

By email to: Michael Angrove,
Planner
City of Victoria
mangrove@victoria.ca

19 May, 2019

Dear Michael Angrove:

Re: Community Meeting for 2566-2570-2580 Fifth Street

Community Meeting Details

Date: 1 May 2019

Location of meeting: Quadra Village Community Centre, 901 Kings Avenue

Meeting facilitators: Hillside Quadra Neighbourhood Action Committee (NAC): 2 members

Attendance: 21: 20 in notification distance and received a letter, 1 outside notification area

Meeting Chair: Jon Munn

Note taker: Gillian Hillidge

Proposed Development Details

The proponents—Luke Mari of the Purdey Group and ARYZE developments delivered a presentation and answered questions. Mr. Mari began by briefly describing the history of the project and the changes made over three CALUC meetings over the past year. He also described Hillside Quadra as demographically different than other neighbourhoods, with more families with children and fewer seniors.

Currently 2566-2570-2580 Fifth Street includes three individual lots with single family dwellings, zoned R-2 Two Family Dwelling District. Adjacent to the north is an apartment building in the R3-2 zone, to the south is the school district former art school site also in the R3-2 zone. To the west are mixed use and commercial buildings in the C1-QV zone. To the east across the street are older houses in the R-2 zone which back onto Fifth Street and front onto Vancouver Street.

The proponents are seeking a site-specific Comprehensive Development Zone in order to build a mixed-use apartment and institutional/ commercial project in two buildings of four and five storeys on top of one floor of underground parking.

The proposed residential part of the development is unchanged in terms of number of units at 64 apartment units of one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three bedroom units of the types described in the adjacent table. Two units are proposed as ground-oriented individual street entrances and three other units ground-oriented off an access.

The proposed tenure is rental for all units. Previously, the proponents indicated they had been in discussion with BC Housing regarding an agreement to offer a majority of the units at a below market rent. The different affordability definitions of the City of Victoria and BC Housing were noted. There will be a combination of market and below-market rents. No draft agreements were presented.

Open space for the building residents consists of a court yard with birch trees, grasses and shrub plantings. The former usable roof top space proposed has been replaced with a roof with solar electric panels. Part of the roof space will be planted as a green roof.

| Residential Use Details | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| • | Total number of units: | 64 rental units |
| • | Total Residential Area: | 3229.5m ² |
| • | Unit types: | |
| | Studio: | 20 |
| | 1 Bedroom: | 25 |
| | 1 Bedroom + Den | 4 |
| | 2 Bedroom: | 8 |
| | 2 Bedroom + Den | 1 |
| | 3 Bedroom: | 7 |
| • | Ground Oriented Units: | 5 Units |
| • | Minimum Unit Size: | 35.4m ² |
| • | Avg Unit Size: | 50.5m ² |

The proposed institutional/ commercial use is the Vancouver Island School of Art (VISA), the former tenant at the adjacent School District 61 property. VISA currently rents space at 950 Kings, the old Blanshard Elementary School site. The location of VISA has changed to occupy the northeast corner of the first floor of the project facing Fifth Street.

| PARKING STALLS | |
|----------------|-------------|
| 5 | COMMERCIAL |
| 18 | RESIDENTIAL |
| 2 | VISITOR |

The proposed design includes 25 vehicle parking stalls of which 18 are for residents.

Bicycle parking includes 72 class 1 and 12 class 2 bicycle spaces (half residential and half commercial), located in underground parking. A parking study was not available although requested previously.

The proponents also showed results from shadow studies which remain unchanged. The south side of apartment building to the north was shown as most the affected neighbour, highly shaded in winter.

Discussion

Issues

A number of issues were discussed.

Mix of Uses

As discussed in the previous CALUC meeting, the addition of VISA to the previous 56-unit 26-parking space apartment building proposal met with divided opinions. Many attendees supported the idea of VISA, but the lack of dedicated parking or any sign of collaboration with the school district to support the use met with disapproval.

The issue of a future tenant if VISA vacated the space was raised. The proponent did not expand on the previous idea from the previous CALUC meeting of a restrictive covenant or wording in the zoning bylaw to restrict the use to a non-profit which would have similar community benefits.

Transportation/ Parking

Most of the discussion involved issues related to transportation and parking. Many meeting participants stated that 18 parking spaces is not adequate for the 64 units and there is no space for VISA clients [28% of units would have one parking space]. Bicycle parking for VISA would be limited to the class 2 spaces. The proponents indicated that they had found a way to increase the number of parking spaces

from the previous design despite the high water table. The attendees generally acknowledged that the presence of the No. 6 bus route on Quadra, secure bicycle parking and a MODO car share were good features, but there were many comments about increased demand for on-street parking from the project. Residents from the adjacent and nearby apartment buildings said some residents have moved away because of lack of parking. Several attendees suggested that the city should institute on-street permit parking for residents, as done in many parts of Vancouver, so residents of a particular block could have some priority for space.

The proponent gave an example of a new building in Saanich in the Tillicum area built with 40 spaces for 90 units [44% of units with one space] and stated there were only three complaints.

The proponent noted that they would ask for a parking variance for VISA, as there is no agreement with the school district for parking.

There was a brief discussion about electric cars and self-driving vehicles. The proponent said they would provide plug-in for electric cars. There attendees commented skeptical

Traffic/Street Improvements

Meeting participants noted that this block of Fifth Street is narrow with no sidewalks and unorganized parking. Redesign of Fifth Street from Bay Street to Kings Road was discussed. The proponent said they would be willing to contribute to a design with parking bays which would make parking more efficient. The proponent said that the city only requires improvements in front of a lot.

Attendees noted the importance of street trees in any road improvements.

Affordability

There was little discussion of affordability, as it largely remains the same and the previous proposal.

Design – Building Form and Character

At the previous CALUC meeting there was some discussion of the applicable design guidelines and how the building fit with the neighbourhood character. Some attendees expressed that this proposal had improved the building exterior design. The reduction of the townhouse streetscape was mentioned, as residents thought that this element provided a good emphasis of the existing residential character. The new VISA frontage received some interest as a generally good improvement over the previous design.

Attendees reiterated that the ‘stepped’ relationship of the two buildings was more street friendly, but residents also said that the building should be lower and have fewer units due to the other issues discussed.

The concept of a green inner courtyard met with some approval, but there were questions if this open space was adequate. A question raised the fact that there was no proposed play space for children or young people to recreate and immediate access to park space without crossing a major road. Residents were in favour of two and three-bedroom units for families, but there looks like there are no amenities to support this. There was some discussion of the adjacent school district site as usable open space. It was noted that the school district neglects this land, although some of it is used for a limited community garden. Residents did note that people now freely walk across the school district land.

One person proposed a climbing wall on the south side of the building. The proponent said this would compromise the structure envelope.

Residents of 2559 Quadra reiterated comments from the last CALUC meeting regarding their concern about replacing their current view of green space with 'a five-storey wall.'

There was a brief discussion about the lack of outdoor space for residents, there would be Juliet balconies only. One concern was that the building would be very hot in the summer. The proponent said the high energy efficiency would make units cooler in the summer and south facing windows were minimized.

In conclusion, few attendees came to the meeting specifically to support the proposal. The overriding issue pertained to the perceived increase in motor vehicle parking demand which would further limit on-street parking.

Jon Munn
CALUC Co-Chair
Hillside Quadra Neighbourhood Action Committee

cc. Hillside Quadra NAC, Luke Mari