

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: October 24, 2012

TIME: 4:00 pm

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Robert Barnes
Helen Besharat
Gregory Borowski (Chair)
Daryl Condon
Vincent Dumoulin
Alan Endall (Excused Item #2)
Veronica Gillies
Bruce Hemstock
Geoff McDonell
Peter Wreglesworth

REGRETS:
David Grigg
Arno Matis
Norm Shearing

RECORDING SECRETARY: Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1729-1735 East 33 rd Avenue
2.	980 Howe Street
3.	557 East Cordova Street
4.	2477 Carolina Street

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 22, 2012 where 2118 West 15th Avenue was presented to the Board and approved with modifications to the conditions. Chair Borowski then called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. The Panel considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 1729-1735 East 33rd Avenue
 DE: N/A
 Description: Cedar Cottage Cohousing Company has applied to the City of Vancouver to rezone 1729, 1733 and 1735 East 33rd Avenue from RS-1 (Single Family) District to CD-1 (Comprehensive Development) District. The proposal is for a 3-storey multi-family residential development that will operate as a cohousing community. The project will consist of 27 strata-titled units and a common amenity space.
 Zoning: RS-1 to CD-1
 Application Status: Rezoning
 Architect: McCamant & Durrett Architects
 Owner: Cedar Cottage Cohousing Company
 Review: First
 Delegation: Charles Durrett, McCamant & Durrett Architects
 Ericka Stephens-Renee, Citizen Developer
 Gary Birch, Citizen Developer
 Yonas Jengland, project Manager
 Staff: Farhad Mawani and Ann McLean

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (2-6)

- **Introduction:** Farhad Mawani, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal for a site located on East 33rd Avenue near Victoria Drive. This is a single family RS-1 zoned neighbourhood and Victoria Drive is the only area in the immediate neighbourhood that is currently zoned for mixed-use/multiple dwelling developments. Mr. Mawani noted that at this time they are not anticipating any changes to the zoning in the area. The proposal comprises three lots with a strata titled multi-family dwelling with 27 units, a sizeable common area and shared amenity space. The rezoning is required to permit the multiple dwelling use, height and density on the site.

The project is intended as a Cohousing Community, a model of living that encourages individual home ownership with extensive common space that allows for enhanced amenities, communal interaction, and responsibility. The common area is proposed as a clubhouse with a community kitchen and dining room, activity rooms, office areas, music room and a rooftop garden. As well, there will be ground-level gardens, workshops, a play area and a glass-covered atrium to encourage year-round social contact.

This is the first application to be considered under the "interim rezoning policy on increasing affordable housing choices across Vancouver's neighbourhoods" that was approved by Council on October 3rd of this year. This policy is aimed at encouraging innovation, and enabling examples of ground-oriented affordable housing types. Projects that are developed under this policy are meant as demonstrations and will be tested for wider application across the City in the future. Through this policy innovative housing models such as co-housing can be considered on or in close proximity to arterials.

One of the qualifications for this use is that it is subject to urban design performance including consideration of shadow analysis, view impacts, frontage length, building massing and setbacks and demonstrates a degree of community support.

As with all rezonings applications, the Green Building Policy for Rezonings applies, requiring a minimum of LEED™ Gold or equivalent rating.

Community consultation has resulted in feedback that has expressed support for the cohousing concept across the greater neighbourhood however a concern has been expressed by the immediate neighbours about the height, density, and form of the proposal. In particular, nearby residents have issues related to shadowing, overlook, and the general fit of the project as proposed on this mid-block site within the existing single family area, as well as concerns around increased traffic and parking problems.

Residents are required to follow 'house rules' which mandate resident involvement in activities such as communal meals, building maintenance and other activities. While the housing units are anticipated as being at market value, cohousing enables a more affordable lifestyle.

Ann McLean, Development Planner, further introduced the proposal for a two and three storey building connected by an atrium and one 4-storey building at the lane with a 2-storey portion containing communal amenities including a kitchen, play area and lounge connected with exterior walkways. The proposal is for 27 residential units and one level of underground parking accessed from the lane. Ms. McLean noted that the zoning allows for single family dwelling with a basement or secondary suite and laneway housing. The existing zoning anticipates the first 35% of the site, beyond the front yard setback, and the rear 26 feet to contain built form, and the remainder as open space. She mentioned that staff did not have the opportunity to work with the applicant team prior to the application being made. The exact proposed height is not known, but the applicant has advised that the ridge at the front is at 32 feet above grade. The height at the north ridge is approximately 42 feet. Ms. McLean indicated that staff have concerns regarding the approach to the distribution of built form and site coverage and feel a better approach could be explored.

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

- The response of the proposal to the existing single family context including
 - building scale
 - building placement
 - open space
- The proposed building relationship with East 33rd Avenue

Mr. Mawani and Ms. McLean took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Charles Durrett, Architect, presented a PowerPoint presentation. He noted that design rationale was lifestyle-driven by the future residents of the project. The design includes amenities with a covered courtyard, a common garden and a common house. The idea is to have the residents be able to actively engage with their neighbours. Mr. Durrett described the design rationale noting they have utilized the three lots to give the appearance of two separate buildings when viewed from East 33rd Avenue. The units will use windows for daylighting, natural ventilation and energy efficiency.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Design development to reduce the height and density;
 - Design development to better fit into the neighbourhood using an east/west orientation;
 - Design development to reduce overlook to the neighbours;
 - Design development to improve the front yard expression to allow for at grade main entry to the site;
 - Consider improving the sustainability strategy though renewable energy sources.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel did not support the proposal as they had some serious concerns regarding the form of development and the urban design response to the neighbourhood.

The Panel commended the applicant for the process of getting a number of people who will be residents to work on the project. They felt the project as a whole would promote interaction and social aspects and was a welcomed opportunity for the neighbourhood. As well they thought it was a worthy project with respect to affordable housing.

The Panel thought there were some real challenges in regards to the height and density of the proposal. They felt there were some overlook issues with respect to the proximity and scale of the project to the adjacent neighbours and their private outdoor spaces. As well they felt there was a lack of consideration to the single family house typology in the neighbourhood. They suggested the applicant take a look at how a large portion of the buildings traditionally occupy the front portion of the lots whereas there are traditional outbuildings along the lane. As a result they thought the applicant should develop two principle building that would preserve the courtyard and this would help to avoid some of the overlook issues. As well they thought it should have an east/west orientation. One Panel member noted that the East 33rd Avenue expression of two principle buildings and the atrium along with the width of the massing felt disconcerting. In order to be a more successful fit into the neighbourhood it was suggested that the project have three primary massings and to pick up the division that is already there. As well they felt the entry to the project needed to be at grade from the street.

Regarding the landscape plans, some of the Panel thought that what was missing was the front yard which is typical for the neighbourhood. Having a porch, front door and sidewalk are the ingredients of being part of this neighbourhood. One Panel member thought the internal spaces needed more greenery and a program needed to be established as to how the spaces will be used. As well there needed to be better materials and furniture to create outdoor rooms.

Regarding sustainability, it was suggested that the applicant look at renewable energy, solar energy and the massing for the project.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Durrett said that he doubted they could afford to redesign the project and asked the Panel to consider the value it added to the community. He said he was glad the Panel appreciated the concept but they probably won't be able to have the same number of units if they had an east/west orientation.

2. Address:	980 Howe Street
DE:	416146
Description:	To construct a new 14-storey office building with commercial uses on the ground floor and parking for 217 vehicles accessed from the lane.
Zoning:	DD
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	CEI Architecture and Endall Elliot Architects
Owner:	Manulife Financial
Review:	Second
Delegation:	Alan Endall, Endall Elliot Architects John Scott, CEI Architecture Randy Sharp, Sharp & Diamond Landscape Architects Kathy Ireland, Manulife Financial Jason packer, Recollective Consulting
Staff:	Sailen Black

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-0)

- **Introduction:** Sailen Black, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a 16-storey building with fourteen floors of office with retail on the ground floor and a penthouse for a meeting room and service areas. The proposed height is 202 feet from the base surface to the southeast corner of the penthouse roof. Mr. Black described the CD-1 bylaw with respect to the established form of development. As well he described the various design considerations including relocation of the public washroom into the building to improve pedestrian flow on Nelson Street.

The Panel was asked the following questions:

- Thinking of the proposed sequence of open, covered and enclosed spaces that create the public realm interface, including canopies, sidewalks, and the landscape design at grade, how well does the proposed design provide pedestrian amenity for this area?
- Considering the all-glass skin proposed, privacy concerns, sustainable design, and visibility from Granville Street entertainment district, does the design of the glazing and associated systems create a visually engaging and considerate response to its context?

Mr. Black took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Alan Endall, Architect, further described the proposal noting that they are trying to work within the parameters of a 100% structural glazing skin that is triple glazed, argon filled and low energy coating. He add they are responding to all the different exposures of the building by introducing layers of different coloured tints, frit patterns and different degrees of reflectivity. As well they looked at how the building is shaded by surrounding buildings. They have completed an energy cost analysis and 3-D modeling to be informed as to how to layer the treatments. Mr. Endall stated that at the rezoning stage they thought it would be a heating dominant building, and because they are using all glazing to optimize views and daylight they now need to satisfy the energy targets. Forty-nine percent of the energy is being used to heat the building and two percent is going to cool the building. Mr. Endall described the three different frit patterns they will be using on the building as well as the different types of glass they plan to use. As well, he described the proposed shading devices and described

the art program. He mentioned that they are looking to incorporate a public art piece in the building. Some of the things they have looked at include the use of LED lighting, media mesh screens or films and integrated layers of LED in the glass. He added that 60% of the public art contribution will go towards the public art piece and the rest will go towards the public art program. Regarding privacy to the adjoining residential building, Mr. Endall noted that they have had tried to mitigate issues of privacy and overlook by using a three foot high frit on the glazing.

Randy Sharp, Landscape Architect, described the landscaping plans for the proposal. He mentioned that they have developed the public realm since the rezoning especially at the base of the building to improve the pedestrian flow. They have modified the plaza to respond to desire lines and to the context of Robson Square. The interior and the exterior have a strong relationship and in addition there are several shades of cut granite and basalt with rock outcroppings.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Review the pedestrian circulation especially at the corner of Howe and Nelson Streets;
 - Reconsider using the raised privacy frit on the windows;
 - Ensure the public art integrates well with the language of the building.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and thought it was an exceptionally professional and complete presentation from the applicant team.

The Panel commended the applicant for a nice balance of building and scientific design. They noted that working with technology and the science of materials allowed the applicant to produce a very simple building that has been exceptionally well done. They thought the applicant had also done a good job in mitigating overlook issues and had no issue with the 80 foot separation from the adjoining residential building. They liked the choice of glass with several Panel members suggesting the privacy frit wasn't necessary as there weren't any major privacy issues since it will be an office building. One Panel member suggested using reflective glass for a play of sunlight although other members thought it wasn't necessary on the northwest facade.

The Panel liked the entry but felt it didn't feel like an amenity and suggested the applicant add an area for sitting. Also, they suggested pushing out the weather protection to improve walking along the face of the building.

It was suggested that the public art piece should be made by a local artist or artists and have a modern or futuristic expression using the same gray scale as in the architecture. One Panel member thought the art piece didn't need to be on the building but could be at street level.

The Panel supported the landscape plans, however one Panel member thought the ground plane could be improved, especially the circulation pattern and the placement of the stone element. It was suggested that this element got in the way of the pedestrian circulation. Another Panel member suggested beefing up the basalt columns and to add a seating edge at the corner.

Regarding sustainability, one Panel member noted that the building didn't need to be overtly green to be sustainable. One Panel member suggested the applicant consider increasing the energy efficiency and even suggested having a way to display the energy

efficiency of the building through a digital display or other means. Another Panel member suggested energy future proofing the building.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Endall said he appreciated the Panel's comments. He said it was challenging working with an all glass envelope and making it work. The team looked at a lot of different types of glass before making their choice. He added that it was good to get some positive feedback and they will continue to work to refine the project. Mr. Scott said he appreciated the support and the recognition for the work that had gone into the project. He added that they want to make sure they did the best job they could.

3. Address:	557 East Cordova Street
DE:	416178
Description:	To construct a new 4-storey residential building with 24 units of achievable home ownership units on the second through fourth floors, 5 units of non-market rental on the ground floor and parking accessed from the lane.
Zoning:	DEOD
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Gair Williamson Architect
Owner:	Boffo properties
Review:	First
Delegation:	Gair Williamson, Gair Williamson Architect Jenny Chow, Gair Williamson Architect Senga Lindsay, Senga Landscape Architecture Jeremy Waldman, Boffo properties
Staff:	Scot Hein

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (9-0)

- **Introduction:** Scot Hein, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a residential building that will contain a social housing component. Mr. Hein described the zoning for the site noting that a parking relaxation is being sought. The proposal is under prevailing zoning and context but it is starting to identify a new built form. The building will have a contemporary expression with an industrial context.

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

- Comments on the liveability of the courtyard; and
- Comments on the ground plane interface and the fronting units on the street.

Mr. Hein took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Gair Williamson, Architect, further described the proposal noting that the non-market component is at grade. He also described the material palette for the project.

Jenny Chow, Architect, noted the context for the area which has a lot of history. The project encourages a mixed community including a variety of unit types (studios, 1 bedrooms and 2 bedroom townhomes). It is a 4-storey residential building with 24 units of achievable home ownership on the second, third and fourth levels. There is an interior courtyard which will allow passive ventilation. The non-market housing will be set back three feet from the property line and provides a covered entry and small gardens for the units. The upper level units will be accessed from the street. There is also a third floor exterior gallery above the courtyard that allows access to 12 2-storey townhomes. They also have private roof decks. Ms. Chow described the architecture for the proposal that references the historical heritage of the area. Each unit will have Juliette balcony type windows to maximize light into the units. There are 12 parking stalls proposed of which 20% will have electric charging stations plus a place for car share. Bike storage and a bike repair room will also be provided.

Senga Lindsay, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans for the proposal. Three trees will be planted in the courtyard. On the top level outdoor patio space is provided for the residents. A separation between the ground level units and the street will be provided with plantings.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Design development to improve access to the building;
 - Design development to provide privacy to the upper units;
 - Consider sun shades on the rear units;
 - Consider adding rest areas in the circulation;
 - Consider further separation between the ground plane units and the sidewalk;
 - Design development to improve the main entry into building.

- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and thought it was a clean and sophisticated project.

The Panel agreed that it was a great project especially the arrangement of the units, circulation and materiality. They thought the courtyard was a good addition but one Panel member thought there should be more social sustainability aspects in the project such as seating areas. Several Panel members thought the residential entry needed to be improved with one Panel member suggesting finding a way to get some natural light into the corridor. As well, they thought the units at grade should be front loaded units.

A couple of Panel members suggested adding some colour or glass blocks into the party wall to soften the expression. Several Panel members thought there should be a lift in the building to help residents move their belongings or for people with disabilities. They appreciated the notion of creating an art opportunity and suggested using local artists

Although the Panel supported the landscape plans they thought the expression might need to be revised. One Panel member suggested creating a front yard expression along Cordova Street and to further express the character of the neighbourhood.

Regarding sustainability, it was noted that the upper levels on the back will require sun shades. As well a couple of Panel members thought the glass next to the floor in the units should be insulated spandrel glass.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Williamson thanked the Panel for their comments. He noted that initially they were looking at having the non-market housing inboard of the building but now their primary entry is from the street. He said they would look at sun screens on the upper level. He added that he agreed that it is a long corridor at the main entry. As well he said he didn't know if there was any money in the budget to include a lift in the building.

4. Address:	2477 Carolina Street
DE:	415819
Description:	To construct a 5-storey mixed-use building with retail on the ground floor and residential on the upper floors.
Zoning:	C-2C
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	W.T. Leung Architects
Owner:	Royal East Broadway Development
Review:	First
Delegation:	Wing Ting Leung, W.T. Leung Architects Veronika Kreuels, W.T. Leung Architects Gerry Eckford, E & A Landscape Architects
Staff:	Marie Linehan

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (2-7)

- **Introduction:** Marine Linehan, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a development permit application on the northwest corner of East Broadway and Carolina Street. Ms. Linehan described the context for the area noting the RM-4 zoning across the lane which is a Multiple Dwelling zone which allows for height up to 35 feet and 1.45 FSR.

This site is in the Mount Pleasant Community Plan in the East Broadway Sub Area. The north side of East Broadway between Prince Edward and Prince Albert Streets has been identified through the community plan process as being eligible for additional density and up to six storeys via site specific rezoning. Under the current C2-C zoning, mixed commercial and residential buildings up to 3.0 FSR and a height of 4-storeys and 45 feet is allowed. Ms. Linehan also noted that there is an angled height envelope at the north side to reduce shadowing impact on sites across the lane. It is 24 feet vertically at the rear property line with a 30 degree angle.

Ms. Linehan stated that the proposal fits within the expectations of the C2-C Zoning. The anticipated form of development is for a 4-storey building with a high commercial base and 3-storeys of residential above. The proposal is at 2.4 FSR so well within the permitted 3.0 FSR. As well a 20 foot setback is required and will be provided to residential at the lane. Most of the massing is set significantly back with an L-shaped configuration. There is a height relaxation sought largely due to the site topography. Height is measured from a base plane parallel to the site grades so the height envelope slopes down with the site to a low point at the inside corner

The building is organized as three blocks that step down to the east, which minimizes the extent of encroachment into the height limit. There are small wedges of roof encroaching at two feet into the envelope as seen on the elevations. The upper storey is setback at the rear to fit generally within the angled height envelope, again with a small wedge of encroachment along the roof edge. The number of storeys also requires a relaxation. The building is technically 5-storeys as viewed from the rear, the permitted height being 4-storeys. As viewed from the primary street elevations, it is 4-storeys. The grades drop away as you turn the corner and down the lane, resulting in a 5-storey height. The lower grades at the lane allow the provision of an extra storey of residential. As viewed in section it allows for a floor of units at the rear of the double height commercial space, and two 2-storey town house units fronting the lane.

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

- Height relaxation for 45' height envelope and number of storeys to five.

- Overall design and architectural expression as this is a conditional use, with particular attention to the design of East Elevation at Carolina Street.
- Common roof decks and proximity to private decks.

Ms. Linehan took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Wing Ting Leung, Architect, further described the proposal noting that it a simple program in the sense that there is retail on the ground plane fronting onto East Broadway. Generally in this area there is small scale retail and given the cross fall on the site, there ends up being a 5th floor for the residential. It is conforming with the height envelope, and if they didn't have to step the building it would be more successful given the future 6-storeys in the area. The materials will be brick cladding and the top floor is recessed to give a termination to the building. There are bay windows and enclosed balconies on the East Broadway façade.

Gerry Eckford, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans and indicated that they will be adding a new street tree along the Carolina Street frontage. They are exploring with Engineering to add another tree. There is a hedge element that runs along the property line to soften that façade. There are bike racks and they have provided planters. On the second level there are a couple of grade changes that respond to the loading bay and that provided an opportunity for three different program spaces. There is a small amenity room and a corridor that goes to a common open space. A community garden is planned as well as a children's play area.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Design development to improve the overall expression of the building;
 - Design development to consider the building's orientation and consider adding sunshades;
 - Consider adding weather protection at the ground floor;
 - Design development to improve the circulation from the amenity room to the outdoor deck;
 - Design development to improve the residential entry expression.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel did not support the proposal as they felt the building could be improved to better integrate into the neighbourhood.

The Panel supported the height relaxation for 45 feet and as well as the number of storeys to five. Regarding the overall design and architectural expression with particular attention to the design at Carolina Street, the Panel felt there was a challenge with the stepping. The Panel felt that if the height was relaxed there would be an opportunity for the stepping issue to be removed which would allow for the cleaning up of the elevations not only along East Broadway but also along the lane. They also thought there seemed to be some confusion with the deck elevations.

The Panel felt this project was an opportunity to set the tone in an area that needed some style. However, they felt the architectural expression lacked an element of delight and excitement. Also they suggested the applicant consider the building's orientation when it comes to solar response and to continue the weather protection around the corner at the ground floor.

The Panel thought the common roof decks in proximity to the private decks was supportable. One Panel member suggested adding a bit of screening between the private and common spaces to improve privacy issues. They thought it was difficult to get to the common decks from the amenity room and recommended making a more direct route. They also thought that the leveling of the roof would allow a barrier free access to the urban agriculture.

The Panel thought the residential entry needed to be more visible both in the landscape and in the architecture. One Panel member noted that the residential entry didn't read any different from the commercial entries. They made a suggestion to extend the grass strip up to the residential entry.

Regarding sustainability, the Panel suggested the applicant consider solar readiness and potentially a green roof.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Leung said taking out the 2nd floor could solve the problem and the height envelope would be less of an issue. He said they could add weather canopies over the retail.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.