

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** Nov 6, 2024

**TIME:** 3:00 pm

**PLACE:** Webex, Virtual

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

Craig Taylor  
Helen Besharat  
Catherine Lemieux  
Aik Ablimit  
Bob Lilly  
Federica Piccone

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** K. Cermeno

### ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1. 657 W 37<sup>th</sup> Ave Parcel B
2. 657 W 37<sup>th</sup> Ave Parcel F

Address: 657 W 37<sup>th</sup> Ave Parcel B  
Permit No.: DP-2024-00802  
Description: To develop three residential towers on this site, consisting of: a 24-storey apartment with 207 strata units and 67 moderate income rental units, with an approximate height of 250 ft. (76 m.); a 20-storey apartment with building with 203 strata units and 2 secured market rental units, with an approximate height of 200 ft. (61 m.); a 12-storey apartment with 101 secured market rental units and 32 moderate income rental units, with an approximate height of 123 ft. (37.5 m.); a combined total floor area of 496,895 sq.ft. (43,655 sq.m.) four levels of underground parking, having vehicular access from Manson St.

Application Status: Complete Development Application  
Architect: GBL Architects Inc  
Delegation: Thomas Lee, Architect, GBL  
Amela Brudar, Architect GBL  
Cameron Woodruff, Landscape Architect, PMG  
Tobias Slezak, MST Cultural Liaison

Staff: Brenda Clark

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

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

**Brenda Clark**, 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. Brenda 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 the design, including overall massing and site design.
2. Comment on the quality of the public realm and open spaces, including:
  - the three site entries, particularly the north entry adjacent to the pollinator corridor;
  - the inner courtyard and amenities; and,
  - the interface with the Heather St. Row

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

Applicant Thomas Lee and Amela Brudar Architects for GBL noted the objectives and gave a general overview of the project followed by Cameron Woodruff 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. Ablimit** and seconded by **Ms. Besharat** 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. Encourage and support further development and refinement of the towers while clearly maintaining their contrast in expression.

**Summary of Panel Commentary:**

The panel noted the Project is successful and thoughtful from the massing to the site planning.

The panel acknowledged and appreciated the participation of the MST team in the project design and fabric.

The panel generally supported the evolution of the design and the quality of the public realm.

The massing appears logical.

The essential courtyard and the amenity space at the top is fluid and strong.

The parti is strong.

The landscape is generally strong.

Some design development comments included,

Consider further development of the 3-bedroom units presently some living spaces appear very small.

Consider the recess of the townhome units.

Consider making the entry to the site more welcoming for pedestrians.

Regarding materiality, consider further development of the masonry and brick elements.

Consider the transition of the top portion of the building to the glass.

Regarding B1, consider privacy issues to help with marketability of units.

Consider adding weather protection feature to top floor balconies.

Consider the evolution of the curving balconies at the podium.

Consider adding a dedicated bike elevator and bike parking for a project of this size.

Consider how water is treated in the landscape design, exposure on the surface, and long-term management.

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

2.Address: 657 W 37<sup>th</sup> Ave Parcel F  
Permit No.: DP-2024-00853  
Description: To develop three residential towers on this site consisting of: an 18-storey apartment with 232 strata units, with an approximate height of 184 ft. (56 m); a 25-storey apartment with 298 strata units, with an approximate height of 249 ft. (76 m); and a 6-storey apartment with 78 strata units, 30 secured market rental units and 12 moderate income rental units, with an approximate height of 65 ft. (20 m); a combined total floor area of 484,207 sq.ft. (44,984 sq.m.); three levels of underground parking, having vehicular access from the lane.

Application Status: Complete Development Application  
Architect: RH Architects Inc  
Delegation: Vincent Yen, Architect, RHA  
Stephen Vincent, Landscape Architect, DKL  
Staff: Grace Jiang

**EVALUATION:** 4 support/ 1 abstained

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

Grace Jiang 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. Grace 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. Comment of the overall evolution of the design, including building massing and podium heights.
2. Comment on the quality of the public realm and the interface, such as the meeting point (corner plaza), courtyard, and lane.
3. Advice on the architectural expression, considering:
  - Establishing signature building F2
  - Animating the public realm

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

Applicant Vincent Yen Architect for RHA 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 **Ms. Lemieux** and seconded by **Ms. Piccone** 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 further development of building F3;
2. Consider a stronger landscape connection of parcels B and F.

**Summary of Panel Commentary:**

The panel generally supported the evolution of the design and building massing.

There was support for buildings F1 and F2.

The panel noted the public realm and courtyard are generally successful.

The connectivity throughout the site is generally successful.

Creating the one central courtyard works well with the overall intent of the masterplan.

Consider the animation of the gathering area as the project develops.

Consider further landscape connection of parcels B and F.

Some panel members noted the project is still far from being a signature building F2, the materiality does not express this.

A panel member noted amongst the three buildings the parti and podium is not clear. Consider do they need to be similar when the buildings are different heights.

The podiums heights are rather tall.

Consider the orientation and bulkiness of the podium.

A panel member noted the F3 building is a bit forgotten compared to F1 and F2.

A panel member noted the vocabulary of the building and massing need further resolution to have a clear parti.

A panel member noticed there is a bit of a missed opportunity by not extending the pollinator corridor along the strip.

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