

Meeting: No. 484
Date: Monday, July 24 2000
Time: 3.00 p.m.
Place: No. 1 Committee Room, City Hall

PRESENT:**Board**

F. Scobie Director of Development Services (Chair)
L. Beasley Co-Director of Planning
B. MacGregor Deputy City Manager
T. Timm Deputy City Engineer

Advisory Panel

P. Grant Representative of the Design Professions (Urban Design Panel)
A. Gjernes Representative of Development Industry
P. Kavanagh Representative of Development Industry (present for *1299 West Hastings* only)
J. Leduc Representative of General Public
R. Mingay Representative of General Public
M. Mortenson Representative of General Public
R. Roodenburg Representative of General Public

Absent

J. Hancock Representative of the Design Professions

ALSO PRESENT:

R. Segal Development Planner
M. Thomson Assistant City Surveyor
C. Gray Director, Housing Centre

Item 3 - 1299 West Hastings Street - DE404821 Zone CD-1

J. Davidson Davidson Yuen Simpson Architects
S. Ho Davidson Yuen Simpson Architects
R. Nicklin Affordable Housing Advisory Association

Item 4 - 1000 Quebec Street - DE405027 Zone CD-1

S. Lyon Gomberoff Bell Lyon Group of Architects Inc.
D. Bosa Bosa Development Corp.
J. Perkins Perkins & Company Architecture and Urban Design Inc.

Clerk to the Board: C. Hubbard

1. MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Timm, seconded by Mr. Beasley, and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Minutes of the Development Permit Board and Advisory Panel Meeting of July 10, 2000 be approved.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

**3. 1299 WEST HASTINGS STREET - DE404821 - ZONE CD-1
(COMPLETE AFTER PRELIMINARY)**

Applicant: Davidson Yuen Simpson Architects

Request: To construct a 30-storey residential tower containing 253 dwelling units (82 non-market family and 171 market rental units) and 31 units of two to three-storey, non-market family townhouses along the site edges.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

The Development Planner, Ralph Segal, briefly described the context of the subject site, referring to a context model of Coal Harbour Neighbourhood and a scale model of the proposed development. The preliminary submission was approved in principle by the Board on April 17, 2000, subject to a number of design conditions. The proposal is for both non-market and market rental accommodation comprising a mix of family housing. Council has approved in principle the substitution of rental housing for non-market housing in the Coal Harbour ODP. As well, the Housing Centre will be seeking a Text Amendment for adjustments in FSR and unit counts.

Mr. Segal reviewed the issues identified in the complete submission, most of which relate to detail resolution of the townhouses. There is a concern that the relationship of the townhouses to the public realm should be refined, raising the townhouses slightly above sidewalk level for privacy and separation. The owner of the neighbouring Evergreen Building (1281 West Pender Street) has agreed but only to the slight raising (1.5 ft.) of the easterly townhouses. On Jervis Street, there are three or four townhouses which have their front doors at or below the sidewalk. The possibility of converting these units to two storeys and raising them by several feet, has been discussed with the applicant. The floor area lost by this modification can be recovered by inserting an additional townhouse on the West Hastings Street frontage. There are two prominent corners on the site, Hastings/Jervis and Cordova/Jervis, which staff believe should be strengthened, as well as developing a stronger architectural expression to the top northeast corner of the tower.

There was only one response to notification, from the owner of the Evergreen Building with whom negotiations have taken place concerning the height of the easterly townhouses.

The recommendation is for approval of the application, subject to the conditions contained in the Staff Committee Report dated June 28, 2000.

Discussion

The Chair questioned whether condition A.1.16 which calls for approval of the form of development by Council, is a duplication of the Board approval preamble. In discussion, it was suggested the Staff Committee seek the advice of the Law Department as to whether a specific condition is necessary. Mr. Scobie also questioned B.2.3 concerning the Private Property Tree By-law requirements given replacement trees do not appear to be an issue on this site.

In response to a question from Mr. Timm about the close adjacency that exists at the ends of the rows of townhouses, Mr. Segal agreed it is a fairly tight situation to accommodate the program on the site. He noted the issue was not addressed at the preliminary stage.

Applicant's Comments

Mr. John Davidson, Architect, stressed that the posted drawings do not reflect further revisions already contemplated to respond to the staff recommendations. He said they are confident they can meet the conditions. With respect to the interior setback of the easterly townhouses, Mr. Davidson said they believe 4 m is adequate to provide both access to the units and private outdoor areas. He agreed the space between the ends of the townhouses at the easterly end of the site is narrow, but they believe it is appropriate for the family activities that will occur there and could be quite a pleasant space where young children can be overseen. He briefly described the elevator and access arrangements. With respect to the townhouses on Jervis Street, Mr. Davidson confirmed they are prepared to make these two-storey units in order to raise the entries above grade, inserting an additional unit into the open space along Hastings Street to make up the loss of floor area. Mr. Davidson also confirmed that a text amendment will be sought in order to achieve the extra FSR on the site for those portions of the tower lower floor within the supporting columns.

Discussion

In response to a question from Mr. MacGregor concerning the impact of inserting an additional townhouse along Hastings Street, Mr. Davidson advised it will reduce the opening by 25 - 30 percent. Mr. Segal added, staff felt this was a reasonable compromise to achieve the desired separation for the Jervis Street townhouses. An additional townhouse on Hastings Street is also seen as an advantage in terms of security because it results in a narrower opening into the interior courtyard.

Questioned by Mr. Timm about the uniform appearance of the roofline of the townhouses, Mr. Segal noted the modifications to the Jervis Street townhouses will provide some variation in this respect. Mr. Davidson added, they are restricted by the need to accommodate the number of units and amount of usable floor space necessary to make the project financial viable within the Maximum Unit Price constraints of the provincial funding.

Comments from Other Speakers

None.

Board and Panel members took a few minutes to review the models and posted drawings.

Mr. Beasley raised a question about the townhouse patios along the street and the tendency for such spaces to become unsightly storage areas. He suggested they could be designed as porch entries along the street, adding more private space on the courtyard side. Mr. Davidson confirmed that this could be done, in fact it is probably what will occur as a result of the unit layouts. He agreed they could look at designing entries as porches to discourage storage of household items (e.g., bicycles, barbecues).

Panel Opinion

Mr. Grant noted the Urban Design Panel was concerned about the effect of strictly maintaining the 16.9 m height limit on all the townhouses. While the Panel appreciated the constraints of the project, the results are somewhat unfortunate. Nevertheless, the townhouses have been resolved as far as the Panel would have hoped in terms of detailing. Notwithstanding some comments about spatial separation between units and noting there have been some improvements to the corner conditions, the Panel would support the proposal in its present configuration, subject to satisfactory resolution in response to the conditions recommended by staff.

Mr. Kavanagh said he believed all the conditions are achievable. With respect to condition 1.1, he agreed with the Development Planner that it is an advantage to add another unit along Hastings Street because it improves the sense of enclosure and privacy for the project.

Mr. Gjernes said he agreed with staff's recommendations, including raising the Jervis Street townhouses and adding a unit on Hastings Street. The constraint of the height while achieving the program is a challenge but the applicant has made a reasonable response, with some compromises that have to be accepted. He recommended approval, subject to the conditions presented by staff.

Ms. Leduc thought most of the preliminary approval conditions had been addressed. She supported a redesign of the entry porches to avoid having messy patios on the street. She also recommended that the applicant pay close attention to adjacency issues when resolving the details of the end units.

Ms. Mingay commented the proposal does feel a little "tight". She commended staff for the attention to detailing called for in the conditions.

Mr. Mortenson recommended approval with the conditions. He supported raising the Jervis Street townhouses and improvements to access, particularly at the loading bay.

Mr. Roodenburg also recommended approval with the conditions presented by staff.

Board Discussion

In moving approval of the application, Mr. Beasley commented, it is an extraordinary achievement to get family housing and non-market housing of this quality at the epicentre of the downtown. There has been a very positive design resolution of the conditions by the architects and the level of cooperation is commendable given the constraints of the project and the height limits involved. He said the conditions will lead to an even better scheme. He reiterated his recommendation to improve the entries with porches and enlarge the private open space on the courtyard side. He added, he looked forward to the project being constructed because it will be a good addition to the neighbourhood. With respect to the issue of townhouses at or below grade, Mr. Beasley added, adequate separation between the sidewalk is essential in order to avoid compromising quality of livability of the units.

Motion

It was moved by Mr. Beasley and seconded by Mr. MacGregor, and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. 404821, in accordance with the Development Permit Staff Committee Report dated June 28, 2000.

4. 1000 QUEBEC STREET - DE405027 - ZONE CD-1
(COMPLETE APPLICATION)

Applicant: Gomberoff Bell Lyon Group of Architects Inc.

Request: To construct Phase 7 of CityGate, a seven-storey, mixed-use, institutional, retail, residential building containing 71 non-market dwelling units over a ground floor child care facility at the rear of the building and retail use along the Main Street frontage and an adjoining four-storey multiple dwelling building containing 31 non-market dwelling units along the new street, all atop three levels of underground parking.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

The Development Planner, Ralph Segal, presented this application for Phase 7 of the CityGate project. The proposed development contains mixed uses including 102 non-market housing units in an L-shaped form facing Main Street and Millross Avenue. Mr. Segal briefly reviewed the context, referring to the model. The adjacent site at the corner of Main and National Streets will contain the future Phase 8 market housing tower. In order to preserve the development potential of Phase 8, a Text Amendment is being sought to adjust total unit count and total floor area.

Staff support the basic massing proposal but recommend a stronger brick expression, as called for in condition 1.1. Design development is also sought to the corner adjacent the future Phase 8 component, to strengthen its expression and reduce the blankness of this end elevation. Refinements are also sought on the Millross Avenue frontage to achieve a stronger entry identity and to maintain the materials and streetscape character of existing CityGate developments. Mr. Segal noted the courtyards in the previous CityGate phases have been developed to a very high standard, which staff seek to maintain in this development. He noted the courtyard will also contain the future daycare's play space as well as the public right-of-way which extends through all CityGate courtyards.

There was no response to the notification. Staff recommend approval of the application, subject to a fairly substantial list of detailed items to be resolved, as outlined in the Staff Committee Report dated July 12, 2000. Mr. Segal tabled an amendment to condition 1.8.

Discussion

Responding to a question from Mr. Timm regarding the Main Street frontage, Mr. Segal explained that staff are not seeking an absolute heritage character in terms of brick detail; it could be a contemporary brick detailing which would be more like existing CityGate developments. Staff believe the materials are important to strengthen the quality of the expression, but the detailing should be more compatible with CityGate. With respect to what now exists on Main Street, Mr. Segal advised the 900-1000 block contains four heritage streetwall buildings.

Mr. Beasley raised a concern about the treatment of units on Millross Avenue at sidewalk level, particularly the private terraces which may not get any sun at all. Mr. Segal said this has been discussed with the applicant and some adjustments to the unit layouts are being sought. Adjustments are also being requested to the disabled ramp, as called for in condition 1.7. Mr. Beasley suggested the width of the 5-bedroom units at grade compromises the interconnection between building and the sidewalk that is normally sought. He questioned why they were not designed as two-storey units that would have more frontage on the street.

In response to a question from Ms. Leduc, the Development Planner advised there will be separate play spaces for the daycare and the residents. Ms. Leduc also questioned what controls are in place with respect to the building occupants. Mr. Cameron Gray, Director, Housing Centre, explained BC Housing has very strict regulations as to who can occupy the units, and the 5-bedroom units are restricted to families with at least four children. Mr. Timm questioned why some of the family units do not appear to have visual access to the central

courtyard. Mr. Segal agreed it is desirable for family units to face the courtyard; however, there is access via the corridor, which satisfies the guidelines for housing families at high densities. It is recognized there will be double-loaded corridor solutions for family housing projects, with some street-facing units.

The Chair noted conditions A.1.10 and B.1.3 appear to duplicate the approval preamble regarding the requirement for the form of development to be approved by Council. Mr. Segal confirmed this matter will be referred to the Staff Committee. Mr. Scobie also questioned the intent of conditions A.2.2 and B.1.6, regarding access. Mr. Segal explained this issue arose from a knock-through panel being shown at the end of the parkade in the lower parking level, implying a linkage or even providing access to the underground parking in Phase 8. Mr. Stu Lyon, Architect, noted it was a requirement of Engineering Services for the parkades to be linked to provide alternative access in the event of access restrictions off Main Street. Mr. MacGregor added, there was such a requirement on earlier CityGate phases, for rapid transit connections, and this may not apply to this phase.

With respect to the Health Board conditions relating to the daycare, Mr. Gray explained that while the daycare is not being developed yet, the requirement is for it to be designed to a level that is workable at some point in the future. Responding to a question from the Chair regarding the additional square footage being sought for Phase 8, Mr. Gray explained there is a requirement in the CD-1 zoning to provide a community room. However, this is not being developed yet and the retail space being provided in its place in the meantime has to be included in FSR.

Applicant's Comments

Mr. Lyon briefly reviewed the history of the project to date. He said they are already working on the prior-to conditions and are eager to proceed with the development. In response to concerns expressed earlier by some Board members about the townhouses on Millross Avenue, Mr. Lyon explained there is a requirement to provide several very large 4- and 5-bedroom units and these units need to be as close to the ground as possible. For this reason, they are located in the woodframe building which has no other ground level uses. They attempted to provide two-storey units but this proved unworkable and too expensive to be acceptable to BC Housing. He added, the constraints on this type of housing are very significant, with little opportunity to play with alternative configurations. However, they have provided an additional open stair connecting the second floor with the interior courtyard. Mr. Lyon confirmed they will be reworking the disabled ramp.

Mr. Lyon said their main concern relates to condition 1.1, to provide more brick. They object to this requirement, firstly, because it came to their attention for the first time only last week. The materials have been integrated with the façade for some time and it would be difficult to accommodate such a change at this time. Mr. Lyon also stressed the very tight budget constraints on the project. He noted the brick podium was increased from two to three storeys at the request of the Planning Department, just before the project was reviewed by the Urban Design Panel, which ties in with the brick podium in existing CityGate developments. As well, a significant modification was made to the setback in response to Urban Design Panel comments. Mr. Lyon said they consider an additional two storeys of brick to be an onerous and tardy request. He added, there also seems to be some ambivalence with respect to how the façade should be treated. They believe the massing and streetwall ties in very much with CityGate; it is not supposed to be an historical building. He asked the Board to consider maintaining the brick as proposed.

Mr. Des Bosa reiterated their concern about the timing of the request for additional brick. He said it could also involve changing the configuration of some units, noting if it simply involved adding two levels of brick, without any redesign, it would probably not be a problem.

Discussion

Mr. Segal agreed the issue of additional brick was not raised until the Urban Design Panel commentary which questioned whether the project should blend with or differ from CityGate, noting the massing of existing development on Main Street is softer above the third floor, terracing back above the podium. It was concluded the building should blend more closely with existing and potential buildings across the street, for which it was felt the higher quality material was necessary. Three storeys of brick is thought to be inappropriate because it blends neither with the Main Street context nor existing CityGate development. Mr. Segal added, staff do not believe the additional brick will involve a significant change in unit layout. There would be no change in unit type or bedroom count.

Responding to a question from Mr. Timm about the architectural expression of the project, Mr. Lyon said they were happy with the earlier two-storey brick podium, and could also work without brick. However, they believe the proposed façade is appropriate and is an attractive design. Mr. Bosa added, this building will only be seen at pedestrian level. It also provides a softer transition between CityGate and the Main Street heritage buildings.

In response to a question from Mr. Roodenburg regarding Phase 8, Mr. John Perkins, Architect for the earlier phases of CityGate as well as the future Phase 8, advised the model does not accurately reflect what is likely to occur on Phase 8. It will probably be more like the other smaller CityGate towers, mostly in brick. He agreed with the Development Planner's approach that the building should blend in with rather than match existing CityGate buildings.

Board and Panel members took a few minutes to review the model and posted drawings.

Comments from Other Speakers

None.

Panel Opinion

Mr. Grant said the Urban Design Panel found this to be a wonderful project, well executed. On the question of materials, Mr. Grant noted this is quite a critical building in this location with respect to how the whole project is seen. The Panel felt the corners should be reinforced. As well, there was a particular concern that the north façade of the 7-storey building on Millross Avenue has an inordinately large proportion of concrete facing up Main Street. In this respect, Mr. Grant said he supported condition 1.1. If brick was introduced to a higher level the corner could be left as it is in terms of its more contemporary statement. Mr. Grant added, the whole Main Street façade could even be brick, which would give the building even greater strength than would brick just to the 6th floor sill level. The applicant has done a very good job of responding to the other minor issues raised by the Panel. In summary, Mr. Grant said he supported approval of the application, but that the aspect of façade treatment in condition 1.1 be looked into a little further. The lack of difference in plane above the brick is the critical issue: if there was a significant stepping back or change in plane the cornice line could establish itself at that level. Since there is no change in plane on this building, the cornice line can find its way successfully at a level higher up the building. Mr. Grant added, there are many buildings in this area which achieve the six storey height in brick, so it would be making a contextual statement in this part of Main Street.

Mr. Gjernes said he had some concerns with the wording of condition 1.1. He agreed the 7-storey building is a bit weak and he concurred with Mr. Grant there could be more brick on the north façade, noting this could also apply to the south face in terms of its interface with Phase 8. Mr. Gjernes said he was not concerned about the façade along Main Street but recommended design development to the north and south ends. With respect to the townhouse entries on Millross Avenue, Mr. Gjernes said he did not believe it warrants a re-work of the project to change the unit configuration, although he had some concerns about the recessed bedrooms on the north façade which should be improved. He recommended approval of the application.

Ms. Leduc commended the applicant for the design. She questioned whether there was a contradiction in conditions 1.1 and 1.8 which call for response to Main Street and CityGate context, respectively. With respect to materials, Ms. Leduc said it is worth putting more brick on the project. She recommended retention of 1.1.

Ms. Mingay concurred with Mr. Gjernes' comments about the brick. She also had less concern about the Main Street façade but had problems with the north and south façades. The south façade presents a particularly bleak aspect for the buildings facing it. On the north Millross side, the recessed entries also seem problematic. Overall, Ms. Mingay said it is a very nice building.

Mr. Mortenson agreed with the suggestions to improve the north and south faces with more brick. He also had less concern about the Main Street frontage. He had some concerns about the recessed areas on Millross Avenue, noting it is especially important in this part of the city to have more "eyes on the street". He also encouraged further design development of the disabled ramp. He supported the project.

Mr. Roodenburg recommended approval of the application. He suggested the amount of brick proposed is almost token and it might be better to be all brick. He suggested condition 1.1 be amended to delete reference to the 6th floor sill, to be less prescriptive.

Mr. Gjernes added, the connection in the parkade referred to earlier should be avoided if at all possible. While it is not known at this time what the exact intent is with respect to a connection, Mr. Timm said he saw no reason to delete the conditions. The drawings do show provision for future access which, if utilized, will require the conditions to be met. Condition A.2.2 (c) calls for clarification from the applicant in this regard. In discussion, Mr. Beasley said, if we do not think the connection is good idea, and the applicant does not support it, it would be better to seek its deletion from the drawings. Mr. MacGregor reiterated, he believed the requirement for a connection applied only to the initial phases of the site, between National and Terminal, and did not pertain to this part of the site.

Board Discussion

In recommending amendments to condition 1.1, Mr. Beasley commented this building is trying to do too much. It would be better if the façade was simplified, which would make it much easier in terms of unit layouts, rather than trying to define another cornice line. He felt a satisfactory solution could be worked out between the architect and the Development Planner, noting the Board's objective to maximize the amount of brick while avoiding alterations to unit layouts. In discussion, he agreed to delete the reference to the 6th floor sill.

In further discussion, Mr. Timm expressed uncertainty about the Main Street façade except to note that it could benefit from the use of more brick. In terms of the views of the building and its relationship to the rest of Main Street, the important façades are the end elevations which would undoubtedly benefit significantly from more brick, possibly to full height. In summary, it was stressed that the Board believes there should be a lot more brick on the north and south façades and consideration of more brick on the Main Street façade.

Motion

It was moved by Mr. Beasley and seconded by Mr. Timm, and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. 405027, in accordance with the Development Permit Staff Committee Report dated July 12, 2000, with the following amendments:

Amend 1.1:

design development to strengthen the architectural treatment of the Main Street, Millross Avenue *and south* elevations for the seven-storey building to better relate to the existing and anticipated Main Street context north of National Avenue;

Note to Applicant: A contemporary architectural expression of the proposed floor plans utilizing more brick ~~up to the fifth floor sill~~ is recommended, *with particular emphasis on the north and south façades*;

Amend 1.8:
indication that material colours *and detailing*, including brick and metal roofs, are matching or compatible with existing *CityGate* context;

Delete A.2.2 (c);

Add A.2.10:
delete the notation on plans regarding the provision of an underground connection to the adjacent future development;

Delete B.1.6.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6.05 pm.

C. Hubbard
Clerk to the Board

F. Scobie
Chair

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