

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: Oct 11, 2023 Minutes

TIME: 3:00 pm

PLACE: WEBEX

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:

- Craig Taylor
- Heidi Nesbitt
- John Stovell
- Kai Hotson
- Peeraj Thakre
- Scott Romses
- Margot Long
- Brittany Coughlin
- Amina Yasin

REGRETS: Meeta Lele

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	2096 W Broadway & 2560-2576 Arbutus St
2.	1395 W Broadway
3.	5763-5791 Oak St & 1008 W 41 st Ave

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

1. Address: 2096 W Broadway & 2560-2576 Arbutus St
Permit No.: RZ-2023-00032
Description: To develop a 30-storey mixed use building. The zoning would change from C-3A and C-8 (Commercial) to CD-1 (Comprehensive Development) District. This proposal includes: 260 secured rental units, 20% at below market rates; Commercial space on the ground floor; Space for the Ohel Ya'akov Community Kollel; A secondary Broadway Subway station entrance for Arbutus Station; A floor space ratio (FSR) of 11.40; A floor area of 21,444 sq. m (230,819 sq. ft.); A building height of 90.8 m (298.0 ft.) [with additional height for rooftop amenity space]; and 67 vehicle parking spaces and 489 bicycle parking spaces. This application is being considered under the Broadway Plan

Application Status: Rezoning Application
Architect: MCM Partnership
Staff: Tiffany Rogeau & Hamid Shayan

EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations

Planner's Introduction:

Tiffany Rogeau, 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 under the Broadway Plan. Tiffany, concluded the presentation with a summary of the rezoning proposal.

Hamid Shayan, Development Planner gave an overview of the neighbourhood site context in relation to the proposal. Hamid Shayan 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. 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 of the proposal with particular attention to the following:
 - Podium and tower proportion and expression
 - Contribution to the skyline of Vancouver's "Second Downtown"
2. Does the proposal, including preliminary arrangement of at-grade uses and building articulation, reinforce the prominence of Broadway as a Great Street and foster a lively public realm integrated with the future station area?
3. Please provide any comments on preliminary material palette, architectural expression, and details to assist staff review of the future DP application.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

The applicant team noted the objectives and gave a general overview of the project followed by the 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. THAKRE** and seconded by **MR. STOVELL** 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. Further development of the secondary station access, (the proposed location is too close to the residential entry);
2. Further development of the public spaces to support social sustainability;
3. Further development of the expression of the tower to better integrate with the podium;
4. Further design development and programming of the corner plaza.

Summary of Panel Commentary:

There was general support of the massing and height.

The architectural expression could benefit from further refinement; the project should better reflect the Kitsilano area.

Consider a simpler architectural expression.

A panelist noted the tower balcony expression tends to arbitrarily end at the podium.

The brick element at the base of the building is incongruous with the expression of the rest of the project.

Further development of the east and west facades is recommended. The facades and cultural spaces feel flat. The hierarchy between uses and massing is unclear.

As a transit hub consider better access to the residential entry, it is presently too close. Also, consider better contribution to employment space. A panelist suggested extending the canopy element. Consider relocating the residential entry so the subway entry fronts the plaza.

The public realm requires further development.

Consider more solar shading.

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

2. Address: 1395 W Broadway
Permit No.: RZ-2023-00026
Description: To rezone the subject site from C-3A (Commercial) District to CD-1 (Comprehensive Development) District to allow for the development of a 24-storey office building and includes: Commercial space on the ground floor; A floor space ratio (FSR) of 9.0; A building height of 97.0 m (319.8 ft.); and 274 vehicle parking spaces and 187 bicycle parking spaces. This application is being considered under the Broadway Plan.

Application Status: Rezoning Application
Architect: Andrew Cheung Architects Inc.
Delegation: Andrew Cheung Architect, ACA & Justin Taylor Landscape Architect, DKL
Staff: Carl Stanford & Leifka Vissers

EVALUATION: Recommend Resubmission (7 /0)

Planner's Introduction:

Leifka Vissers, 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 under the Broadway Plan. Leifka, concluded the presentation with a summary of the rezoning proposal.

Carl Stanford, Development Planner then gave an overview of the neighbourhood site context in relation to the proposal. Carl 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. Does the Panel support the density, massing, and height, of the building considering in particular the below questions:
 - a) Does the proposal demonstrate successful architectural expression, as experienced close up, on the approach, and from a distance?
 - b) Are the tower dimensions and mass of sufficiently attractive proportions to achieve a positive contribution to the skyline given its prominence as a landmark building?
2. Please comment on the impact on the public realm interface with consideration of:
 - a) Does the proposal provide a responsive public realm on all three sides responding to the unique character of each street?
 - b) Does the proposal succeed in enhancing and effectively integrating with the ground plane, supporting its success as a pedestrian thoroughfare?

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Andrew Cheung Architect for Andrew Cheung Architects, and Justin Taylor Landscape Architect for DKL, 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 **Margo Long** and seconded by **Scott Romses** and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

THAT the Panel **Recommend Resubmission** of the project to the Urban Design Panel with the following recommendations to be reviewed by City Staff:

1. Design development to the public realm particularly along Hemlock Street and the plaza off Broadway;
2. Design development to the building to meet the ground better;
3. Design development to achieve a more cohesive expression at the podium and the transition to the tower;
4. Design development to consider improved detailing particularly at junctions;
5. Design development to consider revealing interior functions at grade;
6. Design development to consider access to the rooftop missed for building tenants.

Summary of Panel Commentary:

There was general support for the height and density.

The Panel noted the three primary elements of the proposal are not well articulated particularly at grade. It does not meet the ground well, and does not engage well with the public realm. There is nothing unique at grade. It's very matter of fact and needs a finer grain at grade. There is a sloping hill with a restaurant at the back with no access along the entirety of Hemlock Street.

Most panelists noted the building needs refinement, editing and should bring a finer grain to the building expression.

Most panelists noted the podium is unsuccessful.

Some panelists noted the need to reveal the interior of the building. There should be access to outside, breakout spaces, and something to play out on the facade of building breaking up the articulation with balconies and terraces.

Some panelists noted the overall architectural expression needs more work. The success needs cohesive architectural massing. The building is not innovative and nothing memorable with prismatic office towers being quite common now.

Some panelists noted the building is successful close up more or less but not at the skirting of the curtain wall as it transitions to the podium.

Some panelists noted the concerns over the curtain wall sleeved over the stone podium as being an awkward transition between the podium and tower. It needs to be simplified.

Some panelists noted the potential of the architecture is entirely dependant on the detailing and should be clearly articulated in design development.

Some panelists noted the glass frit and solar shading need a lot more work and are undeveloped.

Some panelists noted the arch expression at close and at a distance is dependent on the quality of the detailing of the glass and how the fins work.

Some panelists noted the there are no effective plazas just entrance lobbies. The corner cuts need to be large and qualitative. It should be a place to comfortably pause and repose. Hemlock Streets interface is rigid. The stairs between entrances achieve nothing. The transitions are not organic or related to the character of the area. West 8th Avenue is not a great entrance design or a useful patio design. The interior spaces don't integrate well with the public realm.

Some panelists noted the amenities need more thought. The rooftop is a missed opportunity and should be strongly considered as an amenity space.

Some panelists noted the quality and detailing of the landscape could benefit from further development. It's just concrete at grade.

A Panelist noted that the building form seems aggressive and the programming is deficient.

A Panelist noted that the applicant should consider operable windows in the curtain wall. The facade pattern is neutral.

A Panelist noted concern on the effectiveness of the fins. They can also degrade performance of the curtain wall performance thermally. There is a disconnection between podium and tower.

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

3. Address: 5763-5791 Oak Street & 1008 W 41st Ave
Permit No.: DP-2022-00814
Description: To rezone the subject site from C-1 (Commercial) District to CD-1 (Comprehensive Development) District. The proposal is to allow for the development of a 25-storey and 17-storey mixed-use building over a 6-storey podium and includes: 357 secured rental units with 20% of the floor area secured for below market rental units (approximately 72 units); Commercial space on the ground floor; A floor space ratio (FSR) of 7.31; A building height of 78.5 m (258 ft.) (25 storeys) and 53.7 m (176 ft.) (17 storeys); and 224 vehicle parking spaces and 696 bicycle parking spaces. This application is being considered under the Cambie Corridor Plan. The application requests consideration of height and density in excess of the existing policy.

Application Status: Rezoning Application
Architect: Arcadis Architects (Canada) Inc.
Staff: Omar Aljebouri & Bryan Wong

EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations (7/0)

Planner's Introduction:

Bryan Wong, 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 under the Cambie Corridor Plan. Bryan concluded the presentation with a summary of the rezoning proposal.

Omar Aljebouri, Development Planner gave an overview of the neighbourhood site context in relation to the proposal. Omar 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. The increased height and density above what the Cambie Plan prescribes for the delivery of additional rental housing within an emerging high density context.
2. The proposed location and overall design of the covered plaza.
3. The amount and quality of indoor and outdoor amenities.
4. Any advice for consideration at the Development Permit stage.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

The applicant team noted the objectives and gave a general overview of the project followed by the 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 **MR. AEPLI** and seconded by **MR. STOVELL** 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. Further design development of the plaza and programming;
2. Further refinement of the architecture;
3. Consider increasing the amount of amenity space.

Summary of Panel Commentary:

There was general support for the height and density.
Some panelists noted it is a strong improvement from the previous submission.
The architecture has improved however could still benefit from further refinement.

Panelists noted to reinforce the “GRID” expression, particularly facing west.
Panelists noted to reinforce the grid pattern in the ground plain surface treatment.
The grid elements should be reinforced so they do not appear as “stuck on.”

The panel recommended further development of the plaza and programming. There should be more amenity space in general. Consider an indoor amenity on level seven.
The panel noted the linear plaza is a success.

The corner plaza is covered and appears more of an entry area for a large retail tenant; this will not be a successful public space.
Consider developing a more successful landscape design at this corner presently not a lot of interest.

Consider more green space at the ground floor presently this space is not giving back much to the public realm.

Panelists recommended more roof decks.

Panel noted to the applicant to reconsider the extent of the window to wall ratio to improve the envelope performance.

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