

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** April 8, 2015

**TIME:** 3.00 pm

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

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:  
Russell Acton  
Stefan Aepli  
Meghan Cree-Smith  
Stuart Hood (Excused Item #1)  
Roger Hughes (Chair)  
Ken Larsson  
Arno Matis  
Chris Mramor (Excused Item #3 and #4)

**REGRETS:**  
Jennifer Marshall  
Matthew Soules

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

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### ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

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| 1. | 1754-1772 Pendrell Street                               |
| 2. | 3090 East 54 <sup>th</sup> Avenue (Fire Hall 5)         |
| 3. | 5650 Balaclava Street (Knox United Church)              |
| 4. | 520 East 1 <sup>st</sup> Avenue (Emily Carr University) |
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**BUSINESS MEETING**

Chair Hughes 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: 1754-1772 Pendrell Street  
DE: N/A  
Description: To construct a 21-storey residential building. This proposal is for a total of 171 dwelling units including 26 non-market rental units.  
Zoning: RM-5A to CD-1  
Application Status: Rezoning  
Review: Second  
Architect: Henriquez Partners Architect  
Owner: Wesbank Developments  
Delegation: Gregory Henriquez, Henriquez Partners Architect  
Peter Wood, Henriquez Partners Architect  
Ian Gillespie, Westbank  
Staff: Linda Gillan and Sailen Black

**EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-0)**

- **Introduction:** Linda Gillan, Rezoning Planner introduced the proposal and mentioned that this application predates Council's approval West End Plan. The application is to rezone three parcels on Pendrell Street, east of Denman Street. The proposal is to rezone the site from RM-5A to CD-1 to allow for a 21-storey residential building containing 171 secured market rental units. Ms. Gillan mentioned that the application was originally submitted in December 2007 under the City's Affordable Housing Policies and proposed a mix of social housing and market residential. The Panel reviewed the application in March 2008 and supported it. As well a revised application, with the same housing mix, but a revised form of development, was reviewed by the Panel in May 2010 and received non-support. With a new applicant team, the proposal for the site has now been revised to include 100% secured market rental. Ms. Gillan added that the application predates the Green Buildings Policy for Rezoning, however the applicant is proposing LEED™ Gold equivalent, with no requirement to register.

Sailen Black, Development Planner, further described the proposal and mentioned that the surrounding context includes commercial shopping along Denman Street and Morton Park to the southwest. Mr. Black noted that the tower separation that is recommended in the guidelines is being maintained and that other zoning measures are either met or exceeded including the setbacks.

Comments were sought on the landscape and architectural design of this rezoning application in general, and in particular;

- Whether the Panel supports the proposed form of development, including the height and setbacks shown, and the proposed density of 6.55 FSR.
- Whether the previous comments of the Urban Design Panel have been addressed successfully, including the relationship of the building at grade to the public realm.
- Whether the Panel has any preliminary advice on the exterior expression shown.

Ms. Gillan and Mr. Black took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Peter Wood, Architect, further described the proposal and mentioned that they have increased the amount of units from the previous proposal. There are 145 market rental units of which 72 are two bedroom units. They also have some three bedroom units. He noted that they moved the podium into the tower and moved the tower further to the east to allow more garden space at the ground plane. The building has been stepped to allow views through from the surrounding towers. There is an amenity space on the roof and as well a green roof with urban gardens. Mr. Wood said they tried to bring some of the West End characteristics into the building. They wanted to provide some passive solar shading and made a sculpted form to look like sails.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Design development to improve the lane expression;
  - Consider activating the courtyard;
  - Consider adding an outdoor patio to the indoor amenity space.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and thought it was a well thought out application.

The Panel supported the form of development, height, density and setbacks but mentioned that it might be a little tight on the north side. They agreed that the integration of affordable housing was supportable. They also appreciated the number of family units in the proposal. The Panel acknowledged that the Panel's previous concerns had been addressed.

Some Panel members thought the lane expression could be improved with one Panel member commenting that it was a bit harsh. As well several Panel members thought the back face was somewhat flat in its expression whereas the others were more sculpted. They wanted to see a more consistent look to the building. However, they liked the number and size of the balconies.

The Panel supported the landscape plans and thought the ground plane was exceptionally clear and well handled. However, one Panel member thought the courtyard was not activated very well and noted that the amenity space didn't have a patio space. The Panel agreed that the amenity on the roof would be well used by the residents.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Henriquez thanked the Panel for their comments.

2. Address:	3090 East 54 <sup>th</sup> Avenue (Fire Hall 5)
DE:	418846
Description:	To construct a 6-storey mixed-use building, including a replacement of Fire Hall No. 5 on the first two levels and an additional four levels of non-market social housing above. This proposal is for a total of 31 dwelling units.
Zoning:	CD-1 Amendment
Application Status:	Concurrent Development and Rezoning Application
Review:	First
Architect:	Johnston Davidson Architecture + Planning Inc.
Owner:	City of Vancouver
Delegation:	Kim Johnston, Johnston Davidson Architecture + Planning Inc. Paul Whitehead, Greenway Landscape Architects
Staff:	Cynthia Lau and Patrick O'Sullivan

#### EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-1)

- Introduction:** Cynthia Lau, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal for a concurrent rezoning and development permit application comprised of a single parcel at the corner of East 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Kerr Street. She described the context for the area noting the 2-storey apartments/townhouses to the west and south in the existing CD-1 zoning which allows for use, density and form as built. To the north are single family homes and across Kerr Street to the east is a gas station and Champlain Square. The proposal is for a 6-storey building with the Fire Hall at grade and on the second level with 31 social housing units above to be operated by the YWCA. The proposal is being considered under the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2012-2021 meeting strategic directions by increasing the supply of affordable housing, optimizing the use of City land and supporting partners to enhance housing stability. The Victoria-Fraserview-Killarney Community Vision supports rezonings for existing CD-1s and social or affordable housing projects as well as the expansion or reuse of publicly owned or public authority use projects. Ms. Lau mentioned that there is parking for fourteen vehicles and fourteen Class A and eight Class B bicycle parking stalls.

Patrick O'Sullivan, Development Planner, further described the proposal and explained that the context is predominantly 2-storey single family homes and multifamily uses to the west and south. The proposal is for a 6-storey building with the residential entry on Kerr Street near the lane. There are stair towers to the west and south. Vehicle and bicycle parking is in the parkade level with apparatus bays, community room, offices, kitchen, workshops and gear storage on the main level for the Fire Hall. The fire fighter dorms, fitness area and outdoor space are on the second level. Floors three through six have the social housing units and an amenity area on the third level (both interior and exterior spaces). There is an outdoor play area on the roof with canopy extensions. There are 31 social housing units planned, each with a balcony. Mr. O'Sullivan described the material palette noting the use of brick and hardie panel.

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

- Comments on the proposal's height and massing.
- Comments on the success of the proposal's composition, materials and expression in reducing apparent building bulk. Is the articulation, materiality and expression sufficient to achieve a level of interest for the community?
- Comments on the handling of building edges including the proximity of circulation tower massing to adjacencies.
- Comments on the overall landscape design (including the rooftop play area) as proposed in terms of daylight exposure, choice of materials and plant selection.

Ms. Lau and Mr. O'Sullivan took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Kim Johnston, Architect, further described the proposal and mentioned that there are two complex user groups. The social housing in combination with the fire department was a very interesting application and required a design that would reflect the differences in the programs yet bring them together in a cohesive composition. Since the application is considered a post disaster building it had some specific requirements. They had to use a concrete structure for the lower portion with the housing made from a wood structure. She noted that they wanted to reflect that in the nature of the building. She described the material palette noting the masonry on the base of the building with hardi board paneling above. In describing the architecture she noted that there is an entry for the fire hall and a separate entry for the residential. There are graphics in the entries for wayfinding along with some colour. There is an outdoor private space for the fire fighters on the second floor and for the YWCA on the south there is a small outdoor space adjacent to the amenity room. As well there is a roof top patio with urban agriculture, patio seating and a play area.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Design development to step the upper floor;
  - Design development to resolve the expression and join the two vocabularies together;
  - Consider enlarging the barbeque patio as well as the roof top outdoor space;
  - Consider adding solar hot water.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and liked the mix of uses for the project.

The Panel thought the height was reasonable and supported the massing although one Panel member thought a step at the 6<sup>th</sup> floor would help capture a more residential expression and a better expression against the single family homes across the lane. Another Panel member thought the lower floors should be better connected to the upper storeys as it feels like one building sitting on top of the other.

Regarding the material expression, some Panel members thought there was too much of a difference between the lower and upper portion of the building and thought more design development was needed to join the vocabularies together. They also thought the residential entrance could be more prominent.

The Panel thought the landscaping was well handled but thought more outdoor space could be added. They especially were concerned with the barbeque space, given its proximity to the bus stop, and thought it required a larger patio space. A couple of Panel members thought there could be more greenery on the roof as well as more meaningful outdoor space.

Regarding sustainability, it was noted that air condition in this building might be a good idea and that solar hot water could be added.

- **Applicant's Response:** Ms. Johnston thanked the Panel for their comments and said they were much appreciated.

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3. Address:	5650 Balaclava Street (Knox United Church)
DE:	418780
Description:	To construct a 4-storey residential building plus a 2-storey annex for Knox United Church. The residential building includes a total of 77 dwelling units. The annex building includes offices at grade and a preschool above.
Zoning:	CD-1 Pending
Application Status:	Complete Development Application
Review:	Second
Architect:	Rositch Hemphill Architects
Owner:	Hon Towers Kerrisdale Ltd.
Delegation:	Keith Hemphill, Rositch Hemphill Architects Anca Hurst, Rositch Hemphill Architects Chris Phillips, PFS Studio Landscape Architects
Staff:	Sailen Black

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**EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (0-6)**

- **Introduction:** Sailen Black, Development Planner, introduced the proposal in the northeast corner of West 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Balaclava Streets in the Dunbar neighbourhood. The site currently contains several houses and the Knox Church and Fellowship Centre. Mr. Black described the context for the area noting the Kerrisdale Elementary School immediately east and the single-family houses to the north. Across Balaclava Street to the west are also single family houses and across West 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue is Crofton House School. The Crofton School site is zoned CD-1 and zoned RS-5 on the north side of West 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Knox Church site.

Mr. Black mentioned that Council approved in principle the CD-1 rezoning in 2009. It established the density, height and setbacks of a 4-storey multiple dwelling designed for seniors, designation and rehabilitation of the Vancouver Heritage Register listed "B" Knox Church and replace of the church annex building. Mr. Black described the conditions of approval that were added by Council at the Public Hearing.

The proposal includes designation of the Knox Church as a protected heritage building, demolition of the single-family houses on the site and the Fellowship Centre. These will be replaced by a new 2-storey Annex with offices on the first floor and a 20 child preschool above. As well new 4-storey multiple dwelling designed for seniors will be added containing 77 residential units. Vehicle access for the new residential will be from West 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and as well there will be pedestrian access from the midblock driveway on the north side of the site. As well vehicle access to the Annex will be from the midblock driveway. Mr. Black mentioned that the LEED™ checklist indicates a Gold rating for the residential building and Silver for the Annex.

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

Comments were sought on the landscape and architectural design of this complete development permit application in general and in particular on:

- The application's response to the previous Panel comments
- The suitability of the building and open space design for seniors
- The proposed response to the conditions regarding feasibility of an east-west pedestrian connection, and better connections and amenity space for seniors
- The proposed exterior design in terms of expression, colours, and materials

Mr. Black took questions from the Panel.

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- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Keith Hemphill, Architect, mentioned that they made a strong effort to consider the Panel's comments from the last review. He noted that they have had significant input from the community, City staff and the public. Mr. Hemphill explained that they designed the proposal to accommodate the slope on the site and to include amenity space for the residents. As well they have decided to save a number of trees that are currently on the site. He mentioned that they re-evaluated the massing and went to a double loaded corridor approach in order to provide a more typical kinds of access to the units. The main entrance on the north side has a vehicular drop-off. He described the architecture and mentioned that they stepped the upper floors so that there is less mass presented to the adjacent single-family houses. He said they tried to make the courtyard useable and as well accessible from the street. Mr. Hemphill mentioned that they have added a substantial indoor area with washroom, kitchen and lounge area. It relates to the outdoor space and can be used by the broader neighbourhood as it accessible from the street. He noted that parking for the church will be separate from the resident's parking. Mr. Hemphill described the colour and material palette noting the use cementitious panel cladding and terra cotta. He also noted that they have changed the ratio of transparent windows to wall to improve energy management.

Mr. Hemphill described the approach they took with the Annex. He mentioned that they created a respectful separation from the existing church and as well they added a children's play area in the south to allow for maximum sunlight. The program for the childcare facility has been improved as well.

Chris Phillips, Landscape Architect, described the landscaping plans and mentioned that the circulation from a neighbourhood perspective is much clearer and more public. A lot of effort has been made to save the trees which will set a nice neighbourly context. The courtyards function well as social spaces for the church and neighbourhood. They are flat areas with a grass area for weddings and other events. The senior's courtyard is a sunny area with a nice relationship to the street. On the roof there is urban agriculture with raised planters and tool a shed.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Design development to have the residential building better fit the slopes of the site;
  - Design development to improve the connection to the amenity room;
  - Design development to allow for public access through the site to the school;
  - Design development to improve the expression of the Annex;
  - Consider improving the community space on the roof.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel did not support the proposal although they thought the applicant had attempted to make the project better since the previous review.

The Panel thought the proposal was a sympathetic approach to the neighbourhood and the access through the site were all positive moves. However, the Panel had some concerns regarding how the residential building was addressing the slopes on the site. They thought the three levels made for an awkward solution especially in a senior's building. They did not agree with the use of two sided elevators and thought the floors should have level access. As well they thought the connection to the amenity room and the proposed uses were not working especially how the amenity room addresses the lobby. One Panel member noted that the amenity room was at the end of a corridor.

The Panel thought the east/west pedestrian connection had addressed the previous concerns but wondered how the neighbourhood would get access to the school grounds. They commended the applicant for saving the trees but wondered about the quality of the roof deck. They felt there was a lack of community happening and was mostly a sea of gravel. One Panel member questioned the lack of irrigation for the site.

Regarding the expression, materials and colour palette, most of the Panel found the original rezoning submission was stronger. They wanted to see the residential expression simplified a bit. As well they found the vocabulary of the annex at odds with the site. Although they agreed that it could be different from the church and residential they thought the design seemed too complicated. As well some Panel members found the entry and approach to be too harsh and abrupt especially with the angular roof. They noted that the design was not complimentary to the existing church.

Some Panel members thought the location of the multipurpose room for the annex was problematic. They suggested flipping the annex with the church as it blocks a lot of light to the courtyard. As well they noted that although the children's play area in the south was a good location for this use, they didn't support the long walk over concrete to get there.

Regarding sustainability, it was suggested that the proposal could add solar units on the roof for domestic hot water.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Hemphill noted that the plan for the east/west connection was taken to the School Board as well as members of the church and the public and had a good response for their solution. He noted that because of the slope of the site and the zoning they are limited in the height they can build to and would need to go to the Board of Variance to change the height of the residential building. Mr. Hemphill thought the location of the amenity room was not a problem considering that the people who live in the building will know how to get to it. He noted that the amenity space allows for use by the community as well as the residents with a direct connection from the outside so they don't need to go through the building. He added that the residential building is for independent living and is not a care facility.

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4. Address:	520 East 1 <sup>st</sup> Avenue (Emily Carr University)
DE:	418832
Description:	To construct a new 4-storey school for the Emily Carr University of Art and Design.
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Complete Development Application
Review:	First
Architect:	Diamond Schmitt Architects
Owner:	Emily Carr University
Delegation:	Don Schmitt, Diamond Schmitt Architects Gerry Eckford, ETA Landscape Architects Ron Burnett, Emily Carr University Ryan Bragg, Perkins and Will Architects
Staff:	Tim Potter

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#### EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-1)

- **Introduction:** Tim Potter, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for site located inward from Great Northern Way and Carolina Avenue. He noted that the Burlington Northern Railway is located to the north of the site and the Central Valley Greenway, a regionally significant greenway, passes through the site at St. George Plaza. As well at Thornton Avenue and Great Northern Way, a future SkyTrain station is planned. Mr. Potter explained that the development application is to construct an institutional building for the Emily Carr University of Art and Design. Parking will be provided through a series of off-site parking agreements and Class A bicycle parking is being provided towards the eastern edge of the site. The main entry will be located off St. George Plaza and the pedestrian spine and connector will be designed and provided by the Great Northern Way Trust.

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

Comments were sought on the proposed form of development for this Development Application in general, and in particular:

1. Taking into consideration the design parti of the building being composed of four buildings brought together as a single building, comments were asked on:
  - a) the proposed massing as an expression of the design parti;
  - b) the massing as it relates to outside space; and
  - c) the proposed roof design as it relates to building massing
2. The pedestrian movement for the campus is a key element and must be fully accessible, comments were asked on:
  - a. the interface of the proposed building to the pedestrian spine;
  - b. the success of the Emily Carr Main entry and its relationship to the St. George Plaza in terms of the design and placement of stairs and ramps.
3. The expression and use of materials and the composition and placement of windows relative to views and solar exposure.
4. The overall landscape design and treatment of the public realm.

Mr. Potter took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Don Schmitt, Architect, further described the proposal with a Power Point presentation. In describing the architecture he noted that the design provides places for informal gathering, discussion and the needs of the student and faculty. The transparency of the building allows for sight lines into the building and allows for more open space around the site. There is an eastern plaza and principal entry from St. George Plaza with transparent views into the building. The massing is broken down to

articulate four distinct elements creating various spaces within the building. As well the roofline has a series of projecting elements including the screening of the roof top mechanical units. Mr. Schmitt described the material palette noting the use of glass, metal panel and standing seam. He added that the colour palette is currently under development and will bring additional vitality to the building.

Ryan Bragg, Architect, explained that they have been looking at what the pedestrian spine will look like as well as the two plazas. The plan is to bring people from Great Northern Way into the building by flattening out the spine to make the site more accessible. The large terraces will allow for meaningful public spaces. He added that the pedestrian circulation is still being refined.

Gerry Eckford, Landscape Architect, described the landscaping plans and mentioned that the plan is to provide spaces for social, educational and creative needs of the campus population. They want the space to be as flexible as possible. Mr. Eckford explained that the plant material focuses on native plantings that relate to the First Nations culture. At the north corner there is bicycle storage with an entry and seating space. Large stairs come up into the main entry and have an amphitheater seating that looks onto St. George Plaza.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Design development to have the exterior more strongly connected to the interior;
  - Design development to improve the sculptural quality of the design;
  - Design development for more clarity of connections between floors;
  - Design development to improve the main entry sequence;
  - Consider solar control for the south façade;
  - Design development to improve interior/exterior connection to the various plazas.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and were excited to see the creation of a new home for Emily Carr University.

The Panel supported the proposed massing and exterior expression but thought it could be more strongly connected with the interior layout. As well they thought there could be more opportunities for indoor/outdoor relationships on the grade elevation. Some Panel members thought the elevational form seemed tacked on and that there should be more depth to the sculptural roof. As well they thought there should be more clarity of connections between the floors especially floors one and two. The Panel supported the material and colour palette and thought it would make for a dynamic expression.

Some Panel members thought the main entry could be improved as they felt there were too many stairs and ramps. As well they thought the connections from the SkyTrain Station to the campus needed to be clarified.

There was support for the window treatments as they thought they were playful and the placement of the windows was successful. However, they thought there was an opportunity in terms of solar control especially on the south face.

Although the Panel supported the landscaping plans, they thought there were opportunities for an inside/outside experience that wasn't being taken advantage of along the south side. There was some concern regarding the 5% ramp and thought it was going to be a challenge. As well they wanted to see some weather protection along the edge of the building for pedestrians. The Panel felt that the east plaza was the more successful of the

two plazas and had a good relationship to the entry. However they wanted the east plaza to connect both levels one and two.

Some Panel members wanted to see more seating opportunities in the plazas. As well, they thought the Aboriginal plaza was somewhat token and needed to be pulled together with other elements in the building to give it more connection.

Some Panel members thought the roofscape could be improved and the irregular form of the centre piece could be more regular. However there were a number of Panel members who liked that the roof form was unexpected and out of the ordinary.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Schmitt said he appreciated the Panel's comments. He agreed that it was a challenge regarding the grades around the perimeter of the building and how to deal with that in terms of transition so that the building is not below the public realm. He also agreed that they would like to have St. George Plaza at the level of the second floor but that wouldn't align with the building elements. He said they would continue to work to improve the elevations. Mr. Schmitt mentioned that they would take into account sculpting the building to strengthen the project as well clarifying the parti. Mr. Burnett noted that on the west side the unifying element is the auditorium and that they are trying to create an east/west connection. He added that the idea is that the public areas are connected to each other.

#### **Adjournment**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.