

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** June 7, 2023 Minutes

**TIME:** 3:00 pm

**PLACE:** Townhall Room, City Hall

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

Craig Taylor  
Heidi Nesbitt  
John Stovell  
Peeraj Thakre  
Margot Long  
Meeta Lele  
Alasdair Butcher  
Reza Mousakhani

**REGRETS:**

Scott Romses

### ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1. 900 West Georgia Street (Vancouver Hotel)

Chair Craig Taylor called the meeting to order at 3:05pm. The panel then considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 900 West Georgia St  
Permit No.: RZ-2022-00088  
Description: To develop an office building while retaining the heritage designated, Hotel Vancouver building. Rezone from DD to CD-1. This proposal includes: Commercial retail space at grade; A floor space ratio (FSR) of 13.10; A floor area of 24,603 sq. m (264,732 sq. ft.); A building height of 69 m (225 ft.); and 201 vehicle parking spaces and 226 bicycle parking spaces. The application is being considered under the Rezoning Policy for the CBD and CBD Shoulder, Downtown Official Development Plan and the Metro Core Jobs and Economy Land Use Plan.

Application Status: Rezoning Application  
Architect: Architects-Alliance  
Delegation: Peter Clewes, Architect, Architects Alliance,  
Peter Kreuk, Landscape Architect, Durante Kreuk  
Wendy LeBreton, Owner/Developer, Larco Investments Ltd.  
Art Phillips, Owner/Developer, Larco Investments Ltd.

Staff: Nicholas Danford, Hiroko Kobayashi

**EVALUATION:** Support with Recommendations (8/0)

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

Nicholas Danford, Rezoning Planner, introduced the project with a brief description of the existing urban context, followed by an overview of the anticipated policy context as per the Rezoning Policy for the Central Business District. Mr. Danford, concluded the presentation with a summary of the rezoning proposal.

Hiroko Kobayashi, Development Planner gave an overview of the neighbourhood site context in relation to the proposal, followed by a summary of the existing heritage building for this project. Hiroko Kobayashi, then gave a brief description of the proposed form of development for this project before concluding with Staff questions for the Panel.

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

1. Please comment on the proposed overall form, scale and massing articulation with particular consideration given to the following :
  - The overall performance, compatibility and proportional relationship of the new addition to the heritage building;
  - Contribution of the building to the urban context from the key public view points.
2. Please comment on the interface with the public realm particularly where the building faces along Hornby Street.

3. Please provide any comment on the preliminary material pallets, architectural expression, and details to assist staff review of the future DP application.

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

Peter Clewes, Architect for Architects Alliance, and Peter Kreuk, Landscape Architect for Durante Kreuk, noted the objectives and gave a general overview of the project.

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

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

Having reviewed the project, it was moved by **Jon Stovell** and seconded by **Reza Mousakhani** 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. Relationship with the street level especially Hornby requires further animation;
2. Further refinement of the massing articulation;
3. Consider a celebration of the Porte Cochere experience.
4. Recommend continuous paving of high quality material throughout the Porte Cochere & lane;
5. Further consideration of the sun shading particularly on the south and west facades curtain wall.

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

There was general support from the panel however further design development is needed.

The massing could benefit from further refinement including exploration of the steps at the top of the building to create more articulated distance from the existing hotel building.

Shifting of masses away from the existing hotel could result in successful floorplate sizes and its uses.

Further consideration of creating a better relationship with the massing and where the voids happen with the views and experiences.

There were mixed opinions regarding massing stepping view from Burrard St. and Hornby St, further study of the massing and space articulation including tri-partite design narrative and slenderness of the tower is recommended.

The form and uses of the building need further work. Focus on the overall relationships of the elements of the building, since it is a small infill project, the detailing of it will be important at all levels particularly at the ground level.

The entrance of the hotel is very important, consider exposing it more. Consider the celebration of a hotel porte cochere and its connection with the hotel and the streetscape. The excitement and animation does not need to entirely depend on the retail consider the plaza at the entrance, this can be an eventful place.

When you walk down Hornby or Burrard there is always something happening, consider animating the street including a more usable commercial space at grade.

The panel recommended that at all stages of design development the proposed materials including the high quality paving are maintained at grade, in the lane, and at the Porte Cochere.

Some panelists noted to staff to consider the handicap precedent set on 777 Hornby St. for the future development on this site, including the tower separation requirement.

Regarding sustainability, it is still very weak, consider further improvements.  
When considering an all glass building solar shading is critical and further design development of how the curtain wall façade wall works with the spandrel glass.

Consider making the building electric relying on gas is not the way to go.  
Supportive of the green roofs but proposed pool area at roof will be always in the shadow.  
The panel noted challenges with the location of the mechanical system and windows.

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