

**URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES**

**DATE:** April 21, 2021

**TIME:** 4:00 pm

**PLACE:** WebEx

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

- Karenn Krangle
- Marie-Odile Marceau
- Michael Henderson
- Sydney Schwartz
- Margot Long
- Angela Enman
- Adrien Rahbar
- Jennifer Stamp
- Muneesh Sharma

**REGRETS:**

- Brittany Coughlin
- Alan Davies
- Walter Francl

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** M.Sem

**ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING**

1. 1002 Station Street - New St. Paul's Hospital (Two-part Session)

**BUSINESS MEETING** Chair, MR. HENDERSON, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. The panel then considered application as scheduled for presentation. The presentation consisted of two parts: Part 1 was a non-voting workshop and Part 2 was presented as a regular item including a voting motion.

- 1. Address: 1002 Station Street - New St. Paul’s Hospital
- Permit No. DP-2021-00085

To develop the 18.4 acre site with a new hospital and integrated health care campus, including a mix of commercial, hotel, office, institutional and limited residential uses with two child care facilities and a new road network throughout the site that would connect to existing adjacent streets. All over four levels of underground parking consisting of a total of 1,170 parking spaces. The maximum building geodetic building height is 61.31 m (201.1 ft.), the total floor space ratio (FSR) is 3.45 (approximately 119,807 sq. m). The application is being considered under the St. Paul’s Hospital and Health Campus Policy Statement and the Rezoning Policy for Sustainable Large Developments.

- Zoning: CD-1
- Application Status Complete Development Application
- Review: Fourth (First as DP)
- Architect: Stantec
- Delegation: Darren Burns, Stantec  
Rhonda Lui, Provincial Health Services  
Troy Ransdell, HDR  
Ken Larsson, Connect Landscape Architecture

Staff: Derek Robinson & Alina Maness

**EVALUATION: Resubmission Recommended (9/0)**

Derek Robinson began by indicating that the purpose of this session is two-fold. The first portion is reserved as a non-voting workshop to discuss the proposed public realm plan for the overall campus area. The second portion will proceed as a standard review and voting session covering the area that has been submitted with this first DP application (Phase 1a), including the main hospital building, the healthcare boulevard, the majority of the central plaza, and the majority of the Wellness Walk.

**Part 1: Overall Campus Public Realm Non-Voting Workshop**

Derek Robinson began by providing an overview of the existing site, the surrounding context and relevant policy. In 2017, a Policy Statement was approved by City Council. In 2018, a rezoning application was submitted to the city for the overall New St. Paul’s (NSP) campus that was approved at public hearing in 2019. At that time, Council also approved a set of site specific design guidelines for the campus, which will be used to evaluate all future development permit applications.

There are 18 guiding principles to be considered for the development of the new hospital campus, stemming from the policy statement. Three key Urban Design Principles are also outlined in the CD-1 Guidelines.

The campus includes four Precincts: Parcel A is the new primary hospital building and the research centre, which will be submitted as 2 separate Development Permits. The hospital building will be approximately 63.1 m in height. This is driven by view cone 22, which covers most of the site. Parcel B or the South Precinct proposes a mixed use office building with retail at grade south of National Avenue up to approximately 9 storeys and a height of 39m. This building has a key interface with Pacific Central Station.

The form of development of the West precinct (or Parcel C) consists of hotel and office buildings with a childcare facility, and articulated by a modest plaza. The hotel is proposed up to 17 storeys with retail at grade, and the office with retail at grade is proposed up to 15 and 13 storeys up to maximum height of 66.1m. The north precinct (or Parcel D) proposes a 6 storey mixed use building with retail at grade and workforce housing above up to 24m.

Build out of the campus is intended to occur generally in three phases, with Phase 1 being the development of the hospital and health care campus consisting of 2 separate DPs. Phase 2 consists of the west and north parcels, including hotel office, childcare and workforce housing uses. Phase 3 includes the medical office building south of National Avenue and potential expansions of the research facility and the main hospital.

The rezoning application was presented to the Urban Design Panel (UDP) on three occasions. In January 2019, a non-voting workshop was held to receive early feedback from the panel on the site principles. In May 2019, the application was recommended for resubmission by the Panel, noting that the design had not progressed since previous iterations, that the design will not be able to meet a number of the guidelines, and that the massing was problematic with a highly unrelenting scale, a critical north-south connection through the site missing, and a concept that was reacting to its constraints and prioritizing tower plates over open space. In July 2019, the UDP supported the application unanimously.

Panel noted the following in their support of the project: that the public realm is critical and the success of the campus relies on wayfinding, pedestrian crossings, and the relationship with vehicles, landscaping and public art. There should be a focus on spaces for everyone from toddlers to the elderly and Pockets of greenery to visually soften the service area interfaces. The panel also noted that a world class building means world class sustainability and recommended a holistic approach rather than chasing LEED points. In July 2019, the panel summarized a number of additional items for future design development in relation to the guidelines, which can be found in the relevant minutes of that meeting.

In response to previous panel comments and staff review, the design now proposes a reorientation of the central campus to achieve specific functional and urban design objectives identified through the rezoning application process. The primary change is a 90-degree rotation of the central axis of the main hospital building, the 'Healthcare Boulevard', and the research centre buildings.

Alina Maness, Landscape Planner, then noted that the landscape is tasked with restoring natural systems on this site, as well as restoring human wellness and health. This is critically important as the site, currently barren, eventually becomes a green oasis for this urban health care campus and for the public realm integration into the urban fabric. The applicant and panel should comment on how the

proposal will achieve an open space strategy as a network of open spaces linked through a strong health and wellness concept, quality landscape materiality and the importance of providing quality materials; and strategies to achieve a level a maintenance to sustain the proposed landscape design.

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

*Overall masterplan*

Recognizing that the primary hospital building includes highly specific functional requirements, provide commentary on the revised site strategy's ability to:

- Deliver an innovative and contextually appropriate response to the guidelines for all future campus buildings;
- Adequately transition in scale and form to achieve permeability through the site and integration into the existing fabric of the neighbourhood; and
- Improve the future performance of the New High Street.

*Public realm and open space*

Provide commentary on the revised site strategy's ability to achieve an exceptional public realm and to guide future open space development throughout the campus in a flexible way, including:

- **Wellness Walk:** The strength of the Wellness Walk to foster social interaction and promote healing;
- **Legibility:** The provision of an intuitive and legible network of well-connected open spaces offering a variety of experiences reflective of the unique site history and future healing functions;
- **Public Realm Interface:** The success of the proposed building interfaces with the public realm achieving active edges and permeability throughout the campus;
- **Pedestrian Amenity:** The degree of priority for pedestrians, including maximizing pedestrian comfort and achieving an adequate human scale at grade; and
- **Sustainability Strategy:** The overall sustainability strategy, including a regenerative approach to landscape as a critical component and any additional opportunities or measures to be explored that further enhance the sustainability performance of the overall campus.

**Applicant's Introductory Comments: Part 1 – Overall Campus Public Realm**

The applicant began by noting the previous scheme proposed parking under the entire joint phase 1a and phase 1b, and in the current rotated proposal, we were able to achieve parking within the hospital building footprint. The orientation of both the plaza and Healthcare Blvd is much improved. In the previous scheme they were largely shadowed by the adjacent building.

Pedestrian connections have been enhanced by allowing a north-south and east-west connection through the building and by providing underground access to the building in two locations at Healthcare Boulevard, and a separate staff and a loading entrance, as well as separate emergency location, a separate ambulance location and a separate mental health emergency entrance. The applicant presented the vision and background for public realm, legibility and wayfinding, connectivity and permeability, diversity, uniqueness and vibrancy, sustainability and resiliency.

Regarding the storm water management strategy, in the central plaza there are full depth soils, capturing runoff in collecting green roof water as well and maximizing ground level absorption. This is a neighborhood with very limited tree cover and site permeability, and in the future we will be adding more greenery.

Materiality is durable, robust and comfortable and reduces glare while the landscape consists of coastal plant ecology. There will be about 7 trees retained while about 22 others need to be removed.

The heart of the public open space network is the plaza, taking advantage of the southern exposure, inviting people to the front door and available for community and hospital use. The Wellness Walk takes advantage of the spaces to provide natural distractions, add tree canopy and minimize vehicular conflicts. Healthcare Blvd is the arrival and drop-off area connecting with the Wellness Walk along the west side. The Healing Corridor connects the plaza to the front door and future expansion areas. The Spiritual Garden is a combination of two spaces, one lively and one meditative with great southern exposure as a calming place for people. The Hotel Plaza is a traffic court that maximizes access with its proximity to the centre of the campus.

Green roof open spaces are varied in character: The level three critical care garden has access to daylight, walking paths and places for people to be outside, with unique views, some to the mountains, some to the south. The rehab deck will have full sun exposure, views to the plaza and can bring rehab exercises from the inside to the outdoors.

Therapeutic green spaces include the medicine garden as a traditional First Nation's place for reconnecting and place of hope, surrounded by medicinal plants and ceremonies that happen from the inside can come out and get up and close to plants and nature. The stabilization unit courtyard is a quiet visual garden with daylight for the patient rooms.

There will be two childcare spaces in the campus area. Office spaces will have outdoor spaces for employees, maximizing view and exposure to daylight. Off site landscape design includes about 200+ trees in 1.2 kilometers of Boulevard sidewalks.

The applicant then gave an overview of the proposed heights for the campus buildings and an overview of the circulation concept. The sustainability strategy will include green building standards and is pursuing LEED gold certification under the LEED Healthcare rating system. Site design features related to sustainability and those intended to increase resilience of the built environment and adapt to future climate conditions were outlined. Staff and the applicant team then took questions from the panel.

### **Panel Commentary on Part 1: Overall Campus Public Realm Non-Voting Workshop**

- General support for the central plaza and rotated plan.
- Central plaza and entrance adds to legibility. Consider an improved connection between Thornton Park, the small park to the north and the central plaza. Connections between the open space could be improved.
- Concerns with the medical building on the south parcel shadowing the plaza most of the year. Recommendation to relocate this density and extend the plaza to Thornton Park.
- Support for the Wellness Walk but there is a substantial opportunity to do much more. Consider connecting to Trillium Park. Consider the two parks as meandering extensions of the wellness walk. Consider more interesting treatments and additional plantings between the wellness walk and buildings.
- Wellness Walk will be a great benefit but needs to be enhanced. For example, if it could be free from the ground plane would be transformative - if portions could be elevated in an accessible way from the sidewalk, for views over of the railway and the trillium fields.

- Encourage more extensive green roofs and more accessible outdoor space.
- Consider adding more rain screening and covered canopy areas.
- Design development to improve public realm interface and the emergency hospital entrance.
- Permeability - explore strategies to introduce rain garden and to limit storm water runoff.
- Concerns with Spiritual Garden being in shadow most of the time.
- Encourage stronger link between the hospital entrance and professional office building by widening the mid-block connection to New High Street, consider broader link and legibility from National Ave to the front entrance.
- Permeability and vegetation has improved but there is opportunity to do more. The existing green roofs on the east side (# 14 on the plan) should be maximized for their soil volume. Literature noted there are better patient outcomes when they have access to green space.
- Consider having higher trees to buffer across the courtyard as it would improve outlook of patient rooms.
- Appreciate the smaller gardens i.e. rehab garden, note plant choices will be limited due to access to light.
- Work with Parks Board to get connection at northwest corner of trillium so Wellness Walk can connect to the Park as an extension.
- Concern with screening around the back of house areas - consider a more solid screen and more decent soil pockets in terms of structural soil underneath adjacent walk way to ensure planting along there can get a decent size.
- Legibility of the main entrance and emergency is challenging to find. It gets lost on a private street, consider moving it to a city street.
- Connection east to west through the hospital is an opportunity to reinforce the different grids and connections.
- Noted the closeness of the building to all the roads around it, the hospital building is bursting to the roads and is this is a detriment to the public realm and the civic nature of the building.

## **Part 2: Phase 1a Primary Hospital Building Complete DP Voting Session**

Derek Robinson began by stating the second staff presentation is brief and focuses on the five topic areas that are outlined in the questions to the panel, each of which relates to different sections in the Council-approved CD-1 Guidelines.

Staff do recognize that this first DP for the primary hospital building may not be able to fully reflect all of the objectives laid out in the guidelines due to the highly specific and complicated functional requirements of delivering such a program. This also means, however, that the future campus buildings and the overall public realm will be relied on heavily to achieve the overall campus goals and principles outlined in the policy statement and the guidelines. Staff then proceeded to outline relevant sections of the guidelines which relate to each of the five topic areas in the questions to the panel.

**Advice from the Panel on this application is sought on the following:***1. Architectural expression*

Provide commentary on the proposal's ability to achieve innovative, contextual and enduring architecture, serving as a focal point that sufficiently responds to the Guidelines (5.1.2), including but not limited to the following:

- Reducing, to the greatest extent feasible, any appearance of monolithic bulk and expansive horizontality;
- Providing for variety and visual interest at the roofline and contributing to a sculpted skyline;
- Breaking up of massing through architectural design at grade and through expression of upper building elements; and
- Supporting the healing and wellness intent of the facility, which may include employing architectural elements that contribute to environmental performance.

*2. Materiality*

Provide commentary on the proposed building and landscape material palette and its ability to reinforce a sense of permanence and distinctiveness while reflecting site history and appropriately responding to the Guidelines (6.3).

*3. Interface with the public realm and the central plaza*

Provide commentary on the relocated central plaza's configuration and its ability to create a welcoming sense of arrival through visual and physical connection to Thornton Park, the Skytrain and the main entrance of the hospital.

Provide commentary on the relocated central plaza's relationship to the hospital building and its ability to serve as the campus focal point that sufficiently responds to the Guidelines (4.1.1).

*4. Circulation*

Provide commentary on the Wellness Walk and its ability to encompass the overall health and wellness imperative and adequately respond to the Guidelines (4.1.2).

Does the Healthcare Boulevard strike an appropriate balance and establish a clear hierarchy between pedestrian and vehicular uses while responding adequately to the Guidelines (4.1.3)? Please comment on the overall vehicle and loading strategy and the proposed exposed parkade access, noting the Guidelines highly encourage locating underground parking entrances and ramps wholly inside a building envelope.

*5. Sustainability*

Does the proposed sustainability strategy advance the City's objectives for innovation in green building design, while also responding to the City's Climate Emergency Action Plan and Rezoning Policy for Sustainable Large Developments?

**Applicant's Introductory Comments: Part 2 - Phase 1a Primary Hospital Building Complete DP**

The project provides broadly distributed access points into the building, both public and restricted. The service yard is also accessed to the east and to the south along with dedicated staff parking and loading access, and the cycling center access as well. Healthcare Blvd is intended for drop off and pickup, while emergency has dedicated drop off and pickup on the east side with public access below grade for additional pickup and drop off with direct access to public elevators. There are a number of specific loading and access requirements, both at grade and below.

The applicant then outlined the various emergency service access points and the bikeways provided on all bounding streets and the various cycling facilities proposed.

Heights and massing are largely impacted by the multiple view cones crossing the site. It is proposed that elevator shuttles that would go to a helicopter landing facility would protrude into the view cone in a limited way and a separate concurrent application is being made to amend the CD-1 for this purpose. The shadow study diagram, shows the effects at 2pm and at 4pm of the medical office building in the south portion of the site.

The form and materiality takes inspiration from nearby industrial residential characters. Looking at some traditional elements of native weaving provided inspirations around both pattern making in the ground plane and pattern making on the building. The building and envelope concept for articulation and massing is guided by the separation of an outpatient facility, which is a tower bar to the west and an inpatient facility which is a tower bar to the east, those two elements are the programs to be articulated independently of each other, and then rounding that on a more podium based foundation where these elements can spring from. This allowed the further breaking down of components into mass nodes relative to both their program and their orientation, and their relationship to each other, as this will allow for a unique experience of the building from all sides. Also looking at creating an articulation of podium, primarily in some setback and the material changes from both the podium or urban landscape level to the tower elements that are above and then introducing the partial exterior vertical circulation elements and the stair cores to further break down the massing.

The applicant team then further outlined their proposed strategy for materials, color palette and expression. Upper elements are a single skin metal material that allows it to fold and bend to create further lines both horizontal and vertical, as well as building on that layer of color variation between grays and light colours to create weaving approach to the envelope. The separation of the podium element which is effectively delineated by the first two floors of the facility and that expressed in a composite metal panel in a darker tone and considering wood tones to create some softness around the entries and create prominence there and again at the top of the building. The exterior expression ends are also muted down, taking more of a planar approach to the application of these forms and expressions as they blanket themselves around the building as opposed to volumetric one because of the complexity of the program. The applicant then further outlined the material patterning and expression of the various building components, followed by presenting the below grade plans and the various requirements and services provided for.

The main atrium is double height and to the left on the north side is the indigenous First Nations sacred space and the traditional medicine garden. On either side of the plants are very large programmatic elements. The applicant then outlined the location and varied access requirements for the emergency department and the design of the northeast portion of the building. The applicant then outlined the specific functional and rather complicated layout requirements of the ground level as well as the upper level floor plans. The applicant then presented elevations in context which show the relationship to the surrounding site and outlined the interior wayfinding strategy and the sustainability and resilience components of the project. Staff and the 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. ENMAN** and seconded by **MS. LONG** and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

THAT the Panel RECOMMEND RESUBMISSION of the project to demonstrate the application responds to the design guidelines as established and to incorporate the panel's comments.

**Summary Comments from the Chair:**

- There was general support for the overall massing, approach and configuration of the building and an appreciation for the 'basket weave' concept, material color selection and the reconfigured central plaza.
- No issues were expressed regarding the proposed limited minor height increase into the view cone for roof access overruns.
- Concern was noted around some detailed elements of the architectural expression with recommendation to simplify the expression, particularly on the west elevation. Concern noted over strong presence of mechanical louvres, particularly on the west façade.
- Concern around the planar nature of the elevations with recommendation to revisit this in order to further achieve some of the architectural objectives.
- Concern noted around the proposed materiality, particularly at the base of the building, some noting the dark grey material as adding to the heaviness of the massing.
- Further design development required on the proposed rooflines, without substantially changing any floorplan layouts, in order to meet objectives in the guidelines to provide visual interest and a sculptural form.
- Improvement to further distinguish key entrances through building expression and urban cues rather than just relying on signage.
- Strong support for the Wellness Walk concept noting that design development is needed to more fully achieve the goals set out in the guidelines.
- Opportunity to increase the area of green roofs including greater accessibility and planting robustness, highlighting green roofs as an additional healing opportunity.
- Design development to the interface with the public realm through both increased physical access and visual porosity at grade, where feasible.

**Related Panel Commentary:**

- Architectural expression is generally well handled, however, there are several competing horizontal and vertical elements, the dark vertical elements that are right up against the street is severe.
- Noted there are many departures from the guidelines. The guidelines refer to the contextual fit and refer to historic shorelines and the local industrial history.
- Architectural expression still feels too monolithic and massive. There is an opportunity to further express aspects of local culture and healing.
- Consider how the design can be expressed in the most welcoming light for people of all cultures and faiths, particularly in the context of the City's reconciliation efforts.
- Restudy the elevations in an effort to simplify, particularly the west façade as the primary elevation, as they feel too planar, consider a cladding approach that has more relief, the basket weave reference would be reinforced if the cladding had more perceived depth and undulation. Large mechanical

louvres on the west façade is impacting how the building reads from the public plaza, consider replacing it with public art instead. There could be opportunity for public art on the building.

- There is little sculptural quality at the roofline, further develop the visual interest.
- There are large flat roofs without greening. Roof space on the southwest corner is a missed opportunity. Recommend intensive green roofs with large green trees, consider moving rooftop mechanical equipment or cover it with large trees. Noted the three meter maintenance strip around the building doesn't need to be there.
- Regarding livability, windows will look into the space between the east and west parts of the building at the lower levels and will be quite dark. Consider more windows for natural lighting. The staircases could benefit from more natural lighting to encourage use.
- Material palette does not correspond to any of the themes considered in the guidelines.
- More varied robust material palette recommended to express this permanence, the building appears too dark for a place of healing, consider a lighter palette. Encourage more high quality stone, brick, and terracotta materials.
- Consider more texture and fine grain materials at the grade of the building. Appreciate durability of materials, would be nice to consider local sourcing.
- Central plaza has improved, but it will be in shade most of the time according to shadow analysis.
- Consider relocating small medical building at the southwest that is shadowing plaza.
- Appreciate the interior wayfinding strategy, consider incorporating the segments into the exterior as well for improved wayfinding.
- Wayfinding is relying on signage rather than clear cues to delineate the major entrances.
- Concern with the ground plane at the drop off on Healthcare Blvd – it won't be a comfortable place for pedestrian drop off zone.
- Noted there is a lot of space dedicated to road which is over-powering the public realm and compromising the wellness walk and the interface between interior and exterior.
- Critical to maximize regenerative and renewable energy sources. Consider applying solar panels to façade.

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