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Trio of towers could rise near Marine Drive

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The Marine Drive White Spot site may become home to 27- and 12-storey towers. The project is part of a plan to build two town centres in the land surrounding Park Royal along Marine Drive. file image supplied

Just how three new towers will integrate into the land surrounding Park Royal and along Marine Drive is the subject of a recently released West Vancouver study.

A bow-tied shaped swath along Marine Drive bordered by Capilano Road to the east and Park Royal Shopping Centre to the west is ripe for development, according to the report.

The long-term plan is to build and connect two town centres, one on Taylor Way and another associated with the Lions Gate Town Centre.

“That area’s all going to develop in time,” said West Vancouver Coun. Bill Soprovich, who noted the scarcity of land left in the district.

The approximately two-kilometre-long piece of land is bisected by the Capilano River and includes Klahanie Park.

Complicating the study is the relatively small portion of land controlled by West Vancouver.

The eastern portion of the bow tie is part of the District of North Vancouver, where approximately 2,500 new units are earmarked for the Lions Gate Town Centre.

The western reaches of the land are controlled by the Squamish Nation, who could develop a project around Park Royal South, noted Soprovich.

“You never know when that’s going to come about,” he said, explaining there have been discussions of projects for several years.

Park Royal Shopping Centre has applied to build 27- and 12-storey residential buildings at 752 Marine Dr., formerly a White Spot restaurant. The development, which would comprise 254 units and 25,439 square feet of commercial

space, would require an amendment to West Vancouver's official community plan.

Plans for projects at 303 Marine Dr. near Klahanie Park and across the river at 657 and 675 Marine Dr. and 660 Clyde Ave. have been submitted to the district, but are undergoing revisions.

The Clyde Avenue/Marine Drive development would likely include a single tower with its height "deferring to" the 27-storey tower planned for 752 Marine Dr., according to a staff report. The tower would include a podium oriented towards Marine Drive.

The development at the Earls restaurant site at 303 Marine Dr. would also include a tower that would "respond in scale" to the 25-storey International Plaza tower.

The project may also include lower-scale buildings fronting Marine Drive and terracing to the B.C. Housing site at 380 Klahanie Court. Future development at Klahanie Court could include infill housing such as townhouses, according to a staff report.

The most prominent towers should "earn density" with great design and environmental performance while meeting district housing goals, according to the staff report.

The area also needs extra paths for foot traffic, according to the staff report, which noted Marine Drive is "an undesirable environment" for pedestrians and cyclists.

"We've got to look truly at a major traffic plan, and everybody seems to be avoiding that," Soprovich said. "You get certain times of day where you have massive traffic at Taylor Way and Marine and onto the bridge. ... At night, in West Vancouver, there's hardly anybody around."

Soprovich estimated 150,000 people pass through the district on a weekday.

"It's still a bedroom community. A flow-through bedroom community," he said.

While preliminary, Park Royal has also expressed interest in "cluster towers" with a maximum height of 16 storeys to the west and south of the mall.