

Wong, Tamarra

From: Peter Whitelaw s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2019 4:18 PM
To: Public Hearing
Cc: Todd Hickling; Sue Gill s.22(1) Personal and Confidential don davies p9; Martina Lee; Michelle Segal; Ben Mortenson; Larry Kazdan; Kim McCarthy
Subject: Re. REZONING: 686-688 East 22nd Avenue, 3811-3891 Fraser Street and 679 East 23rd Avenue

Hi,

I am speaker #19 on the list for this Public Hearing. Unfortunately, while I was available on July 9, I am not available tonight. Please accept the following brief notes in place of my oral presentation:

- I believe that Strand Development has made a generally reasonable response to the City's Affordable Housing Choices Interim Rezoning Policy (AHCIRP)
- I strongly support more affordable housing in this neighbourhood
- I support densification of the neighbourhood that is sensitively done, comes with amenities and services for new residents, supports small local businesses, and is planned comprehensively through a neighbourhood consultation. I am concerned that waiting 3 years for the city wide plan is too long, but I don't want to stop good development in the meantime. Can Council find an interim approach that works for the community and allows for some development?
- I have significant concerns about the AHCIRP itself, and its impacts on the community because it encourages developers to purchase land at values that support the density and community benefits set out in the policy. This means that the policy envisions 6 storey buildings on many properties that are currently zoned for single-family or duplex.
 - The affordability threshold is too low. The policy provides a major land lift - \$10M on the Strand properties - that is gained by the former property owners and/or the developer, depending on the sale negotiations. This is in exchange for a community benefit of 100% market rental. But the City acknowledges market rental rates require a household income of \$75,000 to rent a 1-bedroom, a fair bit more than the East Side median income for single person households of about \$38,000 or single parent families of \$52,000. A two-income household is needed to afford a 1-bedroom at this rate. If the land lift on this property is anything to go by, a stronger policy could require below-market rents and still provide significant value to both developer and landowner. This is especially true when the starting land values have appreciated more than 500% in the last 10 years.
 - There is limited ability to transition on sites identified in the policy. The policy is limited to parcels on arterials with approx. 30 m lot depths. These depths provide limited ability to transition in height from 6 storeys to adjacent homes, even with townhouses facing the lane.
 - Without CACs for local amenities, the community may not see amenities to serve current age new residents. I am concerned that the City may not provide amenities for the neighbourhood through the DCL program in a timely way, or may prioritize other parts of the city for a period of time, leaving the Fraser area even more underserved than it is now.
 - While this policy limits projects to 1 per 10 blocks, taken together, the 4 policy programs available to developers for rental housing have allowed for a large number of proposals in a small area all at once. This cumulative impact of these projects is a significant and sudden change to the neighbourhood; however, consultation is limited to individual projects: the scale of consultation does not match the scale of change.

- Furthermore, with the potential for a significant delay in DCL-supported amenity provision, the cumulative impacts on services and amenities in the neighbourhood could be significant and problematic, especially in the short term.
- I have minor concerns with the Strand proposal
 - I think that the proposed building doesn't adequately transition to the West, due in part to the slope away from the site. Moving the building approx 3 m towards Fraser, reducing the commercial unit depths to permit this, might be a good option to improve the transition for neighbours without unduly affecting the design. It would also support small retail units that may be more accessible to small local businesses.
 - I would love to see some below-market rental provision. I wonder if Strand would consider partnership with a non-market housing provider to secure some of the units for non-market rental, e.g. through some form of rent subsidy for the non-market households. Let's find some solutions to provide more affordable housing on this site!

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Peter Whitelaw
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