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## Lynn Valley mall towers headed to public hearing

[Jeremy Shepherd](#) / North Shore News

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Consultant Mark Sager and developer Nat Bosa sat among residents in council chambers for first reading of their Lynn Valley project. Photograph by: Cindy Goodman

The re-development of the Lynn Valley mall - which initially seemed fated for a long and contentious debate - barely made a ripple on its way through first reading at a District of North Vancouver council meeting Monday evening.

If the project is successful, the Zellers building at Lynn Valley Mall will be demolished to make room for six towers between four and 12 storeys.

The 4.8 acre development proposal includes 377 apartments and 22 townhouses. The height of the buildings ranges from 55 to 150 feet. Four of the towers will sit on a one-storey commercial component that will add 50,000 square feet of new commercial space to the neighbourhood.

Besides the Zellers, the project would also swallow up the former District of North Vancouver library.

A non-profit society will likely end up operating six units of affordable housing in the project.

The package also includes a developer contribution to the municipality including \$1.6 million for transportation improvements, \$500,000 for public art, and trail improvements, with a total value of \$4.5 million.

Council previously approved a maximum height of 12 storeys, but may not have taken into account that a commercial storey

is roughly 10 feet taller than a residential storey, noted Coun. Lisa Muri.

Council should cap the height at 12 storeys or 130 feet, according to frequent council watcher Hazen Colbert.

One resident produced a petition with the signatures of 1,500 residents in support for the project.

For those who see the derelict Zellers as a concrete eyesore, the project is very good news.

"I'll be very glad to see this redevelopment go ahead," said John Gilmore.

The project also received a boost from David Hewitson, who manages a store in the mall.

"I can unequivocally say at least 85 to 90 per cent of everybody that comes by are 150 per cent in favour of this," he said.

The mall is in dire need of the development, according to Hewitson.

"It's like a morgue in there lately," he said.

The entire project would have a Floor Space Ratio of 2.36, which measures the development's total floor space against the area of the lot.

Richard Hancock, who opposed a large development in the City of North Vancouver, lauded Bosa for submitting a project that falls well below the district's maximum allowable floor space ratio of 3.5 for the area.

Hancock also noted Bosa's "pristine reputation" for quality projects.

The project's commercial element may be very successful, exceeding the popularity of Zellers, suggested Coun. Doug MacKay-Dunn. That popularity means district staff may need to revisit traffic projections, he said.

MacKay-Dunn has previously noted that Lynn Valley residents are tired of worsening traffic congestions caused by development.

A public hearing on the project is set for April 15.

Coun. Mike Little did not attend the meeting.

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