

Date: March 4, 2024
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Place: Virtual WebEx

PRESENT:**Board:**

Andrea Law	General Manager, Development, Buildings, and Licensing
Corrie Okell	Director, Permitting Services (Chair)
Lon LaClaire	General Manager, Engineering Services
Matt Shillito	Director of Special Projects and Acting Director of Planning, Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability

Advisory Panel:

Craig Taylor	Representative of Urban Design Panel
Gloria Song	Representative of Design Profession
Joe Carreira	Representative of the Development Industry
Karenn Krangle	Representative of the General Public
Ellen Sy	Representative of the Development Industry

Regrets:

Michael Joko	Representative of the General Public
Dani Pretto	Representative of the Development Industry
Colin Vaness	Representative of the General Public
Monica Moore	Representative of the General Public

3398 North Arm Avenue (PDP APPLICATION) - DP-2023-00729**ALSO PRESENT:**

M. Au (Chair), Development Services
H. Ghasemi, Urban Design & Development Planning
M. So, Development Review Branch K. Amon, Planning and Park Development
E. Lau, Engineering Services
E. Finn, Planning and Park Development
L. Beaulieu, PDS Landscape
J. Wong, Facilities Planning and Development
K. Hsieh, Development Services
Y. Hii, PDS Social Planning
P. Fouladianpour, Development Services

Recording Secretary: M. Sem

1. MINUTES APPROVED

It was moved by Matt Shillito and seconded by Lon LaClaire and was the decision of the Board to approve January 15, 2024, and February 20, 2024, meeting minutes.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

3. 3398 North Arm Avenue (PDP APPLICATION) - DP-2023-00729

Applicant: Wesgroup Properties

Request: To develop the site with a 3-storey community centre that includes a 74-space childcare facility all over one level of underground parking along with two 1-storey retail buildings. The proposal includes a public plaza, and riverfront park including a shoreline walkway with bike path and is subject to Council enactment of the CD-1 By-law and approval of the form of development.

Planner's Comments

Hamed Ghasemi, Development Planner, presented the proposal and summarized the recommendations contained in the Staff Committee Report.

Applicant's Comments

The applicant will work with staff to meet the conditions for approval.

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

Speakers Comments

No Speakers

Panel Comments

Craig Taylor noted support for this project.

Craig Taylor noted this project provides a positive contribution to the River District as a whole.

Craig Taylor also noted UDP recommends transparency at the ground level is essential to positively contribute to the vitality and activation to the place.

Craig Taylor noted there some challenges associated with passive house certification and the window to wall ratio is essential in a public building fronting onto a public urban space.

Craig Taylor noted one thing that didn't come up during UDP at the time but have seen from another submission for the development to the north of the site whereby there is a concerted and concentrated pedestrian desire line coming towards the north of the building; would encourage engineering staff to look at the cross-street connection.

Craig Taylor encourages more transparency at ground level to positively contribute to the vitality and the activation of the plaza space.

Craig Taylor noted there were some challenges associated with passive house certification; and the window to wall ratio it is essential to a public building fronting onto a public urban space.

Craig Taylor noted support for the inclusion of the crane into the project but would encourage reconsideration of its location.

Gloria Song noted support for this project.

Gloria Song noted from the drawings and analysis diagrams, it clearly demonstrates how aspects such as programming of public realm traffic flow, sustainable design, flood protection and shoreline design and physical ratio connects have been fully incorporated in this project.

Gloria Song agreed with Craig Taylor– the ground floor should be fully improved to make it more interesting for the public.

Gloria Song noted the water element in the plaza is impressive and would encourage adding public art and signage to the area, making it a great educational and play area for the young kids.

Gloria Song noted appreciation for the 74 spaces- childcare with a nicely designed outdoor roof patio, this will be a huge benefit to the community.

Joe Carreira noted support for this project.

Joe Carreira agrees with Craig Taylor to activate the ground plane; also, noting the crane be relocated in and around the waterfront to speak to the history and historical site.

Joe Carreira noted further exploration of rooftop access.

Joe Carreira noted there are opportunities at the plaza, to enhance the child play area, bike and pedestrian route and enhance the customer experience.

Ellen Sy noted it's terrific to see the prime amenity focal point of the EFL come to fruition near the community centre, it's a "dynamic beating heart" and it's intended to be a distinct presence.

Ellen Sy noted the character and expression of the building and landscape design ties both the

ecological and the sensible priority of community programming but also echoing the comments from the other panelists that it's equally important the waterfront plaza and pedestrian connection , that there be a more visual connection between the CRU , community centre and the waterfront Ellen suggested a more spatial layout, seamless connection, and the interface could be further looked at.

Ellen Sy noted the execution and success of the river plaza, the “beating heart” and the distinct urban fabric, anchoring this high street would be really important and critical to the success of this master plan.

Karenn Krangle noted support for this project.

Karenn Krangle agreed community centre and the park will be a great access to the emerging neighbourhood.

Karenn Krangle echoed comments from panelists the need for transparency at the ground level.

Karenn Krangle noted the buildings look like a business park or warehouses and are just as about inviting.

Karenn Krangle agreed with UDP comments that it is a lost architectural opportunity and needs to be more animated, delightful, friendly, porous and transparent.

Karenn Krangle noted the project is very well programmed, a full library branch would be a good idea given the projected population.

Karenn Krangle noted good job on the daycare and play areas on the roof.

Karenn Krangle noted UDP comments suggested integrating the indoor and outdoor spaces; Karenn suggested having gym access to the outside or extending the gym to the outside.

Karenn Krangle noted space for food trucks would be a great addition to the plaza.

Karenn Krangle agreed with Joe Carreira that there should be a play area opportunity in the plaza.

Board Discussion

Matt Shillito noted support for this project; it is a good move forward on a project that is challenging and will improve through design development based on the conditions presented.

Matt Shillito noted from staff's presentation that it's generally compliant with the OEP and the CD-1 zoning and guidelines.

Matt Shillito noted trust that the parcel reconfiguration and the subdivision issues will be worked through around the parks base requirements.

Matt Shillito noted appreciation for the condition focused on increasing the visibility of the First Nations on the site.

Matt Shillito noted access to the rooftop of the retail building, is a “nice have” more than a requirement; there is adequate opportunities for views towards and across the river from the public realm within the parks base.

Matt Shillito noted in-favour of making the rooftop access condition more in the exploratory sense rather than a rigid requirement.

Andrea Law noted support for this project as a PDP (preliminary development permit), acknowledging there will be future and further refinements of the concept plans through subsequent DPs coming through.

Andrea Law noted this project is a welcome addition for the community and neighbourhood.

Andrea Law noted in-favour to Matt Shillito’s comment on refinements to the condition regarding rooftop access.

Lon LaClaire noted support for this project.

Lon LaClaire echoed panel’s comment to provide as much transparency to the plaza as possible.

Lon LaClaire noted no concerns with the crane over the retail; to the applicant’s point- being able to see it from way up the hill and being able to draw you down is key; there are a lot of heritage relic cranes in the city and they are not being incorporated into the retail so this might be the first and will be an interesting opportunity.

Lon LaClaire noted appreciation for the lower-level section of the park; it’s really nice to give people comfortable access down to the water.

Lon LaClaire echoed Craig Tylor’s comment regarding concerns with the pedestrian desire lines. Lon noted in this particular area, they have to be more important than the bike path, suggested by putting the bike path east of the crane retail building so that goes past the bike racks would make a lot of sense and it would make a shorter bike path and overall, less conflict.

Lon LaClaire noted in-favour to Matt Shillito’s comment to proposed changes to the condition on access to the rooftop – it is a nice have but not essential.

All board members voted in favor to amend the following condition as an exploratory condition rather than a rigid requirement:

A.1.3 design development to provide access to the roof of the retail building.

All board members voted in favor of the application to move forward subject to the conditions noted in the Staff Committee Report and the amended conditions.

Motion

The decision of the Board: THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application **DP-2023-00729** subject to the conditions in accordance with the Staff Committee Report dated **March 4, 2024**, with the following amendment:

To make as an exploratory condition rather than a rigid requirement:

A.1.3 design development to provide access to the roof of the retail building.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00pm