

Meeting: No. 482
Date: Monday, June 12, 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
D. Rudberg	General Manager of Engineering Services

Advisory Panel

J. Hancock	Representative of the Design Professions (excused Item 3.)
J. Leduc	Representative of General Public
M. Mortenson	Representative of General Public
R. Roodenburg	Representative of General Public

Absent

A. Gjernes	Representative of Development Industry
P. Grant	Representative of the Design Professions (Urban Design Panel)
P. Kavanagh	Representative of Development Industry
R. Mingay	Representative of General Public

ALSO PRESENT:

R. Segal	Development Planner
N. Peters	City Surveyor
P. Pinsker	

Item 3 - Address - DE404752 - Zone DD

F. Musson	Musson Cattell Mackey Partnership
J. Philips	Philips Wuori Long
A. Grant	PCI Group

Clerk to the Board: C. Hubbard

1. MINUTES

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

THAT the Minutes of the Development Permit Board and Advisory Panel Meeting of May 29, 2000 be approved.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

**3. 1400 WEST GEORGIA STREET - DE404752 - ZONE DD
(COMPLETE APPLICATION)**

Applicant: Musson Cattell Mackey Partnership

Request: To construct a 23-storey multiple dwelling development containing 183 dwelling units with a two- to three-storey podium for townhouses and amenity spaces.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

The Development Planner, Ralph Segal, presented this application, referring to a context model and a scale model of the proposal. He briefly reviewed the immediate context of the site which forms part of the transition area where West Pender Street merges with West Georgia Street. The proposal is to integrate the new development with the adjacent Georgian Towers. The Georgian Towers will be renovated and public realm and livability issues will be addressed in both buildings. The proposed tower is relatively slim, at a width of 82 ft. and a floorplate of 5,764 sq.ft., and has been sited as far as possible to the east towards Broughton Street to provide maximum space (104 ft.) between it and the existing building. Staff consider that the proposed townhouses on Alberni Street, which wrap around onto Broughton Street, comprise an important component of the evolution of Alberni Street. On Georgia Street, the proposal responds to the Georgia Street Guidelines by providing a green court which also functions as the common open space for the development. Landscaping for the full block is being developed comprehensively to address the requirements of the Triangle West Public Realm document.

The issues identified by staff relate to the details of public realm interfaces where some improvements are being sought. As well, staff recommend a reduction in the size of the mechanical penthouse. On-site loading is also a concern, noting the difficulties presented by the site topography, combined with the desire to achieve the townhouse interface on Alberni Street. Staff recommend that a loading bay be accommodated off the Alberni Street driveway in what is a predominantly landscaped area, but with some relaxation of what would be the normal requirement for a full size loading bay. The issues raised by staff are addressed in the prior-to conditions outlined in the Staff Committee Report dated May 31, 2000. Subject to these conditions, staff recommend approval of the application.

Mr. Segal advised that a subdivision application has been received very recently for this site, and he noted that some non-conformities may arise in the individual parcels if the site is divided into two. Staff believe a single site covenant can resolve these non-conformities, including the allocation of the loading bay for the use of both towers.

Six letters of opposition have been received from neighbouring buildings in response to notification. The reasons for objection are outlined in the Staff Committee Report, together with staff's response. One issue raised was the question of concessions being made for the proposed use of the new tower as rental accommodation. Mr. Segal stressed that staff have not reviewed the application on the basis that any concessions would be given for rental housing. It has been evaluated as a market development and there is no requirement that it be secured as rental housing.

Discussion

Mr. Rudberg noted there is presently no sidewalk on this block of Alberni Street. Mr. Segal explained that, while there is no specific condition to require the applicant to provide a new sidewalk, it has been identified on the applicant's drawings. The existing trees on Alberni Street would be retained and new trees added where required. In response to a question from Mr. Beasley, the Development Planner confirmed the applicant is required to meet the requirements of the Triangle West Public Realm.

In response to a question from Mr. Scobie, Mr. Segal agreed that condition A.1.15 is made redundant by condition 1.1. Referring to condition A.1.12, Mr. Scobie questioned why registration of the subdivision plan is required before issuance of a development permit. Noting the development permit process and subdivision process will be overlapping, Mr. Segal said staff felt that any issues arising from the subdivision would best be incorporated as part of the development permit. Mr. Scobie commented that he did not believe the linkage between the two processes needs to be so strong, merely that the Board could advise that, in the event of future subdivision, measures should be secured to ensure that the loading bay is available to serve both buildings.

Applicant's Comments

Frank Musson, Architect, said they would prefer the reference to subdivision to be excluded at this time, to ensure the requirement does not hold up the development permit. He suggested the loading area be secured by amending the condition to state, "if there is a single site covenant, the loading area is for both sides of the property." Mr. Musson noted the proposal was modified in response to advice from the Urban Design Panel. They have integrated the two pieces of the development by having the landscaping encompass the entire block, they have integrated the colour scheme of the two buildings, and the architecture also tries to relate one building to the other with a more geometric solution. A major improvement is the increased number of townhouses from the original scheme, which took bulk from the tower. Access and loading was studied extensively. Mr. Musson noted that this is the steepest site on both West Georgia and the side streets, making it virtually impossible to achieve successful access without causing a great deal of disruption, including to the central courtyard. The redesign of the scheme accommodated the central space as an amenity for both buildings. As well, amenities in each building will be accessible to tenants of both buildings. Regarding the placement of the tower, Mr. Musson noted this block is only 330 ft. long so that even if the existing building were demolished and a replacement tower located in a similar footprint, the proximity of the two buildings would be generally the same.

Referring to the Staff Committee Report, Mr. Musson advised there are very few items of concern. He noted they have already made some sketches of the on-site loading space and believe they can reach a satisfactory conclusion with staff. With respect to condition 1.5, Mr. Musson noted the provision of granite is not a requirement for this area. They would prefer to work with staff on where to integrate granite features within the planter walls rather than being required to provide granite walls throughout.

Mr. Musson confirmed they have received no concessions for proposing a rental housing building. Andrew Grant, PCI Group, added, the new Provincial Homeowners' Protection Plan provides tenants with a ten year covenant to ensure it remains as rental accommodation. Mr. Grant noted considerable work was done with respect to positioning the tower. As well, the original design had a lot more chamfering around the edges of the tower. However, it was the unanimous opinion of the Urban Design Panel that this was not appropriate because they felt it should emulate some of the form in the existing building.

Discussion

Mr. Beasley sought clarification that the subdivision would allow a single site covenant to ensure there is no non-conformity, allow the loading bay to be secured for the use of both buildings, and secure the ten off-street parking spaces in the new parking structure for the existing building. Noel Peters, City Surveyor, explained the conditions in question were intended to ensure these items were not overlooked in the process. Mr. Scobie added, if the subdivision does create any non-conformities, these would be addressed by a single site covenant. The City Engineer can advise the Approving Officer of arrangements considered necessary to secure access to the loading bay. The availability of amenities and open space to both buildings is noted in the report as being the applicant's intention. However, the concern is that, if this should become a matter of contention, there may not be the latitude

for the Approving Officer to mandate it as a condition of subdivision approval. Mr. Grant confirmed he has no problem with making the necessary arrangements between the existing and new buildings, as outlined in the report, and advised he would be willing to provide a letter to this effect if required.

Questioned by Mr. Beasley concerning the retaining walls, Mr. Grant said they are happy to introduce granite but would like to work out the extent of it with staff. In discussion, Mr. Segal noted the Georgia Street Guidelines generally seek a strong street definition and unified appearance. Staff believe it would be appropriate to upgrade the image on Georgia Street, given some the concrete executed to date has fallen short of the high quality objective for Vancouver's ceremonial boulevard.

Mr. Roodenburg sought clarification regarding the off-street parking requirement. Paul Pinsker, Parking Engineer, noted there are 66 parking spaces and ten surface spaces required for the existing building, and 189 spaces are required for the new building. The new building will also be required to replace the ten surface parking spaces required for the existing building. The application proposes 192 spaces, and condition A.1.2 seeks an additional seven.

Mr. MacGregor expressed concern that public realm issues are fully addressed, noting conditions B.2.4 and B.2.5 refer only to setbacks. Mr. Grant confirmed he would have no objection to adding public realm treatment to these conditions. He also confirmed that the deadline of August 21, 2000 in condition B.1.2 would be acceptable if the subdivision requirement is removed.

Comments from Other Speakers

Ms. Ann Schlutz, Chair of the Strata Council of Alberni Place, 738 Broughton Street, outlined their concerns. First, the change in tone of the neighbourhood being introduced by the proposal which has many small units. She noted there is much more provision for family oriented development in the Coal Harbour Neighbourhood. Second, traffic, noting that Broughton Street is narrow, with parking on one side, and Alberni Street is not much wider with parking on both sides. Since this site has no lane, Alberni Street has to accommodate access, deliveries, garbage collection, etc., as well as the additional traffic generated by the new building. The Strata Council's third concern has been identified by Mr. Hans Haebler, a builder who is a resident of Alberni Place. Ms. Schlutz read from Mr. Haebler's letter in which he maintains the proposed development is too close to Alberni Street. He also objected to shadowing and view obstruction. Mr. Haebler also questioned the accuracy of the applicant's context drawings and shadow diagrams.

Mr. John Bruk, resident of Alberni Place, said there are two compelling reasons to delay any action on this application, if not reject it. First, the question of misrepresentation raised by Mr. Haebler. Second, the confusion created by the application for a development permit as well as for subdivision. He did not believe it was appropriate to give a development permit for a property that is to be subdivided. Mr. Bruk considered the application to be an example of the incipient deterioration of their community.

Ms. Diana Kilgour, resident of Alberni Place, said it is important to look at the "big picture" of lifestyle in the West End and she urged the Board to look more closely at the site and the neighbourhood. She was very concerned about the visual impact of floor to ceiling glass in the proposed building.

Responding to a question from Mr. Beasley concerning the accuracy of the application documents, Mr. Segal confirmed that Alberni Place has not been correctly located on the context plan submitted. He stressed, however, that the context plan is only one of the documents used in analysing applications and determining distances between buildings. Staff also considered what was possible on this block in terms of the zoning and believe the dimensions of the proposed tower and its location on the site meet the guideline parameters. Mr. Segal acknowledged it can be disturbing for neighbours to be confronted with a new building on a site previously a parking lot. However, the zoning generally calls for two towers per block, and the application fulfils what is available to developments in this area of the downtown.

With respect to the concurrent subdivision application, Mr. Segal advised he did not believe subdivision would result in a building form that is significantly different from what is proposed in this development application.

In response to a question from Ms. Leduc regarding the neighbour's concern about the extent of floor to ceiling glass, Mr. Segal agreed that privacy is an issue. The guidelines attempt to achieve as much distance between buildings as possible, with a minimum 80 ft. separation generally sought in the downtown. The distance between this proposal and the building directly across Alberni Street is about 95 ft. The (diagonal) distance from Alberni Place would be even more. The guidelines do not prescribe the amount of glazing in buildings. In fact, the more glazing, the more light enters the units, which is considered beneficial.

Mr. Rudberg sought clarification regarding the size of the units. Mr. Segal advised the smaller units are 630 sq.ft. and the two-bedroom units are larger. Most of the units are one-bedroom. Minimum unit size required in the by-law is 400 sq.ft. The Official Development Plan does not require family units in this part of the downtown. In discussion, Mr. Segal confirmed the requirement for family units in the Coal Harbour Neighbourhood is being met.

Responding to a question from Ms. Leduc regarding traffic and loading issues, Mr. Segal advised staff looked very carefully at access to the site, which can only be off Broughton or Alberni Streets. Access off Broughton would be directly opposite the access to "The Lions" (1300 West Georgia Street), but there would be no directly opposing vehicular access point off Alberni Street. Staff support the proposed access off Alberni Street, noting also the topographical limitations of the site. Mr. Pinsker agreed the issue of loading was difficult to resolve. Typical on-site manoeuvring would have taken from the green court which is a major objective of the guidelines. As well, a full height loading space would have increased the overall height of the building. Since it was felt the main use of the loading space would be for residents moving in and out of the building, the proposed compromise solution was agreed to, given this rather unique situation.

Mr. Martin Bruckner, representing Mr. Hans Haebler, expressed concern that the superstructure on the roof is larger than necessary, impacting the upper floors of Alberni Place and The Lions. He acknowledged this would be addressed if the Board approved condition 1.7 recommended by the Staff Committee.

Board and Panel Members took a few minutes to review the models and posted materials.

In the absence of a representative of the Urban Design Panel, Mr. Segal noted the Panel reviewed this project on two occasions. The Panel did not support the initial submission but was unanimously in support of the revised proposal. Most of the Panel's comments related to the public realm interface and treatment on Georgia Street. The Panel felt the increased number of townhouses and adjustments to the tower massing and its treatment were significant improvements. The Panel agreed the optimum location for vehicular access was off Alberni Street.

Panel Opinion

Ms. Leduc said she liked the way the landscaping on Georgia Street had been handled. It will add to the ceremonial nature of the street. She recommended as much granite as possible as opposed to concrete on this side of the project. She recommended that Engineering Services look more closely at the traffic situation on Alberni Street to ensure it does not become a bottleneck. She also recommended that something be done about sight lines in terms of having two buildings on the same site with floor to ceiling windows. Otherwise, Ms. Leduc felt the applicant had done a good job of designing for the space and she noted it conforms with the regulations. She recommended approval of the application.

Mr. Mortenson also supported the application and felt the applicant had done a good job of managing the site and massing the building. He agreed the treatment on Georgia Street could be improved with the addition of more granite and less concrete. He expressed sympathy with the concerns expressed by neighbouring property owners, but did not agree with the contention that 600 sq.ft.+ units are uninhabitable.

Mr. Roodenburg supported the application. He also sympathized with the residents of Alberni Place but commented that high density is the nature of life in the West End. The applicant has achieved the best possible

location for the building. Privacy of the suites is a tenant issue. Mr. Roodenburg said he did not believe the subdivision should be a requirement of the development permit, and he agreed with the applicant's suggestion of working out the loading bay planning with staff. He also suggested the applicant should work with staff regarding the provision of granite.

Board Discussion

Mr. MacGregor said it was disappointing that the neighbours who spoke in opposition to this proposal had already left the meeting. He said it is a good development and he moved approval, with some amendments to the conditions.

Mr. Beasley suggested additional amendments (to 1.8 and A.1.12) which were accepted by Mr. MacGregor. Mr. Beasley agreed this is a very good project. The quality of the architecture and the inclusion of the townhouses to create a domestic frontage are excellent. Mr. Beasley said he regretted that perhaps the residents of Alberni Place were not as aware as they might have been that there was every likelihood there would be a new building on this site. He said he did not believe the traffic will be a problem, noting that traffic studies have indicated the streets can carry this kind of density. With respect to privacy issues, he noted the floor to ceiling glass is mainly in the enclosed balconies. Mr. Beasley did not agree that the neighbourhood is deteriorating. Rather, he felt it was improving and this project will be a good addition to the neighbourhood.

Motion

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

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. 404752, in accordance with the Development Permit Staff Committee Report dated May 31, 2000, with the following amendments:

Amend 1.5:

design development to upgrade the quality of the West Georgia Street planter walls ~~from concrete to granite~~ *by including granite treatment;*

Amend the **Note to Applicant** in 1.8:

Engineering Services will consider a relaxation of the required width to 9 ft. and forego on-site manoeuvring on the basis that truck movement is to be front out only. A parabolic mirror to assist driver visibility is required. The use of this space is to be shared by both buildings ~~this to be formalized through the submitted application~~ *if there is a subdivision of the site application.*

Add 4.0:

Subdivision approval may be completed before or after the development permit is issued, provided the applicant acknowledges his obligations under the subdivision by-law and the various conditions identified in this report.

Amend A.1.12:

arrangements shall be made, to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning and Director of Legal Services, *if the site is subdivided*, for a single site covenant *including shared use of amenities and open space*;

Note to Applicant: The City has recently received a subdivision application for this site. The applicant must demonstrate that the subdivision will not create any non-conformities, otherwise the single site covenant applies. ~~Registration of the subdivision plan will be required prior to issuance of this permit.~~ Plans should be updated to reflect this.

Delete A.1.15

Amend B.2.4:

Treatment of the Broughton, Nicola *and Alberni* Street setbacks *and public realm* is to be in accordance with the Triangle West Public Realm, the details of which are to be determined, to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning *and the City Engineer*.

Amend B.2.5:

Treatment of the West Georgia Street setback *and public realm* is to be in accordance with the Georgia Street Public Realm, the details of which are to be determined, to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning *and the City Engineer*.

4. **OTHER BUSINESS**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5.20 pm.

C. Hubbard
Clerk to the Board

F. Scobie
Chair

/ch