

Date: Monday, January 28, 2013
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Place: Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall

PRESENT:**Board**

V. Potter Director of Development Services (Chair)
S. Johnston Deputy City Manager
B. Jackson General Manager of Planning and Development
P. Judd General Manager of Engineering Services

Advisory Panel

G. Borowski Representative of the Design Professions (Urban Design Panel)
F. Rafii Representative of the Design Professions
J. Stovell Representative of the Development Industry
K. Busby Representative of the General Public
K. Chen Representative of the General Public
J. Miletic-Prelovac Representative of the General Public
D. Wlodarczak Representative of the General Public

Regrets

S. Chandler Representative of the Development Industry
K. Maust Representative of the Vancouver Heritage Commission

ALSO PRESENT:**City Staff:**

J. Greer Assistant Director of Processing Centre - Development
R. The Engineering Services - Projects Branch
A. Molaro Development Planner
M. So Project Facilitator

68 SMITHE STREET - DE415916 - ZONE CD-1

M. Bruckner IBI/HB Architects
J. Hancock IBI/HB Architects
P. Webb Concord pacific Developments Inc.
F. Roman Concord pacific Developments Inc.
C. Phillips Phillips Farevaag Smallenberg
M. Hetzler Phillips Farevaag Smallenberg

Recording Secretary: D. Kerr

1. MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Jackson seconded by Mr. Judd, and was the decision of the Board to approve the minutes of the meeting on January 28, 2013.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

**3. 68 SMITHE STREET - DE415916 - ZONE CD-1
(COMPLETE APPLICATION)**

Applicant: IBI/HB Architects

Request: To develop this site with an 18-storey mixed-use building consisting of two storeys of commercial (CRU) and sixteen storeys of residential (423 dwelling units) all over three levels of underground parking having vehicular access from Smithe Street.

Development Planner's Opening Comment

Anita Molaro, Senior Development Planner, introduced the proposal. The site located is adjacent to the Cambie Street Bridge with frontage along Pacific Boulevard and a new frontage that will be established with the extension of Smithe Street. The new Smithe Street will provide frontage to this development and the future development of BC Place where the entertainment development is proposed.

The rezoning accommodates over 300,000 square feet of residential and it is required to provide a minimum of 45,000 square feet of commercial space that has been proposed over the lower two floors of the building. The height limit for this building is set by the Cambie Bridge view cone.

The form of development at the time of the rezoning contemplated a building stepping down in a curved elongated form and a smaller tower floor plate at the corner of Smithe Street and Pacific Boulevard with a south facing plaza and/or lower podium piece connecting between these two buildings.

Ms. Molaro noted that through the detail design work the proposal has some variations in the massing from what was seen at the rezoning. There is a redistribution of density, notably the increase in the podium. Since the rezoning there has been a slight change in the flood plain elevation of an increase of approximately 0.5m. There was also a clarification/refinement of the view cone that limits the height of this site. For example, at the time of rezoning, the height was anticipated at approximately twenty storeys of residential. There are now only eighteen storeys of residential which has resulted in some shifting and thickening up of the building masses as a result.

Ms. Molaro explains that while the change is from a tower and podium expression to a certain extent, it is now moving into a more block type of building composition. That is still consistent with the policy direction for this area that seeks to encourage distinctive and creative architecture that differentiates this site from the other waterfront areas that had relied predominately on the tower and podium building form.

Ms. Molaro stated that there are two primary issues associated with the development applications; the architectural resolution and the public realm interfaces and treatments. With

respect to the architectural resolution, the condition of the rezoning was to strengthen the project's architecture to reflect the site's bridgehead location as well as more appropriately incorporate green building exterior materials and techniques. At the time of rezoning, the building was contemplated to have a fairly slim profile as it relates to the view coming over the Cambie Street Bridge as well as the façade along the bridge with a curvilinear expression.

Staff along with the Urban Design Panel commented that the design evolution of the building had not fully addressed the rezoning condition and that more work needed to be done to incorporate the simplicity and clarity that had been demonstrated at the rezoning stage (Condition 1.1).

The other aspects of the overall massing that the Urban Design Panel and staff felt needed further design development included the massing transition between the Smithe Street façade and the Cambie Bridge façade including better delineation between the tower elements and the podium along Smithe Street (Condition 1.2 and 1.3).

The other very important attribute of this site and development is the public realm interfaces and treatments. This site will provide pedestrian connections between Yaletown via the new portion of Smithe Street on this block and a pedestrian connection underneath the building and under the Cambie Street Bridgehead connecting with the future pedestrian connection on site 5B West. In addition alongside the Cambie Street Bridge a bike and pedestrian path are proposed as well as a publicly accessible plaza off Pacific Boulevard.

Ms. Molaro explained that there are a number of rezoning design conditions that needed to be met. Pacific Boulevard had to take into account the future street car stop and pedestrian amenity in the proposed plaza. There was a desire to also create a special sense of place between the turnaround at the end of Smithe Street and to ensure that the Cambie Street edge created an attractive pedestrian link and the feeling that the public could access this public connection through the site.

The design evolution from the rezoning to the development permit has been largely successful however there are a number of detailed improvements that staff are recommending. Condition 1.4 relates to the Pacific Boulevard plaza and its sense of publicness and functionality as a pedestrian route through the site. Condition 1.5 relates to the specific interface between the building and the bridge as a pedestrian and bike route including how to maintain access to the bridge structure in addition to how areas under the bridgehead, where there are some void areas, can be appropriately treated to deal with issues associated with CPTED.

Condition 1.6 is to address the quality of the public and private realm surface treatments.

There are two other Conditions (1.7 and 1.8) that relate to the liveability of the residential units and to address the unit configuration found within the crux of these adjoining masses. The second stems from a rezoning condition in the establishment of higher acoustic performance criteria to mitigate the impact of event noise from the adjacent stadium.

There are a couple of other detailed design conditions contained in Appendix A; technical and engineering conditions associated with the proposal including the timing and delivery of the Smithe Street extension as it is tied to in part with the development of the entertainment component of the PAVCO site. Conditions A.2.1 and A.2.2 are Engineering Services conditions that reflect the ongoing work on the Smithe Street extension and staff continue to work with the applicant on these conditions.

Staff are recommending the Board's approval of the development permit application subject to the conditions recommended in the report.

Questions/Discussion

In response to questions raised by the Board and Panel, the following clarifications were provided by Ms. Molaro:

- Two factors which changes the form of the building; the refinement of the view cone and the adjustment in the flood plain elevation.
- The setback for the streetcar is a dedication that the building design had accommodated at the rezoning stage.
- Staff did not hear from any of the residents of the newly built tower regarding noise from events through the development permit process.

Applicant's Comments

Martin Bruckner, Architect, stated that they had reviewed the report including the conditions amongst themselves and with the owner, and were able to comply. In fact he said they have been working with City staff since the Urban Design Panel in anticipation of these conditions and they have investigated the impact of the conditions and are comfortable in accommodating them. He stated that there had been comments regarding streetcars on Pacific Boulevard and whether this had an impact on the design. He said there was a certain impact, and that they had to dedicate a setback further from the building for the streetcar. He added that they will continue to work with staff on the conditions.

Questions/Discussion

In response to questions raised by the Board and Panel, the following clarification was provided by the applicant team:

- At the time the rezoning application was made, the requirement was for LEED™ silver equivalent and the applicant will meet that and may well do better as they get more into the technical design.
- The building will be subject to additional noise mitigation and that will help to achieve a higher energy standard for the building.
- The applicant is still undecided at this point as to whether they will pursue LEED™ certification.
- The ground floor was raised up a bit as the applicant has taken into consideration the building height as it is governed by the view cone from Cambie Bridge which means the impact is mainly on the height of the building.
- When the applicant applied for the development permit the City had refined the calculation for the view cone from that shown at the rezoning stage. As a result the view cone height was lower which resulted in the applicant having to reduce the tower by two floors on the tower and the curved shaped building became higher.
- View cones are approved by Council. The heights given to the applicant at the time of rezoning were higher before the refinement. As a result when the development application came in last year, further work had been done by staff on the height for the view cones and they had to accommodate their building heights as a result.
- The building façades will have high quality architectural cladding materials. The side that comes down to grade will be architecturally treated and the side against the bridge will have access panels to allow City staff to have maintenance access to the bridge.
- The plan is for a potentially large single restaurant use on the ground floor and on the second floor a large fitness centre is proposed.

- The applicant is working to increase permeability by removing some of the planting beds and trees and reconfigure the seating because they want to allow for people to sit on the southwest side and to provide a clearer path running diagonally through the site that allows pedestrians to go under the bridge to 5B West.
- The applicant had a rezoning application that was reviewed by Council and the conclusion for the CAC discussions was that the massing of 5B West be a mirror effect of the massing so the two of them bookend the bridge. The lower level will be adjacent to the underside of the bridge bulkhead and will also have the same expression on the 5B West side. The commercial elements on 5B West will take up the bottom few floors to allow for a strong pedestrian route and has commercial on both sides under the bridgehead.
- The applicant is exploring an illuminated ceiling and opportunities for public art or other treatments along the façade on the bridgehead side. As well they are developing sympathetic lighting for the area with respect to safety.
- A feature is proposed that will be incorporated on top of the building that curves towards Cambie Bridge.
- The applicant is planning to have the open space be as flexible as possible so that the structure doesn't take away from the flexibility and there will still be rain protection canopies against the buildings with restaurant uses helping to animate the public uses.
- The applicant agreed to continue to explore the addition of a covered element around the building.

Comments from other Speakers

None.

Panel Opinion

Mr. Borowski stated that the Urban Design Panel reviewed this project on September 12, 2012 and supported the project. In particular he thought the notion of the kind of wind sculpted slab edges as you come into the city was a very interesting idea and a strong idea. He was encouraged to see the applicant had mentioned a further re-enforcement of that and indeed it is one of the recommended conditions of approval in this regard.

Mr. Borowski stated that probably one of the greatest difficulties the Panel had was the merging of the boxed elements with the curvaceous windblown pieces and believed that the windblown pieces were very strong in of themselves and that it would be nice to see that reinforced as you drive into the city. He noted that a few points were raised by the Panel including reinforcing those wavy characteristics of the façade and reducing the curving wall box appliques, looking at the liveability of the suites on the inside corner of the building, addressing the CPTED issues in the breezeway area, considering the notion of sports and the public arts strategy and weather protection.

It seemed to Mr. Borowski that in the conditions staff brought forward those points were addressed and he was happy to see the applicant is able to respond to them. Mr. Borowski recommended approval for the application.

Mr. Stovell stated that he was in support for the application, noting that the Staff conditions were very significant. Mr. Stovell stated that he actually liked the Council approved design better. The towers were more distinctive and there were some nice view slots through to the stadium. He noted that it was an unfortunate consequence of the view cone that it is a blockier building. He said he realized that the massing was meant to match the entertainment facility across the street but viewed alone he thought the initial design was better. He added

that he appreciated the applicant having to make adjustments to keep the FSR that they had been granted at Council so he said he was in support of the application.

Mr. Rafii said he believed that this was a very challenging site and all the density going through that shape was not a very easy task and he thought it was pretty successful. He noted that the building is very massive but he believed the main views from the Cambie Bridge coming into downtown and the other on Pacific Boulevard was a pretty good result. He added that he was pleased to see that the applicant was willing to comply with all the conditions in the staff report. Mr. Raffi recommended support for the application.

Ms. Busby stated that she was in support of the project but as a Panel member representing the general public she wanted to bring to the Board's attention that there was an article in the VanCity Buzz regarding new condos around BC Place and that they are killing the entertainment district. She said she thought it was very important that noise mitigation and other factors are put in place because if people are going to live near these entertainment facilities, they need to be able to live there but in a way that does not suppress the character of the entertainment district. She added that with residents in the area there already are limited hours regarding light levels and noise levels.

Ms. Miletic-Prelovac stated that this was a very important site being next to a large stadium and also representing one of the main entries to the city so how this was developed would influence the other side to make it more of a gate. She appreciated the attention shown to the public realm and saw many different ideas and was looking forward to see those ideas being developed. Regarding one of the plazas with a roof, she said she thought this would bring something new to the city, having covered areas to sit all year long, as this is something that was needed and appreciated. Although she didn't have a problem with the towers she still thought that the podium was a little bit high, although she appreciated the new building type. She added that it was not always necessary to have a tower and podium and understood it was very difficult to make it work.

Mr. Chen stated that he would also like to show his support for the project. He too was concerned with the suppression of the entertainment district. He stated that this was going to be an important area and was sensing that with more people moving into the area there was going to be pressure on the City to set restrictions on the type of the events held in this entertainment district. Mr. Chen would like to see Vancouver as a more festive city and since so much money was spent to renovate the stadium he felt that to see it used for lectures and quiet concert and parties would be unfortunate.

Mr. Wlodarczak stated that he was in support of the project and agreed with other Panel members that the original design was better as it gave more permeability to the view but he thought the applicant had done a good job responding to that. He said he would be interested to see how 5B West will book end the bridge. He thought that would add a lot of interest from a design perspective in the area and would like to see a development where bicycle parking outnumbered the car parking. Mr. Wlodarczak recommended approval for the application.

Board Discussion

Mr. Jackson stated that he spent a lot of time in this neighbourhood and was really looking forward to seeing the revised design approach with respect to this particular building. The building that is currently in front of this building is very competent but not particularly imaginative as you walk or cycle or drive into the city. He thought this building responded to the same conditions in a much more unique way. First of all the façade has been broken up in a number of ways between a linear form and a curvilinear form which adds to the visual

interest. The length of the façade was nicely broken up again between flat pieces and curved pieces and as the building curves and disappears out of view the length of the façade is not immediately apparent and adds to the visual interest of the building. He said he really appreciated the efforts of the design team to make this building feel a little bit more special and he was glad the attention was being paid to the façade since it is along the Cambie Street Bridge. Mr. Jackson recommended approval for the application.

Mr. Judd seconded the motion with no further comments.

Mr. Johnson stated his agreement for the motion. He said he thought it was clearly a tricky site and thought all of staff's conditions had made it even trickier in some ways. He said he thought the applicant had risen to the challenge with meeting various objectives regarding the district energy to green building and bike parking and interesting urban design. He thanked the applicant for a very interesting project and thought it was going to improve that part of the city. He noted that there were a number of concerns regarding developing the site but felt it was a development that would give life to the site with interesting components and views. He added that he looked forward to looking across and seeing the sun glinting off the windows making this a more interesting development. He added that staff have clearly worked very hard to address all of the City's various priorities, including Council priorities and he thanked staff for a very thorough job and added that he supported the application.

Mr. Jackson noted that nobody was complaining about noise the previous weekend when there was the World of Mud event happening at BC Place. He added that if people can survive that they can survive anything. He added that the good thing was now people who are moving into this area will have full knowledge of the fact that they are adjacent to an entertainment district whereas before with the roof in a different configuration people might have had different expectations.

Mr. Johnson said he wanted to add that he thought there had been a lot of work as a community addressing noise concerns. As a result there are some parameters that have been established that will support growth in the area and make this an even more lively entertainment district.

Motion

It was moved by Mr. Jackson and seconded by Mr. Judd and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. DE415916, in accordance with the Staff Committee Report dated October 10, 2012.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:00pm.

D. Kerr
Assistant to the Board

V. Potter
Chair