

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: April 6, 2016

TIME: 3:00 pm

PLACE: Town Hall Meeting Room, Vancouver City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Russell Acton
Stefan Aepli
Roger Hughes
Ken Larsson
Jim Huffman
David Jerke
Derek Neale (Excused from item #2)
Neal Lamontagne
James Cheng
Peter Cardew (Only for item #1)
Jim Hancock (Only for item #1)

REGRETS: Stuart Hood
Muneesh Sharma
Meghan Cree-Smith

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Camilla Lade

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1.	969 Burrard Street & 1019-1045 Nelson Street
2.	1380-1382 Hornby Street
3.	424 W Pender Street
4.	454 W Pender Street

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Roger Hughes called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. After a brief business meeting the panel considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 969 Burrard Street & 1019-1045 Nelson Street
 DE: N/A
 Description: The proposal includes restoration of First Baptist Church, new church ancillary spaces, including a 37-space child daycare, a gymnasium, a counselling centre, offices and a café, a new eight-storey building containing 66 social housing units, owned by the church, and a new 56-storey tower containing 294 market strata residential units with a floor space ratio (FSR) of 10.83..
 Zoning: CD-1 (445) and RM-5B to CD-1 Revised
 Application Status: Rezoning (Higher Building)
 Review: Second
 Architect: Bing Thom Architects (Amirali Javidan)
 Owner: Westbank
 Delegation: Bing Thom, Bing Thom Architects
 Michael Heeney, Bing Thom Architects
 John Wong, SWA
 Farouk Babul, Westbank
 Ian Gillespie, Westbank
 Staff: Karen Hoese and Sailen Black

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (9-0)

- **Introduction:** Karen Hoese, Rezoning Planner, and Sailen Black, Development Planner, introduced the development proposal for the rezoning of 969 Burrard Street. Greg McCall, Energy Policy Specialist, and Sabina Foofat, Renewable Energy Planner, were available for questions. The site has a 395 ft. frontage that takes up two thirds of the block, with a 130 ft. lot depth. There is a row of substantial evergreen trees on site along the sidewalk of Nelson Street. The site was rezoned in 2005 together with the YMCA site, which has been fully developed and includes a 24 storey tower (“the Patina”) that is about 248 ft. in height.

The rezoning policy falls under the West End Community Plan. The planners noted that under the Plan rezoning applications can be considered for a maximum height of 550 ft., with proposals beyond the Queen Elizabeth View Cone (3.2.1) subject to a review under the General Policy for Higher Buildings. The maximum recommended floor plate is 7,500 square ft. in the Plan. For Downtown projects, a separation of 80 ft. between buildings over 60 ft. in height is normally expected.

The Rezoning Policy for Sustainable Large Developments requires rezoning applications achieve higher sustainability standards in the various areas, including access to nature, sustainable food systems, rainwater management, zero waste planning, and affordable housing. Policy also requires a low carbon energy supply feasibility study to explore the viability of a district energy system, and, if the business case is viable, a system will be required. Under the General Policy for Higher Buildings higher buildings should demonstrate reduced energy consumption and leadership and advances in sustainable design.

The proposal includes seismic upgrade of the 1911 First Baptist Church structure, restoration of the sanctuary interior, and restoration and designation of the interior of the 1931 structure (Pinder Hall). The applicant proposes the removal of the three wood-frame buildings and all trees on the site. They aim to construct an underground parkade for 497 cars level with the lane, and a residential high-rise.

The proposed high-rise will be a 56-storey market residential tower in the middle of the site. The floor plate of typical tower levels varies from 8,870 square ft., including an open air lobby corridor on each floor, to the smallest floor at a 7,565 sq. ft. plate. The average size is 8,690 sq. ft. including the open air corridor but not the outside balconies, which are beyond the maximum size recommended in the West End Community Plan. The height to the parapet of the uppermost habitable floor is proposed at 550 ft. The proposed shadow would fall across Nelson Park. The application proposes to exclude from the height a range of mechanical and private roof deck screens that extend above the top floor, to about 580 ft. in height, with the tower setback of at least 80 ft. from the nearest existing residential tower. There are a series of four scalloped cut out forms at the base of the tower.

The proposed mid-rise building is an eight-storey, 66 unit rental apartment at the west end of the site. The setback is 7 ft. from the interior property line, with dwelling units located along the west façade toward the neighbouring site. The podium is a three-storey podium that runs along the lane west of the church to add a larger lobby, program, and staff space, plus a new daycare for 37 children. The proposed church area more than doubles the existing church space. The total density is 10.83 FSR.

Mr. Black noted that traditional West End buildings on the residential streets often have a green and planted 'tower in park' expression which creates a visual openness, 'through block', or porosity to and from the lane. The proposal is more of a 'podium and tower' form with an at-grade design that connects to the west side of the Church with a glazed atrium space and continues across the majority of the site. The site is primarily covered by hard surfaces or building.

The applicants intend to demonstrate a 33% reduction in GHG emissions and a 45% reduction in total energy use. Measures to achieve this are proposed to be an energy efficient envelope and outdoor circulation space, reduced demand for domestic hot water, and connection to a low-carbon energy utility.

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

1. Does the proposed design provide a lasting and meaningful public legacy as intended by the Higher Buildings Policy?
2. Beyond the reduction in energy use required in the policy, do the built features identified in the high-rise tower, its podium, and the midrise building establish the development as a leader in sustainable design?
3. Does the Panel support the design of the portion proposed to extend above 550 ft. considering its benefits or impacts to the project, the neighbourhood, and the skyline?
4. Does the Panel support the built form shown at each of the four sides, including heights, setbacks and open spaces, in terms of forming a well-resolved relationship:
 - a. With the heritage structure of the original First Baptist Church;
 - b. To the pedestrian realm along Nelson Street;
 - c. With the adjacent site to the west; and

- d. To the lane and the YMCA and Patina building beyond?
5. Does the Panel support the proposed form of development including the heights (550 ft. and 580 ft.) and setback (7 ft. at the west side) shown at a density of 10.83 FSR (561,881 square ft.) ?
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant stipulated that the project is driven by the active church. The heritage building is being renovated, and there is a challenging seismic upgrade. The entire inside of the church building needs to be shelled out at large expense. Pinder Hall was subdivided, so it will be recreated, and it will be a room for 200 people. It will be open to the public for lectures and other public activities, and a resource for the community.

The other space is the basement with programming contained in the lower level. Next, the podium of the building expands the programming. The licensed daycare will meet criteria for 37 kids in a licensed daycare. The affordable housing units range from bachelor, to two or three bedrooms, and there is a lot of common space on the ground floor. The fourth component was a reconsidered tower which addresses sustainability and isolation. The applicant created more common areas on each of the tower floors to create more inclusion and sense of community. The design intent was to have the fenestration break up the wind inside the building. There are habitable micro climates and cross ventilation on each floor. The open outdoor entry lobby concept at each floor reduced the energy consumption by 10%.

There are clusters of three floors to create a high rise block. There is a limited strata in each area for a micro community. There is ventilation created with the open spaces. The applicant proposes a tandem elevator; the upper one is the passenger elevator with a lower elevator for garbage, moving, and pets. Rather than having a garbage chute, the design proposes a tandem elevator. The aimed for a sustainable concierge with interactive software to communication better with residents. The panels are curved pre-cast, concrete, with insulation on the inside. The windows are also being fabricated off site. The curved glass is important to the applicant. The tower creates a curved dome or shallow arched sky line profile.

The church used to have its front door on Nelson, but it was not used. The applicant intends to create a drop off location on Nelson. A swimming pool and public art are proposed. The art will be on privacy screens. There are numerous entrances to the site. There is an informal entry to the church, but the drop off entrance is the second entrance. There is only one door allowed for the corner of the church, and the congregation will use the corner for before and after church services in future. Going forward, there will be a wind study for the towers. Balconies will have substantial overhangs, so there will be shading where the decks are. The rental building will have darker glazing. It will be related to the other building. The shadows will have minimal impact on park, and it will have the minimal two hours of daylight for the daycare.

The landscaping intention is to improve the pedestrian experience on Burrard and Nelson, as well as the alley, in order to create a landscaped street. There is a plaza that relates to retail, in order to activate the space. They intended to create a court with outside café seating. The landscaping will grow up the building, and 60 replacement trees will be added to the site. There will also be a garden and fruit orchard area with a children's play area.

Sustainability performance of the project includes achieving 40% energy savings. There is a unique outdoor lobby corridor design at each floor that reduces heating needs. There are insulated balcony slabs, and the building itself will perform 30% better than an ASHRAE building. There will be a renewable gas supply in order to reduce carbon.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - The proposed façade might be too graphic or abstract for an expression of a residential use
 - The scalloping expression at the base of the tower is very literal, however it does address the church at grade
 - The proposed 7 ft. set back is an issue for the outlook of the buildings on the west side of the site
 - Develop the landscape more
 - Recommend a break in the length or add connections to the lane
 - Further exploration of the vertical wall garden idea
 - The elevation of the lane is too severe and lacks porosity
 - There were concerns that the open hallway lobbies at each level of the tower might not create social inclusion as designed
 - Develop the mid height amenity space garden
- **Related Commentary:** The panel supported the overall design. The design would create a legacy, it would be a striking building, and the form is unique. The relationship with the new tower and church works and the complexity was addressed and resolved. The open corridor lobbies of the tower could be an experiment that could inform other developments. It is a solid building with a strong presence. The thermally broken slabs, insulated soffits, concrete sandwich panels, and split elevators are supported. The façade is not a curtain wall, and has a solidity to it that is welcomed. There is support for the proposed height and averaging of the height. It does not impact Queen Elizabeth view cone. The form is strong, with respect to the church. The ground plane is crowded. The panel strongly supported a wider sidewalk. The density is supported.

The galleria and adjacent spill space is supported. The galleria seems unresolved and more like a connection space in the development. The galleria should have a better connection to the church.

The formal expression of the pool in the lane is a strong point, and it is well placed in the lane because it is in a private area. The outlook of the buildings could be a problem. The heritage is well incorporated. The rental units are too close to the property line. There are opportunities to look at connections within the site by breaking street walls. One panelist thought the church does not need to physically connect to the rest of the site. The insulated concrete panels and garbage elevator work well. The pedestrian realm along Nelson Street is well done. Permeability should have a purpose. At the lane the massing is not an issue. One panelist objected to loneliness as an argument for common spaces, unless it can be proven that loneliness is attributed to towers.

Open garden courts are supported by a panel member. The experience should be good on the ground where people can sit and spend time creating community. Solidity in the building is desirable and beautiful. The glazing on the building is a concern on the lower building. The current expression is resolved. The public art will make the scallop forms at the base of the tower work well.

The shape of the building is good. It may not always be possible to have accessibility from floor to floor. There is a concern for parking drop off for childcare. People have to park so they can drop off children. The undulating scheme with alternating floors and exposures should be considered. The sun on outdoor childcare space should be considered. The rental building location 7 ft. from the property line has a negative impact. The shadow over the park is not problematic for the park. The west side of the site should have more design development and interest.

The panel supports the 550 ft. height. The varied tower heights are well done but could go higher. One panelist thought the tower is a world class addition to the skyline. The panel recommends adding diversity in tower heights, since multiple heights do not appear to impact neighbouring sites. The panel supports 8500 square ft. floor plates. The tower could have a more meaningful garden and interior amenity with multiple heights. A panel member was concerned about the heat gain due to the glass on the building. The tower will be modern and expand the west end with a new visual literacy for architectural and urban design. The church at ground plane and entry way is supported. One panelist felt the ground plane should be improved by looking at more public interaction experience. More places should be made for movement; for example, a meet and greet drop off location for vehicles.

The floorplate is justified considering the size of the development. One panelist advised the average height should be proportional to floor plate. Another panelist thought the floor plate size could be smaller because there is a park beside the site. Another panelist disagreed, and thought the exterior wind into the tower has been carefully considered, and thought the floorplans were not that much bigger than average. The tower footprint has minimal impact on the form. The Nelson street lane closure is supported so people have accessibility for drop off. There could be a second entrance in the lane.

The low rise building should have more of a setback. In the west, the shadowing is not a problem for the park however the seven ft. setback could be addressed. The tower is connected to 60s design of the West End. The ground plane plaza is a concern due to shadowing, development should be made for a lively space. The key is making two towers one tower. The shape of the towers and the open corridors will be creating a strong Venturi effect.

The open corridor courts are a major part of the sustainable energy reduction. The sustainable design is supported with a proposed 45% reduction in energy consumption. The energy strategies of the envelope are addressed with thermally broken slabs, insulated soffits, and concrete sandwich panels, as well as split elevators. Water harvesting and water re-use could be developed further, for example adding rainwater and stormwater management. The gardens in the sky precedent could be developed more. The landscape and architecture are working together. There was support for landscape development and trees in the lane. On Nelson, tree roots should be maintained.

- **Applicant's Response:** The open court idea is taken very seriously. With strong wind forces, the question is whether to stop the turbulence of the wind. The social aspect will be explored social impact analysis. The open spaces will be studied.

2. Address:	1380-1382 Hornby Street
DE:	N/A
Description:	The proposal is for a 39-storey residential building and includes 212 market residential units, a floor space ratio (FSR) of 16.25, 238 underground parking spaces, and restoration and relocation of Leslie House, the existing Heritage 'A' building, on site.
Zoning:	CD-1 (435) and DD to CD-1 Revised
Application Status:	Rezoning
Review:	First
Architect:	IBI Group (Jeffery Mok)
Owner:	Grosvenor
Delegation:	Martin Bruckner, IBI Group Peter Kreuk, Durante Kreuk Architects Marc Josephson, Grosvenor Maxime Frappier, ACPF Architects
Staff:	Karen Hoese and Paul Cheng

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-1)

- **Introduction:** Rezoning Planner Karen Hoese introduced the rezoning project for 1380 Hornby Street. The site is located at the intersection of Hornby and Pacific Street and it is currently split zoned. The northern part of the site is zoned CD-1, and the portion facing Pacific Street is zoned DD (downtown district). The CD-1 portion was rezoned in 2004 to allow for a hotel use with an FSR of 6.7 and a height of 173 ft., while also ensuring for the preservation of the historical Leslie House, which was located on Hornby Street. The hotel has not been built and the restoration on the building has not been completed but the Leslie House was designated as an “A” category building on the Vancouver Heritage Register and is now protected under the Heritage Revitalization Agreement.

The rest of the site is in the downtown district, which is regulated by the Downtown Official Development Plan. It is located in sub area N of the Downtown Official Development Plan, also called the Hornby-Slopes Sub Area, which endorses residential high density development with commercial uses. Under the existing zoning there is a maximum of 5.0 FSR and a maximum height of 300 ft. that can be considered subject to urban design performance.

In 2008 as part of the downtown benefit capacity study, Council endorsed the consideration of rezoning applications in parts of downtown south, including this particular sub area that allows for additional height and density up to the underside of the view cones in the area, subject to the provision of public benefits. This particular proposal is for a 39 storey residential building with a floor space ratio of 16.25 and a height of 375 ft. The application also includes the relocation of the Leslie House from the Hornby portion of the site around the corner to face Pacific Street adjacent to the lane. As with all rezonings, the Green Building Policy applies, which requires LEED Gold with an emphasis on optimized energy performance.

Development Planner Paul Cheng introduced the proposal. The site measures 125 x 120 ft., a relatively small site. While there are no minimum frontage requirements in this subarea of the downtown zoning, the applicable Design Guidelines do delineate an overall tower floorplate as a function of the site frontage and the proposed tower height (for example taller/slender or shorter/fatter) and to also to guarantee wide separations between towers. Under the downtown zoning, this site would likely qualify for a much smaller floorplate of approximately only 3000 square ft. at a height of 300 ft.

However, it was decided by Council that rezoning applications in this area for additional density and height should be considered, in order to support public objectives. The staff has advised a few context-specific design parameters for this proposal to be considered in application form:

1. A maximum height of 375 ft. (dictated from the Burrard bridge view at the midpoint, as a smaller counterpoint to support the visual prominence of Vancouver House and Burrard Gateway).
2. A maximum floorplate of 6500 square ft. (not including exterior balconies), to ensure a minimum standard of slenderness.
3. A minimum 80 ft. distancing from any other nearby towers.

There are several design considerations and constraints. The relationship with the neighbour to the north is such that the building has units oriented to the south. Further constraints were placed on this site through requirements from Engineering's requirement for a setback from the Pacific Street property line with a Statutory Right of Way, to accommodate a bike lane, and a left-turn bay. Finally, planning stipulated a minimum 12 ft. wide sidewalk, as per the policy for Pacific Street.

Another constraint is the rezoning application proposes to take on the responsibilities of the previous CD-1, which is to retain and restore the Leslie House. However, in this application, the proposed location of the Leslie House is facing Pacific Street instead. The applicant had been required to explore retaining the location of the house against Hornby, since one of the historically-significant elements of the house was as a mid-block house on Hornby. The hotel was 12 stories and 173 ft.

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

1. Given the proposal for a building height and density that is greater than the allowances under downtown zoning, is the proposed height and floorplate size an appropriate urban design response for this site? Specifically, with respect to:
 - a. The pedestrian's experience along Hornby Street, Pacific Street and further afield.
 - b. The impact with skyline as seen from the midpoint of Burrard bridge in relation to Vancouver House and Burrard Gateway.
2. In comparison to the approved building form in the Council-adopted CD-1 for the north part of this site, does the building propose an undue increased negative impact on the direct neighbour to the north?

The current CD-1 allows a 16-storey tower that in some places sits tighter to the north property line. The applicant has provided an extensive view impact comparison study.

3. Please provide commentary on the proposed architectural expression as a residential tower project. There are inset balconies, corten steel, materials, tinted glass, not typical of Vancouver. As well provide feedback on the proposed location and site of the heritage building.
4. Is the proposed siting of the Leslie House an appropriate resolution, given its historical significance?

5. Please provide commentary on the proposal's response to the public realm, including the proposed landscaping and the site's interface of these spaces with the public sidewalk and street.
 6. Please provide commentary on the proposed sustainability strategy.
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant introduced the project by noting that the building was pushed north. A 6500 square ft. floorplate is planned. The building plan is shaped to open up views to the south, for the neighbouring south-facing dwelling units, and more openness in the courtyard.

The applicant elaborated on the detailed architectural design. Landscape features include streetscapes and amenity towards the lane and building. There is a double row of trees, a bike lane and a wide sidewalk on Pacific Street. There is a water feature for reflected light, and planting is as an interface. There is a simple landscape to correspond with the Leslie House, and space to walk around house. The lane is being improved for the project. The lobby entrance is on the corner to help animate the corner. The amenity space opens into a courtyard and the applicant is evolving those features as the development permit is pursued. There is a lower deck to avoid privacy problems.

The site located across the lane to the east may house a social amenity, such as a 70 ft. tall building for social housing. The Leslie House is slated to be a gallery, café or a restaurant, but the plan is not yet resolved. Grosvenor will take over the responsibility of the house. The enclosed loading bay is a drop off space and is next to the parkade entry.

The sustainability is achieved with glass, window wall and curtain wall. The project is considering triple glazing at R-10. Close to 30% reduction of energy is proposed. The balconies proposed will be wrapped with insulation. There is a triple glazing curtain wall system on the trim.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - The Leslie House is not integrated with the tower or connected to the street and it looks dwarfed
 - The tower could be taller and slimmer considering the context
 - The expression could be simplified on the façade but some texture within the framework is needed
 - Concern that the ground plane is disjointed from the site. It would help the siting of the Leslie House if the townhouses were considered for a more integrated composition
 - There were concerns that the water feature did not integrate the elements of the ground floor
 - Harvested rainwater should be used for the water feature
- **Related Commentary:** The panel expressed support for the height, density and floor plate. Overall, the size of the building is supported. The solution for form is supportable. The building adds variety to the skyline, a sub skyline. The tower might get washed out of the skyline, so it should be taller. The shape is better for the neighbours to the north in order to enhance their views. The view impacts on of the neighbor were addressed and supportable. However, one panelist thought the view of the tower from the neighbouring property could be overwhelming.

A panelist felt it did not architecturally read as a typical Vancouver tower, rather more like a Montreal tower, but different shapes and sizes was commended. A panelist thought a Canadian design from a designer outside of Vancouver deserves credit. The expression is defensible, and does not affect the skyline.

The base is well done well detailed, but coming up the slope from Hornby the ground floor it is compressed and could be taller. The architectural expression is beautiful but the panel recommends integrating the ideas more. The top is simplistic, but the ground plane feels disjointed. One panelist mentioned expression should be addressed at the base of the building in terms of the appearance of too much luxury. A panelist mentioned it had a restrained and elegant building expression.

The siting of Leslie House is not currently part of the compositional elements, and maybe it could be incorporated into the building with a gesture more sympathetic to it, and become a stronger part of the composition. The plinth and court yard are well done, but the house is isolated. A panelist thought the Leslie House could be inside the lobby of the tower as a museum piece because right now it is an anomaly, orphaned, and the walkways need to capture more of the garden expression.

There was general agreement that improvements were needed for the public realm. The landscaping should be revised to better integrate the Leslie House. The water feature breaks the sections of the streetscape, and needs to be improved. The bike routes were well integrated. The bike lane and street trees are supported. A panelist suggested the water feature could be grass instead to provide an area to walk around the Leslie House because the separated water feature does not integrate the house with the street very well. The water fountain is not inviting, and the wall of the loading dock was an abrupt backdrop for the Leslie House.

Sustainability wise triple glazing is welcomed. Rain water could be harvested and used in the amenity spaces and water features. Insulated slabs and balcony orientation were all approved. Stormwater and land irrigation were recommended. The triple glazing, works well, but could be a secondary strategy for sustainability. Overall, the panel felt the sustainability needs were met as required at this stage.

- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant team thanked the panel for their comments. The relationships with the direct environment and public realm need to be improved. There are good suggestions to bringing in the Leslie House with the tower. The backdrop and loading space improvements are also welcomed.

3. Address:	424 W Pender Street
DE:	N/A
Description:	The proposal is for an 11-storey mixed-use development that includes 72 units of secured market rental housing, commercial space on the ground floor, a floor space ratio (FSR) of 8.18, four car-share, one disability, and one standard parking space, 90 bicycle parking spaces, and a height of 32.2 m (105 ft.).
Zoning:	CD-1 (435) and DD to CD-1 Revised
Application Status:	Rezoning
Architect:	IBI Group (Martin Bruckner)
Owner:	Onni Group
Delegation:	Martin Bruckner, IBI Group Mike Enns, Enns Gauthier Jason Newton, Onni Developments
Staff:	Linda Gillan and Tim Potter

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (4-5)

- **Introduction:** Linda Gillian, Rezoning Planner, introduced the policy for the proposal at 424 West Pender Street that is being considered under the Downtown East Side Plan (DTES Plan). Under the policy rezoning applications can be considered for projects providing a public benefit including social housing, secured market rental housing, or heritage rehabilitation. The maximum height that can be considered under the policy is 105 ft. Density is based on urban design performance. As a rezoning application, the green building rezoning policy applies requiring a minimum of LEED Gold or equivalent.

Timothy Potter, Development Planner, provided an overview for the project. The site is an infill site that is 52 ft. wide and 120 ft. deep and served by a lane. The base zoning is the Downtown District Official Development Plan (DD ODP). The proposal is for a 32.2 m high (105 ft.), 11-storey mixed-use development seeking 8.18 FSR and is comprised of 72 units of secured market rental housing, a commercial space at grade, four car-share spots, one accessible parking space, one standard parking space and 90 bicycle parking spaces.

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

1. Are the proposed height, massing, and density sought in this application supportable?
 2. Please comment on the design of the light wells and their effect on livability, and their response to context and influence on future adjacent developments;
 3. Does the Panel have any preliminary advice on the overall design with regard to:
 - a. Landscape design;
 - b. LEED Gold strategies and Rezoning Policy for Greener Buildings;
 - c. Indicative materials and composition.
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant noted that the site is in the *Victory Square Policy Plan* area and noted the project seeks a good fit with the heritage context. The built form is at the property line on all four side sides.

The building is a mid-block project with a building step at 70 ft. where the remaining levels are set back by 18 ft. to achieve the saw tooth effect that is described in the guidelines. The building step also improves the daylight angle providing sunlight on the north sidewalk at noon.

There is a difference in grade from Pender Street down to the lane of approximately 6 ft., which makes parking access at the ground level challenging. Therefore, the applicant is seeking a parking relaxation because of this challenging site condition. The light well rendering shows the cladding of the light well with reflective materials. Furthermore, the windows are staggered and have optical vision glass positioned to mitigate privacy and overlook concerns. There was strong support for the light well and its contribution to the livability of units, but there were questions about the details such as opposing windows in adjacent buildings.

The design of the decks is related to fire escape stairs in historic districts. Both buildings are sibling buildings, one with punched windows and the other with a window system and bay windows. Both buildings have large display windows at ground level, a historic reference to the buildings in Gastown. On the lane the middle portion of the building projects outward to take advantage views down the lane. Two wings of the building step back to reduce the massing and improve privacy to adjacent sites.

There is no landscape per se at the ground plane; the design is a city standard sidewalk with banding, paving and street trees. There are upper level patios on the 9th floor on the north side for private residences, and an amenity room on the 11th floor at the south side.

The sustainability target is LEED Gold.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - The overall design lacked sufficient detail for the panel to make a decision on rezoning
 - There was concern about the street elevation and a sense that it had not been developed and informed by an understanding of the context
 - More definition at street's commercial level should be pursued
 - Landscape could have more tree canopy and improvement in the lane as well as rain harvesting
- **Related Commentary:** The panel had concerns that the urban design performance had not been reached to merit the support for the rezoning at this stage. The panel had difficulty understanding the façade because there was insufficient information in the package. There was a concern that the panel cannot comment on the form of development without a better understanding of how the proposal relates to its context. One panel member noted that a running streetscape would show the context and that without it there was no way to understand how the proposed façade relates to the surrounding buildings. The panel decided to proceed with comments on the design and later make a decision after comments were offered.

The panel determined that there was not enough info to support the project. One panelist mentioned the Victory Square Policy Plan area is a historical district, and its character should be respected. This panelist was not convinced that the design earns or justifies the increased FSR sought. In essence, the architecture is not strong enough to warrant the 8.0 FSR.

The rental units are a compelling reason for density, but the height and density are not decisively supportable because the architecture is not yet resolved. The height and density are contingent on the architectural design demonstrating good compatibility with the context. At the east end of the block, for example, there is a significant historical building; the proposal could be a reinterpretation of the heritage elements of that building. There are also missing elements and details in the building elevations. There needs to be cornice lines that match adjacent buildings, for example. The material and detailing need further development for the building expression to shine.

The two buildings, 424 and 454 West Pender, broadly speaking work well together. The heritage buildings have a rhythm, symmetry and overall composition of elements that give them strength, but the modern building design does not have this strength. The sun shades at the top levels were not supported because they seem orphaned. The form is awkward at the top.

One panel member thought that the market will determine if the light wells are successful but the impact on neighbours should be decided by city staff. The light wells were generally supported by the panel. More info is needed about how the light will perform with the reflective materials. It was also unclear how the light well works at the ground floor.

There was near support for the proposed FSR however there was one non-support vote on account of a lack information in the proposal that resulted in an overall vote of non-support for the project. The dark brown brick and the white windows seemed suburban. The panel suggested that maybe a dark brown brick and a darker window would be more urban and might weather better as well. The tonality of the proposal needs to take into account the context. The panel thought that both buildings need more decoration, surprise and strength in the composition of elements. The relationship to neighbors is a challenge because the neighbouring buildings are small in scale. Pender is a commercial street, and the contribution of the buildings to the streetscape is important. It was thought that the proposal looks too suburban and not urban enough. There should be high quality glazing and handrails for example. The detailing and quality should be modern but avoid low quality glass handrails. The buildings appear to be disconnected with the rest of the neighbourhood.

The lane elevation is the strongest elevation, and there was concern about the street elevation and how it will respect the existing context in the whole area. The massing and urban response was supported however the stepping seemed to be random and not explained sufficiently.

The landscape is sparse. It was noted that the landscape design, as it relates to the LEED strategy, could use more tree canopy and a more vegetated garden to improve the heat island effect of the roof. Similarly, it was suggested there could be water collection and rainwater harvesting. While the landscape design is minimal, it is well thought through for the amenity space. One panelist thought the minimal approach to the landscape design is urban, and therefore appropriate.

It was noted that the small area of windows is helpful to reach a LEED Gold rating however the concrete side walls and the proposed slab edges will need to be carefully insulated.

In conclusion the panel noted that the streetscape is important and needs to be understood. It was thought that there should be consideration for pedestrian use in terms of the development of the commercial uses at grade. The lines of the building to the east are a strong feature of the context and should be respected. It was thought that there is no strong pattern to the design of the building's elevations, and that the composition of the existing buildings should be evident in the proposals for 424 and 454 W Pender Street.

- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant is seeking support and recognizes shortcomings, but they also felt they addressed them well.

4. Address:	454 W Pender Street
DE:	N/A
Description:	The proposal is for an 11-storey mixed-use development that includes 69 units of secured market rental housing, commercial space on the ground floor, a floor space ratio (FSR) of 8.58, four car-share parking spaces, 87 bicycle parking space and a height of 32.2 m (105 ft.). Zoning: CD-1 (435) and DD to CD-1 Revised
Application Status:	Rezoning
Review:	First
Architect:	IBI Group (Martin Bruckner)
Owner:	Onni Group
Delegation:	Martin Bruckner, IBI Group Mike Enns, Enns Gauthier Jason Newton, Onni Developments
Staff:	Linda Gillan and Tim Potter

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (2-6)

- **Introduction:** Linda Gillan, Rezoning Planner, introduced the policy for 454 West Pender Street. The rezoning applications, 424 and 454 West Pender Street are being considered under the Downtown East Side Plan (DTES Plan). Under this policy, rezoning applications can be considered for projects where there is a public benefit including social housing, secured market rental housing, or heritage re-habilitation. A maximum height of 105' can be considered, and density is based on urban design performance. The green building rezoning policy applies to both projects which requiring a minimum of LEED Gold or equivalent.

Timothy Potter, Development Planner, introduced the site particulars of the project. It is a corner site that is 52' wide and 120' deep, and served by a lane. The base zoning is the Downtown District Official Development Plan (DDODP) and CD-1 (435). 454 West Pender Street is a proposal for an 11-storey mixed-use development which includes 69 units of secured market rental housing, commercial space on the ground floor, a floor space ratio (FSR) of 8.58, four car-share parking spaces, 87 bicycle parking space and a height of 32.2 m (105 ft.). The proposed density is 8.58 FSR.

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

1. Are the proposed height and massing, and density sought in this application supportable?
 2. Please comment on the expression and composition of the building and the design of the parapet as it relates to its heritage streetscape context;
 3. Does the Panel have any preliminary advice on the overall design with regard to:
 - a. landscape design;
 - b. LEED Gold strategies and Rezoning Policy for Greener Buildings;
 - c. Indicative materials and composition.
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant noted that the site is in the Victory Square Policy Plan and stated the intent for the proposal is to fit well with the existing heritage context. There is a change in grade from Pender street down to the lane of approximately six ft., making parking access at the ground level not possible. The applicant is seeking a parking relaxation because of this constraint.

The building design is also related to the design of the project at 424 W Pender. One has punched windows and the other has a glazed window system. Both buildings have large display windows at the ground level, recalling some of the detailing of and scale of storefronts in Gastown. The lightwell is stepped (in plan) to address the stairwell of the adjacent heritage building. The first step aligns with the adjacent building; the second step aligns close to the end of the next building and is further back to increase the light penetration for the windows. The building is a solid on the entire east face, with only one window facing directly towards the southwest. The street facades have an emphasis on bay windows.

The project is targeting a LEED Gold standard. Having a low ratio of window to wall allowing a high insulation possibility will help to attain this goal.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Overall the design lacked detail in its form and expression
 - The street elevation needs to be informed by its historical context
 - The corner window is not a successful way to address a corner condition
 - The bay windows do not seem well resolved, especially at the parapet
 - The Massing could create a strong bookend with the building at the opposite end of the block, but it currently does not
 - More definition at the street level needs to be provided for the commercial spaces
 - The landscape design should provide more tree canopy
 - Water harvesting should be explored
- **Related Commentary:** The panel had concerns about the success of the design at a rezoning stage due to the lack of detail on the overall design. The panel had trouble understanding the façade composition in the absence of a streetscape context, which lead to concern about the overall form of the development. One panel member noted that a running street scape would show the context and without it there was no way to understand how the proposed façade design relates to the surrounding buildings. The panel decided to proceed with commentary on the design, and later in the meeting they decided to revisit how to conclude [vote] on the review once the comments by the panelists were offered.

There was uncertainty about support for the FSR. One panel member noted that the Victory Square Policy Plan area is a historical district, and the character should be respected in the area. The massing with two book ends was supported but the building is not performing that function yet. One panelist was not convinced that the design as is justifies or earns the substantial increase density that is proposed. The details of the tripartite expression of the context are not reflected in the proposal's bay windows and corner window. There needs to be better resolution at the top of the building. More definition at the street level would reflect the buildings at the other end of the block and on Richards Street. The living wall was not seen to make sense and was not supported. The materials and composition need more development to match the surrounding area. At the moment, the design is not convincing as a modern interpretation of the neighbourhood.

The parapet is not well interpreted. The design needs more decoration and surprise. The dark bricks do not match heritage buildings adjacent to the site. The panel thought the colour of the materials created a dark street.

The first few floors could have a different strategy and need to be resolved further. The relentless height of the bay windows is problematic. One panel member thought the hard edges are fine. Another panel member thought the buildings, 454 and 424 West Pender, work well together. The heritage buildings have horizontal banding elements that give them strength, but the proposed buildings lack this strength because they are vertically emphasized. The streetscape is important. The lines on the corner building to the east are a strong feature and should be respected and understood in the proposed design. Some panel members thought there is no strong pattern or composition to the buildings. The sidewalls are problematic and the lane elevation is uninspiring.

The landscape hard edges as an 'urban treatment' were supported; however, there should be more tree canopy on the roof terraces and an improvement of the lane through more landscape treatment. There should be more rain harvesting on the building. The landscape design should have rainwater harvesting and the design does not need to be softened. LEED Gold performance was supported but it was noted that exposed concrete walls will need to be properly insulated.

- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant is seeking support and recognizes shortcomings, but they also felt they addressed them well.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.