

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** October 10, 2012

**TIME:** 4.00 pm

**PLACE:** Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:  
Robert Barnes  
Helen Besharat  
Gregory Borowski (Chair)  
Daryl Condon  
Vincent Dumoulin  
Alan Endall  
Veronica Gillies  
David Grigg  
Bruce Hemstock (Excused Item #2)  
Arno Matis  
Norm Shearing (Excused Item #2)  
Peter Wreglesworth (Excused Item #3)

**REGRETS:** Geoff McDonell

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

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ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	6361-6385 Cambie Street
2.	3100 River Walk Avenue (East Fraser Lands - Parcel 9B)
3.	Georgia Viaducts Workshop

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**BUSINESS MEETING**

The business meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. and the Chair gave an overview of the Development Permit Board meeting on October 9, 2012 where 2118 West 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue was presented to the Board and deferred to the October 22<sup>nd</sup> Development Permit Board Meeting. Chair Borowski then called the meeting to order at 4:20 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. The Panel considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

- |                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Address:         | 6361-6385 Cambie Street                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| DE:                 | N/A                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Description:        | Proposed rezoning to allow an 8-storey (27.13m) building with two storeys on the lane, containing 63 residential units and commercial ground level retail for a total area of 5,277 square meters and 3.29 FSR. |
| Zoning:             | RT-1 to CD-1                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Application Status: | Rezoning                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Review:             | Third                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Architect:          | GBL Architects                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Delegation:         | Stuart Lyon, GBL Architects<br>Andrew Emmerson, GBL Architects<br>Stephen Vincent, Durante Kreuk Landscape Architects                                                                                           |
| Staff:              | Ian Cooper and Sailen Black                                                                                                                                                                                     |

**EVALUATION: SUPPORT (11-0)**

- **Introduction:** Ian Cooper, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal noting that this was the third review by the Panel. Although the Panel supported the height, bulk, density, building location, site plan and general landscape approach, they had concerns primarily with the architectural expression. The proposal is for a mixed-use building on Cambie Street at West 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue with 8-storeys, ground floor retail and offices. As well, it will have courtyard housing and three 2-storey townhouses on the lane, with six units under the STIR program. Mr. Cooper noted the applicable policy for the area is the Cambie Corridor Plan. This includes 25% housing suitable for families with children (2 bedroom units). The proposal is for 42 of the 63 units as two or three bedroom units. As well 20% rental housing is encouraged. The Green Buildings Policy for Rezoning is applicable to this proposal and requires LEED™ Gold with a minimum of 63 points (6 points optimized energy performance, 1 water efficiency, 1 stormwater) and to be registered and certified.

Sailen Black, Development Planner, described the context for the area including a 6-storey building to the north, which was designed before the Corridor Plan was approved. He also noted that the Cambie Corridor Plan intends to balance city-wide and regional goals with the existing community and its context as well as to design and locate densities and forms to meet city and regional needs. The Plan allows heights up to six storeys at West 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue increasing to 8-storeys at this site, and recommends upper floors step back from Cambie Street to create a streetwall. The design of the proposal is also intended to respond to the approved form to the north through proposed setbacks and windows. The lane side of the building steps down to four storeys to create a transition to the lane townhouses and the rowhouses on Ash Street. There is also ground floor commercial space proposed. The exterior expression has been changed considerably in response to the Panel's concerns from the last review.

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

- Does the walkway and building design read as inviting and open for free public access?

- Is the public realm interface sufficiently developed with inviting and attractive features?
- Are the interface to existing (south) and approved (north) building sufficiently resolved as shown?
- How does the proposed streetwall and shoulder line respond to the intent of the area plan and the unusual context of this site?
- Is the proposed palette of materials and the façade expression, including the glass and panel combination shown, an appropriate response to this location?

Mr. Cooper and Mr. Black took questions

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Stuart Lyon, Architect, further described the proposal noting the building to the north is under construction and there will be commercial uses on the ground floor on that site as well. The building comes up to the property line so there will be a fire wall about 3-storeys high between the buildings. They thought this was an opportunity to provide an ensemble of buildings as they back onto each other. Because there is a pedestrian right-of-way to the south, the primary entry faces on to it and gives a quieter opportunity for the residential entrance. He noted that they are animating the lane with the townhouses to make it more interesting. Mr. Lyon indicated that the building has come down in height and they have used a similar vocabulary to the building next door with some differences. The building has been scaled with a base, middle and top. It allows for some stepping and it provides an opportunity for solar control. At the ground plane, there are four or five smaller units proposed and an amenity space. There are units at the ground plane across from the laneway houses. On the second floor there are ten units which are going to be dedicated rental. There are a number of two and three bedroom suites planned for the project.

Stephen Vincent, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans noting that their intention was to simplify the front and keep it open and to make sure there was good accessibility. As well they wanted to make sure there were no raised planters. They wanted a layered terrace effect with some trees and shrubs. The public walk way is at an important corner as it serves many program requirements including through space, entrance to the courtyard and entrance to the building. A water feature and some furniture elements are proposed at the corner. The courtyard space is programmed as a common space with adventure play for children, and at the southern end some tables and chairs. An extensive green roof is planned.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Add weather protection at the retail and residential entry;
  - Review the suite interface carefully next to the building being constructed to the north;
  - Review the loading to eliminate any negative impacts for vehicle drop off at the lane and the pedestrian passage.
  - Consider bringing the mews to the crosswalk and out towards the street;
  - Consider a vehicle drop off at the lane and on Cambie Street;
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and thought it was a huge improvement over the last submission.

The Panel said they appreciated the presentation package from the applicant. As well they said they had no issues with the building, but felt the interface with the building to the

north could be further improved. They thought the interface to the south had also been improved. It was suggested that weather protection was needed along the retail frontage on Cambie Street. A couple of Panel members thought the lobby expression could be further improved. A couple of Panel members wondered if there could be a drop off area on Cambie Street while another Panel member suggested having one in the lane.

One Panel member encouraged the applicant to look at the connection through the mews as it relates to the crosswalk at West 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Since the connection doesn't line up with the crosswalk it was suggested to make some adjustments in the boulevard and bring the mews to the crosswalk. Several Panel members were concerned with the neighbour to the south and thought the design needed a permanent solution to deal with that edge.

A couple of Panel members thought the way the loading bay was sitting in the mews and the interface of the outdoor courtyard could be improved. The Panel liked the relationship between the amenity room and the outdoor space. One Panel member thought Units A and B on the main floor facing west need work, and asked the applicant to look at the privacy issues between them and the townhouses. Another Panel member thought the children's space impacted the townhouses on the ground floor.

One Panel member thought there were some interesting opportunities to integrate art into the public realm.

Regarding sustainability, one Panel member noted that there wasn't any consideration for solar protection on the south and west facades. As well, they suggested adding provision on the roof for the addition of future solar panels. Another Panel member thought the roof area was a lost opportunity and encouraged the applicant to look at an intensive green roof and urban agriculture.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Lyon said he looked forward to the next round and appreciated the Panel's comments.

2. Address:	3100 River Walk Avenue (East Fraser Lands - Parcel 9B)
DE:	416120
Description:	To develop one 5-storey and one 7-storey residential building all over one level of underground parking on Parcel 9B in East Fraser Lands. The underground parkade will be shared by adjacent site on parcel 9A with access ramp into parkade shown over dividing property line.
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Complete
Review:	First
Owner:	Polygon Homes
Architect:	Dialog
Delegation:	Alan Boniface, Dialog Chris Sterry, PWL Landscape Architects Kevin Shoemaker, Polygon Homes
Staff:	Patricia St. Michel

#### EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-2)

- Introduction:** Pat St. Michel, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for the third residential project in the East Fraserlands southeast corner of Vancouver. Ms. St. Michel described the context for the area noting that there are two projects at or near completion. As well there is an upcoming shoreline park with waterfront walkways and bike path. The proposal is for two buildings; one five storeys and the other seven. The project shares vehicular access and one level of underground parking with Parcel 9A. Ms. St. Michel described the architecture noting the building form terraces down towards the river. The applicant has tried to capture the history of the site recalling the forms, components, materials and other characteristics of the working river and the historic mill. Materials for the project include stack bond brick and metal and glass spandrel panels. The two level expressions for the entries along Riverwalk have board-form concrete and wood elements.

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

General comment is sought on the architectural and landscape design, and in particular:

- Foreshore park frontage: The relationship of the continuous linear balconies of the smaller building to the riverfront park
- Street end view: the design of the larger building in response to the axial view set up by the curving Riverwalk Avenue
- Entry Element: Relationship to the adjacent building
- Architectural expression in reference to the guidelines: The guidelines require the form, scale, components and materials to recall the mill and the working river. Particular comment on the scale and proportion of the two storey entry elements along Riverwalk Avenue.

Ms. St. Michel took questions from the Panel.

- Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Alan Boniface, Architect, further described the proposal noting that the zoning and guidelines dictate a 5-storey building and a 7-storey building and that they should be made of concrete. The massing of the buildings is terraced to the water and creates and daylight and sunlight for the parks. It was one of their goals to make the public realm as engaging as possible and the entries have been designed for interaction a street level. He described the materials which are wood that takes from the

history of the site and the board formed concrete, a material that is running through most of the ground plane and some of the vertical elements. The brick on the buildings has a sheen to it and changes with the light and time of day. Most of the terracing has a green element and there are also green roofs that are not accessible. Mr. Boniface described the architecture and indicated that the buildings will be LEED™ Gold.

Chris Sterry, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans and mentioned that the mews is shared with the adjoining building including road access to the underground parking. The courtyard is a highly programmed space providing a play area and urban agriculture. The angled forms of the building lead people to the two entrances, and there is a pathway that allows people to move through the courtyard and to the park. There are units at the ground floor with patios and gateways. There is an entry canopy expression for the two entrances.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Design development to reinforce a clearer hierarchy of the buildings;
  - Design development to further express the history of the site;
  - Design development to better express the entries;
  - Design development to reinforce the history of the site in the landscaping;
  - Consider other alternatives to the sustainability strategy.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal.

The Panel thought the architecture lacked a certain clarity regarding the hierarchy as to what ties the two buildings together. They found the expression did not strongly express the context of the waterfront or the history of the area. As well one Panel member thought the buildings didn't recognize the scale and character of the buildings across the street. The Panel thought the strategy with respect to the frames within the infill was a good response and that the applicant should reinforce those moves. Although they liked the detail element of the brick that runs vertical along the north façade, some Panel members thought there needed to be a focal point at the end of the street that better identifies the entrance. They also thought the entries could be extended into the courtyard. One Panel member suggested having the lobbies in the corners of the buildings to help welcome visitors onto the site. Another Panel member thought the balconies were too deep at the master bedroom and would shadow the bedroom below, and they thought there should be more fluidity to loosen up the balcony expression. As well a number of Panel members thought it felt too tight at the entry stairs and suggested removing the canopy.

Some Panel members thought the taller building was more successful while the smaller one struggled in proportion. As well, they thought there should be a more industrial feel to the architecture and that it should further reflect the industrial past. One Panel member suggested using aged wood treatments, rusting metal or old saw mill signage. A few Panel members thought the proposal should address the river walk frontage.

Some of the Panel thought the applicant should review the party wall elements and clean up the details and strengthen the expression with the concrete elements.

The Panel supported the landscaping plans but suggested the applicant review the character of the railings to differentiate them in the landscape to reinforce the industrial expression. Also, consider the riparian component and perhaps simplify the landscaping as well to help with way finding through the site.

Regarding sustainability, one Panel member thought there were opportunities to tap into the river as a heat source solution. As well, they thought that the applicant hadn't pushed the boundaries of sustainability as far as they could.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Boniface thanked the Panel for their feedback.

3. Address:	Georgia Viaducts Workshop
DE:	N/A
Description:	A proposal has been developed to remove the viaducts and replace them with a new at-grade street network, increased parks and open space, and new opportunities for house. The staff team would like to provide an overview of the study, describe the key urban design elements of the concept plan and gather feedback on the proposal.
Zoning:	N/A
Application Status:	Workshop
Review:	First
Owner:	City of Vancouver
Architect:	N/A
Staff:	Karis Hiebert, Kirsten Robinson, Cory Dobson & Kevin McNaney

#### EVALUATION: NON-VOTING WORKSHOP

- Introduction:** Kevin McNaney, Assistant Director of Planning, noted that the presentation is a concept that they have been preparing at Council's request for the area. A new vision for a part of the eastern downtown which has transformed many times. It is another opportunity to look at a transformation. He noted that the conceptual plan will change over time. The presentation included some of the big moves in the area including framework, transportation, park and urban design on a broad scale.

Kirsten Robinson, Planner, gave the presentation using Power Point. She noted that the viaducts study kicked off in July 2011. Over the last year, the staff team has engaged in public consultation, hosted an international ideas competition, and worked with an interdisciplinary team lead by Perkins + Will Architects to develop a new concept for the lands surrounding the Georgia and Dunsmuir Streets viaducts.

The concept was informed by a set of 10 guiding principles (create a vibrant district; reconnect communities to the creek and each other; embody history to make it memorable; link parks and open space; reintroduce water and natural systems; rebalance movement modes; reinstate Georgia Street's ceremonial role; restore the Main Street corridor; repair the urban fabric; and enhance 'urban vistas' to the mountains).

Inspired by a solution put forward in the Ideas Competition (by Larry Beasley, Jim Green, PWL Partnership [Landscape Architects] and Dialog [Architects]), which proposed two big moves: (1) bringing Georgia Street straight down to Pacific Boulevard, and (2) combining Pacific Boulevard and Expo Boulevard on the north side of the SkyTrain guideway providing a direct east/west connection, a new concept was developed. Highlights of the concept plan include potential for a major waterfront park and restoration of a portion of the Dunsmuir Street viaduct as an elevated public plaza, increased connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists, a direct connection to downtown for goods movement and transit, restoration of the urban fabric and Main Street corridor, a dignified terminus to Georgia Street on axis with Science World, and clustering development to create a vibrant district in Northeast False Creek (NEFC).

Public response to the concept plan has been positive with nearly 70% of the respondents at the open houses hosted in June were supportive or strongly supportive of the concept. As part of ongoing consultation, the staff team is meeting with stakeholder groups to understand and resolve issues in regards to the plan, with a target of reporting back to Council in the New Year.



- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the moves and the principle of the proposal as well as the removal of the viaducts.
  - Connecting the downtown grid is well handled;
  - The realignment of the new Pacific Boulevard reads as a kind of suburban parkway;
  - There needs to be some vitality at street level along the north edge;
  - Consider making it an urban downtown street rather than a parkway;
  - Consider mapping the shoreline - reintroduce the water connection through the park space;
  - Consider having something of importance to mark the end of Georgia Street;
  - Would like to see water views at both ends of Georgia Street;
  - Important to figure out the role of Georgia Street in the future and how it connects to Main Street;
  - Unfortunately SkyTrain dilutes the benefit of getting rid of the viaducts;
  - The straight to the creek context seems confusing with all the competing streets;
  - The density that is shown doesn't do enough to define the western edge;
  - Support the approach to healing Main Street as it is the correct strategy;
  - Removal of the two viaducts will be a benefit to the city;
  - Consider having more iconic buildings at the intersections to anchor Georgia and Dunsmuir Streets;
  - Consider having some public art up prior to the construction;
  - Concord Pacific has a public art plan. What would happen if the other developers combine their money to do something spectacular and memorable;
  - Consider programming the park by recreating and connecting with nature;
  - There is an opportunity on Carrall Street to daylight the creek;
  - Could frame the edge of the park with some higher massing;
  - Important to consider an overlay on how the cultural and historic elements are going to be expressed;
  - How does Chinatown merge into the plan;
  - Consider having urban agriculture area;
  - Consider double lane along Pacific Boulevard to Abbott Street and get rid of the intersection;
  - The intersections should be celebrated;
  - One area that needs to be looked at is how bicycles will use the street;
  - Consider something unexpected at the creek with perhaps an island that is only accessible when the tide is out;
  - Nature could intervene between Science World and Georgia Street perhaps with an interpretive centre;
  - This is an opportunity to showcase sustainability.

### Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.