

Attachment 7

Design Rationale Letter

ROBERT JOHNSON, ARCHITECT

821 Henley St.,
New Westminster, B.C.
V3M 4B8
Tel: 604- 520-3099
E: rja@telus.net

DESIGN RATIONALE – 1324 Nanaimo St., New Westminster, B.C.

OVERVIEW

This application concerns retaining an existing heritage house and subdivision of the existing 115.72 foot deep property into two lots of 65.34- and 50.39- foot widths, then constructing a new sympathetic infill dwelling on the new lot. A new single-car garage with roof deck is proposed on the southeast corner of the property. To this end, the owner intends to enter into a Heritage Revitalization Agreement with the City of New Westminster.

Since both houses will have secondary suites, this proposal will provide much-needed affordable housing in the city.

EXISTING HOUSE

The Claude and Ruth Larson House was built in 1944 and is a good example of post-WW2 residential design. For full description see the Statement of Significance and Conservation Plan prepared by Elana Zysblat, Heritage Consultant (April & September 2015), and addendum prepared by Schueck Heritage Consulting (July 2020). It is a modest post-WW2 stucco bungalow with simple roof forms and massing. The house is in generally good condition. A non-contextual garage/sundeck will be removed and a much smaller sundeck added. Some elements need repair and or maintenance as outlined in the Conservation Plan and addendum. The house will be repainted according to the color scheme described in the Schueck addendum as revised for equivalent Sherwin Williams colors

Body: SW 7551 Greek Villa or Sw7757 High Reflective White
Trim & doors: SW6482 Cape Verde
Window sash & back band: SW 6258 Tricorn Black
Roofing (when shingles need replacing): black or dark grey asphalt

As the house contains a secondary suite, two parking spaces are required. Due to the site slope and existing retaining walls, two small-car stalls are proposed in the existing driveway off Nanaimo Street.

INFILL HOUSE

The owner intends to occupy this house.

Siting – The new infill dwelling has been located 10 feet from the front property line on Nanaimo Street in order to provide as much rear yard play space for his children as possible. The 10 foot setback and any privacy concerns are alleviated by the 3 – 4 foot height variance created by the existing retaining walls. This distance helps occupants and sidewalk pedestrians avoid direct eye contact in much the same way as older two-and-a-half storey houses do. The house is also located as far north as possible in order to preserve the root system of an existing Katsura tree on the corner.

Architectural character and massing – The projecting two-storey gabled front and at-grade porch are elements taken from the existing house to provide continuity of character in the neighbourhood. The hipped main roof is used to reduce mass and preserve light and views of the existing and neighbouring homes.

The upper floor site coverage requirement of 80% could not be met due to the relatively small footprint and the owner's program.

Entrances, windows and detailing - The glazed, recessed-panel front door is a simplified version of that on the existing house. Windows are simple punched openings with vertical sashes or one-over-one casements to mimic those of the existing house. Roof fascias and bargeboards are of similar detail as the existing house. The standing-seam metal roof is seen as a modern expression instead of traditional shingles, in order to set it apart from the existing house and accentuate the heritage asset. Eyebrow roofs over the den slider and dining room windows alleviate flat side facades while offering rain and sun protection. Porch columns are simple painted wood.

Materials and colours - Wall cladding will be white painted stucco; another gesture toward the existing house. Doors will be dark green and windows will be black vinyl, also to maintain continuity with the existing house. The colors are as follows:

Body: SW 7551 Greek Villa or 7757 High Reflective White

Doors: SW6482 Cape Verde

Windows: black vinyl

Roofing: Old Zinc Grey

Energy: - This dwelling has been designed in accordance with BC Energy Step Code Level 3. The owner is exploring meeting Step 4 or 5 with Energy Save New West.

Privacy and overlook – The northwest elevation has only one window on the upper floor in order to minimize overlook to the existing house's yard. The proposed roof deck on the garage is screened with a 6 foot fence and trellis with vines to provide privacy and minimize overlook into the neighbours back yard. The stairs to this deck also have a 5 foot high screen at the landing. A replacement tree will be planted to the north of the garage to enhance privacy as well. The existing cedar hedge will be retained as much as construction allows. It should be noted that the neighbours' carport and parking pad are adjacent to the garage and existing cedar hedge so these will contribute to privacy on both sides of the property line.

Open space and landscape design – Primary pedestrian access will be via a new set of stairs cut from the existing retaining wall in the northwest corner of the new lot. A walkway leads to the front porch and continues around the south side and down stairs to a recessed patio for the basement suite private outdoor space. These have been located to minimize impact on the Katsura tree. There is also a sidewalk on the north side, providing a patio off the main floor den, access to the basement stairs, and a route to the back yard for the owners. There is a covered patio off the rear kitchen providing indoor-outdoor continuity and easy supervision of the children's outdoor play space. The deck over the garage is proposed because a large portion of the back yard is given over to parking and the space necessary for manoeuvring due to the existing 8 foot wide lane.

Hard landscaping – The sidewalks, patios, parking pad and driveway will all have permeable pavers. The retaining walls will have a new cedar fence along the top.

Soft landscaping – Low-maintenance and drought resistant planting will be located along the walks, patios and front of the house. The south side yard will have planters beside the stairs and recessed patio for the tenants' enjoyment.

Exterior lighting – Paths will be lit by a combination of in-ground and step lights. Soffit lights will illuminate the front and suite entrances, while surface-mounted fixtures will light the back patio and parking areas.

Garbage & recycling – Garbage and recycling bins are located at the rear of the parking pad. These will be convenient to both dwelling units. Lighting is a combination of step and surface mounted fixtures.

Parking – Parking is off the 8 foot wide lane to the southeast. It has been set back and a large portion of the existing retaining wall removed in order to provide enough turning radius for parking on the pad and the garage. Stairs up to the back yard and down to the suite private outdoor space provide convenient access. These will be well-lighted.

ACCESSORY BUILDING

The garage is partly recessed into the grade. It will have the same materials and color scheme as the infill house. The privacy screen and trellis on the northeast side will be metal, painted to match the cedar fencing on site. This and the stucco-clad concrete block wall on the neighbouring side is provided for non-combustibility as required by the BC Building Code. The rest of the deck railings will be tempered glass in metal frames in order to minimize the visual height of the structure.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Johnson, Architect AIBC