

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** October 9, 2024

**TIME:** 3:00 pm

**PLACE:** Webex, Virtual

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

Heidi Nesbit (Chair)

Jane Vorbrodt

Aik Ablimit

Bob Lilly

Reza Mousakhani      Excused item 3

Arno Matis

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** K. Cermeno

### ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1. 282 W 49<sup>th</sup> Ave (Langara YMCA)
2. 4190-4950 Willow St
3. 1470-1476 W Broadway

Chair Heidi Nesbitt called the meeting to order at 3:00pm and noted the presence of quorum. The panel then considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 282 W 49<sup>th</sup> Ave (Langara YMCA)  
Permit No.: RZ-2024-00080  
Description: Musqueam Capital Corporation, the economic development arm of the xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam Indian Band), in partnership with YMCA BC and Townline, seeks to rezone the site to a new CD-1 district. This will permit a mixed-use development that offers a diverse range of housing options and new community facilities. It will also provide a unique opportunity to secure long-term economic prosperity and self-sufficiency for the Musqueam people. This initiative aims not only to generate economic growth but also to empower the Musqueam people through ownership and active participation in Vancouver's economic fabric. The proposal is for a mixed-use development with three buildings at heights of 8, 33, and 37 storeys that includes: community service focused replacement YMCA facility with associated childcare; 308 rental units, 269 strata units, and 88 social housing units; commercial space on the ground floor; a total floor area of 53,928 sq. m (580,472 sq. ft.); and a maximum building height of approximately 122 m (400 ft.). The application is being considered under the Cambie Corridor Plan and the Transit Oriented Areas Rezoning Policy.  
Application Status: Enhanced Rezoning Application  
Architect: BOP Architects  
Delegation: Alan Boniface, Architect, BOP  
Troy Abromaitis, Architect, BOP  
Derek Lee, Landscape Architect, PWL  
Charlotte Mearns, Musqueam Elder  
Staff: Kent McDougall & Benjamin Duffix

**EVALUATION:** Support with Recommendations (6/0)

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

Kent McDougall, 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 Cambie Corridor Plan. Kent concluded the presentation with a description of the site and a summary of the rezoning proposal.

Benjamin Duffix, 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. Benjamin 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. Please comment on height, density, and overall form for this highly visible unique site within a high-density Transit Oriented Area.

2. The proposed approach to site organization, public realm, and open spaces.
3. Any additional design development considerations.

**Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Applicant Alan Boniface, Architect for BOP, noted the objectives and gave a general overview of the project followed by Derek Lee, 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 **Bob Lilly** and seconded by **Aik Ablimit** 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. For the design team to carefully review the flexibility of use at the drop off and pick up area;
2. To ensure clarity of wayfinding for all people regardless of age or ability;
3. Further explore articulation of the social housing on the podium in particular to align with project values;
4. Further consider long term impacts of the project sustainability initiatives.

**Summary of Panel Commentary:**

The panel generally supported the project and the height, density, and site organization.

The project reflects a strong design team, and a panelist noted the City should trust and allow the applicant team freedom in developing this project.

A panelist noted some concern with the drop off zone and parking area. Consider people walking through, especially in high traffic areas, and clarity of wayfinding, especially for those with low vision.

A panelist noted to consider the materiality for the social housing component, there is a lack of coherency between the towers and the social housing building. Consider further articulation to break up the massing.

A panelist noted it was a bit of a missed opportunity not to have an amenity on the rooftop of the bigger tower.

A panelist noted to the design team to incorporate the sustainability initiatives throughout the whole design process as this will be critical for the long-term success

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

2. Address: 4910-4950 Willow Street  
Permit No.: RZ-2024-00061  
Description: To rezone the subject site from R1-1 (Residential Inclusive) District to CD-1 (Comprehensive Development) District. The proposal is to allow for the development of a 14-storey Ronald McDonald House facility and includes: 75 social housing units; a floor space ratio (FSR) of 3.5; and a building height of 54.7m (179 ft.) with additional height for rooftop amenity space. This application is being considered under the Cambie Corridor Plan
- Application Status: Rezoning Application  
Architect: Michael Green Architecture  
Delegation: Natalie Telewiak, Architect, MGA  
Stephen Vincent, Landscape, MGA  
Richard Pass, CEO Ronald McDonald House
- Staff: Michele Alborg & Allison Smith

**EVALUATION:** Support with Recommendations (6/0)

**Planner's Introduction:**

Allison Smith, 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 Cambie Corridor Plan. Allison concluded the presentation with a description of the site and a summary of the rezoning proposal.

Michele Alborg, Development Planner gave an overview of the form of development, followed by an urban design analysis for this project. Michele then gave a brief description of the proposed public realm interfaces, façade expression, and site accessibility 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 height, density, and massing along with integration into the surrounding context.
2. Please comment on the success of the proposed interfaces to:
  - W 33rd Ave
  - Willow St, and
  - the lane
3. Please comment on the façade expression of the tower.
4. Any further comments for consideration at future application stages.

**Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Applicant Natalie Telewiak Architect for MGA noted the objectives and gave a general overview of the project followed by Stephen Vincent, 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 **Bob Lilly** 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. The applicant to review the building's cross section and entrance ramp design to find a more inclusive and welcoming solution to the primary building entrance;
2. The applicant to explore solutions to ensure a safe and accessible connection across the lane to the park.

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

The panel noted support for the project.

The panelist noted the project is a great addition to the neighborhood and support the height, density and massing.

A panelist noted the strong aesthetic and supported the public realm interface. There was concern about stair and ramp access, and recommended solutions such as reducing the ramp length, seating, a landing, additional landscape, widening of stairs and/or dropping the ground floor height. The panelist also noted that the connection across the lane is confusing.

A panelist noted that the massing is beautiful and quite playful, offering a nice alternative to the typical podium tower typology in Vancouver. They recommended additional articulation of the north face at grade, not necessarily glazing but a solution which improves the human scale. As for the façade expression, the recommendation included additional articulation to the south face. The reduction of glazing is a positive for sustainability outcomes and to explore strategies to increase the level of natural light into the units.

A panelist noted the beautiful and elegant approach. Recommendations included celebrating the walkway to the northern hospital site and suggested a walking loop around the facility. Panel noted concerns with amount of slope of the ramp and stairs and suggested making the ramp more accessible by breaking it up or to have landings that are not as narrowed with more of a landscape feature; or gathering space to view neighbouring activity. In addition, panel suggested there could be more additional activation for the W 33<sup>rd</sup> Ave interface.

A panelist noted the interface on W 33<sup>rd</sup> Ave could be further activated; also noting the windows may not be the best solution due to the unique program of the facility. Panelist also recommended further exploration of site accessibility.

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

3. Address: 1470-1476 W Broadway  
Permit No.: RZ-2024-00052  
Description: To rezone the subject site from C3-A (Commercial) District to CD-1 (Comprehensive Development) District. The proposal is to allow for the development of a 34-storey mixed-use building. This proposal includes: 300 secured rental units with 20% of the floor area secured for below-market rental units; commercial space on the ground floor; a secondary Broadway Subway station entrance for South Granville station; a floor space ratio (FSR) of 13.0; and a building height of 119 m (391 ft.) with additional height for rooftop amenity space. This application is being considered under the Broadway Plan. The application requests consideration of additional density and for a reduction in the minimum job space requirements.
- Application Status: Rezoning Application  
Architect: MCM  
Delegation: Renante Solivar, Architect, MCM  
Oren Mizrahi, Landscape, Connect Landscape Architecture  
Staff: Carly Rosenblat & Hamid Shayan

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

**Planner's Introduction:**

Carly Rosenblat, 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 Broadway Plan. Carly 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 Broadway Plan, advice from the Panel is sought on the proposed Height, Density and Overall Massing with particular attention to the following:
  - The proposed podium height, proportion and expression and how it contributes to the future streetscape along W. Broadway;
  - Contribution to the skyline of Vancouver's "Second Downtown"
2. Please provide commentary on the proposed interface with the public realm along W. Broadway considering the secondary station entrance and public transit plaza.
3. Please provide any comments on preliminary architectural expression, materiality, and details to assist staff review of the future DP application.

**Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Applicant Renante Solivar, Architect for MCM noted the objectives and gave a general overview of the project followed by Oren Mizahri, 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 **BOB LILLY** and seconded by **AIK ABLIMIT** 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. Consider a more simplified tower expression and balcony articulation;
2. Explore material alternatives at the podium in the interest of simplified and rich detailing;
3. Review tapered expressions currently shown through the balconies at the upper levels;
4. The applicant to provide a better and more dignified experience for elevator access;
5. Consider to extend the pavement patterning into the public realm.

**Summary of Panel Commentary:**

The panel generally supported the project and its proposed height, density, and massing.

A panelist noted the tower could benefit from simplifying the expression, the white vertical bands appear to be fighting with the stepping of the project.

The diagonal screening is quite overpowering.

A panelist noted the overall design is quite busy, the transition from the tower to the base is quite busy and appears constrained.

A panelist noted there is a bit of disconnection with the podium and tower.

A panelist noted the crown idea at the top of the building is not successful.

A panelist noted the balconies, and the tower bands appear conflicting in the design.

The main entry to the elevator lobby is an unsuccessful experience consider further development.

A panelist noted the interface at West Broadway appears unfinished by stopping at the property line. There is opportunity here to wrap around the landscape and liven the public space.

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