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## Rental housing proposed for Phibbs

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An artist's rendering of a proposed new rental building in the District of North Vancouver. Photograph by: supplied, GBL Architects

District of North Vancouver council gave first reading to a handful of motions Monday night, which could result in a six-storey development just west of the Phibbs Exchange.

Slated for a March 25 public hearing, the 112-unit development would span four lots between 1561 and 1583 Oxford Street, totalling approximately 24,111 square feet.

The lots would need to be rezoned from singlefamily residential to comprehensive development. The site would also require an amendment to the district's recently adopted official community plan.

The project is appropriate for the area, according to Coun. Mike Little.

"If ever there was a place in the District of North Vancouver to relax some of these issues, this is the spot," he said. "This is not, for me, precedent-setting in this area. This is more like a pilot."

Darwin Properties is stickhandling the project, which is touted to replenish the district's rental stock, the vast majority of which is more than 35 years old.

The details have yet to be ironed out, but Darwin would theoretically supply some affordable rental units in exchange for the district waiving development cost charges. Darwin is working with B.C. Housing but no agreement has been finalized regarding affordable units.

Council was unanimous in their support for the project, but Little was concerned the development's modest parking lot may end up overflowing.

"I am very concerned that we are going to underbuild the parking on this," he said, pointing out that revisiting the issue after the project is complete would be futile.

Plans call for 87 parking spots including 70 underground spaces. Because of the opportunities for building residents to use transit, the project has a lower than average parking spot to unit ratio of 0.75 to 1. According to a staff report, traffic conditions in the surrounding area are expected to operate at an acceptable level, with the exception of Mountain Highway and Main Street. That intersection is expected to remain clogged due to the plethora of vehicles heading to the Second Narrows Ironworkers Memorial Bridge. The area would likely be congested "with or without the proposed project," according to the report.

The surrounding network will experience little, if any, impact due to the project.

The project's floor space ratio, which measures floor space against lot size, will likely be a maximum of 3.5, according to a district report.

In exchange for the boost in density, Darwin likely will pay the district a community amenity contribution of \$50,000, earmarked for public art.

The development will likely feature a commercial component such as a coffee shop over an underground parking garage.

Mayor Richard Walton and Couns. Lisa Muri and Alan Nixon did not attend the meeting.

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