

Date: Monday February 22, 2021
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Place: Webex

PRESENT:

Board

A. Law Director, Development Services
J. Adcock General Manager, Development, Buildings & Licensing
L. LaClaire General Manager, Engineering
G. Kelley General Manager, Planning, Urban Design, Sustainability

Advisory Panel

M. Henderson Representative of the Design Professions (Urban Design Panel)
D. Pretto Representative of the Development Industry
N. Hayward Representative of the General Public
M. Cree-Smith Representative of the Design Professions
K. May Representative of the General Public
L. Shenkute Representative of the General Public

Regrets

P. Sihota Representative of the General Public
C. Karu Representative of the Development Industry

ALSO PRESENT:

City Staff:

John Greer Assistant Director, Development Review Branch
John Turecki Civil Engineer, Major Projects
Carl Stanford Development Planner, Urban Design & Development
Michelle Lee-Hunt Development Planner, Engineering
Kevin Spaans Development Planner, Urban Design & Development

650 West 41st Ave – DP-2020-00759-DP-5
Henriquez Partners Architect

Broadway Station Project (BSP)
IBI Group

Recording Secretary: K. Cermeno

1. MINUTES APPROVED

It was moved by Mr. LaClaire and seconded by Ms. Adcock and was the decision of the Board to approve the minutes of the meeting on Feb 8th, 2021.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Ms. Adcock noted a revision of her vote from non-support to resubmission.

3. 650 West 41st Ave - DP-2020-00759 – DP-5 (COMPLETE APPLICATION)

Applicant: Henriquez Partners Architect

Request: To develop four-storeys of retail (Food Hall) over three levels of underground parking, and a portion of the future 9-acre Park (Meadow Gardens).

Development Planner's Opening Comments

Mr. Stanford, Development Planner, presented the proposal and summarized the recommendations contained in the Staff Committee Report. The recommendation was for support of the application, subject to the conditions noted.

Mr. Stanford took questions from the Board and Panel members.

Applicant's Comments

The applicant thanked the staff team for their work.

The applicant noted they contest the condition item where it states for a more cernuous curved corner architecture.

The applicant is requesting to have this condition reviewed and removed. The applicant noted they believe the architecture should stay as it is.

Mr. Stanford noted the word is refined to explore.

Mr. Stanford noted staff open the opportunity for the applicant to defend their rationale especially during the prior to phase.

The applicant noted they are confident they can work with staff to meet the conditions for approval.

Comments from Speakers

No Speakers

Panel Opinion

Mr. Henderson noted UDP widely supported the project with robust commentary around the design excellence and project integrity.

Mr. Henderson noted his support for the applicant's commentary regarding the corner; it was a minimal comment at UDP.

Mr. Henderson noted his support for the project.

Ms. Cree-Smith noted it was an impressive project and congratulated the applicant.

Ms. Cree-Smith noted particularly with the public realm there is a good accessibility and the design development is impressive.

Ms. Cree-Smith noted her support for the project.

Ms. Hayward noted her support for the project.

Ms. May noted it is a fun interesting location for socializing and grabbing a bit to eat.

Ms. May noted minor concern regarding the light safety issues with the skylights, however noted sounds the applicant is addressing this.

Ms. May noted her support for the project.

Ms. Pretto noted her support for the project.

Ms. Pretto she is excited for Vancouver to have a project that is world class and of high caliber.

Mr. Shenkute noted it is an interesting site and likes how the applicant is managing such a big project.

Mr. Shenkute noted support for the project.

Mr. Karu noted he is looking forward to the completion of the project.

Mr. Karu noted his support for the project.

Board Discussion

Mr. Kelley congratulated the applicant team and staff for all their work.

Mr. Kelley noted it is a complex project with many layers but discrete.

Mr. Kelley noted the access to the park is a success, the use of offices is a positive, and the at-grade entrances really work and bring people into the site and guide them up to the layers.

Mr. Kelley noted his support for the project.

Mr. LaClaire noted his support for the project.

Mr. LaClaire echoed the comments made by Mr. Gil.

Mr. LaClaire noted appreciation for the heart and activity of the project.

Mr. LaClaire noted the project has potential to be the center of a big neighbourhood.

Ms. Adcock noted her appreciation of all the comments and unanimity.

Ms. Adcock noted the development is of a world-class nature and everyone in Vancouver should be proud.

Ms. Adcock recognized all the staff and applicant for all their hard work for such a massive development.

Ms. Adcock noted her support for the project.

Motion

The decision of the Board: THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application - DP-2020-00759 - CD-1(1), subject to the in accordance with the Staff Committee Report dated January 27, 2021.

4. BROADWAY SUBWAY STATIONS (ADVICE ONLY)

Applicant: IBI GROUP

Request: To develop six new underground skytrain stations and transit plazas as part of the Broadway Subway Project. Stations locations are as follows: GNW-Emily Carr, Mount Pleasant, Broadway City Hall (interchange station integrated with the existing Canada Line), Oak-VGH, South Granville and Arbutus.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

Mr. Kaveh Imani, Project Facilitator, spoke regarding the project governance and help guide the advisory panel and board members through the proposal.

Ms. Lee-Hunt, Development planner presented the proposal and summarized the recommendations contained in the Staff Committee Report.

Staff noted today's meeting is to vote to endorse staff recommendations included in the report.

Staff took questions from the Board and Panel members.

Applicant's Comments

The applicant thanked the staff team for their work and detailed presentation.

Comments from Speakers

Speaker one, Mr. Vela noted he has been following the BSP and City of Vancouver for over 12 months for the specific micro locations, and how these stations will affect and are affecting their neighbourhoods.

Mr. Vela noted the design comments provided regarding the Arbutus station is inadequate. The public realm needs to consider safety issues. The aesthetics, landscaping, and weather considerations are minor in comparison to the safety issues.

Mr. Vela noted the input at the open houses is insufficient and staff have excluded petitions made by the public.

Mr. Vela requested to the board to reconsider this station and ask that the recommendations be expanded. Mr. Vela noted he along with many others do not agree and request a relook at the design of this station.

Speaker two, Mr., Gulfas, noted he has lived, worked, and played in the Arbutus neighbourhood for the last 20 years. Mr. Gulfas noted he is concerned and not in support of the Arbutus Station.

The BSP engagement process has failed. Concerns from the public have not been acknowledged. There will be noise, traffic and safety issues along with a decline in the air quality.

Mr. Gulfas asked City staff to revisit the site design. The landscape integration is not addressed. This station in comparison to the others is weak.

Speaker 3, Mr. Dividich noted he used to be the chair at the citizen's advisor committee at City Hall. Mr. Dividich noted there should be separate meetings for each station with proper notification.

He noted the public engagement was not properly done. The Arbutus station is inferior to the other stations.

Mr. Dividich asked senior staff and board members to request to have this station re designed.

Mr. Dividich noted the public is being withheld from honest information.

Mr. Dividich noted the design needs more design development.

Panel Opinion

Mr. Henderson noted at UDP the project was presented for commentary only.

Mr. Henderson noted there was an appreciation from UDP for the challenges that the project team faces, technical challenges in particular. There was general appreciation for the direction that the project was heading in.

Mr. Henderson noted best-case scenario was the Granville street station and where overbuilt was required, that strategies be put forward that provided a broad range of possibilities for the future.

Mr. Henderson noted it was believed the approach that was presented was the best one but it did provide some challenges in each station providing individual character of their respective neighbourhood, some development could be done around this.

Mr. Henderson noted there was commentary regarding the gap between the station itself and the street front and what are some of the possibilities of each station in this regard but it was understood that this work would be done in the street design.

In general, the project was well received by the Urban Design Panel.

Ms. Cree-Smith noted it is a complicated project but very much needed for Vancouver.

Ms. Cree-Smith noted her support for each station having a unique design that compliments their surrounding neighbourhoods.

Ms. Cree-Smith noted her support on seeing how the project develops.

Ms. Hayward noted it did not seem there was much public concern with any station except for the Arbutus station.

Ms. May noted her main concern was the missed opportunity for the potential to add housing, retail or office use.

Ms. May noted to explore the possibility of reviewing this further and resubmit.

Ms. Pretto noted she understands the deeply complex nature of this application and supports all the points brought forward by staff.

Ms. Pretto noted the language provided in the reports could be a bit more specific.

Ms. Pretto noted these stations are needed in the east west connector.

Mr. Shenkute had no comments.

Board Discussion

Ms. Adcock thanked and acknowledged staff and the applicant team for all their work on this project.

Ms. Adcock noted that it is important to continue the dialogue regarding the station designs and neighbourhood necessity.

Mr. Kelley made a motion to support the recommendations made by staff with two additions: Staff consider along with Law department, whether the terminology is correct, in terms if applicant can be reframed as proponent and conditions be reframed as recommendations.

The second being, there has been enough conversation around the importance of washrooms and the redundant elevators for future proofing the stations.

Mr. Kelley noted he hopes the positive collaboration between staff and applicant team continues. Mr. Gill thanked staff for a detailed and clear presentation.

Mr. LaClaire noted his support and seconded the motion and recommendations put forward by Mr. Kelley.

Mr. LaClaire noted his appreciation for the commentary made by the UDP and the members of the public.

Mr. LaClaire noted he is aware the public realm and interface now is unsatisfactory and a lot of it will depend with the development of the street design and encourages the public to stay involved.

Mr. LaClaire noted there is opportunity with the removal of the bus loop and what it will provide for the future.

Mr. Kelley echoed Mr. LaClaire's comment regarding the public realm.

Motion

The decision of the Board: THAT the Board approves endorsing the staff conditions for this approval in addition to considering a reframing of the terminology around the governance structure and emphasizing the importance of the washrooms and elevators at the interior of the stations.

The meeting adjourned at 5:45pm.