

# **Downtown Edmonton Community League**

## **STREETScape REPORT**

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Presented by  
Lois Knight, Secretary of the Downtown Community League

### **Meetings**

On Wednesday, December 5th, 2007 there was an open house held at the Coast Edmonton Plaza put on by Armin A. Preiksaitis & Associates Ltd. whose purpose was to show the public their proposed amendment to the Capital City Downtown Plan and Re-zoning of the North West Corner of 106 Street and 97 Avenue.

The purpose of the amendment is to increase both the allowable density from 500 to 729 units per hectare and the building height from 15 to 29 storeys. The purpose of the rezoning application is to allow the development of up to 177 dwelling units to accommodate a comprehensive redevelopment of this site. The amendment involves the rezoning of a house and apartment complex from Residential Mix-Use to site specific Development Control.

The intent of the meeting was to have the public view and share ideas in the early stages of the project. It was held gallery style with informal mingling and questioning. I talked at length with the architect Brad Kennedy with respect to the building design and their proposed implementation of streetscaping with the project.

Present at the Meeting were:

- Brinsmead Ziola Kennedy Architecture
- Armin A. Preiksaitis & Associates Ltd. - Urban Planning & Community Consultation
- Bunt & Associates - Traffic Impact Assessment
- Associated Engineering Alberta Ltd. - Servicing
- Lois Knight- Secretary, Downtown Community league
- A few Residents of the Marquis Condo

My report is based on my conversation with the chief architect, Brad Kennedy of Brinsmead Ziola Kennedy Architecture.

### **Visual of Proposed Site**

The rendering of the proposed building looks very slender and attractive. Its snake-like crawling-upward design promises to provide more views of the Legislature Grounds to more occupants and other condos surrounding it with the exception of the Marquis. The present accepted 15-storey proposed structure would be not only shorter, but wider, causing longer shadow periods especially along 106th street. The proposed 29-storey tower promises 5 minute shadows around its circumference and more park space behind it. The rendering of the 29-storey tower is attractive but its sole tall presence may jeopardize the pedestrian friendly character the city is trying to establish for 97th Avenue. There are no other very tall structures proposed for 97th Avenue.

Two other structures presently located on the NW Corner are to be included in the overall plan. The old house, with a business as its sole occupant will remain and have the park integrated with it. The apartment to the West of the house, The Parkview Manor, is a declared historical building and presently has 12 units which will need parking, so it will lose 4 units but it will be connected underground to the new building for its parking. The park-like setting will be developed at streetscape level and will incorporate a fountain, benches and gardens. The park rendering displayed looked very romantic, attractive and tasteful.

### **Effect on Surrounding Condos**

The Marquis condo is most negatively affected by the Tower. It would be in shadow more than half the time. Occupants on its West side with balconies would see the tower instead of their present view of the Legislature buildings. A few residents of the Marquis were present and vocal about their displeasure. Since then the architect has stated a couple of residents have applied for the penthouses in the proposed Tower.

### **Inclusion of Green Space**

The proposed Garden in front of the house and apartment were described and its rendering was available for viewing. Also, there is a proposed pedway system to begin behind the tower allowing the apartment, house and Tower residents' use of this path to access the grounds of the Legislature more easily. The path is to be flanked by green scaping, but I'm not sure what kind.

Brad invited me to view plans for other buildings close to downtown that are in the planning stage. He shared his belief in giving back to the community. I have a follow up appointment with him on Tuesday, Dec. 18 to view these plans and discuss how much control the architect has with his plans once they have been released to urban planning and construction phases.