

**URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES**

**DATE:** March 17, 2021

**TIME:** 4:00 pm

**PLACE:** WebEx

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

- Alan Davies (excused from item # 1)
- Karenn Krangle
- Marie-Odile Marceau
- Michael Henderson
- Sydney Schwartz
- Walter Francl
- Margot Long
- Angela Enman
- Adrien Rahbar
- Jennifer Stamp

**REGRETS:**

- Brittany Coughlin
- Muneesh Sharma

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** M.Sem

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<b>ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING</b>	
1.	546 W 13th Avenue
2.	906-982 W 18th Avenue & 907-969 W 19th Avenue (Balfour Block)

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**BUSINESS MEETING** Chair, MR. HENDERSON, called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. The panel then considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 546 W 13th Avenue  
Permit No. RZ-2020-00060  
To develop a 13-storey residential building with 135 social housing units over two levels of underground parking consisting of 47 vehicle parking spaces and 250 bicycle spaces. The proposed building height is 40.7 m (133.5 ft.), the gross floor area is 8,664 sq. m (93,263 sq. ft.), and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 6.0. This application is being considered under the Affordable Housing Policies.
- Zoning: RM-3 to CD-1  
Application Status: Rezoning Application  
Review: First  
Architect: GBL Architects  
Delegation: Amela Brudar  
Karla Guerrero
- Staff: James Boldt & Kevin Spaans

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**EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations (8 support)**

Rezoning Planner, James Boldt, began by providing introductory comments on the existing policy context, noting the site falls within the Fairview RM-3 area, which permits development of up to 36.6m (120ft) in height, with a maximum density of 1.00FSR plus moderate increases laid out in the District Schedule. This proposal is being considered under the Social Housing or Rental Tenure (SHORT) affordable housing program. The site falls under the Queen Elizabeth View Cone, which limits the supportable height to no more than 40.7m (134ft). The property is within the Broadway Plan area, but as this development proposed 100% social housing, the rezoning application is not restricted by the *Broadway Area Interim Rezoning Policy*, which otherwise prohibits rezoning applications in the plan area. Mr. Boldt summarized the application as follows:

- Site Area: 1,349sm (14,520sf);
- Proposed Gross Floor Area: 8,664sm (93,263sf);
- Proposed Density: 6.00FSR
- Proposed Height: 133'-5"
- Number of social housing dwelling units: 135, including 35% family sized units.

Senior Development Planner, Kevin Spaans, began his presentation of the proposed form of development by reminding the Panel of the urban context of the site and the unusual mid-block situation of the property, further noting that because of the lack of a rear lane vehicular access is and will remain to be directly from W 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue. He noted that buildings in the immediate surroundings developed under the current RM-3 zoning and vary from taller, older stock multifamily buildings up to 13 storeys high, and slightly newer 3 to 5 storey buildings dating to the 1980s. The existing building is 3 storeys, contains existing social housing units owned and operated by the Soroptimists, and was constructed in the 1960s.

Mr. Spaans then noted that areas requiring the Panel's consideration and feedback generally fell into three categories: articulation, building width, and landscape.

Regarding articulation, Mr. Spaans noted that when the curvilinear balconies and "ribbon" bands are removed from the mass of the building, the proposed massing is generally that of an unarticulated form set on a single-storey podium with a step back from the east at the uppermost level. Mr. Spaans suggested to the Panel that, considering that this is a 100% non-market housing development targeting net-zero building energy performance, this lack of articulation might be the result of both green building limitations and financial considerations.

Of building width, Mr. Spaans noted that the existing RM-3 zoning is highly prescriptive, stipulating that allowable width is never to exceed an amount equal to 25 % of the sum of the average depth of the site and the average width of the site. In this case, the resultant allowable building width would be no greater than 62ft, or 40ft narrower than the 102ft tower proposed.

Regarding the proposed landscape and site design, Mr. Spaans noted reiterated that the mid-block situation of the site means that a significant portion of property which might otherwise have been given over to the use of the residents or the community as open space is taken up for vehicular circulation and loading. This condition challenges the performance of other proposed outdoor programming areas, such as the natural play area and zen space proposed at the south side of the property. At upper levels, the applicant is proposing an outdoor amenity area oriented to the east. At the roof, the applicant is proposing a pollinator garden / green roof.

Mr. Spaans concluded by addressing the interface between the building and the public realm, noting that the programming at Level 1 was substantially residential in nature, with dwelling units and a principal building entry oriented to the sidewalk.

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

**Articulation**

1. Does the Panel support the use of modulating slab extensions and guardrails to mitigate perceived building mass, rather than formal building massing?

**Width**

2. Please comment on the proposed building width and its divergence from the prescribed maximum width anticipated by existing zoning.

**Landscape**

3. Please comment on the proposed landscape and site design, with particular consideration given to the interface with the public realm, and the design of common residential amenity spaces adjacent vehicular circulation and loading areas.

**Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Karla Guerrero, CEO of Purpose Driven Development and Planning began by presenting the mandate of the project. She noted the following:

- This project is the first of its kind in Canada;
- The mandate was developed to deliver housing for women, by women in order to close the glaring gap that exists and to respond to housing needs specific to women;

- This project is about affordability, it's mixed income, and it's about encouraging social connections;
- The second very significant part of this project, which makes this mandate unique is delivering the project by an all woman team through across design, development, and as much as we can across construction;
- Assembled a team of all women to date, in order to focus on two things, Firstly, bringing a gender-based lens to how we deliver this project. Secondly, this project is about demonstrating the capacity of women and women leaders in the industry to deliver amazing projects and innovative projects like this across design, development and construction.

Amela Brudar of GBL Architects gave a summary of site context.

She noted the following:

- The site is located on a major intersection in the city, near City Hall and the city square Shopping Center. The rest of the neighborhood is really a very eclectic mix of shops, restaurants, medical offices and then high-rise in low-rise buildings.
- The site itself is mid-block and it is surrounded by older mid-rise buildings.
- The building form and the general aesthetics have been developed through a series of collaborative workshops with SOV Committee.
- SOV expressed a very strong desire that this building needs to communicate and respond to their core values of inclusivity, wellbeing, safety and strong social connections.
- After analyzing the surrounding context, the applicant wanted to differentiate this building from the surrounding towers, all of which are older stock and highly regimented. The applicant adopted a strategy of designing a simple building for an extraordinary building form, where the structure and exterior walls actually stack up all the way from ground floor all the way to the top, with the exception of the very top floor, where the building is tapered back to allow for an indoor and outdoor amenity. This also helps with the energy performance of the building, minimizing the form factor for the building, and also impacts on that cost.
- To contrast the cubic and highly regimented towers across the street, we are proposing this undulating horizontal that integrates the balconies and solar shading while providing very playful and fluid architectural expression.
- The balconies are thermally broken from the floor slabs, and as they go around the building, they are acting as solar shades. They are actually supported by outriggers, and are bolted to embeds in the façade. The applicant is working with the construction manager to ensure this is a main design feature.
- Although it appears that the aluminium ribbon is changing on each floor, there are only two different floorplans with ribbon configuration, maintaining the rigor and discipline on the façade and also minimizing construction complexity. The only difference is at top floor, which has its own geometry, signifying the communal space on the top floor.
- The building is centrally located that to optimize the redevelopment potential of the adjacent sites without affecting tower separation requirements.
- The entrance lobby is centered and it forms the spine that connects to the rear yard amenity. Applicant planned for the oversized and welcoming lobby that is fostering the opportunities for resident's social interactions. The laundry room and the office on this floor are co-located in these public areas, which will activate this space, bringing people into the lobby as they come and go from the amenity area and the laundry. If people are doing their laundry, they can oversee the kids playing in the inner backyard that's actually fully secured.

- There is no lane for parking and loading access from the street for this project but looking at paying careful attention to the lighting and general experience of this area to make it as pleasant and welcoming as possible.
- Each home is designed with different tenants in mind from single workforce, women to families, to senior women; they are all sharing the same floor. In addition, this intergenerational living is one of the key aspects of the building where we are not segregating different unit types to different floors.
- At the top floor, there is set back of the building and we have provided the amenity along facing the outdoor amenity spaces.
- Every space is designed with sense of reinforcement of community.
- Applicant paying special attention to that indoor-outdoor connectivity, there are very limited space around the building, but at the same time, it is continuous in its flowing and it's designed as a series of outdoor interconnected rooms.

Kelty McKinnon presented on the landscape for the project.

- The site is quite limited at the ground floor with the long linear space at the back of the building.
- There are four very large, existing trees that create a beautiful overhead canopy which also means a little bit of darkness in that location, therefore going with a very light paver going around the building.
- The project has quite a generous sort of expression and seating opportunities for people to gather and meet each other.
- The private units have a series of elements to provide privacy for women living at the ground level, including raised planters, areas for there's a couple of areas for seeding and having activities in the front of those locations.
- On the east pedestrian connector, there are vines and trees are used to soften the corridor. In the back, there are a number of activities, leveraging the domestic activities of laundry while kids play in the natural play are, creating adjacencies for these informal social activities to happen.
- Moving further west, there is a more private area for contemplation and decompression in a Zen garden with plantings that we've researched different cultural plantings that have meaning for women in shaded and sunny conditions, which will be used on the roof.
- The undulating metal planter ribbons to use to emphasize the curve linearity of the building multiple areas for people to sit and rest, recognizing that seniors will be living in the building, tried to spread those throughout the whole outdoor zone for people to sit whenever they feel like it.
- On level two there are communal tables, very simple sort of natural play elements for children, a finger Labyrinth on the wall for contemplation and colourful seating, and it's an adjunct zone as well, that's
- With the two units that have a larger outdoor area added in again, the undulating planters three foot six inch tall so that residents have a chance to garden and there's also enough soil depth to get some trees. There is a step back condition for the planters to get sun and rain.
- keep the edges of the roof amenity terraces on level 13 open because the views from all sides - beautiful views towards the mountains and up towards the ridge and over their surrounding neighborhoods.

- The amenity terraces are broken into several subgroups. The northernmost terrace is the most formal and social. Adjacent to the smaller amenity zone, there is a seating event area with a stage, which could be used for an informal deck area, there was an expression for more formal events like weddings or speaking events or meet meetings and collective gatherings and celebrations in that area, which is backed with a planter. Moving into the center of that area, there is another batch platform that could be used for sunbathing, and lounging, for children to play on etc. with more playful sort of colorful seating elements that can be moved and reconfigured. Moving to the south side, a more solitary and contemplate series of spaces for people to go and decompress and have some reflective time with the wood type seating on these curvilinear benches.
- Regarding the roof, it is an extensive green roof and plants will be selected for pollinator purposes.

The planning and applicant team then took questions from the panel.

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

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

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

- Design Development to the drive access and loading area to provide green buffering to the western neighbour to the zen garden and to overlooking suites.
- Design Development to the balcony banding.
- Review CPTED considerations for the east pedestrian connector.
- Consider reorienting the rooftop amenity space from the east to the west side of the building.
- Continue to review the livability of the unit layouts as the project advances to development permit.

**Panel Commentary:**

- There was general support from panel on the project.
- The Panel noted the balcony modulation, and the banding that goes with that is a very interesting aspect of the project, that it could use some design development as the project proceeds.
- There were some concerns by Panel around the West property line.
- The Panel noted design development around the loading area, the relationship to the neighbor to the west, and to the Zen garden is recommended, and that landscape buffers could help to resolve some issues here.
- The Panel noted some concerns with access to the amenity and landscape area at the back of the site. The Panel suggested, having a gate or some methods of improving this situation around to the back.
- Some Panel Members recommended a western facing amenity space rather than eastern facing on the 13th floor.

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

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2. Address: 906-982 W 18 Avenue & 907-969 W 19 Avenue (Balfour Block)  
Permit No.: RZ-2020-00047  
Description: To develop the site with a 6-storey rental building; a 6-storey condo building with a rooftop amenity and a childcare space on the ground floor; six 4-storey and two 3-storey stacked townhome buildings. The proposal includes a total of 241 units consisting of 84 townhouses, 57 market strata residential units, and 100 secured rental units (with 25% of the proposed residential floor area at below-market rates). The proposed buildings heights range from 11 m (37.5 ft.) to 25 m (82.6 ft.), the total floor area is 20,447 sq. m (220,093 sq. ft.), the floor space ratio (FSR) is 2.16, and a total of 334 vehicle parking spaces and 630 bicycle parking spaces. This application is being considered under the Cambie Corridor Plan and the Rezoning Policy for Large Sustainable Developments.
- Zoning: RT-2 to CD-1  
Application Status: Rezoning Application  
Review: First  
Architect: Formwerks Architecture  
Delegation: Evan Lewis, Wesgroup Properties  
Jim Bussey, Formwerks Architecture  
David Stoyko, Connect Landscape Architecture  
Farshid Bagheri, BCBS

Staff: Kent MacDougall & Omar Aljebouri

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**EVALUATION: Recommend Resubmission (9 Support)**

**Introduction:**

Rezoning Planner, Kent MacDougall, began by noting this application is to rezone the site at 906-982 W 18th Avenue & 907-969 W 19th Avenue (the Balfour Block) under the Cambie Corridor Plan. The Balfour Block is a large site, at approximately 101,883 sq. ft., located between W 18th Avenue and W 19th Avenue just off Oak Street. The site is bounded by Laurel Street to the east and a lane to the west, and a private parking lot on the SW corner.

The Balfour Block is currently developed with 17 duplex residential buildings containing 34 family-oriented rental units. An east-west lane and informal greenspace currently divide the site. The surrounding neighbourhood is largely detached homes with notable density increases directly west of the site along Oak Street where predominantly multi-family dwellings line both sides of this arterial street. The Schara Tzedek Congregation synagogue is also located immediately west, across the lane, along Oak Street.

The site is within walking distance from nearby Heather Park, which features tennis courts, open space and walking paths and Douglas Park, which includes baseball diamonds, nature paths, and a local Community Centre. The site is within walking distance of Oak Street for a variety of retail needs, a large-format grocery store, Vancouver General Hospital, and nearby elementary schools. The King Edward

Canada Line station is 1.2km south of the Balfour Block, and the approved Broadway SkyTrain project will have a station within approximately 1.0 km north of the site. The site is also in close proximity to two bike routes: 14th Avenue and Heather St.

The site is currently zoned RT-2 (Residential) allowing for two-storey duplexes. Immediately surrounding the site is also zoned RS-7 to the north, east and south and is predominantly comprised of detached homes. To the west is zoned RM-3A and is developed with 2.5 and 3-storey multi-unit buildings and the previously noted Synagogue.

This application is being considered under the Cambie Corridor Plan with this site located within the Cambie Village sub-area. The site is one of several “Unique Sites” under the plan and generally speaking, the Balfour Unique Site is envisioned to continue as a vibrant family-oriented node with the addition of new housing options and strong connections to the surrounding neighbourhood.

This application proposes 241 units across a 6-storey secured rental residential building (100 units); a 6-storey strata residential building with at-grade childcare proposed (57 units); and eight 3- to 4-storey stacked townhome buildings (84 units). One full and a partial second level of underground parking, with 334 vehicle parking spaces and 630 bicycle spaces, are proposed with access from the lane.

The overall density proposed is 2.16 FSR, with buildings ranging in height from 3-, 4- and 6-storeys. The maximum proposed building height is 25 m (82.6 ft.). Staff noted that the density is not prescribed in the Plan and results based on the urban design performance. The proposed density of 2.16 is subject to review.

Development Planner, Omar Aljebouri, presented the guiding principles for unique sites under the Cambie Corridor Plan; the Plan’s vision for the subject site including the expected built form and public realm.

The Plan provides guiding principles for large sites to appropriately respond to a site’s local context, unique characteristics, size. The following are some of the organizing themes of these principles.

- Neighbourhood scale and identity
  - Developments should respond to their surroundings through building character, massing, site organization, arrangement of open spaces, and integration with the public realm.
- Transitions to Context
  - A sensitive transition of height, massing and landscaping to the context contributes to a respectful relationship with the surroundings.
- Ground-oriented housing.
  - Integration of ground-oriented units throughout the development supports the needs for families with children; animates the public realm, and strengthens the relationship to open spaces.
- Community connections
  - Integrated walking, cycling, and vehicle connections will connect the site to community networks and destinations through a high-quality walking environment both through the site and along its edges.
- Open space and public places



- Site organization, including building arrangement and circulation should define, activate, and complement on-site open and public spaces while maximizing their usability, views and sunlight access.
- Sustainable systems & green infrastructure
  - Exceptional sustainability standard is expected through site design, architecture, energy systems, water use, and rainwater management. Emphasis is on potential connections to neighbourhood energy systems and high-efficiency building design that works towards near-zero greenhouse gas emissions.
- Solar access
  - Buildings should minimize shadow impacts on play and public spaces, including on-site open spaces. Adequate spacing between buildings enhances livability and privacy.

#### Site context (current and anticipated)

- Existing context includes RS-7 (up to 2.5 storeys houses) to the south, east and north; and RM-3A (up to 3 storeys apartments) to the west.
- No change for surroundings anticipated under current policies
- The site includes two blocks with a total cross-fall of approximately 16 ft. in the northeast direction.

This site is envisioned to continue as a vibrant family-oriented node with the addition of new housing options and strong connections to the neighbourhood.

#### The big moves:

- Emphasize ground-oriented housing for families (townhouses) for the majority of the site, with provision for low- to lower mid-rise buildings (4 to 6 storeys) at the west end to accommodate housing diversity and affordability.
- Community Connections
  - Open the east-west lane right-of-way for site access. Partial lane closure may be considered if servicing requirements are met to the City's satisfaction.
  - Integrate a high-quality active link along the east-west lane. If the lane is opened, pedestrian paths would be on private property on each side of the lane. A north-south active link is also envisioned.
- Public Realm and Open Spaces
  - Public open space is envisioned at the southeast corner. Alternative to the corner open space, a linear public open space could be considered. In both cases, the intent is to provide meaningful open space that is publicly accessible and welcoming. The linear open space is expected to perform at the same level as the corner open space, if not better.
  - A shared family-oriented outdoor gathering/play space internal to the site is envisioned for site residents
- Neighbourhood Scale and Transition
  - Arrange townhouse buildings into lengths of 5 to 6 units that complement the surrounding single-family. Building lengths will be balanced by overall on-site open space with the intent for maximum open space and visual permeability. Townhouses arranged parallel to the street ensure a high level of livability.
  - Massing forms should create a sensitive transition to the surrounding neighbourhood through design, massing, and setbacks.

- Variety in architecture and materials should be considered to strengthen the existing residential character of the neighbourhood.

The Plan envisions public realm and open spaces that:

- offer flexible use for play, programming, or passive use and gathering;
- are landscaped with the potential to incorporate rainwater management opportunities or community gardening opportunities
- provide visual and physical openness to the street and adjacent developments
- invite pedestrians into or through them
- these expectations apply to any public open space, whether it is the southeast corner public space or the linear one.
- Active links provide public connections while breaking up longer city blocks. They are to accommodate pedestrian passage, with elements that support this informal space for movement and respite such as planting and informal seating.

The application includes a 6-storey rental building, a 6-storey strata building, and eight clusters of 3- to 4-storey townhouses with varying frontages and orientations. An east-west landscaped strip on the eastern half of the site instead of the anticipated southeast public open space. Vehicular access to the site is from the lane, terminating with a roundabout and three parking ramps. Indoor and outdoor amenities are proposed atop the 6-storey strata building. Childcare on the ground level of the 6-st strata building. The proposal varies from the Plan in terms of providing a family-oriented outdoor space at the rear of the 6-st rental building as well as a continuous east-west active link.

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

1. Height, density and massing as per the Cambie Corridor Plan and concerning the following:
  - a. contextual fit
  - b. townhouse arrangement/orientation
  - c. vehicular access.
2. The public realm and open spaces in terms of function, interface, and solar performance, for the following:
  - a. the shared family-oriented outdoor space
  - b. the linear public open space.
3. The quantity, quality and functionality of indoor and outdoor residential amenities, especially for families with children relative to the number of units and buildings.

**Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Evans Lewis, Wesgroup began the presentation by giving a summary of the project.

Wesgroup acquired this property in 2015. It was actively engaged in the City of Vancouver's Cambie Corridor Plan consultation process from 2015 until 2018. Following that process, a letter of inquiry was

submitted in 2019 and then a rezoning application in September 2020. After five years of work on this project an application is brought forward that proposes diverse housing options including condominiums, townhomes secured market rental housing and moderate-income rental housing.

Highlights of the proposal are:

- A much-needed daycare, one of the five goals of the Cambie Corridor Plan - Public benefit strategy.
- A linear park for the enjoyment of residents and neighbours
- Triple the number of rental homes by providing 100 new rental units, 25% of which will be moderate-income rental housing.
- 50% of the homes in the project will accommodate families, thereby exceeding the 35% requirement for family units under the City of Vancouver policy.

Jim Bussey presented on-site and the context of the project.

David Stoyko presented the Landscape of the project.

Mr. Stoyko noted the following on the landscape of the project.

- A pedestrian-oriented network that helps to connect all the streets, integrate into the neighbourhood and live in a green and tempted series of spaces, having a neighbourly feel and integrating with the context.
- The project got a lot of great street frontage facing the neighbours; friendly and fits with the neighbourhood context.
- There are a series of mews that allows pedestrian accessing, overriding the vehicular access for the site.
- The park-like-linear spaces are divided into several components to accommodate small and large groups, serving the neighbourhood.
- The rooftop spaces on the midrise blocks are divided up into a series of active and passive spaces; the daycare is sheltered there in the middle of the site; as well as greenery on the roof.
- The project has a lot of detail planting, step planting, and layered planting strongly expressing lobby entries
- Ability to accommodate livability and usability, multi-functional spaces with real strong neighbourliness and a green canopy that fits with the Cambie Corridor Plan.

Farshid Bagheri, BCBS presented the sustainability targets for this project with the objective of low emissions green buildings in this development.

Mr. Bagheri noted the following for this project:

- Targeting the energy and greenhouse gas intensity less than the policy.
- Proposing highly insulated walls and roofs, reduce thermal bridges from wood frame dominant construction with thermally broken concrete balconies, high-efficiency glazing, triple glazed on the aluminum side, improved airtightness of the building envelope.
- Passive cooling measures are taken, such as distributed balconies and geometry articulations to create solar shades during summertime and mitigate overheating.

- Proposing low e-coatings and glazing, to reduce the solar heat gain in the summertime.
- Proposing Passive house certified HRVs.
- Proposing high-efficiency heat pumps with electric heaters to achieve the energy targets.
- Combined electricity and gas is proposed for domestic water heating to minimize the amount of greenhouse gas from the development.

The planning and applicant team then took questions from the panel.

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

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

THAT the Panel **Recommend Resubmission** of the project and asks the applicant team to consider the comments in the minutes.

**Panel Commentary:**

Height and Density:

- General support for height.
- General concern from the Panel on density.
- The Panel noted the density is inhibiting the open spaces’ quality and their solar access.
- The Panel noted concerns with the application’s departure from the indicative concept envisioned by the Cambie Corridor Plan that contains a lot of aspiration and intent.
- The missing two lots at the southwest corner are resulting in density pressure on the rest of the site. If more density is needed, then it can be provided along the west and closer to Oak St.
- It was noted that the four-storey townhouses are high given the neighbourhood is predominately two-storeys with a few two-and-a-half-storey houses.

Massing and Contextual Fit:

- Some Panel Members noted the massing felt heavy and would like to see a significant amount of development, especially its expression; a stronger alignment with the neighbourhood pattern and grain to avoid any contextual conflict and awkward transitions.
- The Panel suggests further design development of the west mid-rise form to reduce the monolithic appearance and improve the transition to the single-family houses on either side of the site.
- Some Panel Members suggest seeing more engagement of the two larger buildings.
- The massing, especially of the townhouses needs development to reduce the blocky appearance. Relying on materiality and architectural expression is not enough.
- The project seems very uniform and institutional. There is a rich variety in the neighbourhood, with a wonderful palette of eclectic character and a lot of greenery and garden that should be reflected in the proposal. The expression does not relate to the neighbourhood’s residential character.

Public Realm:

- Concerns with linear public space will be mostly in the shade. It was noted that replacing part of the lane with a linear open space does not offer much nor demonstrate any potential. Between September and March, it will be predominantly in the shade, which is an issue. The linear park is less effective for play because it is too formal. It does not provide the quality seen in the southeast public space. It does not seem inviting to the public and is limited to the residents.
- The Plan's southeast public open space is more favourable and sunnier.
- Family units should be located at grade to activate the public realm and better meet family needs.

Open Spaces and Site Organization:

- The Panel encourages the applicant to review the access to parking. Given the detailed rationale of the serviced transit site and considering measures coming forward in the Broadway corridor plan, which is only two blocks to the north, it feels like the direction is moving towards reducing parking and establishing maximum parking rather than the minimum. The Panel suggests it worthwhile to study the less dominant parking access strategy and consider consolidating a single entry point to the site at the west end, dividing up underground instead of on-site to increase some open space opportunities and to resolve some; as there are difficult adjacencies to the ground level units and the childcare space. The Panel recommends moving the parking access over to the north-south lane on the synagogue or have it come into a single point. The Panel recommends providing parking as an offsite community amenity.
- Consider removing buildings four and seven to create a proper quadrangle/courtyard.
- Concerns with the very few trees on the site except for the street trees.
- The Panel noted some of the paths, open spaces and courtyards between buildings are limited by stairways leading up to the upper units of stacked townhouses, and often in the shade. The interstitial spaces are awkward, the stairs are awkward for delineating public and private spaces.
- The Panel recommends studying the courtyard section profile: a broader section would create a more rich, open space area for programming, and also make a more livable and vibrant linear open space, as well as reducing shadows and the overlook impacts.
- The Panel noted the spaces between the blocks feel compressed at 25 feet. The Panel suggests more areas are required to support the open space activities, the pathways, the outdoor decks, and the required privacy screening.
- Concerns of no adequate shared family-oriented outdoor space for residents as envisioned by the Plan.
- The Panel noted concerns with buildings nine and two blocking the east-west connectivity across the development and prefer an east-west orientation where the townhomes are parallel to the street as shown in the Plan. Orientation building nine is bearing the pressure of facing the childcare. Childcare should be oriented to the street. The north-south porosity is good, which follows the Plan. Reorientation of the north-south buildings to be east-west would improve daylighting and view, and be more consistent with the neighbourhood.
- Stacked townhomes take away from the outdoor useable space.
- Vehicular access, with the linear park terminating with a guardrail, is not supportable. The parking ramp should be moved back. Otherwise, maybe this ends at a point similar to False Creek with removable bollards.

Residential Amenities:

- There was concern regarding the size, quality and distribution of the outdoor and indoor amenities that support families and children's play and relative to the number of units, especially family ones.
- Rental building has a very small 500 sq. ft. amenity space for a large number of units, which merits a larger amenity space.
- There is no exterior space for the children except for the childcare but there will be children who are not part of the childcare. Outdoor children's play space should be provided for all other residents of the complex.
- The Panel noted it feels like a lost opportunity to have the amenity on the rooftop, dislocated from the ground level open space. The Panel recommends relocating this along the linear parks to provide more of a communal focal point with proactive programming, and a positive neighbourhood response. This could be enhanced with ground-oriented family units. Blocks 3, 4, 7 and 8 appear to have one-bedroom units on the ground and stacked townhouses on top so it pushes the families to the top where they need the open space, the space can be more activated down the centre.

Architectural Expression:

- Concerns with the monochromatic expression that does not represent the context; too formal for the interior neighbourhood, especially the proposed townhouse blocks.
- Suggest working on a unified architectural language with a lot of attention to the proportions of the massing. Currently, the project is boxy and the landscape is not softening the edges.
- The Panel noted the design expression appears very institutional and out of character in this context. Panel recommends the design team consider a character based on local typologies and vernacular.

Sustainability:

- It was noted that the sustainability for a large site has not been addressed adequately. It has been left off. The lane has the potential for contributing to this through the integration of sustainable strategies.

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