

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

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**DATE:** January 19, 2022

**TIME:** 3:00 pm

**PLACE:** Webex

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

Alan Boniface  
Brian Wakelin (Chair)  
Clinton Cuddington  
Geoff Lister  
Jane Vorbrodt  
Jennifer Stamp  
Margot Long  
Meeta Lele  
Natalie Telewiak (excused from item # 2)  
Peeraj Thakre  
Reza Mousakhani  
Scott Romses (excused from item # 2)

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** M.Sem

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### ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1. Granville Loops (625-777 Pacific St)
  2. 1728 Alberni St and 735 Bidwell St
  3. 2062-2092 E Broadway
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**BUSINESS MEETING** Chair, MR. WAKELIN, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum.

- 1. Address:** Granville Loops (625-777 Pacific St)  
**Permit No.:** N/A  
**Description:** To develop a 60-storey Passive House tower with 485 residential To develop four residential towers on four adjacent sites, which will be created once the circular bridge ramps (the Loops) are removed and Continental and Rolston streets are extended south to Pacific Street. The proposal includes two strata residential towers at 120.4 m (395 ft.) in height, one mixed rental-residential and strata residential tower 76.2 m (250 ft.) in height, and one rental residential tower 76.2 m (250 ft.) in height to contain a childcare centre and social housing The total floor area is 89,489 sq. m (920,266 sq. ft.). This application is being considered under the Granville Loops Policy Plan.
- Zoning:** DD to CD-1  
**Application Status:** Complete Development Application  
**Review:** Second  
**Architect:** N/A  
**Delegation:** Fei Cai, Project Manager, Real Estate Services, City of Vancouver  
 Brian Sears, Associate Director of Development, Real Estate Services, City of Vancouver  
 Paul Storer, Director of Transportation, City of Vancouver
- Staff:** Kevin Spaans and Leifka Vissers

**EVALUATION:** Support with recommendations: (11/0)

**Planner's Introduction:**

Rezoning Planner Leifka Vissers began by noting the rezoning application is at 625-777 Pacific Street (Granville Loops). The proposal would allow for the development of four mixed-use buildings over four sites with maximum heights ranging from 250 feet to 395 feet. The zoning would change from DD (Downtown) to CD-1 (Comprehensive Development) District. The site is bounded by Pacific Street to the south and Seymour Street to the east, Howe Street to west and future Neon Street to the north. This application is being considered under the Granville Loops Policy Plan which was developed following Council's approval in 2002 to remove the northern loops at the Granville Bridge under the Downtown transportation plan. The proposal includes four sub-areas.

The Loops Plan is laid out as a guide for developing the area. The plan called for new streets and improvements to the public realm and 50,000 sq. ft. of social housing. This application proposes a 40 storey, 395 foot tower on sub-area A and 27 foot tower on sub-area B to include social housing rental and childcare on sub-area C and 40 storey tower on sub-area D.

Senior Development Planner Kevin Spaans presented the urban design responses to the Panel's previous consensus items on behalf of Urban Design and Development Planning. Mr. Spaans first reminded the Panel that the draft *Granville Loops Guidelines* remain in progress; that work on the *Guidelines* is independent of any work being undertaken by City of Vancouver Real Estate and Facilities Management; that the *Guidelines* are intended to be performance based rather than prescriptive, and; that Panel commentary will continue to inform staff as they work toward a final draft of the document for Council approval. Mr. Spaans noted that the *Guidelines* contain seven Urban Design Principles as follows:

- Overall Massing – building massing is intended to reinforce the appearance of a “valley” gateway into downtown when reviewed from Granville Bridge;
- Street Wall – a consistent streetwall that defines and encloses the public realm;
- Active Uses at Grade;
- Podium – using tower podiums to define the streetscape;
- Framing Near Views – ensuring that building forms and architectural expression are designed for attractive near views;
- Roof Expression – presenting upper levels and roofs that enhance the urban skyline;
- Weather Protection;
- Public Art.

Mr. Spaans then presented the consensus items from the UDP on June 9, 2021 as being design development to:

- Improve public realm (re: built form)
- Improve access to open space
- Improve street activation
- Maximize sun access for the daycare.

Mr. Spaans then presented slides broadly noting the applicant's design response compared to the previous submission to the Panel, noting that the applicant team was prepared to provide further detail to their response. In conclusion, Mr. Spaans reminded the Panel that future applications within the Granville Loops area would return to the UDP for review, and that the application at hand is a general massing and architectural framework.

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

1. Please comment on the applicants' response to the following areas for improvement as identified by the Urban Design Panel:

- a. The public realm (re: built form)
- b. Access to open space
- c. Street activation
- d. Sun access for the daycare

2. Please provide any comments to assist staff in review of future policy and guideline work, and applications in the Granville Loops area.

**Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Brian Sears, Associate Director of Real Estate Services, City of Vancouver noted the concept images shown have been created to illustrate the proposed design policies and guidelines, they do not represent complete building designs. This master plan which will be created by the CD-1 guidelines, design guidelines and policies will guide the future development.

Fei Cai, Project Manager, Real Estate Services, City of Vancouver began by noting the improvements to address the issues raised by panel members at the UDP meeting on June 9, 2021. The issues raised were improve public realm, access to open space, livability and activation across the site and specifically along Pacific Avenue and sun exposure to the daycare.

Paul Storer, Director of Transportation, City of Vancouver presented a summary of the improvements of the road network reconfigurations.

**Applicant and staff took questions from Panel.****Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**

Having reviewed the project, it was moved by **MS. STAMP** and seconded by **MS. LELE** and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

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

1. Further exploration of massing.
2. Daycare to meet the City of Vancouver design guidelines for sunlight access.
3. To add more outdoor public open space.

**Panel Commentary**The public realm (re: built form)

- General support from Panel that public realm could be bigger.
- A panelist noted the public realm has not addressed the fundamental issues that could help empower future applicants to prepare a more comprehensive design response that creates a more engaging neighbourhood.
- The Panel acknowledged the improvements made by the applicant, particularly along the public realm on Pacific Ave. Panelists noted the effectiveness of reorienting the CRUs toward Pacific Ave to better animate the street.
- A panelist noted the additional roads has put a focus on cars, resulting in a waste of infrastructure, recommending that more focus could have been put toward open space in the public realm.

- A panelist expressed that the proposed hardscape plaza wasn't necessary, suggesting that the area needed more green park space.
- A panelist acknowledged the importance of the indicative design in setting out the priorities for site performance.
- A panelist expressed concern with privatizing the south side of Parcel 'A' in replacing green space with townhouses.

#### Access to open space

- Full support from Panel on improvements to open space from the previous application.
- A panelist encouraged further enhancements to the public realm, noting the importance of the connection between east and west under the bridge.
- Panelists noted the importance of connectivity through the site, physically and visually, as a means to draw activity to and through the site, and adjacent sites.

#### Street activation

- Support from Panel on revised street activation proposal from previous application with mix of retail and residential at grade units.
- Panelists noted that the vacant area underneath the bridge is a potential space for public art, further encouraging the applicant to explore more opportunities for public art, interactive / performance spaces, and providing multiple spaces for multiple different user groups.
- A panelist noted the towers at the ramp levels should be appropriately programmed for street activation.

#### Sunlight access for the daycare

- The Panel noted concerns about the lack of sunlight on the child day care facility, and noted that its location must be a priority in the design of the massing in the area.
- A Panel member noted there isn't enough sunlight at the podium level and there was an understanding of six hours of sunlight and not three hours.
- Some panelists suggested flipping and rotating the buildings in Parcel 'C' to improve sunlight access for the child daycare facility.

#### Comments to assist staff in review of future policy and guideline work

- Some Panel members raised concerns about prescriptive urban design guidelines, and requested revisiting the implication of symmetrical tower massing in the draft *Guidelines*. The Panel expressed concerns that applicants will feel too compelled to build to the massing of the indicative design, and that the *Guidelines* will not sufficiently require design rigour.

- A panelist encouraged staff to include expectations for green roofs clearly in the *Guidelines* so that roofs aren't given over entirely to mechanical and functional uses.

#### Transportation

- Panel encourage consideration of increase in future traffic. Instead of shrinking the vehicle realm where some of the merge areas that come onto Granville Bridge need to be lengthened and widened.
- A panelist noted concerns with the connectivity of the site with adjacent sites, and the nearby seawall, suggesting that shifting the location of the proposed Plaza to Howe St will make for a stronger connection to the path that goes past Vancouver House.
- A panelist noted the need for increased accessibility i.e. noting the stairs are barely visible.

#### Other

- One panel member encourage opportunities for energy efficiency strategies.
- Some panel members expressed the need for greater certainty about the quantity of public art.

**Applicant's Response:** The applicant team thanked the panel for their comments.

<b>2. Address:</b>	1728 Alberni St and 735 Bidwell St
<b>Permit No.:</b>	RZ-2020-00075
<b>Description:</b>	To develop two residential towers with a podium for a combined height of 30 and 39 storeys, including 387 strata residential units and commercial retail space at grade; all over 5 levels of underground parking including 500 vehicle parking spaces and 848 bicycle parking spaces. The proposed density is 10.47 FSR and the floor area is 37,856 sq. m (407,483 sq. ft.). The building heights are 90.9 m (298.23 ft.) and 117.30 m (384.84 ft.). This application is being considered under the Rezoning Policy for the West End and West End Community Plan
<b>Zoning:</b>	RM-5C to CD-1
<b>Application Status:</b>	Rezoning Application
<b>Review:</b>	First
<b>Architect:</b>	IBI and Heatherwick Studio
<b>Delegation:</b>	Gwyn Vose, IBI Group Stuart Wood Michael Patterson Kevin Welsh, Integral Group
<b>Staff:</b>	Sailen Black and Robert White

**EVALUATION:** Support with recommendations: (9/0)

**Planner's Introduction:**

Rezoning Planner, Robert White, began by noting this application is considered under the *West End Community Plan* and *Rezoning Policy for the West End*. The application was originally submitted December 23, 2020, and was revised on December 20, 2021. The site is located at the west corner of Albemarle and Bidwell Streets in the West End, adjacent to Eihu Lane. It is currently zoned RM-5C, and is developed with a 9-storey building and a 4-storey building, containing a total of 75 strata residential units and three commercial units. Two nearby rezoning applications have recently been approved for residential buildings measuring 33, and 43-storeys; and two nearby rezoning applications are currently in review for a 39-storey residential building, and for two 38-storey residential buildings.

This site is within *West End Community Plan* area. The Plan was approved by Council in 2013 and provides guidance for the West End for the next 30 years, including opportunities for new growth through increased heights and densities in certain areas to provide new job space, housing, and amenities. The Corridor areas of the plan are the newer areas of the community, where the majority of new housing and job space has been built over the last 40 years. These areas are well-served by transit, services and amenities.

The site is located in the western portion of the Georgia Corridor Character Area 'A', where rezoning applications to increase density for market residential can be considered. The *Rezoning Policy for the West End*, which was adopted alongside the *West End Community Plan*, enables the consideration of market residential applications in this Area C of the policy. Rezoning applications for market residential in this location must have:

- A minimum site frontage of 130 ft.
- For sites west of Cardero St, a typical floorplate of up to 5,500 sq. ft., subject to urban design performance,
- A height up to 117.3 m (385 ft.), subject to view cone restrictions,
- For towers over 60 ft., spacing of at least 80 ft. from other residential towers over 60 ft.
- Shaping with tapering at the upper levels for point tower forms
- Minimized shadow impacts, with no additional shadowing onto parks or open spaces from 10 am to 4 pm on the spring and fall equinoxes
- And applications must include public benefits.

In response to these policies, this application proposes two residential towers including a 6-storey podium, with a 30-storey east tower, a 39-storey west tower, a density of 10.47 FSR, a total of 387 strata residential units, and about 5,500 sq. ft. of commercial retail space at grade.

Mr. Black provided additional information about the site and its immediate context, noting the buildings on the site and nearby. He described the policies and guidance on the form of development for new buildings in the area, such as the built form section of the *West End Community Plan* along with related bulletins and zoning, and he noted briefly how some of them had been applied to this site to arrive at the proposed form of development. Mr. Black concluded by asking for the Panel's comment on four aspects of the proposal related to the policies and guidance for the area.

**Advice from the Panel on this application was sought on the following:**

1. The compatibility of the built form, including height and density, with this context;

2. The quality of the public realm interface at grade along the streets and lane;
3. The sculpting of the towers; and
4. The proposed size of the balconies.

Comments on other aspects of the architectural and landscape design were also welcomed.

**Applicant’s Introductory Comments:**

Applicant presented the rationale and explanation for the proposed project design.

The idea behind the project was to do something than the typical glass tower that is Vancouver’s modus operandi. The project speaks to the proximity to the wilderness and surrounding greenery. The notion of being surrounded by nature and having a building that responds to the natural environment around it. Looking at nature as a form of inspiration, the coastline the more organic forms and the trees.

**Applicant and staff took questions from Panel.**

**Panel’s Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**

Having reviewed the project, it was moved by **MS. STAMP** and seconded by **MS. LELE** and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

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

- Design development of landscape design.
- Design development of public realm including consideration for movement through the building.
- Design development of top of tower.

**Panel Commentary**

Panel acknowledged and noted appreciation for this project, describing this building as thoughtful, beautiful, vibrant and compelling.

The compatibility of the built form, including height and density, with this context

General support for the height and density.

Some Panel members noted the thoughtfulness of the massing.

A Panel member noted there are three repeating balconies that are over each other. Panelist suggest shifting or rotating them to maintain the organic feeling all the way up.

The quality of the public realm interface at grade along the streets and lane



A Panel member noted comment from applicant regarding increased street daylighting because of the massing is incorrect. The size of the balconies at the west end tower form 5500 feet, it's meant to be super small for those reasons but is not the case with the larger balconies – it's not bad but it's not true.

Some Panel members noted the lack of porosity of the public realm. One panelist encouraged ground level green space even though it is not open to the public as it has a huge public presence. Another panelist noted there are more opportunities to landscape the exterior to provide a pleasing environment such as framing the patio or balcony or more interaction with the public realm.

A Panel member noted there needs to be a distinction between retail and townhouse entries on Alberni St. even though there is a continuity of structural form.

A Panel member suggested spreading out the bike station or having some short term bike racks in front of the CRUs

A Panel member noted concerns with townhouses two and four which are slightly below the adjacent public realm grade.

Panel members appreciate the rounded and welcoming feel of the area at grade, suggest making the entries more visible.

A Panel member noted the ground floor appears hermetically sealed off from the street circulation, there is too much programing at the base of the building.

Some Panel members noted the landscape has not caught up with the architectural development for this project.

A Panel member noted there was not enough landscape at the podium and street level.

Some Panel members noted a lot of the planting is under overhang and despite Vancouver being a rainy climate, planting that extends more than 4 feet under cover will not be naturally irrigated.. Another Panelist noted the overhangs should be adjusted to ensure success of the vegetation at edge and suggested studies to be done to understand how this building's plantings will thrive.

Panel encouraged more outdoor amenity spaces.

Some Panel members encouraged the concept of allowing public passage through the middle of the site from Alberni Street to Eihu Lane.

#### The sculpting of the towers

Some Panel members encourage a different treatment of the top rather than slicing the building off at the view cone. There is an opportunity to represent the top of this tower differently as it meets the sky than simply being chopped away.

A Panel member noted that the repeating balcony pattern would be better homage to the context than when it gets too organic.

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A Panel member suggest having the two towers slide through the podium, keeping the lattice work on the outside, noting the concept of the skin is strong but using it all over the place is not strong, encouraging further design development.

Some Panel members noted the applicant's presentation of the form chosen of the pine cone is not that random, it is repeated and somewhat linear and that is the strongest part of the design when it is not repeated. Tower forms at the top and bottom would benefit from less randomness.

Some Panel members noted appreciation of the continuity of tower to base.

A Panel member encouraged the internal lighting of this building to spill out to the balcony edge rather than introducing soffit lighting in the building. Panelist noted there are a lot of possibilities that would allow for a different type of silhouette, to create a tracery that interlocks with the sky.

#### The proposed size of the balconies

In general Panel was supportive of the size of the balconies.

Panel acknowledged and noted appreciation for the staggering balconies and the mixing of sunlight and shadow and the form it creates.

A Panel member suggested building on the fungi parti so that the soffits under the large balconies can look beautiful as well.

One Panel member suggested larger balconies for planting.

A Panel member noted if balconies are thermally broken from the façade it might have positive effect on the form factor and overall energy consumption of the building, allowing a lighter language for the tower top and bottom.

A Panel member liked personalized balcony plantings but suggested a portion of the balcony plantings be managed by the building operator where possible to be maintained without having to enter into someone's suite.

#### Sustainability

A Panel member noted there are a lot of big street trees in the area, suggest pulling the parkade away from the property to increase more native soil to help with sustainability and climate resilience.

#### Accessibility

A Panel member encouraged accessibility and inclusiveness of the amenities such as pools and spa.

A Panel member noted tapering stairs are an issue for accessibility and people with visual impairment and suggest making stairs with treads that are consistent and not tapered for accessibility.

A Panel member noted the bike station blocks access to the rear entry from Bidwell St. forcing people using mobility devices into the vehicle portion of the lane which is not safe. `

A Panel member noted accessible parking is located very far away from the elevator making it dangerous and requiring a lot of energy for people with disability to travel to those elevators. Panelist suggest designing parking so that the pathway is safe for someone getting out of the car and having to travel to the elevator through traffic.

A Panel member noted the outward swinging main entry door as a safety concern. Panelist suggest keeping the design intent but not creating a condition where it is a safety issue.

A Panel member encourage the concept of the roughly cut cobble stones but without the highly textured surface for people with mobility issues.

**Applicant's Response:** The applicant team thanked the panel for their comments.

<b>3. Address:</b>	2062-2092 E Broadway
<b>Permit No.:</b>	RZ-2021-00053
<b>Description:</b>	To develop a 6-storey residential strata building, with 71 residential strata units; all over 2 levels of underground parking consisting of 71 underground vehicle parking spaces and 140 bicycle parking spaces. The floor space ratio is 2.65, the total floor area is 4,955.6 sq. m (53,342 sq. ft.), and the building height is 20.1 m (66 ft.). The application is being considered under the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan.
<b>Zoning:</b>	RT-5N District to CD-1
<b>Application Status:</b>	Rezoning Application
<b>Review:</b>	First
<b>Architect:</b>	RH Architects
<b>Delegation:</b>	Bryce Rositch, RH Architects Japheth Bondoc, RH Architects Daryl Tyacke, eta Landscape Architecture
<b>Staff:</b>	Scott Erdman and Ryan Dinh

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**EVALUATION:** Support with recommendations: (10/0)

**Planner's Introduction:**

Development Planner Ryan Dinh noted the key urban design principles in Grandview Woodland Community Plan which include higher-density building forms appropriate for a transit-oriented neighbourhood and streetscapes enhancement through public realm improvements. Buildings will provide upper floor setbacks above the third floor; and further upper storey setbacks on the north side to reduce shadowing. The proposal respects the upper level setbacks as recommended. The upper levels at the lane are further set back to reduce the scale of the building to improve the transition to

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the residential neighbourhood. The project will provide an improved 18ft sidewalk along E. Broadway, and retain existing trees on the sidewalk. The building is located within the required setbacks from the Plan. Main floor includes ground oriented units with private patios for street and lane activation and livability improvement. As well, the indoor and outdoor amenity space are located on the main floor in the south side.

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

1. Does the Panel support the proposed form and massing relative to the Grandview Woodland Community Plan?
2. Comments on the quality of public realm along Broadway and the lane.
3. Additional advice that could further inform the design through the development permit process.

**Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Bryce Rositch, RH Architects began by presenting the general form of the building.

Daryl Tyacke, eta Landscape Architecture presented on the Landscape for this project.

**Applicant and staff took questions from Panel.**

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

Having reviewed the project, it was moved by **MR. MOUSAKHANI** and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

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

1. More family units at grade especially on the south side.
2. More intensive planting along Broadway lane and Lakewood edges.
3. Design development of the entry required and consider moving to Lakewood.

**Panel Commentary**

Proposed form and massing

General support from panel on the form and massing.

Considerations of a color and material scheme that respond to the school from across the street.

Panel members discussed the building proportion with required building setback above the third storey in a 6 storey building (3:3 ratio). Recommendation of 4:2 ratio be considered for the Grandview Woodland Plan. Panel members noted that the proposed 3 storey based are well resolved. The roof could use some design development making the top level more complimentary with the rest of the massing

Some panel members noted the Broadway façade and massing is successful. Consideration to improve the articulation of the south façade

Some panel members encouraged a lighter touch with the overhangs or eliminate them.  
Panel member encouraged more asymmetry in the approach to the massing.

Some panel members suggested using fewer types of exterior materials.

#### Public realm

Panel suggested re-locating more family units to the ground level so that families with kids can benefit from the outdoor space at grade. Perhaps exit stairs could be reoriented to Broadway to enhance the south patios for family units.

Panel member noted they appreciate the bike storage room at grade. Panelist noted an opportunity to have an exterior door access directly in from the outside to the bike room.

Some Panel members noted appreciation to the layered landscape approach with existing street trees providing a beautiful screen to the building.

Some Panel member encourage more intensive planting at the edges to retain green spaces and support natural habitat as per the Grandview Woodland Plan.

Panel member noted the PMT should be further west down the lane.

Panel encouraged further design development of the entry. Some Panelists noting it is underwhelming.

Panel member encouraged more outdoor space and seating.

Panel member noted the balconies facing E. Broadway will require some privacy and sound mitigation due to it being a high traffic and busy area.

Panel member suggested the main entrance on Broadway should be re-located to Lakewood Dr. Panelist noted there is no vehicle parking on Broadway. Lakewood is an important arterial that connects Trout Lake Park to the whole neighbourhood to the north, it is a bike route and the route everyone uses for the public market. By re-locating entrance to Lakewood, it will be in a quieter corner and there is a dialogue with the school, and bike route.

Careful design of the parkade to respect the existing street trees.

Panel member suggest creating a defined pathway that is used as a safe place to connect up with the sidewalk and school.

Panel member suggest having drop off locations.

Panel member appreciates designated parking stalls located adjacent to the site.

Additional advice that could further inform the design through the development permit process.

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Panel member suggest taking advantage of the horizontal balconies for shading and looking at additional opportunities for passive heating, and cooling within the envelope.

Panel member noted six story forms should not come to the design panel and rezoning

**Applicant's Response:** The applicant team thanked the panel for their comments.