

Date: Monday, September 8, 2015
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Place: Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall

PRESENT:**Board**

J. Pickering Deputy Director of Planning, (Chair)
B. Jackson General Manager of Planning and Development
J. Dobrovlny Acting General Manager of Engineering
S. Johnston Deputy City Manager

Advisory Panel

J. Marshall Representative of the Design Professions (Urban Design Panel)
P. Sanderson Representative of the Design Professions
H. Ahmadian Representative of the Development Industry
S. Chandler Representative of the Development Industry
J. Denis-Jacob Representative of the General Public
S. Atkinson Representative of the General Public
R. Chaster Representative of the General Public

Regrets

K. Maust Representative of the Vancouver Heritage Commission
J. Ross Representative of the General Public

ALSO PRESENT:**City Staff:**

D. Autiero Manager, Project Facilitation Group
M. Holm Engineering Services - Projects Branch
S. Black Development Planner
P. St. Michel Development Planner
J. Grottenberg Planner - Vancouver Downtown
W. LeBreton Project Facilitator
D. Drobot Housing Review Branch
D. Naundorf Housing Review Branch
J. Bateman Planning Assistant

4188 YEW STREET - DE418990 - ZONE CD-1

R. Hall Dialog Design
A. Politano Dialog Design
A. Phillips Dialog Design

1188 BIDWELL STREET - DE419087 - ZONE C5-A

Jon Stovell Reliance Properties Ltd.
A. Politano Dialog Design
A. Phillips Dialog Design

Recording Secretary: L. McLeod

1. **MINUTES**

It was moved by Mr. Jackson, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and was the decision of the Board to approve the minutes of the meeting on July 27, 2015.

2. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

None.

3. **4188 YEW STREET - DE418990 - ZONE CD-1
(COMPLETE APPLICATION)**

Applicant: Dialog Design

Request: To develop the first phase (Block A) of the Arbutus Center redevelopment, with a 64.80 m, eight storey mixed-use building on 2 ½ levels of underground parking.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

Ms. St. Michel, Development Planner, presented the proposal and summarized the recommendations contained in the Staff Committee Report. The recommendation was for support of the application, subject to the conditions noted.

Ms. St. Michel took questions from the Board and Panel members.

Applicant's Comments

The applicant team mentioned that they have been working hard with staff and have made good progress. Solutions are being sought for any remaining concerns and conditions which are outstanding.

The applicant team then took questions from the Board and Panel members.

Comments from other Speakers

One speaker raised concerns about the groundwater as a historic stream runs directly through this site, and some water problems have been experienced in adjacent sites already.

Speakers also anticipated a lot of extra use of an adjacent park due to the increase in area population, and noted that a buffer is ultimately needed between the park and the building.

It was noted that the cumulative impact of the shadows of all buildings in the area should be taken into consideration.

Operational hours are needed to limit the amount of noise coming from the Safeway loading bay, which would disrupt the sleep of residents.

A speaker hoped that First Nations heritage would be taken into account, and recommended consulting with a First Nations architect to facilitate this.

A final speaker noted that the current space makes an active contribution to the creation of connection between people within the community. He also hoped that this attribute could be preserved somehow by providing a meeting space which was independent of retail.

Panel Opinion

Panel members offered a range of comments on the proposal, including:

- Greater activation of Arbutus Street is needed - there should be as many doors as possible on the street;
- The lobby for seniors should be more open, welcoming and daylight;
- The water concerns should be considered, and perhaps the historic stream could be highlighted in a way which draws attention to the heritage of the site;
- This site needs to preserve its contribution to the creation of community as a sense of neighbourhood and livability in public spaces is critical;
- Attention should be paid to the concerns outlined by the Seniors' Advisory Committee regarding accessibility;
- Hours of operations are needed to mitigate the noise impact from the loading trucks.

Board Discussion

Mr. Jackson noted that the applicant and staff seem to have done a thorough job on this project, and thought that there was an interesting treatment of the building. He added that it would be fine to add a condition regarding the hours of operation for Safeway in consideration of noise. He also noted that the information provided by the Seniors' Advisory Committee and the information about the adjacent parks are things which will be taken under advisement.

Mr. Dobrovolny was supportive of the project and appreciated the comments heard from the public. He noted that the applicants and staff are still working through issues as a fair bit of work is needed for a servicing plan. As well, a loading management plan will be provided.

Mr. Johnston supported the proposal and noted that this will bring a lot of value to the community, city and neighbourhood. He thought that it was important for seniors to have a free gathering space to provide opportunities to be part of the community in a visible way. He also agreed with the need to better animate the retail space, as additional smaller retail spaces are needed.

Motion

It was moved by Mr. Dobrovolny and seconded by Mr. Jackson, and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. DE418990, in accordance with the Staff Committee Report dated August 12, 2015, with the following amendments:

Amend Condition A.2.10 to read as follows: Provision of a loading management strategy that considers both the interim and final configurations;

Note to Applicant: The maneuvering proposed in the interim strategy requires multiple movements across the sole vehicular entry to the development. Provision of flaggers may be required to ensure efficient operation and to provide pedestrian safety. Consideration should be given to hours of operation and minimizing noise and other impacts to neighbours.

**4. 1188 BIDWELL STREET - DE419087 - ZONE C5-A
(COMPLETE APPLICATION)**

Applicant: Reliance Properties Ltd.

Request: The development of a 22-storey mixed use building comprising 108 secured market rental dwelling units, and three commercial retail units at grade, all over 4 levels of underground parking, accessed off the lane. Under C5-A zoning, the proposed density may be permitted if the development provides 100% secured market rental housing and receives heritage density. A Letter "A" to transfer heritage density was submitted with the application.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

Mr. Black, Development Planner, presented the proposal and summarized the recommendations contained in the Staff Committee Report. The recommendation was for support of the application, subject to the conditions noted.

Mr. Black took questions from the Board and Panel members.

Applicant's Comments

The applicant team noted that 70% of the extra height requested is mechanical space, with the amenity space making up the rest of the area. The floor plates are also smaller than they could be, so the fins have minimal shadow impact on the area.

The applicant team took questions from the Board and Panel members.

Comments from other Speakers

A speaker supported the development as it significantly improves public realm, forms an exciting street façade, and is sorely needed in order to provide more rental stock at an affordable rate. Another speaker noted that rental units in the West-End are aging, and supported the project as an affordable and secure option for renters.

Two speakers were opposed to the project because of the impact on views, affordability, and hyper-density. The project needs to give something back to the community, and transit and amenity upgrades are needed to the area before the extra population can be supported. They also noted that the building is a glass box and is out of character with the other buildings in the neighborhood.

Other speakers expressed their support for the project and think that the form and expression will add complexity to the neighbourhood. They also noted that there is a real conflict between renters and owners as homeowners are creating a moral panic about hyper-density in the area, which is creating a class division in the West-End. Rental units need to be preserved and enhanced so that the socio-cultural character of the neighbourhood does not disappear.

A resident of the current building acknowledged that the West-End has a strong community, and that so far Reliance has shown willingness to work with residents on maintaining this. Another resident wanted more information on the tenant relocation plan.

Finally, speakers wanted staff to take into account the shadow impact of the building during the winter months. They also questioned the definition of 'affordable' rental stock as the proposed units do not seem to be affordable for most people.

Panel Opinion

Panel members offered a range of comments on the proposal, including:

- The architectural response is positive and strong;
- A stepped-top changes what tower is about, and the continuity of the lower levels should be maintained;
- The fins are not an issue as they provide positive shading to south-east façade and also provide privacy as they separate the outdoor patio space between the units;
- The retail units may need a redesign as storefronts could divide down into smaller tenancies;
- The design could go further in activating the laneway;
- Support for how the retail wraps around both street-frontages;
- While the units may not be cheap, they are more affordable than other options in the area;
- The tenant relocation plan looks good;
- More 3 bedroom units are needed;
- Additional sustainable elements are worth exploring in the long term.

Board Discussion

Mr. Jackson thought that the project responded well to the West-End Community Plan and appears to be a great building. He also noted that there was a thorough democratic process involved in the creation of the West-End plan, and supported the project as it satisfies all the plan requirements.

Mr. Johnston also thought that the project was well done. While he understands that not every wish from the speakers will be met, this project will ultimately allow for more people to be accommodated within the community. He also commended City staff on their work and thanked everyone who came out to speak.

Mr. Dobrovoly acknowledged that the concerns heard from area residents were legitimate and sincere, and thanked the speakers who raised these concerns. He expressed support for the West-End plan as it was exceptionally well-done by staff, and noted that this project fits within the policy framework of that plan.

Motion

It was moved by Mr. Jackson and seconded by Mr. Johnston, and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. DE419087, in accordance with the Staff Committee Report dated August 12, 2015, with the following amendments:

Amend Condition 1.2 to read as follows:

design development to potentially reduce the extent of decorative elements that affect views and natural light in the area;

Note to Applicant: Intent is to examine the effect of the building on sunlight, daylight, and private or public views created by exterior fins, projections, and similar elements. See also Condition **Error! Reference source not found.**, which is related;

Amend Condition 1.10 to read as follows:

design development to the northwest corner of the building to create a greener and more open transition from the commercial area into the residential neighbourhood, and to consider ways to activate the laneway;

Note to Applicant: This can be accomplished by relocating the service functions, mechanical ducts and exit stair box away from Bidwell Street; providing views through the lobby room with more glazing; and continuing the setback, planters and pavers from the building entry to the lane

5. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:50 PM.