

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: Oct 26, 2022

TIME: 3:00 pm

PLACE: Webex

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:

Natalie Telewiak
Margot Long
Kelly Lee
Peeraj Thakre
Geoff Lister
Reza Mousakhani
Amina Yasin
Jane Vorbrodt

REGRETS:

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1. 1943 E Hastings St

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

1. Address: 1943 E Hastings St
 Permit No. DP-2022-00157
 Description: To develop an eight-story mixed-use building with commercial at grade and consisting of 136 multiple dwellings (includes 2 live-work units) over 3 levels of underground parking with 144 parking spaces, having vehicular access from the lane on this existing site. A proposed FSR of 3.99 and a floor area of 120,861 sq ft. A maximum building height of 102.4 ft.
 Zoning: CD-1
 Application Status: Complete Development Application
 Architect: BOP Architects
 Staff: Omar Aljebouri

EVALUATION: SUPPORT WITH RECOMMENDATIONS (1 Non-Support/ 7 Support)

Planner's Introduction:

Development Planner, Omar Aljebouri, began the presentation by noting this is a Development Permit application following rezoning under the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan. It is an eight-storey mixed-use development with commercial and two live-work units at grade and 136 strata units. On March 9, 2021, Council approved the form of development, which defines the height, density and general massing. The project is returning to the Panel to discuss design refinements, in particular the evolution of the public realm and building character.

The Context

- This site is located on the northwest corner of Hastings Street and Semlin Drive with a steep drop toward the lane of approximately 11 ft. (3.4m).
- Context:
 - North: I-2 up to 100 ft.
 - South: X'pey Elementary School
 - East: Up to 6-st mixed-use
 - West: Up to 8-st mixed-use

The Plan's Vision

- The Hastings area will become a vibrant mixed-use area with a range of building heights and forms.
- It will have a thriving retail environment that serves residents and regional needs.
- It will have wider, improved sidewalks that make this a more comfortable environment for people. New spaces for gathering and public life will be integrated.
- Some of the Built Form and Public Realm Policies include:
 - Maintaining an active street wall with varied store frontages that encourage smaller scaled and locally oriented retail.
 - Creating "urban rooms" or pedestrian plazas to allow for placemaking and opportunities to incorporate outdoor seating and other pedestrian amenities.

- Providing public realm improvements such as street trees seating, patios, bike racks, and public art.

Rezoning

Some project highlights from Rezoning:

- A recessed streetwall with irregular planes and transparent balconies.
- Balanced emphasis on both street elevations.
- Some framing elements.
- A corner urban room with seating.
- Animated lane interface.
- Indoor and outdoor amenities on Level 7 and a commercial terrace at the lane.
- UDP supported the project at Rezoning with recommendations to develop the retail frontage along Hastings and the public realm along Semlin.

Development Permit

Current refinements to the project include:

- A consistent expression along E Hastings.
- A corner urban room with seating.
- Animated lane interface.
- Indoor and outdoor amenities on the mezzanine and Level 7, as well as a commercial terrace at the lane.

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

1. The evolution of the public realm and pedestrian interface.
2. The evolution of the overall building articulation and the façade strategy for a corner site.
3. The proposed indoor and outdoor amenities.
4. Any additional comments for consideration.

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

The applicant began by noting the two major feedback/comments from the previous submission was the requirement to add exterior balconies to all suites and to remove the overhang from balconies on the east elevation.

The goal was to look for a solution for the exteriors that was visually interesting but also provided an improved building performance.

With horizontal sun shading and vertical screening, the balconies do the expressive work. To further articulate the massing the saw tooth has been alternated. Have also broken down the facade with three vertical cuts.

Materials include textured metal panelling, weathering steel, concrete, and aluminum compost panels.

The corner where the balconies were removed is where the stitching of the building comes together.

The key feature of the project is the urban room at the corner.

Level 8 has been pulled back at the exit stairs to allow for a larger outdoor amenity space and improved the indoor one.

Other amenities include a bike room, bike racks, car share stalls.

Privacy to the residential units has been improved.

At the residential areas, there is a generous balcony.

There is a significant grade change that has an impact on the landscape; there are a lot of step planters that go down as a result.

There are planters to minimize the look of the guardrails.

With the CRU at the back, having the openness allows for a nice opportunity of a public and semipublic space.

There are long benches, movable seats, and planters on the edge as part of the landscape.

Moving to Hastings there are angled patterns CRU nice opportunity for paving treatment and add interest to the project.

At the property line, it is your city standard boulevard treatment.

Additional landscape amenities include flexible seating, quieter space, green roofs, adaptive planting and a play area.

Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:

Having reviewed the project it was moved by **MS. LEE** and seconded by **MS. THAKRE** and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

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

- Consider opportunities to green and activate at the lane within the site.
- Enhance the livability and functionality of the unit suites.
- Enhance the amenity space on the roof considering the size and layout.
- Consider accessible design within units and common spaces.

Related Commentary:

There was general support for the design changes and refinements from the rezoning responses to previous comments in a positive way.

The overall articulation has improved and fits in well with the neighborhood and creates a building identity. There is good definition and breaking.

The live work units are successfully expressed.

The panel commended the balconies for all the units, they are functional.

Evolution of the retail unit along the edge is a big improvement from the rezoning

Consider the livability of the units, such as the studio and two bedroom units, who are these being marketed towards; consider the livability of the space. Consider units need circulation in

order to be livable. The second bedroom should function as such, they currently do not work. If anything they should be called dens. These are not liveable without circulation. The studios having the two toilets and potentially two bedrooms in a studio is pushing the edges of liveability. More storage makes more sense. Questions on how to label units and how they really are. Two toilets separated by glass is not appropriate.

Consider accessibility for the units and building as a whole. There should be better consideration for accessibility in such a neighbourhood with plenty of amenities and across from a school. The equality is not integrated into marketing. Accessible family units should be better considered. Urban room linear arrangement of seating is good for people with visual impairment. Continue with this idea. Add some low lighting for visual accessibility. Amenity washrooms should be accessible. Enlarge the 7 level amenity horizontally rather than vertically to aid with accessibility.

The panel recommended to enhance the quality and the scale of the amenity of the roof consider the livability of the space as a whole. Bike repair amenity should be considered.

The amenity on the roof could be increased in size and consider consolidating the amenity spaces at the roof for a more successful programming.

The public realm and pedestrian interface is a positive evolution from the rezoning submission.

The general location of the exterior urban room opportunity to further study the use of this area.

A panelist noted the urban room could benefit from design development that provides more than just seating and benches. Consider some low lighting for visual accessibility.

The north face at the lane think about how to soften this edge to activate the lane, consider how the building turns the corner. Consider more greening at the lane. Consider the transition at the lane.

The panel was in general support of the landscape.

The landscape created a nice transition to the outdoor.

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