

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

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**DATE:** June 17, 2020

**TIME:** 4:00 pm

**PLACE:** Webex

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:

Walter Francl  
Marie-Oedile Marceau  
Brittany Coughlin  
Alan Davies  
Michael Henderson  
Margot Long  
Adrian Rahbar (chair for item 2)  
Sydney Schwartz  
Muneesh Sharma  
Jennifer Stamp (exclude from item 2)  
Karenn Krangle

**REGRETS:**

Angela Enman  
Matt Younger

**RECORDING**

**SECRETARY:** M.Sem

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ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	5910-5998 Cambie Street
2.	450 W Georgia Street

**BUSINESS MEETING**

Chair Jennifer Stamp called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. The panel then considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 5910-5998 Cambie Street  
Permit No. RZ-2019-00090  
Description: To develop the site with a 29-storey market residential tower and a 15-storey hotel tower over a podium with 168 strata units, 270 hotel units, 10 artist live-work studios, and commercial retail use at grade; all over six levels of underground parking consisting of 281 vehicle spaces and 377 bicycle spaces. The maximum building height is 85 m (278 ft.), the floor area is 31,982 sq. m (344,256 sq. ft.), and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 10.86. This application is being considered under the Cambie Corridor Plan.  
Zoning: RT-2 to CD-1  
Application Status: Rezoning Application  
Review: First  
Architect: David Dove - Perkins + Will Architects  
Delegation: Joe Fry - Hapa Collaborative Landscape Architects  
Owners:  
Staff: Tiffany Rougeau & Ryan Dinh

**EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations (10/0)****• Introduction:**

Rezoning Planner, Tiffany Rougeau presented this rezoning application at 5910-5998 Cambie Street under the Cambie Corridor Plan rezoning policy. Tiffany began by providing an overview of the site and surrounding context. Tiffany also spoke to the specifics of the Plan's expectations for the subject site, as well as current and anticipated contexts. Tiffany concluded her presentation with a description of the site and a summary of the rezoning proposal.

Development Planner, Ryan Dinh, started by giving an overview of the vision of the Cambie Corridor Plan for the neighborhood, followed by the expectations of the built-form guidelines. He then gave a brief description of the proposed project before concluding with Staff questions for the Panel.

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

1. Does the Panel support the proposed tower form and massing in relation to the expectation of the Cambie Corridor Plan?
2. Comments on the quality of public realm, particularly the plaza and the lane interface.
3. Comments on the proposed architectural design including the building projection and its relationship to the overall building form.

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

The Applicant noted this project includes a plaza as a gateway to the connection between the Oakridge mall and Columbia Park and is surrounded by neighbouring towers.

To maintain the separation between the residential tower and the hotel tower, the residential tower projects over the plaza at 40ft above grade to expose the retail frontage on the north plaza.

There are a variety of indoor and outdoor amenity spaces for the hotel and the residential towers. Retail spaces are wrapped around the corner of Cambie and 43<sup>rd</sup> and opening out to the plaza along with residential front lobby for both live-work and rental units. To the south of Cambie, the hotel entrance lobby will be used for lounge/restaurant/café. Parking and loading is located off to the lane.

Landscape rationale is guided by the Cambie Corridor Public Realm with the idea of protection and enclosure at the edges of the street. Bike lane with road trees and generous sidewalk are provided. The minor plaza on 43<sup>rd</sup> Ave extends to the east with large bench at the edge of the planted buffer to the street, providing room for pedestrians to step out from a parallel parking area. At the drop off of the plaza, circular planters are provided to unify the edges at the minor plaza on 44<sup>th</sup> Ave, creating separation from the sidewalk.

The applicant team then took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**

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

- Explore opportunities to further activate the lane
- Consider providing amenity or greenery to level 7 of the hotel infill
- Distinguish the residential lobby on 43<sup>rd</sup> Ave.

- **Panel Commentary:**

Building form and massing:

- General support from Panel on the proposed tower form, massing and relationship to the Cambie Corridor Plan
- Panel supported the tower projection on W. 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue over the public realm, and supported the setback on 43<sup>rd</sup> at the pedestrian level. The panel appreciated the departure from the typical tower podium relationship.

Public realm:

- General support from Panel on the treatment of the public realm.
- Panel appreciated the planters and benches on the ground plane and encouraged applicant to add more greenery and seating.
- Panel suggested the mechanical shaft on east of E 43<sup>rd</sup> plaza be relocated so that it is not part of the plaza

- The panel appreciates the dialogue with the green space across 43<sup>rd</sup> and encouraged the applicant to talk to the landscape architect that is designing the adjacent plaza (across 43<sup>rd</sup>).

#### Lane Interface:

- Panel noted the vehicular uses consume the lane frontage and suggested adding green and more activation along the lane. The hotel lobby off the lane provides good activation.
- More greenery and tree canopy along the lane is needed.
- The panel supports the special paving into the lane/city property
- Panel noted the connectivity of 44th Ave to the porte cochere could be improved.

#### Architectural design:

- General support from panel on the architectural design
- Regarding the blank wall along W. 44<sup>th</sup> Ave. as part of the kitchen's café area for the hotel, Panel suggested introducing windows for lighting and activation creating interest to public realm
- Panel suggested different residential tower and hotel façade expression to be further strengthened.

#### Others:

- Panel supported sustainability strategy for this project.
  - General support from Panel of having a hotel in the neighbourhood
  - Panel suggested to further improve prominence of the bike elevator
  - Panel appreciated the handling of the hotel and its integration with the residential tower
  - The panel felt that the project has a minimum contribution of green to the City (0.2% of the site area) and encouraged the applicant to explore further means of adding green to the project.
  - The panel asked the applicant to add more roof use overall and in particular at level 7
  - One panel member suggested exploring the soffit of the north tower overhang as a potential location for the public art (adjacent to the artist's studios).
- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant team thanked the Panel for their comments.

**BUSINESS MEETING**

Chair Adrian Rahbar called the meeting to order at 5:20.m. The panel then considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

2. Address: 450 W Georgia Street  
 Permit No. RZ-2019-00091  
 Description: To develop a 23-storey office building with public and commercial retail space at grade over six levels of underground parking consisting of 270 vehicle spaces and 236 bicycle spaces. The proposed building height is 87.2 m (286 ft.), the total floor area is 34,902.8 sq. m (375,554 sq. ft.), and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 15.65. This application is being considered under the Rezoning Policy for the Central Business District (CBD) and CBD Shoulder
- Zoning: DD to CD-1  
 Application Status: Rezoning Application  
 Review: First  
 Architect: Wing Leung - WT Leung Architects  
 Delegation: Stephen Vincent - Durante Kreuk Landscape Architects  
 Owners: Navid Hossaini - Sustainability Consultant
- Staff: Leifka Vissers & Carl Stanford

**EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations (8/1)**

- Introduction:

**REZONING PROPOSAL**

The proposal is for the construction of a 23-storey office tower with an overall height of 87.8 m (286 ft.), a gross floor area of 34,902.8 sq. m (375,554 sq. ft.) and a Floor Space Ratio of 15.65 to rezone from DD (C1) to CD-1 under the CBD & CBD Shoulder Rezoning Policy and Building height of 87.2 m (286 ft.) 270 vehicle parking spaces with 236 bicycle spaces.

The rezoning application before you today is located at 450 West Georgia St. The site is located at the intersection of West Georgia St. and Richards St. The application proposes a rezoning from DD (downtown) to CD-1 (comprehensive development) to allow for a 23-storey office building. I will be speaking to the policy context under which this application is being considered, after which my colleague Carl will speak to the form of development of the application.

Currently zoned DD (Downtown District), a number of non-residential uses are allowed on the site, including office and retail uses. The *Downtown Official Development Plan* allows for a floor space ratio (FSR) of up to 7.0 in Area C1, a basic discretionary height of 91.4 m (300 ft.) and a maximum discretionary height of 137.2 m (450 ft.), subject to view cone restrictions. Additional non-residential density may be considered at this site under the *Rezoning Policy for the Central Business District (CBD) and CBD Shoulder*.

According to the *Downtown Official Development Plan*, secured interior public space may be excluded in FSR calculations (up to 6,000 sq. ft.). The site area is 2,230sq. m (24,000 sq. ft.) measuring 120' along West Georgia St. and 200' along Richards St. The *Public Art Policy for*

*Rezoned Developments* applies to rezonings having a floor area of 9,290.0 sq. m (100,000 sq. ft.) or greater.

Immediately to the West of the site is Telus Garden, a 21-storey office tower and 45-storey residential tower with retail podium at grade. To the East of this site at 400 West Georgia is a 24-storey office building, currently under construction, which resembles stacked boxes. Across West Georgia to the North of the site is "The Post" two office towers atop the former Canada Post building podium. Additional non-residential density may be considered at this site under the *Rezoning Policy for the Central Business District (CBD) and CBD Shoulder*.

According to the *Downtown Official Development Plan*, secured interior public space may be excluded in FSR calculations (up to 6,000 sq. ft.). The *Rezoning Policy for Sustainable Large Developments* does not apply, however it would apply to a rezoning application with a floor area of 45,000 sq. m (484,375 sq. ft.) or more.

#### SITE

The subject site is a rectangular site measuring 120' x 200' is located in the core of the Downtown District zoned DD, area C1 at the southeast corner of the West Georgia Street and Richards Street intersection. The northern portion of the site contains an existing surface parking lot and the southern portion of the site contains a three-storey retail buildings fronting onto Richards Street.

#### CONTEXT

Immediately to the south of the site the L'Hermitage building containing social housing, hotel, condos and retail. The 24 storey Telus Gardens office tower is to the north west and the 400 W. Georgia office 24 storey development currently under construction is to the south east, flanking either side of the site along W. Georgia. Both sites were re-zoned to CD-1.

#### POLICY:

The principle governing policy for the site as relates to the FOD includes:

- Downtown Official Development Plan
- Downtown (except Downtown South) Design Guidelines
- Downtown District (Except Downtown South) Character Areas Description
- General Policy for Higher Buildings
- View Protection Guidelines
- West Georgia Street Tree and Sidewalk Design Guidelines
- Interior Public Space Guidelines for DD, BCPED, C-3A, C-5, C-6 and FC-1 Districts

#### VIEW CONES:

The subject site is covered by view cones 9.1 and 9.2.2. The lowest view corridor impacting the site is 9.1. The compliance with any Viewcone height encroachment will be determined following a technical assessment and adjusted as required within the process.

#### TOWER SEPERATION

Separation distances for residential to residential buildings are recommended as minimum 24m/ 80'. Staff required an 80-foot tower separation from L'Hermitage tower. For office to office tower buildings there is no separation requirement.

#### SETBACK & SRW's:

	Required	Proposed
W. Georgia:	18'-0 1/2"	18'-0 1/2"
Richards:	18'-0 1/2"	11'-9 1/2" (Fl. 4-7)
PL Setback South:	None	None
PL Setback Lane:	None	0'-3 1/2"

#### FORM & FUNCTION:

At the ground level, an indoor Privately Owned Public Space (POPS) is proposed, along with a retail space, and the office lobby. The primary entrance for the office component of the building is off West Georgia St with secondary entrances off Richards. The primary entrance for the POPs and retail however is off Richards Street. The Privately Owned Public Open Space (POPOS) provides sitting and table areas open to the general public during weekday business hours

Commercial retail units are integrated in the lobby/ POPOS space, attempting to activate both street frontages and reinforcing existing commercial patterns established by adjacent buildings. Vehicular access is from the Lane at the SE corner leading to 6 levels of underground. Loading is provided both at the Lane and at the P1 level of the parkade. The first 3 stories of the building are recessed providing circulation at grade separated from the sidewalk by steps on Richards St and flush with the sidewalk on Georgia St with a planter box and landscaping.

The upper levels of the building sits above this recessed three-storey ground floor area and contain office uses with outdoor amenity provided at level 8 and level 23 towards the south end of the building. Along the Richards frontage, there are 2 proposed encroachments into the 5.5m (18') setback. At the SW corner of the Ground Floor and extending up to the level 4 soffit is a 1'-11" (0.58m) encroachment where exit stairs and the bicycle entrance are located.

The other Richards St. encroachment is the cantilever of Floors 4 to 7 into the setback by 6'-3" (1.91m).

The building is orthogonal in form consisting of simple planar geometries with a recessed at grade interface. The W. Georgia facade is the front face of the building and appears as a rectangular slender glazed box sitting upon, exterior metal- clad columns. On Richards the planar volumes attempt to create continuity with the existing adjoining streetscape. Along the lane there is a vertical of glass plane separated by solid metal cladding of the washrooms running the vertical length of the facade of the lane 20' across from 400 W Georgia.

#### SUSTAINABILITY:

The 450 West Georgia St. project will be designed and constructed to meet the Low Emissions Green Buildings requirements of the City of Vancouver Green Buildings Policy for Rezoning. The project will be designed to achieve Gold certification under LEED for Core and Shell (CS) v4 rating system.

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

1. Please comment on the articulation of the buildings massing, the transition of character (crown body, podium) to the streetscape, the contribution to the general skyline, its sustainable design and the architectural expression (encompassing the colour, reflectivity, shape, proportions, fenestration etc.) of the proposal.

2. Please comment on the contextual fit of the proposal with regard to its relationships and impact to the neighboring buildings as well as the aesthetic and environmental conditions of the interstitial spaces created.
3. Please comment on the quality of the public realm and whether it creates a fluid accessible pedestrian environment that is attractive, sheltered, and inviting in a pedestrian scale contiguous with adjacent developments and further comment on the at grade interface with its definition of entry points etc?

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Landscape is described as Quiet elegance looking at quality building on strong patterns. Recognize there is a unique condition due to the public open space for physical and physio accessibility,

To blur the line between inside and outside, there is a large flat wall, the idea being that to create the indoor and outdoor space and primary way to achieve this is by extending the paving pattern out from the inside to the outside and the understanding that the exterior is going to be not split and it is not going to be the same but can achieve a similar look. Primary location being downtown, there will be a lot of people, the circulation pattern was important and applicant feels they have achieved this.

One of the key to the visibility in terms of grading, on the corner of Richards and W Georgia St is the high point at about 104.6, and slopes away on both sides from that. The grade of interior space is about the same, as it drops away it begins to introduce the stairs and planters as well as bridge the gap and create some visual interest along there.

There will be lighting to create some ambience to create an inviting feel.

On the lane side closer to 400 W Georgia facing the neighbouring project, some stairs as well as a roof hill planter will be introduced, as well as a small tree so the planter is quite large and deep allowing for appropriate amount of soil and planting to soften edge.

There is opportunity for public art to allow for public engagement for a more rich public space. In addition, the outdoor café that is at the space and planter on Georgia St side is a buffer between public realm outside of the property.

The off-site space will be approved with new paving to match the W. Georgia St. standard which will match the neighbouring projects on both Richards St and W. Georgia St. Most of the trees on W. Georgia will be new as there is currently one tree there. Regarding the trees on Richard St, applicant has not decided if they will use existing trees or replace with new trees.

On the next panel moving up the building, the 2 landscape levels, the objective is to create strong organic forms in contrast to the building, this is to create a level of interest in the landscape. The forms are quite large, trying to establish a large volume of soil so the trees can reach their maximum potential.

Applicant noted on level 8 the buffer between the opposite building and this building there will be a landscape buffer. Moving up next level, strong landscape forms with built in benches that will reinforce those forms. Moving up to the rooftop is an extensive green roof, and will look extensively at native plantings.

The project is targeting LEED gold standards. The project is focusing on active transportations, providing cycling facilities connected to City of Vancouver cycling network, reducing energy consumption, reducing water consumption for the building and



reducing greenhouse gas emission. The project is following the low emission green building policy. Applicant noted they are meeting the energy performance target for total energy use. The building is focusing on health and wellness; it will provide indoor environment for the occupants to have access to quality indoor air and increased ventilation.

Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:

Having reviewed the project it was moved by Mr. Davies and seconded by Mr. Franci and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

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

- Further develop the definition of the lobby and develop the public realm on Georgia.
  - Explore strategies to simplify the massing of the building.
  - Explore ways to improve accessibility on Georgia.
  - Further development of solar shading devices to create a stronger contrast with the north elevation.
  - Further consideration to the setbacks of the walls on either side of the central circulation core— particularly on the north side — in order to increase the setback or aperture of the lane.
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- Panel Commentary:
    - There was general support for the building appropriateness, good design, and attractiveness
    - There were mixed reviews on the success of the ground level
    - There was general support for the operability of the windows.
    - Panel noted appreciation for the quality and detail of the curtain wall system
    - Panel suggested softer planters and landscape on the ground plane
    - There was general concern from panel with congestion on site within context of the adjacent buildings
    - There was general concern from panel with concerns with the height of the ground level recess
    - Panel noted accessibility concerns regarding the stairs to the public garden on the ground level.
    - There was general appreciation from panel of the modern expression of the rendering glass along Georgia
    - Panel suggested breaking the mass into horizontal and vertical volumes, providing a good transition on Richards St
    - There was general appreciation from panel on the 3 storey open volume on Georgia St.
    - There was general support for the form and massing
    - Panel noted concerns with the public open space as not being inviting
    - Some panel members acknowledged applicant done a good job in addressing the sustainability requirements
    - Panel members ask applicant to consider some weather protection along the walk way along Richards St.

- Panel members noted the roof deck accessibility for residents should be more clearly indicated in the plane, ie the fitness facility has no outdoor connection, doesn't have potential for access to outdoors
- Panel members noted energy efficiency, appropriate on SE and SW facades and can be more strongly articulated
- Panel members noted building will be a great contribution to skyline and street,
- Panel members noted the north side of Georgia St has an elegant, refined, mid-century, modern proportion and simplicity of form.
- Panel members appreciate the use of triple glazed windows
- Some Panel members noted the public realm is very generous, grade change at opposite corners help define the outdoor space
- Panel members noted depth of the amenity space on Richard St is narrow, appears more of a functioning moving path
- Panel members noted the main entry appears very tight of the series of steps going up to the deck
- Panel members ask applicant to consider greater definition of the lobby entrance on Georgia and treat the tree columns and ceremonial space as the dominant entry, leaving the Richard side as the gathering space.
- Panel members ask applicant to consider develop the exterior lighting strategy and public art to show case the building
- Some Panel members concerned with the minimal contribution to the greenery of the city .04 of the area is devoted to the greenery
- Panel members suggest public art in the lobby area would make it more welcoming
- Panel members suggest public art to help connect the sidewalks into the recesses
- Panel members noted the lobby entrance on Georgia St appears very tight and narrow
- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant team thanked the panel for their comments.