

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: August 19, 2020

TIME: 4:00 pm

PLACE: Webex

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:

Walter Francl
Marie-Oedile Marceau
Alan Davies
Michael Henderson
Margot Long
Adrian Rahbar
Sydney Schwartz (exclude from item 2)
Muneesh Sharma
Karenn Krangle
Angela Enman (exclude from item 1)

REGRETS: Matt Younger
Brittany Coughlin

RECORDING

SECRETARY: M.Sem

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1. 810 Kingsway (RZ-2020-00016)
 2. 304 E 1st Avenue (DP-2020-00370)
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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: 810 Kingsway
Permit No. RZ-2020-00016
Description: To develop a 6-storey mixed-use residential building with 108 secured market rental units and commercial uses at grade; all over two levels of underground parking consisting of 95 vehicle spaces and 193 bicycle spaces. The maximum building height is 22m (72 ft.), the proposed floor area is 8,338 sq. m (89,750 sq. ft.), and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 3.62. This application is being considered under the Secured Market Rental Housing Policy.

Zoning: C-2
Application Status: Rezoning Application
Review: First
Architect: Yamamoto Architecture
Delegation:

Taizo Yamamoto, Architect
Lucas Berube, Developer – Rize Alliance
Matt Grey, Landscape Architect – ETA landscape Architects

Staff: Jim Spillane & Derek Robinson

EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations (10/0)

- **Introduction:**

Rezoning Planner, Jim Spillane presented the rezoning application at 810 Kingsway under the Secured Market Rental Housing Policy, known as Rental 100. Jim began by providing an overview of the site and surrounding context. He concluded his presentation with a description of the site and a summary of the rezoning proposal.

The site is located on the south side of Kingsway, between Prince Albert Street to the west and St Catherines Street to the east. The site is currently zoned C-2 and is developed with a one storey commercial building and an at-grade parking lot. It's located on the number 19 bus route through to Stanley Park, which is part of TransLink's Frequent Transit Network. The site has a frontage of approximately 244 ft. along Kingsway, and it has a depth of 122 ft. The area of the site is approximately 2,300 sq. m. (24,800 sq. ft.). Across Kingsway to the north are low-rise commercial buildings. The properties to the east are four-storey mixed use buildings. To the south across the lane are two single family homes zoned RS-1 and to the west is a small scaled church.

The Rental 100 policy allows for consideration of mid-rise forms of up to 6 floors at this location. This policy does not provide an FSR cap, however these projects commonly range from 3.2 to 3.7 FSR.

The proposal is to rezone the site from C-2 to CD-1, for a six storey mixed use building with 108 secured market rental units and commercial use at-grade. It proposes an FSR of 3.62 and a maximum height of 72 ft. (22m). It contains 2 levels of underground parking with 95 vehicle parking spaces and 195 bike parking spaces.

Development Planner, Derek Robinson, gave a brief description of the proposed project before concluding with Staff questions for the Panel.

Derek began by presenting the ground floor plan of the project with a proposed restaurant and café at the corner, several CRUs along Kingsway, townhouses at the lane and two residential entries; including an enhanced public lobby space intended to integrate the commercial and residential uses.

On the second level plan, the proposed common indoor and outdoor amenity with southern exposure utilizes the townhouse roof deck fronting the lane. On this elevation it shows the applicant has taken steps to break up the façade length along Kingsway. Staff is seeking comments from panel on this as the proposed building length is approximately 223 ft.

Regarding the full 6 storey corner expression, Staff is seeking comments from the panel on whether this corner could be further enhanced given the unique sightlines created by Kingsway's geometry.

Regarding the modest open space on the corner intended to transition from public to private, Staff is seeking comments from panel on whether the open space is effective or is there opportunities to further enhance it; with the understanding that the design is also negotiating grade as elevation slopes down to the lane.

Staff is seeking comments from panel on the interface with the two triangular shaped RS-1 properties across the lane. On the slide presented, the proposal relative to the typical C-2 envelope shown in red, it was noted the proposed building pulls back further off the lane than typical C-2.

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

1. Please comment on proposed height, form and massing, including:
 - a) Long frontages along Kingsway and the lane,
 - b) Visually prominent north-west corner and interface with plaza space, and,
 - c) Residential interface to the south.
2. Please comment on pedestrian interest and public realm development, including:
 - a) Corner plaza,
 - b) Variety of ground floor storefronts, and,
 - c) Site grading around the corner.
3. Please comment on architectural expression, materiality and colour, to be explored at future development stages.

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

This project is close to transit on Kingsway and Fraser and two blocks away from a bike route. The geometry of this site is unique given the intersection of Kingsway and Prince Albert. There are two single family homes to the south west of the site. The concept is to emphasize the four storey street wall to transition to the existing four storeys on the east, to recess the volume and to create a six storey corner element; to take advantage of the flat iron corner and help create some roof line variations along the length of the block. The applicant is trying to emphasize the shared lobby by breaking up the massing in the middle of the building, a break in the in-fill building in the middle and then the corner element.

The frontage on Prince Albert Street is shorter, breaking it in to smaller volumes. Because of the orientation and oblique intersection the townhomes there is a nice frontage rather than directly looking into garages which is common with C-2 type sites.

Regarding the lane, applicant tried to keep form as simple as possible to create some clarity between the elements and introduce a vertical rhythm; to represent the townhouses on a smaller scale while keeping the overall form simple.

The Plaza is an opportunity for an extension of the restaurant space. The plaza would wrap around the side of building. Given the grade change the proposal will need some space for a landscape buffer to help mitigate the grade change.

There is a secondary lobby that is private and only for residents use. It will give people the option to access the townhouses without having to interact with the communal aspect of the main public lobby. The townhouses are raised from the lane for privacy with planter buffers to help keep the separation.

The outdoor amenity area on the podium is southwest facing, centrally located and convenient. There is an opportunity for planting, urban agriculture, children's play, and an indoor amenity area which is located adjacent to the main core of the building.

The applicant then presented the concept of the shared lobby space.

The objective with this proposal is to redefine relationship and functionality between commercial and residential uses. To achieve this objective the applicant is proposing to integrate a public lobby with the adjacent lobby space similar to a café or bar in a hotel. Public lobby on the ground floor will have a direct connection to the adjacent retail café. The permeable connection between the retail and residential uses is intended to create opportunities for connections between commercial tenants, their customers and residents.

The combination of programmed and un-programmed space in the public lobby is intended for public use, social interactions and work.

The lower lobby allows for private access to the upper residential floors and townhomes. To achieve the connection of the public lobby, the main entrance is off of Kingsway and the secondary entrance is off Prince Albert St.

Applicant presented the materiality and palette to emphasis the massing elements.

All street trees have been retained on Kingsway and two more have been added along Prince Albert St. Inside the property line along Kingsway there are concrete unit pavers to help distinguish between the on-site and off-site and to draw attention to the CRUs. At the public lobby entrance there is a change in colour of the paver, as well as bike parking, concrete and a timber bench, additional bike parking also is provided along the CRU frontage. On the corner of Kingsway and Prince Albert St. there is the public plaza, connecting to the restaurant. There is a small patio seating area on the one side and some landscape is provided to make some of the grade difference. Applicant noted there will be some challenges to keeping that useable. Along Price Albert St. there is additional planting, shrub and tree planting along the building and at the corner there is a lane way and on Prince Albert St there is the other accessible residential lobby. Townhouse lobby is a long the lane way, each one has a concrete unit paver patio and a planting buffer to separate it from the lane way.

Up on the podium is the main amenity space with the barbeque, removable seating and adjacent indoor amenity space. Both of these spaces are to be used as one to have a nice flow from indoor to outdoor. There is also a play area with rubber surfacing for children play, urban agriculture and a secluded seating area. The remaining podium is a larger patio with a planting buffer and raised concrete planters and additional seating outside of those planters and additional planting on the south side providing privacy overlooking the lane.

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

Having reviewed the project it was moved by **Mr. Davies** and seconded by **Ms. Marceau** 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:

- Explore increasing size of the corner outdoor plaza.
- Improve the amount of indoor and outdoor amenity space for residents.
- Explore a finer grain expression of the town house typology on the lane and review the heavy parapet at the top of the town house block.

- **Panel Commentary:**

- Panel supports the proposed height, form and massing
- Panel noted the frontage along Kingsway was well handled - it was well broken up and nicely proportioned.
- Panel noted no concerns with residential interface to the south.
- Panel noted north-west corner and interface with plaza space could be increased in size and developed further. Consider pushing back the storefront to gain more plaza space.
- Panel supports the variety of ground floor storefronts and sizes.
- Panel noted the grading at the corner is well handled.
- Panel felt the flat iron corner is well handled.
- Panel supportive of architectural expression, materiality and colour.
- Design development to further increase the size of the indoor and outdoor amenity spaces. The panel felt that the rooftop was undeveloped (as a common amenity space) is a lost opportunity.
- Panel suggests sacrificing private patio space and planting area at the amenity podium to give more communal outdoor space to residents. Extent programming all the way to the east of the podium.
- Design development to explore vegetation on roof.
- Design development to the townhouse expression at the lane, other facades of the building has been well handled, but this one is the least accessible, Panel suggests more articulation along here.
- The panel was very supportive of the material palette being considered. The brick is excellent. The earthy façade with the metal paneling behind is subtle but compelling.
- The brick and fenestration pattern is cohesive and strong.
- The panel liked the shared common café/lobby space. The panel liked the subtle quiet expression of the 2nd residential lobby on Prince Albert.
- The panel felt that the proposal is very well resolve for a rezoning and suggested to City staff that it not be seen again at panel.

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

2. Address:	304 E 1st Avenue
Permit No.	DP-2020-00370
Description:	To develop a 10-storey mixed-use building with 112 residential units and commercial uses at grade with ground level parking consisting of 20 vehicle spaces and 238 bicycle spaces. The proposed building height is 30.5 m (100 ft.), the total floor area is 8,007.2 sq. m (86,189 sq. ft.), and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 4.0.
Zoning:	IC-3
Application Status:	Complete Development Application
Review:	First
Architect:	MCM Architects
Delegation:	Rupert Campbell - Cape Group Joe Muego - Hearth Architectural (Childcare Space only) Patricia Campbell - PMG Landscape Architects Harish Murthy Celso Stifelmann – MCM Architects
Staff:	Paul McDonnell

EVALUATION: Resubmission Recommended (10/0)

- **Introduction:**

Development Planner, Paul McDonnell, started by giving an overview of the vision of the False Creek Area plan for the neighbourhood, followed by the expectations of the built-form guidelines. He then gave a brief description of the proposed project before concluding with Staff questions for the Panel.

With due consideration given to the key principles of the False Creek Flats Area Plan and IC-3 Guidelines,

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

1. Overall building massing, height, articulation, contextual fit, and relationship to adjacent residential building to the east.
2. Design of the ground planes and interface with the public realm, with particular attention to lower building elevations, entrances, materials, landscaping and CEPTD.
3. How successfully does the applicant contribute to the performance of the 'Arts Walk?'

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

This project will be providing 112 residential homes. There is a huge demand for childcare in the area based on the public hearing and noticed an opportunity to put the childcare on the third floor which has been a focus of the project. This project will bring environmental and social benefits but will leave some constraints for the project and eager to hear feedback from panel on how to integrate this building back into the surrounding context.

Proposing a mass reconstruction of the tower on top of the concrete podium; also proposing extensive green roof on the south east corner of the roof which will take care of the storm water management. The ground level will be animated wrapping around East 1st Ave. on Scotia and into the lane with integration to the future Arts Walk. Project is designed to provide energy performance exceeding the minimum requirements by City of Vancouver bylaw.

Daycare will accommodate 64 children and 24 staff to add to the amenity and vibrancy of this development. The proposed day care facility exceeds MPFD childcare licensing regulations and intended to align with the City of Vancouver's social planning objectives. All classes will have quality northern lights and visual access to outdoor play areas. Decision was made early to locate a wide corridor to the south of the program areas; this allows for better visual and physical access to upper play spaces. To allow additional light to filter through the south applicant proposed interior glazing through all the classrooms. A large portion of the outdoor program area is covered which is an asset; since head room beneath the residential is over 10 feet there will be a potential for sunlight at most times of the year and a bit of rain protection. The covered area also mitigates sound transmission to the residences above while reducing the amount of residential overlook.

The need for day care spaces can't be overstated for a neighbour that is attracting young families. These essential facilities allow the families to live and work in close proximity and add to the vibrancy and sustainability of the neighbourhood.

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

Having reviewed the project it was moved by **Ms. Marceau** and seconded by **Ms. Enman** 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 podium and tower expression, materiality, articulation and fit with its neighbour to the east.
- Explore increase in the building height to improve livability of unit and improve open sky for childcare space.
- Design development to the legibility of the residential and day care entries.
- Design development to access to open sky for the child care.
- Improve activation on all frontages.
- Further resolution of the Art Walk design response and contribution.
- Design development to roof deck to increase intensive planting, include a covered area and improve usability; also increase size of indoor amenity room and reconsider its location.

- **Panel Commentary:**

- There was general support from panel with massing and height.
- The proposal has a good mix of uses.
- Panel suggested relaxation of the height to provide more livability to the micro units; consider reducing the floor to floor height of the commercial at grade.
- Panel suggested providing more access to open sky for childcare space.
- Panel is not supportive of the cover space for the childcare space. The majority of the outdoor space is under the tower overhang and only has 10' clearance.
- Regarding the contextual fit, some panel members felt there was no relationship to the building to the east and the building was not making a contribution to the neighbourhood.
- Regarding the podium, panel noted the renderings do not match the drawings and there is no articulation.
- Panel noted the podium lacks in detail, rhythm, not attractive and no definition.
- Panel noted the daycare entrance on the ground plane was reading too flat and no decompression space outside of it. Panel suggested the daycare entrance needs to be animated in a more clearly announced area or relocated to a spot that is more level.
- Panel is not supportive of the tower placement and how it impacts the childcare space.
- Encourage applicant to put PMP below grade.

- Panel noted the amenity room would be challenging to use as it is small and not connected to roof top.
 - Panel suggested exploring amenity room on the rooftop or at a minimum a canopy with weather protection to allow for gathering.
 - There was general support from panel on the handling of the landscape. The roof could have more intensive planting, rather than just extensive green roof.
 - Panel noted on the ground plane there is more opportunity for seating, more interaction to building and public realm along E 1st Ave and along the lane.
 - Panel noted there needs to be more public engagement on the ground plane.
 - Panel noted the retail frontage does not speak to the area.
 - Panel noted there needs to be more activation at grade on Sophia.
 - Panel suggested there is potential to use loading bay as amenity space.
 - Panel noted building is not successfully contributing to the 'Art Walk', the murals shown on the building feel more like an applique rather than something integrated into the architecture.
 - Panel noted it was not clear if the murals are being installed at the time the building is being delivered or if it is just a potential.
 - Panel noted further design development to improve integration of the murals with the façade.
 - Panel suggested more comprehensive lighting to improve the Art Walk.
 - The podium is monolithic, flat and there is no material interest. The industrial material palette and vocabulary are not seen in the proposal. The building is an office/commercial expression and requires more articulation.
 - The proposed expanded metal mesh along the lane feels defensive.
 - The residential entry on 1st needs more differentiation from the retail entries.
 - The building misses an opportunity to be unique and eclectic as part of the arts walk. The retail looks placeless and does not speak to the arts walk. Consider roll up doors or structural bays as a means to activate/animate the edges and better relate the building to the arts walk. The lavender coloured railings at the balconies are good – push this idea further
 - Consider adding more glazing at the corner of the lane and Scotia.
 - Further develop the ground floor landscape to incorporate better paving materials, more seating and planting.
 - Consider a more pedestrian oriented program at eh lane. Consider developing as a shared space with operable doors and active uses, not parking loading and PMT.
 - Remove the perimeter planting at the daycare level so there is more interaction between the daycare and the lane.
 - There is a lack of connection between the childcare and outdoor space. The indoor uses are separated by a hallway/circulation.
 - Consider artists' studios or flex spaces at the lane.
- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant team thanked the panel for their comments.