

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: May 8, 2013

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Daryl Condon
Walter Francl
Veronica Gillies (left after Item #3)
David Grigg
Bruce Hemstock (excused Item #1)
Joseph Hruda
Phil Mondor
Norm Shearing (Chair)
Peter Wreglesworth

REGRETS:
Ryan Bragg
Vincent Dumoulin
Joseph Fry
Goran Ostojic

RECORDING SECRETARY: Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	41 East Hastings Street
2.	1920 SW Marine Drive (Casa Mia)
3.	7249 Cypress Street
4.	708 East 26 th Avenue

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Shearing called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. There being no New Business the meeting considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 41 East Hastings Street
- DE: N/A
- Description: The proposal is for a 14-storey mixed-use building, with commercial/retail space at the ground and second (mezzanine) floors and a total of 169 residential units from floors three to fourteen.
- Zoning: DEOD to CD-1
- Application Status: Rezoning
- Architect: Perkins + Will Architects
- Owner: Atira Development Society
- Review: First
- Delegation: Jim Huffman, Perkins + Will Architects
Bruce Hemstock, PWL Partnership Landscape Architects
Janice Abbott, Atira Development Society
- Staff: Yan Zeng and Scot Hein

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-0)

- **Introduction:** Yan Zeng, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal for a rezoning application on East Hastings Street. Currently the site has two existing buildings; the Ginseng Building and a building that is occupied by United We Can on the main floor. Ms. Zeng explained that the application is coming in under the DTES Interim Rezoning Policy and is for a 14-storey building with commercial space at grade and mezzanine level with dwelling units on levels 3 through 14. There will be a total of 169 units offering a mix of social housing and market rental. Specifically, 52 shelter allowance units (levels 3 to 6), Housing Income Limit (HIL) units (levels 6 to 9) and 67 market rental units (levels 9 to 14). The shelter rate units and the HIL units together make up the social housing component of the project which is 60% of all the residential units in the building. She noted that there will be sixteen underground parking spaces. In terms of the proposed height, the site is also within the boundary of the Historic Area Height Review. The maximum height for this part of Hastings Street is 120 feet under a rezoning. This is to allow consideration of special opportunities for affordable housing projects. As well she mentioned that the proposed ground floor use is currently under discussion and is to include a low-cost grocery store to serve the local community. She added that United We Can will be relocating to another site.

Scot Hein, Development Planner, further described the proposal noting that he was looking for comments from the Panel on use, density and form of development. He said there were three specific areas that staff would like the Panel to review. The first is the height which is seven feet above the prevailing policy and the second question related to contextual response. He said they are looking for a good contextual response to prevailing streetscape character. He added that they regard the proposal as an important background building to strengthen the streetscape. The final question was with respect to the lane interface in terms of the podium wall and how it responds to possible CPTED issues.

Ms. Zeng and Mr. Hein took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Janice Abbott, ATIRA, described the different unit layouts for the proposal. There are 52 units of housing for couples on women-headed leases. That means if the relationship dissolves the woman will remain housed. These units rent for the maximum shelter allowance. There are some units that will rent at the housing income limit rates for people with a maximum yearly household income of \$36,000. The top floor will be air parceled and sold to a group of investors and will market rental units with the profits earned of the sale will help pay for the non-market housing. She noted that they are working to put in a low-income grocery store on the ground floor.

Jim Huffman, Architect, described the architectural plans for the project. He mentioned that the units are 350 square feet with one window and storage area that is big enough for a bed. He said they tried to design a building that fits into the neighbourhood but had a more modern character. He described the material palette noting the brick being proposed. He indicated that the top units have been recessed and roof line is staggered at the top so that it matches the rhythm on the street. There is small cornice at the top that will provide some sun shading to the units. Mr. Huffman noted that there are hydro poles in the lane that make it difficult for trucks to move in around however, Hydro is talking about removing the poles. He added that they have highlighted the entrance with some colour.

Bruce Hemstock, Landscape Architect, described the landscaping plans for the proposal. He noted that the outdoor common area is on a raised podium. They wanted to make it a safe place for people to gather and there is a children's play area on the corner. They plan on trees in the space and urban agriculture.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider using the window expression to emphasis the vertical proportions of the building;
 - Consider reversing the lower towers so that the higher proportion is next to the taller building next door and the lower tower to the lower building next door;
 - Consider a stronger cornice line;
 - Consider more landscaping elements in the lane;
 - Consider a stronger sustainability strategy.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and commended the applicant on the amount of information.

The Panel thought it was a supportable project and had no concerns regarding the height relaxation. They also thought the modern expression and the tall middle portion was the correct response for the site. However they thought that the promise for the building had not yet be resolved but felt it would be by the time the applicant got to the development permit stage. One Panel member noted that the elements needed to be expressed more independently.

A couple of Panel members thought the windows needed to stress the vertical proportions of the building as they thought it was reading rather flat. They wanted to see the vertical elements modulated in terms of the street wall. A couple of Panel members suggested the higher side of the building be next to the higher building next door and that the lower height should be next to the lower building. As well they thought the commercial level wasn't resolved enough with one Panel member noting that the brick elements coming down from the residential was hurting the expression. Another Panel member urged the applicant to play up the urban streetscape that was being modeled on the street. The

Panel wanted to see a stronger line at the lower cornice as it is a strong line on either side of the site. It was also suggested that the glass canopy could be of solid material since it was on the north side of the building and will be fairly well lit.

Some Panel members thought the lane interface was a little tough and wanted to see more habitual roofscapes. One Panel member had some concern with the room in the lane for trucks and stressed concern for possible CPTED issues.

It was noted that the sustainability strategy was lacking with one Panel member stating that the solar response seemed to be forgotten.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Huffman thanked the Panel and said that all the comments were helpful. He added that they would make it easier for them to focus on the development permit submission. He also thanked Janice Abbott for developing a unique program for the development. Mr. Huffman noted that the loading at the back was developed with United We Can and they had a requirement for parking a 55 feet long vehicle overnight that had to be secured. He said it was difficult considering the number of hydro poles in the lane but hopefully the poles would be gone which would make more room in the lane. He agreed that there was a large CPTED issue in the neighbourhood.

2. Address:	1920 SW Marine Drive (Casa Mia)
DE:	N/A
Description:	To allow development of a 92 bed Community Care Facility - Class B. This proposal entails the retention, designation and conversion of the existing 'Casa Mia' house and the development of a 3-storey addition with underground parking and loading facilities, replacing the existing garage.
Zoning:	RS-1 to CD-1
Application Status:	Rezoning
Architect:	Stuart Howard Architects
Owner:	TC Group
Review:	First
Delegation:	Stuart Howard, Stuart Howard Architects Nan Legate, Stuart Howard Architects Orianne Johnson, Stuart Howard Architects Damon Oriente, Damon Oriente Ltd. Landscape Architects
Staff:	Grant Miller and Sailen Black

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (2-6)

- **Introduction:** Grant Miller, Rezoning Planner, presented an application to rezone a site on Southwest Marine Drive from RS-1 to CD-1 to allow for the development of a 92-bed Community Care Facility - Class B. The proposal includes retention and designation of the existing "Casa Mia", a listed heritage building which will provide office and amenity functions while a 3-storey addition will include ninety-two licensed residential care beds for seniors. The site is approximately 1.5 acres. Mr. Miller described the policy for the proposal, which in this case supports senior's residential care. The use is conditionally permitted in all residential zones and subject to specific guidelines.

Sailen Black, Development Planner, further described the proposal noting the surrounding context which includes detached family housing on either side of the site. The existing heritage building is 7,103 square feet. Mr. Black described the permitted height, density and FSR allowed under the zoning. As well he noted that the setbacks for the current lot under the zoning.

Comments were sought on the proposed form of development for this rezoning application in general, and in particular after taking into consideration current zoning and guidelines:

- Did the Panel support the proposed siting and height of the addition, and
- Did the Panel support the proposed setbacks and floor plate size (18,693 square feet) within this neighbourhood context?

The Panel was also asked if they had any advice on the overall design with regards to:

- Neighbourliness, including shadow, view and privacy impacts, and
- Open space and landscape treatments, including the basement courtyard.

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

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Stuart Howard, Architect, further described the proposal. He mentioned that in consultation with their heritage consultants and with the Heritage Commission they were encouraged to have a more modernist approach to the form of development. Casa Mia is a class A Heritage Building and Mr. Howard gave a little bit

of history on the site. The site has two access points that will be maintained. Staff suggested even though the use it allowed on the site that with an HRA it would be possible to get relaxations of density and height. They also thought that a rezoning would be most appropriate because of the nature of the site and use. Mr. Howard described the different schemes they came up with and explained that they wanted to have a lower building which resulted in a 3-storey building. They have developed a traffic management plan to handle parking in an underground parkade and a drop off space. They have kept the mass of the new building as far away as possible from the drive to allow for a view in from the street to the heritage building. He added that they have a number of green strategies in the proposal and number of elements on the building to provide landscaping features. The building will be designated as heritage site to preserve parts of the interior of Casa Mia.

Damon Oriente, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans for the project. The key components include preserving the gate and the wall and existing bridge structure. They will be improving the pond and adding a new driveway turn-around. They will also be adding trees to provide screening from the street and the driveway. The south bank will remain with cedar and dogwood trees. The west side hedge will most likely be removed and replaced. There is a green roof proposed over the parking and circulation. The sunken courtyard will serve some units as well as an activity area.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Design development to reduce the overall bulk of the new building
 - Design development to improve the interface between the new building and the heritage house
 - Consider a way to have the social spaces more centrally located
 - Design development to improve the road access
 - Design development to improve the sunken courtyard space
 - Consider extending a heritage approach throughout the landscape
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel did not support the proposal as they felt there was too much density on the site but supported the intention to save the heritage building.

Although most of the Panel supported the contemporary expression for the new building, they had concerns with the height and density of the addition as well as the bulk of the massing. They thought it was not compatible with the existing residential around the site. They mentioned that the neighbor to the northwest was particularly impacted. As well they thought it was impacting the heritage building and needed some breathing room between the two buildings. One Panel member suggested having the new building be expressed as a background building so it celebrates Casa Mia instead of overwhelming it. A couple of Panel members suggested tucking the building under the eave line of the heritage building. It was also mentioned that the roof deck needed to respect the neighbors.

The Panel supported the use on the site and thought it was important to find a way to make the design work. It was noted that having the social spaces in Casa Mia and the beds in the new building would mean a lot of walking for the residents and the Panel thought the communal spaces needed to be more centrally located. It was pointed out that in most care facilities the social spaces are in the middle of the building.

A couple of Panel members were concerned that there wasn't a viable traffic plan and thought the right in and right out for the vehicle entrance was not supportable.

The Panel supported the open space and landscape plans although they thought there was a pit like feeling to the sunken courtyard and needed a softer transition. A couple of Panel members thought the landscape should have a heritage nature in keeping with the importance of the site.

A couple of Panel members had a problem with the approach from the street. There is a view to the heritage building but it is obscured from the north. One Panel member thought there should be more walkways to the north on the site. Another Panel member noted that the way the 2-storey building approaches the street is an anomaly and an intrusion into the streetscape along Marine Drive.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Howard acknowledged that the density had been pushed around on the site and it was the City's desire to reduce the square footage by having more of the building at grade. He said he agreed with a lot of the Panel's comments. The City wants to encourage aging in place but the question is how to preserve the heritage and put a viable use on the site. He added that this use is particularly difficult to build on a residential site and provide enough outdoor space. Mr. Howard said he did agree with some of the massing comments but thought the site could handle the density. He added that he hoped the Panel could support the use and preservation of Casa Mia.

3. Address:	7249 Cypress Street
DE:	N/A
Description:	To allow development of five ground oriented, 3-storey row houses and one commercial retail unit with residential apartment above.
Zoning:	RS-6 to CD-1
Application Status:	Rezoning
Architect:	Matrix Architecture
Owner:	The Airey Group
Review:	First
Delegation:	Paul Lebofsky, Matrix Architecture Robert Cadez, The Airey Group Howard Airey, The Airey Group
Staff:	Michelle McGuire and Ann McLean

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-1)

- **Introduction:** Michelle McGuire, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal for a rezoning on a triangular site at the junction of Cypress Street, East Boulevard and West 57th Avenue. The site is a single lot that currently has a single family house located on it. Ms. McGuire described the context for the area noting the supermarket and the single family houses across the street. This rezoning application proposes to rezone the site from RS-6 to CD-1 to allow development of five 3-storey townhouses and one commercial unit with a residential apartment above. The proposal is being considered under the Housing Demonstration Project policy that allows consideration of projects that demonstrate a new form of housing in the neighbourhood; improved affordability and a degree of neighbourhood support.

Ann McLean, Development Planner, further described the project. The proposed rowhouse building has 2.5-storey expression with pitched roofs and a traditional residential expression, and a height of 35 feet. The building at the corner containing the commercial unit has a flat roof. The two buildings are separated by a breezeway. This breezeway provides access to the underground level for the commercial unit as well as outdoor space for the end unit. Private outdoor space is provided with raised terraces along East Boulevard and on the roof of the corner building. The project is proposing to achieve LEED™ Gold.

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

We ask for the UDP's comments on the proposed form, height, density and use with particular regard to:

- the relationship of the proposed buildings to each of the site edges; and
- amount and design of open space on the site.

Ms. McGuire and Ms. McLean took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Paul Lebofsky, Architect, further described the proposal and mentioned that there isn't any impact on the East Boulevard side of the site and there is a church across the road. They have included residential over commercial with an apartment. The residential portion has been staggered back to respect the zoning envelopes and to reflect the stepping of the existing building that flanks the building on the north. He added that it is a modest project that they feel fits well into the neighbourhood. Mr. Lebofsky described the landscape plans noting that they will be enhancing the street trees and will retain the existing trees on the site. Flowering trees will be added in front of the commercial building.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider making a more distinct rhythm along the street edge;
 - Consider softening the edge along East Boulevard.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and thought it was well done and supported the form, height and density.

The Panel thought it was a handsome little project and that the commercial building had been on the site for decades and that it would be a welcome addition on the corner. The Panel liked the unit layouts as well as the use of materials. The Panel did not have any issues with the relationship to the side edges.

Some Panel members thought the second townhouse could be shifted back to make the legibility of the massing clearer and would give a more distinct rhythm to the massing. A couple of Panel members suggested staggering the townhouse units to make the units read better. While another Panel member suggested anchoring the commercial to the townhouses.

The Panel supported the landscape plans however one Panel member thought the edge along East Boulevard was too high and needed some softening. Another Panel member noted that the access to the south unit was cumbersome.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Lebofsky thanked the Panel and said they would take the comments under consideration.

4. Address:	708 East 26 th Avenue
DE:	416468
Description:	To construct a 4-storey with one level of underground parking mixed-use building.
Zoning:	C-2
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Cornerstone Architecture
Owner:	Ewen Stewart
Review:	First
Delegation:	Andres Vargas, Cornerstone Architecture Simon Richards, Cornerstone Architecture Peter Kreuk, Durante Kreuk Landscape Architects
Staff:	Marie Linehan

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-1)

- **Introduction:** Marie Linehan, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a site located in the C-2 zoning along Fraser Street, at the south east corner of Fraser Street and East 26th Avenue. Ms. Linehan noted that the context is largely older single storey commercial buildings along this part of Fraser Street, except the immediate neighbour to the south which is a 4-storey mixed-use building built in 1999 under the previous C-2 Regulations. The zoning across the lane to the east is an RS-1 single family district.

The proposal is for a mixed use building with underground parking accessed via the lane, four small commercial units at the main floor, and 3-storeys of residential above. Twenty-eight residential units are provided, with a mix of one and two bedroom units. Two residential units are also provided at the rear of the main floor with patios at the lane.

Ms. Linehan described the setbacks that are required at the fourth storey for street facing elevations in the C-2 district to provide a 3-storey street wall condition. There is a vertical element extending the full height at the side street at East 26th Avenue which encroaches into the setback. This is intended to emphasize the residential entry.

Advice from the Panel on this application is sought on the overall design.

Ms. Linehan took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Andres Vargas, Architect, further described the proposal noting that they wanted to acknowledge the building to the side so they put the parking ramp parallel to the lane to create a transition from the street. They also wanted to create a gentle transition between the single-family residential. He noted that they have 10 foot floor to floor height in the units with large windows to let in more light into the deep units. They recessed the corner to get a more open space at the ground plane as well.

Simon Richards, Architect, noted that they wanted to have a strong expression of the middle two levels with some articulation to give some substance to the streetwall.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Design development to improve the overall expression;
 - Consider brightening up the color palette.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and thought it was a nice little scheme.

The Panel liked the disposition of the massing especially along the lane. As well they liked the floor layouts and found the one bedroom units were well thought out. One Panel member noted that it had the potential of a rich looking building and had a different character than previously seen but was appropriate for the neighborhood. Most of the Panel liked the over height on the entry with one Panel member suggesting it could be higher.

A couple of Panel members found the expression a little fussy but thought there was consistency. One Panel member noted that the building was not well resolved in terms of the nature of the forms. As well the horizontal bands seemed heavy and they didn't support the setback of the commercial with one Panel member noting that there wasn't any room for an outdoor area for a coffee shop. They thought it didn't have the strength that was found around the rest of the building. One Panel member suggested peeling a bit of space out of the units to have the same expression on the ground floor.

The Panel supported the landscape plans although one Panel member had some concerns regarding the access to the parking ramp. As well there was a minor concern regarding CPTED issues. Another Panel member thought the turning radius in the lane needed to be looked at to see if it is workable.

Most of the Panel thought the color palette was too gloomy for Vancouver and thought it should be bolder although they liked the color on the vertical strips.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Vargas thanked the Panel for their comments. He mentioned that the stepping back was suggested by City staff. He said he would try to strengthen the horizontal expression. He said that they don't intend it to be a gloomy building and will look at the color palette.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.