

# **Report of Meeting of Fairfield Gonzales**

## **Community Association Land Use Committee**

Re: variance application for 331 & 337 St. Charles Street – DVP No. 00204

Meeting date: June 7, 2018 at Fairfield Gonzales Place, at 630PM

About 15-20 people in addition to the Committee were present

Meeting Chair: David Biltek

This report is not meant to be a verbatim recording of the meeting, but rather a summary of the discussions that reflects what the community said at the meeting

As was stressed at the meeting the FGCA CALUC does not approve or deny any applications for re zoning or variance applications.

Community sentiment:

1. The neighbourhood values ample front and back yards, and the proximity, particularly here where the subject property is adjacent to Hollywood Park
2. Parking. By adding two dwelling units (one house that will have a suite) there will undoubtedly be increased street parking. The neighbourhood already struggles at many times of the year, especially during baseball season with increased parking on neighbourhood streets; along with a small day care in a house on Earle can cause parking and traffic issues.
3. Sewer problems. The neighbourhood reports that every Monday there is a City truck at the corner of Earle and St Charles that pumps out sewer lines. The City has not made clear if there would be any impact on this situation by adding two more dwelling units.
4. The immediate neighbour to the East was concerned about the proximity of the new house to be built on lot B. The existing house to the east of the proposed new house has 12 windows on the west side and the occupant,

Mr. Insha Khan, is concerned there will be significant loss of light and privacy due to the construction of the new house.

5. There did not appear to be any valid reason for the variances, which were out of character with the existing lots and side yards

#### Developer comments

1. His intention is to have three houses (the new one with a suite) where there are now two. The existing two houses are perfectly functional, and he see no reason to bring those down and replace them. He pointed out that the existing houses could be torn down and three new houses could be built without variances on the lots. The new lot is planned to have a long driveway and would have sufficient room for two cars to park on the driveway.
2. The house was designed to limit intrusion into the neighbour's house to the east. The windows on the east side of the new house are few and high and should not decrease privacy for the east side neighbour.
3. The developer pointed out that some of the variances were largely a result of the City's request for additional road allowances along St Charles, a request of two plus meters. This then triggered a further conflict with determining which was the to be the FRONT, BACK and SIDES. Under City size/shape rules, the new "front" of the existing lot at the corner of St Charles and Earle would be what is now a side yard, and as a result the south side yard would become the new BACK yard.

#### Possible solutions:

The meeting was asked what if anything might be done to resolve some of the concerns

The developer suggested they might be able to adjust the shape of the house, making it longer and narrower, which would increase the side yard with the neighbour to the east. A suggestion was also made to consider shifting the peak of the new house so that a larger portion of the second floor would be located away from the adjacent house to the east, reducing some of the shadow effect. He will consider these possibilities.

He also said they could conduct a shadow study to show what impact there might be on the adjacent houses.

The developer will also share addresses of some other projects he has completed so the neighbours can view the sort of work he has done.

There was support for the peaked roof of the house, which is in keeping with existing character.

**The City should explain:**

- 1. Why the need the additional road allowance, and**
- 2. What if any will be the in impact on sewer lines of the new house**

**There was considerable concern about the lack of notice for this variance.**

The developer said he had no knowledge of neighbours' concerns and that had he known he would have liked to have spoken to the neighbours earlier. There was also a question as to why neighbours were not advised of this application, and it was suggested that perhaps the City should require this in the future.

It was also suggested that the neighbourhood association could send notices. It was pointed out that the FGCA does not have the resources to deliver notices to specific locations but would consider putting variance applications into their e-newsletters. This would be received by some people, given the circulation of approximately 1400, but would not entirely solve the lack of notice. The CALUC will consider doing this

Robin Jones, a CALUC member, pointed out that the current design does save several trees.

The meeting adjourned at 8PM with a thank you from Mr. Khan

The CALUC was very pleased to host this meeting and would like to commend those who participated in a respectful and cooperative manner. We were happy to advise on what we do and how we might help.

## **Addendum**

Many people at the meeting expressed interest in seeing developments that had been completed by the applicant; what follows is the list he provided:

238 Richmond and the other side of the block on Robertson. This was a small lot rezoned where two houses were put on one oversized lot. Useful thing about this one was that there was street access from both sides of the lot.

306 Dallas / 11 Oswego - Two houses in a more modern style. This style was in keeping with the waterfront modern style along Dallas.

2650 Shelbourne. - You likely cannot tell from the street, but this was a three house project. There were large internal backyards with significant drainage issues. Most of the neighbors could not use the space in the backyards as it was always wet. We ended up buying space from the various neighbors to allow us to do one house forward and two back in a duplex style.