

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: July 22nd, 2020

TIME: 4:00 pm

PLACE: Webex

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:

Alan Davies
Angela Enman
Brittany Coughlin
Michael Henderson
Margot Long
Adrian Rahbar
Marie-Oedile Marceau
Sydney Schwartz
Muneesh Sharma
Jennifer Stamp (excused from item 1)
Karenn Krangle
Walter Francl (excused from item 1)

REGRETS:
Matt Younger

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** M.Sem

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1805 Larch St DP-2020-00385
2.	315-319 E 2nd Ave DP-2020-00305

BUSINESS MEETING

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

1. Address: 1805 Larch St
Permit No. DP-2020-00385
Description: To develop a 5-Storey residential building consisting of 68 units including 20% allocation to MIRHPP with 42 underground vehicle spaces and 126 bicycle spaces. The proposed building height is 20.5 m (67.2 ft.), the total floor area is 4,180 sq. m (44,784 sq. ft.), and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 2.53.

Zoning: CD-1
Application Status: Complete Development Application
Review: Second (First as DP)
Architect: Tom Pappajohn, Jameson
Scott Mitchell, Architect, Metric Architecture

Delegation: Alexa Gonzalez, Landscape Architect
Staff: Grace Jiang

EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations (9/0)**• Introduction:**

The project we are reviewing today is a DP application following an approved rezoning. This is a 6-storey apartment development in Kitsilano. The council has generally approved height and massing but left a concern about how the architectural form and character can be further developed to fit in the neighbourhood. This issue was also identified at the last UDP. So we bring the revised scheme back to UDP to review whether the issue has been successfully addressed.

The site is located at the boundary of two different zones - RT-8 and RM-4. The yellow dash line indicates the project site. The areas on two sides of Larch St have distinct building form and character.

The area zoned RT-8 is dominantly occupied by 2 to 3 storey old houses built in craftsman style and other traditional styles. The characteristics of the area remain intact in past decades and reinforced by the implementation of RT-8 zoning and design guidelines. The pictures shown on the left are the houses adjacent to the subject site. The area on the other side of Larch St is a multiple family zone and characterized by 3 to 6 storey contemporary buildings. Some buildings have simple form while some have more articulations and details.

At rezoning, the approved apartment building has a larger form than the surrounding low-scale houses. It is designed in a contemporary style, but lacks sympathetic architectural design considerations to achieve a compatible appearance with the neighbourhood. Last UDP recommended further development to the building proportion and character. Council also approved rezoning conditions that require significant improvement to the compatibility of the

architectural expression. In the DP application, the applicant has made design changes in 4 aspects to address the issue.

First is the articulation of the corner and edges.

At rezoning, the building looked very boxy. This perception was exaggerated by two contrasting surfaces adjoining at the corner. At the DP, the same material is carried across the corner and the adjoining planes. Balconies and openings are introduced at this corner. These measures would visually de-emphasize the corner expression. Another change is replacing the solid parapets by transparent guardrails and possible landscape. This method would soften the edges of the boxy form and effectively reduce the perceived height.

Secondly, the planes are articulated in the following ways:

- The light brick is lowered to the third floor and the fourth floor is finished with grey cementitious panel. The changes of the texture and colour would increase the visual contrast and emphasize a three-storey expression which is more compatible with the scale of surrounding houses;
- Setbacks are incorporated to the continuous flat plane. The formed void space and the projecting balconies and canopies would create texture with shadow patterns and animate the plane;
- And, the large vertical linear glass is transformed to a pattern of punched windows. This would emphasize a feeling of solidness and geometric order.

The third aspect is adding an individual entrance and porch to each ground-oriented unit facing the streets. This is to continue the pattern of the existing houses. The details include a few traditional elements, such as a single swing entry door with sidelight, a projecting covered porch, an elevated patio, and a wooden stair.

The fourth change is about the material and finishes. The choice of material takes the cue from the old houses, such as traditional running bond brickwork, 6" cementitious lap siding, and wood soffit and trellis.

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

- Does the DP proposal successfully address the concern previously voiced by the Council and the Urban Design Panel, with respect to the compatibility with the architectural character of the surrounding area?
- Given the height and massing has been approved by the Council in general, are there any improvements that can be made to the architectural form, character and details to further enhance the neighbourhood fit?

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Applicant started presentation by noting the improvements done since the last UDP meeting:

- improvement on the ground plane
- increase in units since rezoning
- addressing the issues with entry and height
- Improvement to the design between public space and private space.

At ground, there are porches and connections with board walks. Engineering wouldn't allow to provide for play space for the neighbourhood at grade but applicant incorporated the urban swale and landscaping. The driving design element for the ground level landscape are the activation integration of the public realm as well as tree retention as there are many mature trees on the site. On the north side of building, working on a strategy with mature trees, providing ground level access through the understory to the sidewalk. Providing amenities to public realm along 2nd Ave. where applicant is proposing public realm without benches and replacing existing street blocks. These elements allow applicant to maintain the existing trees with minimal impact and provide individual unit entries. The west side of the site features row of planters to screen building from adjacent neighbours. The south lane way has ground level patio access, gated access to the unit and with more planters to further green and screen the development from the neighbours and public realm. One level above the architecture has been setback from the original design and the green edge provides a buffer for general oversight concerns. The gated patios that face onto Larch St frame the entry of the building and there will be a new sidewalk and street trees installed along this public realm frontage.

With the diverse unit mix strived to create the rooftop design to be an extension of each of the tenant's homes. The layouts has been designed with protectability, flexibility and programming in mind. It will be a wood frame construction so applicant tried to be thoughtful and considerate of how to approach rooftop design.

East zone of the roof is the active zone featuring rubber surfacing for play, seating, storage for casual oversight, sandbox and activity board and opportunity for chalk board on the building space and can be used for fitness and exercise, north shore views and north side of the patios are dining area and the west side is the raised planters for gardening.

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

Having reviewed the project it was moved by **MR.DAVIES** and seconded by **MR.SHARMA** and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

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

- Consider alternative to the wood "boardwalk" at the ground level and explore moving the patios closer to the unit entries.
- Further explore improving unit layout functionality and consider enlarging some units.
- Explore enlarging the smaller balconies.

- Further develop landscaping on roof deck with larger planting area.

- **Panel Commentary:**
 - Panel generally supports the changes of the architectural expression address the council's concern and recommendations from the first UDP review.
 - Panel generally acknowledged an improvement in design, massing, and landscape
 - Panel noted suite sizes and balcony being too small
 - Panel noted concerns with functionality of many unit layouts.
 - Some panel members noted lack of visual interest versus previous version of the proposal
 - Some panel members expressed concerns with the architectural character of the board walk conflicting with the building, and general fit with neighbourhood context specifically with respect to the units and balconies.
 - Some panel members noted a CPTED issues at parkade
 - General support of the form, massing, and height
 - Panel supported the tree retention, materiality and landscape
 - Panel encourages larger balconies, windows and suites in keeping with the character of rental buildings in Kitsilano specifically on W. 2nd Ave.
 - A panel member suggested providing accessible ready units.
 - Panel members noted their appreciation for the high quality cladding materials.
 - Some panel members noted their concern with the wood deck's fit and usability, with respect to weathering would limit use and maintenance by owners and residents
 - Some panel members noted the wood deck could be a unique element and used as a patio for those units as long as it is properly maintained.
 - Some panel members noted patios would be more functional if located closer to the unit entries. They would also be more private and a better fit for the neighbourhood.
 - Panel appreciate that the parkade is setback to save some trees
 - Some panel members encourage more landscape details such as bigger planters on the roof deck.
 - Panel suggests adding more landscape to the lane.
 - Panel acknowledges applicant's energy efforts.
 - A Panel member encouraged the addition of overhangs to provide solar shading.

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

2. Address:	315-319 E 2nd Ave
Permit No.	DP-2020-00305
Description:	To develop a 9-storey mixed-use building with 2 levels of commercial space, 5 levels of residential use, and 2 levels of office use above; all over two levels of underground parking. The proposed building height is 30.5 m (100 ft.), the total floor area is approximately 7,330 sq. m (78,899.4 sq. ft.), and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 4.0.
Zoning:	IC-3
Application Status:	Complete Development Application
Review:	First
Architect:	Wave Developments
Delegation:	Studio Balcaen Kwan Architecture and Design Bettina Balcaen, Architect Cameron Woodruff, Landscape Architect, PMG Cheryl Fu, Wave Developments Ltd
Owners:	Wave Developments Ltd
Staff:	Kevin Spaans

EVALUATION: Resubmission Recommended (8/4)

- **Introduction:**

The Development Permit application under review today is a mixed use Manufacturing, Residential (micro-dwelling market rental), and general office building located at 315 E 2nd Ave. At the southwest corner of Scotia St and E 2nd Ave, the subject site is zoned IC-3 and falls within the Creative Campus subarea of the False Creek Flats. This subarea is also referred to the Rental Incentive Artist Live-Work Mixed Use Zone in some regulations, guidelines, and policies. The proposed density of 4.0 FSR aligns with the maximum allowable density in the IC-3 District Schedule. The applicant is seeking no significant height or density relaxations.

The applicant is proposing 100 residential units, most of which are micro-dwelling units as are permitted within this subarea. Larger units and unit mix typically seen with other secured market rental developments are not required where micro-dwelling units are being considered. Despite this, the applicant is voluntarily providing some larger units.

The proposed building height is 9 storeys over 2 storeys of underground parking, with a minor height overage which is conditionally supported by the Director of Planning. The site is governed by the IC-3 District Schedule, design guidelines, and significantly, the False Creek Flats Plan. It is substantially compliant with the intents of these regulations and plans.

Context is a mix: Emily Carr University is located nearby to east, generally light industrial uses land to the immediate west and north, and a number of residential buildings of various tenures are located to the south and east. These buildings are largely Residential Unit Associated with Artist Studio buildings, which are ostensibly strata buildings, and they range in height from 4 to 6 storeys. An application for a similar development has been made on the site across the lane, which is intended to be brought before the Urban Design Panel toward the end of the summer.

The False Creek Flats Art Walk runs through the lane to the north of the property. Originally intended to connect the Innovation Hub area at Main and Terminal with the future Millennium Line subway station to the east, the Canvas Building at 417 Great Northern Way was completed without securing public access through the property, thereby resulting in the Art Walk terminating at the eastern extent of the application site. It is still anticipated that the Art Walk will extend as far as possible, and all building along the walk should contribute to its success.

The False Creek Flats Plan includes a series of development principles, three of which have particular application to this proposal. These are:

Principle 4: Establish an enhanced and expanded public space network to support economic life

Develop a hierarchy of public spaces to support a variety of activities from passive reflection and introverted idea generation, to social celebration, collaboration, and the spillover of ideas.

Principle 5: Secure and strengthen the economic presence of arts, culture and food

Celebrate, support and enhance the arts, cultural and food economy in the Flats, with a particular focus on industrial production, recognizing the critical role these sectors play in a healthy and complete city.

Principle 10: Support new models of housing to support economic initiatives and innovation

On the edges where residential is permitted, explore new models of housing that address the economic objectives of the area, while thoughtfully transitioning to the surrounding neighbourhoods.

As mentioned, the site falls within the Creative Campus Subarea which extends roughly from Main Street to Clark. This subarea is intended to provide intensification opportunities for well-functioning, flexible industrial and light industrial workspace, office space and other employment opportunities while enhancing the public life and creative pedestrian interest. IC-3 permits residential uses. Residential uses should be carefully designed and considered with respect to non-compatible uses.

As mentioned the project falls on the False Creek Flats Arts walk. Key performance criteria of the Walk are as follows:

- Take advantage of the grade change between First and Second Avenues to create a “dual frontage” and double grade access uses, including galleries, restaurants, with work-force rental housing above.
- Create an ‘arts corridor’ that links from the Innovation Hub to the ECUAD and Great Northern Way Institutional Anchor.

- Provide infrastructure to support the display of original artworks and support the expansion of the area's street art or mural opportunities on existing blank walls

Architecturally, the proposal building is uncomplicated and simple, reading as 8 storeys from E 2nd Ave and 9 storeys from the lane. The building is formally broken down as follows:

- At grade, a low retail-style Manufacturing podium runs the breadth of the site from east to west, with a nondescript office entry located toward the far east side of the south frontage. As the site slopes down toward the north, these retail-style Manufacturing spaces increase from single storey to two-storey units, with the westernmost units extending the full depth of the site from E 2nd Avenue through to the lane. At the lane are proposed to be roll-up doors intended to provide for activity at the Art Walk. At the northwest corner of the site, the building presents a large unarticulated wall extending the full height of the façade;
- A tower mass sits atop this low podium and extends from Levels 2 through 7 in the same vertical plane. Articulation is provided in the form of horizontal sawtooth architectural modulations on the north, west, and south frontage. Residential units, located from Levels 2 through 6, include either Juliet balconies or full balconies depending on the units site, and Level 7 includes the first level of office use expressed by way of larger glazing units;
- The uppermost floor includes office use and is stepped back from the outside faces of the lower façades on the north, west, and south elevations;
- The east façade is an exposed party wall that extends to the full height of the building.

Interface with the public realm is achieved through a series of paved outdoor areas with plantings. To the south are entrance plazas for the retail-style manufacturing spaces, and the office entry, with a proposed seating area at the southwest corner. At the northeast corner, the applicant is proposing a similar entrance plaza for the residential building, and a plaza for the northwest retail unit.

Residents are provided with an outdoor amenity area at Level 3, and office workers are provided with a roof deck.

The material expression is a combination of vertical metal siding, glass, and fibre cement siding. The design guidelines for the area generally anticipate high quality materials that reflect the historic and contemporary industrial context.

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

1. With due consideration given to the key principles of the False Creek Flats Plan, please comment on the proposed development's contributions to the character of the Creative Campus subarea, with particular focus on overall building form, massing, and the proposed material palette.
2. Does the applicant sufficiently contribute to the successful performance of the Arts Walk, including providing activating uses and space for artists?

3. Please comment on the performance of the public realm design and other key landscape elements.

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

In the urban context we use the angling walls along Scotia St. and at 2nd Ave to create public entrance spaces for the office use and commercial units, and residential courtyard and entry. The design intent is to provide a transition space and make it more pedestrian friendly along E 2nd Ave., and allow for increase street activity. Regarding the massing, the intent is to draw on the industrial character at the ground level, with the commercial units, and mitigate the scale of the building.

Office access is separate from the other entrances to address possible security concerns. There is a significant grade change from E 2nd Ave. over to the lane which provides opportunity to create commercial units that span across the building and have double height spaces that can be used for light industrial manufacturing. This provides the opportunity to open up to the lane with an overhead garage door, and provide some interest and activation along the lane where we do have the walkway. There are no steps to mitigate the grade change and some planting is added to make it more pedestrian friendly.

Urban open spaces - with the walk way and the entry plaza along E 2nd Ave. and the generous landscape on the corner with outdoor patio behind and these are design related setbacks and decided to propose this because the neighbourhood needs a new identity and suffers from an activate street. The corner to the lane activates the walk way which is intended to connect the innovation hub with Emily Carr.

As shown in the renderings, the entry court yard connects to Scotia St. and the walkway with the lane.

In terms of materiality, at the ground level plane it is repeated on the upper volume to break the volume further down and provide a more residential scale and provide some shading at the opening and provide some identity for this building at this prominent corner. And along E 2nd Ave. there are micro unit dwellings that connect to the outdoors, with Juliette balconies adding hard colour accent to break the façade up even more. There are bigger 2 bedroom units with balconies, all the residential units have indoor and outdoor connections and on the third level provide an indoor amenity room with deck and some planting and a space for office use on the roof deck with views of the mountain to the north.

The architectural façade is an undulating, clean, linear form which is reflected back into the landscape design. Starting with diamond shape pavers, concentrated and change colours from the highlight entries of commercial spaces as it goes closer to the entry.

Custom level planters will be used as separation between the public street frontage sidewalk and semi commercial plaza spaces. Wrapping around the corner from E 2nd Ave. and Scotia St. there is more room for landscape to provide a screen to the patio space

where there is vertical elements in a woodland box setting with an ever green ground plane under story and some more trees wrapping down the slope down Scotia St. Metal planters are used around the north east side of site along the lane to soften the lane and to acknowledge the industrial history of the site.

Moving up, there is a patio area provided for residential level and office level , tried to keep this as simple as possible for flexibility of use but provide a continuous screen around the perimeter for the residential; It is very low to provide an overlook when standing but when seated it provides more of a screen for privacy. On top office level, there are screens on the Scotia St side providing bird friendly landscape.

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

Having reviewed the project it was moved by MR. SHARMA and MS. LONG and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

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

- Design Development to ensure an increase in the indoor and outdoor common amenity spaces.
- Design Development to further enhance relationship of the lane.
- Design Development to consider wrapping the glazing on to the lane elevation on CRU # 2.
- Design Development to the location prominent of the office entry.
- Design Development to consider green roof top at level 3 and level 9.
- Design Development to enhance the mixed use intent of the guidelines, with focus on quirkiness and also the distinct element of the office, residential and ground plane commercial.

Kevin Spaans, Development Planner asked for clarification from the Panel on which design development condition(s) are being used as grounds for resubmission. He noted that there is no City of Vancouver policy requiring that the applicant provide a green roof, a larger residential amenity, noting that the space provided substantially meets the intent of the *High Density Dwellings for Families Guidelines*.

Panel expressed concerns with how the building is addressing the Guidelines and how it relates to the Art Walk.

Panel noted although there are no requirements for green roof, more amenities are encouraged; Panel has seen projects of smaller scale that offer more than the project presented.

Panel noted given the size and livability of the micro units, there is opportunity for them to have more outdoor space, the increase in height and increase in density, there needs to be more of a give to the residents of the building.

- **Panel Commentary:**
 - Panelists expressed overall support for the form, massing, height, and material palette of the building, noting the simple form as being appropriate for the location.
 - The panel is supportive of the overall building form and architectural expression. They appreciate the restrained character and feel the form, expression and character are appropriate in the context.
 - The panel appreciates the high quality materials proposed and feels they are appropriate. They are robust and industrial, as well as neutral and restrained. The panel suggested considering some more vibrant colours on elements such as guardrails.
 - Panel noted there is lack of innovation for landscape from the street level up. Projects needs more greenery on Level 3 and 9 and the top can benefit from an extensive green roof.
 - The panel feels that the building reads as a residential building and it's missed an opportunity to read as a mixed use building. It needs to express the three different uses. The office is not expressed.
 - Given the context the building has missed an opportunity for quirkiness and innovation - as stated in the 'flats' plan.
 - The panel suggested reconsidering the colour of the level 9 overhand as it makes it prominent.
 - Panel noted plantings are limited in size and scale; to have an impact suggest exploring extensive green roofs on the upper levels.
 - Regarding the planting along the lane, CRUs with garage door and CRU # 2 on the corner of Scotia, Panel suggest dropping it down to lane level.
 - Panel noted residential entry on Scotia is lost because CRU doors are right there, Panel recommends moving the door of the CRU #2 closer to the lane away from the residential and the carve in front of residential lobby, it feels like it is buried in the overall expression of the office, could be taken out to make it more legible.
 - The gap doesn't go far enough between office and residential . The uses should be better differentiated in the expression of the building. Panel encouraged more glazing on the north west corner to animate and differentiate the office and residential. Furthermore the office and residential need differing window treatments.
 - At the connection on the corner of W 2nd and Scotia, Panel noted the retail patio space and plaza is too cut off from the street with walls and planting. Panel suggested there could be a café to open up the space to have more interaction. The Panel also recommended further exploration of seating and planting.
 - Panel suggested wrapping the glazing on to the lane on CRU # 2
 - Panel noted the subtleness and restraint of the material palette; some Panelists suggested taking it further with some colour, although they left that to the Architect to determine if it's needed.
 - Panel noted the lack of residential amenities for micro dwelling units.
 - Panel noted further explore the amenity of laundry rooms on each floor.
 - Panel encouraged more indoor and outdoor common amenities; roof top could be an opportunity for common amenities space.
 - Panel noted the office expression is lost amongst the residential expression.
 - Regarding contribution to Art Walk, Panel suggested wrapping of glazing on the blank wall on Scotia St to open up space and make it more inviting.
 - Panel noted their appreciation of front/back CRU units interacting with the lane, with further opportunity for applicant to improve that, such as reducing the step/grade change and eliminating the planting.

- The panel suggested that the loading bays could be utilized as art space or they could be put below grade so that more front/back CRU units could be provided.
- Panel suggested shared indoor spaces with programming to offset the livability concerns of the small units.
- Panel recommended that measures be taken to mitigate thermal bridging at the slab edges.
- Panel encouraged consideration to make the architectural expression more vibrant.
- Panel noted the livability concerns about the micro-dwelling units.
- The panel asked for the applicant to consider cooling in the units as they are very small and will heat up quickly.
- Panel suggests shifting the office entry one bay to the west and widening it.
- Panel noted the planting at the lane is not best solution as it conflicts with loading.

- Kevin Spaans, Development Planner noted to the Panel the adjacent property to the north on the other side of the lane will be coming into Urban Design Panel in the next few weeks.

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