

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: Wednesday, January 6, 2021

TIME: 4:00 pm

PLACE: WebEx

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:

Alan Davies
Brittany Coughlin
Adrien Rahbar
Sydney Schwartz
Walter Francl
Jennifer Stamp
Karenn Krangle
Marie-Odile Marceau
Angela Enman
Margot Long
Michael Henderson
Muneesh Sharma

REGRETS: Matt Younger

RECORDING SECRETARY: M.Sem

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1. 5763-5791 Oak Street & 1008 W 41st Avenue

1. Address: 5763-5791 Oak Street & 1008 W 41st Avenue
Permit No. RZ-2020-00032

Description: To develop a mixed-use building with two towers at 8 and 16-storeys on top of a 6-storey podium. The proposal includes 222 secured market rental units (with 20% of residential floor space provided for below market rental units) and commercial retail space at grade, all over three levels of underground parking consisting of 212 vehicle spaces and 492 bicycle spaces. The building heights are 54.6 m (179.2 ft.) for the 16-storey tower and 26.3 m (89.71 ft.) for the 8-storey tower, the total site area is 3,427.4 sq. m (36,892 sq. ft.), and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 5.03. This application is being considered under the Cambie Corridor Plan.

Application Status: C-1 to CD-1

Review: First

Architect: IBI Group

Delegation: Farshid Bagheri, BCBS

Dean Johnson, Vice President, Wesgroup Properties

Luke Kenny, Transportation Analyst, Bunt & Associates Engineering

Myra Shunny, Senior Development Manager, Wesgroup

Nicci Theroux, Landscape Architect, ETA Landscape Architects

Gwyn Vose, Director – Sr. Practice Lead, IBI Group

Staff: Joseph Tohill & Karen Kallweit-Graham

EVALUATION: SUPPORT with Recommendations (10 support, 2 non-support)

- **Introduction:**

Rezoning Planner, Joseph Tohill, began by noting this is a rezoning application to rezone 5763-5791 Oak St & 1008 W 41st Ave under the Cambie Corridor Plan.

The subject of today's presentation is a rezoning application we received at 5763-5791 Oak St & 1008 W 41st Avenue. The proposal is for a mixed-use development with two towers at 8 and 16 storeys on a 6-storey podium under the Cambie Corridor Plan.

The site is located on the southwest corner of Oak and 41st Avenue. Currently on-site is a two story commercial building and a former gas station site, which is now a community garden. The site is currently zoned C-1 (commercial). Intent of C-1 district schedule is to provide for small-scale convenience commercial establishments and for dwelling uses designed compatibly with commercial uses. Properties to the North and south along Cambie Street are zoned CD-1, while sites directly to the west are zoned RS-1.

Here is some context on the surrounding development activity and nearby uses. Site is located about 100 m from Montgomery Park. Across 41st Avenue to the North is the Louis Brier Home and Hospital, which is a long-term care facility. Towards the northeast is the recently approved rezoning for the Oakridge Transit Centre, which is a 17 building mixed-use development and two-acre public park. A half-

block to the west is a recently approved rezoning application for the Jewish Community Centre at 950 W 41st. The rezoning approves a replacement community centre and two residential towers above a residential podium.

The enabling policy for the site is the Cambie Corridor Plan. The site is located within the Oakridge Municipal Town Centre Neighbourhood (or Oakridge MTC Neighbourhood), which is what is considered under the Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy as a regionally significant urban centre. The area is envisioned to be strengthened and enhanced as a walkable mixed-use urban centre with a diverse mix of job space, housing types and tenures. The site itself is located in a mixed-use node on the western edge of the Oakridge MTC. The plan envisions higher intensity uses located at the intersection of Oak and 41st, including direction for a tower on this site with commercial at grade. Across 41st to the North is the Louis Brier and Shaw Oaks sites, which are unique sites under the plan, intended to go through an enhanced rezoning process. Direction for Louis Brier is for the replacement or expansion of existing senior residential and care facilities, and allow for a range of new housing types. The direction for Shawn Oaks is for the addition of a range of housing types, including townhouses and mid-rises buildings. Townhouses are anticipated along Oak St to the south of the site and north of Shawn Oaks. No changes are envisioned for the residential neighbourhood to the west, which under the RS-1 zoning allows for lower intensity residential uses including one or two-family dwellings, and the potential for secondary suites or laneway houses.

The site is located within the Mixed-use Building on arterials section of the Plan. For this site, the plan envisions two towers at 8 and 16 storeys on a podium.

A density up to 4.25 can be supported under two scenarios:

- 100% secured market with 20% below market
- 30% of residential floor area provided as social housing

The proposal is for a mixed-use development with two towers at 16 and 8 storeys on a 6-storey podium. 222 secured market rental units are proposed, with 20% of floor space allocated to below market rental. Commercial space located at grade 5.03 FSR. Amenity spaces on the 7th floor on top of the podium, and a partial 17th storey common amenity on the roof of the 16-storey tower. 212 parking spaces and 492 bicycle parking spaces are located on 3 levels of underground parking.

Development Planner, Karen Kallweit-Graham began by describing the overall vision of the Cambie Corridor Plan as it relates to this neighbourhood commercial centre. She then described the emerging context of built forms anticipated for the area. Karen then highlighted the relevant design principles of the Plan's Built Form Guidelines, which specifically outline expectations for mixed-use buildings, tower form, and highly active commercial public realm. The proposal was then specifically described relative to the Policy's direction.

This site is located in the far west portion of the Oakridge Town Centre neighbourhood of the Cambie Corridor Plan. The Plan recognizes this as an important neighbourhood commercial centre and anticipates significant development along W 41st. Oak Street itself is envisioned as a secondary active node that supports Cambie as the 'High street'.

As Joseph mentioned, this area foresees numerous high-density projects. Directly to the north, are the unique sites of Louis Brier and Shawn Oaks, each with an anticipated tower of 12 - 16 storeys. To the

east along 41st is the Jewish Community Centre, with two towers up to 26 storeys. Also to the east, is the Oakridge Transit Centre, which anticipates tower forms up to 26 storeys closer to W 41st, transitioning to mid-rise and townhouse forms, which will ultimately frame a new park to the north.

Vision of the plan is to strengthen this key shopping location through opportunities to enhance and renew existing mixed-use sites. Commercial uses such as retail, service or community-serving functions are required at grade.

The goal is an urban and walkable neighbourhood, to be supported by a number of public realm improvements. These include significant setbacks along 41st and Oak Streets, wider sidewalks, at-grade commercial and urban elements (seating, bike racks, signage, and café space). A corner sidewalk plaza at the intersection of Oak and 42nd is identified in the plan, opposite a secondary active link. While small, these plazas read as extensions of the city sidewalk and are part of a bigger network of public spaces that help connect the neighbourhood and foster an engaged public life.

The Plan identifies a number of design principles for mixed-use buildings. These buildings play a key role in providing shops & services by creating appropriate street scale, continuous street enclosure and pedestrian interest. A tower/podium typology is anticipated. Higher building elements above 4-storeys should be stepped back from the front and side yards. Building massing and design should consider neighbourliness on adjacent residential sites. Buildings should animate and enhance the lane through active uses. Tower floor plates should not exceed 6500 sq. ft. and have a tower separation of at least 80 ft. Provisions of podium and rooftop amenity space in conjunction with outdoor area is expected. Commercial uses should be appropriately scaled and wrap corners to give an active presence on the flanking streets.

Proposal follows these guidelines of the Plan closely, with a 16-storey residential tower at 41st and an 8-storey tower at 42nd. These are connected by a 6 storey link with a modest setback. Amenities and common outdoor space are located on the rooftops of both towers and on the podium. Continuous commercial uses occur at grade, including a small corner plaza at 42nd.

Commercial space occurs at grade along 41st and Oak Streets. It wraps the corner at 42nd where it sets back to create the small plaza and meets the main entrance to the south tower. Two residential units face 42nd to animate the street and to transition to the single-family residential area to the west.

Tower floor plates (in green) are kept compact and separated by 80 ft., which allows for generous indoor & outdoor amenity space at the 7th floor.

This is a longitudinal section overlaid in red with the profile outlined in the Cambie Corridor Plan. The Plan anticipates a step back above the 4th level to create a 4-storey podium as viewed from the street, with a 5-storey link between the two towers.

The red line indicates the profile anticipated in the CCP, which steps down to the lane to ensure a sensitive height transition to residential uses to west. While the project proposes a 6 storey link as opposed to 5, it is setback from the lane and fits within the profile. Lane is predominately used for back-of-house functions, however commercial & residential uses do wrap at corners where there may be some potential for activity.

In terms of shadows, the most impactful time of year for shadows on public realm and residential properties to the west would be at the Equinoxes. It is recognized that there will be morning shadow impacts on a future plaza anticipated on the Louis Brier site directly to the north. While the illustration shows the plaza at the middle of the site, the location is diagrammatic at this stage. Shadowing will be taken in to consideration once a Louis Brier proposal comes forward. Otherwise, shadows fall mainly across Oak & 41st streets.

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

1. Height, density and form of development relative to the expectations of the plan, in particular the “podium” expression (5 vs. 6 storeys).
2. Quality of the public realm at lane, streets, and sidewalk plaza.
3. Any preliminary advice for consideration at the Development Permit stage. Please consider factors such as building elevations, materiality, quality of public spaces and sustainability strategies.

Applicant’s Introductory Comments:

(Applicant Presentation on the site and context)

Wesgroup bought this site from Chevron in 2017. The site is currently a community garden with retail on the opposite end, In December, the 2019, we submitted LOE application, which aligns with the Cambie Corridor Plan including height. After receiving comments back from the city on our LOE application, we thoughtfully refined our design concepts.

Project is located at 41st and Oak. The building is sixteen and eight storeys. The amenity space is on \ the 16th storey with the 80-foot separation on the podium. We introduced the 4th storey setback on Oak and 41st, which we felt was appropriate for those streets, and where the tower is, we really wanted a portion to carry down to the retail to really punctuate the corner and to emphasize the fact that there are these power elements in the project. We shifted the core parts on 41st to really impact that two story transition between the eight and the six to really keep that area north of the eight storey to give it as much natural light as possible and make it a really good space for the amenity and to avoid being too far into the shadow. We created articulation, visual interest and help emphasize that podium expression on the base of the two street frontages. The height that will be in the future on the other corners of the site, creating a punctuation point at that intersection. The office building across the street, it's kind of another anomaly that although it's five storeys it's really a five to six storey height, there will be similar height to the podium, and it's in keeping in the community. Looking at the building from the corner and noting the retail with the sense of the friction along these vertical columns, which we anticipate having lighting and continuous rain protection and to create a good pedestrian experience as one walks along towards that Plaza at the corner. The lane, it's used for loading and for parking access but we've tried to animate it through the use of planting in various key locations, as well as wrapping the townhouse at that corner and wrapping the retail glazing on the corner of 41st Ave. There will be some further glazing for that last retail unit along that edge.

The green of the rooftop of the eight-storey component, and on the six-storey podium. In addition, at the very top, there is green roof amenity. The building of the contemporary palette is white and dark grey with dark brick at podium base and spandrel and clear glass for the remainder.

The plans have to have two and a half, three levels of parking. There is storage in various places where parking doesn't work, and all of the bicycle storage is held up at P1 level, closest to grade, with easy direct access to the ramp and to the street and beyond. The ground level has lobbies at 41st and at 42nd with retail on all remaining street frontages, smaller CRUs on 41st and larger retailer further, majority on Oak Street.

A large open space with an amenity attached on the tower form and access from the lower tower form. The top has the green roof and the set back on the top level of the tower to the top where we have again occupied route for the enjoyment of the entire complex.

(Applicant presentation on the Landscape)

The ground floor there is active frontage on all four sides. There are street trees on Oak St, which will not intrude onto the busy transit corridor. In keeping with trying to have oaks on Oak Street, it is pulled back slightly from the sidewalk because of future plans for a bike lane.

Wrapping the corner to 42nd we wanted to bring some trees that would also ease that transition into the neighborhood and then soften that face as well as.

On the rear, we have also activated that area with some planting, heavy-duty shrubs and vegetated walls.

On the corner at 42nd, the southeast corner we have a corner sidewalk Plaza; and there is opportunity there to have a specimen tree to make this space feel like a destination space. There is seating on the corner; we have bike racks on all sides on 41st and on 42nd.

On top of the podium, there is a bio-diversity green roof to encourage habitat for birds. On the seventh floor, there is a common amenity space that will serve the two towers; there is urban agriculture, some children's play areas, an area for outdoor seating, a communal table, making it a mini community up on that level.

On level nine there is another biodiversity green roof striving as much as possible to get soil volumes so that we can have a biodiversity green roof and for bird habitat, as well as insect diversity which will feed the birds.

On the tower, on the roof top there is an adult oriented amenity space. There is lighting that will activate space at night. To the east sides the morning sun and to the north, views of the mountains. In terms of sustainability, we have looked at plant material that is going to be adapted to our drier summers and much wetter winters, as time goes on. We have made sure that all of our soil volumes are consistent with the City of Vancouver standards so that we can reduce the rate of water into the larger system. We are proposing high efficiency irrigation and the use of durable materials that is for longevity on the site. All lighting would be dark sky compliant. In addition, with the habitat roofs on level two and level nine, is a good source for birds and it becomes a refuge for flora and fauna.

The staff and applicant team then took questions from the panel.

Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:

Having reviewed the project, it was moved by **MS. ENMAN** and seconded by **MR. SHARMA** and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

THAT the Panel **SUPPORTS** the project with the following recommendations to be reviewed by City Staff:

- Design Development to podium expression and its relationship to the tower
- Design Development to strengthen the tower expression at 41st and Oak.
- Design Development to public realm and storefronts for opportunities to animate and increase the porosity; consider a small corner café use facing the 42nd Ave and Oak sidewalk plaza.
- Design Development to animate, activate and green the lane frontage, and improve the relationship to the single family residential to west. Review the parking ramp location to align with lane to the west (behind the RS1 zoned properties).

Related Commentary:

Height, Density, Massing Relative to the Plan:

- There was overall support for height, density and form of development.
- One panel member felt that the corner could support the height; however, it is not compatible with the neighbourhood to the west.
- The majority of the panel felt that the height, density and form conform to what is called for in the plan.
- One panel member felt that the podium did not conform to what is called for in the plan and suggested it be further set back. Another panel member felt that the setback is minimal in nature and podium is too imposing.
- One panel member is have a concern with the density and felt that the proposal was too dense and it is packed with units (some of which are not livable).
- There was considerable comment about the tower - its relationship to the podium, and how it is expressed at the corner of 41st and Oak. The podium/tower expression is awkward and the applicant was encouraged to review where the tower and podium break at the frame. It was also felt that the north tower blended too much with the podium. The panel also commented on the need for the tower to better address the corner (of a major intersection).
- While the panel supported the massing, it was felt that there were many competing elements on the façade. The frame elements stray into the tower and this relationship needs refinement.
- One panel member had concerns with the shadow across 41st to the Louis Brier site, so they were not supportive of the height.
- The retail expression is continuous. The panel commented that the CRU frontage needs more animation and porosity. The continuous storefront should be replaced with sliding/garage doors, produce stands, and other means to allow interior activities to spill outside to the public realm (and provide interest).
- Regarding expression and design concept, it could be pushed further.
- The podium expression in the mid-section of the façade reads monolithic and heavy – consider lowering the podium to create a stronger link between the two buildings and give a bit more, or at least a stronger definition of the South Tower.
- No issues with the lack of set backs, suggest setback from the main tower on the north side
- The forum is created by this subtracted volumes, on the rear elevation, are successful and if this were to extend around the building to help mitigate uniformity. The panel suggested using this on Oak Street to help mitigate the podium expression/mass.

- The architectural expression is different on all four sides of the building. The applicant was encouraged to consolidate the façade expression with more resolution to the horizontal, vertical and frame forms.
- Noted the main site setbacks, make for a fairly good transition to the neighboring property
- Appreciates the podium expression mitigates the bulk, although it would have been nice to extend more into the tower's of mass.
- Encourage design development to help strengthen the podium. Currently, it seems like the horizontal aperture is on Oak elevation at 41st. It read as part of the podium but then there is continuous towers, and whether the solution is to have them be more continuous or express, particularly the tower at Oak and 41st more strongly with a vertical expression, suggesting a hybrid could potentially work but right now, it is in the middle.
- Concern with the shadowing on the Louie Brier side. It is noted an important healthcare facility and should not be shadowed for healing purposes. Not supportive of the height. It needs not to have shadow from a tower across the street.
- Corner expression of Oak and 41st is lacking in terms of presence. Suggest integrating the podium frame elements a little bit more into that while still allowing the tower to touch the ground.
- Noted the primary intersection is at 41st Ave and suggest there be an expression to carry up the building tower itself. It is the primary and most visible corner of the building and yet it does not present with much more than a balcony. Panel noted suggest there needs to be an architectural expression that speaks to the corner on this most important intersection.

Public Realm

- Great opportunity to animate and create significant blustering character at the corner of Oak and 41st
- Many panel members felt that there is a missed opportunity at the northeast corner of the site. The panel encouraged the applicant to consider a building entry here.
- The panel felt that more should be done to the lane frontage to minimize the back of house and activate the lane. The location of the parking ramp should be re-considered further south to align with the east west lane.
- The panel also commented that glazing should wrap the lane, and planting should be used to further soften it. Activation and the needs of the grocery store/loading need to be balanced. Regarding the location of the parking ramp, suggest applicant to look at shifting that a little further south, so that it mitigates the noise and light trespass from headlights going into the side yard of that house. If there were a way to shift that would have been more aligned with the lane, it would be a better contextual alignment with the single-family homes.
- Many panel members suggested a small CRU café space should front the sidewalk plaza, and not a drug store (with blank windows) which will not activate the plaza.
- The panel commented that the public realm is just paving and that it should be more reflective of the urban garden that is Oak Street. The applicant was encouraged to provide more furniture and do something more inside the property line on the ground floor, and explore more landscape in the boulevard.
- The panel suggested design development to the residential lobby entry on 41st so it is more legible from the CRU expression and more legibility to the residential lobby entry on 42nd with its hidden pathway to the core.
- Panel members felt that the sidewalk plaza is in the right location and it will be well used. The panel commented that the sidewalk plaza needs further attention to make it special. Several

panel members commented on pushing back on COV Engineering requirements that contribute to lack of interest/activation of the plaza.

- Suggest applying artistic elements along the lane and encourage further development of lanes within the area.
- Regarding public realm, suggest putting some street furniture there. There needs to be additional gesture for the pedestrian and the street, particularly the lane i.e. gesture through art, transparency, meaningful vegetation

Further Advice for the DP Stage:

- Supportive of roof deck on 7th floor
- The rooftop planting and the amenity spaces are really well handled
- Encourage covered outdoor space in the upper amenities rooftops as it rains a lot here. In addition, there will be people wanting to enjoy some of this outdoor space as well during that time of year.
- Appreciates seeing a grocery store in the neighbourhood.
- Appreciate the effort to encourage biodiversity
- Encourage greater percentage of family units, that could mean two more units overall as the surrounding area is family oriented
- Suggest applicant review some of the living units on the inner corners for privacy issues
- Consider making the two town house units off 42nd Ave two storey- two or three bedroom units.
- Some units not livable
- Materiality could be improved; it lacks diversity in colour and joy.
- Lane façade is a bit monochromatic and solid. Suggest at least more varied and extensive plantings scheme for some of the central elements along that lane.
- Noted it would be helpful to have a shadow study to extend longer in the days from two o'clock in the summer particularly if showing urban agriculture because six hours of sunlight is needed.
- Appreciate the project has sustainability strategies such as triple glazed windows and HRV
- Encourage introducing more exterior wall insulated panel; And ensuring the standards and models are meeting the City of Vancouver energy requirements.
- Concern with overheating of the units especially at the towers as there is not a lot of shading there and the long, east, west orientation.
- The operable windows look a bit small, suggest that are operable or larger operators to assist with a lot more natural ventilation into the suites; consider more shading to the south versus the east less vertical shading. Alternatively, considering cooling or partial cooling would really help with the comfort and livability of the suites.
- Appreciate the implementation of thermally broken balconies
- Both entrances, CRU one and the residential entry on 41st Ave. are not very legible at all and could benefit from design development.
- Suggest green roof on level two at the lane would be explored as an intensive roof to further mitigate the mass and relationship particularly to the back yard of the single-family homes.

Applicant Response: The applicant team thanked the panel for their comments.