

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: October 2, 2017

TIME: 3:00 pm

PLACE: Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Kim Smith - Chair
James Cheng (excused from item #1 and 2)
Amela Brudar
Helen Avini Besharat (excused from item #3 and 4)
Leslie Shieh
Yijin Wen (excused from item #1)
Meredith Anderson
Karen Spoelstra
Renee Van Helm
Colette Parsons

REGRETS: Veronica Gillies
Muneesh Sharma
David Jerke

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Camilla Lade

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

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| 1. 969 Burrard Street & 1019-1045 Nelson Street |
| 2. 1668-1684 Alberni Street |
| 3. 728-796 Main Street |
| 4. 2715 W 12th Avenue |
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BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Kim Smith called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. A brief business meeting took place before the presentations commenced.

1. Address: 969 Burrard Street & 1019-1045 Nelson Street
Permit: DP-2017-00905
Description: To develop the site with a 57-storey building consisting of 331 market strata units; a 7-storey building consisting of 61 dwelling units (20 market rental and 41 social housing); and restoration of the First Baptist Church with ancillary spaces including a 37-space child daycare; all over seven levels of underground parking with 497 vehicle spaces accessed from the lane. This application proposes a combined floor area of approximately 52,200 sq. m (561,881 sq. ft.), and a floor space ratio (FSR) of approximately 10.83.
Zoning: CD-1
Application Status: Complete Development Application
Review: Second (First as a DP Application)
Architect: Bing Thom Architects
Owner: Farouk Babul/Fred Liebich, Westbank / First Baptist Church
Delegation: Amirali Javidan, Project Manager, Bing Thom Architects
Venelin Kokalov, Project Designer, Bing Thom Architects
John Wong, Landscape Architect, Bing Thom Architects
Jubin Jalili, LEED Consultant, Integral
Donald Luxton, Donald Luxton & Associates
Staff: Marie Linehan

EVALUATION: RESUBMISSION Recommended

Introduction: Marie Linehan, Development Planner, introduced the project as a development permit application following rezoning. The rezoning application was reviewed and supported by the Urban Design Panel in April 2016 and approved by Council in July this year under the provisions of the West End Community Plan. The height, density and general form of development was approved through the rezoning.

The proposal includes 3 elements: restoration of the Heritage-A listed First Baptist Church, a new 57-storey market residential tower, and a new 7-storey building containing 66 social housing units. A podium connects the church, tower and midrise elements, and contains new ancillary spaces for the church and a 37-space daycare. The pool amenity for the market residential units also spans the lane elevation.

The rezoning was approved with conditions which incorporated the previous advice of the Panel as well as staff. The urban design conditions focused on the podium scale, visual porosity through the site, and the amenity of the open spaces.

In particular a condition requires a 21.5' setback from the west property line. This was intended to provide more space for units facing the interior property line, as well as a pedestrian path to the lane secured via a statutory right-of-way. Other conditions seek improvements to the visual transparency and reduction to the scale of the podium, as viewed from Nelson Street and along the lane, and to provide a more varied massing and landscaping at the podium at the lane, noting the general intent of the West End Community Plan to improve the pedestrian quality of the lanes.

It is also noted that the development is subject to rezoning conditions with regards to sustainability to meet a minimum LEED Gold rating, and to demonstrate leadership in sustainable design as required by the General Policy for Higher Buildings, though specific criteria.

It is also noted that higher buildings in the downtown are expected to demonstrate a high degree of architectural creativity and excellence.

Advice from the Panel on this application is sought on the following:

Staff asks the UDP to comment on the response to the urban design conditions, as well as the further design development of the tower and open spaces.

- 1) Design development to improve the visual transparency and reduce the scale of the podium;
- 2) Design development to the open spaces at Nelson Plaza and the church courtyard to improve pedestrian amenity. In particular, provide comments on the reorientation of the main church entry stairs to face Burrard Street.
- 3) Design development to the tower form, in particular the introduction of greater transparency to the panels.

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant noted the changes to the form of the development. The west set back was increased in the design to improve the day lighting for the units as well as to create a mid-block connection. The landscape was intended to be improved by the setback as well as balconies along the passage. From the lane side, there is a loading bay planned. Filtered views along the lane are meant to create greenscapes. Along the lane, the massing design is varied to increase the building setbacks on different levels. The scale of development is broken down and there is more opportunity for landscape to improve pedestrian experience and views from the balconies. The stair orientation is important to the form of development. The courtyard design is intended to be 'opened up' and connectivity improved. The accessible ramp is designed more at grade.

The façade design symbolizes clouds and the glazing symbolizes blue sky. The façade was developed later. There were new screens brought down to scale in the proposal. The concrete structure is closer to the language of the tower.

Landscaping wise, the intention was to improve all four sides. There is a water feature that is intended to be retained. But on the Nelson side the water feature is planned for removal. The landscape would be an ally of trees with screening and a mid-block landscape connection. There is a community garden and a children's outdoor play area with edible plants planned. The back of the building has its own frontage. Grasses break up the volume and trees were added in the design. The windscreens were improved in the proposal.

The applicant team then took questions from the panel.

- **Panel Consensus:**

Having reviewed the project it was moved by Ms. Anderson and seconded by Ms. Avini Besharat and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

THAT the Panel **RESUBMISSION** of the project with the following recommendations to be reviewed by City Staff:

- Clarify and simplify the architectural ideas in the overall scheme
- Activate the lane with more physical connections and porosity
- Design development to the podium open spaces: the courtyard on Nelson is too small and could be reconsidered as a unifying space including a common entrance for both buildings, and the heritage courtyard needs more attention due to its' small size and location, including consideration of afterhours gating
- The rental building needs to be given the same degree of design attention as the tower including the facades and space planning particularly at the entry
- Provide improved sense of entries to the buildings
- Re-consider the glass enclosure of the swimming pool
- Ensure a respectful relationship between the podium and the church and provide sufficient spacing so the podium does not compete with the church
- Simplify or re-size the organ pipe cut-outs so they do not compete with the church and work more in scale with the street and podium
- Consider passive energy conservation methods for the building
- Consider the public art to ensure it does not negatively impact residential units

Related Commentary: The panel generally agreed that the tower design was well developed and iconic, but there was a loss of quality in the design development to the podium and open spaces since rezoning. The Panel noted the clarity of the three elements (church, tower and midrise) at rezoning and the importance of the podium as a fourth element and a connecting piece. It was felt in particular that the lane elevation had suffered, and the proximity and connection of the podium to the church was not an improvement.

There were questions about the height at the lane in relation to the other elements (church and midrise). It was felt that the setback at the lane was not adequate to support the proposed landscape. It was suggested that the book ends of the pool need a different treatment. It was suggested that the pool be open air, instead of enclosed to reduce the height at the lane. It was also noted that this would improve solar/daylight access for the childcare outdoor amenity space, which was seen to be needed.

The Panel noted that the relocation of the midrise reduced the size of Nelson Plaza such that it was reading as cramped and needed to be rethought. It was suggested that the plaza be more of a unifying space and provide a common entry for both the tower and midrise; one member suggested enclosure of the plaza as an atrium noting its' reduced size. It was noted that the connection to the lane should be more than just a visual connection as proposed; a pedestrian connection through the plaza to the lane was recommended. It was noted that further activation of the lane through active uses and entries was needed.

Some members had concerns about energy loss at the open breezeways in the tower versus the benefits of social interaction that they would provide. It was noted that insulation was not needed in the guardrails. There were concerns that the public art is not in the right place in the glass structure as it may impact livability of adjacent units. Some suggested that the scallops for the 'organ pipes' were out of scale and distract from the overall form.

- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant team for the comments and noted they hoped to create an opening through the podium. The courtyard was meant to be more intimate. The rental building was not intended as an afterthought, but rather a back drop.

2. Address: 1668-1684 Alberni Street
 Permit No.: RZ-2017-00050
 Description: To develop a 39-storey building consisting of a 6-storey podium and 94 market residential units, all over four levels of underground parking with 180 vehicle stalls and 120 bicycle spaces. This application proposes a floor space ratio (FSR) of 10.7 and a building height of 117.3 m (385 ft.).
- Zoning: RM-5C to CD-1
 Application Status: Rezoning application
 Review: First
 Architect: Bing Thom Architects
 Owner: Josh Anderson, Westbank Projects
 Delegation: Venelin Kokain, Project Designer, BTA
 Marcos Hui, Project Manager, BTA
 Chris Phillips, Landscape Architect, PFS Studio
 David Ramslie, LEED Consultant, Integral Group
- Staff: Yan Zeng & Patrick O'Sullivan
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EVALUATION: SUPPORT with Recommendations

- **Introduction:** Yan Zeng, Rezoning Planner, introduced the project as a rezoning application for this site at the southeast corner of Alberni Street and Bidwell Street. There are two existing strata residential buildings on site, both of them are rented.

Policy Context:

- The proposal is rezone from RM-5C, one of the West End residential district schedules, to a CD-1, to demolish two existing buildings and replace them with a single residential tower, containing 94 strata units.
- The rezoning is being considered under the *West End Community Plan* and the *Rezoning Policy for the West End*.
- Under the *West End Community Plan*, for this site, which is part of the Georgia/Alberni corridor, a rezoning for increased height and density for a market residential development can be considered.
- The intent of the rezoning policy is to accommodate growth in this corridor and to use the density increase to support the West End Public Benefit Strategy to help delivery of growth-related community amenities.
- The proposed land use of 100% market residential development in this proposal would meet this policy intent.

Patrick O'Sullivan, Development Planner, introduced the project as on a corner site with Alberni Street to the north, Bidwell Street to the west and Cardero Street to the east.

The surrounding context buildings consist of:

- a 385-foot-tall residential tower proposed immediately to the east (in-stream rezoning application)
- a 434-foot-tall residential tower designed by Kengo Kuma to the east of Cardero Street (approved rezoning application)
- two residential towers on the "White Spot" site (currently a rezoning enquiry)
- an existing office building at 1500 West Georgia Street along with a proposal for a 439-foot-tall residential tower designed by Ole Sheeren (in-stream rezoning application)
- an existing 200-foot-tall slab residential tower to the southeast
- existing residential buildings to the northeast: a 213-foot-tall tower with townhouse podium

- a 94-foot-tall residential building to the west, and mixed-use low-rise further west
- mixed-use low-rise development to the south

The site area is 165' x 131'. It is a relatively flat site, with the high point at the southeast corner less than 3 feet higher than the northwest corner. The proposal is for a 39-storey residential condo development with 94 units, of which 81 are family units.

The height and view cones consist of:

- four view cones pass over the site. B1, C1, 20 and 3.2.1: most restrictive is 20 from Granville and Broadway, limiting height to 316 feet
- however, there's a view cone shadow caused by other existing building/buildings in the foreground of that view cone that already protrudes into the view cone to a height of 400 feet
- the maximum height as per West End Plan is 385 feet
- the proposal's height does come in under the view cone shadow
- 8'8 architectural appurtenance

There is a design requirement to not cast shadow on the lot boundary of Marina Square Park at key daylight hours on the Equinox. For this reason the top of the tower is shaped. Architectural features include a concrete exoskeleton and curved glass.

The ground plane consists of:

- a water feature along Alberni Street
- a condo lobby taking up most of the Alberni frontage and one at-grade 3-bedroom unit
- a spa located centrally on the plan
- a 2-bedroom unit on the southwest corner
- parking and loading accessed from the lane
- a multi-purpose/amenity room adjacent to a children's play area

The podium consists of:

- the podium steps down in massing towards Bidwell
- a 6-storey podium with mostly two-level units and inaccessible green roof areas
- horizontal fins

Traditionally developments in the area have had an option of accommodating a row of 3-level townhouses or an open court at grade (similar to a tower in the park expression).

Staff preference is for a podium in new development that provides a consistent pedestrian environment, in human scale and limits shadowing impact. The proposed floorplate complies with 5,500 square feet at 69 feet by 82 feet.

The proposed density is 10.7 FSR. There are 180 parking spaces and 126 bike spaces proposed.

Advice from the Panel on this application is sought on the following:

1) Density and Form of Development:

- do you support the proposed density?
- do you support the proposed height?

Please comment on the success of the design of the exoskeleton/exterior balcony layer in terms of impression of building bulk.

2) Podium

- do you support the proposed podium massing (depth, height and breadth) in relation to the context?

- do you support the extent of the proposed horizontal fins at the podium level with respect to apparent bulk and shadowing?

3) Landscape and Public Realm

- does the proposed form of development and landscape architecture contribute to enhancing the Public Realm on Alberni Street and the lane?

Please comment on the proposed landscape design, which includes:

the water feature, the proposal's relationship to the Public Realm, green roofs, and children's play area.

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant wanted to create a tower that was elegant and beautiful for the West End. By using a simple form, it was an attempt to achieve a functional and aesthetically pleasant 'exoskeleton'. There are balconies and other outdoor spaces proposed. The balconies were intended to be 'outdoor living rooms'. It was a design opportunity to have better access to nature. There are private balconies proposed. The tower is designed at grade. The denser units allow for more activation. The lobby design announces itself at the water feature. The building design was terraced to create a better transition to Bidwell. The design frames the existing trees.

The spaces were intended to be engaged and occupied. There is a space for community to gather outside.

The applicant team then took questions from the panel.

- **Panel Consensus:** Having reviewed the project it was moved by Ms. Avini Basharat and seconded by Ms. Anderson and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

THAT the Panel **SUPPORT** the project with following recommendations to be reviewed by City Staff:

- Look at the podium in terms of how it relates to the neighbourhood character and the streets. Specifically, the scale of the podium should relate to the lower scale streetscape along Bidwell Street and Robson Street
- Look at the water element so that the building is not too segregated from the public realm
- Look at the single unit on the street in terms of viability and privacy
- Improve the elevator structure
- Look at the overall ground floor programming and layout, including the piano, the amenity spaces, and specifically, the lobby and how it can be more welcoming to the street and the public
- Consider more activation in the lane

Related Commentary: The height and density are supported as it is a very 'elegant' and 'refined' building. The façade treatment is refreshing. However, the podium massing and landscape are a lost opportunity.

The trees add a beautiful edge to the building. The loading bay and the garbage at the lane opposite Whole Foods across the lane needs more work. The balcony vegetation needs to be irrigated. Consider a public art aspect.

Applicant's Response: The applicant team appreciated the comments.

3. Address: **728-796 Main Street**
 Permit No.: RZ-2017-00025
 Description: To develop a 15-storey mixed-use building consisting of commercial space at the ground level and mezzanine; 19 social housing units located at the mezzanine and second level; and 99 market residential units from the third to fifteenth levels; all over four levels of underground parking. This application proposes a floor space ratio (FSR) of 8.12 and a building height of 45.7 m (150 ft.).
- Zoning: HA-1A to CD-1
 Application Status: Rezoning Application
 Review: First
 Architect: Studio One Architecture
 Owner: BONNIS DEVELOPMENT MAIN INC
 Delegation: Tomas Wolf, Architect, Studio One Architecture
 Jonathan Losee, Landscape Architect, J.L. LM.
 Staff: Yan Zeng & Marie Linehan

EVALUATION: RESUBMISSION Recommended

Introduction: Yan Zeng, Rezoning Planner, introduced the project a rezoning application for this site at northeast corner of Main and Union streets.

- The site is 107 feet along Main Street/120 feet along Union Street.
- Currently on site, there are three buildings. At corner is a 3-storey building called Creekside Student Residence. The building was built pre-1940, and it is designated under the City's Single Room Accommodation By-law. There are 22 existing SRO rooms in this building.
- There is a structure that is located at the back of the Creekside building/that is one-storey structure facing Union Street. It is also a pre-1940 building, historically known as a taxi dispatch stand.
- Then on 728 Main, is a two storey commercial building, with the bar "the Brickhouse" on its second floor. This is also a pre-1940 building.

Policy Context

- The proposal is to rezone the site from HA-1A (Chinatown Historic Area District) to a CD-1 in order to permit a 15-storey mixed-use development.
- Commercial/retail units are proposed on ground floor and the mezzanine level, facing both streets as well as wrapping around the rear lane.
- 19 studio social housing units are proposed on level 2 and the mezzanine level. The social housing units are replacement housing for the existing SRO on site, and are to be delivered turn-key to the City.
- All three existing structures are proposed to be demolished – the façade for 728 Main is proposed to be saved.

Marie Linehan, Development Planner, introduced the project as an application under the Rezoning Policy for Chinatown South (HA-1A). A building height of 150' and a density of 8.12 FSR are proposed. Under the base zoning for Chinatown South, HA-1A, the height limit is 90' with a lower

street wall of 70' recommended under the design guidelines. Under the rezoning policy in the Main Street Sub-Area, a height of approximately 150' may be considered.

There is no FSR limit under the HA-1A zoning. The height limit and the design guidelines regulate the form of development, and the ultimately the density that may be achieved. This approach is the same for the rezoning policy.

Under the urban design provisions of the rezoning policy and the Chinatown design guidelines, new buildings should respect the fine grain and historic character of Chinatown in terms of their scale and massing, as well as their architectural expression, details, and materials. Building facades should reflect the historic development pattern of 25' lots. To that end, street facades should be divided into distinct vertical increments with a saw tooth or stepped height profile to follow the narrow lot pattern. This is intended to convey a sense of incremental development of narrower lots by different architects over the years across the site frontage.

The building massing above 90' should exhibit articulation that is compatible with the street wall below. There are specific guidelines for setbacks to the upper massing: a setback of 25' should be provided at the primary façade at Main Street and 15' at the Union Street façade. For developments over 120' in height, a step in the massing should be provided for the upper 3 stories to break the roofline.

New buildings on Main Street should also emphasize its' role as a neighbourhood high street with retail uses at grade.

The site is located at the boundary of Chinatown South and Northeast False Creek. The sites to the south across Union Street are currently under review as part of the viaduct removal and NEFC Planning process.

Advice from the Panel on this application is sought on the following:

Comment on the proposed height, density and form of development, with respect to the urban design provisions of the rezoning policy for Chinatown South, in particular:

- 1) Is the proposal compatible with historic Chinatown in terms of the architectural scale, massing, expression, details and materials?
- 2) Does the proposal provide suitable variation in the building facades to reflect the historic development pattern?
- 3) Does the building form above 90' exhibit sufficient articulation and modulation compatible with the building forms below?

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant noted the building has gone through various design iterations. The proposed building has a stepping. The entrance is a reference to the existing building. The façade elements of the brick would be re-claimed. The mid part is strong brick clad and meant to be understated. It is designed to be a 'strong' ground floor with a solid base and a light expression on the top.

There is one existing tree that will be retained due to complications from the underground utilities. There will be plantings. The intention is to add details to the units. The Chinatown paving pattern would be continued at the site. The plan is to introduce common amenity spaces. The lane would have paving patterns that will be more interesting.

The applicant team then took questions from the panel.

- **Panel Consensus:** Having reviewed the project it was moved by Ms. Parsons and seconded by Mr. Cheng and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

THAT the Panel **RESUBMISSION** with the following recommendations to be reviewed by City Staff:

- The form should respond to the corner condition noting the site is a gateway to Chinatown
 - Provide a vertical connection between the building base and the portions above 90'
 - Provide more texture and variation to the facades, including varying the street wall height with a sawtooth profile.
 - Consider reversing the stepping on the north for improved daylight access
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel noted that the height and density should only be supported if further refinement of the design is provided. The building will read as a gateway building on a significant site, so it should be more distinctive. The street wall height may exceed 90' to add prominence to the corner as well as a saw tooth profile. A setback to the upper massing may further emphasize the corner.
 - **Applicant's Response:** The applicant team thanked the panel and will discuss the urban design directions with regards to height and massing with Planning.

4. Address:	2715 W 12th Avenue
Permit No.:	RZ-2016-00049
Description:	To develop a 3.5-storey townhouse development under the Affordable Housing Choices Interim Rezoning Policy. The proposal consists of 15 units of secured market rental housing at a floor space ratio (FSR) of 1.5, and a height of 37.5 ft.
Zoning:	RS-7 to CD-1
Application Status:	Rezoning Application
Review:	First
Architect:	MCM Partnership
Owner:	2715 WEST 12TH INVESTMENTS LTD
Delegation:	Mark Thompson, Architect, MCMP Peter Odegaard, Architect, MCMP Peter Kreuk, Landscape Architect, DKL
Staff:	Michelle Yip & David Lee

EVALUATION: SUPPORT with Recommendations

- **Introduction:** Michelle Yip, Rezoning Planner, introduced the project as located in Kitsilano at the northwest corner of 12th Avenue and Stephens Street, where 12th Avenue becomes Kitsilano Diversion heading west. It is one block west of Kitsilano Secondary and two blocks from the Kitsilano Community Centre and Connaught Park.

The area south of 12th Avenue and west of Macdonald Street is zoned RS-5. The subject site and surrounding area to the north and east are zoned RS-7, which conditionally permits two-family dwellings, multiple conversion dwellings and laneway houses, and on larger lots, multiple dwellings and infill.

The proposal is being considered under the Affordable Housing Choices Interim Rezoning Policy, which allows for rezoning consideration for a 3.5-storey ground-oriented form at this location. The policy includes a spacing requirement between projects, where no more than two projects can be considered within 10 blocks along an arterial street. The proposal is for a 3.5-storey townhouse development containing 15 secured market rental housing units at 1.5 FSR and a height of 37.5 feet.

David Lee, Development Planner, introduced the project as the site is triangular and is located in the Kitsilano neighborhood. It is framed by W 12th Ave to the south, Stephens St to the east, and there is a 20'-0" lane to the north. The base zoning is RS-7 which extends to the west, north, and east and RS-5 extends to the south on the south side of W 12th Ave.

There are no additional density recommendations for RS zones under the Rental Incentives guidelines so the approach is to apply RM-7 regulations as a baseline. The anticipated form of development for stacked townhouses in RM-7 is a 2.5 storey building with a maximum height of 37.72', an FSR of 1.2, and a dwelling unit density of 132 units per hectare for up to 11 dwelling units. The proposal is for a 3.5 storey building with a maximum height of 37.5', an FSR of 1.5, and 15 dwelling units.

Under the guidelines for high density housing, developments should have outdoor open space in the form of a small common space for use by adults, an outdoor play area for preschool children with a minimum area of 50 square metres, and an outdoor play area for elementary and teenaged children with a minimum area of 85 square metres. Approximately 30 square metres of play area is currently provided.

Section 3.3.3 allows the reduction of the play areas if reasonable access to playgrounds and community facilities are within 0.4km. Connaught Park is approximately located within 0.5km and Carnarvon and Tatlow Parks are located within 1.0km.

Advice from the Panel on this application is sought on the following:

- 1) Does the panel support the size and location of the common open space?

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant noted there is a lot of existing space for development. There is an existing 'stepped footprint' that follows a 'curved geometry'. The geometry creates a space in the back for parking and a kid's play area. The units would be accessed by front doors. There is back access designed for the family units. The units are 1 and 3 bedrooms. The floor elements step slightly. There is one level designed above grade. The proposed top is contained with gable roofs. The standards meet sustainable guidelines and the project has passive house elements.

The proposed plants tend to be pollinators. The kid's play space is placed in the back area.

The applicant team then took questions from the panel.

- **Panel Consensus:** Having reviewed the project it was moved by Mr. Wen and seconded by Mr. Brudar

THAT the Panel **SUPPORT** the project with the following recommendations to be reviewed by City Staff:

- Re-examine where the play area on the north side so that there is more access to light and visual access
- Address Stephens more as a street because it has better orientation for units

Related Commentary: Family housing is appreciated in the area. However the site plan needs work. The building needs a sense of community. It needs a focal point to make it a sense of community. The end of the lane could use more work.

- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant team thanked the panel for the feedback.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.