

Date: June 13, 2011
Time: N/A
Place: N/A

PRESENT:

538 WEST 7TH AVENUE - DE414388 - C-3A

Minutes
Motion

Board

K. Munroe Assistant Director of Planning - Current Planning Division (Chair)
K. McNaney Assistant Director of Planning - Central Area Planning
K. Bayne General Manager - Business Planning and Services
P. Judd General Manager of Engineering Services

Advisory Panel

S. Romses Representative of the Design Professions (Urban Design Panel)
F. Rafii Representative of the Design Professions
J. Stovell Representative of the Development Industry
S. Bozorgzadeh Representative of the General Public
P. Sanderson Representative of the General Public

Regrets

K. Maust Representative of the Design Professions
M. Biazzi Representative of the General Public
C. Chung Representative of the General Public
J. Miletic-Prelovac Representative of the General Public
M. Pez Representative of the Development Industry

ALSO PRESENT:

City Staff:

J. Greer Processing Centre - Manager
P. Storer Engineering Services - Projects Branch
D. Morgan Development Planner
D. Autiero Project Facilitator

538 WEST 7TH AVENUE - DE414388 - C-3A

W.T. Leung W.T. Leung Architects
L. Luke W.T. Leung Architects
D. Swift Durante Kreuk Landscape Architects

CLERK TO THE BOARD: L. Harvey

1. MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Judd seconded by Mr. McNaney and was the decision of the Board to approve the minutes of the meeting on May 16, 2011 with the following amendments:

- Delete Condition 1.2

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

**3. 538 WEST 7TH AVENUE - DE414388 - ZONE C-3A
(COMPLETE APPLICATION)**

Applicant: W.T. Leung Architects

Request: To construct a mixed use commercial/residential building containing commercial uses on the ground floor and 51 units on the second through ten floors and two levels of underground parking room the lane. The project is seeks a 10% Heritage Density Transfer (3,860.8 sq. ft.) from donor sites 135 Keefer Street and 163 West Hastings Street.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

Dale Morgan, Development Planner, introduced the application for a 10-storey mixed use development located half a block west of Cambie Street. It is located in the C-3A District in the Fairview Slopes sub area. Mr. Morgan noted that uses include commercial at grade, nine storeys of residential and two levels of underground parking. The application is seeking a conditional height of up to 100 feet and a density of 3.29 FSR which includes a 10% transfer of heritage density. Mr. Morgan described the context for the site noting that at present it is being used as an auto body shop. As well there is a sewer easement on the eastern side of the site that will be relocated to the adjacent lane to the east of the site.

Mr. Morgan stated that West 7th Avenue is a designated greenway and cyclist route and the greenway public realm standards will apply to the application.

Mr. Morgan described the application and indicated that the Guidelines have a suggested maximum height of 120 feet but the site is limited by a height restriction to preserve views of City Hall. He added that the proposed height will not restrict views of City Hall to the south. The intent of the Guidelines for building massing is to maintain views, natural light and sun access through the site for the upper massing while maintaining a continuous street wall at up to twenty feet. Mr. Morgan noted that the Urban Design Panel supported the density but had some reservations regarding the upper massing. He added that staff's technical review has revealed that the density was incorrectly calculated by approximately 4,000 square feet. As a result Condition 1.1 has been added to the Staff Committee Report asking the applicant to reduce the building bulk and improve the skyline profile.

Mr. Morgan mentioned that in general terms, the livability for the proposed development is good and issues of concern are relatively easy fixes namely providing enhanced privacy for the 10th floor balconies from outdoor terraces of units above and for weather protection.

The proposed materials are predominately a dark chocolate coloured brick with silver metal panel accents. Mr. Morgan stated that the material choices are considered to be a high quality and appropriate for the building and setting. Although there is no policy requirement in the current C-3A zoning to meet LEED™ standards aside from indirect benefits to liveability, the applicant has voluntarily decided to target LEED™ Silver equivalent. Mr. Morgan stated that staff consider this a well designed mid block building that will contribute positively to the streetscape and the surrounding public realm.

Mr. Morgan reviewed the recommendations contained in the Staff Committee Report dated May 18, 2011. The recommendation was for support of the proposal, subject to the conditions contained in the Staff Committee Report.

Questions/Discussion

In response to questions raised by the Board and Panel, the following clarifications were provided by Mr. Morgan.

- Back in the 1960's, Don Dockstader Motors did a formal dedication to open up the lane.
- The enclosed balconies are excluded from the FSR calculation.
- The architectural model included the square foot overage.
- Parking spaces for the resident's bikes will be located in the underground parking area and there will be six spaces outside the property that are not covered for the general public to use.

Applicant's Comments

Mr. W.T. Leung stated that they would be able to comply with all the conditions in the Staff Committee Report with two exceptions. He said that Condition A.1.7 should be amended as the disability access was not for the residents in the building. Also he requested that Condition A.2.5 be deleted as the ground floor unit will probably be used as office use. The loading space provides direct access to the large commercial space but he thought the request for the interior corridor should be deleted.

Questions/Discussion

In response to questions raised by the Board and Panel, the following clarification was provided by the applicant team:

- The apartment building to the east of the site is set back from the street. In order to respond contextually to that building, the applicant has pulled the building back and added landscape planters for easier access into the commercial space.
- One of the uses on the ground floor will be retail/office space which will not require a loading bay.
- The applicant has dropped the slab in the commercial space at the front and raised it at back to reduce the slope of the parking ramp.
- There will be roof anchors for the window cleaning equipment.
- The residential disability parking spaces have direct access from the elevator to the parking garage.
- The applicant will make sure there are three disabled parking spaces for the residential use.
- The access corridor from the loading space referenced in Condition A.2.5 has no direct access to the commercial space on the eastern side of the building. However, there is access from across the lane through the rear gate into the space.
- The pedestrian ramp is an internalized ramp.
- A materials board was submitted to the City at the time the applicant went to the Urban Design Panel (UDP). The exterior will be brick masonry.

Comments from other Speakers

None.

Panel Opinion

Mr. Romses confirmed that there was a materials board presented at the UDP meeting and was proposed dark brick for the exterior. He added that the Panel supported the dark brick and thought it would be a nice counterpoint to the other colours in the city. The Panel supported the proposal however there were some issues surrounding how the building resolves at the top. Mr. Romses thought that removing 4,000 square feet out of the top of the building would make for a better design and address the Panel's concerns. Another concern of the Panel's was the public realm but they thought the applicant could resolve that issue.

Mr. Rafii said he liked the project and supported the recommendations in the Staff Committee Report. He added that he recommended approval of the application.

Mr. Stovell said he disagreed with Conditions 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4 and 1.2.5. He thought there was an interesting diversity across the façade with the ground floor tenancies and thought that everything did not have to meet a certain standard for retail on secondary streets. He noted that there are a number of similar streets in the city and thought that a mixture of commercial, service, retail and residential uses would offer more diversity and he has found this type of mixed-use building often rents better. He said he supported the applicant's request for the relaxation of the loading access to the smaller retail/office space.

Mr. Sanderson thought it was a good project and a suitable redevelopment for an infill site. He said he liked the recommendations from the Urban Design Panel for the removal of the planters and the ramp from the front area of the building and thought it would make the front of the building more inviting. Given the fact that West 7th Avenue is a bike route, he said he was concerned with the lack of proper weather protection for public bike stalls in front of the building.

Ms. Bozorgzadeh said that although the Urban Design Panel liked the colours but that she thought they were heavy and would like to see more contrast. Regarding the restaurant and the public realm, she suggested using large sliding doors so that the restaurant could interact with the outdoors. Ms. Bozorgzadeh said she was in support of more bike racks and added that she supported the recommendations in the Staff Committee Report.

Board Discussion

Mr. Judd moved approval of the recommendations with amendments to the conditions.

Mr. McNaney said he was supportive of the motion with the amendments. He said he thought the design condition for the public realm with regard to the commercial use would allow for flexibility as the space could be used for office or retail. He added that he thought they were necessary conditions for future users. He said he liked how the massing worked and was pleased to see that public art and urban agriculture components would be part of the application.

Motion

It was moved by Mr. Judd and seconded by Mr. Bayne and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. DE414388 in accordance with the Staff Committee Report dated May 18, 2011, with the following amendments:

Amend Condition A.1.7 to read as follows: provision of a third disability parking space with access to the residential lobby;

Delete condition A.2.5

Re-number Conditions A.2.6 through A.2.12 to A.2.5 to A.2.11

4. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:01 PM