

Date: Monday, April 20, 1998
Time: N/A
Place: N/A

PRESENT:

Minutes

Business Arising from the Minutes
808 Bute Street - DE403047
1000 Robson Street - DE402992
488 Robson Street - DE402595

Board

L.B. Beasley Director of Central Area Planning (Chair)
J. Rogers Deputy City Manager
I. Adam Assistant City Engineer

Advisory Panel

J. Drohan Representative of the Design Professions (Urban Design Panel)
A. Gjernes Representative of Development Industry
D. Chung Representative of General Public
J. Oberlander Representative of General Public
B. Parton Representative of General Public

Regrets

A. Waisman Representative of the Design Professions
P. Kavanagh Representative of Development Industry
S. Kellington-Catliff Representative of General Public

ALSO PRESENT:

City Staff:

R. Segal Development Planner
M. Kemble Development Planner
N. Peters City Surveyor

Item 3 - 808 Bute Street - DE403047

M. Burton-Brown Annand Burton-Brown Architects

Item 4 - 1000 Robson Street - DE402992

W.T. Leung W. T. Leung Architects Inc.
B. Krause W. T. Leung Architects Inc.

Item 5 - 488 Robson Street - DE402595

D. Galpin Downs/Archambault Architects
M. Ehman Downs/Archambault Architects

CLERK TO THE BOARD: Carol Hubbard

1. MINUTES

It was moved by Ms. Rogers, seconded by Mr. Adam, and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Minutes of the Development Permit Board and Advisory Panel Meeting of March 23, 1998 be approved.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

3. 808 Bute Street (1172-1188 Robson Street) - DE403047 - DD (COMPLETE APPLICATION)

Applicant: Annand Burton-Brown Architects

Request:

To receive 1,730 square feet (10 percent) heritage density bonus floor area transferred from the former Vancouver Public Library at 750 Burrard Street, pursuant to Section 3.12 of the DODP By-law; and alterations and additions to the ground and second floors of an existing two- storey mixed- use commercial building.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

The Development Planner, Mike Kemble, explained that this application is before the Board to consider the request for transfer of heritage floor space from the former Vancouver Public Library site at 750 Burrard Street. The application proposes alterations and additions to an existing building at the southeast corner of Bute and Robson Streets having a frontage of 130 ft. on Robson and 125 ft. on Bute to the lane. The existing development has an open breezeway through to an internal mall. The proposed transfer of density will allow for part of the breezeway to be filled in with additional grade level retail fronting on Robson Street, the relocation of the elevator to the Bute Street side, and a number of other cosmetic improvements to the exterior of the building. Staff have no concerns about the proposal and consider the proposed changes will improve the appearance and function of the building by providing retail continuity at grade.

(Board and Panel members took a few minutes to review the posted materials)

Applicant's Comments

Mr. Mike Burton-Brown, Architect, explained that the building has never really functioned properly since it was built ten years ago. The internalized mall off Robson Street has not been successful and it has also prevented the potential of the second level from being realized. Mr. Burton-Brown briefly reviewed the proposed changes to the building.

Comments from Other Speakers

None.

Panel Opinion

Ms. Drohan agreed the existing development has little appeal and the proposed changes will be very positive for Robson Street, particularly the continuity of retail. She added, while the contemporary half-arch additions on either side are quite refreshing the corner cupola seems somewhat trite. She suggested the applicant explore other corner expressions that might be more in keeping with the arch elements.

Ms. Parton supported the proposal because it will make the building much more pedestrian friendly. She especially endorsed the proposed relocation of the elevator and stairs which will encourage people to go to the second floor. She liked the applicant's proposed corner treatment.

Mr. Chung concurred with the recommended conditions of approval. He agreed this building has never worked to its full potential and he supported the proposed changes, including the corner treatment.

Mr. Gjernes had no problem with the proposal which he said is a positive step for Robson Street.

Ms. Oberlander also supported the proposal. She also agreed with Ms. Drohan's suggestion to reconsider the corner treatment by taking a cue from the proposed arch motif.

Additional Comments from the Applicant

Mr. Burton-Brown explained the circular shape at the corner was chosen because they did not want to overplay the half-arch form. They think the cupola is a more appropriate pivotal element for the corner, noting they are trying to achieve a softer expression to the building. The cupola is an open structure without a roof. With respect to the recommended conditions outlined in Appendix A to Mr. Kemble's memorandum dated April 9, 1998, Mr. Burton-Brown requested reconsideration of A.1.1 calling for 8 ft. awnings. He explained the proposed 6 ft. awnings provide the proportions they wish to achieve for the building. Mr. Kemble explained the awnings in question are in the middle recessed section where 6 ft. awnings would only extend 4 ft. beyond the property line. The guidelines for pedestrian weather protection suggest a minimum of 6 ft.

Board Discussion

Ms. Rogers said the proposed density transfer will clearly improve the retail along this part of Robson Street. She supported retention of condition A.1.1 as written.

Mr. Adam said he was pleased to see this proposal which will be a good addition to the corner. He added, he hopes it will be successful in improving the operation of the building.

Mr. Beasley agreed it will be a very positive addition to the street. With respect to the advice from Panel members that the corner element be reconsidered, he noted it may not be appropriate for the Board to request architectural changes given this proposal is essentially an "outright" application, but he suggested the architect give some further thought to the corner detailing as the project proceeds.

Motion

It was moved by **Ms. Rogers** and seconded by **Mr. Adam**, and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. 403047 as submitted, the plans and information forming a part thereof, subject to the conditions set out in Appendix A, thereby permitting an increase in density of 1,730 sq.ft. for the purpose of infilling an existing open breezeway with grade level retail space, and implementing other minor changes to the building, this density being transferred from the former Vancouver Public Library at 750 Burrard Street.

FURTHER THAT the Board instruct the Director of Legal Services to amend the CD-1 zoning for 750 Burrard Street to debit the amount of transferred density.

**4. 1000 Robson Street - DE402992 - DD
(COMPLETE APPLICATION)**

Applicant: W. T. Leung Architects Inc.

Request: To construct a two-storey retail commercial building having a Floor Space Ratio (FSR) of 1.10 on this corner site without lane access.

1. To receive 433 square feet (10 percent) heritage density bonus floor area transferred from the former Vancouver Public Library site (750 Burrard Street) pursuant to Section 3.12 of the DODP By-law; and
2. To relax the parking requirement from 5 spaces to 0 and the loading requirement from 1 space to 0.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

The Development Planner, Mike Kemble, introduced this application for the small site at the corner of Robson and Burrard Streets. The property is a land-locked parcel having no lane access, and vehicular access from Burrard and Robson is prohibited under the Parking By-law. Site consolidation has not been possible. Mr. Kemble briefly described the proposal, noting that staff support the requested loading and parking relaxation given the unique circumstances of the site. He briefly reviewed the main prior-to conditions outlined in the Staff Committee Report dated March 25, 1998, and tabled an additional recommended condition of development permit, B.1.6, relating to the requested transfer of density from the former Vancouver Public Library at 750 Burrard Street. Staff support the project as a high quality development and believe it will improve the character of Robson Street and the pedestrian amenity at this corner.

(Board and Panel members then took a few minutes to review the posted material)

Applicant's Comments

Mr. W. T. Leung, Architect, said they have no difficulty in meeting the recommended conditions. However, he requested some flexibility in condition 1.1, to be less prescriptive with respect to the amount of projection for weather protection along Robson Street. There is no concern about extending the glass canopy on Burrard Street

to 8 ft. With respect to materials, he advised the intention is now to provide all limestone. He also confirmed that the corner drum element will be lit.

Responding to a question from the Chair relating to the awnings not being continuous, Mr. Leung noted there are many ways of dealing with this and it is structurally possible to fill in the gaps with another element. He said they would prefer not to have the awnings carry all the way across, in order to maintain the strength of the design.

Comments from Other Speakers

None.

Panel Opinion

Ms. Drohan reported that the Urban Design Panel generally found the design to be an elegant addition to Robson Street. The distinct expression for each of the streets was seen as something that could make this relatively small-scale building much more interesting than is normally seen in buildings of this size. It also recognizes quite well the different characters of Burrard and Robson Streets. Some Panel members thought a stronger corner would be more appropriate and that some increased height might be worthwhile in terms of denoting this building as a gateway. At the same time, however, other members of the Panel considered it an appropriate scale given what happens immediately to the west. There was concern expressed that the quality of the signage might not meet the standards of the building and the applicant was urged to pay close attention to this aspect of the project. With respect to materials, Ms. Drohan said she was satisfied with the applicant's description of the proposed limestone, noting the Panel was looking for a cladding which is less polished than has been seen recently in other Robson Street locations. She strongly supported the recommended conditions relating to weather protection, signage, and lighting.

Mr. Gjernes supported the application. He felt there should be some flexibility in condition 1.1 with respect to weather protection, given that 8 ft. canopies might overpower the building. He suggested that features such as the exterior façade, signage and lighting are more important than weather protection, particularly in this location. With respect to the standard conditions, Mr. Gjernes questioned the requirement to provide one bicycle parking space, and suggested this condition be deleted. In discussion, **Ralph Segal**, Senior Development Planner, noted that bicycle parking is a by-law requirement.

Ms. Parton supported the proposal. She said it is unfortunate that this small site has no lane access, and she questioned how garbage pick-up will be managed. Mr. Leung explained that because of the unique circumstances of this property the City allows weekly garbage pick-up to be made from the curbside on Burrard Street.

Mr. Chung also recommended approval of the application. He recommended allowing some flexibility with respect to the size of the awnings, noting the appearance of the building will be especially important at this prominent location.

Ms. Oberlander commended the applicant on an excellent proposal. She suggested amending condition 1.1 to indicate a minimum projection of between 7 and 8 ft. for the awnings, adding this might best be finally decided at the same time as the signage.

Board Discussion

With respect to the requested relaxations, Mr. Adam noted that in this instance there is no way to avoid having no parking or loading. In discussion with respect to the awnings, the Board agreed to indicate a range of projection size in condition 1.1, and to make the provision of unbroken weather protection a consideration item. Ms. Rogers added, she was impressed with the high quality of the proposal and thought it had successfully achieved a dual expression to reflect both streets. She congratulated the architect on the design. Mr. Beasley agreed it is a very elegant small building that will be a good addition to the area.

Motion

It was moved by **Mr. Adam** and seconded by **Ms. Rogers**, and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. 402992, in accordance with the Development Permit Staff Committee Report dated March 25, 1998, with the following amendments:

Amend 1.1: design development to the pedestrian weather protection features on Burrard and Robson Streets, to provide a minimum projection of seven to eight feet and to consider achieving as much continuity as possible, in order to improve the pedestrian amenity at this important retail location;

Add B.1.6: CD-1 By-law No. 7246 for 750 Burrard Street (former Vancouver Public Library) shall be amended by the Director of Planning or alternate arrangements made to reduce its permitted floor space ratio by the amount (433 sq.ft.) being transferred to this recipient site, to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal Services

**5. 488 Robson Street - DE402595 - DD
(COMPLETE AFTER PRELIMINARY)**

Applicant: Downs/Archambault Architects

Request: To construct an 18-storey mixed-use commercial/residential building containing 84 dwelling units; approximately 2 511 m² retail/office/restaurant; and approximately 289.5 m² music library/resource centre.

To increase the building density from 5.0 to 7.33 FSR, an increase of 2.33 FSR (2 599 m²) for residential use in exchange for donating the music library facility to the City as a civic amenity in accordance with Section 6.II of the DODP By-law.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

The Development Planner, Mike Kemble, presented this complete application. The preliminary application was approved in principle by the Board on December 15, 1997, and the requested amenity bonus was approved by Council on February 5, 1998. The site is located at the southeast corner of Robson and Richards Streets and part of the

site currently contains a single room occupancy hotel (the Plaza Hotel) that is to be demolished. It contains 33 SRO units, about 12 of which are still occupied. Mr. Kemble briefly reviewed the preliminary conditions and how they have been addressed. The main unresolved condition related to the relocation of existing tenants. However, referring to a letter from the applicant dated April 15, 1998, Mr. Kemble noted the Housing Centre is now satisfied with the proposed relocation plan, and recommended that 1.1 of the new conditions can be deleted. Other conditions relate to signage, and encroachments over the City street. There was some discussion about encroachments at the preliminary review, following which meetings on this subject have taken place between the applicant and Engineering staff. The encroachments concern trellises and cornices at the second and third level which are contrary to current City policy. The amount of encroachment is approximately 3 ft. Mr. Kemble noted the policy is currently under review and may be amended; however, a decision is not expected until later this year. In the meantime, the recommendation is to delete these encroachments. Currently the only areas of the City in which encroachments are supported by Engineering are Gastown, Chinatown and Yaletown. Referring to the standard conditions, Mr. Kemble noted staff are also recommending provision of a small amenity space for employees in the building. The recommendation is for approval of the application, subject to the conditions contained in the Staff Committee Report dated April 8, 1998.

Some discussion ensued with respect to encroachments over City property. Mr. Kemble noted the Urban Design Panel has raised concerns that the current policy will lead to somewhat flat facades at the property line. **Mr. Noel Peters**, City Surveyor, confirmed a general review of the policy is now being undertaken, following which a recommendation will be forwarded to Council. There are a number of complexities, including a conflict with the Condominium Act, some of which should be overcome by requiring encroachments to be demountable. Responding to a question from the Chair, Mr. Segal advised the guidelines encourage a high degree of articulation to lower elements of buildings but do not suggest encroachment over City property. Responding to a question from **Mr. Gjernes** regarding the condition calling for amenity space for the commercial users of the building, Mr. Kemble confirmed this is a new condition that was not discussed at the preliminary stage.

Ms. Jill Davidson, Housing Centre, advised they have been working with the applicant since December 1997 and a plan has now been prepared that will sensitively deal with the existing tenants. Each tenant will be met with individually to assess his/her needs and assisted with relocation expenses. Ms. Davidson confirmed that satisfactory assurance has been received and condition 1.1 can be deleted.

(Board and Panel members then took a few minutes to review the model and posted material)

Applicant's Comments

Mr. David Galpin, Architect, noted that work has already been done on signage but it was not included in this submission since signage is dealt with in a separate application. He confirmed that discussions have taken place with City staff regarding encroachments, and the cornices and decorative elements shown over the lane have been removed. However, they understood that making these elements demountable on the street side would remove any particular concern about restricting the City's ability to do work. He questioned why the City is able to work with legal agreements on these issues only in the historic areas, and he suggested it would be worth resolving the legal

issues so that they are not an impediment to good architecture. He noted the guidelines do encourage articulation of buildings and they do not believe it is reasonable to expect developers to step buildings back from the property line in order to allow for articulation. Mr. Galpin added, stepping them back or removal would not be appropriate.

Mr. Galpin said they were surprised by the inclusion of the condition to provide amenity space for employees, which they do not believe should be required given the mixed use nature of the building. He requested deletion of condition A.1.13.

Comments from Other Speakers

None.

Panel Opinion

Ms. Drohan noted the Urban Design Panel saw this proposal twice and was encouraged by the applicant's serious response to its initial concerns which centred around the three-storey podium expression, the corner and Richards Street entries, and the character of the tower top. With respect to the encroachments, Ms. Drohan reiterated the Panel's regret that encroachments of this nature might not be allowed in the future on similar buildings. In this instance, the Panel thought it was particularly important to connect the podium feature to the rest of Robson Street and found the proposed elements give it much greater articulation and help a great deal to make that connection. The Panel was also concerned about the relative two-dimensionality of the facade treatment. Panel members did not believe a sheer streetwall would be appropriate and encouraged the applicant to articulate the facades as much as possible. Ms. Drohan added, the contemporary expression of these particular cornices and overhangs should allay any concerns about them having any connection to historic areas. Certainly, a high degree of articulation at the lower level is very helpful to the pedestrian character sought by the guidelines. With respect to the requested amenity space, Ms. Drohan said she felt the applicant's rationale was reasonable and the condition should be deleted.

Ms. Oberlander also strongly supported retention of the encroachments and urged the City to work towards some new solutions. She concurred with the deletion of condition 1.1 and commended the applicant for arriving at a satisfactory tenant relocation plan. She also commended the applicant for a good response to this site and for integrating all the uses, including the music library. With respect to the requested amenity space, Ms. Oberlander noted this issue was not raised at the preliminary stage and suggested it be deleted.

Ms. Parton also thought the requirement for amenity space should be deleted. Regarding the proposed relocation plan, she urged that this be dealt with by a neutral party so that the tenants do not feel unduly pressured. With respect to the proposed facade treatment, given the damage that can be caused by pigeons to such projections, Ms. Parton recommended they be removed. She said she hopes the music library is successful but wondered if it would be better located in the public library nearby.

Mr. Gjernes declared for the record that he has recently begun working with the owner of this property on a different development but has no involvement in the subject development. He recommended approval of the application. He recommended that condition 1.3 be amended to allow for demountable trellises and canopies, and that

condition A.1.13 be deleted given the security issues involved with such an amenity space. With respect to the tenant relocation plan, he recommended retention of condition 1.1 pending completion of legal arrangements.

Mr. Chung also recommended approval of the application, with the deletion of condition A.1.13 due to security concerns. Mr. Chung also suggested it would be better for the music library to be located in the public library.

Discussion

Regarding the tenant relocation plan, Ms. Davidson advised that the applicant has retained a consultant to carry out the work and Housing Centre staff are satisfied that he will treat the tenants fairly. The City's Legal Department has confirmed there are no further agreements required. If a plan is not implemented to the City's satisfaction a Building Permit will not be issued. With respect to condition A.1.13, Mr. Kemble said similar amenity spaces have been requested in other larger commercial projects. Staff believe the security concerns can be addressed.

Motion

It was moved by **Ms. Rogers** and seconded by **Mr. Adam**, and was the decision of the Board::

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. 402595, in accordance with the Development Permit Staff Committee Report dated April 8, 1998, with the following amendments:

Delete 1.1;

Amend 1.3: design development to the exterior facade treatments with demountable cornices, planters and trellises, with their installation to the satisfaction of the General Manager of Engineering Services;

Delete A.1.13;

6. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4.55 pm.