

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** Feb 26, 2025

**TIME:** 3:00 pm

**PLACE:** Teams, Virtual

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:

Helen Besharat  
Aik Ablimit (Chair)  
Michele Cloghesy  
Aya Abdelfatah  
Scott Mitchell  
Sarvnaz Golkar

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** K. Cermeno

### ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1. 1728 Alberni St & 735 Bidwell St

Address: 1728 Alberni St and 735 Bidwell St  
Permit No.: RZ-2024-00082  
Description: To rezone the site from RM-5C to CD-1 under the Rezoning Policy for the West End. The proposal is to allow for two residential towers (41-storey east tower and 38-storey west tower) with: 236 strata residential units; 377 residential rental; building height of 117.3 m (385 ft.) for the east tower and 117.3 m (385 ft.) for the west tower; total floor area of 597,682.5 sq. ft. ; floor space ratio (FSR) of 16.11 (east tower); floor space ratio (FSR) of 14.60 (west tower); east tower: 190 vehicle parking spaces - 788 bicycle spaces; west tower: 324 vehicle parking spaces - 535 bicycle spaces; ground-oriented commercial space.

Application Status: Rezoning Application  
Architect: Henriques Partners Architects  
Delegation: Shawn Lapointe, Architect, HPA  
Nathaniel Funk, Project Lead, Bosa  
Michael Patterson, Landscape Architect, P & A  
Staff: Hamid Shayan & Daniel Feeney

**EVALUATION:** Support with Recommendations (5/0)

### **Planner's Introduction:**

**Daniel Feeney**, Rezoning Planner, introduced the project with a brief description of the existing site context, followed by an overview of the anticipated context as per the West End Plan. Daniel concluded the presentation with a description of the site and a summary of the rezoning proposal.

**Hamid Shayan**, Development Planner gave an overview of the neighborhood context in relation to the proposal, followed by the expectations of the built-form guidelines for this project. Hamid then gave a brief description of the proposed project before concluding with Staff questions for the Panel.

### **Advice from the Panel on this application is sought on the following:**

1. With due consideration given to the key principles of West End Plan, advice from the Panel is sought on proposed Height, Density, and Overall Massing.
2. Please provide commentary on the quality of building interface to the public realm along entire frontage with particular attention to the following:
  - The podium height and expression and how it contributes to the existing streetscape
  - Provision of pocket park and its contribution to the public life and activity.
3. Given consideration to the prominent urban culture of West End, please provide any comments on preliminary architectural expression, massing articulation, details, and materiality to assist staff review of the future DP application.

### **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Applicant Shawn Lapointe Architect for Henriquez Partners & Associates (HPA) noted the objectives and gave a general overview of the project followed by Michael Patterson Landscape Architect presenting on the landscape design.

### **Applicant and staff took questions from Panel.**

### **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**

Having reviewed the project, it was moved by **Ms. Besharat** and seconded by **Ms. Abdelfatah** and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

THAT the Panel Recommend **Support with recommendations** to the project with the following recommendations to be reviewed by City Staff:

1. Design development of the retail frontages as well as its contribution to the public realm;
2. Design development of the pocket park with consideration to the Viability, livability, and openness of the park;
3. Design development of the patio spaces with further consideration to the privacy of residential units;
4. Consider improving the privacy between balconies.

### **Summary of Panel Commentary:**

There was general support from the panel regarding the height, density, and overall massing.

There was general support for the form of development proposed.

The panel generally supports the public realm and frontages.

Many noted the façade expressions have improved in comparison to previous submission.

The panel suggested further consideration to improve the pocket park such as the livability and openness.

The pocket park is north facing therefore the amount of shading is a concern, consider animating this space more.

Some panelists noted if reducing one of the tower podium heights (rental tower) to benefit to the pocket park would be good.

Other comments included some of the units feel tight especially the ones facing each other.

Consider the privacy around the balconies.

A panelist noted Alberní is not a podium typology.

The podium level of the rental tower could be increased for less shadowing on the public park.

Consider further podium coherence maybe with more retail. Consider a more unified Alberni Street frontage.

Consider shifting some retail to the western side of the podium.

Consider strengthening the facades unity.

Regarding the level 7 amenity, private patio, consider if this will be an enjoyable space for the renters (i.e. noise).

Consider the usage of amenity spaces with play zones versus more adult space.

Would have liked to see further consideration of functionality and accessibility in amenity spaces.

The bike elevators are a success.

**Applicant's Response: The applicant team thanked the panel for their comments**