

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: March 23, 2016

TIME: 4:00 pm

PLACE: Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Roger Hughes (Chair)
Russell Acton
Meghan Cree-Smith
Stuart Hood
Ken Larsson
Muneesh Sharma
Derek Neale
David Jerke (abstained from item #1 & #2)
Jim Huffman
James Cheng (excused from item #1)

REGRETS: Stefan Aepli
Neil LaMontagne

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Lidia McLeod

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

- | | |
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| 1. | 3595 Kingsway (Odd Fellows Manor) |
| 2. | 6333 West Boulevard |
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BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Hughes called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. There was a brief business meeting and then the panel then considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 3595 Kingsway (Odd Fellows Manor)
 DE: DE419978
 Description: The proposal is a six storey building that contains 44 units of non-market housing on lower levels, 117 units of market rental housing on upper levels and commercial space on ground floor along Kingsway, all over 2 levels of underground parking, accessed off of the western side lane. Social housing unit entrance is off of Lincoln St and market rental housing lobby is accessed off of Kingsway. This is a Rental 10 project and a concurrent rezoning/DE.
 Zoning: CD-1 Revised
 Application Status: Concurrent Rezoning and Complete Development Application
 Review: First
 Architect: GBL Architects (Irmira Jozkow)
 Owner: Hungerford Properties
 Delegation: Stu Lyon, GBL Architects
 Peter Kreuk, Durante Kreuk Ltd.
 Staff: Michelle Yip and Danielle Wiley

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (4-3)

- **Introduction:** Michelle Yip, Rezoning Planner, introduced the application as a concurrent rezoning and development permit application. It is comprised of a single parcel on the northwest corner of Kingsway and Lincoln Street, two blocks from Boundary Road. The site is currently zoned CD-1 and is surrounded by two to four-storey mixed-use buildings along Kingsway, and RS-1 lots to the north.

Currently the site is occupied by a low-income seniors rental housing development containing 44 units. This will be replaced and incorporated into a six-storey mixed-use building, with retail at grade and 117 secured market rental units.

This proposal is being considered under the Housing and Homelessness Strategy, which meets strategic directions by increasing the supply of affordable housing through the pursuit of new business models to enhance delivery and the Rental 100 program. It also considers redevelopment in CD-1 zoned areas that are appropriate to location and context. The Renfrew-Collingwood Community Vision also supports rezonings for social or affordable housing projects, and for seniors housing.

Danielle Wiley, Development Planner, continued the introduction by noting that the project is a six-storey development consisting of the replacement of the Odd Fellows seniors housing at the north side of the building, market rental residential on the upper storeys, and commercial/retail at grade fronting on Kingsway.

The site is located at the north-west corner of Kingsway and Lincoln Street, two blocks from Boundary Road. This stretch of Kingsway is a “mix” of C-2 and CD-1 zones, consisting primarily of two to four-storey buildings, with retail at grade and office or residential above. It is a fairly fine-grained mix of smaller scale frontages. To the north is RS-1 zoning with single family residences. There is an unusual condition in which the rear yards of a cul-de-sac flank the subject property with no intervening lane.

There is a significant slope from Kingsway to the north, with a 15.5' drop across depth of site. The slope exacerbates the potential visual and shadowing impacts of the development on the single family neighbours. Due to site topography the proposed development has 8 "levels" but, technically, complies with the six-storey maximum height at any given section of the site.

To mitigate the impacts of the development on the neighbouring single-family properties, substantial setbacks are proposed on the north side of the building, which effectively shifts the massing to the south fronting onto Kingsway. The Kingsway elevation is six-storeys, with the uppermost storey set back 10'. At grade there is a 5 ft. setback with weather protection, creating an enhanced pedestrian realm related to the retail units. The entry to the market rental is located here.

The Lincoln Street elevation has a stepped form, with eight levels climbing the slope. An 18 ft. setback is provided, with the upper two storeys set back a further 3 ft. A split entry to the Odd Fellows residence is provided at the Lincoln Street and Kingsway corner. The entry from Kingsway also provides access to a chairlift. The west elevation addresses an "L" lane condition, which provides site serving and access to underground parking.

The rear elevation presents the greatest challenges, interfacing with single-family properties on a downslope. The proposed setbacks are similar to a C-2 development, with 20 ft. for lower storeys, 35 ft. to the third and fourth storey, and approximately 50 ft. to the fifth and sixth storeys. Shadow studies demonstrate that shadowing onto the adjacent rear yards is not significantly greater than what would be cast by a C-2 development.

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

1. Comment on the appropriateness of the overall height, massing and density.
 2. Comment on the visual and privacy impacts of the *additional* massing - that is, "additional" to the development potential under C-2 as viewed from RS-1 properties to the north?
 3. Comment on how successfully the proposal "fits" into the Kingsway streetscape, and engages the pedestrian scale.
 4. Please comment on the resolution of the corner at Kingsway & Lincoln, and specifically the treatment of the split entry to the Odd Fellows facility.
 5. Comment on the design of the private and semi-private outdoor spaces, including screening of potential overlooks to neighbouring properties.
 6. Comment on the exterior materials and architectural detailing.
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant team noted that this project has been in the works for a few years as the current building is old and in need of replacement. A number of schemes have been proposed, which included towers as substantial density is needed in order to make the project viable. Eventually a six- storey form was settled on due to the maximum height.

As mandated by the City there are prescriptive cuts on the north side adjacent the neighbours. The density for the site is 3.71 FSR, which is a bit of a challenge but is still doable. Due to the 15 ft. slope on the site, the major elements, including residential and commercial, are actually neatly organized. All of the non-market units have been fit located under the rental units.

The building was done with a wood frame structure because of the proforma.

There is an amenity space for the renters on the upper levels, and the amenity for the non-market is raised on the lower levels.

The two primary entrances include the market units entry on Kingsway, and the non-market entry on Lincoln Street. As the Lincoln street is quite steep there is also a handicap access off of the corner. The Odd Fellows Manor entrance is split because of the grade.

Brick is being used around the base of the building, and hardy panel exists throughout the centre of the building. FiberC panel strips make the palette lighter going up the building. A randomized pattern of red panels is being used to add colour.

The stepped massing at the back mitigates the overlook for the units at the north side and reduces the shadow impact. A continuous glass and steel canopy at the pedestrian level provides weather protection.

On the ground floor at the north side there are a series of patio spaces which are separated by planting strips. Interfacing with the single-family residential there is a hedge with a railing, and a tree is being retained on the corner of the building. At the upper levels there is a planter to protect the privacy of units below, and privacy screens between the balconies. Urban agriculture and a private roof deck are located at the uppermost level of the building. There is also a vine wall which backdrops a children's play area

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - The panel is split on whether the height and massing is supportable. Several panel members commented that the Kingsway façade seems relentless and requires further relief in the massing and articulation; one panel member was comfortable with the "long" building expression
 - The entry and exit off Kingsway to the Odd Fellows housing should be pulled back and combined with the upper rental housing entry to create a covered entry court on the corner of Lincoln and Kingsway. At the very least there should be further design development of this corner of the building to create a stronger expression of the entry and covered public space off Kingsway whether or not the rental entry is moved to this location
 - Generally there was support for the shaping of the building corners, but some panel members noted that the Lincoln St corner is more prominent and should be expressed differently than the west corner (at the lane)
 - The private and shared outdoors spaces are well-designed, but the amenity decks are on the north-side may be under-used
 - While the tree retention is supported, some panel members did not support raising the deck in order to accomplish this
 - The red accents on the exterior elevation are, in principle, a good strategy but alternate colour schemes may bring more delight to the building
 - The sustainability strategy is minimal, and more should be done; the projecting balconies should be thermally broken

- **Related Commentary:** The panel thought that, while generally this is a well-resolved project, more rigor is needed for a concurrent rezoning and development application. The overall scheme seems cleverly resolved with the massing and multiple uses.

The terracing at the back is as successful as it can be given the density. The impacts of the fifth and sixth floors are quite minimal on the developments to the north. While the building does not cast a lot of shadow, it seems to loom a bit large over the neighbours.

The use of materials helps with breaking up the Kingsway elevation, and creates a good rhythm. This is a very neat looking building with the materials and colours. The dark to light strategy is great and the wood is supportable. There is also a good interface between the concrete and wood, and the brick at the base is nice. A few panelists questioned the selection of the red accent colour, and noted that the colour choice could bring more “delight.”

While the building fits into the Kingsway streetscape at grade, there are concerns that the Kingsway façade looks relentless and flat. Some panelists commented that the mass and density are too much, and should be reduced. It is a long building with not much relief and needs to be broken down much more. The building is a very functional box, and does not have the form which could support the proposed density. One person thought that the long form was fine, but that using the red panel to break it up is not the right solution.

The panel was split on the corners. Some people thought that the four corners are dealt with nicely, while others thought that they feel a bit abrupt with the setbacks. One person thought that it seems a bit strange that the building follows the angles of the property line so strictly.

The corridors inside the building are long and dark. There is an opportunity to open the corridor up - maybe by adding glazing or access to the exterior amenity spaces.

On the wood frame portion on the sixth floor there seems to be an ‘eyebrow’ detail which sticks out and adds nicely to the privacy.

The split entry to the Odd Fellows residence, to address accessibility, is commendable. The weather canopy is also appreciated, but the entries are too understated and could be difficult to find. Something is needed to gracefully improve the entry to Odd Fellow Manor, maybe with a bit more landscape treatment or some coloured accents. One person thought that the entries were subtle but fine.

The amenity spaces are well-considered. However, the raised deck for the Odd Fellows outdoor amenity space may not connect well to the amenity room.

On the lowest level, the pathway passing in front of the private patios on the north side is confusing. People walking past the planters in this location are being imposed upon, and it does not seem to be adding anything. There is an existing retaining wall on the north side which has a guardrail and a hedge that works quite well. The retention of the tree is great, but more greenery and softness needs to be brought to all the levels.

The bare minimum of sustainability is being done, and this is disappointing. Look at doing a higher performance as there is a payback to making it more energy efficient.

- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant team thanked the panel and noted that challenging projects are enjoyable, and that a certain amount of density is needed on this site. Certainly there are ways to deal with all the comments, including ways to mitigate the relentlessness of the façade which do not lose density.

2. Address:	6333 West Boulevard
DE:	DE419972
Description:	To construct a new four-storey mixed-use building with commercial on the first level and residential on the first, second, third, and fourth level, including four townhouse units and 36 dwelling units. Two levels of underground parking have access from the rear lane.
Zoning:	C-2
Application Status:	Complete Development Application
Review:	First
Architect:	IBI Group (Jeff Christianson)
Owner:	Cressey Developments
Delegation:	Peter Lance, IBI Group Jeff Christianson, IBI Group Jennifer Stamp, Durante Kreuk Ltd. Julian Kendall, Cressey Developments
Staff:	Allan Moorey

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-4)

- **Introduction:** Allan Moorey, Development Planner, introduced the project as a DE application. The site is located on West Boulevard and occupies the full block. There is an RS-5 pattern of residential to the west, and the site is zoned C-2.

There is a slope from a high point in the north-east corner down to the lane, with a 12 ft. crossfall over the site. The site is 31,200 sq. ft. with 16,000 sq. ft. of retail at grade. The retail is configured into three finer units, and a larger space to the south-east.

The massing conforms to C-2 setbacks, with some minor encroachments on the townhouses to the north-west. There is also a landscape buffer against the lane.

The building is setback an additional 15 ft. against the lane, with minor encroachments of the balconies and terraces. There is an 8 ft. setback on the two sides and across the front. There is also a 2 ft. building setback over the front elevation which is compliant overall.

The height maximum of the building is 45 ft., but due to the slope there is a 5 ft. encroachment at the south-end. The building presents as four-storeys, and the perceived length is mitigated via tripartite massing.

A single larger tenant completes the south-side of the building. The amenity space is co-located with a large outdoor terrace.

There is an adjacent parking entry which is buffered with landscaping along the lane. There is also buffer planting with the lane, and deep landscape planters to mitigate overlook from the upper levels.

The materials are architectural concrete, windows walls, metal siding, and metal/glass guards.

The project consists of 42 units, and four two-bedroom townhouses.

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

1. The proposed development presents a building frontage of approx. 75m (265'-0"). Could the Panel comment on the extent to which the proposed massing, materiality and open spaces contribute to the visual interest and serve to animate the interface with the public realm along West Boulevard?
 2. The stepped rear yard setbacks recommended in the C-2 zoning are intended to transition in scale from a form of a development having greater height to adjacent, lesser scale residential. Could the Panel comment on the effectiveness with which the proposed form of development:
 - a. addresses issues of privacy and overlook
 - b. provides an appropriate interface with attention given materiality and expression
 3. Could the Panel comment on the location provided for amenity functions and collocated common access outdoor space from the perspective of functionality and livability.
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant team noted that the site has been looked at as a transition between West Boulevard and the north-south grid to the north. These two geometries are being intersected in a way which breaks down the mass and creates a space on the north end of the building.

The intent was to get away from adhering to an inflated C-2 envelope, and to create more variety. There is a variation of building plane to create interest with light and shadow. The lane massing is not typical. More of a residential feeling was looked for at the west, so it was stepped back to allow for more space for trees.

An effort has been made to reduce traffic down the lane. They also tried very hard to activate the corners, with townhouses wrapping around to provide life to the lane. The building at West Boulevard has been shifted back to provide more space.

At the townhouses there is basalt and simple metal fencing with landscaping. There is also painted concrete in a dark colour, and some with a bored-form finish to provide texture.

There is an indoor child's play area and meeting room, with an exterior courtyard and patio. The building above is cut back to provide more light into the area, and there is planting around it to provide a buffer. There is an opportunity to extend the patio beyond the building a bit more, but the intent is to create a covered porch.

The planters beyond the west-side provide a buffer to the residential neighbourhood. Green coverage of the site is 37%, which is a lot.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - The materiality should be extended around; a stand-alone approach to the buildings at the west would be better
 - The setbacks of the west massing are good, but either change the facia over the townhouses or hold them back more
 - Design development of the facades on the upper levels to increase shading; perhaps with punched windows

- More resolution is needed between the loading and townhouses; the screen along the lane could be a lot more powerful, perhaps with a physical element instead of just planting
 - Design development of the outdoor patio is needed as it is not great, and the interior corridor is a bit oversized compared to it; consider enclosing it
 - The roof amenity looks high maintenance, consider a revision
 - Consider revising the balconies to make them more sustainable
 - Consider a more sustainable building; LEED Gold at least
- **Related Commentary:** The project is quite compelling with a good palette of rich materials and a lot of nice architectural details and finishing. However, this is a fine-grain building, which is confusing and misleading from the boldly-expressed imagery in the rationale. There is also a mistake on the shadow analysis, and a bit of over-analysis. There should just be the winter solstice, summer solstice, and the equinox done correctly and with detail.

While a curved treatment would add visual interest, the proposed expression denies the curve, and the entry compromises the curve. Currently the project seems to be more of a series of corners. This runs counter to how it was proposed, and a stronger recognition of a curval-linear form is needed. The curve could contribute to the form of the building if it was developed a bit more and brought down to the street level. Currently the street experience seems very flat and could be more animated.

The proposed setbacks at the lane with the planters are a good strategy, but the siting of the townhouses is a bit awkward. They do not animate the lane, and would be more successful if they were held back along with the other mass of the building. There should also be more architectural screening instead of planting screening for the neighbours, and a bold defined architectural screen and treatment along the lane.

The garage area should be re-thought. While the broader-step approach at the lane is appreciated, but there is more resolution needed between the townhouses and the garage.

The townhouses look good and have nice terraces, but are adjacent to a grossly over-scaled garage door and a huge wall. More needs to be done to soften the transition between these elements in order to break up the scale and allow the townhouses to express themselves. The blank concrete wall has some nice basalt on the front; consider the same material all the way around to help with the transition.

The amenity functions and location are compromised with the semi-recessed character. The central space adjacent the interior amenity rooms is big with no function, and the outdoor amenity seems to be shrouded and tucked-away. A larger glassed interior space would be nicer, as the plaza may not be needed. Overall, more development is needed to make the amenity better.

While the edged planter details and railings are good for the overlook and seem respectful to privacy, there is a lot of glass along the south-west façade which ruins privacy in this area. The glass will also create problems from an energy prospective as the interior spaces will be too hot during the day.

There are a lot of concrete balconies, which is to be discouraged because of thermal bridging. Include more sustainable-friendly balconies, and in general make the project more sustainable.

The terracotta palette is only in the front, which is odd. For consistency it should be brought around the sides.

The rooftop will require a lot of maintenance as the planting beds and glass require a lot of work. Consider a more modest and lower maintenance garden. There should also be more resolution on the details of the landscape.

- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant team thanked the panel and stated that they made a lot of good points. The inspiration was for where the project started, and was for portions of what was attempted, rather than for the entire thing. The curve was attempted, but was resolved back into a rectal-linear grid. All of the comments will be studied.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.