

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: July 20, 2022

TIME: 3:00 pm

PLACE: Webex

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:

Brian Wakelin
Alan Boniface
Kelly Lee
Jennifer Stamp
Adrian Rahbar excused item 2
Reza Mousakhani excused item 2
Alyssa Koehn
Jesse Gregson

REGRETS:

Peeraj Thakre
Jane Vorbrodt

RECORDING

SECRETARY: K. Cermeno

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1. 1308-1318 E 12th Avenue
2. 1045 Burnaby Street

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

1. Address: 1308-1318 E12th Ave
 Permit No. RZ-2022-00024
 Description: To develop a six-storey mixed-use building, including 33 secured market rental units, with commercial retail space at grade; all over two levels of underground parking, providing 29 vehicle parking spaces and 56 bicycle parking spaces. The floor space ratio (FSR) is 3.0. The floor area is 3,238.1 sq. m (34,855 sq. ft.). The building height of 20 m (66 ft.) The application is being considered under the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan.
 Zoning: RM-11N to CD-1
 Application Status: Rezoning Application
 Architect: Sea to Sky Architecture
 Staff: Scott Erdman and Ryan Dinh

EVALUATION: Resubmission Recommended (7/0)

Planner's Introduction:

Rezoning planner, Scott Erdman, began by noting the site is located at the southeast corner of East 12th Avenue and Clark Drive. Commercial Drive is two blocks away, to the east. The site is zoned RM-11N, and is currently an empty lot. There are two gas stations on the north side of the same intersection, and a small cluster of low-rise commercial buildings across the street to the west.

Detached houses and duplexes are found on the surrounding residential blocks. As for the future context, lots to the east, along 12th Avenue, have been pre-zoned to RM-11N for four-storey residential forms. The gas station at the NE corner could be rezoned for mixed use, up to 6 storeys and 3.0 FSR under the Grandview-Woodland Plan. The two corners on the west side of Clark Dr are within the scope of the recently-approved Broadway Plan, for mixed-use up to 12 storeys and 4.5 FSR.

Sites to the south are limited to the current RT-5N zoning for duplexes.

This application is being considered under the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan. This site is within the "Station Residential" sub-area, where the Plan anticipated mid-rise buildings along the arterial.

For this site specifically, the Plan anticipated:

- Residential uses
- Height up to 4 storeys
- And density up to 1.7 FSR.

For sites zoned RS or RM, the Plan also requires the inclusion of ground-floor commercial-retail uses for sites with former small-scale retail. Although this site has been a vacant lot for a long time, it previously had commercial uses on it.

The proposal is for a mixed-use development, and includes:

- Ground-floor commercial retail units, and residential above, with 33 secured market rental units

- A height of 6 storeys
- And a density of 3.0 FSR

Development planner, Ryan Dinh, began by noting the key urban design principles in Grandview Woodland Community Plan include providing higher-density building forms appropriate for a transit-oriented neighbourhood and enhancing streetscapes through public realm improvements. The Plan recommends 4 storeys residential on this site. However, staff are supportive of additional commercial space at this location and could support a 6 storeys mixed use building to enable it. Cross fall is approximately 7', which poses grading challenge for the site. The project provides side walk enhancement as required, noting that some portions of upper level project over the public realm on Clark Dr. Floor plans are intended to maximize cross ventilation, so all units are located toward the perimeter of the site. Level 5 and 6 are stepped back from the interior side yard to support the transition to the existing residential properties. The common indoor and outdoor amenities are provided on Level 6.

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

1. Does the Panel support the proposed height and density to enable additional commercial space, noting that they exceed the expectations of the Grandview Woodland Community Plan?
2. Comments on the quality of public realm along E 12th and Clark.
3. Additional advice that could further inform the design through the development permit process.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

The applicant began by noting this is a challenging site in that it is tight however they tried to maximize the space while pushing the concept that it is one of the first to be naturally ventilated. The natural ventilation is achieved with floor plates are a bit different from your traditional multi-storey building.

To address setbacks concerns on E 12th and ensure the building still works the building cantilevers over the walkways creating natural sun shading and rain shelter.

The building steps down at the south side and provide green roof features and lots of vegetation to improve the transition to the neighbouring properties.

Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:

Having reviewed the project it was moved by **MR. BONIFACE** and seconded by **MR. MOUSAKHANI** THAT the Panel Recommend Resubmission of the project with the panel comments addressed.

Related Commentary:

Height and Density:

- Generally support of height and density for the location.
- Massing from the lane and setbacks are supportable

Public Realm:

- There is no landscape plan in the package for public realm comments.
- There is lack of information to assess what could be done with the CRUs facing 12th Ave.

Other comments:

- Residential entry from Clark is narrow, suggest additional element such as canopy to make it more visible.
- Consider outdoor amenity on the south side.
- Consider celebrate the corner expression at the intersection.
- Concerns about the openness of level 6 corridor, privacy issue, exiting from parkade
- Unclear of programming of the roof top amenity and accessibility
- Consider livability and solar access to the units
- Concern about exterior ventilation, building envelope implications and code compliance. The form of the building does not seem to fit with the goals of cross ventilation.

The applicant team then took questions from the panel.

2.	Address:	1045 Burnaby Street
	Permit No.	RZ-2022-00029
	Description:	To develop a 16-storey residential building, including 133 secured market rental units and 37 below market rental units; all over two levels of underground parking, providing 52 vehicle parking spaces and 317 bicycle parking spaces. The floor space ratio (FSR) is 6.19, the floor area is 9,945.27 sq. m (107,050 sq. ft.), and building height is 48.46 m (159 ft.). The application is being considered under the Criteria for 100% Secured Rental and BelowMarket Housing as an Alternative to Inclusionary Social Housing in the Burrard Corridor of the West End Community Plan
	Zoning:	RM-5A – CD-1
	Application Status:	Rezoning Application
	Architect:	GBL Architects Inc.
	Staff:	Lex Dominiak and Carl Stanford

EVALUATION: SUPPORT WITH RECOMMENDATIONS (6/0)

- **Planners Introduction:**

Rezoning Planner, Lex Dominiak began by noting that the rezoning application seeks to develop the site from RM-5A to CD-1 zoning with a 16-storey, 100% secured rental building with two levels of below-grade parking for a proposed FSR of 6.19 in the Burrard Corridor of the West End Community Plan. The enclosed proposal includes a provision for 20% of the net residential area to be offered at below market rents in perpetuity. It is projected that the proposed project would add a net gain of 133 market rental units plus 37 below-market rental (BMR) units, over 35% of which are family units, to the City of Vancouver's secured rental stock, located in the highly walkable West End of Downtown Vancouver. This application will be made under the rezoning policy titled '*Rezoning Policy for the West End and 100% Secured Rental Housing Option with Below-Market Rental*'. This allows for secured rental use a tower floor area greater than the 5500sq.ft limit set in '*The West End Tower Form, Siting & Setbacks Bulletin*' up to a maximum of 20% or 6600sq.ft. This additional area is subject to performance criteria and staff review.

The proposal is located midblock of 1000 Burnaby and comprised of a single legal parcel east of the corner of Thurlow and Burnaby Street. Pantages Lane is to the northern edge of the site. The site measures approximately 40m (131') by 40m (131') on a square shaped site with an approximate site area of 1605.9m² / 17,285 sq. ft. It slopes slightly 1m rising from west to east with a 1.6 percent cross fall slope from north to south. An existing 37-unit condo building with one level of underground parking is located on the site and it is currently zoned RM-5A. The existing neighbourhood consists of a mix of low, mid and high rise residential buildings along Burnaby Street. To the North and East, Burrard Street and Davie Street provide a variety of offices, shops, restaurants, services, etc. Davie Street is a hub for activity in the West End, lined with a variety of different kinds of food, shops, bars, clubs, and festivals/events. Public transit is easily accessible along Davie and Burrard Street, providing transit to the Skytrain stations nearby. The St. Paul's Hospital campus is located further East, a short walk from the site.

Development Planner, Carl Stanford, then began by discussing the principle governing form of development policy for the site which includes:

- *The RM-5A District Schedule & Guidelines;*
- *The West End Community Plan;*
- *The West End Tower Form, Siting & Setbacks Bulletin; and,*
- *The View Protection Guidelines (2011).*
 - *View cones 3 & 12*

The '*West End Community Plan*' requires that new developments 'Achieve a green, environmentally sustainable urban pattern', 'Support a range of affordable housing options to meet the diverse needs of the community', 'Sculpt built form to maximize sunlight on sidewalks', 'Development in the form of a tower with landscaping at grade', Support a range of transportation options, continuing to promote walking, cycling and transit, 'Increase opportunities for residents to grow and access healthy foods close to home', and 'Design solutions for energy, water, materials, waste and indoor environmental quality to maximize energy efficiency and health performance of buildings'. The Plan also sets out seven principles for form of development considerations. Those most pertinent to today's questions include 'Recognizing a Transitional Role in Form and Scale', 'Developing a responsive Form to Private Views' and 'A Ground Oriented Focus in Public Realm Quality'. 'Recognizing a Transitional Role in Form and Scale', is to ensure a thoughtful urban design response for new development opportunity by recognizing the local, contextual role new built form can offer in mediating between established development and respective sites. Form and scale to "fill the gaps" can strengthen the image of the city. 'Developing a responsive Form to Private Views' emphasises that new development should be responsive to adjacent and nearby private views by shaping built form to optimize performance. Responsive building forms can help achieve a distinctive architectural identity. 'A Ground Oriented Focus in Public Realm Quality', emphasises that new development needs to contribute to public realm vitality and related public realm design quality. The other four guidelines include to 'Reinforce the Dome-Shaped Skyline', 'Strengthen the Urban Frame', 'Adhere to Prevailing View Corridors' and 'Demonstrate Shadowing Performance'.

'The West End Tower Form, Siting & Setbacks Bulletin' sets out specific criteria to be met in order to satisfy the West End Plans principles. As per *'The West End Tower Form, Siting & Setbacks Bulletin'*; building height and mass must prevent shadowing on parks, public open space and the West End Shopping "Villages" between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. P.D.T. at the fall and spring equinoxes. Here in this case they must not shadow Davie St. The building massing has been revised from earlier versions to ensure no additional shadowing on Davie Street. Shadowing from 10am to 4pm on the March and September Equinoxes indicates no issues. This will be subject to alter technical verification.

The '*RM-5A District Schedule & Guidelines*' - The existing zoning permits residential developments and some compatible retail, office, service and institutional uses and requires that developments achieve compatibility with neighboring development with respect to streetscape character, open spaces, view retention, sun-light access and privacy. At least 35% of dwelling units must include two or more bedrooms.

'The View Protection Guidelines' - The proposed building height falls below the City of Vancouver's view cones 3 and 12. The sites maximum height is not impacted by the view cone which has an approximate height limit of 88.4m geodetic for view cone 12 and 141.9m geodetic for view cone 3. VC 12 allows a height of 51.3m/ 168' and VC3 allows a height of 104.1m/342'.

The primary limit on height operating on the site is the *The West End Tower Form, Siting & Setbacks Bulletin* requirement to not shadow Davies Street until after 4pm. Therefore height is limited primarily by preventing shadowing on Davie Streets north sidewalk.

Rezoning Policy for the West End and 100% Secured Rental Housing Option with Below-Market Rental - In December 2020 Council approved an interim policy providing guiding criteria for an alternative to the current inclusionary social housing requirement for rezoning's in the Burrard Corridor of the West End Community Plan. As such, the subject property is located in Area E of the Burrard Corridor, where the interim policy allows consideration of rezoning proposals with 100% secured rental housing of which 20% of the residential floor area is secured below-market rental to have up to a 20% increase in floor area beyond what is enabled by the West End Community Plan and the West End - Tower Form Siting and Setbacks Admin Bulletin. The proposed average tower floor plate size (levels 7-16) falls within the 6,600 sq. ft. limit, and the proposed FSR is well within a 20% increase over what is achievable under the West End Community Plan. The proposal achieves an average floor plate of 599m²/ 6452sf.

Density - The RM-5A designation allows an outright density of 2.20 FSR but allows for higher densities under an amenity share cost schedule. This development proposes an FSR of 6.19 or 9945m²/ 107,051sf. The West End Plan for the Burrard Corridor, Area G allows a maximum Floorplate for Area G of 511m² /5,500 sq.ft above the podium.

Setbacks - The West End Plan for the Burrard Corridor, Area G allows a maximum frontage for Area G- of 39.6m /130'. The proposal states that it meets these requirements which will be subject to verification via a technical review. *The West End Tower Form, Siting & Setbacks Bulletin* requires a 40' side yard for the tower to facilitate tower separation. This application proposes 28'-6" and 30'-10". A tower separation study was provided by the applicant to demonstrate that 80' spacing can be achieved between the proposed tower and potential future towers on adjacent sites. The purpose of tower separation to facilitate daylight and consideration of views, & privacy. The bulletin allow discretion on these matters subject to urban design performance. Under the existing zoning the setback of a building at grade must have a south front yard of 3.7m/ 12', an east side yard of 2.1m/ 6'10", a west side yard of 2.1m/ 6'10" and a north rear yard of 2.1m/ 6'10".

Height - The RM-5A zoning allows for a maximum height of 58m/ 190'. The West End Plan for the Burrard Corridor, Area G allows an increased height of 91.4m/ 300' subject to view cone constraints. This development proposes an overall height of 48.5m/ 159' or geodetically 86.92m/ 285' at 16 storeys. This height will be subject to a technical review for verification purposes.

With regard to the form of development and since receiving staff advice on the original rezoning enquiry on May 18, 2021, the applicant revised the massing in order to eliminate shadowing on the north sidewalk of Davie Street, with more stepping at the tower crown closer the intent of the West End Community Plan guidelines.

The primary entrance for this rental residential tower is located off Burnaby Street with the service entry and parkade access to the rear off Pantages Lane. The tower massing has a podium base with tower above with side setbacks providing outdoor space at grade for the tenants. These areas are allocated for amenity and private uses including seating areas, urban agriculture, a dog run and private patios. The podium of the tower continues upwards from levels 02 to 06 with a standard central core and perimeter dwelling units. Studio units have Juliet balconies. The building steps in at level 07 on the east side to facilitate future projected tower separation requirements. The North side of the tower is stepped back at the top two levels

to minimize additional shadowing on Davie Street, which then creates an opportunity for north facing patios. At level 15, an indoor amenity space was added connecting to the adjacent patio, allowing all residents to enjoy the north facing views from both the indoor and outdoor amenity spaces. The level 16 patios are given to larger penthouse units.

To articulate the massing, the tower is split in two which helps to create slimmer proportions. The east volume is elongated with balcony frames on the Burnaby street side, with an inset at level 7 to further separate the volume. A step at level 16 creates a differentiation in height between the split towers. The larger massing then seems to recede in the background, emphasizing the smaller tower proportion. The ground level lobby and amenity are set back to distinguish the entry and provide separation from the street. The level 7 and ground level recesses, as well as the west side of levels 15 & 16 will be glazed to oppose the more solid clad tower. The character of the building attempts to reflect a contemporary, but monochromatic theme through an articulated massing volume with a punched window expression. The architectural expression has a functional quality which attempts to mitigate the perceived bulk of the building and minimize glazing to maximize energy performance. Material finishes include window wall, spandrel panels, metal panels, and white/charcoal grey cement panels.

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

The topics we'll be reviewing today in our questions include the articulation of massing, the livability, and the quality of the public realm interface generated at grade as per below:

1. Please comment on the Massing & Articulation considering: Does the articulation of massing, achieve a satisfactory character at the base, middle and top of the building with an appropriate order of scale for effective contextual fit?
2. Please comment on the livability considering: Does the proposal provide qualitative amenity space for the residents of the building?
3. Please comment on the Public Realm Interface considering: Does the proposal succeed in effectively integrating with the ground plane enhancing the quality of the streetscape?

• **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

The applicant noted that the design rationale is based on a tower in the park typology. They further noted that they are seeking to have their average floor plate slightly increased in size from what the policy framework typically expects. The basis for this is that the increase does not create any additional shadows.

With regard to the massing of the building, the base of the tower at the east is enlarged, creating roof patios while at the west the tower comes back to grade. The entrance to the building is generated by creating a recess at the bottom of the building which incorporates an amenity space. There are a mix of both private and public amenity spaces.

The landscaping at grade includes layered planted frontage with a low wall. On the western side there is a series of outdoor amenity spaces which included a children play space and urban agriculture. On the east side there is a dog run with private patios on the south/east corner. About 11 trees will be removed and 22 proposed in the replacement strategy.

The north part of the building at the upper levels is stepped to reduce shadowing and this also provides private and public roof patios for residents.

The character of the building overall reflects a contemporary monochromatic theme articulated by punch windows and a playful massing.

The project complies with all applicable sustainable goals and requirements. The building's envelope will be provided with continuous insulation and thermally broken balconies. Most of the studios units will have Juliet style balconies this will increase energy performance and minimize overlook issues.

The applicant team then took questions from the panel.

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

Having reviewed the project, it was moved by **MR. BONIFACE** and **MS. KOEHN** was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

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

- Design development of the entry;
- Consider the child play space and its solar and visual access.

Related Commentary:

There was general support for the application, its massing, scale, and character.

The Panelists noted the site planning is successfully handled.

The Panelists noted the livability of the proposal is successful with a good variety of amenity spaces provided.

The Panelists noted that utilizing thermally broken balconies is welcome.

Most panelists noted that additional development is required of the entrance area and the child play spaces solar and visual access. It should be adjusted so as to be within the sight lines of the amenity area. It is also not convincing in the amount of sun exposure. It could swap with the amenity area.

A panelist noted that it may be worth exploring an alternate location for the play space.

Some panelists noted they would encourage the applicant to put a canopy over the main entrance door. They recommended exploring opportunities for raincover where relevant.

A panelist noted that the entrance is not recessed enough. The massing would work better if you could move building line in. Activating the lane should also be a goal.

Some panelists noted that the building should have accessible entries into the building and units. They encourage the applicant to continue to work with the City regarding accessibility to the ground floor units for individuals with mobility issues.

One panelist suggested that the applicant should consider making the lobby more accessible from both sides as this will help making the lane side more prominent.

A panelist noted that the relationship to the public realm is generally good but the front entry could be more legible.

A panelist noted to need to consider the benefits of passive surveillance and CPTED. They suggested providing more patio areas to allow for more eyes on the street.

A panelist noted that the townhouse frontages and their relationship with the ground plain is generally successful.

A panelist noted that the stacked block look in the tower massing elements should have a different color or finish to encourage differentiation.

Some panelists noted that the crown needs more refinement. It needs a stronger upward element on south west corner to avoid eroding a strong concept. The massing is a sophisticated architectural approach but could include better resolution to the top of the tower notwithstanding the constraints of the shadowing requirement; it could still be improved.

A panelist noted more breakdown is needed in the massing. In particular, consider the two floors on the southwest corner where it steps back, and does not appear to be doing anything.

A panelist noted that there may be a perceived issue regarding equality of units and spaces with an unequal provision of balcony space quality.

Applicant's Response: The applicant team thanked the panel for recognizing the challenges of the project and for their comments.