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51 Roslyn Road – Public Engagement Summary Report

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Introduction

The proposed project is a 6-storey, 66-unit multi-family residential building located at 51 Roslyn Road. It is situated between Roslyn Road and the Assiniboine River. The rental units provided by the new building are to include 1x large two-bedroom, 39x two-bedrooms, 22x one-bedrooms, and 4x studio apartments. Parking will be contained within the volume of the building, with open-air perforated screening illuminating the perimeter. The revised design maintains the core principles of the previous 15-storey, 80-unit iteration: prioritizing transparency and active uses adjacent to pedestrian thoroughfares, and responding sensitively to the massing, alignment, and material language of the adjacent existing buildings. It also maintains the progressive urban-scale approach of connecting with the riverside environment through the provision of an accessible public green space at the rear of the site.

Pre-Application Process

H5 Architecture originally reached out to the City of Winnipeg Urban Planning Department to present a preliminary scheme of our project on January 20, 2020. The scheme presented was for an 82-unit, 32-storey building comprised of a two-level amenity podium and a thirty-storey tower with a small footprint. Based on feedback from this original conversation, we edited our scheme, which was submitted to COW PP&D in a pre-application process in March of 2020. The revised scheme was 30-storeys in height, contained 82 rental units, and featured a podium for levels 1-3, an intermediate tower podium at levels 4-10, and finally a narrow tower for levels 11-30. We received comments from the COW on our pre-application process on June 29, 2020. Among recommendations, it was requested that a four-storey podium design and a maximum height of fifteen-storeys would be more suitable for the site. It was also stated that the proposal far exceeded supportable density, however it was noted that additional density could be acceptable if consideration for the existing character and scale of the immediate context was demonstrated more thoroughly.

Following this response, we considerably revised our proposal to consist of a four-storey podium, with an overall height of fifteen-storeys, and a density of 80 units. The tower component featured a small cantilever over the podium, which we felt helped define the building entrance. The revised scheme was shared with City Planning in February, 2021, as well as subsequently with district ward councillor Sherri Rollins on April 7, 2021. The feedback from planning was that the tower cantilever was not suitable, however the councillor liked the overall design, and encouraged higher density at a potential height of 30-storeys. She also questioned the tower cantilever. Our design at this stage was updated to address these concerns with a tower set back from the four-storey podium.

Unfortunately, following the last revisions to the 15-storey, 80-unit design noted above, it became apparent that the project would no longer be feasible due to economic conditions. As a result, we have endeavoured to completely re-design our proposal, and have been in communication with City Planning on how to address these changes with regard to our existing variance application. Due to the scope of the changes in question, City Planning strongly encouraged us in an April 7th, 2022 email to follow-up our original public consultation methods with additional measures, including at minimum: contacting individuals who participated in the original virtual open houses to inform them of the new design, providing all immediately adjacent neighbouring properties with notice of the proposed change, and updating the project website with the new design for interested neighbours to get additional information.

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Our response to these recommendations are outlined in the following process description below, which also explains some of our prior public engagement activities for reference.

Public Engagement Process

Initially, two public open houses were held to present our original development proposal to the community. Given the public health orders in place at the time of this engagement, the presentations were hosted virtually. The first session was held on Tuesday, May 18, 2021 at 7:00PM, and the second session was held Thursday, May 20, 2021, 7:00PM. A website was created to advertise the events, provide a platform for interested parties to register to attend, as well as to leave comments on the proposal. The website attracted 270 unique visitors, as well as over 460 page views.

These public presentations were advertised to residents and businesses within a 300 meter radius of 51 Roslyn Road via flyers delivered to Canada Post mailboxes between May 7, 2021 and May 10, 2021. The flyer distribution service provided by Canada Post indicated that roughly 2,200 residences and business fell within this area. The subject property did not have a local community paper in which to also run an ad. The events were advertised in the May 8, 2021 issue of the Winnipeg Free Press on page B3, in the forward news of the City/Business section. Overall, comments received at this time were supportive of the project, presentation, and design.

In response to City Planning's recommendation for additional public consultation relative to the latest iteration of the proposal, we updated the project website (www.51roslyn.ca) on May 4th, 2022 with new images and a written description. Residents of adjacent properties were notified of the website updates through the circulation of printed flyers, which were delivered to common areas of buildings on the immediate block that same day. At this time we also circulated an email to attendees of the two original public open houses, notifying them of the website update as well.

Following circulation of print and digital notice, the comment submission form on the website was utilized to collect feedback from neighbours on the revised proposal. The subject matter of these comments included the following:

- One comment expressed concern over the impact on existing street parking posed by the reduced parking of the revised proposal.
- One comment expressed concern over the green space proposed at the rear of the site, indicating that this space could potentially become unsafe if occupied by homeless or transient individuals.
- One comment inquired about the price of units and whether rent would be geared to income. This individual also expressed support for the proposal with minor adjustments.

Where appropriate we reached out to the individuals submitting questions to provide clarification on their concerns. With regard to the comment about street parking, we explained that the reduced parking of 51 stalls in the parkade is due to the pedestrian-oriented lifestyle afforded by the neighbourhood. With regard to the comment on pricing and affordability we explained that the building will offer a range of unit types with varying rent, with 10% offered as affordable housing. Lastly, with regard to the concern expressed over the green space at the rear of the site, we maintain the position that active public use of this space, in concert with the substantial glazing and illumination proposed, will discourage unsafe or inappropriate occupation of the space. In conclusion, we believe we have successfully conducted the appropriate additional components of the public consultation process as directed by City Planning.