

Date: Tuesday, November 13, 2001
Time: 3.15 p.m.
Place: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT:**Board**

F. Scobie	Director of Development Services (Chair)
L. Beasley	Director of Current Planning
A. McAfee	Acting General Manager of Community Services
I. Adam	Assistant City Engineer

Advisory Panel

T. Bunting	Representative of the Design Professions (Urban Design Panel)
J. Hancock	Representative of the Design Professions
P. Kavanagh	Representative of Development Industry
J. Ross	Representative of Development Industry
D. Chung	Representative of General Public
M. Mortensen	Representative of General Public
R. Bruce Scott	Representative of General Public

Regrets

J. Leduc	Representative of General Public
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ALSO PRESENT:

R. Segal	Sr. Development Planner
A. Molaro	Development Planner
V. Potter	Project Facilitator
M. Thomson	City Surveyor

Item 3 - 1055 Homer Street - DE405652 - Zone DD

C. Brook	Brook Development Planning
F. Rafii	Foad Rafii Architect

Item 4 - 1085 Homer Street - DE406084 - Zone DD

S. Howard	Stuart Howard Architect
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Clerk to the Board: C. Hubbard

1. MINUTES

Mr. Beasley requested the following amendments:

p.3 under **Board Discussion**, penultimate sentence to read:

Mr. Beasley cautioned both staff and the applicant that the interface conditions among projects *and especially between private projects and the public realm*, are sometimes not being resolved very carefully, and he urged that close attention be paid to this issue in the detailed development of this project.

p.5 under **Questions/Discussion**, first sentence, to change "usability" to *use*;

p.9 under **Board Discussion**, third sentence to read:

He added, he was convinced by the comments of several speakers about use of the lower level roof areas, although a satisfactory design scheme could ~~have been~~ be devised ~~if the issue had been raised earlier~~.

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

THAT the Minutes of the Development Permit Board and Advisory Panel Meeting of October 29, 2001 be approved as amended.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

**3. 1055 HOMER STREET - DE405652 - ZONE DD
(COMPLETE AFTER PRELIMINARY)**

Applicant: Brook Development Planning

Request: To construct a 27-storey tower and 3-storey podium containing 135 residential units including 8 townhouses, and 157 underground parking spaces.

**4. 1085 HOMER STREET - DE406084 - ZONE DD
(COMPLETE AFTER PRELIMINARY)**

Applicant: Stuart Howard Architect

Request: To construct a new 6 storey office/retail building and 62 underground parking spaces.

Note: The foregoing two applications received preliminary approval as one application. The complete applications have been submitted separately, but for ease of review were presented in one report and were considered simultaneously by the Board.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

The Development Planner, Anita Molaro, presented these two applications. The preliminary scheme, having a total density of 5.5 FSR which included ten percent heritage density transfer, was approved in principle by the Board on May 28, 2001. Since that time, the property has been divided into two sites, Lot I and Lot H, and the complete proposal has been submitted as two separate applications. The additional ten percent heritage density is located entirely within the office component (1085 Homer Street). Ms. Molaro briefly described the surrounding context. The residential component (1055 Homer Street) has been revised since the preliminary stage, having increased from 26 to 27 storeys, with three-storey townhouses along Homer Street, and the number of residential units has been decreased from 167 to 135. The 6-storey commercial component remains unchanged. Parking access is through the office component, with the separate uses split at a lower level. A

major issue at the preliminary stage was the quality, quantity and accessibility of the semi private open space for the residential uses. This has been addressed in the revised proposal by more direct access to the upper areas and the creation of a series of stepped outdoor spaces ~~on~~ either side of the tower. Staff are recommending further design development to lower the level of the rear lobby and to improve the relationship of the raised semi-private open space to the lane, as called for in conditions 1.1 and 1.2. Condition 1.3 is to address a concern raised by the Urban Design Panel, to provide more clarity to the architectural expression of the tower. Conditions 1.5 (residential) and 1.2 (office) address the heritage density transfer of the two linked sites, noting the calculation of the ten percent heritage density transfer is based on the entire development site. Ms. Molaro tabled an addition to condition 1.5 and an amendment to A1.1.2. In summary, she advised the substantive issues have been satisfactorily addressed and the recommendation is for approval of both applications, subject to the conditions contained in the Staff Committee Report dated October 17, 2001.

Questions/Discussion

Mr. Beasley sought clarification regarding condition 1.3. Mr. Bunting acknowledged that the Urban Design Panel is sensitive about getting into too much detail in its advice, although in this case the concern related more to the proportions of the tower, and whether the middle piece is part of the lower part or the upper part. The Panel felt there could be some design development to help pull it together more.

In response to a question from Mr. Scobie regarding condition 1.4, Ms. Molaro confirmed that the request for an elevational change of at least 2.5 ft. to the two southerly townhouses was carried forward from a condition of the Development Permit Board's preliminary approval. Regarding condition A1.2.4 which deals with cross boundary access agreements, Mr. Scobie pointed out that Building By-law issues may also arise which may also need to be addressed through legal agreement. In addition, Mr. Scobie suggested conditions A1.2.8 and A2.2.10 might need to be reworded to properly address the yet to be enacted revised parking standards. With reference to the technical analysis on p.4 of the Staff Committee Report, it was noted the site area dimensions for the office building are incorrect and should be 14,976 sq.ft. (1 391 m²).

Applicants' Comments

Chuck Brook confirmed the tabled amendments to conditions 1.5 and A1.1.2 have addressed their concerns. Foad Rafii, Architect, confirmed they have no problem with conditions 1.1 and 1.2, and will work with staff to address 1.3. With respect to 1.4, Mr. Rafii explained there is a technical problem in addressing this condition, because of the access to the roof deck from the tower which was added at the request of the Board in its preliminary approval. Of the two townhouse units concerned, one is 4 inches and the other 6 inches lower than the recommended 2.5 ft. Raising the entry level to 2.5 ft. would mean either reducing the ceiling height from 8 ft. to 7.6 ft. which would sacrifice livability of the suites or raising all townhouses and the tower by 6 inches. With respect to condition A1.1.5, Mr. Rafii noted the reference should be to the Manager's suite and not office. He noted there are only two suites which do not have balconies and requested that the requirement be deleted for this suite.

Stuart Howard, Architect, confirmed he had no problem with any of the conditions. With respect to disabled parking requirements, Mr. Howard said that while they think they can meet the intent of the proposed new regulations, their calculations to date have been based on different clearances and the additional 200 mm height may have an impact on the overall height of the building. Regarding condition A2.2.7, Mr. Howard explained the cornice in the lane was added in response to a condition at the preliminary stage to help articulate the rear elevation. Mr. Howard confirmed they understand the condition relating to the heritage density transfer (1.2).

With respect to condition 1.4, Ms. Molaro explained an elevational change of at least 2.5 ft. is sought throughout Downtown South to ensure a degree of privacy between the residential units and the sidewalk. In this case, it also helps to achieve some separation from the adjacent office use. Ralph Segal, Senior Development Planner, added, an elevational change of 3 ft. is recommended in the Downtown South Guidelines but in this instance the sidewalk elevational changes were taken into account to arrive at the recommended 2.5 ft. Regarding A2.2.7, Mike Thomson, City Surveyor, explained the rationale Engineering Services would seek includes the height clearance from grade, the purpose of the cornice (whether architectural expression or functional), and why encroachment over the lane is necessary.

Questions/Discussions

In response to a question from Dr. McAfee regarding accessibility of the residential units in terms of forthcoming Building By-law amendments re: improved access for people with disabilities, Mr. Rafii advised they would not meet the new guidelines being considered (not yet approved), although each suite has a wheelchair accessible bathroom. Mr. Scobie added, the contemplated Building By-law amendments are not likely to precede the issuance of a development permit for this development or subsequent BU application.

Mr. Beasley sought further clarification from the architect concerning the impact of achieving the 2.5 ft. separation called for in condition 1.4. Mr. Rafii agreed it would have no impact on the design but creates technical difficulties in terms of stairways in the core and transition in the lobby from the street and lane entrances.

Mr. Scott sought the applicant's comments on Appendix F. Mr. Brook explained, at the preliminary stage they were asked to explore the costs of undergrounding the overhead electrical equipment in the lane. The letter from BC Hydro in Appendix F indicates a rough cost of \$350,000. Mr. Brook said while an alternative treatment to the existing electrical system in Vancouver would be welcomed, it is a very complex and expensive process and will not be undertaken on this project. Mr. Hancock added, the issue of undergrounding arises frequently in the Board's deliberations but it can never be achieved because it is not economically viable. Rather, it is something the City should undertake as a comprehensive initiative. In discussion, Mr. Adam agreed the issue will be referred back and discussed further by Engineering Services.

Comments from Other Speakers

Wendy Donaldson, Realtor and Downtown South resident, sought clarification regarding the heritage density transfer. She questioned whether there has been a review of the cumulative impacts of such transfers, noting that most development applications in Downtown South have some kind of density bonussing. Ms. Donaldson expressed concern about the sustainability of the neighbourhood given it is already zoned to be dense.

Mr. Segal responded that, over the last ten years or so, the ratio of applications in the Downtown South receiving density bonussing is about 1 in 4 or 5. Mr. Beasley added, every density transfer or bonus is thoroughly assessed as to both its livability on the site and its impact on adjacent areas, including the general livability of the neighbourhood.

Paul Eveleigh, Yaletown resident, noted he was unaware of the application at the preliminary stage. His concerns related to the compatibility of this high rise development with the lower Yaletown buildings.

Mr. Scobie advised this issue was not raised at the preliminary stage, noting the proposal reflects the intent of the Downtown South zoning. Mr. Beasley agreed that Mr. Eveleigh's concern relates to the original zoning. He recommended that Mr. Eveleigh communicate with the local area planner to review the development expectations for this area.

The Board and Panel reviewed the model and posted materials.

Panel Opinion

Mr. Bunting advised the Urban Design Panel generally liked very much both these applications and considered it to be a very high quality development. The Panel's comments were generally of a very minor architectural nature, as reflected in condition 1.3, and it was felt this applicant could satisfactorily resolve the issues with the development planner. Most Panel members agreed the tower needed some design development in terms of its proportions. Mr. Bunting recommended approval with the conditions.

Mr. Hancock also recommended support with the conditions. He agreed condition 1.3 is a matter of proportions and making the three top parts of the building feel slightly more integrated with each other. Mr. Hancock said he believed 1.4 was achievable and he supported its retention.

Mr. Ross supported the applications with the conditions and amendments thereto. He was satisfied that condition 1.3 could be worked out between the applicant and staff, and that a solution could be reached to achieve the 2.5 ft. change in elevation called for in 1.4.

Mr. Kavanagh recommended approval, with amendment to the standard conditions dealing with future amendments to the parking standards. He asked the Board to consider relaxation for two townhouses in 1.4.

Mr. Mortensen recommended support. He said he felt the elevation of 2.5 ft. on the two end townhouses is achievable and worthwhile considering the privacy issues. Noting this is a very dense neighbourhood, Mr. Mortensen said he regretted it is not possible to get the utilities undergrounded in the lane. He suggested some future focus on these kinds of issues is warranted. Mr. Mortensen added that amenities such as sufficient garbage cans seem to be lacking in the area.

Mr. Scott also supported the applications. He said the development will be very complementary to the heritage buildings across Homer Street. With respect to the issue of undergrounding the electrical utilities, Mr. Scott noted this project represents about a third of the 1100 block of Homer and Richards, all prime for redevelopment, and the lane would be a good starting point.

Mr. Chung recommended approval.

Board Discussion

Mr. Beasley said the applications have responded very well to the preliminary conditions. The project has evolved very positively and been refined quite substantially since the preliminary stage. He commended both design teams. The office building in particular has been quite handsomely designed and will be not only a contextual addition to the neighbourhood but will stand out on itself quite positively. Mr. Beasley noted that a lot of work has been done on the interface between the sidewalk and the buildings to make it more positive at grade level. With respect to the expression of the tower, Mr. Beasley said he agreed with the need to refine the architecture. His support for condition 1.3 is, however, a reflection of the Urban Design Panel's role in the peer review process. Mr. Beasley also supported condition 1.4 relating to the townhouse grade because the problem does not appear to be difficult to solve and it has a significant affect on the livability of the units. Mr. Beasley said there needs to be some further exploration with regard to utilities in the lane and this should be pursued by staff. With regard to the *street* furnishings in the neighbourhood, he noted there is already a plan for the City to ensure the needed items are included in those areas which have not experienced redevelopment. This should also be pursued by staff.

Dr. McAfee seconded Mr. Beasley's motion to approve both applications, adding she believed staff could work with the applicant on the architectural expression issue referred to in condition 1.3. She stressed the importance of achieving a good separation from the street for the townhouses. She also noted the importance of the acoustical measures to be taken for the residences, particularly those that might back onto the adjacent night club. She concurred with Mr. Beasley's recommended amendments to the conditions dealing with accessible parking.

Referring to the addition to condition 1.5, Mr. Scobie noted the existing covenant on title could frustrate the residential component if the transfer of density is not secured. He stressed that the clause "has been executed to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal Services" means the drafting of the single site covenant may take some care and attention and may require the owners to re-visit the existing covenant. With respect to condition 1.4, Mr. Scobie urged staff to ensure that prospective applicants are informed of the elevational requirements for townhouses in relationship to the adjoining sidewalk, noting it is not necessarily reflected in the wording of the Guidelines. Applicants should be made aware that the Board is being quite insistent about achieving as close as possible to the 3 ft. elevational change.

Motion

1055 HOMER STREET

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

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. 405652, in accordance with the Development Permit Staff Committee Report dated October 17, 2001, with the following amendments:

Amend 1.5 to add to the **Note to Applicant**:

In the event the single site covenant tying Lots H and I together has been executed to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal Services, this condition can be deleted;

Delete A1.1.2 and replace with:

confirmation that the enclosed balconies comply with the FSR provisions of the zoning and the Balcony Enclosure Guidelines;

Amend A1.1.4 to delete the **Note to Applicant**;

A1.1.5 to change "Office" to "Suite";

Delete A1.2.8 and replace with:

if the by-law is enacted implementing new parking accessibility standards into the design of underground parking garages, the design must be amended to accommodate this; however, the Development Permit Board supports the Director of Planning exercising discretion as laid out in the by-law to relax these requirements on a hardship basis as this application has long been in hand; if the subject by-law has not been enacted at the time of issuance of the Development Permit this condition is deleted.

1085 HOMER STREET

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

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. 406084, in accordance with the Development Permit Staff Committee Report dated October 17, 2001, with the following amendment:

Delete A2.2.10 and replace with:

if the By-law is enacted implementing new parking accessibility standards into the design of underground parking garages, the design must be amended to accommodate this; however, the Development Permit Board supports the Director of Planning exercising discretion as laid out in the By-law to relax these requirements on a hardship basis as this application has long been in hand; if the subject By-law has not been enacted at the time of issuance of the Development Permit this condition is deleted;

5. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4.50 pm.

C. Hubbard
Clerk to the Board

F. Scobie
Chair

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