

Date: Monday, June 11, 2018
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Place: Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall

PRESENT:**Board**

A. Law Director, Development Services, (Chair)
P. Mochrie Deputy City Manager
G. Kelley General Manager of Planning, Urban Design & Sustainability
C. Nelms Deputy General Manager of Engineering

Advisory Panel

A. Brudar Representative of the Design Professionals (Urban Design Panel)
M. Norfolk Representative of the Vancouver Heritage Commission
R. Chaster Representative of the General Public
D. Pretto Representative of the General Public
R. Wittstock Representative of the Design Professions

Regrets

J. Dobrovolny General Manager of Engineering
R. Rohani Representative of the General Public
B. Jarvis Representative of the Development Industry
S. Allen Representative of the General Public
J. Greer Assistant Director of Processing Centre - Development

ALSO PRESENT:**City Staff:**

D. Wiley Development Planner
M. Linehan Development Planner
M. So Manager - Development Review Branch
T. Tenney Project Facilitator
C. Joseph Engineering

616 E Cordova - DP-2018-00255 - DEOD

Delegation

Brian Dust, Architect, NSDA Architects

Barbara Atkins, Manager of Women's Family Center, UGM

Bobby McDonald, Community Engagement Coordinator, UGM

129 Keefer Street - DE420078 - HA-1A

Delegation
Darren Burns, Architect, Stantec
Nalon Smith, Landscape Architect, LEES + Associates
Andrew Collins, Owner

Recording Secretary: K.Cermeno

1. MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Mochrie seconded by Ms. Nelms and was the decision of the Board to approve the minutes of the meeting on May 28, 2018.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

**3. 616 E Cordova - DP-2018-00255 - DEOD-CD-1
(COMPLETE APPLICATION)**

Applicant: NSDA

Request: To develop a 7-storey mixed-use building containing a Social Service Centre, Child Care Facility, and 63 units of Social Housing, all over one level of underground parking having vehicular access from the lane. This project is being processed through the Social Housing or Rental Tenure (SHORT) Program.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

Ms. Wiley, 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.

Ms. Wiley took questions from the Board and Panel members.

Applicant's Comments

Had a productive meeting with staff and reviewed the conditions and appreciate the suggestions and recommendations. Do not see any problem meeting all the requirements.

The applicant team took questions from the Board and Panel members.

Mr. Kelley asked staff what is the policy basis for allowance of the height and relaxation?

Ms. Wiley noted in the DEOD there is no policy for height and relaxation therefore will be using the hardship clause.

Comments from other Speakers

Paul Allen inquired in regards to the description of the development proposed and the surrounding area.

Mr. Allen was advised to refer to the Development Permit report which describes the above.

Ms. Wiley noted immediately around the building there are two and two and a half character story houses directly across the street and to the east. Across the lane from the Union Gospel building are about 4-5 storeys, and across the street are 6-10 storeys.

Mr. Allen inquired in regards to the meaning of 'Character.'

Ms. Wiley noted character houses meaning pre 1940 single family houses. Character houses are not necessarily heritage.

Mr. Allen proceeded to inquire about issues that were not relevant to the project that was before the board.

The Chair clarified to the speaker that as per policy the panel can only speak to the specific project that was before the board

Panel Opinion

Panel members offered a range of comments on the proposal, including:

Ms. Brudar noted the project received strong support from the Urban Design Panel. The panel thought the building was well resolved and response to the corner was well done. The volumes and cubic forms proposed were well handled and the choice of materials well resolved.

Ms. Brudar noted the building has a complex program and everything seem to be fitting well and the relationship handled well in a relatively small city block with many needs for different user groups. The applicant was commended for the solutions of the outdoor space.

Ms. Brudar noted two areas of concern were the frontage block with East Cordova. The panel felt an improved interface between the street and the building itself was needed. The building felt cut-off from the street, suggestions included adjusting the programming.

Ms. Brudar noted the second concern was the interface with the character buildings to the side, specifically the interface of the parking entry and wall to the backyard of the single family homes.

Ms. Brudar noted a lot of these issues were pointed out in the staff comments.

Mr. Wittstock noted he echoed UDP concerns of Cordova St. would be beneficial if Cordova Street was developed to be friendlier.

Mr. Wittstock noted his support.

Mr. Wittstock noted he believed there shouldn't be any height restrictions on market projects similar to this one.

Mr. Norfolk noted he does not agree with a cliff next door to domestic dwellings. On both sides of Cordova St there is streetscape of character houses.

Mr. Norfolk noted his appreciation to staff for having picked up on this in condition 1.2 to try to soften the transition.

Mr. Norfolk referenced the Wong House that will be preserved on Cambie St and will sit in between two similar sized buildings, however the developers have agreed to a step back to soften the transition.

Mr. Norfolk noted this may not be probable for this project but asked staff to please think about avoiding the cliff effect for future projects.

Ms. Chaster noted similar concerns in regards to the interface with the character homes however appreciates staff have made suggestions under conditions 1.2 and does not want to change anything to such a project.

Ms. Chaster noted it was exciting to see a project that was able to retain the presence of the Union Gospel and attain the number and variety of units.

Ms. Chaster noted it was such a needed project with great diversity and open space catered to individuals from all walks of life.

Mr. Chaster noted her support.

Ms. Pretto noted her appreciation for the amount of units and variety, especially the 2 and 3 bedroom units.

Ms. Pretto noted the project team's voluntarily design to keep within the FSR max, the balconies and amenity spaces on each level.

Ms. Pretto noted her support.

Board Discussion

Ms. Nelms noted the project is fantastic. The unit mix and the units that are specific to women with babies is a great enhancement.

Ms. Nelms noted her appreciation for the applicant team working with engineering to work out the sidewalks and height.

Mr. Mochrie noted his support.

Mr. Mochrie appreciated the execution of the building and the programming and the needs of the community that it will support.

Mr. Kelley thanked the panel for their comments.

Mr. Kelley thanked the architect and the development staff for working well together to create the conditions and changes that have made for a successful project.

Mr. Kelley noted the programs were unique and much needed in the neighbourhood.

Mr. Kelley noted he would like to do something more with the Cordova Street wall but also understands the limitations.

Mr. Kelley noted his support for the project with the recommendations proposed by staff.

Mr. Kelley stated for the record the rationale for relaxing the height limits outlined by Ms. Wiley is supportable for this type of project.

Motion

It was moved by Mr. Kelley and seconded by Mr. Mochrie, and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. DP-2018-00255, in accordance with the Staff Committee Report dated May 2, 2018.

3. 129 Keefer Street - DE420078 - HA-1A (COMPLETE APPLICATION)

Applicant: STANTEC

Request: To develop on this site a nine-storey mixed-use building with retail on the ground floor and 32 dwelling units on levels two through nine, all over 2 levels of underground parking providing 24 parking spaces having vehicular access from the lane via a car-elevator.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

Ms. Linehan, 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.

Ms. Linehan took questions from the Board and Panel members.

Applicant's Comments

Had productive meetings with staff, it was then the information in regards to the PMT came to light and still working through those issues. Relative to the comments in the report we are confident we can progress with the conditions to achieve a successful development.

The applicant team took questions from the Board and Panel members.

Mr. Kelley noted the sensitivity of the contextual design in this particular block.

Mr. Kelley noted concerns in regards to the response of earlier direction and looking at conditions, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, Mr. Kelley asked the applicant team and Ms. Linehan if these conditions give sufficient directions to respond to.

Mr. Kelley noted the frame feels heavy and pronounced and having an equally heavy 25 ft frame is not an ideal solution.

Mr. Kelley noted the project feels like a modern imposition on that block and between the heaviness of the frame with the light contrast appears to be a disturbing element on that whole street façade.

Mr. Kelley noted the other pieces of the project required equal amount of attention.

Mr. Kelley noted conditions 1.5, 1.6, 1.7 are not to be taken lightly and required a fair amount of work.

Mr. Kelley noted to staff that he will trust in staff to explore a successful solution however would like to have on the record from both the applicant and staff that this will be looked at and taken seriously.

Both the applicant and staff stated for the record that yes the conditions will be looked at and/or revised for a successful development.

Comments from other Speakers

Speaker one, Melody Ma, noted there is a lot of uncertainty in regards to the final design product and appears to be a lot of design development needed from a technical and visual aesthetics standpoint. A big question is what will this building look like and this needs to be taken seriously as it will flank the Chinatown Memorial Plaza which is an important place in Chinatown, it will set the tone and mood for all visitors local and non-local. It is also a gateway site into Chinatown and will help define pedestrian experience heading into Chinatown especially once Keefer Memorial triangle is developed as directed by Council.

The ground level façade currently resembles something that could be in Soho Manhattan in terms of colour palette and treatment it does not emphasize a 12.5 ft or 20 ft distinction of the retail frontages. There is no personalization of each of the retail units, which you can see through the emphasis of the frame as well as through the awnings. There is also a difference in the awnings, in the more traditional and long standing retails you can see retractable awnings that are dome shape and colorful compared to the newer buildings that use metal and window treatments which does not blend with the authenticity of the Chinatown area. . The use of the white frame and white brick feels very forced and unnatural. It overwhelms the façade and feels inappropriate.

In terms of the color palette, the 105 Keefer development was rejected and one of the reasons was due to the use of black and white. This is a neighbourhood where the use of color is celebrated and this was not used in this building. The stamp glass treatment of the balconies gives more of an Orientalist feel which is not respectful to the heritage or pays proper homage to the Asian groups. Better quality treatment is needed. Suggest deleting the car elevators and create an active laneway retail.

To conclude if not sure what the end product will look like and this is a defining building suggest taking a step back.

Speaker two, Sean Cassidy, noted there are lot of questions that are still to be answered. Referring to the conditions 1.5, 1.6, 1.7 and the contextual nature of this project should pass for another revision. Mr. Cassidy noted the project should be done right and not at a 50 percent pass. One of the most important points is referring to page.8 of the report that states *“this application is submitted under the review of the Current HA-1-A district schedule design*

guidelines.” The concern is this is very much at flux, especially with changes to the Chinatown district planning guidelines going to council.

The design of this building is very generic and does not fit the future of this area. Mistakes have been made in the past and this could be corrected with this building. Should changes to the Chinatown guidelines occur this development should be grandfathered into the current policy.

Speaker three, Steven Prast, property owner in the Chinatown area, spoke in regards to the intention of activating the lanes. The lanes are very busy already and in need of some form of policing. These lanes are used quite a bit for drug use and other illegal activities and asked the panel from refraining to create an area for more of such activity.

Across the street from this development is the Chinatown parkade, notwithstanding the sensitivity of this site relative to the gardens and to the memorial, and there are already elements that don't tie in with the area, I am satisfied that staff and the applicant have taken into consideration comments from all the advisory panels and will create a façade with 25 ft. frontage to reduce the heaviness of the frame.

Panel Opinion

Panel members offered a range of comments on the proposal, including:

Ms. Brudar noted this application was accepted during its second submission. The panel felt the current proposal was of great improvement. The panel commended the applicant for taking into account the Chinatown guidelines and creating a contemporary version. The panel felt Chinatown was evolving as for most of the City and a contemporary take of the guidelines were appropriate.

Ms. Brudar noted there was a lot of discussion surrounding the frame and the appropriateness of the frame. The panel felt the 25 ft. expression was well handled with the base and the balconies and the frame articulated a 50 ft. frontage. It was the relationship between the frame and the intricate details of the balconies that seem to be at odd. It was suggested to thin down the frame to balance it with the balconies.

Ms. Brudar noted the design for ground floor retail could benefit from further development.

Mr. Wittstock noted it was a strong design, supported the framed, it is a strong expression that is well resolved and highly detailed.

Mr. Wittstock noted the project was not pretending to be something it was not.

Mr. Wittstock noted the project should not try to pretend it is two 25 ft. lots as it is not and support the current expression.

Mr. Wittstock noted his opposition to the City's imposition to require for light wells and inserting the courtyard down the middle to get extra light. A number of municipality's local and international have no issues with borrowed light bedrooms. The city is going counter to affordability and the design of affordable one bedroom units.

Mr. Norfolk, noted the Heritage Commissions use to look at new buildings in the Chinatown area and is unfortunate this is no longer the case.

Mr. Norfolk noted his agreement with the comments provided by Mr. Kelley in regards to conditions 1.5, 1.6, 1.7.

Mr. Norfolk noted this was an interesting building however it is a right building in the wrong place.

Mr. Norfolk referenced page 7 of the DPB reports and noted this is in fact two 25 ft lots.

Mr. Norfolk noted if this development is any indication of future developments it will dwarf the current heritage building at 133 Keefer.

Ms. Chaster noted comparing to when 137 Keefer came out, this building with the setback and the light well there is a lot more to respect that 5 storey height and the provided outdoor amenity spaces.

Ms. Chaster noted her support for the unit mix and for the application.

Ms. Pretto noted her appreciation for the applicant and staff for sticking to this project for 2 and half years.

Ms. Pretto thanked the speakers for their well-informed comments.

Ms. Pretto noted in respect to the back alley, from experience, activating the lane creates a much safer alley.

Ms. Pretto noted it was an intelligent use of space. Like the unit mix.

Ms. Pretto echoed Mr. Wittstock comments that the City needs to soften up on the light wells as it creates undue hardship.

Ms. Pretto noted her support.

Board Discussion

Mr. Mochrie thanked all members and public for their involvement and input.

Mr. Mochrie noted the written submissions received and the themes identified were consistent as the following points:

- Design, ground floor, retail, frame, color
- Livability of 2/3 bedroom units and light
- Necessity for parking
- Access to children's play space

Mr. Mochrie noted these issues have been addressed, except for the parking requirement as this is outside the panel's scope for consideration.

Mr. Mochrie noted further development is needed especially in regards to the PMT and the lane.

Mr. Mochrie noted in respect to the design and the frame in particular there is a clear direction of the changes that need to be addressed.

Mr. Mochrie noted his confidence with the comments and questions made by the GM of Planning and satisfied that the challenges will be articulated.

Ms. Nelms noted this is an important site flanking Chinatown Memorial Plaza.

Ms. Nelms noted her confidence with further conversation between the applicant and staff will result in resolving the issues raised, e.g. PMT.

Ms. Nelms noted her support.

Mr. Kelley noted a couple of procedural questions:

“Should the council act to adopt new design guidelines and rezoning regulations for Chinatown?”

“Are development permits automatically subjected to the new guidelines if a development permit has not been granted yet?”

Ms. Linehan noted that a permit has to be issued by the time the zoning would change and if it is not in compliance with the zoning it cannot be issued.

Ms. Linehan noted consulting with Legal there is an avenue that once it is approved the approval can be grandfathered before the zoning changes. Planning is operating on this letter of advice.

Ms. Linehan noted that is the application is to be approved today with conditions there is a greater window of time to deal with those conditions.

Mr. Kelley requested for an alternative motion for decision, as further discussion is required for a vote of confidence, to the next development permit board of June 25, 2018.

Mr. Mochrie seconded the motion for further discussion.

Mr. Mochrie asked staff and the applicant if the two week time frame would be enough time to discuss the issues for a final decision.

Ms. Linehan noted legal advised a decision at DPB would need to be made in order to proceed with the grandfather option. Therefore the next panel date of June 25, 2018 is advisable.

Ms. Linehan and the applicant both noted the two weeks would be suffice for further conversation.

Ms. Law noted further public notification is not needed as the time for input is over and going forth it is an issue of refinement.

Motion

It was moved by Mr. Kelley and seconded by Mr. Mochrie, and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Board defer the decision to Development Application No. **DE420078** to the meeting of June 25, 2018.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:30pm.