

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: June 13, 2018

TIME: 3:00 pm

PLACE: Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Amela Brudar Excused from Item 3
Yinjin Wen
Muneesh Sharma
Colette Parsons
Marie-France Venneri
Jim Huffman
Derek Neale
Susan Orckwell
Leslie Shieh
Helen Besharat Excused from Item 1

REGRETS: David Jerke
Grant Newfield

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** K. Cermeno

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1636 Clark Drive & 1321 - 1395 E 1st Avenue
2.	349 W Georgia Street (Post Office)
3.	1551 Quebec Street - SEFC - Building 5 "The Creek"

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Amela Brudar, called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum.

1. Address: 1636 Clark Drive & 1321 - 1395 E 1st Avenue
- Permit No. RZ-2018-00015
- Description: To develop a mixed-use building consisting of a social enterprise space at grade, an on-site withdrawal management centre with up to 20 transitional units, and 97 social housing units; all over one level of underground parking with 39 vehicle stalls and 100 bicycle spaces. The proposed floor area is 12,192 sq. m (131,234 sq. ft.), the floor space ratio (FSR) is approximately 3.12 and the building height is approximately 100 ft.
- Zoning: I-2 & RM-4N to CD-1
- Application Status: Rezoning Application
- Review: First
- Architect: HDR Architecture
- Owner: James Forsyth, BC Housing
- Delegation: John Scott, Architect, HDR Architecture
Ulrich Gussler, Architect, HDR Architect
Ken Larson, Landscape Architect, Connect
Jim Aalders, HDR Architect
- Staff: Sarah Crowley & Patrick Chan

EVALUATION: SUPPORT with Recommendations

- **Introduction:**

Rezoning Planner, Sarah Crowley, introduced the rezoning application as a mixed-use development submitted on behalf of the applicant, BC Housing.

This is a split zone site owned by the City of Vancouver, I-2 industrial and RM-4N general urban. The site is an 11 lot assembly, full block from Clark to McLean on the north side of E 1st Ave measuring 116m (380 ft. frontage). There is an approximate 30 ft (9 m) drop in the slope on site from McLean down to Clark Drive. The site area measures at 4,194 sq. m. (45,148 sq. ft.)

The I -2 portion of the site is currently vacant and the RM4N portion is occupied by 5 rental buildings with 21 tenants in situ. There are residential units developed adjacent to the lane to the north within 16 m (52 ft.) from the northern boundary of this site.

The proposal is to rezone under Grandview-Woodland Plan and Social Housing policies to permit development of approximately 12,192 sq. m. (131,234 sf.) mixed-use building containing: a detoxification center including 20 transitional housing units, 97 social housing units and a social enterprise space at grade.

The 50,900sq ft. detoxification centre including up to 20 transitional housing units and associated programs will be managed by Vancouver Coastal Health. A 3,600 sq. ft social enterprise space will be funded and operated by COV. 97 social housing units will be managed by BC Housing or a Housing provider. The development will include 39 underground parking stalls and loading bays and 100 bike spaces.

This application has been submitted under the City's SHORT Pilot program which prioritizes social housing projects internally and a dedicated staff team is on hand to process these particular applications.

The height is up to 100 ft. on 1-2 zone fronting onto Clark Drive and up to 65 ft fronting on McLean Drive. The density has approximately as 3.12 FSR.

This site is within the Grandview Woodland area and is subject to the policies within the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan (2016). The project site is located within East 1st Avenue sub-area (Section 6.4.2), this section of the plan had indicated that future development could consider a 100% 6-storey secured rental housing, T- type typology with a density up to 2.4 FSR, locate parking at rear with access from lane. However other sections of the plan indicated that additional height and density could be accommodated for social housing projects. Additional health and wellness uses (including detoxification centers) were described as needed in the neighborhood within the Plan.

Other relevant City policies and strategies for this development are:

- Housing Vancouver Strategy (2017)
- Housing Vancouver 3- Year Action Plan 2018-2020
- Affordable Housing Policies (1989, updated 1991)

Development Planner Patrick Chan began with a review of the Grandview Woodland (GW) Plan's "T-Shaped Apartment" typology envisioned for the subject site as a ground to discuss how the proposed design responded to the GW Plan's urban design performance. These T-Shaped Apartments' key intention was to provide more breathing space and improve air / light access on the laneside. As such, present a more sympathetic interface with the existing and future fabric across from the lane. Furthermore, these T-Shaped Apartments are to be within 118 ft. in width to better response to the area's finer scale street / building rhythm.

Chan then described how the proposed building - particularly its east-west axis and continuous base-podium - is a response to the sharply sloped one block-sized site and the clinical programming. Next, Chan talked about the design parti which comprises "three moments" that sit above the base-podium: The vertical ten-storeys Clark Tower; the roof-garden; and the horizontally expressed McLean Building. He pointed out that while the base-podium and McLean Building have expansive widths, there are attempts to reduce visual monotony through some material variations and recesses in the wall-planes. More importantly, the negative space provided by the roof-garden was an interpretation of the T-Shaped Apartments' intended urban design performance to increase breathing space, light and air.

Prior to presenting questions to the panel members, Chan noted this project was an exercise in balancing the GW Plan's urban design intentions for sensitivity to the existing and future neighbourhood fabric; the acute housing needs; the medical treatment's spatial and program requirements; an opportunity for architectural excellence; and lastly, liveability that extends beyond technical measures to include fostering a sense of home.

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

1. The proposed massing's response to the Grandview-Woodland Plan's urban design intentions (through the T-Shaped Apartments) to improve solar / air access, and to offer moments of respite hence a more sympathetic relation with the area's finer scale and rhythm.
2. The Building Identity in terms of presenting a residential feel, thus foster a sense of home for future residents, while also addressing the Clark and East 1st corner.
3. Liveability and usability issues pertaining private outdoor spaces such as balconies for the family-sized units, connectivity between indoor and outdoor amenity spaces, and lastly, ease of wayfinding and entrance identity.

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

The piece that was missing posed a challenge as architects was taking a piece that was intended to look a certain way with defining uses and addresses the agreement at principal, the contract, between the City, Coastal Health and BC housing.

Not too long after establishing the GRANDVIEW woodland plan and redefining this particular block in the middle of the neighborhood, as a result, there are individuals in the neighborhood that feel this is appropriate for the neighborhood and some that feel it goes away from the WOODLAND plan. The challenge is to address both sides and work with a blended program.

The clinics are looking for 25000 sf of space and looking at fitting as many 1,2 and 3 rental units that are moderately priced this has a huge impact on how this project is addressed. We are trying to create a forum of development that will respect the anticipated blocks and improve some of the present characteristics.

The intent is to address the scale of the building and podium to mimic the elements and have similar height and setbacks of the neighborhood.

The tower arrangement is purposeful to lessen the shadowing.

The program did discuss in its evolution to have extended balconies, trying to address the city's green rezoning policy including the step code and trying to keep as energy efficient as possible. Note the balconies cost regardless the direction, tried to articulate the building in terms of intrusions, recesses, various colors, filigree, and using Juliette balconies instead of extended balconies to the outdoor space.

The front of the project there are proposed setbacks, looking to work with an indigenous artists. The entrance to the plaza has been widened with landscape.

Landscape and outdoor access does improve patient outcome, looking to have setbacks that will create a community wellness walk, and have a number of step gardens. Inside there is a sunken atrium.

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 Ms. Parson and seconded by Ms. Orckwell and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

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

- Further design refinement to building base;
 - Further design development to residential portions to soften residential expression;
 - To explore relocating height and density to the west block to allow for further articulation on the east block.
- **Related Commentary:**

There were strong opinion on both sides in regards to the height and form. The majority of the panel supported the massing and form. There was general support for the density. The program and density is appropriate for the location.

This project is badly needed in this city. Not so much the podium but how the residential looks above it. Understand the large floor plates due to complex uses of the building.

Comments from panel members included a need for a breakdown of the massing. The massing and form could go higher on either end. The massing needs work in terms of making it more residential friendly.

The form is foreign to the existing neighborhood, the form choice appears they want to make the building bigger, the giant slope roofs are still costing money, hope the city does not support that every site become a square box do not think this is a proper interpretation of the current policy. Livability and usability was handled quite well.

When it came to the base generally felt the strong base was appropriate and the mimicking of the building across the street was an appropriate approach.

A panel member noted the building base appeared a bit relentless and flat and the base does not have to be a different color.

In regards to the height of the west block the majority of the panel members were comfortable adding additional height to that corner.

Define the corner of Clark drive and gateway, the higher massing is appropriate and this will manifest itself to mark the corner.

There is a lot of effort to make the identity of the building all connect. To make a giant base with a challenging site that has a high slope, one needs to be sensitive to the street as well. People need to be able to interact.

Presently appears as one giant building, suggest each element have its individual expressions, this would help break the massing as well. As well by breaking it up might help more to look like model across the street.

The building shape versus the T shape idea, understand trying to get more light on the back side, understand trying to get more light on the back side, you could easily access the a floor on the west portion of the building and carve out a few floors on the north side.

A panel member noted the interpretation of the Grandview Woodlands Heights T-shape was a nice interpretation.

In terms of the overall character, the institutional portion looks to institutional especially the lane in the back, anything you can do to soften it would be great.

With more buildings coming forward with new energy rezoning policy, the Energy performance of the building will start dictating a certain typologies in the buildings that is not presently seen. Consensus in principal supports the height, massing, and density with modifications.

The panel noted the building is doing the right thing sheltering the employees and residences by providing a strong presence on the street.

Support the big residential balconies. It is not the best site however in terms of sounds and noise the Juliette balconies are appropriate and understand trying to make a cost effective project.

In terms of landscape suggest anything possible to buffer that traffic is a positive. Future proofing of the lane space would be great. In terms of the indoor/outdoor amenity I would rather they come together to get light into the lobby. An elevator up to the amenity would be useful.

Other comments included having a flat roof instead of an angle roof. Like the McClean entrance as the residential entrance. The height solar studies look like it has optimized the sun for the neighbors. Regarding Clark and 1st appreciate having the aboriginal artists.

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

2. Address:	349 W Georgia Street (Post Office)
Permit No.	DP-2018-00380
Description:	To develop the site with a mixed-use development consisting of commercial at grade and on levels two to four, office space on levels five to seven, a 21-storey and a 22-storey office towers; all over two levels of underground parking.
Zoning:	DD
Application Status:	Complete Development Application
Review:	Third (First as DP)
Architect:	MCM Partnership
Delegation:	Mark Thompson, Architect, MCM Elijah Sabadlan, Donald Luxton & Associates
Staff:	Paul Cheng

EVALUATION:

- **Introduction:**

Development Planner, Paul Cheng, introduced the project as this is a Development Permit application. The previous rezoning application has been withdrawn.

The ODP permits a 7.0 FSR of commercial density, because this building is considered a major heritage resource in the City, and recognizing that retention of this building would be a significant challenge, staff are contemplating a bonusing of the density as compensation for the heritage retention, and an amount of heritage density transfer into the site. A total 10.93 FSR is proposed (1.43 million s.f.)

The previous rezoning proposed 2.08 with residential density of 5 FSR. A reduction of 130,000sf translates into less building mass in the upper floors.

Large floor-plate buildings were the approach for the entertainment district, not slender residential towers on low podiums, i.e. Telus office, 753 Seymour, Central Library, future Art Gallery, stadium, arena, Casino.

This is the largest heritage retention project you will ever see.

The obligation to retain a massive floorplate presents challenges with having uses in some of the deep dark spaces. No residential or office could work in that floorplate. The current adjacent sidewalk experience is quite weak. The project represents some "urban repair" as the following:

- porosity through all 4 sides compared to current opaque heavy walls of granite;
- Significance to new Commercial Retail tenancies, not just shopping, but "third places" where socializing urban life takes place between the private realm and public realm, (i.e. Pubs, restaurants, cafes, hair salons, etc.);
- existing surface parking lot into public spaces and also restaurant terraces;
- 4 existing curb cuts reduced to 2, relegated to Hamilton.

Staff are also considering some minor incursions into the applicable viewcone.

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

1. Does the proposal's open space and building facades successfully relate to the existing public spaces located on neighbouring properties (i.e. Library Square and the Queen Elizabeth Theatre forecourt)?
2. Do the proposed additions successfully pay due homage to the retained heritage building?

3. Please provide commentary, if any, on the proposed detailing of the new additions and ground floor interfaces.

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

This is a previous rezoning application that was supported at UDP with commentary. There has been a lot of interest for large floor plate buildings in this neighborhood from the technology sector. This opportunity has changed the life of the project. The building has a unique heritage component.

We redesigned the project as an office retail project. The uses include parking below grade in the building, above grade retail on multiple levels taking up a lot of the large plates of the podium, and parking with office. The top floor of the existing building is one big office building.

Sitting on the top of the podium we have another large new floor. There are multi-level atriums that provide light and air to the larger floors.

The heritage podium provides a multiple level of uses and totals 200000 sf gross density because some of the parking has been taken out. The space between the buildings is presently over 100 sf.

The principles working on is the idea of urban repair, the ground plain around, created a public open space on Georgia St, and activating the street scape. We have kept the landfill onsite, to enhance the sustainable aspect of the heritage element.

A key principle is creating a strong dialogue between the heritage elements and the office space.

There is a large basement where a parking will be slid below. There is a floor below Hamilton that will be activated with retail and office. We are reusing the existing loading area. The parking total is 10 percent less than the bylaw. The crossings have been reduced from 5 to 2.

An improvement is one will be able to walk inside the building from the lobby through the retail concourse and out the front edge onto Georgia.

A massing strategy was based on the relationship between the two open spaces. There are elements that relate with the open plaza, added a linking floor, a programmatic element with the atriums. There is an obvious distinction between the old and the new.

An important relationship with the base is creating a symmetrical solution.

A secondary massing element with the base was reinforcing the structure grid up the building with the subdivisions and reinforcing with coloring on the external elements.

We chose materials that were lighter and lift over the heavy podium. This also helps the podium not being weighed down by the elements on top.

We have provided a 19ft sidewalk to enhance the urban space. Created the idea of great steps for temporary refuge. There is a series of terrace benches. Will be providing a lighting scheme for the terraces and benches. We have taken big advantage of the rooftop as a common gathering space and events space. Will be using graphics and arts to make interesting spaces. The views and sunlight will be significant. The tenants have communicated a need for off leash dog spaces which will be provided. There is about 18 acres of park within a ten minute walk.

This project is not a rezoning project therefore had to work with the City to reach energy and sustainable goals. The energy performance is largely focused on the office space due to the limitations of the heritage retention. Using a triple glaze high solar heat gain coefficient glazing to mitigate those solar gains in addition to shading elements integrated into the design.

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 Ms. Avini Besharat and seconded by and Mr. Sharma and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

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

- Revisit the office tower architectural expression to provide more contemporary dynamic architectural character reflecting the forward thinking end user;
- Ensure continuous and public use of the stairs and plaza at Georgia St.
- **Related Commentary:**

The panels appreciated the materials submitted and thorough presentation. Commend the applicant for the improvement of the treatment to the public realm; treatment is respectful and well-handled when it comes to heritage retention. Wonderful job providing transparencies by maintaining the heritage of the building and improving it.

The massing is well handled the concerns were mostly about the façade treatment. The new building should respect the old building but still be modern. The way it's relating to the post office is too much of a good thing, taking the heritage elements too literally.

Suggestions included if the buildings could be more dynamic, energetic, still respectful, and lighter in its expression.

One of the main issues was the overall image of the building.

The heritage building looks better without the granite walls. Do not find the view cones are an issue at all. Support the office

The heritage building exceptionally well handled. The two tower scheme well-handled again and with significantly less mass. Architectural expression of the towers is being quite conservative.

The Georgia plaza was well received. The missing link in the Plaza is tying all the open spaces. Moving forward think about how does this stay a public space.

Not in favor of the private landscaping it is narrow and meant only for office use. Landscaping would benefit from some flexibility to the rooftop.

Other comments included like the image of the public library and not sure the lighting being suggested is needed.

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

3.	Address:	1551 Quebec Street - SEFC - Building 5 "The Creek"
	Permit No.	DP-2018-00406
	Description:	To develop a 17-storey residential building consisting of 91 market units, over three levels of underground parking with 155 vehicle stalls accessed from Switchmen Street. The proposed floor area is 16,400 sq. m (176,526 sq. ft.) and the building height is approximately 52.63 m (172.8 ft.).
	Zoning:	CD-1
	Application Status:	Complete Development Application
	Review:	Second (First as DP)
	Architect:	Foad Raffi Architects
	Owner:	Jonathan Silcock, Concert Properties
	Delegation:	Foad Rafii, Architect, Rafii Architects Patrick Cotter, Architect, ZGF Architects Jennifer Stamp, Landscape Architect, Durante Kreuk Chris Kendall, LEED Consultant, Recollective Juan Cruz Martinez, ZGF Architects
	Staff:	Paul Cheng

EVALUATION: Support with recommendations.

- **Introduction:**

Development planner Paul Cheng introduced the project as a landmark building that presents some challenges. Tower podiums are formulaic; it is challenging to do something that is not formulaic. The proposal includes a 6500sf floorplate and 9-storey podium and townhouses with a courtyard versus a 12,000 s.f. slab building. This imposes a more upper-storey massing, which adds to increase spatial enclosure on public realm, shadowing concerns, and public views.

For reference:

Excerpt from the applicable Design Guidelines for Building 5

5.9.3 Landmark Building 5

Building 5, being of significant greater height and in a prominent location, is identified as requiring significant architectural quality to serve as a "landmark" building in the neighbourhood that stands out from other "background" buildings within the neighbourhood.

The following design criteria are to guide the overall design of Building 5:

- a) Far distance view: When viewed from a far distance (such as from Northeast False Creek, False creek flats or from various points along the False Creek seawall), building 5 should exhibit a strong, cohesive silhouette. As such, a clear visual distinction between the top, middle portion and base should be legible at a distance, while composed together to achieve an overall well-balanced and graceful composition. For the top element, a strong and clear capping gesture is therefore very important.
- b) Middle distance view: When viewed from a closer vantage point, the major building forms as seen from the far distant view should remain clear and legible. Further, the major forms should be further articulated with a secondary layer of largescale detailing that adds to the overall perception of the major building forms. A visual richness, that would not be viewable from a far distance, should add to, and not detract from, the overall understanding of the major forms with the use of elements such as secondary building forms, fenestration, material composition, transitional

edges between the major forms, and a secondary layer of decorative articulation to the major forms. Materials should be of the highest order for this building, with metal cladding and brick high on the list of priorities.

- c) Proximate distance view: When viewed from a proximate distance (ie. From 30 ft.), the exterior cladding materials and their detailing becomes of greatest consideration. Architectural detailing at this scale should add a third layer of visual interest through expressive connections, fastenings, material transitions and appropriate visual texture.

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

1. The project proposes a different form of development from the formulaic tower/podium typology that was approved in the CD-1. Is this proposal an improved form of development for this site, taking into consideration:
 - a. The visual prominence of the site;
 - b. The requirement for a distinguishing architectural landmark;
 - c. The large amount of adjacent open space;
 - d. The building's impact on the public realm.
2. The Council-adopted design guidelines for this site (see attached) requires an exceptional architecture that can attain the status of a landmark in the city's collective psyche. Generally, the guidelines attempt to establish an overall rich experience of the building from all vantage points, far and proximate. Please evaluate the project in the following lenses:
 - a. The distant view. Does the proposal present a clearly legible silhouette, a strong expression of base/main body/top and an overall balanced composition?

What's the money shot?

- b. The middle view. Are the major building forms further articulated with a secondary layer of composition such as fenestration patterning, modulation, major elements of materiality and decorative elements?
- c. The proximate view. Are there further discoveries to be made when the building is viewed close up, with interesting construction details, textures, and finer-grained play of light and shadow?

Does the design achieve the architectural prominence needed to be a landmark?

3. The building design in the rezoning followed a SEFC principle of providing a semi-private courtyard that is visually welcoming and physically accessible to the public. Does the new proposal achieve an equivalent amount of public amenity? Given the overall amount of publicly accessible space in the remainder of the rezoning site and the adjacent public park and seawall, is a publicly-accessible area still needed on this subarea?
4. Given that the original form of development was composed of a slender tower and accompanying podium, does the proposal create an undue hardship on neighbouring private properties with respect to views, privacy and proximity of building mass?

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

A criteria of a landmark building should express a unique expression from a distant view as you got closer to the building it revealed a level of details. In addition of that view there is a requirement to make this building contextual. This building has evolved from an interpretation of the railway district. One example is we abstracted that notion of an arc rail segment and cut the arc into segments we would end up with a series of forms that could build up to a building of a unified expression and materiality and still keeping its three expression of bottom, middle, and top.

A keep was to place the building where it has best value to the public and park. The building slides off the podium onto the park with open views to science world as well. The building provides lots of openness and public access the main goal is to provide lots of contextual connection.

Looking at this building from a distance, this is very much a 4 ground building. This building is trying to have a contrast with a simple arc façade.

Because there is not another building for ten blocks this building and streetscape was designed to stand on its own.

The building is a fairly horizontal building and have chosen to express this with a rail and tie motif. There is a veneer screen on the west façade and vertical fins to provide a fairly dynamic experience of the building.

There is an insertion of an elevator core to bring landscape up to the building and bring focal alignment views to the north side of the building. Landscape took cues from the simplicity of the building. There is strong patterning and materiality.

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 Ms. Parsons and seconded by Mr. Neil and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

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

- Cooperation between, Cov, Parks Board, Landscape and the architect to ensure the future foreground is successful;
- Further design development to the metal screens and generators to ensure they are well articulated in the building;
- Further design development of the amenity space including its landscape details.

- **Related Commentary:**

Panel supported the project and found this to be major improvement from the previous submission.

The building was found to be simple yet elegant, A well done and well-presented project. Success of this project will rely on the details and execution of the building. Parks Board creation of a park at the foreground of the building will be a key of the success of the building for photo taking and in keeping with the area.

The building is a nice departure from the traditional podium typology. The simplicity of the building helps strengthen the top portions and the darker color will help it stand out.

A strong element is the curve top and could be improved by better detailing, with further design development and during working drawings

Ensure there is proper examination of solar and heat gain. A suggestion was using isocorb that will tie in with the detailing.

Appreciate the layers of heritage that were hidden and then revealed. A panel member noted not sure if the building fits as a landmark building and does not find this is an important aspect. A panel noted a more important question should be whether the building stands out as a focal point for the area. A panel member noted presently for this area Science World stands out as the main focal point.

At the lower level the podium is strong on one end then becomes less strong on the other, this will cause for the amenity room space to be very dark. The height and depth of the amenity space can benefit from some improvements.

Additional comments includes the metal screen does not have enough depth to really stand out and parks board strongly desires the use of natural materials therefore think about shrubs at the base in large quantities in a structural pattern to hold down the base.

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