

# north shore news

## Shell station to clip canopy over views

A lesson here for all municipalities! -cjk

### Gas pump canopy to be lowered **after** complaints

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A new canopy over Shell's gas pumps in West Vancouver has been built taller than expected, raising the ire of neighbours next to the station. Photo Mike Wakefield

A newly constructed gas station in Ambleside will lower its pump canopy by nearly a metre following complaints from nearby townhouse owners.

That was the decision following a discussion by West Vancouver council Monday night.

After a development permit was issued in 2011, Shell Canada Ltd. completed its overhauled Shell station at the northwest corner of 13th Street and Marine Drive earlier this year, which included a newly added "green" roof canopy.

Although initial drawings showed the roof height of the new canopy to be lower than the one previously on site, the now completed gas canopy appears to be about one metre higher than that of the old site, at over six metres.

Shell Canada agreed to change the initial development permit to lower the canopy height to 5.251 metres, which would bring it 13 centimetres below the height of the townhouse balconies that sit immediately north of the site. However, legal representatives for the strata at the four-unit complex known as Ambleside Terrace said the proposed amendments do not properly address the issue.

"The violation is not that it wasn't six metres, the violation was that it was not built (relative) to the elevation that it was supposed to," said Heather Jones of Sager Legal Advisors, representing the strata.

Jones said even with the amendment, the canopy will still sit over a metre higher than was initially approved in 2011.

"That would need to be addressed," she said.

Lisa Berg, senior community planner for the District of West Vancouver, said the issue of the dimensions arose from a drawing that did not correctly represent what the canopy would look like during the initial approval process in 2011.

"What happened was the drawing that was produced did not correctly represent what the dimension height of the canopy was going to be," she explained.

"The canopy that we see today that's constructed wasn't built to the dimension drawings that were part of the development package."

Oleg Verbenkov of Pacific Land Group, representing Shell Canada, added that a chimney in the old canopy was taken into account when calculating that building's overall height, as required by district bylaws.

That would have been factored into the design comparison of the old and new structures and thus created height discrepancies, he said. District bylaws state that chimneys above 1.8 metres must be factored into height.

For the most part, council didn't have a problem with Shell's solution of lowering the canopy by 0.8 of a metre. Coun. Michael Lewis took issue with the initial design drawings for the station in relation to the townhouses, many of which did not have height figures attached.

"We have people that live there and they in fairness need to have a clear explanation," he said.

Coun. Craig Cameron said that although he's not a fan of the station's location he doubted the council that approved the project in 2011 would have voted differently had they known about the height discrepancies.

"I think that the previous council would have passed it because they saw the merits in the project and whether it was a foot higher or a foot lower was not going to make a difference," he said.

Coun. Christine Cassidy said she agreed with Shell's actions to lower the canopy over the gas pumps and amend the development permit, but questioned the point on views being obstructed.

"I don't know what views everybody is talking about other than perhaps space because within the next few years there's going to be a seven-storey building in front of them. So a gas station is definitely much better than what they conceivably could have been looking at."

In the end, council voted six to one in favour of the allowing the change to lower the canopy, with Lewis voting against.