URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: Feb 12, 2024

TIME: 3:00 pm

PLACE: Teams, Virtual

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:

Helen Besharat
John Stovell
Catherine Lemieux
Allyse Li
Tony Osborn
Maryam Tashakor
Alfred Waugh
Khushali Kagrana
Bob Lilly

RECORDING SECRETARY: K. Cermeno

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING
1. 2315 W 4th Ave

Address:	2315 W 4th Ave
Permit No.:	DP-2024-01039
Description:	To develop the following on this site: a mixed-use building, with a ground floor grocery store and retail space, 385 residential market rental units above, proposed density of 352,099 sq.ft. (32,711 m), a Floor Space Ratio (FSR) of 3.70, above two levels of underground vehicle and bicycle parking.
Application Status:	Complete Development Application
Architect:	MCM
Delegation:	Mark Whitehead, Architect, MCM Stephen Vincent, Landscape Architect, DKL
Staff:	Michele Alborg/Ji-Taek Park

EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations (8/0)

Planner's Introduction:

Michele Alborg (stepping in for Ji-Taek Park), Development Planner gave an overview of the neighbourhood context in relation to the proposal, followed by the expectations of the built-form guidelines for this project. Michele 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. Does the panel support the increased building height in relation to the evolving context and design guidelines?
2. Does the proposed at-grade interface create sufficient pedestrian interest for public realm along the high street (W 4th Avenue), as well as the secondary street (Vine Street)?
3. Provide commentary on overall architectural expression, including the success of courtyard typology, and materiality.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Applicant Mark Whitehead, Architect for MCM noted the objectives and gave a general overview of the project followed by Stephen Vincent, Landscape Architect presenting on the landscape design and the project's sustainability strategies.

Applicant and staff took questions from the Panel.

Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:

Having reviewed the project, it was moved by **MR. STOVELL** and seconded by **MR. LILLY** 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. Improve at-grade frontage e.g., through design development of materiality, especially at building corners.

2. Consider the location and distribution of the mailboxes and entrances in more than one location for practicality and ease of access.
3. Consider the exit and entry of the residential lobby and improving this corner.
4. Consider a more active courtyard and insertion of additional small plazas along W 4th Ave.

Summary of Panel Commentary:

The panel found the project was overall in the right direction.

Overall, the panel supports the increased building height.

The panel support the overall architectural expression however noted further improvements.

A panelist suggested to consider a consistent architectural language and coverage.

Some noted concern with the upper storey expression and how it connects with the at-grade expression to the frontage.

A panelist noted orientating the mass more north south would be successful.

A panelist suggested further development of the southeast corner.

A panelist noted there was a lack of narrative with the facades.

A panelist noted regarding the higher portion of the building along 3rd avenue, it is a significant departure from residential fabric, encourage more materiality or consideration to reduce the visual implication of the height along 3rd avenue. Others had no issue with the height.

Some panelists suggested lighter materiality, especially with the long winter rainy months.

The panel noted the interface along W 4th Avenue is generally successful.

The panel generally found the public realm a positive urban contribution.

The floor lobbies deserve further study.

The residential entry in corner near the Safeway entry is unfortunate and a potential safety risk.

A panelist noted the amenity on W 4th Avenue and Vine Street entry appears less considered compared to everything else.

Generally, the panel supported the courtyard, and some noted the private spaces were a success.

Some found it well integrated with daylight access others noted concern with shading.

A panelist noted the facades at the courtyard are relentless.

A panelist noted some concern with the water feature in the courtyard and its maintenance throughout the year.

Consider places along the W 4th frontage where pedestrians can just get off the street and sit, not just at

the small plaza at the Safeway corner.

Consider accessibility throughout the site especially with the higher and further units. Consider the accessibility of the mailboxes.

Reconsider the landscape on the Vine Street frontage.

Regarding the vines growing up the building, consider their state during the winter and the care they require to look as beautiful as they do on the renderings.

Thermal performances overall are good.

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