

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: July 18, 2012
TIME: 4.00 pm
PLACE: Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall
PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Helen Besharat
Gregory Borowski (Chair)
Alan Endall
David Grigg
Bruce Hemstock
Arno Matis
Geoff McDonell

REGRETS:
Robert Barnes
Daryl Condon
Vincent Dumoulin
Veronica Gillies
Norm Shearing
Peter Wreglesworth

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1. | 1937 Stainsbury Avenue |
| 2. | 510 West 29 th Avenue, 4533-4591 Cambie Street |
-

BUSINESS MEETING

The business meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m. Ms. Molaro and Mr. Munro had a briefing meeting with the Panel and the Chair gave an overview of the Development Permit Board meeting on July 16, 2012 where 8198 Cambie Street and 7299 Granville Avenue (Shannon Mews) were presented to the Board and were approved. Chair Borowski then called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. The Panel considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 1937 Stainsbury Avenue
DE: 415772
Description: To construct a new multiple dwelling buildings.
Zoning: MC-1
Application Status: Complete
Review: First
Owner: Clifton Beach Holdings Ltd.
Architect: Cornerstone Architecture
Delegation: Scott Kennedy, Cornerstone Architecture
Andrew Bobyn, Cornerstone Architecture
Patricia Escobar, Cornerstone Architecture
Staff: Sailen Black

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (2-4)

- **Introduction:** Sailen Black, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a multiple dwelling with seventeen units. He noted that the units are stacked in different ways in the development. Mr. Black explained that the courtyard is a different approach with a freestanding elevator core, walkways and stairs to access upper floor units. There aren't any setbacks required in the zoning for the ground floor but there is a proposed setback at the rear from the residential to the property line of about 12 feet. Mr. Black noted that the height exceeds the height limit in the zoning by about six inches, which would require approval by the Board of Variance. The required setback to residential from the lane is 15 feet, and 20 feet at the fourth storey.

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

- Height beyond permitted maximum;
- Entryway legibility, including access to individual units at the upper levels;
- Design of courtyard including stairways and elevator, considering implications for access to light and air for units; and
- Laneway elevation and exterior expression of parkade, considering the adjacent and upcoming development which is expected to use the lane more actively.

Mr. Black took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Scott Kennedy further described the project noting that they looked at the site as an opportunity to provide some housing in the development for families. They created four, 3-bedroom family type townhouses at the front of the site. They also created two more at the back of the site. There is a one bedroom suite in the middle and as well there are four rental suites that will be permanently rental as part of the project. Mr. Kennedy described the architecture noting that they organized the top floor into flats that will be accessed off the third level. The elevator services the project from the parkade. The top floor is setback according to the guidelines and creates deck space. There are a number of enclosed balconies that are expressed as glass bays on the

back. All the units have front and back ventilation. Mr. Kennedy described the landscape plans noting that the planting in the courtyard helps with privacy around the units. As well, a seating area will be provided.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Design development to improve the legibility of the entry;
 - Design development to improve the quality of the courtyard;
 - Design development to improve the laneway expression with landscaping;
 - Consider moving the children's play area to a sunnier location; and
 - Consider sun shading on the southern façade.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel did not support the proposal.

Most of the Panel was supportive of the very modest height increase to the building. They were generally supportive of the courtyard in concept and thought it was a good approach for the project. The Panel agreed that the introduction of rental use was seen as a positive and liked that there were some inventive suite layouts.

The Panel thought the legibility of the main entrance could be improved as they were concerned with visibility and access to the elevator. Also, the Panel thought the legibility coming from the main entrance into the courtyard needed to be enhanced. The Panel had some suggestions including shifting the elevator in order to draw people through the courtyard. The Panel thought the courtyard in terms of privacy was very tight. A couple of Panel members suggested finding ways to increase the sense of separation by reducing the rear setbacks or having the open balconies protrude into the setback. As well, several Panel members suggested moving the elevator adjacent to one of the building's walls or perhaps closer to the visible line from the main entrance, which would place it in parking spot 17. They felt this would increase the sense of legibility in the courtyard.

The Panel was also concerned that ventilation and daylighting into the courtyard would be difficult to accomplish and thought there needed to be some design development to further increase the courtyard width. As for the children's play area, some of the Panel noted that there wasn't any shadow study provided so it was difficult for them to comment, but the general opinion was that the area would be shaded most of the time.

For the laneway elevation, the Panel was concerned with the north concrete wall. They suggested that the applicant should review reducing that setback to help with the courtyard and as well to enhance the planting and treatment of the wall along the lane. They suggested that this could be either material or patterning of the wall.

Some of the Panel thought the applicant should review the planting strategy in the lane because of the shallow setback to the wall. They suggested the applicant could add some richer plantings along that wall edge.

A number of Panel members thought the facades of the building could be improved with respect to solar and light aspects. They suggested the applicant look at a sun shading strategy, and review the parking entry to see if it could be shifted to improve the geometry. Several Panel members suggested the applicant review the suites beside the garbage area to make sure that the area is managed so as to not negatively affect the unit. Some of the Panel thought the colour palette in the courtyard could be improved by using a lighter shade in order to improve the light aspect.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Kennedy told the Panel that they have added windows into the blank wall on the east side after seeing the model. He said they would look at the legibility of the entry and the relationship to the elevator. He added that it would be a bit tricky to move the elevator as there is a requirement that the courtyard be at least twenty feet wide. He said they would also look at reworking the courtyard to make it a private amenity rather than a community amenity. As well he said he was prepared to look at shading on the south façade.

2. Address:	510 West 29 th Avenue, 4533-4591 Cambie Street
DE:	N/A
Description:	Proposal is for three buildings with a total of 185 units. Heights of 6-storey and proposed FSR of 2.62.
Zoning:	RS-1 to CD-1
Application Status:	Rezoning
Review:	First
Owner:	Intergulf Development Group
Architect:	Ramsay Worden Architects
Delegation:	Doug Ramsay, Ramsay Worden Architects Bruce Ramsay, Ramsay Worden Architects Carolyn Kennedy, Perry & Associates Landscape Architects Richard White, Intergulf Development Group
Staff:	Dwayne Drobot and Sailen Black

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-1)

- Introduction:** Dwayne Drobot, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal for seven single family lots along Cambie Street between West 29th and 30th Avenues. The site is bounded by Single Family RS-1 lots to the north, west, and south of the project, with the Cambie Historic Boulevard and Queen Elizabeth Park to the east of the site. West 29th Avenue is a Bikeway, and Cambie Street is a bicycle route. The proposal is for three buildings of six storeys each. Mr. Drobot provided excerpts of the Cambie Corridor Plan to the Panel. Section 4.3.2 of the Cambie Corridor Plan provides the specific policy for the site, stating that in this area, residential buildings will be allowed up to six storeys. The density range for the site is 1.5 to 2.0. It is an estimated range and not a limit, based on intended urban design performance with respect to site size, form, typology, height, and scale. The policy also indicates that the unique location should acknowledge the "openness" that results from the current rhythm of existing houses. [The policy also states](#) larger openings between new buildings, for example, and shorter building frontages will help to highlight the special features of this area.

Sailen Black, Development Planner, further described the proposal noting that there will be 185 units in three buildings. He noted that the site falls under the Rezoning Policy for Greener Buildings and the Cambie Corridor Plan. The Plan is a policy document and not a district schedule and does not specify side yards or separations between main buildings on the same site. The proposal has a stepped plan, arranged along the curve of Cambie Street which in turn has varying boulevards. The gap between the buildings varies between 26 to 37 feet. The setbacks along Cambie Street are typically 12 feet but are better than recommended for the central treed portion that extends along 175 feet of frontage.

Advice from the Panel was sought on the architectural and landscape design in general, and in particular:

- Does the proposed siting, building and landscape design taken together respond to the goals of the Cambie Corridor Plan for this area, noting the recommended limit on building frontage of 120 feet?
- Are the spaces and dimensions between new buildings on the site, especially between the interior faces of each six-storey building, sufficiently developed to ensure the livability of new residences and reflect the intended openness of this area?
- Does the massing of the rear elevations, especially the central block, create a sensitive response to the neighbourhood context?

Mr. Drobot and Mr. Black took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Doug Ramsay, Architect, further described the proposal noting that it is an interesting site because of the curve along Cambie Street. There are four different faces on the buildings to take advantage of the curvilinear nature of the site. They have set the buildings back from the street to provide more landscaping. The centre block will have 36 units of rental housing which is one of the requirements of the Cambie Street Corridor Plan. The center building is tapered to allow for a sense of openness. There are some existing stone walls which will be retained. The rear of the site will have eight townhouses to allow for a transition of height down to the residential across the lane, and they will have their front doors onto the laneway. As well, the parking entrance is located off the lane. Mr. Ramsay described the architectural expression noting that the lower units will have individual access and the entrances to the market housing will be on the ends of the buildings. He described the sustainability strategy noting the proposed materials, and that they plan to do energy modeling on the buildings. He added that because of its orientation being north/south they are proposing sliding panels that would act as sun shades. They are also looking at a geo exchange system for heating of the buildings and a storm water management plan with water retention on the roofs and permeable pavers. They are also proposing LEED™ Gold.

Carolyn Kennedy, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans noting that there is a 23 foot elevation change across the site. Along the front they are planning bio swales ending in a rain garden at the corner of West 29th Avenue and Cambie Street. They are planning to introduce some urban agriculture and some park-like plantings on the site. They are also planning to provide some bike amenities. These amenities could include showers in the building with bike racks and a seating area for cyclists along West 29th Avenue.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Reduce the tightness of dimension between buildings A, B, and C
 - Augment the park-like open space on Cambie Street by pulling building C back
 - Consider enhancing the 'speed' of the Cambie elevation with detailing
 - Provide better definition of and transition to building C
 - Recommend more use of the roof levels for open space
 - Consider one common indoor amenity room located beside common outdoor space
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and thought it was a well-considered and developed project.

The Panel found the overall approach to the massing was supportable. Although they supported the two large massing blocks they thought the separations between the smaller building was too tight. As well a number of Panel members noted that the inboard units in the rental building are looking directly across to adjacent units and suggested design development to improve livability in those rental units facing the condominium buildings. One Panel member suggested stepping or pulling back the massing from the rental block. Although there is some stepping towards the lane, some Panel members thought the elevation didn't work up against the residential. Some Panel members thought the architecture did not address the Cambie Street vernacular. However, many Panel members did like how the buildings embraced the curve in the street and the punched openings in the brick but thought that expression could be enhanced.

A couple of Panel members thought the central building seemed quiet in its expression and suggested using colour or materials to enhance its expression.

A couple of Panel thought the courtyard should continue the vocabulary of the townhouse units and one Panel member thought the townhouses should be separated even more with a break so there isn't a continuous streetwall along the lane, as this would also give more light into the courtyard.

Several Panel members were concerned with how the amenity spaces were located in each building and felt there should be a central amenity for residents to meet, with one Panel member suggesting it be in the centre block.

The Panel supported the landscaping plans and liked the retention of the stone walls. Several Panel members were concerned with the proposed water retention on the roofs and thought it could become a long term maintenance problem. Another Panel member thought the rain garden needed to be bolder and incorporate the sense of the park from across the street into the landscape. A couple of Panel members would like to see more greening on the level 2 roof area and as well to make the roof areas more useable. Some Panel members noted that the public access off the lane has a bit of a pinch point with a townhouse entrance next to the public walkway. They also thought the lane space is where people move around and more greenery could be added including some small trees. Some of the Panel did not support the public pass through noting that there hadn't been one before and residents wouldn't appreciate people walking through their backyards.

The Panel supported the sustainability strategy but suggested the applicant consider roughing in solar panels for hot water on the roof.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Ramsay thanked the Panel for their comments. He said they were all excellent and as they move forward with the design development they will consider the comments. He added that he appreciated the comments about the central building and that there still needs to be some design development on that building.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.