

Date: Monday, November 19, 2007
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Place: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT:**Board**

D. McLellan Deputy General Manager, CSG (Chair) (Excused Item 1)
B. Toderian Director of Planning
J. Ridge Deputy City Manager
T. Timm General Manager of Engineering Services (Chair Item 1)

Advisory Panel

J. Wall Representative of the Design Professions (Urban Design Panel)
S. Tatomir Representative of the Design Professions
N. Shearing Representative of the Development Industry
J. Stovell Representative of the Development Industry
D. Chung Representative of the General Public
H. Hung Representative of the General Public
C. Nystedt Representative of the General Public
K. Maust Representative of the Vancouver Heritage Commission

Regrets

M. Braun Representative of the General Public

ALSO PRESENT:**City Staff:**

S. Brodie Civil Engineer
A. Molaro Development Planner
P. Huber Project Facilitator
P. Pinsker Transportation Engineer
B. Boons Co-Manager of Processing Centre - Development
J. Gijssen Senior Cultural Planner

6-1188 RICHARDS STREET - DE411443 - ZONE DD

None.

190 PRIOR STREET - DE411105 - ZONE FC-1

C. Taylor Christopher Bozyk Architects
R. Rao Amacon (Prior Holdings Ltd.)
C. Bozyk Christopher Bozyk Architects

Recording Secretary: L. Harvey

1. MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Toderian seconded by Mr. Ridge, and was the decision of the Board to approve the minutes of the meeting on November 5, 2007 with the following amendment on page 8, paragraph four:

Mr. Toderian thought the scale and location was appropriate, *and noted that the track record for facilities of this type and scale in the city was that they were somewhat "invisible"*. He noted that the actual uses were not getting larger but were being *co-located* and had no concerns with the design details.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

**3. 6-1188 RICHARDS STREET - DE411443 - ZONE DD
(COMPLETE APPLICATION)**

Applicant: Eona Hortensius

Request: Interior alterations to enlarge Penthouse Unit No. 6 by converting the existing 76.0 sq. ft. enclosed balcony to floor space in the existing mixed-use commercial/residential building on this site, thereby requesting an increase in the Floor Space Ratio using a Heritage Density Transfer.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

Mr. Timm, City Engineer, introduced the application for Heritage Density Transfer at #6-1188 Richards Street. The purchase of the heritage density will be 76.0 square feet from 640 West Pender Street. The recommendation was for support of the proposal, with advice and comments provided.

Questions/Discussion

None.

Applicant's Comments

Not present.

Comments from other Speakers

None.

Panel Opinion

None.

Board Discussion

None.

Motion

It was moved by Mr. Toderian and seconded by Mr. Ridge and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. DE411443, in accordance with the Staff Report dated November 19, 2007.

3. 190 PRIOR STREET - DE411105 - ZONE FC-1
(PRELIMINARY APPLICATION)

Applicant: Christopher Bozyk Architects

Request: To retain, restore and rehabilitate the existing five-storey character building (the former BC Electric Railway Men's Quarters and addressed as 901 Main Street) and to incorporate a nine-storey addition to the west, providing retail use at grade and residential use in the remainder of the building. The project proposes a total of ten dwelling units and parking for six vehicles which would be accessed from Prior Street.

The owner has requested that City Council add the existing building to the Vancouver Heritage Register and grant a heritage density bonus, through a Heritage Revitalization Agreement, to be used on-site. This development application is predicated on Council's approval.

The Development Permit Board has previously indicated that they wish applications involving requests for significant additional density, or other variances only accommodated through a Heritage Revitalization Agreement, to be submitted as "preliminary development applications" in order that the Board can consider the overall form of development, use and massing in preliminary terms prior to City Council being asked to endorse the density. Although this development application was submitted as a "complete" application, staff recommend that it be treated as a "preliminary", in terms of the recommendations, conditions and process described in this report.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

Anita Molaro, Development Planner introduced the application for a property on Main Street at the Georgia Street viaduct. Ms. Molaro described the surrounding buildings in the area and noted that the project will have retail at grade and will include ten residential suites in the remainder of the building. She also noted that the section between the building and the viaduct is a street right-of-way. The application came in as a Complete Application from the applicant; however staff recommended the proposal be a Preliminary Application in order to address various issues.

Ms. Molaro stated that there are several outstanding issues. The applicant had asked to reduce the parking from 23 spaces to 10 spaces. The proposal will include six garages with four off-site parking spaces. Staff have acknowledged that there are some physical challenges to the parking and have added alternative conditions to the Staff Committee Report to address some of those challenges. Ms. Molaro also noted that Prior Street is unopened and staff want to ensure a high quality pedestrian environment. She added that Prior Street has been identified as a potential street car route for the future. Staff are supportive of the density and height but are seeking design refinement to the upper floors and have asked for acoustical measures to be included. Staff also want to insure the exposed wall has a high quality treatment to mitigate the expansiveness of the blank wall.

Ms. Molaro reviewed the recommendations contained in the Staff Committee Report dated July 18, 2007. 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 clarification was provided by Ms. Molaro:

- The parking requirements have come down considerably from the legal requirements of 23 to 10 parking spaces.
- Currently three buildings under construction in Vancouver will include parking elevators.
- The applicant may need another six feet to get a reasonable layout for an elevator but there are solutions to get the extra six feet.
- Staff's preference is to have the Board approve the alternate set of conditions regarding the parking spaces.
- Staff require there to be a clear separation between pedestrians and vehicles. The intent is that there will be no stopping or parking in the area but only access to the parking.
- Two parking spaces are to be allocated to the owner's unit.
- The owner was unsuccessful in purchasing an adjacent property for parking.
- There is nothing in the Staff Committee Report regarding sustainability.
- A legal covenant would be required for off-site parking and would be a minor amendment to the development permit. The donor site would not be able to count those spaces on their site.

Applicant's Comments

Christopher Bozyk, Architect, had no substantial concerns with the Staff Committee Report. Mr. Bozyk said his biggest concern was the parking and they are working with Engineering to develop a rationale regarding access from Prior Street. He added that there are considerable cost implications for underground parking and the only way to make the parking work in this project was to have access from Prior Street for six parking garages. Also, they want to be able to control access of vehicles onto the site when a streetcar goes by. He noted that the amount of vehicular access will be minimal and there should be no major interactions with pedestrians and vehicles. Mr. Bozyk stated that the owner would turn the garages into retail space if they could arrange 10 off-site parking spots on the Cobalt Hotel site. Mr. Bozyk added that the project isn't viable if they have to put in a vehicular elevator. Also, Mr. Bozyk noted that the owner would be interested in making the design work in the way of sustainability.

Craig Taylor, Architect, noted that the building is currently not on the Heritage Registry. Regarding sustainability, the applicant is looking at the development not simply as a commercial development but as a pilot for other projects. Mr. Taylor said they were happy to work with staff to bring the conditions to a resolution.

Questions/Discussion

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

- The owner is negotiating to provide off-site parking near-by and would like to explore a number of other possibilities.
- The owner is currently looking for four off-site parking spaces to meet the requirement of ten parking spaces recommended by staff.
- The applicant team had taken smaller cars into consideration for the parking spaces.
- The access to the parking garages will be from Prior Street.
- Only people who live in the building will have access to the parking garages.

- The project is capable of being connected to the False Creek Neighbourhood Energy Utility grid.
- The heritage building will be updated to meet code requirements and as well the interior will be upgraded and the exterior envelope will be restored.
- The heritage building will also have a seismic upgrade.

Comments from other Speakers

Am Johal, Civil Society Development Project, noted that there are 250 artist's studios in the DTES and asked the Board to consider creative uses for studio space to remain in the building.

Dick Stout, Artist, has been a tenant for 14 years and has an artist's studio in the building. He told the Board that he hadn't been notified by the City and was surprised that staff wasn't aware that the building contained artist's studios. He was concerned as to the impact the lost of studio space would have on culture in the city.

Eri Ishii, Artist and tenant of the building, noted that the building had been part of the East Side Cultural Crawl since 1988. She said she would be interested in working with the owner to come up with a solution to retain their studios either in the building or elsewhere. Ms. Ishii also had a petition which the Chair suggested she give to Council for the February 12, 2008 Heritage Revitalization Agreement hearing.

Jack Duke, Coach of the Astoria Boxing Club, an after-school and evening boxing program for boys and girls, asked the Board to consider the application as the owner had been in discussion with them about using the basement of the project for their club use.

Dennis Brown, Artist, noted that the Vancouver Life Drawing Society had been using studio space in the building for many years and has hundreds of members. He felt the notification was not very effective. Mr. Brown asked the Board to give them some time to work with the owner to find a solution to keep their studio spaces.

Questions/Discussion

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

- The public benefit is being used up relative to the heritage preservation and there isn't anything left over. In order to have more public benefits, additional density would be needed and would challenge the current proposal.
- Cultural benefits such as artist's studios weren't considered in the application.
- Regarding notification, two signs were posted on the building and the property owner and adjacent property owners were notified in writing.
- The FSR for the property was set by Council in February 2007.
- The pool in the basement has been included in the FSR but not the parking spaces.
- The Boxing Club use is not part of the current application.
- A preliminary application is used when there is a need for preliminary discussion before the application goes before Council and then the Board gets direction from Council that will drive the final application.
- The City is currently working on a policy with the Creative City Task Force for a long range cultural facilities plan. There are a number of live/work buildings in Vancouver, but the challenge is for studio space only. City staff are working with the community and have the support of a non-profit consulting firm.

Panel Opinion

Mr. Wall noted that it was a challenging project and added that the Urban Design Panel had supported the project unanimously. The Panel recognized the heritage preservation and thought the applicant team had put together an intriguing project. The Panel was also interested in the amount of public realm improvement that was proposed especially the pedestrian mews that will link the project to South-East False Creek. The Panel recognized that parking and mixing of pedestrian could create some problems. Some members felt there should be some distinction to make for a stronger pedestrian realm. The Panel was also concerned that the number of parking spaces might be too low and that alternatives should be considered. Also the Panel thought that quality details and further design development should be used on the blank wall. The Panel thought that some sort of architectural screening might be necessary for the suites facing the viaduct to provide for some privacy. Also, the Panel advised the applicant to look for more sustainable measures. The Panel liked the strong definition between the old and the new building and thought they complemented each other. Mr. Wall thought that staff had addressed the Panels concerns in the prior-to conditions. Mr. Wall thought it was a shame that the artist's concerns hadn't been brought forward earlier and that they weren't considered a good neighbour and given the opportunity to fit into the building. He added that studio space along Prior Street would be a more interesting use than parking spaces.

Mr. Tatomir commended the applicant team for their approach. He said he was glad that the old building wouldn't be demolished and though it would be a great addition. Mr. Tatomir didn't think there was a problem with only six parking spaces noting that this would be a solution in Europe. He added that there is an Italian manufacture that designs 180 degree elevators which could be a solution. Mr. Tatomir thought the six parking spaces would make for nice studios for the artists who are currently tenants in the building.

Mr. Shearing agreed that it was a fabulous project and thought the architect and staff should be congratulated. He added that the applicant team had found some interesting solutions for some tough problems. Mr. Shearing thought putting the building on the Heritage Registry was a great advantage to the City. He suggested using the opportunity to get off-site parking within the Cobalt Hotel property through a parking covenant. He also thought the mix between pedestrians and traffic would be minimal. Mr. Shearing thought that the artists brought a rich layer to the building and hoped there could be a solution and suggested developing the parking spaces into studio spaces. Mr. Shearing thought the overlap of the new building onto the heritage was the one place the project fell apart, as he thought the heritage building should be untouched by the new development.

Mr. Stovell was surprised that the project would be a rental building and thought the owner should be allowed to take the risk of only six parking spaces or be allowed to convert the spaces into other uses. Mr. Stovell noted that the tenants would be bringing their issues to Council as part of the HRA and that Council would be at a disadvantage unless the Board gave them some direction. Mr. Stovell thought there were lots of ways through relaxations to have cultural benefits added to the project.

Ms. Nystedt was uncomfortable with the last minute information the Board received at the meeting regarding the boxing school and also the artist's studios not being included in the proposal. She felt the Board had not been given the whole story. She felt it was a beautifully designed building and would be a great addition to the area but was uncomfortable with heritage density providing for a huge three storey penthouse and only six parking spaces. Ms. Nystedt also thought the sustainability principles were lacking in the project as they should be an essential component. Regarding the parking, Ms. Nystedt thought there should be a minimum of ten spaces in the development.

Ms. Maust noted the Heritage Commission was very supportive of the project. She added that it was normal practise to add one or two floors to an existing heritage building. Ms. Maust thought the project was well designed and would be a great addition to the street. She also thought the applicant had addressed a lot of issues within the small site and congratulated the architect for his design. Ms. Maust noted that heritage is a form of sustainability but in no way should stop the applicant from adding other measures in the project as it was only one element. Ms. Maust added that she would like to see more to compliment the heritage restoration and would like to see the artists be incorporated into the plans for the site. She added that she thought off-site parking could be a solution to the parking problem.

Mr. Chung thought it was an excellent design and that the heritage and contemporary design worked well together and made for a nice contrast. Mr. Chung would like a provision to find future off-site parking and to turn the proposed parking stalls into artist's studios as he also thought off-site parking could be developed elsewhere.

Mr. Hung was happy to see the heritage building restored and liked the architectural design of the new building as he thought the project would enhance the surrounding area. Mr. Hung suggested the Board adopt Alternative Condition AC1.1, AC1.2 and AC1.3 as he would like to see ten parking spaces off-site. Mr. Hung saw issues with cars interfering with pedestrians and agreed that the parking spaces could be turned into artist's studios.

Board Discussion

Mr. Toderian thanked the artists for coming and speaking to the Board. He noted that they were an important part of cultural sustainability within the City. Regarding the building design, Mr. Toderian was disappointed that the applicant had noted they hadn't had a chance to consider sustainable measures by this stage in the design evolution, and that this suggested that sustainability could be considered an after thought rather than as part of the initial design. He suggested that such processes should start with green design to reduce energy load, and then further opportunities to improve energy performance through technological measures could follow.

Mr. Toderian complemented the heritage integration and thought the applicant team had done an exceptional job with this challenge. He also thought the contemporary design of the new building was an exceptional piece of architecture, albeit noting the previous comment around green design. He thought it was interesting that most of the building will be rental units but was concerned that it would stay a rental building in the long term.

Regarding the artist studios, in the absence of policy regarding the retention of cultural features, Mr. Toderian noted that the Board was in a bit of bind to make any recommendations regarding the cultural implications of the project. He noted that the recently initiate Cultural Facilities Study being undertaken by the City will hopefully provide such policy direction. He added that he would look forward to Council's comments on the public benefits relative to artists work space when they consider the HRA.

Mr. Toderian's most significant concern related to the proposed multiple garage-door interface with the public realm. Although Mr. Toderian reiterated that the project was a nice piece of architecture, he noted that its quality of urbanism was poor with this edge condition. He felt this would not create a walkable, safe, active, interesting public realm, and questioned the ability to meet the proposed requirements for such in the design development conditions with this approach. He did not support the approach even initially with the hopes that over time, as per the conditions, it could be "fixed". He felt once the interface was established it would remain. Mr. Toderian added that he would like to find a better solution from day one that might

include further parking relaxations, additional off-site parking, or other design answers. Mr. Toderian was not in a position to support the proposal for these reasons as this issue was not adequately addressed in the conditions.

Mr. Timm noted that the Board was not trying to prejudge the outcome of the HRA and the Board was unable to mandate in the absence of any policy regarding public benefits.

Mr. Timm liked the design of the contemporary building overlapping the heritage building as he felt it sets off the heritage and unified both building designs. He added that otherwise it would look like two different developments.

Mr. Timm had some concerns regarding the parking access. He thought it could work as a pedestrian space with six parking spaces even though there were some negatives with the scheme. He noted that staff had gone through an extensive process with the applicant. Mr. Timm added that there was potential for change in the future, and the parking could be used for other purposes, but it would increase the FSR if the parking was removed.

Mr. Ridge thought it was a nice private residence with a whole bunch of mortgage helpers. He thought the site needed to have the ten parking spots but that the applicant could be creative in finding a solution. Mr. Ridge said he supported the additions around sustainability but had concerns regarding the parking. He added that he appreciated the owner preserving the heritage building.

Motion

It was moved by Mr. Timm and seconded by Mr. Ridge with Mr. Toderian dissenting on Conditions 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3, and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Board APPROVE IN PRINCIPLE Development Application No. DE411105, in accordance with the Staff Committee Report dated July 18, 2007, with the following amendments:

To amend Condition 1.1 a) to read:

provision of an enhanced high-quality public realm treatment to *clearly read as pedestrian oriented*, through the use of landscaping treatments, including, if possible, a second row of trees, lighting, and paving patterns to the satisfaction of the General Manager of Engineering Services and the Director of Planning;

To amend the Note to Applicant in Condition 1.2 to read:

Note to Applicant: The OMP would include provisions for: vehicular access *and control*; goods movement and garbage/recycling from a single location in the lane; *acknowledgement of stopping and loading prohibitions*; security; any special treatments on public property, including consideration for future street car uses, drainage, etc. This will be the subject of a legal agreement, based on the City's standard encroachment agreement.

To add a new Condition 1.8:

that further clarification of ecological sustainability features, beyond those associated with heritage preservation, be provided prior to development permit issuance to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning.

To add a new Condition 5.0:

The Board wished it noted that, consideration of the Preliminary Application in no way pre-concludes Council's consideration of issues relating to the Heritage Revitalization Agreement as well as issues raised by the public at the November 19, 2007 Development Permit Board Meeting relating to use of the building.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM

L. Harvey
Assistant to the Board

D. McLellan
Chair