

WORKING GROUP MAJORITY REPORT ON EDMONT SENIOR LIVING DETAILED APPLICATION

Summary

- A. It would be inappropriate for the Edgemont Village Local Area Plan Refresh to be pre-empted by spot rezoning for a project of this magnitude.
- B. Details of a proposed operating model and adequate particulars of the Developer's experience and financial viability have not been provided as requested in the Working Group's first Report.
- C. Important concerns remain about building size, height, use, and impact on the adjacent residential neighbourhood.

Report

On 17 August 2012, the Working Group struck by the Edgemont and Upper Capilano Community Association (as the Plan Monitoring Group) in coordination with the District of North Vancouver to provide input on the Preliminary Application for the Edgemont Seniors' Living project made its Report. The Developer having recently filed its Detailed Application, it is appropriate for the Group to provide a further Report, discussing what has changed in the proposal and how it has addressed or failed to address the community's issues and concerns as elucidated in the first Report.

This Report on the Detailed Application should be read in conjunction with the Working Group's earlier Report on the Preliminary Application, since many of the issues raised in the first Report remain outstanding and may not be restated here.

Unfortunately, members of the Group were not unanimous in their views about the project and the form of the Report. This Report represents the views of seven of the group's eleven members. Appendix C lists the names of those who approve it and those who do not.

A. Process, Planning, and Social Policy Issues

There is support in the community for a seniors' living facility in the vicinity of Edgemont Village, and the proposed location is generally seen as being appropriate, given its proximity to the Village core. There are real concerns, however, about the proposed building's size and the fact that it will cater only to seniors who are capable of independent living and are wealthy enough to afford the not-inconsiderable rents. The community should be heard on these issues.

The Edgemont Village Local Area Plan ("LAP") Refresh process has commenced. The Refresh will deal with the policy direction for future developments in the Village core and adjacent areas. It provides an ideal opportunity for the community to consider this proposed project in the context of the future of the Village as a whole. While the Developer is doubtless anxious to secure Council's approval of its application as soon as possible, and certainly before the conclusion of the Refresh, the majority of members of the Working Group feel strongly that it would be altogether inappropriate for individual

proposals of this magnitude and significance to be dealt with on a piecemeal basis. The first Report stated that it is **“imperative that the District move forward with the “Refresh” of the LAP in order that the LAP refresh process and the ESL application approval process ultimately synchronize the regulation of use and density on the Canfield site.”** *[emphasis in original]* This view has not changed.

Appendix B contains a detailed discussion of relevant portions of the District’s Official Community Plan (“OCP”) of 2011 and the Upper Capilano Plan of 1999 (this latter document is generally referred to in this Report by its more common name of “Local Area Plan” or “LAP”). The OCP requires that until a Refresh takes place for a new LAP, land use decisions will be “informed” by the existing LAP. Details of a number of apparent problems the proposed project causes with the OCP and the existing LAP are provided in Appendix B. A couple are highlighted here.

Both the OCP and the LAP designate the subject site as “detached residential”. Although the LAP gave direction to “explore alternative forms of seniors’ housing that bridge the gap between independent living and long term care . . . on suitable sites, should they become available”, this should only happen with the concurrence of the community. The ongoing Refresh provides an ideal opportunity for such discussions.

The view of the majority in the Working Group is that the proposed development is too large and flies in the face of the OCP “transitional guidelines” (2.2.5) policy, which is to “concentrate development in the Village core *[the proposed facility is outside the Village core]* and transition sensitively outwards with appropriate ground-oriented housing forms (such as duplexes and townhouses) to adjacent residential neighbourhoods”. The community must be heard. The Refresh currently under way is perfectly timed for taking the community’s views on this issue not just in isolation, as would be the case with a public hearing on the Detailed Application, but more importantly, in the context of the community’s vision for the future of the Village as a whole.

A key element of the OCP is to accommodate the needs of people at different lifecycle stages, with an emphasis on affordability. There was discussion in the Working Group about the fact that the facility will cater only to seniors who are capable of “independent living” and are from the wealthier segment of the population. No provision is made either for “assisted living” accommodation or for less wealthy seniors. The proposed facility would not “bridge the gap between independent living and long term care” as called for in the LAP; tenants must vacate as soon as they become incapable of independent living and require assistance. As to the OCP’s emphasis on affordability, there are no units, for example, which would be available under the auspices of Vancouver Coastal Health to tenants on condition that they pay rent amounting to 70% of their after-tax income, as is the case with other seniors’ living facilities. The community must be heard on this issue. The Refresh is the appropriate vehicle.

B. Developer Credentials and Financial Viability

During the Working Group’s consideration of the preliminary application last summer, the Developer advised that it was negotiating with an experienced operating entity on an agreement which would see that entity assume responsibility for the operation and administration of the facility. The Group’s view

was that a successful conclusion to this negotiation may address some of the concerns listed in the first Report.

Since then, nothing has been heard from the Developer on the matter of an operating model for the facility other than an assurance that negotiations are ongoing with several parties for joint-venture partnerships or operator agreements. This and the other specific concerns enumerated in the first Report have yet to be addressed. Indeed, rumors are circulating about the Developer selling the project. In response, the Developer says that it has no plans to sell, will stay involved in the operation of the facility, and will uphold its obligations to the community.

The Working Group stresses that the Developer must go beyond unsupported assurances, not only to demonstrate that it has concluded negotiations for the ownership, operation and administration of the facility with an experienced and reputable operating entity but also to address the other concerns enumerated in its first Report.

C. Physical Impact and Liveability Issues with the ESL Proposal

The Working Group's first Report incorporated a table to list community concerns and issues, the Developer's response, and the Group's perspective on that response. The table has been updated to add two more columns, one summarizing the Detailed Application's handling of the issue and the other giving a brief statement of the Working Group's perspective on that response. Appendix A to this Report contains important footnotes which expand significantly on many of these points.

Community Concern or Issue	ESL Response	Working Group Perspective August 2012	ESL Detailed Application Feb 2013	Working Group Perspective
1. Number of Units in the Proposal	Number of Units revised from 140 to 125, based on height reduction to 3 storeys and 6-lot configuration. <i>[This reduction in the number of units occurred when the Developer could only purchase 6 lots instead of 7]</i>	There is significant community sentiment that the proposed building form is too “big” and intrusive. Seniors accommodation has general support but not at this scale.	Number of units raised from 125 to 129	Number of units dictates a building of such a large size that it should not be approved unless the community’s consent is secured during the LAP Refresh.
2. Height of the Building	On June 13, it was announced that the building height will be reduced from 4 floors to 3. 1 st story: 12 feet 2 nd & 3 rd stories: 9 feet	The community may be more receptive to a maximum height of 3 storeys, subject to acceptable building configuration and overall size.	Basic reduced building height of 3 storeys is 40 feet from the ground floor at the gables and wings. The ground floor is above grade at the Woodbine/Highland corner.	Visual impact of a building of this height should be considered in the LAP Refresh.
3. Stepping between floors	First floor 10 ft. from lot line Second floor set back 10 -15 ft. from first floor	Stepping back of upper floors should be maximized to enhance human scale proportions.	No stepping back from ground floor to upper floors (see note in Appendix A).	Too much massing presented to street and neighbouring single family homes.

4. Overall site coverage	FSR 1.55 Site Coverage 52%	The FSR should be in the range of 0.80 to 1.20. Site coverage should remain in the 50% range. This will help address the concern over the “bigness” of the current proposal.	FSR 1.55 Building Site Coverage 50% plus balconies and porte cochère. Exact Site Coverage including enclosed interior courtyard unknown but well over 50%.	The concern expressed in the first Report that FSR should be in the range of 0.80 to 1.20 has not been addressed.
5. Massing and Building Orientation should be away from the Highland & Woodbine corner to reduce visual impact	Woodbine frontage has been set back and stepped between first & second floors. Now wholly enclosed configuration to suit 6 lot development	Building façades need careful articulation to provide visual relief and enhance a residential appearance. The enclosed interior courtyard presents an “institutional feel” to the building. The sentiment is that the building configuration should enable outdoor garden and leisure area(s) on the exterior of the building for connectivity to the community and to provide more sun exposure.	Building is not stepped between the first and second floors (see Appendix A, note 3). Interior courtyard still fully enclosed.	Articulation of walls provides little visual relief, given the building’s large mass. The concern about the courtyard which was expressed in first Report is not addressed.

6. Mitigation of impact on views and sightlines	Site topography (elevation difference) mitigates additional view impacts	Existing public views should be respected and mitigated to the greatest extent.	The promised reduction of base height to 3 storeys does not include wings and pitched roofs, which still exceed 3 storeys.	This issue of the impact on views and sightlines of a building of this size should be considered in the LAP Refresh.
7. Transition to the adjacent properties on Ridgewood as well as those across Highland and Woodbine	Topography mitigates impact for homes along Ridgewood	DNV Planning should review the context implications for the proposed development on adjacent properties and opportunities for enhancement of the Village ambience.	Details of proposals for streetscapes on Woodbine, Ayr, Ridgewood, Highlands provided. Details of mitigation approaches to adjacent properties outlined.	The sharp transition to the adjacent residential neighbourhood is not addressed.
8. Provision of public space at the corner of Woodbine and Highlands	Not provided in this proposal	Enhanced public spaces are an important community expectation and have been provided by all recent rezoned redevelopments in Edgemont Village. Could be achieved by locating garden and leisure areas external to the building as discussed above.	Details of a public plaza at the Woodbine/Highlands corner are included, and there is an adjacent semi-private dining terrace in the Residence.	The addition of a public plaza (partly using ESL property and partly property which is publicly owned) together with its connection to the Residence dining terrace will create some linkage to Edgemont Village.

9. Architectural Style	Propose West Coast Contemporary; no Stucco; Flat Roof	Pitched roof may be preferable to achieve a more “residential feel”, depending on the impact on the building height.	Pitched roofs and wings included.	Articulated walls and pitched roof and wing sections may be architecturally attractive, but building height and mass remain an overriding concern.
10. Tree Preservation and Landscaping	Significant trees will remain untouched on the adjacent north east property which is no longer included in this development	The Developer cannot guarantee the retention of existing trees not on its property. The on-site landscaping plan should reflect the residential character of the neighbourhood.	Landscape plans indicate the range of trees and planted areas.	Comprehensive landscaping plans are attractive.
11. Community Benefits accruing from the closure and sale of the Canfield Cr. road allowance and any uplift in density	Developer estimates about \$1.0 M from the sale of Canfield Cr. may be available for community benefits at DNV discretion	The local community should be consulted to identify benefits which could be provided from the sale of Canfield Cr. and any land value uplift.	Acknowledged, subject to agreement with DNV. Developer advises that value of Canfield road allowance has been agreed at \$1.9 M.	DNV policy requires that public land sales be used to purchase land, not amenities for local community. Uplift should be used to benefit the local community.

12. Traffic, Parking and Transportation Impacts	<p>Bunt and Associates will be retained to undertake a Traffic Impact and Transportation Analysis</p> <p>Required parking: 41 stalls</p> <p>Proposed parking: 57 stalls</p>	<p>Study results awaited.</p> <p>Study scope should include mitigation opportunities for any identified impacts.</p>	<p>Bunt Traffic and Transportation Report completed and provided.</p> <p>59 parking stalls and also charging stations and bike racks incorporated.</p>	No significant impacts predicted.
13. Economic Impact Assessment	<p>GP Rollo and Associates will be retained to undertake an economic impact analysis on Village Merchants and Businesses</p>	<p>Study results awaited.</p> <p>The Village Merchants have not taken a stand as yet on potential business impacts – positive or negative. Their feedback has been provided only from their perspective as Village denizens and they are equally concerned about the “bigness” of the development.</p>	<p>Rollo Economic Impact Study completed and provided.</p>	Some contribution to business volume noted.
14. Project accessibility for local residents	<p>An initial 90 day window for advanced registration will be provided for local residents in Upper Capilano Area</p>	<p>Eligibility should also be extended to adult children living in the area who may wish to have their senior parent(s) locate locally.</p>	<p>Advanced registration opportunities for local families confirmed.</p>	Does not provide a long term solution to meet future needs of local residents. The legality of a geographic restriction on registration may be questionable.

Appendix A

Notes to Numbered Sections in Part C. Table:

1. A seniors' living facility seems to have general support in the community, and the Canfield site is ideally placed in proximity to the Village. However, with a total "Building Area" of over 34,000 sq. ft, the proposed building would be by far the most dominant structure in or near Edgemont Village.

To apprehend the true size of the building as viewed from the outside, the area of its enclosed internal courtyard must be included, which, at between 5,000 and 6,000 sq. ft, means that the total area covered by this three-storey building would be in the range of 40,000 sq. ft. For context, the next biggest building in the area, the new Highland Elementary School, is a two storey structure with a ground floor area of about just 23,000 sq. ft. The single-storey Village Market (formerly SuperValu) occupies 10,000 sq. ft. Even if the redevelopment of this supermarket results in a building footprint of as much as 30,000 sq. ft, as has been suggested, the ESL facility would occupy an area of land one third again as large.

The Developer maintains that a building of this size is necessary for the project to be economically viable. The community must decide whether the proposed use of the building justifies its size. This question should be addressed during the Refresh of the LAP.

2. Despite the reduction of the base height of the building from 4 storeys to 3, the pitched roofs and raised wings, one of which is on the corner which faces the Village (Woodbine and Highland), are still effectively 4 storeys high. As well, the main floor at that corner is raised above grade. The structure's apparent height there will be yet further accentuated when viewed from the Village core because of the fact that the elevation of the building site itself is about 1 storey higher than the main intersection in the Village (Edgemont and Highland).

At the north end of the building on Highland, the raised wing accentuates the height disparity between the proposed structure and the surrounding single family residences. The ESL facility would dwarf the homes in the adjacent neighbourhood

These issues should be addressed during the LAP Refresh

3. Despite the Developer's assurance at the time of the first Working Group Report, and contrary to its statement in the Detailed Application that the Woodbine frontage has been stepped between the first and second floors, the "Amenity Area" at the Highland/Woodbine corner is the only place where the main floor level protrudes from the upper floors. There is no stepping between floors anywhere in the building; the walls are straight from the ground to the roof.

4. According to the Detailed Application, site coverage is 50%, not including balconies and the porte cochère. Because the interior courtyard is completely enclosed, it makes the apparent site coverage when the building is viewed from outside larger still. While redevelopments in the Village core may range from 1.75 to 2.00 FSR with lot coverages of more than 50%, the proposed site is much larger than anything in the Village, comprising, as it does, 6 lots as well as the half of Canfield Crescent which runs between Highland Boulevard and Woodbine Drive. A building which, with balconies and porte cochère, therefore occupies well over half a site of this size would cover the largest ground area of any building in the vicinity even without the courtyard, the more so with it. The community must decide whether the proposed use of the building justifies its size. This question can be answered during the Refresh of the LAP.
5. Three sides of the proposed building are 200 feet long. The community must decide whether the proposed use of the building justifies its size. This question can be answered during the Refresh of the LAP.

As to the enclosed interior courtyard, the concern expressed in the Working Group's first Report was that the building configuration should allow for outdoor garden and leisure area(s) on the exterior of the building for connectivity to the community and to provide more sun exposure. The Developer has responded by adding a small public plaza at the corner of Woodbine and Highland. The Detailed Application otherwise provides no outdoor garden or leisure areas on the exterior of the building.

As to the interior courtyard's sun exposure, the "Shadow Analysis" in the Detailed Application makes it clear that, surrounded by high walls as it would be, the enclosed interior courtyard would receive little or no direct sunlight for much of the year.

6. The community must decide whether the architectural feature of wings and pitched roofs justifies view impacts. This question can be answered during the Refresh of the LAP.
7. There is no "sensitive transition" to the adjacent residential neighbourhoods as mandated in the OCP. The community must decide whether the proposed use of the building justifies the sharp drop to the surrounding single family residences. This question can be answered during the Refresh of the LAP.

No additional comments on Sections 8 to 14.

Appendix B

What do the 1999 UCP Upper Capilano Plan (in this report also referred to as the Local Area Plan) and the June 2011 OCP have to say which is relevant to the ESL proposal?

UCP [LAP] background report:

- P39 : *“Minimizing neighbourhood change was identified throughout the process”*
- P39: *“In order to minimize change, the initial premise was that change would not be permitted unless specifically determined in the plan”*
- P40: No support was provided for in-fill within single family areas, when it stated *“community’s opinion did not support any relaxation of subdivision regulations or any accommodation of small-scale redevelopment on an in-fill basis within single family homes.”*
- P41: After consideration of the need of the aging residents who wished to remain in Upper Capilano for accommodation other than single family homes, the *“public broadly recognized that some additional units are necessary to meet the changing needs of some seniors . . . The Steering Committee is basing the plan proposals on the continuing the historical rate of growth (ie approximately 150 net new multi-family units over a 10 year period 1997-2006) which was supported by the 1998 Open House result.”* Subsequently, motions of Council on Dec 14/1998 and January 25/1999 changed this so: on page 45 Implementation 17.1.1 *“the sites designated to accommodate a total of approximately 170 net new multi-family units...”* Note that the proposed ESL at 129 units would consume about 7.5 years worth of historical growth.
- Since the ESL is proposed to abut the SuperValu site, some relevant quotations pertaining to the SuperValu future vision might prove useful: The Nov/98 Upper Capilano Plan – Background Planning Report stated on page 67: *Implementation 26.2.1 A comprehensive development zone for the Ridgewood/Edgemont entrance property will include provisions for medical/dental offices (8,000 - 12,000 square feet) and a supermarket (10,000 – 15,000) square feet)* . Further, on page 61, the supermarket parking was to be on grade with terraced apartments over the retail space, providing a mix of unit types and sizes. *“Limiting the height of building to two-storeys at the street maintains a pedestrian scale to the development and preserves the views of the mountains.”* The ESL proposal is for a building area of 34,308 sq-ft, without the courtyard, with a total floor area of 101,775 sq-ft over three floors, which is over 3 times the building area and 10 times the floor area of the existing supermarket.
- Page 16 of the OCP – Growth Management, states *“importantly, the stability and character of residential neighbourhoods are sensitively preserved.”*

OCP:

- Page 17, Policy 5: *“Respect residential neighbourhood character and limit growth in these areas”*
- Page 23: *“Significant changes to other Village Centres [Edgemont] are not proposed in this plan and pre-existing Local Area Plan land uses have been integrated. The OCP provides for the opportunity for more detailed Village Centre Implementation Plans to be prepared or reviewed where appropriate in the future. Note that such a review (“the Refresh”) is only just beginning for the Edgemont Village area. Readers are reminded that this aligns well with the UCP [LAP], as noted above, which designates only certain areas for multi-family and explicitly disallows any other single family areas from such future use.*
- Page 23, Policy 5: *“Concentrate development in the Village core and transition sensitively outwards with appropriate ground-oriented housing forms (such as duplex and townhouse) to adjacent residential neighbourhoods”.*
- Page 23, Policy 7: *“Ensure Village Centre Implementation Plans and their peripheral areas are consistent with the objectives and policies of the OCP and prepare or review Plans as necessary.”* Please note that the UCP [LAP] is consistent in this regard – that a public review process is required (i.e. need for an Edgemont Village Centre Implementation Plan before any spot-rezoning is considered).
- Page 24 “Neighbourhoods”: *“With a few exceptions, multifamily residences within neighbourhoods are ground-oriented (duplexes, triplexes or townhouses) . . . **Significant change is not anticipated in existing neighbourhood** . . . [emphasis added] Sensitive residential infill opportunities may be considered to provide greater housing diversity or transition to adjacent uses through Neighbourhood Infill Plans and/or Housing Action Plans. Prepare Housing Action Plan(s) to identify criteria for low intensity infill housing, such as coach and laneway housing and small lot subdivision as appropriate.*
- Page 26 “Land Use Designations”:

RESIDENTIAL LEVEL 3: ATTACHED RESIDENTIAL

*Areas designated for attached residential are intended predominantly for ground-oriented multifamily housing within neighbourhoods, or as a transition between higher density sites and adjacent detached residential areas. Typical housing forms in this designation include duplex, triplex and attached row houses up to approximately **0.80 FSR**.*

RESIDENTIAL LEVEL 4: TRANSITION MULTIFAMILY

*Areas designated for transitional multifamily are intended predominantly for multifamily uses within or in close proximity to centres and corridors, or as a transition between higher density sites and adjacent detached and attached residential areas. This designation typically allows for a mix of townhouse and apartment developments up to approximately **1.20 FSR**.*

The above sections have been previously noted in discussions about the ESL. Readers should be aware that no such designations have been stated in the OCP for the area under consideration. Thus the ESL proposal, at **FSR of 1.50**, falls well outside the bounds of even these two future possible designations – designations specifically designed for possible transition areas to Edgemont Village.

- Page 59 “Housing Diversity”: *“While growth will be restricted in detached residential areas, opportunities will exist to sensitively introduce appropriate housing choices such as coach houses, duplexes and small lot infill that respect and enhance neighbourhood character.”*
- Further, Policies on page 59 states:

POLICIES

- 1. Encourage and facilitate a broad range of market, non-market and supportive housing.*
- 2. Undertake Neighbourhood Infill plans and/or Housing Action Plans (described in Chapter12) where appropriate to:*
 - a. identify potential townhouse, row house, triplex and duplex areas near designated Town and Village Centres, neighbourhood commercial uses and public schools*
 - b. designate additional Small Lot Infill Areas*
 - c. develop criteria and identify suitable areas to support detached accessory dwellings (such as coach houses, backyard cottages and laneway housing)*
- 3. Develop design guidelines to assist in ensuring the form and character of new multifamily development contributes to the character of existing neighbourhoods and to ensure a high standard of design in the new Town and Village Centres*

NOTE: None of the plans and design guidelines have even been developed for the proposed ESL site, much less the dwelling designated above.

- Page 87, section 12.3.2 TRANSITIONING FROM LOCAL AREA PLANS: *“Until such time as more detailed sub-area planning occurs at the centres or neighbourhood level, existing Local Area Plans will be used as reference policy documents to inform land use decisions in their respective areas.”*

Appendix C

Working Group members' endorsement or rejection of this Report:

Approve:

Brian Albinson

Adrian Chaster

Robin Delany

Susan Hingson

Corrie Kost

Lenora Moore

Louise Nagle

Oppose:

Grig Cameron

Bill Hayes

Susan Kimm-Jones

Peter Thomson