

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: Wednesday, June 29, 2016

TIME: 3:00 pm

PLACE: Town Hall Meeting Room, Vancouver City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Russell Acton
Roger Hughes
Ken Larsson
David Jerke
Neal Lamontagne
Muneesh Sharma
Karen Spoelstra
Meghan Cree-Smith
Kim Smith
Meredith Anderson

REGRETS: Stefan Aepli
James Cheng
Veronica Gillies

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Camilla Lade

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

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| 1. | 1335 Howe Street |
| 2. | 1575 W Georgia Street |
| 3. | 33 W Cordova Street (36 Blood Alley) |
| 4. | 526-548 W King Edward Avenue |
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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: 1335 Howe Street
DE: DE420124
Description: To construct a 40-storey mixed-use building with commercial at grade and residential above (363 dwelling units), over six levels of underground parking.

Zoning: CD-1 Pending
Application Status: Complete Development Application
Review: Third (Second at DE)
Architect: IBI Group (Martin Bruckner)
Owner: Onni Developments
Delegation: Martin Bruckner, IBI Group
Lin Lin, PFS Studio
Josh Alter, Onni Developments

Staff: Sailen Black

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (9-0)

- **Introduction:** The Development Planner Sailen Black introduced the third review for a development application to construct a 40-storey mixed-use building with commercial at grade and residential above (363 dwelling units) over six levels of underground parking in zone CD-1. The site dimensions are 120 ft. by 200 ft. at a density of 11.2 FSR and a height of 378 ft. It is a mid-block site opposite the Howe Street on-ramp to Granville Bridge, and the site is at-grade with the public realm interface on Howe Street.

The proposal is for 389 market dwelling units with an amenity space located on the ground level and a childcare space on the 8th level. The site is 2 ft. below the view cone and 20 % of the building elevation is balcony balustrade. The policy guidelines for Downtown South allow for a tower floor plate of 6,500 square ft. and a tower separation of 80 ft. The shadow analysis shows existing and new shadows.

The previous presentation outlined the following key aspects needing improvement:

- The urban agriculture is too much of a token gesture and the area should be used to reinforce the function of adjacent areas
- The townhouses are problematic and are not suited for this location
- There was a stronger expression of public space on the original scheme
- Add planters at the podium to add interest if the water feature is dry
- The strong horizontal elements are interrupting the tower mass at the ground and podium level; they should be reconsidered or removed
- The amenity is popping out and interrupting the line of the tower going down
- The top trellis seems unnecessary and gratuitous.
- There is some concern about the white brick not relating well to the building
- The tower lacks the clarity of the original scheme and needs design development to express the concept of the large staggered balconies juxtaposed against the interior spatial envelope of the tower

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

1. Does the proposed design address the key aspects the Panel identified as needing improvement?
 2. Do the proposed changes ensure a high degree of livability for the residences at the lowest podium levels?
 3. Does the proposed public realm interface create a safe and attractive area for pedestrians along Howe Street?
 4. Does the Panel have any advice on the proposed materials, tower design, or the open space on top of the podium?
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant introduced the project as a revised scheme with items that were of concern removed. The ground oriented townhomes facing Howe Street have been removed and replaced by a retail space.

On the next level, the podium, there are dark slabs on the two sides of the tower, which replaced grey slabs. The balconies and the core did not previously have enough contrast, so the design was changed to spandrel glass. The balcony railing is variegated frit glass. The crown element at the top was removed. On the podium deck there was an expressed light box on the pool, but it was removed, instead there is now a dark slab at the base and top with a simple band of glass running side to side. There is a glass screen made of frit glass to obscure the view of the pool.

On the lane, the retail was reduced to 100 square meters, and the number of loading bays was reduced to two, one for residents and one for commercial use. As a result, there is more open space at the lane, and there is 40 ft. of width added to the greenspace. There are three loft units on the mezzanine 2nd floor. There is decreased overhang on the balconies at the lane and street sides. The gold guardrails were removed in the new scheme and now there are simple glass boxes with glass doors. The white panel was replaced with glass at the corners (which was previously solid). The landscape will have planters along the water feature and along the amenity spaces. The lane side has more greenspace as a buffer for the townhouse units. The rooftop has less agriculture due to lack of sunlight, so more space was added for a children's play area. The rental lobby has increased in size with a two-sided elevator added for easier access.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - There were concerns from a few Panel members about the thermal bridging of the balconies.
- **Related Commentary:** The panel supported the presentation, and agreed that key aspects from the last presentation were addressed. Comments included: it is a handsome background building, it is simpler and cleaner, and there was a lot of support for the black and white colour scheme breaking up the massing of the building. The livability concerns were addressed, especially the lane adjustment keeping the townhouses at grade and the added green at the back helped improve the rear portion of the project. There is now improved lobby access. The townhouses at grade were done well according to most of the Panel, with one Panel member who was not in favour of the townhouse design but did not think there was much more that could be done overall.

The proposed public realm interface was improved for pedestrians on Howe Street overall, according to the Panel. It was a crisp, clean, well resolved approach. The retail presence is better on Howe Street. One panel member was concerned that the water feature restricts and isolates the entries to the building. The clarity of the design of the open spaces was welcomed.

The Panel supported the breaking of down of the scale with black and white coloured surfaces, but perhaps the grey could be brought down to the amenity level suggested one Panel member. The Panel mentioned that the landscaping should not be labeled as 'edible'. The original public art application from the previous presentation was supported by the Panel with the recommendation to retain it. Overall, the presentation satisfied the improvements recommended in the last presentation.

- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant stated that the owner is looking into developing the public art aspects going forward.

2. Address:	1575 W Georgia Street
DE:	DE420245
Description:	To construct a 26-storey mixed-use building (175 dwelling units) above retail, service, and office uses, over underground parking.
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Complete Development Application
Review:	Second (First at DE)
Architect:	Henriquez Partners Architects (Gregory Henriquez)
Owner:	Bosa Properties
Delegation:	Gregory Henriquez, Henriquez Partners Architects Shawn LaPointe, Henriquez Partners Architects Bruce Hemstock, PWL Partnership Rob Elliot, Bosa Properties Jay Burtwistle, Recollective Greg Lee, MMM Group Nino Maclang, Bunt & Associates
Staff:	Tim Potter

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (9-0).

- **Introduction:** Tim Potter, Development Planner, introduced the project by identifying the site as a double fronting corner site located on Georgia St. at Cardero St. with Hastings Street to the north where loading and vehicle access occurs. The tower floorplate is 6994 sq. ft. The proposed density is 10.83 FSR, and the height is approximately 265 ft. (81 m) and 26 storeys. The proposal is for a mixed-use building including ground level retail, office and residential above. The site is comprised of two sites that were combined through the Rezoning process. The applicable policies are *the Coal Harbour Policy Statement* and the *Downtown District Character Area Descriptions*.

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

1. Please comment on the architectural expression of the building and in particular, the east elevation;
 2. Please comment on the legibility of the building in terms of the various uses and the design of their corresponding entries;
 3. Please comments on the landscape design in terms of the following:
 - a. Design of the public realm;
 - b. Design of the rooftop amenity (level 6);
 - c. Success of the design for the children's play area.
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant introduced the project as a counterpoint to the Crown Life Building across the street. The applicant intended to break down the scale of the building so that it is not a 'wall'. The proposed tower is divided into two pieces that relate to the different uses. At the base there are retail and office spaces. The sun shade idea, one of the sustainability strategies, came from the image of seaplane and kites that are seen at Grouse Mountain.

The office building is intended to be subservient to the retail and residential aspects of the building. The south and west elevations with the sun shades anchor the corner of the site and establish the identity of the building. The east façade, by contrast, is designed to be subdued in its expression.

With respect to the public realm design, the neighbourhood is Coal Harbour and the idea is to take the notion of 'coal' and use it in the ground plane and entry patios. Cherry trees are historically part of Georgia Street so pink glass tiles are incorporated into the ground treatments to signify this. Cherry trees in large planters will be located adjacent to the residential entries. Level 6 has a rooftop amenity terrace that has areas for children and adults to mix or be separate. The play area is designed for younger children. On the north side there is a 'living room' opposite the amenity room.

In terms of sustainability measures, the intention for the project is to provide a 55% window to wall ratio. The proposal will also include a high performance envelope to reduce energy consumption. The public art component is anticipated to be significant for the proposal.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - There are concerns that there is too much glass on the tower and more solid elements are recommended to optimize energy efficiency;
 - The expression of the office entry requires further design development.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel thought overall it is a great project that is well presented. With respect to the architectural expression, there is strong support for the articulated building massing that differentiates the uses through varied façade treatments. One Panel member thought the podium should be more connected to the tower expression. Many of the Panel members agreed that the detailing of the solar screens is critical. There were concerns about the sun shade detailing including expansion of the steel plate, safety issues, and maintenance. A quieter, understated design for the east elevation was supported by the Panel to act as a foil to the elevation with the sunshades.

It was agreed that there should be clear legibility of the entries. There was strong support from the panel on the residential entry. Although the office entry is subtle and calm, the Panel thought it could be enhanced to be more legible. One Panel member thought the angled parking entry is problematic because of the geometries of the parking entry ramp and mass above. Another Panel member thought there is an issue with the stairs to the parking.

With respect to the design for the tower and the podium (office and retail elements) being tied together, the Panel thought the two separate expressions were handled with clarity. However, a few Panel members thought the design appears as two separate buildings.

With respect to the landscape design and its concept, the panel was generally supportive of the references to coal and the cherry trees in the landscape palette but thought that these ideas were not well connected to the sails (sunshades). One Panel member advised that increased weather protection along the Georgia Street side is needed. Another Panel member thought the landscaped wall is lost because it is not 'tied in' to the paving treatment. Another Panel member thought the landscape striation was nicely carried into the wall with multiple textures that match the ground.

The Panel supported the rooftop amenity however one member said the rooftop amenity should be more flexible and used by the majority of the building. One Panel member thought the mechanical should be located on the lower level to increase the amenity area. A few panel members were concerned about noise from the rooftop mechanical unit. A few other Panel members thought the landscape might be a problem for children, especially if it is edible. There could be more vertical play areas for the children thought a few Panel members. The Panel liked the rubber play area for the children. One Panel member thought there should be less glazing on the building. Public art is supported by the Panel.

- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant thanked the Panel for their comments.

3. Address: 33 W Cordova Street (36 Blood Alley)
DE: DE419722
Description: To construct an 11-storey mixed-use building (214 dwelling units, including 80 social housing rental units and 134 market rental units) and commercial at grade and cabaret underground.
- Zoning: HA-2
Application Status: Complete Development Application
Review: First
Architect: Henriquez Partners Architects (Gregory Henriquez & Rui Nunes)
Owner: Provincial Rental Housing Corp.
Delegation: N/A
Staff: Paul Cheng
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EVALUATION: PRESENTATION WITHDRAWN

4. Address:	526-548 W King Edward Avenue
DE:	DP-2016-00006
Description:	To construct a six-storey residential building and two-storey rear-facing townhouses at the lane (totalling 67 dwelling units), over 1.5 storeys of underground parking accessed from the rear lane.
Zoning:	CD-1 Pending
Application Status:	Complete Development Application
Review:	Third (First at DE)
Architect:	Romses Architects (Scott Romses)
Owner:	Tianco Investment Group Inc.
Delegation:	Scott Romses, Romses Architects Jennifer Stamp, Durante Kreuk Kevin Welsh, Integral Group
Staff:	Jason Olinek

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-0)

- Introduction:** Development Planner Jason Olinek introduced the project as the third UDP presentation to construct a 6-storey residential building and 2-storey townhouses totaling sixty-seven dwelling units. The proposal falls within the density and height of the approved rezoning of FSR 2.35 and 20.0m (65.7ft) respectively with a lot size of 178 ft. wide and 150 ft. depth. Further south from the site on Cambie Street, there are approved rezonings: an eight-storey building at King Edward Station and a similar four to six-storey building across King Edward Street. As well, there is a six-storey rezoning application under consideration across the lane to the east.

The applicable Policy is the Cambie Corridor Plan. The stepped form is a result of policy that allows two lots west of the lane to be considered for six-storey heights and then four-storey heights extending east. Two storey volume buildings frame the courtyard and serve to transition to the lower density RS-1 neighbourhood. These are comprised of one-storey flats (on the east) and two-storey townhouses (on the south).

The setbacks generally are in compliance with the rezoning:

- 2 ft. from the front property line (7 ft. from the statutory right of way), running the first four floors;
- an additional 3 ft. for levels 5-6;
- an additional 8 ft. at the ground floor for patios and
- 5.5 meters (18 ft.) total for public realm on West King Edward Street.

Materials used in the proposal include: cement composite panels, window wall, corrugated metal cladding, perforated metal rolling screens, composite wood siding and decking, brick cladding and aluminum fins. Landscape includes: brick clad planters, landscaping softening treatments around the edges a water feature and vine and trellis structure over parkade entry.

The Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement from the last appearance included:

- Look at the entrance ramp and stairs at lobby;

- Potentially sculpt the building;
- Look at how the amenity spaces could connect better. Could support spaces be given to the great outdoor spaces on the upper levels?
- Look at the balcony protrusions at the lane;
- Look at the interface (privacy) between the townhomes and the condos.

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

1. How is the applicant's response in addressing the consensus items from the last UDP appearance?
 2. Please comment on the architectural expression, in particular the composition, elements and materials.
 3. How is the building interface at ground level, specifically with respect to the livability of the ground floor units, as well as the relationship to public realm and to the neighbours?
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant wanted a 'strong' and 'simple' expression. The long frontage along King Edward Street is broken up with an asymmetric composition and the introduction of a breezeway at grade that extends from the street to the lane. The parti is a 'simple' composition of three white 'boxes'. The façade has solar or privacy screens as well as continuous balconies. The vertical fins and solar screens were intended to give the design a 'light' facade.

The main entry is located in proximity to the pedestrian desire line connection to King Edward Station. The stairs were moved nearer the breezeway to facilitate the flow of people. The ground floor amenity space includes a kitchenette and an accessible bathroom.

The courtyard is intended to provide space for social interaction, creating a 'tight' but livable relationship between the apartment building and the townhouses. There is a single row of trees planted along the courtyard to provide a buffer at the second level bedrooms between the townhouses and the condos. The breeze way intersects the courtyard, connecting Cambie Street through to the lane.

The laneway has been enhanced since the previous presentation. The light wells have been eliminated, and landscaping has been added. The sunken units at the back of the building were raised 1 foot. The balcony protrusions in the back lane have been reduced to 2 ft. in order to have more landscape space. There is 10 ft. of 'grade change' across the site.

Public realm design includes side walk and bikeway separated from King Edward Street by a treed boulevard. The water feature in the breezeway will not have a guardrail; the water is level with the floor of the breezeway. It is meant to be a wayfinding device. Planters have been added for privacy. Lounge gathering spaces as well as a play hut in the children's play area have been added.

Sustainability measures include: LEED Gold rating of 71.5 points and potable water management. Furthermore, a reduction of energy cost through a conservative window to wall ratio, a variant refrigerant flow (VRF) mechanical system, increasing insulation on the exterior as well as other measures have been added.

- **Panel’s Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - The main entry identity could be strengthened with better integration of the ramp, stairs, lobby and breezeway to be more open or legible;
 - Recommend privacy screens between the publicly shared amenity spaces and private or semi-private spaces;
 - The balconies on the lane should either be functional (deeper) or true Juliette balconies;
 - The strength of the parti on the north façade is lost by the shallow balcony connection at the 5th floor and a change in the unit plan and or colour of the balcony fascia would be required to resolve the problem;
 - Rigid adherence to design parti over program results in inadequate provisions of windows and in one case a balcony on the east lane façade.
- **Related Commentary:** Overall the presentation was well received by the Panel, and the consensus items from the previous submission were addressed. The hierarchy and entry identity at the main stairway connecting to breezeway offset should be addressed during design development. There was general support for the sculpting of the building and the amenity space connection at the upper levels. The privacy issues between the townhomes and the main building are not a problem have been and improved by trees and moveable balcony screens.

The architectural character is well developed. The strength of the parti is the three boxes but it is eroded on the front façade by introducing the white balcony fascia across at the 5th floor level. The solution may be to re-plan the units and balcony locations for each unit. The back (south) elevation is more successful.

The expression of the building is following a formal idea and not following programmatic requirements of the interior of the building, in particular the Cambie Street lane side. The ‘west box’ does not respond to the context of the site or unit design. The Panel supported the moving screens. On the south side, the screens will be a good solar device to protect the units.

The ground floor public realm ~~is~~ has improved both along King Edward Street and overall. The setbacks are supported, and the stairs support a ‘neighbourly’ connection. There is support for the water feature without a guard rail. A few Panel members thought the materials on the ground floor are too dark. There should be a more accessible entry and ramp off the lane on the main breezeway. There is concern about the mechanical systems being on the roof according to one Panel member. One Panel member also mentioned that the LEED Gold sustainability rating was modest and could be higher.

- **Applicant’s Response:** The applicant appreciated the Panel comments and had no further items to add.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.