

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: December 17, 2014

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
David Grigg
Jennifer Marshall (Chair)
Arno Matis (Missed 1st Item)
Phil Mondor (left after 2nd Item)
Chris Mramor
Goran Ostojic

REGRETS:
Ryan Bragg
Walter Francl
Joseph Fry
Joseph Hruda
Matthew Soules

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

- | | |
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| 1. | 1819 West 5 th Avenue |
| 2. | 3699 Marine Way (East Fraser Lands parcel 43) |
| 3. | 1510 West 6 th Avenue (2203 Granville Street) |
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BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Marshall called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. There was a brief business meeting and then the Panel considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 1819 West 5th Avenue
 DE: 417855
 Description: to develop the site with a 5-storey mixed-use building containing retail at grade and 23 residential units above.
 Zoning: C-3A
 Application Status: Complete development application
 Review: Second
 Architect: Yamamoto Architecture
 Owner: Orr Development
 Delegation: Taizo Yamamoto, Yamamoto Architecture
 David Stoyko, Sharp & Diamond Landscape Architects
 Staff: Allan Moorey

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-0)

- **Introduction:** Allan Moorey, Development Planner, mentioned that the Panel had reviewed the proposal previously in June. The site is located on the northwest corner of West 5th Avenue and Burrard Street. It is subject to the North Burrard C-3A Guidelines, a subzone of the Burrard Slopes Guidelines. Mr. Moorey noted that the surrounding context is characterized by 2/4-storeys mixed use/commercial buildings north along 4th Ave., 3/4-storeys multi-unit residential to the west, and low rise industrial/service use buildings to the east of Burrard Street. In proximity, along Burrard Street, there are 3/4-storeys (over-height) automobile showrooms and mixed-use residential projects of 6/7-storeys. It should be noted that the site adjacent is C-3A, so that precludes any need for the proposed development to transition to the RM-4 zone to the west. Mr. Moorey noted that there is a cross-fall of +/- 8'-0" as the site slopes down to the north. The building presents 5 storeys; 4 storeys of residential and 1 storey of commercial. The proposed FSR is 3.3 (3.0 Conditional +.3 Heritage Density Transfer). The application is seeking a height relaxation of +/- 2.7m (8'-8") over the 13.7m (45'-0") recommended in the guidelines. Given the sloping site and proximity of a number of other buildings having a similar program and height, Staff supports the height relaxation pending completion of Notification and DE Application review process. The parking entry is off the lane and the residential entry is off West 5th Avenue. Mr. Moorey described the material palette noting the metal panel, curtain wall with and without frit, aluminum windows, cantilevered tempered glass balcony guards, precast concrete panels, painted concrete and wood soffits.

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

- Given the 10% heritage floor space transfer and resulting 3.3 FSR, could the Panel consider the overall massing form of development and comment on the proposed building's fit with the surrounding context.
- Could the Panel comment on the expression of cantilevered balconies and interface with the public realm?
- Based on the previous comments by the Panel, is there consensus these issues have been addressed by the revised proposal?
 - Design development so that the building does not encroach into the view corridor/setbacks.

- Design development to strengthen the building at grade and improve materiality.
- Improve the sustainability strategy.
- Consider continuous weather protection along Burrard Street.
- Consider adding an indoor amenity space in the building.

Mr. Moorey took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Taizo Yamamoto, Architect, further described the proposal and described changes they have made since the last review. They have taken one over height storey off the building and also reduced the height of the building. As a result the face to the west is shorter than in the previous scheme. In terms of the general site, they are trying to make a frontage onto Burrard Street and West 5th Avenue with retail. Services and parking access will be from the lane. The residential lobby is on the southwest and closer to the residential uses on the street. In reconsidering the project design concept, Mr. Yamamoto mentioned that they came up with a concept of a series of stacked slabs to set up the volume of the streetwall and create a positive frontage for both streets. As well they have tried to unify the design that carries through all the levels of the building. With the setting back of floors on the different levels it allows them to have a lot of outdoor space. There are five units that have access to the roof. He mentioned that they will be pursuing LEED™ Gold for mid-rise.

David Stoyko, Landscape Architect, described the landscaping plans and explained that on the ground level there hasn't been much of a change since the last review. They are making a material change at the residential entry and they have some room for patio space for an appropriate retail tenant. They are retaining the existing trees and adding new trees. It is more green building with additional planters on the sides and the roof decks have a series of smaller floating patios within a larger field of green.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider setting back the fifth floor on the lane;
 - Consider adding an indoor amenity space and common outdoor space on the roof;
 - Design development to reduce the appearance of the balcony guards on the top floor.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and thought the applicant was successful in addressing the Panel's previous concerns.

The Panel thought the massing and fit had improved and was a successful fabric building. They also thought the ground floor was largely improved. The cantilevered balconies were supported and the Panel liked the continuous weather protection on the building.

The Panel suggested setting the fifth floor back on the lane to mitigate overlook and to reduce the perceived height of the building. They also thought the view corridor had been well treated.

The Panel thought there should be an indoor amenity space in the building or at the very least there could be an addition of common outdoor space on the roof. As well they thought the balcony guards could be pulled back on the top floor to reduce their appearance from the street.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Yamamoto said he appreciated the comments and will work with staff to continue improving the project.

2. Address:	3699 Marine Way (East Fraser Lands Parcel 43)
DE:	418420
Description:	To construct two 6-storey residential buildings containing a total of 280 residential units and one amenity building.
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Complete development application
Review:	First
Architect:	Raymond Letkeman Architects Inc.
Owner:	Wesgroup
Delegation:	Ray Letkeman, Raymond Letkeman Architects Inc. Greg Voute, Raymond Letkeman Architects Inc. Peter Kreuk, Durante Kreuk Landscape Architects Troy Glasner, E3 Eco Group Joe Carreira, Wesgroup Robin Petri, Wesgroup Beau Jarvis, Wesgroup
Staff:	Pat St. Michel

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (0-5)

- **Introduction:** Pat St. Michel, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a site in the River District in the southeast corner of Vancouver between Marine Way and the Fraser River. Ms. St. Michel described the context noting that Parcel 43 is different in location and type from other recent River District projects. It is on the north side of Marine Way at the foot of a slope up to Champlain Heights, adjacent to Boundary Road. It is a roughly triangular area with a future park at the west end. The site is an important gateway to Vancouver given its location right at Boundary Road and Marine Way. There is approximately a 20 foot grade change between the corner of Marine Way and Boundary Road and the level of the buildings and as well the slope continues up to the north to existing townhouse developments on the rise above.

Ms. St. Michel mentioned that there is a park that is part of the future Avalon Park Corridor and provides a visual and physical extension of green from the river to the uplands of Champlain Heights. An existing pedestrian connection to the uplands will connect to this Avalon Park Corridor. An extension of Saw Mill Crescent, the east/west street that runs through the Town Square forms the northern edge of the promontory park and the parcel and terminates in a cul-de-sac.

Ms. St. Michel noted that the proposal is all residential. Beyond the two buildings there will be two 4-storey buildings intended for affordable housing on the north side of the cul-de-sac. In the Area One Guidelines, an 18-storey tower, with a low-rise base was envisioned. Instead a change to a 6-storey wood-frame building is proposed, offering improved affordability of construction, and more appropriately reserving tower forms to locations with the mixed-use higher density town square and waterfront precincts of the central neighbourhood.

Ms. St. Michel noted that the proposal contains 280 residential rental units however the rental is not being secured by the City, so strata residential would be a possibility moving into the future. A separately expressed amenity building is proposed at the juncture between the two buildings that steps down a level with the slope. The proposal is generally consistent with the guideline version with respect to being set quite far back from Marine Way and raised above it in elevation. The current proposal is at one single level, which is about 2 meters higher than originally anticipated at the corner of Marine Way and Boundary

Road in part due to more detailed work on the design of the street and cul-de-sac. There will be reconfiguring of grade around the site to transition to this level, and the proposal is for a natural wooded frontage with trees planted at a substantial scale from the outset. Also, the park site will be regraded to raise it above the level of Marine Way.

Ms. St. Michel described the architecture for the proposal noting that the building floorplate is carried consistently up through the 6-storeys due to the wood-frame construction and the building is articulated with roof forms at key locations and building projections outward from the frame. Materials include fibre cement panels and boarding, aluminum sun shades, glass and aluminum balcony rails and stained natural cedar soffits on feature roofs. As a wood-frame project in the River District, Built Green Gold equivalency is required.

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

Massing:

- The buildings have been articulated with roof-shapes, overhangs and projections and designed without step-backs or varied levels in the interests of the proposed 6-storey wood-frame construction. Does the Panel have any comments about this approach?
- Does the panel have any comment about the building length, particularly along Boundary Road?
- Finished floor elevations and response to the slope: Both buildings are set at a consistent elevation. Should there be some variation in response to the slope, or does the substantive landscaping proposed address this?

Colour and Materiality:

- Should there be greater variation between the two buildings and more distinct colouration?

Response to Guidelines:

- The guidelines ask that buildings draw from references to the working river and the saw mill industrial past of the site and express them in a contemporary way.

Gateway:

- Does the panel have any advice regarding the combined landscape and architectural approach to this gateway site to Vancouver?

Ms. St. Michel took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Ray Letkeman, Architect, further described the proposal. He noted that they have established the floor elevations to improve livability in the units. The grade of Sawmill Crescent is the same grade as at Boundary Road and sets the floor elevation which they have taken through both buildings. As a result they are touching grade at the northeast corner and then the site slopes about 20 feet. They wanted to develop a green entry so there will be landscaping on the slope to make it an attractive gateway into the city. They increased the setbacks on Boundary Road to allow for a landscape buffer. He noted that they wanted to make the amenity building look like a pavilion. As well the entry to the underground parking, visitor parking and garbage pickup is kept in the centre of the space. The building will be a 6-storey wood framed building that will be covered in non-combustible cladding and they will be using cedar soffits. As well they are going to use wood and timber elements at the entry and as well some timbering on the amenity buildings. Mr. Letkeman described the architecture and mentioned that since it is a wood framed building, they needed to keep the expression as simple as possible. On the corner of Boundary Road and Marine Drive the building will have

a window wall expression and they are planning a symbol or public art at the base of the building. Mr. Letkeman described the colour palette and noted that they are considering more contrast on the buildings.

Peter Kreuk, Landscape Architect, described the landscaping plans and mentioned that they wanted to be fairly natural along the outside edge which has a slope. As well they are using a rock stacked retaining wall system in order to create slopes that can be planted on and walk on it to maintain. As well it will extend into the park to help create terraces. On the corner they are looking at having a sheet pile expression with potential for signage or public art. There will be a rain garden at the entry sequence. The south facing amenity patio will have urban agriculture, children's play, some open lawn as well as an outdoor kitchen space and outdoor fire pit. There will be a green roof on top of the amenity building. All the ground floor units have outdoor patio spaces which are separated and planted.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Design development to address the unrelenting and homogenous massing and expression of the buildings;
 - Design development to better to respond to this gateway site and to reflect the varied orientations of the buildings, improving sustainability and passive design response.
 - Design development to improve the colour and material palette;
 - Design development to improve the livability of the proposal including the length of the internal corridors;
 - Design development to improve the expression visibility and circulation to the amenity building.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel did not support the proposal as they thought the building was not taking advantage of the site.

The Panel agreed that the six storey wood frame building was a supportable change from the high-rise building proposed in the rezoning. However they thought the massing was unrelenting and lacked interest. Several Panel members thought the massing could be broken up into smaller buildings to make it more appealing and/or that some building step backs, breaks, and jogs should be introduced. With respect to the roof shapes, overhangs and set back, the Panel did not think the proposal was taking the approach to the guidelines seriously. Several Panel members thought the guidelines regarding reflecting the industrial past of the main site might not be appropriate for this side of Marine Way and that it would make for a better project if the proposal reflected more of the Champlain Heights character. Concern was expressed at the lack of contextual response across marine Way and that the development should be designed with the 3-storey townhouse edge context in mind. Panel members felt that the proposed form of development was not a neighbourhood fit as designed.

The Panel had concerns with respect to the building's expression, and that it was not meeting the standards set in some of the recent River District buildings the panel had reviewed. They suggested that a change in materials might improve the expression and as well there could be an improvement in strength, contrast and variation of the colour palette. Greater variation between the buildings and components of the buildings is needed. The panel thought the design needed to give further consideration to its role as a gateway corner to Vancouver both with respect to the architecture and the landscape. The

panel had some concerns with how signage would be incorporated and they also were not in support of the sheet pile expression. They thought it looked unfinished and lacked sophistication. One Panel member suggested adding a strong iconic element.

The Panel had an issue with the livability of the units noting that residents who have their units at the end of the corridor will have a long trip to the elevators. Some panel members thought separating the buildings or providing more elevators should be considered.

The Panel thought the amenity building needed some design development and in particular the expression could better celebrate the building with a stronger identity. As well some Panel members thought the circulation from the residential to the amenity space was unworkable and encouraged the applicant to find ways through the building to the amenity space.

The Panel thought the landscape edge along Marine Way and Boundary was supportable with one Panel member suggesting it could be even denser and more lush. However they thought a walkway along that edge was not viable given the amount of traffic. To create a decent walkway they thought there should be a boulevard which would mean encroaching back into the green space. As well they noted that given the runoff from the hill there would be a lot of water collecting in the area.

Most panel members thought the common floor elevation was supportable, considering the dense landscaping and treed response to the slope, but several thought that the building needed to respond to the slope in additional ways, such as stepping down and through some further articulation, perhaps removal of some units.

Regarding sustainability, it was mentioned that all four facades are being treated the same and that there should be an expression of passive elements to improve livability. It was noted that the south and west corners are all glass making the livability during the summer months difficult.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Letkeman said he appreciated the comments from the Panel. He mentioned that they haven't spent a lot of time planning the sheet piling expression and still need to develop that expression. He agreed that the units would be more livable raised up with a landscape buffer. As well he appreciated the comments regarding the connectivity from the residential building to the amenity building. The building has been set up to break down the length of the corridor. As well he agreed that with the addition of more colour contrast they could liven up the elevations using accent colours.

Mr. Jarvis said he agreed with the comments regarding the colour and material palette. He noted that they are looking at the neighbourhood context. As well he mentioned that they do not want to break the building up into three separate building. He added that the Panel had good comments and they could work with them.

3. Address:	1510 West 6 th Avenue (2203 Granville Street)
DE:	418420
Description:	To construct a 5-storey mixed-use building containing three commercial units at grade and four residential units above.
Zoning:	C-3A
Application Status:	Complete development application
Review:	First
Architect:	Amanat Architect
Owner:	Zonda Nellis
Delegation:	Hossein Amanat, Amanat Architects Bruce Gauthier, Enns Gauthier Landscape Architects
Staff:	Tim Potter

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-0)

- **Introduction:** Tim Potter, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a small site at the corner of Granville Street and West 6th Avenue having access from the rear lane. The base height is 30 feet and that height can be relaxed beyond this limit subject to the Development Permit Board or the Director of Planning. There is a Granville view cone located at Granville Street and West Broadway however this proposal does not encroach into the view cone. There are street enclosure guidelines that apply to this site. This guideline looks to achieve and maintain street corridor views, pedestrian friendly scale and access onto the sidewalks.

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

In addition to any comment on the overall form of development proposed for this development application, the Panel's advice was sought on the following questions:

1. Comments on the proposed height, scale, and massing in term of its response to context and its response to the intents of the street enclosure guideline containing angles;
2. Comments on the overall success of the proposal with respect to the architecture and its expression and composition;
3. Comments on the composition of the proposed south elevation;
4. Comments or suggestions on the success of the streetscape and public realm treatments and sidewalk treatments.

Mr. Potter took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Hossein Amanat, Architect, further described the proposal and mentioned that they wanted to inject some life on West 6th Avenue with the addition of retail space. As a result they weren't able to add a ramp to the underground parking so they are going to be using a car elevator. They have tried to create an interesting elevation and consider the streetscape. He described the architecture noting that the building is concrete with painted concrete panels and curtain wall windows.

Bruce Gauthier, Landscape Architect, described the landscaping plans and noted that not only will the building be used for retail but it will also have a residence. There will be some street trees along West 6th Avenue as well as granite sets. An exterior mosaic tile will be used at the retail entrances. He mentioned that they will be using a travertine paver on the roof decks. A simple green roof is planned.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider adding continuous weather protection on Granville Street;
 - Consider a way to improve the blank wall.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal as well as the height, scale and massing and thought it was well suited and a positive addition to the fabric of Granville Street.

The Panel thought the proposal was well designed and suggested the applicant should keep the material and colour palette as clean as possible. They also suggested that any refining matches the level of the architectural design. Some Panel members thought the loading requirement was onerous.

The Panel liked the use of plants as a kind of tapestry but thought the south façade could use some articulation as it may be seen for some time to come. One Panel member suggested making it a green wall. As well they wanted to see continuous weather protection along Granville Street. One Panel member suggested using a new hybrid glazing system to express the glass in a pure way.

The Panel supported the landscaping and thought the mosaic at the retail entrance was recalls a tradition in Vancouver and ties in to the rest of the retail on the street. They liked the public realm treatment and thought a higher quality of paving between the public and private entrances to the building was important.

In addition, the Panel wanted to see further refinement and simplification of the materials on the roof deck and recommended they be more in keeping with the elegant simplicity of the architecture. The Panel wanted the plant material to be the "tapestry".

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Amanat thanked the Panel for all the comments. He said he would like to be able to do frameless windows and thought they could add a feature to the south façade to make it more attractive.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.