

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: December 18, 2013

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Ryan Bragg
Walter Francl
Joseph Fry
Veronica Gillies
David Grigg
Bruce Hemstock
Phil Mondor
Goran Ostojic
Norm Shearing (Chair)
Peter Wreglesworth

REGRETS:
Daryl Condon
Vincent Dumoulin
Joseph Hruda

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1. 1920 SW Marine Drive
-

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Shearing called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. There was a short business meeting and then the Panel considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 1920 SW Marine Drive
 DE: N/A
 Description: To allow development of a 62 bed Community Care Facility - Class B. This proposal entails the retention, designation and conversion of the existing "Casa Mia" heritage building and the development of a 2-storey addition with underground parking and loading facilities. The proposed floor space ratio (FSR) of the heritage building and proposed addition is 0.70. The height of the existing heritage house is 46.5 feet (14.2 meters) and a proposed 2-storey addition is 30.5 Feet (9.3 meters).
 Zoning: RS-1 to CD-1
 Application Status: Rezoning
 Review: Second
 Architect: Stuart Howard Architects
 Owner: TC Group
 Delegation: Stuart Howard, Stuart Howard Architects
 Orianne Johnson, Stuart Howard Architects
 Damon Oriente, Damon Oriente Landscape Architects
 Staff: Grant Miller and Sailen Black

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-3)

- **Introduction:** Grant Miller, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal for a revised application to rezone 1920 Southwest Marine Drive to allow the development of a Community Care Facility - Class B. The proposal includes the retention and designation of the existing "Casa Mia" A listed heritage building. The original proposal was to build a 3-storey addition included 99 licensed residential care beds for seniors with a total FSR of 0.93. The revised proposal includes a 2-storey addition and includes a total of 62 beds with a total FSR of 0.70. The site is approximately 1.5 acres on the south side of Marine Drive. Mr. Miller provided the land use policy background noting that the use, which in this case supports senior's residential care which is conditionally permitted in all Residential zones and subject to specific guidelines pertaining to the location, siting, form, circulation and access. He also described the Southland Policies and Guidelines. The proposal is eligible for bonus density and since the application was made in December 2011, is subject to the City's Green Buildings Policy requiring LEED™ Gold.

Sailen Black, Development Planner, further described the proposal noting the adjacent uses are detached houses on estate sized properties. In terms of the existing building, Casa Mia has a floor plate of about 7,000 square feet. The accommodation of the existing house on the site and frontage makes for a development different than what would normally be found on a 66 foot wide lot. He noted that the base zoning is RS-1 and since there are no design guidelines the regulatory statements in the district schedule are used. He added that the permitted maximum height is around 35 feet and the proposal is at 30.5 feet. In terms of setbacks, rear yards would normally be 45% of the lot depth but can be reduced. The proposed setbacks are 25 feet from the west, 34 feet from the east property line and the rear yard is unchanged. Mr. Black noted that there is a significant excavation proposed in the centre of the site to create an open space that is accessible for the lower units. He

added that the driveway ramp to underground parking has been relocated away from the west side. In this revision, more of the addition has been held back from the existing garage building, and that portion is being retained. No addition was proposed to south of the house, near the top of the escarpment.

Advice from the Panel on this application was sought on the following:

1. Have the previous concerns of the Urban Design Panel been addressed?
2. Taking into consideration current zoning and guidelines, along with the built context of the surrounding neighbourhood of detached housing typically on larger lots, and the arterial route of Southwest Marine Drive, does the Panel support the fit of the revised scale in general (including height, density and floor area) within the local context?
3. Considering the relationship of the proposal 2-storey addition to the character of Southwest Marine Drive; to nearby residences; and to the existing heritage building of Casa Mia, can the Panel comment on:
 - a. The proposed siting and position of the addition (including setbacks, open spaces and grade changes) within the property;
 - b. The degree of neighbourliness provided, including shadow, views and privacy impacts;
 - c. The conceptual design of the landscape and the amenity of outdoor spaces, including those at the basement level;
 - d. Relationship of proposed form to the existing heritage building, including views from Marine Drive and the design of connecting elements.

Mr. Miller and Mr. Black took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Stuart Howard, Architect, further described the proposal and mentioned they have reduced density and the height by one storey. After getting some heritage input, they have now retained Casa Mia in its entirety with minimal intervention into the building. He added that the decision was made to take the density out of the third floor and remove it from the design. The height has been lowered and they tried to keep the addition as far away from the Casa Mia as possible. However, since it is a care facility, there is a need for access to the upper floor of Casa Mia on the same level as the addition. The plan is to have the care beds in the addition and the residents would use the rooms in the house such as the living room, dining room, study and sitting room for their use and for visitors. With the change to the garage to a dining room, they decided to create more outdoor useable space on the south side. The other change was the removable of the side driveway which has been there since the 1930's and was used for servicing the estate. There was a concern that it would compromise the existing landscaping and by removing that they can maintain the landscape and create a walkway. As well it gives an opportunity to open up the building more to that orientation. Mr. Howard mentioned that they have used the natural depression in the middle of the site to create a ramp down to the underground parking. He described the material and colour palette noting that they have tied some of the elements to the heritage house. He added that the wall in the front of the property is a heritage element and now belongs to the City.

Orianne Johnson described the sustainability strategy for the proposal noting that they have set preliminary targets at this stage. This includes the choice of landscape materials, green roofs, below grade parking, storm water management, rain water collection and other measures such as energy efficiency.

Damon Oriente, Landscape Architect, further described the landscape plans and mentioned that the existing cedar and spruce trees will be retained as well as the cedar hedge. The trees along the western side of the property will also be retained. With retention of the

garage, they have provided an outdoor eating terrace along with water features. In the lower courtyard since it is an activity area there is a water feature and a sunny space for residents. He added that they are planning on adding some new trees and hedges.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Design development to the connecting element between the old and new building;
 - Consider reducing the 13 foot floor to floor height of the addition;
 - Design development to improve the entrance on the new addition;
 - Further work on day to day operations including vehicle movement;
 - Design development to improve the lower courtyard including terracing and privacy;
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and thought the proposal had been improved since the last review.

The Panel supported the form of development and agreed that reducing the volume of the building and the FSR in order to preserve the Casa Mia was a step forward and they especially liked the view from the gate to the house. They thought it was important to respectfully connect the new building to this important heritage building. They also agreed that the circulation being proposed around the site was a big improvement since the last review. As well they thought that preserving the garage wing was a benefit to the project. However, several Panel members thought the entrance needed some design development with a couple of Panel members suggesting the entrance be recessed for a view of the garage building.

The Panel felt the over-all architectural expression of the new building needed further design development. While the architecture took some of it's cues from the original historic building the resulting design is appears "heavy". The Panel thought there was an opportunity to explore an expression that was more contrasting to the Casa Mia.

Several Panel members thought the level connection at the main and second floor as a driving element was not an acceptable solution and suggested the applicant reduce the height of the main floor of the new building. in this area. A couple of Panel members suggested having a single storey connection and that the upper storey connection be an open connection that could be used in warmer months. Reducing the over-height of the main floor would also lesson the visual impact of the new building on SW Marine Drive.

Some Panel members were concerned with the lower level courtyard area for the residents. They thought the area would benefit from terracing and that a perimeter should be defined outside these units. One Panel member suggested making the area a private space for the units facing onto that space. A couple of Panel members thought the faux bridge element should be a real bridge.

The Panel thought the applicant had gone a long way to mitigate the overlook and privacy for the neighbour to the north.

Regarding sustainability, it was suggested that noise impact should be considered in the rezoning as well as strategies on how LEED™ Gold certification will be achieved.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Howard said that Casa Mia is a light and airy building and they hoped that all the rooms could be kept and not carved up for support services. As well they wanted them to be kept as original as possible. He noted that if the property was

subdivided, Casa Mia would be regulated to the back of the property and probably not seen from the street. He added that he thought they had done a good job of preserving the street presence of the house by keeping the east side open with views into the house.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.