

Grandview-Woodland Area Council
c/o Britannia Community Centre
1661 Napier Street
Vancouver
BC V5L 4X4

Timothy Ankenman
ANKENMAN MARCHAND International Architects
1645 West 5th Avenue
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Thursday 28 October 2010

Dear Mr Ankenman:

Re: 1240 Salisbury Drive and 1841 Charles Street

Thank you for your letter of 18 October, sent to me, c/o Grandview-Woodland Area Council (GWAC), concerning GWAC's letter of 17 October. This letter is a response to your letter, in which we discuss further some of the topics raised in the first GWAC letter.

1. Number of Units Being Proposed for the Site Under an HRA

Section 2.2 of the GWAC letter said:

The sketches at the Open House showed five rowhomes (townhouses) proposed to the north of the Jeffs Residence on Salisbury, and five to its east on Charles, with six more on the northeast corner of the site. There are thus sixteen townhouses proposed, plus 7–10 residences in Jeffs Residence itself (which would be stratified).

Your letter said:

In your letter you imply that as many as 26 units may be constructed on the property (16 townhouses and 7-10 units in the Jeff's residence)

In fact the plans presented at the Open House contained 22 units (15 rowhouses and 7 units in the house). Indeed the Jeff's residence may not be stratified should it be converted into co-op or purpose built rental housing. (underline yours)

Your letter also said:

The proposal for the Jeff's residence that was presented at the Open House contains 22 residences with a proposed FSR of approximately 1.2 FSR (final plans still being developed).

Here's how GWAC's number was arrived at. According to my notes, the "Proposed Site Plan" display board showed a map with "5 rowhomes" (1,000–1,200 sq. ft.) in the northwest corner, "6 rowhomes" (same sq. ft.) in the northeast corner, restored Jeffs Residence ("7–10 units"), and "5 rowhomes" (same sq. ft.) in the southeast corner. So, $5 + 6 + 5 = 16$ rowhomes. $16 + 7 = 23$ units. $16 + 10 = 26$ units.

I have spoken with Rob Wynen who was interviewed, along with myself, for the *Georgia Straight* article about the proposed development that appeared on 14 October (Carlito, 2010). You were kind enough to send Rob PDFs of the

display boards. He checked the PDF for the “Proposed Site Plan” display board, and it is exactly as recorded in my notes.

2. Background Information Not Supplied at the 15 September Open House

Since receiving your letter, I have spoken with City staff at the Rezoning Centre and in Subdivision & Strata, and they provided some useful information that further supplements the background information provided in the GWAC

Section 3 of the GWAC letter quoted Jones (2010) reporting that at the Open House, he was told that “the size of the property” was “verbally said to measure 155 feet by 132 feet.” The site size was confirmed by a staff person at Subdivision & Strata.

Here is what learned about the legal lots. With regard to the four legal lots at civic address 1240 Salisbury, lot 24 is the one on the corner of Charles and Salisbury, with lots 23 and then 22 to the east. The skinny lot is 11 feet wide and is technically “Lot 21 except east 22 feet” (i.e., it used to be combined with the lot to the east). So 1240 Salisbury is 110 feet wide = 33 + 33 + 33 + 11.

With regard to the civic address 1841 Charles, it is 45 feet wide, consisting of lots 22 feet and 23 feet wide respectively. Those lots are

Lot 21 = 22 feet wide = Western lot = “Lot 21 east 22 feet.”

Lot 20 = 23 feet wide = Eastern lot = “Lot 20 except east 10 feet.”

With regard to the width of the north-south lane to William Street, I learned that it is 12 feet wide, and that the width of a standard City of Vancouver lane is 20 feet. (I also learned that the very short east-west portion of the lane at its very south end is 10 feet wide.)

3. Number of Units Allowable if a Vacant Site

Section 4.1 of the GWAC letter said:

[I]t was important [at the Open House] to know that the 1240 Salisbury Drive/1841 Charles Street site consists of six legal lots because RT-5 zoning allows two units per legal lot. In theory, that would allow the building on the site to comprise twelve 2½ storey units with a maximum height of 10.7 metres (35.1 feet). However, in practice — and here is the answer to (2) what the site’s RT-5 zoning allows if all the buildings on-site were demolished — the eleven-foot wide lot is too narrow to build on, thereby reducing the number of units to ten 2½ storey units with a maximum height of 10.7 metres (35.1 feet) and 0.6 FSR.

When I spoke with a City staff person in Subdivision & Strata, that person, unprompted by me, said that 1240 Salisbury Drive/1841 Charles Street as a vacant site could take five duplexes (ten units), like it says in the GWAC letter.

Here is the staff person’s explanation. The site is 155 feet wide. The minimum width lot allowed for the site is 30 feet. Someone could subdivide the site by splitting it into five 31-foot lots. (I understand that Subdivision & Strata tend to go with “typicalness” when determining lot sizes in a subdivision application and 33-foot lots are typical of the area.) Someone can do just a duplex on each of the lots. This should be considered the base development case for the site — what can be done outright, with the co-operation of Subdivision & Strata — to be used in calculating compensation to the developer, should a Heritage Revitalization Agreement (HRA) go ahead.

Your letter said:

It should be noted that you have stated that the maximum number of units on the site under current zoning is limited to 10 after demolishing the house. The reality is, the current lot configuration [i]s somewhat irrelevant, as the site could either be re-subdivided, or consolidated. Under the latter scenario. The RT-5 zoning allows multiple dwellings. Taking the site area (20,064 sq. ft. X .75 FSR) = 15,048 sq. ft. of buildable square footage. Assuming a unit mix of 20% studios @ 450 sq. ft. (7

units), 30% 1 bedrooms at 500 sq. ft. (9 units), and the remaining 50% 2 bedrooms at 750 sq. ft. (10 units), one could build 26 units under the current RT 5 zoning, not 10 as you described. (underlines yours)

This is not the base development case for the site. I understand that someone could, without City approval, consolidate the site into say one enormous lot or say three lots of 52 feet, 52 feet, and 51 feet. However, what ever the resulting lot sizes, the vacant site will be subject to the site's RT-5 zoning, and development on the site would need to be to a scale and character typical of the zoning.

4. Concerns about Access to Parking and Garbage

Sections 4.3 and 4.4 of the GWAC letter noted that it is problematic to use the north-south lane to William Street for access to underground parking or garbage pickup. The alternative is access to underground parking or garbage pickup via Salsbury Drive or Charles Street, which would be out of character with those streets and would spoil their appearance.

Your letter stated:

The City of Vancouver's Engineering department encourages, indeed requires, that vehicular access to sites be via the rear lane in instances where lanes exist. We recognize that there are some challenges with the existing lane that will need to be addressed with the City's qualified Engineering dept. as the project progresses. As noted earlier, this proposal is still in its infancy and technical details such as lane geometry have yet to be addressed.

When I spoke with the City staff person in Subdivision & Strata, that person, again unprompted by me, noted problems with the lane access. As reported in section 2 of this letter, the north-south lane to William Street is 12 feet wide, and that the width of a standard City of Vancouver lane is 20 feet. The first GWAC letter noted that the north-south lane is bounded by the property lines of adjacent properties, so there is no immediate opportunity to widen the lane.

The person in Subdivision & Strata also pointed out that the density allowed on a consolidated site would take into account factors such as access to on-site parking.

Please also note that Schedule B of the Subdivision By-law (No. 5208), "Standards for Street Configurations" (<http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/BYLAWS/SUBDIV/schedb.pdf>) requires that access lanes be 20 feet wide.

5. Summary

Thank you for your letter of 18 October, and the opportunity to engage in a conversation about 1240 Salsbury Drive/1841 Charles. As part of that conversation, I have explained that the number of units proposed for the site under an HRA come from a display board at the 15 September Open House (section 1) and that the vacant site could take five duplexes (section 3), like it says in the first GWAC letter. Finally, this letter adds a little more information to the discussion about the viability of using the north-south lane to William Street for access to underground parking and garbage pickup for the site (sections 2 and 4).

Sincerely,

Dan Fass on behalf of

The Directors of Grandview-Woodland Area Council (GWAC)

(Graham Anderson, Selena Couture, Annwen Davies, Tom Durrie, Dan Fass, Bing Jensen, Brenda "Poesy" Koch, Craig Ollenberger, Richard Penneway, Petronella Vander Valk)

GWAC website: www.vcn.bc.ca/gwac

GWAC web page about 1240 Salisbury Drive/1841 Charles Street: www.vcn.bc.ca/gwac/1240Salisbury/index.html

References

Grandview-Woodland Area Council [GWAC] (2010). GWAC letter about proposed development of 1240 Salisbury Drive/1841 Charles Street. 17 October 2010. www.vcn.bc.ca/gwac/1240Salisbury/10-10-17GWAC_1240Salisbury.pdf

Jones, Joseph (2010). 17 rental units on the Drive under threat from commercial developer: Ankenman Marchand International takes a “grass-route approach” to gentrifying the Drive. Published 17 September 2010. Vancouver, BC: Vancouver Media Co-op. <http://vancouver.mediacoop.ca/story/17-rental-units-drive-under-threat-commercial-developer/4664>.

Pablo, Carlito (2010). Developers Eye the Drive. *The Georgia Straight*, 14 October 2010, p. 86. Published online 13 October 2010 as Grandview-Woodland Area Council fears the loss of affordable housing in East Vancouver. <http://straight.com/article-352569/vancouver/grandviewwoodland-area-council-fears-loss-affordable-housing-east-vancouver>

Cc: Bob Adair (Development Planner), Marco D’Agostini (Senior Heritage Planner), Steve Hearn (Project Scoper), David Jung (Project Scoper), Brent Toderian (Director of Planning).