

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: February 26, 2018

TIME: 2:00 pm

PLACE: Committee Meeting Room 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Helen Avini Besharat
Amela Brudar
Yinjin Wen
Muneesh Sharma
Colette Parsons

REGRETS: David Jerke
Leslie Shieh
Marie-France Venneri
Grant Newfield

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** K. Cermeno

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

- | | |
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| 1. | 2133 Nanton Avenue (Arbutus Centre Mall) |
| 2. | 936 Main Street |
| 3. | 1021 Burnaby Street |
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BUSINESS MEETING

Panelist Amela Brudar, called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum.

1. Address: 2133 Nanton Avenue (Arbutus Centre Mall)
Permit No. DP-2017-01206
Description: The proposed amendment to the existing CD-1 (642) is to permit an increase in the maximum allowable floor area across Block C and D, from 67,065 sq. m (721,881 Sq. ft) to 77,611 sq. m (835,400 sq. ft.); and an increase to the maximum building height on Block C from 57 m (187 ft.) to 60 m (197 ft.), and on Block D from 57 m (187 ft.) to 72 m (236 ft.). The proposal is being considered under the Arbutus Centre Policy Statement.
Zoning: CD-1 Amendment
Application Status: Rezoning Application
Review: Second (First as Amendment)
Architect: Brett Hotson, DIALOG
Norm Hotson, DIALOG
Owner: Wendy LeBreton, LARCO
Delegation: Margot Long, Landscape Architect, PWL
Peter Joyce, BUNT
Staff: John Chapman, Tim Potter & Grace Jiang

EVALUATION: SUPPORT with Recommendations

- **Introduction:**

Rezoning Planner, John Chapman, introduced the project as, this is an application to amend the zoning for the Arbutus Centre to add height and residential density to Blocks C and D - the western portion of the site.

The Arbutus Village area, including the mall site, was developed in the 1970s. The mall was initially open air, and was enclosed during a renovation in 1986. At the request of the property owner, planning work for redevelopment of the mall site began in 2007. The Arbutus Centre Policy Statement was approved in 2008, establishing guidelines on built form, massing, height, density, and mix of uses. The policy statement also outlined expected design performance, relationship to the surrounding area, and established a significant view corridor looking northwest from Quilchena Park, over the subject property, towards Point Atkinson. The subsequent rezoning was approved in 2011, and construction on the first phase of the development began in 2017.

This zoning amendment application before you today was received in December 2017, and contemplates adding approximately 100,000 sq. ft. (~100 dwelling units) onto the site. As per the Rezoning Policy for Sustainable Large Developments, 20% of dwelling units will be dedicated to the City of Vancouver to become social housing. Additionally, the proposal offers to increase the size of the Neighborhood House by 2,500 sq. ft. over the amount committed to in the 2011 rezoning.

Development Planner, Grace Jiang, introduced the project as, block C & D is the western half of the overall site. The site area is about 1 ha with 180 m long fronting Yew Street extension on the east. All other sides are bordered with residential buildings and Arbutus Village Park, called secondary frontage. The Arbutus village park is a neighborhood linear park connecting King Edward and Valley Drive. The adjacent buildings include 6 storey apartment buildings, 2 storey townhouses, and senior housing, built in 1970-80's. There is a significant slope to the site, resulting in a grade change of 3 to 4 m from this central point to the edges.

The revision of the block C & D proposes 32,000 s.m. floor area in total, which exceeds the original rezoning application by 10,000 s.m.

The revised building height and building form impact the urban design performance on the following 4 aspects:

- Transition & Streetscape
- Public view
- Shadow impact
- Public realm & Open spaces

Transition & Streetscape

Policy statement expects the building heights should generally not exceed 6 storeys. 7 and 8-storey may be considered in the central of the development. The terracing-down building form was emphasized in the policy statement to provide transitions from central massing to the surrounding park and residential buildings. The terraces should be generous in scale and bring massing down to a 2 and 3 storey scale at the edges along the north, south, northwest, and southwest.

The proposed Block C building height is increased from 7-storey to 8-storey. A 4-storey street wall is emphasized along the Yew Street, and there is no 2-storey podium and generous terraces condition along the southwest property line.

The Block D is a courtyard building. The overall building height is increased from 7-storey to 12-storey. The 12-storey massing concentrates at the eastern edge of block D with an over 230 ft frontage along the Yew Street. The building steps down to a 6-storey massing on both eastern and southern wings as it approaches to the site edges. A 4-storey stacked townhouse is proposed along the northwest edge with top floors stepped back.

Public View

The policy statement identifies a significant public viewpoint from Quilchena Park looking northwest towards English Bay and Point Atkinson. Block C & D buildings should be generally set below a datum line of 57 m to preserve views of the water. Any taller building should be clustered and sculpted to limit the interruption of the view to the water and cascading mountain silhouette. The proposed building heights of block C & D protrude the datum line by 3 m and 15 m respectively, and the floor plates are also expanded, which result in substantial change of the overall building massing and its impact on the identified public view.

Shadow Impact

In the original rezoning package, the building form with limited heights, generous terraces, and proper setbacks managed to contribute minimal shadowing of the park, public square, adjacent residential properties, and on-site open spaces. The revision of the Block C & D casts additional shadows on the pathway in the Arbutus Village Park, Block D courtyard, public square, and adjacent northeast townhouse properties. The shadow studies demonstrate the shadowing variation from the original rezoning application and revised proposal.

Public Realm & Open Spaces

To successfully transform an auto-oriented shopping mall into a walkable neighborhood center, one of the goals of the policy statement is to create high quality public realm and promote convenient, safe and pleasant pedestrian connecting to and through the Arbutus Center site.

This 20 x 60 m public square is anticipated in the policy statement as a major place-making feature and a pedestrian node. This public square is surrounded by two buildings, Yew Street on the east, and the public pathway on the west. The 8-storey building C with 2-storey podium defines the south edge. The north of the square is enclosed by a 6 to 10 storey massing from building D. A restaurant and coffee shop anchors the corners as a continuity of the commercial frontage on the east. Ground-oriented residential units and neighborhood house defines the rest north and south edge of the square. The square is featured by public art, landscape furniture, water feature, and access lift.

The public walkways along the north and southwest provide links to the existing pedestrian paths to the park and adjacent residential clusters. They should be designed as wayfinding, safe and pleasant pedestrian and cyclist routes. Ground-oriented building forms should be placed at the lower levels of the building along the walkways to maximize casual surveillance and active path life. The application proposes three townhouses with front door leading to the walkway. The strata recreation center faces the southwest walkway with transparent frontage but minimal opportunities for interactions.

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

1. Does the revised built form successfully relate to adjacent sites and Arbutus Village Park?
2. Has the goal of preserving public views been successfully achieved through managing the building scale and placement of height?
3. Please comment on the block D building in terms of scale, length (east elevation) and its impact on the streetscape along the Yew Street extension.
4. Please comment on the revised massing for Block C & D and its effect on the public square in terms of solar performance, sense of the space, activation of the edge, and promotion of social interaction and activities.
5. Please comment on the performance of the common outdoor amenity and play area in the Block D courtyard.
6. Please provide preliminary advice on proposed architectural expression and materials for the development permit application.

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

This is a rezoning application. The view was an important piece of the site. Elements to be respected were the view of water to the left hand side of the development. The idea with the additional density and height was to follow the mountain profile. Looked at a higher element on block C to follow more of the mountain profile and leave the mountain in view.

Above Yew street are 9 storey elements. Other elements of the site are 6 and 7 storeys. There is a building that is 12 storeys. The plaza now has two basic terraces.

The scale of this site is similar to the Olympic Village False Creek.

In the previous submission, Block D terraced more on the private terraces which didn't allow for amenity roof terraces; in the current application the site is using the roof significantly more.

The previous submission had a very small courtyard and an additional podium. This podium has been taken to the upper terraces to allow a bigger courtyard and play area on the ground level.

While redeveloping the design on the two sites, the goal was to retain the character of the town house piece. Originally this area was completely separate from the rest of the project, now there is a one floor walkway that connects to the walkway to the upper stacks. The original scheme was un-terraced now it's terraced.

There are three large public realm components. The most important the Neighborhood house which is now on street level and has been increased in size by one third. The increase is due to the additional density.

There is an adult (drop in facility) daycare on the second floor. The third component, at grade, is a private strata recreation center for all the strata units that comprised of the original Arbutus Village.

A result of the extra height is additional shadowing. Understand the importance not to shadow the park however the park is a linear park and is largely a Walkway Park with trees on both sides. There is no program function to the park other than a walking through space. In the applicants opinion this is not a critical in terms of the over shadowing.

The streetscape is the same as it is already under construction and was approved at DP. The public realm is relatively the same with the addition of some outdoor covered space. There is a more animated water play. There is accessibility with an outdoor elevator that takes you down and connects you through. You can access the entire site via pedestrian paths all the way around.

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 Mr. Sharma 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:

- Balance distribution of density between the two parcels; The density may need to be reduced to achieve appropriate massing and to mitigate the overshadowing.
- Reduce the shadowing of the public plaza, street, and private courtyard on parcel D;
- Reduce shadowing of the park
- Further design development on the architectural expression in order to simplify and calm down expression of the building;
- Further design development to the view analysis to include roof top structures and mechanical RTUs and to review how they impact the view. The height may need to be reduced to preserve the view of the North Shore Mountains.

- **Related Commentary:**

There was a panel consensus the original concept was the preferred choice. The second concept was a big change from the original. The original application was a better fit and blended in smoother. The current concept is too bulky especially with building D.

Then panel agreed there was a very significant addition of height and density being absorbed mostly on the western parcels which created a misbalance. The original concept was lost because the additional density has been dropped on one block, and should have been better distributed. A consequence was a large parcel created that is out of context.

A panelist noted there were fundamental issues with planning and massing of the entire space. If massing is properly planned in the first phase there would be better relation. There is a loss in transition down to the lower scale units.

A panelist noted the site is in a real bowl which could be to the applicant's advantage.

Moving forward with the architectural expression the strong parti concept has been diluted as well. In the earlier models the parti was cleaner and simpler. A panel member suggested looking at the elevations and determine if they want to be closer or completely different from what is across the street. The elevations should be revisited to be a lot cleaner without losing elevation and height.

7 to 12 storeys created significant shadowing on the park, open space, and street. Yew Street will be completely shaded in the afternoon. The impacts are also significant on the view. Viewpoint is important and cannot be ignored. A big bulky building has a lot of negative effects on the neighborhood; in this case Main Street is too over shadowed. There are intrusions to public views in the City of Vancouver all the time however these issues are on the whole block.

Building C, on the west façade has so many different fenestrations and proportions. In general a calmer and boulder contemporary expression would be more successful. A panelist noted public views can be better distributed back to building C.

The overall site designs seem to be a bit outdated. It appears there was an attempt to introduce color but there is not enough.

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

2. Address:	936 Main Street
Permit No.	DP-2016-00475
Description:	To develop an 8-storey mixed-use building consisting of retail at grade, office uses on levels two to three, and 25 secured market rental units on levels four to eight; all over two levels of underground parking accessed from Station Street. The proposed floor space ratio (FSR) is 5.0 and the building height is 26.44 m (86.75 ft.).
Zoning:	FC-1
Application Status:	Rezoning Application
Review:	Second
Architect:	Walter Francl, Francl Architecture Alain Prince, Francl Architecture
Owner:	Christian Willow, 936 Main St Holders Ltd.
Delegation:	Daryl Tyacke, Landscape Architect, Eckford Tyacke & Associates
Staff:	Marie Linehan

EVALUATION:

- **Introduction:**

Development Planner, Marie Linehan, introduced the project as a development permit application in the FC-1 (East False Creek) District which is a mixed-use district located along Main Street, approximately between Terminal Avenue to the south and Prior Street to the north. It is a small infill site at 50' wide by 100' deep and is double-fronting on Main and Station Streets. On the adjacent site to the north is an existing 3-storey building, the American Hotel, which provides SRO (single resident occupancy units) on the upper 2 storeys with windows facing the subject site. To the south, the lot is currently vacant but has development approval for a 6-storey social housing building for the Lu'ma Native Housing Society. The subject site has an existing 2-storey historical building that is eligible for the Heritage Register with a C-listing. The heritage façade is proposed to be retained. There are a number of other historical buildings along the 900 block of Main Street including the Bank of Montreal and the Ivanhoe Hotel.

The FC-1 district is at the western boundary of the False Creek Flats but no significant changes to FC-1 are proposed under that policy. Across Station Street is the site of the new St. Paul's Hospital and Health Campus which is currently being planned. FC-1 is bounded to the north by the Georgia and Dunsmuir Viaducts and north of this Chinatown. Under the North East False Creek Plan, it is noted that the removal of the viaducts will provide an opportunity to reconnect the north and south sides of Main Street between Prior Street and Union Street. Therefore direction is given to establish a maximum height of 90 ft. along Main Street to match the maximum height for Chinatown. The FC-1 Guidelines also seek to maintain the historic character of the area with small-scale 25 ft. frontages and brick facades. The guidelines also ask for active commercial uses at both street frontages, Main and Station.

The proposal is an 8-storey mixed use building with commercial uses on the first 3 levels, including restaurant and retail uses at both ground floor street frontages, and office use on Levels 2 and 3. 25 secured market rental residential units are provided on Levels 4 to 8. 4 of the proposed units are micro-units of a size of 270 sf. All units have private balconies that are framed by the façade and common amenity space is located on Level 8. Parking is accessed via a car elevator from Station Street. The building is arranged as a series of 4 bays which are staggered at the rear to provide daylight access to adjacent SRO units. The main floor level is required to be stepped up in the middle to meet the FCL (flood construction level) which is about 2 feet about existing sidewalk grades.

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

1. The relationship of the proposed building to the retained heritage façade and the streetscape.
2. The relationship of the proposed building to the SRO units to the north.
3. General livability of the dwelling units, in particular the micro-units, including sufficient access to daylight and outdoor space.

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

The approach was to retain the heritage façade of the very small building. The rest of the heritage building is in very poor shape.

The intention was to frame the retained façade with a recessed commercial façade to the side and above, and then bring the residential façade forward above. The intention is to provide enclosure and a neutral background to the historic façade.

In terms of the livability, the applicant's acknowledge that the rental units are small. The building will be a dedicated rental. To get volume in the units they will have high ceilings at 9 foot 4 (plus or minus).

The applicants modulated the façade and tried to step the height so the highest point is in the middle and shadowing is directed to the side yards.

Despite the compact plan the site has good commercial frontages. There were struggles with loading and parking on the small site, but they were able to provide parking and still maintain commercial at Station Street.

The materials include concrete frames at the front and back, which frame the suites, and brick masonry for the side walls.

There is an amenity space for the residents on the roof top and all the units will have balconies. The rooftop will have perimeter planting to soften the edges.

The landscape surface treatment at the threshold will provide a welcome mat between the building and PL and relate to the contemporary architecture.

At the amenity terrace on the second level there is a green screen proposed on the side wall and a decorative metal screen along the edge of the planting to further screen the units in the adjacent building.

There will be a plaza like feel in the front zone to Station St. The site will be providing bike racks.

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 Mr. Sharma and seconded by Mr. Wen 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:

- Improve the relationship between the heritage and residential facade by increasing the vertical break;
- Review materiality of the façade and provide brick on the front and rear façade;
- Increase the balcony size from 4 feet to 6 feet;
- Consider weather protection on the rooftop amenity.

- **Related Commentary:**

In general the proposal was well received. The panel considered the building to be a modest infill and the design skillfully handled. The massing and the height were seen to be appropriate to the context.

The panel commended the applicants for the retention of heritage. The façade design was seen to be competent and convincing in terms of how the old is tied to the new. Stepping the commercial façade back and framing the heritage façade was noted as a good step. Improvements could be made by providing a larger vertical break between the heritage façade and the residential above. It was noted that this would also improve daylighting of the third floor office space which is in deep shade.

The panel found the relationship of the stepped form to the SRO units to the north to be acceptable. For the livability of the rental units, the panel found they were a bit small, but agreed the applicants did the best they could in terms of the unit design. In particular, it was noted that the additional unit height to 10 feet was good. It was recommended to increase the balcony depth from four to six feet, especially at the east side. One panelist noted the paint color at the deep balcony overhangs could improve light access.

The panel liked the location of the amenity spaces, especially at the roof top with a southern exposure. It was suggested to provide weather protection at the amenity spaces to allow them to be used year round.

It was recommended to simplify the materials for the façades by providing a uniform treatment as opposed to a brick and concrete interface (i.e. provide all painted concrete, or wrap the brick to the front and rear facades noting that it is a limited area). It was noted that building is modern in a historical context, and that bringing the brick forward as a more dignified material would be better. All agreed it is a simple building that would benefit from a simple and clean design. It was also suggested to further consider the base treatment in terms of materiality, interest and street presence, and to provide weather protection.

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

3. Address:	1021 Burnaby Street
Permit No.	DP-2017-01212
Description:	To develop a 5-storey residential building consisting of 21 market dwelling units, over one level of underground parking accessed from the lane.
Zoning:	RM-5A
Application Status:	Complete Development Application
Review:	First
Architect:	Walter Francl, Francl Architecture Alain Prince, Francl Architecture
Owner:	Christian Willows, No 234 Cathedral Ventures Ltd.
Delegation:	Peter Kreuk, Durante Kreuk Ltd.
Staff:	Marie Linehan

EVALUATION: Support with recommendations.**• Introduction:**

Development Planner, Marie Linehan, introduced the proposal as a development permit application in the RM-5A District which is a residential district in the West End. It is a small site at 66' wide by 130' deep. On the adjacent site to the east is a 20-storey residential building with a commercial base fronting on Burrard Street. There is a 15-storey seniors' housing building across the street to the south. The remainder of the block to the west consists of 4-storey wood frame walk-ups, typical of existing rental housing stock in the West End. Across the lane to the north is Davie Street which is developed with commercial uses including 'Celebrities' cabaret directly opposite.

Under the RM-5A District, the site is eligible for a new residential building at 1.5 FSR with an additional 10% floor area available through a purchase of heritage density, which is sought with this application. The basic height limit is 60 ft. with angled setbacks intended to prevent shadowing of streets and lanes. The proposal is a 5-storey residential building with setbacks above the 4th storey and a height of approximately 50 ft. The building is compliant with, or exceeds, the setbacks required under the district schedule. In particular side yards setbacks of 12 ft. (from the minimum of 7 ft.) are proposed to provide outdoor space and daylight to east side-facing units.

The guidelines note that lush mature landscaping in conjunction with medium to higher density apartments defines the West End character. Front yards should have open landscaped areas that are a visual extension of the public realm. Attractive landscaping should also be provided along lanes to respond to their role as secondary pedestrian routes. For the building, a high quality design is expected with finish materials to express a sense of solidity and permanence.

For the building, 21 market strata residential units are proposed. 5 units (25%) are family units, which is recommended under the West End Plan.

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

1. The landscape design of the yards, particularly the front yard, relative to the West End Guidelines, which seek substantial greenery.

• Applicant's Introductory Comments:

This is an all concrete building which adds a sense of robustness. The approach was to have a clean modern expression. The bulk of the building is of a metal skin (Alucobond horizontal panels and standing seam vertical panels) with wood inset panels where the residents can touch the balcony walls. The building was sculpted in order to give best possible views with minimal impingement on the neighboring properties. There is a sloped envelope that cuts down on height at the front and back of

the building. The building's siting and the unit orientation take advantage of the larger side yard setback at neighboring tower.

Due to the size of the parkade a 12 ft. wide ramp is permitted. The parkade has less than 19 stalls below grade and one car share space off the lane dedicated for the residents. All of the service functions are found in the back off the 33 foot lane. The lane edge does not have a whole a lot of landscaping due to the servicing.

The approach in the front of the site was to create as much usable outdoor space as possible. There are opportunities for kid's play, and tables and chairs for socializing. The amenity space is placed in the sunniest part of the site. There is a transition from the corner landscaping next door into the front yard of the site. The front entrance is identified with layered planters and trees, and bike parking is provided at the front entry. There is also hedging across the front.

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 Ms. Parsons 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:

- Provide higher quality materials in the public realm, consider use of granite in a contemporary fashion;
- Consider raising the building to improve livability of units facing the back yard;
- Consider window sizes and how they relate to the solar orientation;
- Consider a green roof amenity or roof treatment, noting overlook from towers;

- **Related Commentary:**

The panel found the building was of good quality and fit all the requirements of the district. It was noted as straightforward application, compliant with all the parameters.

The panel liked the quietness of the building, and suggested the design will rely on quality detailing. The orientation of the units was seen to be a good solution, and provided better use of the side yard.

Some members noted the back units appeared a bit depressed and suggested raising the building to improve light and access. A panelist suggested increasing the pedestrian ramp slope to 8 percent (currently 5 percent) to reduce impact on rear unit. It was noted that the rear units are challenging due to PMT, garbage, and Celebrities across the street.

The landscape was seen to be well handled and it was noted as nice to see a children's play area on the main floor. It was recognized that the front yard would benefit from having more green elements.

A panelist noted the west end neighborhood plan is very specific about a quality public realm. The applicant should consider stone detailing for the walls, particularly in the front and rear. The west end uses a lot of granite and this could be done in a contemporary way.

One panelist suggested the entrance appears too quiet and should be announced in some manner, but in keeping with the overall design (i.e. not high profile). It was suggested that the rendering of the back of building comes across more interesting than the front.

Other suggestions from the panel included to consider window sizes with regards to solar orientation to decrease shadowing. It was noted that a rooftop amenity would be a nice feature to the site.

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