

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: October 21, 2015

TIME: 3:00 pm

PLACE: Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Russell Acton
Meghan Cree-Smith
Stuart Hood (excused for item #2 & 3)
Ken Larsson (excused for item #1 & 4)
Jennifer Marshall
Arno Matis
Chris Mramor
Muneesh Sharma
Roger Hughes
Richard Henriquez (item #1 only)
Peter Cardew (item #1 only)

REGRETS: Matthew Soules
Neil LaMontagne
Stefan Aepli
Julien Fagnan

RECORDING SECRETARY: Lidia McLeod

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

- | | |
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| 1. | 1133 Melville Street |
| 2. | 4085 Ash Street and 619-633 W King Edward Avenue |
| 3. | 5021-5079 Quebec St |
| 4. | 49 E 1 st Avenue |
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BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Marshall called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. There being no New Business the meeting considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 1133 Melville Street
 DE: N/A
 Description: To construct a 33-storey office building with retail at grade. This rezoning application is being considered under the Rezoning Policy for the Central Business District (CBD) and CBD Shoulder, General Policy for Higher Buildings and Rezoning Policy for Sustainable Large Developments
 Zoning: DD to CD-1
 Application Status: Rezoning Application
 Review: First
 Architect: Kasian Architecture Interior Design & Planning (Michael McDonald)
 Owner: Oxford Properties
 Delegation: Josh Chaiken, KPF
 Michael McDonald, Kasian
 Mark Cote, Oxford Properties
 Juan Monterosa, MMM Group
 Ken Larsson, Sharp & Diamond Landscape Architects
 Staff: Linda Gillan and Paul Cheng

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (2-7)

- **Introduction:** Linda Gillan, Rezoning Planner, presented the project as a rezoning application for 1133 Melville Street. The site for this rezoning application is located mid-block on Melville Street between Bute Street and Thurlow Street. There is a frontage of 231 ft. on Melville Street, with a depth of 132 ft. and a site size of 30,500 sq. ft. Currently an eight-storey building with above-grade parking and office exists on the site.

The application is being considered under the Rezoning Policy for the Central Business District (CBD) and CBD Shoulder, which encourages commercial intensification in the CBD. The General Policy for Higher Buildings (GPHB) allows for up to 550 ft. in this area. In order to “earn” the greater heights, the GPHB also requires architectural excellence and a high level of sustainable design. To quote from the higher building policy, a higher building must:

- With respect to architecture, “establish a significant and recognizable new benchmark for architectural creativity and excellence, while making a significant contribution to the beauty and visual power of the city’s skyline”;
- With respect to sustainability, “demonstrate leadership and advances in sustainable design and energy consumption”;
- Meet the requirement for a 45% reduction in energy consumption as compared to the 2014 Vancouver Building By-law; and,
- Also contribute to downtown network of green and plaza space.

The Rezoning Policy for Sustainable Large Developments also applies for this site. The policy states that, with the objective of achieving higher sustainability standards on large development sites, additional studies are required as part of the application with regard to:

- District energy;
- Sustainable site design;
- Green mobility;
- Rainwater management; and,
- Solid waste diversion.

The Green Buildings Policy for Rezonings also applies for this site, and requires a minimum of LEED Gold or an equivalent.

The proposal is to rezone from DD (Downtown District) to CD-1 to allow for a 33-storey office building, with commercial uses at grade. There is a proposed floor area of 655,000 sq. ft. (office / commercial), a proposed density of 21.47 FSR, and a proposed height of 524 ft.

Paul Cheng, Development Planner, continued the introduction by stating that, due to requirements of the applicable rezoning policy, this review involves an enhanced Urban Design Panel with special panelists Richard Henriquez and Peter Cardew as local experts on tower design.

This site is on the north side of Melville Street between Bute and Thurlow streets. There are several existing office and hotel towers located to the north, south and east, and a residential tower located to the west. On the site there is currently a ten-storey building comprised of five-storeys of above-grade parking and five-storeys of office use, with vehicular accesses from both the lane and Melville Street.

The proposal is for an office building on a site that is currently zoned DD. It would be a 33-storey office tower with retail and office lobby at grade, with a maximum height of approximately 550 ft. and a density of 22.65 FSR (approximately 658,000 sq. ft.).

As part of the proposal the applicants will take the opportunity to perform some “urban repair”. This will include deleting the curb-cuts on Melville Street, widening the sidewalk to 18 ft., creating an urban plaza fronting a restaurant use on Melville Street, and improving the mid-block pedestrian access through the site for which there exists a legal easement. Furthermore, a café is proposed to front a second patio located adjacent to the pedestrian access.

This rezoning application is supported by the General Policy for Higher Buildings. This policy seeks to mark the prominence of the “Central Business District in our downtown skyline” while also encouraging the provision of commercial business uses (residential use is not permitted in this area). This particular site has been identified in this policy to attain an overall building height of 550 ft., which penetrates through the Queen Elizabeth Viewcone.

To reiterate, the major policy requirements for this rezoning include the following:

- The building should “establish a significant and recognizable new benchmark for architectural creativity and excellence, while making a significant contribution to the beauty and visual power of the city’s skyline”.
- The building should “demonstrate leadership and advances in sustainable design and energy consumption...”
- That the building ”significantly demonstrate and advance the city’s objective for carbon neutrality for the new buildings with a stated objective to achieve a 45% reduction in energy consumption as compared to the 2014 Vancouver Building By-Law.

Sean Pander, Sustainability Project Manager, further noted that the proposed design uses 45% less energy than reference code building and produces estimated 88% lower GHGs. The energy solution proposes advanced air source heat pumps, waste heat recovery to reduce heating energy demand, and reduced lighting power.

There is a 68% window-to-wall ratio; this high ratio means that resilient energy performance depends on excellent glass. Glass is R2.5 (standard double glazing) and spandrel panels are R4 (standard). Thermal load (heating and cooling) calculations do not utilize the best available information on thermal bridging. While the building envelopes are “forever”, the equipment will be replaced several times over life of the building.

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

1. This project proposes a significant penetration into the council-adopted Queen Elizabeth Viewcone. As such, a high standard of architectural excellence is expected. Does the proposed building make “a significant contribution to the beauty and visual power of the city’s skyline” when viewed from:
 - a) the Queen Elizabeth Viewcone;
 - b) the skyline from various other viewpoints represented.

2. While the upper portion of the building presents an interesting and layered approach of different masses, the proposed middle body presents elevations that are treated more consistently with respect to overall texture.

Taking into account the overall length and depth of the tower floorplate (approximately 120’ x 160’), does the proposal provide a sufficient amount of variability in texture or modulation to the elevations along the middle portion of the building?

3. Please provide commentary on the proposal’s response to the public realm, with respect to the outdoor patios, pedestrian linkages and the interface of these spaces with the building’s ground floor.
 4. Please provide any other commentary on the proposal’s architectural design.
 5. Taking into account the proposal’s cited sustainability strategy, does this building “demonstrate leadership and advances in sustainable design and energy consumption”?
 6. Will this “sustainable design” be resilient to unexpected changes from design phase through its operating life?
- **Applicant’s Introductory Comments:** The applicant team introduced the project as having a chance to impact the city skyline in a significant way. Thus they set out to create an elegant design which achieves an array of architectural goals.

The site is predominantly surrounded by office buildings with some residential buildings and a hotel. The primary strategy was to shift the building footprint to the west to open up a pedestrian throughway on the east, while the form is meant to create an iconic crown on the building when set against the city skyline.

At the tower base the curtain wall has been raised in order to establish a pedestrian scale, while the curtain wall hem has been lifted and recessed to establish the lobby. Canopies extend from the curtain wall for rain protection, and the lobby will be surrounded in glass to create a strong connection to the street. This connection will help to open the lobby onto a plaza to draw light, air and people into the space. Seating will be placed outside on this plaza, while ramps and stairs will provide access through the site. There is also bicycle access off the lane. At the top there are layered roof-decks with a possible café which function as an outdoor amenity.

The building will have very low energy consumption; the energy system is mostly electric with some supplementary natural gas, and is very close to no-carbon use. Tree planting and a green roof help with water run-off and add some greenery to the site. Overall there is a LEED platinum strategy.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - While elegant, the building doesn't push any boundaries, and needs to make a greater contribution to the public benefit, sustainability, and public realm. It needs to make a greater contribution to public benefit and better response to context and sustainability to be considered for the requested relaxations.
 - The height form and massing are generally acceptable, provided view cones, neighbouring building's view, and the texture of the context are respected.
 - There is a smaller-scale of development in the surrounding context which is not reflected in this building.
 - Design development to create more generous and activated linkages from Pender to Mellville - connecting them with the hotel might help to give them more life.
 - Design development to make the building sit comfortably on, and in-scale with, the ground plane.
 - Design development to make the building more light and translucent.
 - This building does not push the benchmark on sustainability; targeting LEED platinum should be the minimum standard. More attention should be paid to a passive strategy rather than mechanical systems. Resilience needs to reside in envelope design not mechanical systems.
 - Social sustainability is important in a state of the art office building - the project should demonstrate new trends in workspace design and worker well-being.
 - The passive response and social sustainability should be told and embraced in the story of the building.
 - The public art should be part of the submission.
- **Related Commentary:** The panel thanked the applicant for a comprehensive presentation and noted that overall the building is attractive and understated, but does not push any design boundaries and is not in scale with the area.

The panel recognized that it is a unique and challenging site with a tight smaller scale context. This context is not recognized in the design.

1. View Cones:

Generally height is okay, but top needs further sculpting. While there is strong rationale for the top of the building, it does not respond to adjacent view-lines neighbouring buildings, or solar access to ground plane. The top could benefit with more dramatic angles or a slimmer profile. Overall this building appears to be just the same as other ones, and a lot more work is needed in order to have it become a significant contribution to the beauty of the skyline.

2. Layered Approach:

The middle portion of the building is not as important as the top and bottom. While panel thought a calm middle portion of the building is appropriate, attention should still be paid to the expression of the building and how it relates to social responsibility and sustainability. There are also questions about the design of the glass to create a high performance skin.

3. Public Realm:

Currently there does not seem to be any public realm benefit to this building. The building does not sit comfortably on the ground plane. The building to open space ratio is not proportionate. Dramatic increases to open spaces are needed for this to be a success. This space should be generous, but in scale to the things around it. The proposed ground plane seems too tight with such a large building. The narrow spaces and grade change are a challenge that needs to be resolved.

An attractive laneway, streetscape, and thru block passage are critical to success. The grade change at the lane is also too much and creates a dead space, as well as impedes the flow of traffic through the site. The thru block linkage needs to be more generous and the grade change more creatively resolved. Stepping down the grade in the plaza to help mitigate the grade change might help with this. The edge along Melville Street needs to be activated with the scale being broken down, perhaps by making the main entry off of Melville and wrapping the cafes and retail around the building. Public art would also help to activate the space, and should be included in the proposal as it will be an important feature of this site.

4. Architectural Design:

These couple of blocks are quite unique and tend to be tight and smaller in scale, thus it is strange that these unique properties are not acknowledged in the proposed design. Architectural excellence is not being demonstrated as this looks like every other building downtown. As well, the base treatment needs to be higher in order to be in proportion to the scale of the building. The floor-plate could be made to succeed, but the second and third floor of the building may need to be removed in order to do something dramatic at the ground. Overall a stronger expression and community contribution are needed if this building is to merit the bonus density being requested. Consideration of glass treatment, the design of the south façade and sustainability measures all need to be addressed in the façade design.

With regards to sustainability the building doesn't really advance the benchmark, and seem to be using mechanical systems to justify a poor-performing envelope. While the LEED Platinum target is appreciated, that should be the minimum in order to be innovative on a global scale.

5. Sustainability:

The proposed heat-recovery system is ok, but it may not be good to hinge everything on ventilation systems. Putting some money into triple glazing and more solar shading would be a more effective approach. Creating differences in solar shading on the different facades could help to re-enforce the uniqueness of the building. The sustainability of the building should be brought into the public art to showcase its leadership in, and ties to, green innovation.

- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant team thanked the panel and noted that, while this is in the rezoning stage, they have been at it for a while. The comments made were good ones, and there is a lot of process and design left to go.

2. Address:	4085 Ash Street and 619 - 633 W King Edward Avenue
DE:	N/A
Description:	To construct a four-storey residential building with two-storey townhouses at the lane. The proposal includes a total of 31 residential units. This rezoning application is being considered under the Cambie Corridor Plan.
Zoning:	RS-5 to CD-1
Application Status:	Rezoning Application
Review:	First
Architect:	Public Design (Mike Thicke)
Owner:	Aragon Properties
Delegation:	John Wall, Public Joseph Fry, Hapa Collaborative David Roppel, Aragon Properties
Staff:	Michelle McGuire and Allan Moorey

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-0)

- **Introduction:** Michelle McGuire, Rezoning Planner, introduced the project as consisting of three parcels at King Edward Avenue and Ash within the Cambie Corridor area. The site is one block from the King Edward Canada Line station. The Hobbit house, and other four and six-storey projects, also exist in the area. To the north and south of King Edward and west along King Edward are single-family properties that are included in the Cambie Corridor Phase 3 plan, which is currently underway.

This application proposes to rezone the site from RS-5 to CD-1 to allow development of a four-storey residential building with two-storey townhouses along the rear lane, all over one level of underground parking. The proposal includes 31 units at a floor space ratio (FSR) of 1.93.

The Cambie Corridor Plan for this area anticipates four-storey residential buildings with townhouses along the lane where space permits. The estimated density range for this area is 1.25 - 1.75 FSR. The proposed development is consistent with other developments along King Edward.

One of the most notable aspects is the extent of slope across the site. There is an effective cross fall of 18' - 0" from the southwest corner of the site to a low point in the northeast corner.

Allan Moorey, Development Planner, continued the introduction by stating that the building presents 130' - 0" to King Edward Avenue, and 80' - 0" along Ash Street. A single story amenity building is located in the northeast corner of the site. A roof is also provided at the courtyard level which provides covered area across the outdoor space.

The amenity building integrates preservation efforts for two feature trees, a Hemlock and a Cedar tree. As per the guidelines, the primary building is four stories with an expressed three story shoulder setback of varied dimensions.

A limited full height expression is proposed to establish a strong corner element at King Edward Avenue and Ash Street. Deep roofs are contiguous to the face of the base building below.

The primary residential entry is located mid-building off King Edward Avenue. Garden terraces are provided for all ground floor units. These benefit from semi-private buffer planting, feature trees, low fencing and, in some instances, vertical separation.

The terrace spaces in the courtyard along the south edge present a 'grand height' transition, with a walkway which separates these from the townhouse spaces.

Thereafter two flights of stairs located between the townhouse units provide a transition between the courtyard and the lane. Along Ash Street, a planter/stair assembly transitions between the courtyard level and grade. To the south, a planter moderates the slope presenting at the low point.

Materiality can be characterized by the use of brick, smooth face and textured composite wood panels, light and dark coloured panels and tempered glass guards.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant team introduced the project as being in a great neighbourhood with some fundamentally inherent sustainable principles. The proposed building is ideal building for families and those whom want less carbon-oriented lifestyles. Brick is the proposed primary material.

The biggest challenge of the site is its slope. While it allows for easy access to the parking level, it is still very difficult to get the typical 3 ft. stoop on the site. To help with this there is a big step in the courtyard to transition to the terraces, and a transition down to the lane.

The placement of the townhouses allows for light to get into the courtyard while still being conscious of overlook issues. There is a series of terraced landscape elements on Ash Street and a large outdoor deck for barbeques.

Some push and pull has been proposed to create interest at the penthouse level, and a strong shoulder has been proposed on Ash Street. The facades are particularly tuned with punch-window expression and larger openings to the north to take advantage of the views. The project will be district energy ready with a hydronic heating system and heat-recovery ventilation.

There is significant screening along Ash Street to meet the grade, and street tree planting along the setback to the sidewalk to provide solar-shading during the summer. Two mature trees are being retained. Strategies are being explored to best protect these trees and create an amenity which works with them successfully.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Design development to simplify the building as currently it is over articulated
 - Provide a larger amenity with positive connectivity to the building
 - Design development to better activate the spaces between the townhouses and to better engage the space with the units
 - Design development of the townhomes to establish a comfortable two-storey relationship with the lane
 - Design development to solve the overlook issues between the two levels of patios
 - More room is needed for the slide, and the implementation should be re-thought
 - Design development on the shoulder as it appears too heavy and looming

- **Related Commentary:** The panel thanked the applicants for their presentation and appreciated how different the project is compared to others in the area.

1. Main Building Design:

While it would be a shame to dilute the expression by changing the verticality of the windows, it is important to pay attention to the verticality of the building. This is both to make sure it doesn't compete with the horizontal expression, and to prevent an institutional feel. A bit more balance should be created between vertical and horizontal expressions at the 2nd and 3rd storeys.

While the brick was generally liked, combined with the punched windows it feels like the project is doing too much. The building is trying to be a brick building but also something else, and needs to be toned down a bit through design to remove some of the articulation and vertical feel.

More design development is also needed at the three-storey shoulder as the change in material makes the corner look odd. While the height and idea is interesting, it does not work with the rest of the building and needs to be resolved.

2. Amenity Space:

The location of the amenity space is positive, but the slide out onto the boulevard on the corner at the lane does not work as it is a potential hazard. The combination of the social space and children's play area needs more room. Additionally, the connection into the amenity through the parking area is unacceptable. A better connection is needed to improve the traffic flow and a positive relationship between units and amenity.

3. Townhouses:

The townhouses seem to work well and activate the lane well. However the grade change is causing the townhouses to be too tall. A more comfortable two-storey relationship with the lane needs to be established and solved through the design.

An additional look should be taken of the roof treatment for the townhouses. The gaps between the townhouse units are also problematic as they are currently dark and uninteresting. More daylighting and activation is needed.

At the ground plane there should be additional hard surface and usable space. More separation could happen between the garden terraces as well.

- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant thanked the panel and noted that the comments were appreciated as they were constructive, and re-enforced the desire to make the project better. Work will be done to further develop the plans and resolve the access issues to the courtyard and amenity. All of the expressed concerns will be embraced.

3. Address:	5021 - 5079 Quebec Street
DE:	N/A
Description:	To construct a six-storey residential building that includes 42 residential units. The application is being considered under the Little Mountain Adjacent Area Rezoning Policy.
Zoning:	RS-1 to CD-1
Application Status:	Rezoning Application
Review:	First
Architect:	Office of McFarlane Biggar (Steve McFarlane)
Owner:	Aragon Properties
Delegation:	Steve McFarlane, OMB Nicholas Standeven, OMB Rob Barnes, P + A David Roppel, Aragon Properties
Staff:	Graham Winterbottom and Colin King

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-0)

- **Introduction:** Graham Winterbottom, Rezoning Planner, introduced the site as consisting of a four lot assembly on the west side of Quebec Street at the corner of 35th Avenue.

The proposal is within the Riley Park South Cambie Community Vision and being considered under the area specific Little Mountain Adjacent Area Rezoning Policy, which covers from 35th to 33rd and from Main St to the lane east of Quebec. The policy was developed along with the site specific policy for the larger Little Mountain Site which sits immediately adjacent; policies for both sites were approved by Council in the winter of 2012 and 2013.

The intent of the policy is to provide a transition in scale from the larger site to the surrounding neighbourhood, to provide a diverse range of innovative building types, and to provide connections which link Main St through to the larger site and Queen Elizabeth Park. In this area the policy contemplates a choice of two building types: a townhouse/rowhouse form with up to 1.5 FSR, or a mid-rise form of up to 6-storeys and 2.3 FSR.

For a mid-rise form, the policy offers general principles and building characteristics which encourage proposals to vary from a standard double loaded corridor typology; principles include:

- Large roof decks or balconies for outdoor living and urban ag;
- A range of units sizes and types including ground oriented units and 35% of all units being 2-3 beds suitable for families
- Passive design elements
- Limited building depths to enhance natural light and ventilation
- Wood frame construction to contribute to affordability

The site located immediately adjacent to the Little Mountain site. This is a 25 acre site with Policy which recommends heights of six to eight-storeys throughout the majority of the site, but with some opportunities for ten and twelve-storey buildings towards the centre.

The surrounding area is very amenity-rich, with Queen Elizabeth Park located to the west and Hillcrest Park to the north. Hillcrest Park includes Hillcrest Recreation Centre, Nat Bailey Stadium, and Phoenix Gymnastics. The area is also well served by transit being located on two frequent bus routes and within ten minutes walks of both the King Edward and 41st Ave Canada Line stations.

The first three rezonings within the Adjacent Area were approved by Council in 2015, they include:

- 2 five-storey residential buildings on Main and Quebec immediately east across the street from this site;
- 1 six-storey residential building on 35th Ave south of this site;
- A rezoning application immediately south on 35th Ave for a five storey building at 2.3 FSR which is currently being reviewed by staff

The application is proposing to rezone four one-family dwellings from RS-1 to CD-1 to develop a six-storey residential building. The proposal includes 42 residential units, 86% being family units of 2-3 bedrooms. Total proposed floor area is 2.3 FSR.

Colin King, Development Planner, continued the introduction by noting that the concept diagrams in the booklet and on the boards give a clear illustration of the evolution of the design.

The site has two active street frontages, and a side yard relationship to the neighbour. Side yard setbacks are 3m as per the policy direction. Along the north interface we have a mid-block connection to the lane in line with the policy, and along the 35th Ave frontage we can see grade activation with private patio spaces.

The front yard setback set by the policy is 3m; and the proposal offers a significant increase at 8.5m. Within this we have the main building entry, and a layering of landscape treatments for the plinth on which the building sits. Similarly the rear yard setback is at 8.5m.

I'll note the parking access from the lane here too, as well as the notching of the parking slab to facilitate tree retention at that corner. This acts to significantly reduce the building depth from other proposals in the area. The importance of this is that the design guidance expects a form of development at six-storeys where the building steps back with a four storey shoulder. The intent of this guidance is primarily to minimize apparent height; it also acts toward the creation of visual interest which the plan seeks.

With the greater setbacks in place, this proposal dispenses with the setback on the rationale that apparent mass is reduced already in the basic building form, and the deep balconies act to provide visual interest.

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

1. Can the panel offer specific commentary around the building expression, especially as it relates to the provision of visual interest through the balcony treatment?
2. Does the panel have any concerns with the relationship between the proposed building and the adjacent neighbour to the north as it relates to upper level setbacks expected by the design guidance?

3. Does the panel support the form of development with regard to height, use and density proposed?

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant team introduced their project as aiming to be affordable. The building form is very crisp and allows for great access to daylight. The structure of the building is meant to be honest in order to create visual interest, and there are different floor plates to create a variety of spaces. The structural ambition around the balconies has been looked at in detail in order to support the ambitious cantilevers. A lot of thought has also been given to livability as the spaces are quite compact.

The proposal complies with the policies for green buildings and will achieve LEED gold. Embedded with the decisions to date have been some note-worthy passive design strategies

All faces of the project hope to animate the streets and lanes; this will not be a two-sided building. There are two large trees being retained at the back, and the building plays with the idea of sliding balconies and a lot of sliding planes in the landscape. These elements will work together to allow for rainfall. There is also a private deck up top surrounded by a green roof and hedges/tall planters for privacy. Overall there is a lot of 'green' site coverage.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Allow for more natural light into the stairs
 - Resolve privacy issues with the relationship to neighbor
 - Attention should be paid to how the balconies will drain
- **Related Commentary:** The panel thanked the applicants and noted that the idea of using a crisp, compact form leads to both more affordability and more livability within the building. The thinner floorplate lead to enhanced livability as well.

1. Form of Development:

The panel supported the form of development as an elegant and refreshing approach. Applicant was commended for family units and accessibility.

2. Balconies:

There is an interesting balance between the body of the balconies and the surface behind them; it creates a lot of interest and variation. However, some recessed balconies on the north façade would help to improve the privacy and create differentiation.

3. Relationship to Adjacent Building:

The façade facing north is not great in its relationship to the tiny structure next door. Detailed design is needed on the windows to add privacy with the next door neighbor as currently the windows are facing other windows just a few feet away. Their rights of light must also be considered for habitability.

4. Amenity + Landscape:

While the panel appreciates how the connection between the amenity space and the lobby, the amenity could also turn the corner and head west to embrace the existing trees. The patio garden could be reduced to allow for this. Passing through the walkway on the north façade could also be made more delightful going through the fence.

5. Sustainability:

Overall more sustainability measures are needed - especially with envelope design.

- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant team appreciated all the thoughtful comments and looked forward to further development.

4. Address:	49 E 1st Avenue
DE:	DE419622
Description:	To develop the site with two residential buildings, a 14-storey and 12-storey building, containing a total of 177 dwelling units.
Zoning:	CD-1 Pending
Application Status:	Complete Development Application
Review:	Second (first as development application)
Architect:	Rafii Architects Inc. (Foad Rafii)
Owner:	Concert Properties
Delegation:	Henry Richard, Henriquez Architects Foad Rafii, Rafii Architects Jennifer Stamp, Durante Kreuk Craig Watters, Concert Properties Jason Packer, Recollective
Staff:	Sailen Black

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-1)

- **Introduction:** Sailen Black, Development Planner, started by mentioning that in 2014 Council rezoned a set of properties to allow 624,525 sq. ft. of residential development in five separate buildings. These included a 104,925 sq. ft. non-market affordable housing building and daycare in Building 1. The plan also includes two new roads and a new public space, Railspur Mews, which follows the historic railway tracks.

Buildings 1 and 2 have been reviewed already, and Building 5 will be seen in the future. The current proposal being reviewed is for Buildings 3 and 4.

All of the buildings were seen at the rezoning stage by the Urban Design Panel in October 2013, and some items were noted as needing improvement. These included:

- Design development to improve the architectural expression;
- Design development to improve how the project relates to the urban scale;
- Consider a more subtle interpretation of the rail yard context.

The following policies apply to the area:

CD-1 By-law - noted above

Southeast False Creek Public Realm Plan

Specialized treatment of the public realm, evoking the cultural history of the area as well as the sustainability features within the neighbourhood

- paving treatment, street furniture, lighting standards and historical references

Southeast False Creek Private Lands - Enrichment Guidelines

- references to the area through public art or the provision of historical artifacts are required, as well as customized street furniture and paving patterns

Southeast False Creek Green Building Strategy

- sustainability strategy includes LEED Gold certification

High-Density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines

- provision of child-friendly areas, including indoor and outdoor amenity spaces, outdoor play areas

The proposal is a complete development permit application which includes two new multiple dwellings at 14 and 12-storeys over a common parkade structure linked to Building 2. Multiple pedestrian connections around and through site exist, including between Buildings 3 and 4. Outdoor patios and doorways proposed along Park edge which helps to animate the open space. A loading bay was originally proposed on Pullman Street, but is now proposed in the pedestrian open space between buildings.

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

1. Quality of the public realm interface, including the Park edge and the public pathway between buildings
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant team noted that there is a reductionist approach to the project. The precinct and park have been re-designed to enhance them. One objective was to increase the size of park and open the views to the Telus World of Science. This would make a better link with the surrounding lands and create a more passive park.

An enclave of buildings has been designed with a hierarchy of building expressions to create a better sense of place. The essence of curvature has been played up line how the buildings have been lined up. Foreground buildings are calm and reflective, and the horizontal expression will make these buildings stand out.

The terraces at the ground are pulled back to create a good public/private interface, and there is an arching expression of the entrance canopies which is meant to reflect the arch of the park. Generous balconies allow for natural light to be brought into the vertical and horizontal expressions of the building. Overall these buildings mean to create a calm and meaningful expression.

In terms of materials the base is stone sheet, the centre is concrete and the townhouses are dark stone.

Although there is limited space on the ground floor, it aims to celebrate the two shore-lines. There are also a lot of industrial things on the ground plane with expressed metal and a utilitarian look to reference the rail yards.

There is urban agriculture and a kid's play area on the upper deck. The amenities are shared across the buildings, and include a lot of vegetative cover.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - The top could have more delight
 - Either do more to celebrate the nautical theme, or calm the building down
 - The base material is out of sync with the 'floating' aspect of the building; either do more with the stone or do something more marine
 - The middle is good, but the top and bottom need work
 - The central piece of the landscape is just a path but could be a place to anchor the site better, and could have better connection with interior spaces

- The trellis piece seems stuck on and doesn't relate - maybe mark the passage with art or something else to celebrate the entries architecturally
 - Step the slab on the private property to facilitate tree growth
 - Change the balcony projections at the end of the building as they ruin curves
 - Solve thermal bridging challenges
 - The glass on top of the horizontal railings matters in its detailing and needs to be done well
- **Related Commentary:** The panel thanked the applicant for their presentation, and noted that the building is visually appealing.

While some panel members thought that the building was too busy and some thought it was too calm, all agreed that it does not do enough to reference the nautical theme which it purports to embody. Currently the buildings having a form with a 'stern' and 'bow' are the only reference to the ship theme. Another curved element at the first level would help to give a hint as to what these buildings are about.

At the top of the building the geometry of the penthouse is too foreign. Use the deck edge to connect the two geometries a bit better and step to the penthouse edges to create more sympathy. Alternatively, the nautical theme could be strengthened by using a slightly different treatment for the penthouse to create a 'wheelhouse' on top.

The punch-opening façade looks weak; if the glassy façade on the north building could be brought to the south building at the courtyard it would add a transparency and lightness to the area. The west façade would be more successful if it was less notched and more continuous.

The materiality seems expected, and could also do more to harken more to the nautical theme. While the stone on the ground floor is fine, the stone should not look slick and manufactured. It should also carry up the building and not just stop at the base.

The hierarchy of the buildings makes sense, the shared amenity spaces work well together. However, there are no washrooms associated with the amenities on the lower floor. The amenities on the upper levels could also use some more covered outdoor space.

There is rail on one side and shoreline on the other and these seem to clash a bit. The public realm interface could be improved by taking a position on what the reference is. Additionally the entrance needs design development as the trellis façade does not strongly mark it. If the trellis was bigger or the curve more accentuated it might help with this. The stepped levels above the street-wall also need a slightly different expression. It would be better if they embodied more of the lower level expression.

The townhouses on the ground floor work well, but the applicants are encouraged to add a regular line of strong trees on that side. There is a lot of activation and integration around the buildings, and the pathway connection might be better as a courtyard pushed out beyond the path. Something is needed to punctuate the space and provide a better connection with the interiors. Marking the path with art rather than just the canopy might be better.

The balconies are very thin and do little to minimize the thermal break. More work is needed to solve the thermal bridge issues.

- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant team thanked the panel for their positive comments and noted that they will do their best to incorporate them into the project. While the two shore-lines shown are a requirement of the public realm, the comments about the sentry elements and the potential for a 'wheelhouse' were appreciated.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.