



Richmond Knob Hill Community Association

Calgary Planning Commission February 17, 2025

Supplemental Information Re: LOC2023-0359

Dear Members of the Committee;

The following attachments are communication between the CA and Minto/Planning team which occurred last year. We feel this is important background information for the committee in their consideration of this application.

They include comments made regarding components of the project, including engagement.

Thank you.

On Behalf the Board

Kevin Widenmaier, President

Viscount - engagement process and next steps Mar 26, 2024

Kathy:

Thanks for your email. We are disappointed that you refuse to involve the community in planning the engagement process. Experience has shown that transparency by the parties in dealing with controversial issues expedites and facilitates decision-making.

I think it's important to restate some of the things we discussed at our meeting with you and Norah in February.

1. There is no point in undertaking any engagement until the traffic study is completed and approved by the City. The traffic study will provide the limits as to what can be done on the site. Without it, any time spent on engagement is just wasted because we will have to undertake a new engagement process when you actually get the TIA and decide what you can do on the site and then apply for a new redesignation.

If you had waited until the TIA was completed and acceptable to the City before launching your quite simplistic consultation program we all would have saved a great deal of time and the applicant would have saved a great deal of money.

2. We are requesting a meeting with your Transpo consultant and the City Transportation representative once they have completed and evaluated the draft TIA.
3. We will want to know what your approach to parking will be? Will Minto meet the Bylaw requirements?
4. What is your approach, in principle, to open space. As you know, we are looking for a large, contiguous green space that borders the perimeter of the property (probably along 25 St.SW) to ensure it is seen as a community resource not just a large private yard for the new residents.
5. The CA would like a Town Hall meeting at the end of the process – so all stakeholders can be heard. Just taking comments and sending out a note saying what you heard is not sufficient.
6. We look forward to **discussion** regarding appropriate land use districts as referenced in our communication with the planning team (Part 6 Multi Residential, Divisions 2 to 6). Minto needs to take into account the location, access, limitations and complexity of this site.

7. There needs to be thorough and robust **discussion** between the residents and the City and the applicant – not just an on-line survey.

We have attached a document which outlines our expectations regarding an engagement process to be used for this project. The project was designated as a Comprehensive Planning Site in the Westbrook LAP which requires a more rigorous and robust process than what's normally expected.

We look forward to working with you to design a development which is appropriate for this site.

We be pleased to meet to discuss the project.

Regards,

Engagement emails 1 May 2024

From: "Phil Harding" <innosyn@shaw.ca>
To: "Mladen Kukic" <Mladen.Kukic@calgary.ca>
Sent: Thursday, May 9, 2024 11:05:34 AM
Subject: Fwd: Viscount Bennett - Engagement Process and Next Steps Mar 26, 2024

You should have received a copy of this note which went out last week
We have not received a reply to it.

Phil

From: Kevin Widenmaier <president@richmondknobhill.ca>
Sent: Friday, May 3, 2024 3:00 PM
To: Kathy Oberg <koberg@bastudios.ca>
Cc: Phil Harding <viscountbennett@richmondknobhill.ca>; Walcott, Courtney <Courtney.Walcott@calgary.ca>; WARD8 <ward8@calgary.ca>; Norah Fraser <NFraser@minto.com>
Subject: Re: Viscount Bennett - Engagement Process and Next Steps Mar 26, 2024

Kathy:

Thanks for your email.

We wanted to comment on what has occurred since we met with you on Feb 21st and in particular, reply to your email of Friday April12.

1. We note that you are not talking about anything different from what you submitted in November 2023 despite the direction from the DTR.
2. You are only informing- this is NOT ENGAGEMENT
3. Surveys on what you submitted in November is NOT ENGAGEMENT
4. We note your bold signs contained no mention of Viscount Bennett School Site. People don't know what 2501 Viscount is, and it deters attendance.
5. Venues and time slots were poor, including virtual.
6. Attendance was low- less than 10 people at 3 of your sessions We've received comments on this from some of the attendees discussing the overall poor quality of these sessions
7. DTR identified 61 areas that need to be addressed, notably;
 - Engagement
 - Density- land use categories
 - Transition
 - Green/open space
 - Transportation
 - parking

None of these items are being addressed in your presentations.

Again, you have provided no new information on the project. It appears you plan to submit virtually the same application as you did previously- land use categories MC-1, MC-2, MC-3; density up to 4900 units;

open space/green space of approximately 1.8 acres; no transitioning discussion; nothing on parking and no transportation plan.

We would like to get together to discuss how we move forward and what engagement will be necessary. Can you provide some dates after May 15?

Thank you.
Phil and Kevin

PS

We want to pass along this link which discusses meaningful Engagement and what we communities are looking for. It reflects what we said in our email.

Becky Poschman - from hearings on blanket upzoning week of Apr 22

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWRvDgbLeeg>

A few major points

- looking for proactive engagement- before the application is submitted
- 2- way communication
- meaningful engagement
- informing doesn't lead us anywhere- being told what's happening

*Kevin Widenmaier,
President,
Richmond Knob Hill Community Association*

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From: Kathy Oberg <koberg@bastudios.ca>

Sent: Friday, April 12, 2024 2:17 PM

To: Kevin Widenmaier <president@richmondknobhill.ca>

Cc: Phil Harding <viscountbennett@richmondknobhill.ca>; Walcott, Courtney <Courtney.Walcott@calgary.ca>; WARD8 <ward8@calgary.ca>; Norah Fraser <NFraser@minto.com>

Subject: RE: Viscount Bennett - Engagement Process and Next Steps Mar 26, 2024

Hi Kevin/Phil,

Thank you for your email and apologize for the delay in responding.

We have included responses to your questions below. Once the survey is closed after April 26, our team is available to meet with your board to share the survey results and feedback that was received during the Community Conversations. Please let us know if you have availability the week of April 29th or May 6th.

Kindly,
-Kathy

Kathy Oberg

President
BEDes, MEDES, RPP, MCIP

d | 403.692.4532 c | 403.616.7024 e | koberg@bastudios.ca

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From: Kevin Widenmaier <president@richmondknobhill.ca>

Sent: Thursday, March 28, 2024 8:52 AM

To: Kathy Oberg <koberg@bastudios.ca>

Cc: Phil Harding <viscountbennett@richmondknobhill.ca>; Walcott, Courtney <Courtney.Walcott@calgary.ca>; WARD8 <ward8@calgary.ca>; Norah Fraser <NFraser@minto.com>

Subject: Viscount Bennett - Engagement Process and Next Steps Mar 26, 2024

Kathy:

Thanks for your email. We are disappointed that you refuse to involve the community in planning the engagement process. Experience has shown that transparency by the parties in dealing with controversial issues expedites and facilitates decision-making.

We can appreciate that we have a different perspective on engagement. We will be offering more opportunities to listen to feedback and expect there to be more conversations later this Spring. Minto values the broader community's perspectives throughout the iterative planning process. This first step is intended to collect feedback on specific topics the community can help inform as we revise our submission.

I think it's important to restate some of the things we discussed at our meeting with you and Norah in February.

8. There is no point in undertaking any engagement until the traffic study is completed and approved by the City. The traffic study will provide the limits as to what can be done on the site. Without it, any time spent on engagement is just wasted because we will have to undertake a new engagement process when you actually get the TIA and decide what you can do on the site and then apply for a new redesignation. We agree that the TIA analysis is critical. The survey and discussion groups are not discussing units, form, or density. They are intended to speak to the open spaces, amenities, and interface. The survey results are quite diverse, hearing from over

100 people. Providing the meeting times allows individuals who might prefer in-person dialog options to engage differently. Our team is also benefiting from the opportunity to ask questions and listen to different perspectives on the topics. These conversations are intended to help us guide us through these topic areas as we wait for more information on the TIA analysis.

If you had waited until the TIA was completed and acceptable to the City before launching your quite simplistic consultation program we all would have saved a great deal of time and the applicant would have saved a great deal of money. **We appreciate this perspective and we will have more dialogue once the TIA analysis is complete.**

2. We are requesting a meeting with your Transportation consultant and the City Transportation representative once they have completed and evaluated the draft TIA. **We would welcome this meeting and the City of Calgary is also agreeable. We do not have a time booked yet, we are in the process of re-submitting our analysis and then the City will do their review. We have asked the City to work with us on potential dates.**

3. We will want to know what your approach to parking will be? Will Minto meet the Bylaw requirements? **Minto is intending to follow the Bylaw Requirements for Parking and it be market driven. We have been advised that all parking needs to occur on site and our residents would not be eligible for street parking permits.**

4. What is your approach, in principle, to open space. As you know, we are looking for a large, contiguous green space that borders the perimeter of the property (probably along 25 St.SW) to ensure it is seen as a community resource not just a large private yard for the new residents. **Our approach is to review the feedback received and determine the best location through the outline plan process – both the Community and the City have provided a similar comment regarding larger connected open spaces and adjacent to public roads. We will be providing 10% public dedication as per the Municipal Government Act since we are intending to subdivide the property.**

5. The CA would like a Town Hall meeting at the end of the process – so all stakeholders can be heard. Just taking comments and sending out a note saying what you heard is not sufficient. **Our intention is to provide another Public Open House opportunity. We will take into consideration the request for a Town Hall format – taking into consideration and providing a space where we can get the most information out and to be received. It has been expressed to us that residents want to receive information in different types of ways and want a safe space to be heard, but do desire the conversation. We would like to work with you on this.**

6. We look forward to discussion regarding appropriate land use districts as referenced in our communication with the planning team (Part 6 Multi Residential, Divisions 2 to 6). Minto needs to take into account the location, access, limitations and complexity of this site. **We would be happy to have this discussion. It should also be noted that the City of Calgary is completing a Land Use Bylaw review and re-write, we are not sure what this will mean from a land use perspective but are willing to include that in our discussions.**

7. There needs to be thorough and robust discussion between the residents and the City and the applicant – not just an on-line survey. **The online survey is not intended to be our only source of discussion. Our goal is to provide different ways for community members to share their feedback.**

We have received some great feedback from a few of the attendees that this is allowing them to provide their opinions outside of a large room where others are louder than them.

We have attached a document which outlines our expectations regarding an engagement process to be used for this project. The project was designated as a Comprehensive Planning Site in the Westbrook LAP which requires a more rigorous and robust process than what's normally expected. Thank you for providing this information for our review.

We look forward to working with you to design a development which is appropriate for this site. Our team is available the week of the 29th or the week of May 6th – we might not have all the final data from the Surveys if it's the week of the 29th but we will do our best if that's the best week to meet. It might be good if we meet with your Board to review the survey results and provide you with an update from the Discussion Meetings. Please advise which week works for your Board and optimal dates and we will work with our team to arrange.

We would be pleased to meet with you to discuss the project.

Regards,

*Kevin Widenmaier,
President*

*Phil Harding,
Director*

Richmond Knob Hill Community Association

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Engagement emails 2 Mar 2024

From: "Kevin Widenmaier" <president@richmondknobhill.ca>
To: "innosyn" <innosyn@shaw.ca>
Sent: Thursday, March 28, 2024 12:12:56 PM
Subject: Fw: Viscount Bennett - Engagement Process and Next Steps Mar 26, 2024

FYI

*Kevin Widenmaier,
President,
Richmond Knob Hill Community Association*

[Richmond Knob Hill Community Association | Calgary | Events | Rink Hall Rentals](#)

From: Kevin Widenmaier <president@richmondknobhill.ca>
Sent: Thursday, March 28, 2024 8:52 AM
To: Kathy Oberg <koberg@bastudios.ca>
Cc: Phil Harding <viscountbennett@richmondknobhill.ca>; Walcott, Courtney <Courtney.Walcott@calgary.ca>; WARD8 <ward8@calgary.ca>; Norah Fraser <NFraser@minto.com>
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Regards,

*Kevin Widenmaier,
President*

*Phil Harding,
Director*

Richmond Knob Hill Community Association

A rezoning application has been received by the City from Minto for this site.

The Westbrook Communities LAP (Bylaw) indicates that the site was designated as a Comprehensive Planning Site and that a rigorous and robust engagement process is appropriate (and required) for the planning of this site. The City has specifically directed the developer to undertake an engagement process (see DTR). The City has approved policies (as well as the LAP Bylaw) which call for a responsible engagement process for all planning applications and especially for rezonings (or redesignations) as for this site.

Planning and Development Services

The following represents an engagement process design that would meet the requirements of the City LAP bylaw and meet the requirement of a 'good planning policy'.

Questions to answer:

- What is a Master Plan?

Comments – If the process is just designed to get the community's input on a developer design a single town hall meeting would be sufficient. However, we are looking for a more comprehensive plan and more comprehensive discussions.

Best practices in resolving multi-party disputes involve the parties working together to set up a process rather than having a process imposed by one party.

There has been some discussion as what the name of the engagement process outcome would be. The Local Area Plan calls for a comprehensive plan and, in another location, refers to a master plan. There is no clear definition of these terms but generally they refer to a Plan or Vision that addresses the full range of community/neighbour ideas, questions and concerns with a proposed development.

An Outline Plan is a more official animal and is the term used for a Plan (usually a suburban residential plan) that includes a rezoning and a subdivision. It is a quite detailed plan that includes many engineering details. It is a mid-level plan – much more detailed design and much less overall vision and community-wide impact analysis.

Steps/Considerations in the Plan

- **Determine Desired outcome –**
 - likely a report for Council to consider as part of the approval process and public hearing on the application. Preferably all parties would have agreed to the Study recommendations.
- **Determine Process**
 - The best practices approach to multi-party planning engagement processes is for the affected parties to meet and determine what the process will be to create the Plan, how decision making will work, and likely timelines. In addition decisions will have to be made as to who will be involved in the Steering Committee from each stakeholder group.
 - The stakeholders could be:
 - **City staff,**
 - **Community at large** representatives,
 - immediate **impact area representatives** (e.g. 1 resident from each surrounding block),
 - **Developer reps**
 - **City Councilor** (their role to be based on their availability and preferences.)
 - **The City team considering an official application are not part of the PC. The City Team requires their ability to advise Council no matter what the PC has recommended.**
 - The first task is usually setting up a Planning Committee (PC) or Steering Committee to handle the planning process.
 - Note that these comprehensive planning processes do not use voting but attempt to reach a consensus on Study elements. The point is to reach a compromise agreement (if compromise is necessary) that each stakeholder group can support.
 - The process should be based on Planning Committee discussions among the stakeholders with expert input from developer consultants and city staff. The PC will decide who chairs the Planning Committee. Other procedural decisions will also have to be made by the PC.

Sample Format

- Form the Planning Committee
- Hold a community meeting to introduce the process (and make changes if necessary)
- The community meeting will also determine how the rest of the community wants to be involved in the process AND the concerns of the community that must be considered in the planning process.
- The PC can meet as needed – once every 2 weeks is difficult to manage but every 3 weeks can work.
- Agendas & minutes will be distributed.
- Not all issues will be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties. The PC just does its part to gain as much consensus as possible.
- Create subcommittees to handle specific issues e.g. traffic, noise, how to guarantee the final approval documents provided to Council for their direction ensure that the matters agreed to by Council are implementable and will be implemented.
- A Steering Committee will be reviewing all subcommittee reports weekly and determining whether enough work has been done or more time is required.
- Use of on-line meetings and group processes (e.g. Zoom calls) are tempting because they are easy to set up, however they do not allow discussion and are not sufficient in themselves to answer the necessary planning questions in the depth required to generate community support.



Re: LOC2023-0359 (Viscount Bennett School site)

January 11, 2024

Dear Mr. Kucic and the CPAG Team.

I am writing on behalf of the Richmond CA regarding the above noted application to redesignate the Viscount Bennett site. We were looking forward to seeing the site be redeveloped but were frankly dismayed with what our community has been presented with. There are two broad areas of concern we wish to raise with the City with this application.

1. Process- the City recently adopted the Westbrook LAP and thousands of hours of dedicated volunteer efforts from our community and nine others were expended to help make the Plan shape our future. This application is the first major test of how the LAP works and whether all the efforts to create it, both at the City and with residents were indeed worthwhile.

The Viscount Bennett site was specifically identified within the Plan and the Plan determined this site needed additional scrutiny before determining its future land use outcome. However, it did recognize the impact redevelopment of the site would have on the community and designated it as a "Comprehensive Planning Site." It states on p. 42 that "...should undertake a master planning exercise prior to or at the time of a planning application...". The CA is not aware and was not informed that such work was either underway or scheduled to start.

This process is the foundation of community planning and the City Engage processes outline just how such collaborate work should be undertaken. Instead, the applicant prepared the land use submission without any public consultation and then informed the community of its intent to create a very high-density residential/commercial district. It included some sketches of the site and suggested it MAY include public open space should the site be subdivided. This has created a serious breach of trust between the applicant/City and our residents.

The applicant held one community meeting days before submitting its application. It was purely a way to show the community what would be submitted. While there was significant pushback and questions from the community, the application was already "set in stone" and no commentary was going to change it. This level of engagement, best described as presenting information, or to the more cynical, tokenism, does not meet the standards set by the City Engage team or in fac the LAP.

2. The LOC Application- The application was submitted to the City on November 15, 2023. The application included the formal application notice page, a one-page applicant submission and two pages of maps indicating generally where the three land use districts would be placed on the site. There was no Master Plan, no roadways, no open space, and no capacity analysis.

The CA, when it started its review, found that the application was missing key information, including a basic description of the one proposed district (DC/M-H3) which covers almost 62% of the site. The DC designation may allow for significant changes in density, height and even uses, but the CA has no information to assess whether the proposal is even appropriate. The other



two districts did not include either height or density modifiers, especially important in these districts as no maximums are included in the base districts.

While the applicant has suggested total unit counts and possible open space, those comments do not form part of the legal application and the CA will not comment on those "ideas." Instead, it has relied on its understanding of the full range of land uses and regulations associated with the M-H1 and M-H2 Districts. It attempted to do the same for the DC District, but quickly realized even evaluating the maximums allowed (uses, height, density, setbacks etc.), any comments were not founded on what might be proposed.

Lastly, information related to "publicly accessible, private open space" was included in the applicant submission. It is our understanding such an "offer" has no standing. Secondly, the calculations apparently included private roadways and sidewalks, which in our minds is intentionally misleading. This information was not considered as part of the official application and the CA has not offered any comments with regard to those hearsay suggestions.

The M-H series of Districts (Divisions 8-10) are designed to create high density, high traffic areas located on corridors and nodes. They include all forms of residential plus a wide range of commercial uses. It is suggested that these three categories belong at the Westbrook LRT station or major activity centres and not justified by being beside a transit stop. Given the MH-1 and M-H2 sites specifically outline height and density modifiers (with no maximums set), it is important to include such limits in the application. The DC/M-H-3 is even more egregious as there is no indication what might be relaxed, extended, or added to the district. In conclusion the three districts proposed are inappropriate in the proposed location and based on the shaky concept of being by one transit station. The MDP states also states that comprehensive plans are required for sites of more than one ha and should be "...integrated into the fabric of the surrounding community..." Even if modifiers and limitations through the DC are applied, these districts are just plain inappropriate.

Instead, the Land Use Bylaw has a number of other Districts in the Part 6-Multi-Residential that align more closely with site with their respective Purpose Statements. Divisions 2 through 6 state that these Districts are truly residential districts without commercial intrusion with their purpose statements suggesting "...intended to be in close proximity to low density housing". This is especially important the area proposed for the M-H1 lands. The site is limited in vehicle access (almost like a large cul-de-sac) and adjacent to single detached homes, these Districts may be more in keeping with the principles of redevelopment as outlined in the MDP; that of ensuring stability of established neighbourhoods.

It is suggested that once the Master Plan exercise starts, emphasis should be placed on those Divisions (2-6) as a more appropriate range of residential redesignations.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Richmond CA would like to see the Viscount Bennett site redeveloped in such a manner that will be seen as a positive enhancement of our community. We believe that is possible with frank and honest dialogue between all parties. To date, that has not occurred. Instead, the time has



Richmond Knob Hill Community Association

come, abruptly, to signal just how important this site is to all parties and to work together to achieve its full potential. Therefore, the Richmond Community Association would recommend:

1. That the application be placed on pause until such time as a legally binding Master Plan that addresses LAP directions and that community concerns have been worked through AND
2. Such a process would embrace a full and collaborative exercise with the community, the applicant, and the City.

On Behalf of the Board,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "K. Widenmaier".

Kevin Widenmaier

President, Richmond Knob Hill Community Association.