

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: August 5, 2020, 2020

TIME: 3:00 pm

PLACE: Webex

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:

Walter Francl
Marie-Oedile Marceau
Matt Younger
Brittany Coughlin
Alan Davies
Michael Henderson
Margot Long
Adrian Rahbar
Sydney Schwartz
Muneesh Sharma
Karenn Krangle
Angela Enman

REGRETS:

Jennifer Stamp

RECORDING

SECRETARY: M.Sem

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	888 W Broadway

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Adrian Rahbar 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: 888 W Broadway
 Permit No. DP-2020-00369
 Description: To develop the site with a 13 and 11 storey mixed use hotel building with 446 hotel units and retail use at grade; all over five levels of underground parking consisting of 487 vehicle spaces with access off the lane. The proposed building height is 42.3 m (138.8 ft.) and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 8.96. This application is being considered under the Metro Core Jobs and Economy Land Use Plan.
 Zoning: C-3A
 Application Status: Complete Development Application
 Review: First
 Architect: Arno Matis Architecture
 Delegation: Arnos Matis
 Chris Philips
 Isabela De Sousa
 Jeremy Field
 Ning Han
 Owners: Centennial Hotel Ltd
 Staff: Carl Stanford

EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations (9/0)

- Introduction:

Development Planner, Carl Stanford, began the presentation by explaining this proposal seeks to develop a site with a 13 and 11 storey mixed use building containing 446 hotel units with retail use at grade all over five levels of underground parking with access off the lane. The proposed building height is 42.3 m (138.8 ft.) and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 8.96 (7.99 FSR above grade).

Principle governing policy for the site includes the:

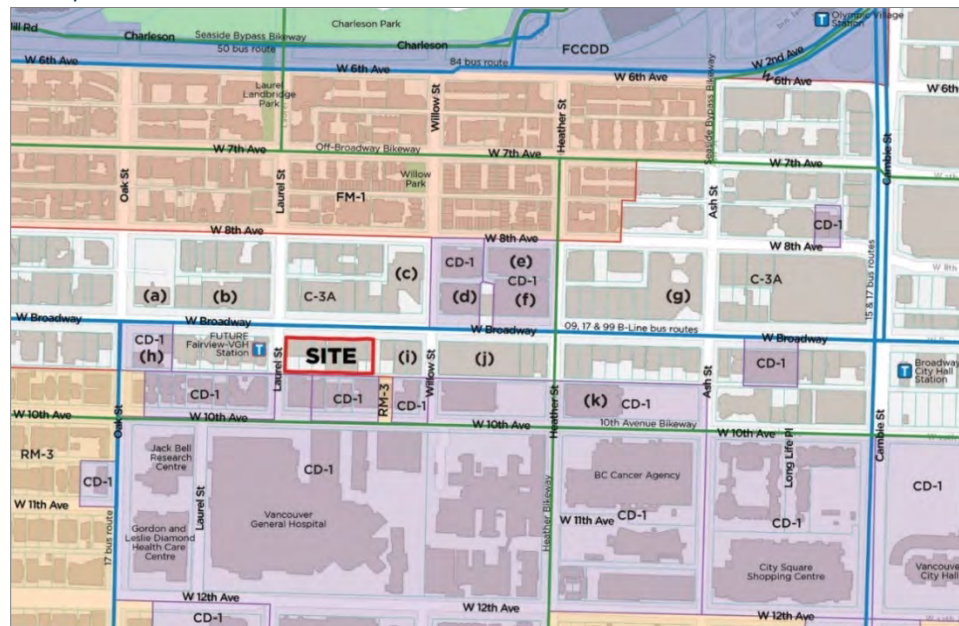
- Central Area Plan: Goals and Land Use Policy (1991)
- Central Broadway C-3A Urban Design Guidelines, Fairview Slopes Sub-area (amended 2004)
- C-3A District Schedule (last amended 2016)
- View Protection Guidelines (1989, last amended 2011)
- Council approved CD-1 (2019)

The proposed development is located on the southeast corner of Broadway and Laurel Street in the Fairview local area (see Figure 1). The site is comprised of seven legal parcels, with a total site size of 3,777.4 sq. m (40,660.9 sq. ft.) and frontages of 99 m (325 ft.) along Broadway and 38 m (125 ft.) along Laurel Street. It is located along the proposed Broadway Subway route (a tunnelled extension of the Millennium Line SkyTrain) and adjacent to the proposed Fairview-VGH station (to be located directly across Laurel Street). There is a sloping grade, falling approximately 2.9m (9.4') along Laurel from the

Lane to Broadway while being rising 1.2m (4') over the length of the building along the Broadway frontage. The site is currently occupied by a seven-storey hotel (Park Inn and Suites) with a bar and music venue (Fairview Pub). This building was built in 1971 and is not listed on the Vancouver Heritage Register.

The sites along Broadway are zoned C-3A and CD-1 and contain a mix of office and retail in low-rise and tower forms. The sites on the north side of 10th Avenue are zoned CD-1 and RM-3A and consist mostly of three- to four-storey residential and office buildings. Vancouver General Hospital (VGH) is located directly south of the site half a block away on the south side of 10th Avenue.

Figure 1: Context plan



- | | | |
|-----|----------------------|--|
| (a) | 999 West Broadway | 9-storey office building |
| (b) | 943 West Broadway | <i>Broadway Medical</i> , 9-storey office building with commercial-retail uses at grade |
| (c) | 805 West Broadway | <i>Broadway Centre</i> , 18-storey office building with commercial-retail uses at grade |
| (d) | 777 West Broadway | 13-storey office building |
| (e) | 728 West 8th Avenue | 18-storey residential building |
| (f) | 711 West Broadway | <i>Holiday Inn</i> , 14-storey hotel building |
| (g) | 620 West Broadway | <i>Broadway Plaza</i> , 12-storey office building with commercial-retail uses at grade |
| (h) | 988 West Broadway | 11-storey office building with commercial-retail uses at grade |
| (i) | 2525 Willow Street | <i>Willow Professional Building</i> , 7-storey building comprised of commercial-retail uses at grade, three levels of above-grade parking and three levels of office |
| (j) | 750 West Broadway | <i>Fairmont Medical Building</i> , 14-storey office building with commercial-retail uses at grade |
| (k) | 675 West 10th Avenue | <i>BC Cancer Research Centre</i> , 15-storey office/laboratory building |

with commercial-retail use at grade

Prior to the submission of a rezoning application, the sites base-zone was C-3A (Commercial) District, which permits a maximum density of 3.00 FSR. The *Central Broadway C-3A Urban Design Guidelines* generally anticipates building heights of 120 ft. in the Fairview Slopes sub-area. The Fairview Slopes area of C3-A anticipates the following urban design objectives for new developments: a) maximization of sun penetration and views to the North, b) limiting shadowing on the North sidewalk of Broadway.

Council approved in Nov 26 2019 the height, density, and form of development for this project in a submitted rezoning application and was seen by the UDP as part of that process on Aug 08, 2018. The current CD-1 zoning proposes a density of 8.96 FSR and the applications use height and density is consistent with the proposal submitted. Building height, measured from base surface to top of roof slab, must not exceed 42.3 m. The submitted application proposes an overall density of 8.96 FSR (7.99 FSR above grade). The applicant is proposing to increase floor area below grade to allow for more programmed space for hotel uses. The proposed overall building heights conform to a combination of view cone height limits and helicopter flight path requirements for helicopters accessing the VGH emergency heliport. These maximum heights range from elevations of 78.3 m (257 ft.) View Cone 3.1 height limit for the easterly portion of the development and 71.6 m (234.9 ft.) helicopter path permissible elevation for the westerly portion.

The Urban Design Panel supported the project with recommendations (see below). The Panel's consensus on key aspects needing improvement included enhancement of the massing on all façades, review of sun penetration and privacy on the courtyard, liveability issues on the east façade, quality of the public open space and the potential exploration of treating the two buildings with different appearances as they are meant for different clientele.

- Look at enhancing the massing on all facades, especially on the east façade to deal with major privacy issues;
- Review sun penetration and privacy of the gap on the courtyard;
- Review major livability issues on the east façade;
- Increase the quality of public open space, major improvements required for Laurel, Broadway and the lane;
- Explore the potential of two different buildings.

As stated the building consists of commercial/ hotel use with retail units at grade with access at the lane to the six levels of underground parking. The west tower (11 storeys) is intended for short-term stays and the east tower (13 storeys) is intended for long-term stays (due to its close proximity to VGH) and contains hotel rooms with kitchenettes, including some suite units with bedrooms.

The proposed hotel is located on a site with three frontages (two streets and one lane). Due to the sloping nature of the site, parking access is from Level 2 along the Lane (centre of the site). There is a proposed hotel drop-off from Laurel (on the west) that connects to the Lane. The west (11 storeys) shorter building is ~47m (153') long & the 13 storey building ~ ranges along Broadway and the lane up to 25m~ (85'). Separation between the towers varies from approximately 20.6m (67'-10") at the narrowest point with an average separation of approximately 27.3m (89'-5"). There is no minimum tower separation listed in the C3-A base zone for non-residential use, however, as mentioned above, the base zone does limit tower width in relation to site length.

The form of development is comprised of a three-storey podium base and two mid-rise massing elements on top of the podium. The podium contains retail, restaurant and hotel uses. The mid-rise towers house the hotel rooms including standard short-term stay rooms in the west tower and longer-term stay rooms and suites in the east tower. Additional usable floor area is proposed below grade (e.g. entertainment venues) along with parking. The top of the podium is landscaped to provide open spaces for hotel use.

The development intends to activate the public realm along Broadway, Laurel Street and the lane with a variety of commercial frontages and lobby entries. The ground-level design incorporates a small plaza at the corner of Broadway and Laurel Street that addresses the significant grade change on Laurel Street intending to enhance the visual and spatial experience of pedestrians leaving and approaching Broadway. It locates the parking and loading access points on the lane away from the intersection with Laurel Street. A drop-off area for hotel guests is also provided along the lane. Pedestrian access to the hotel lobbies is provided from both Broadway and the lane. Retail units and entertainment venues are accessed from Broadway.

The massing, with its podium and above-podium elements, addresses the objectives of the *Central Broadway C-3A Urban Design Guidelines* in a number of ways. The podium expression along Broadway is consistent with guidelines that encourage an approximately 30 ft. high continuous streetwall. The arrangement of the above-podium massing elements, which gathers the floor area into two distinct masses spaced along the Broadway frontage, supports sun penetration to Broadway, views through the site from the south and enhanced privacy between facing hotel rooms. To achieve these advantages, as well as accommodate the proposed floor area, the two massing components are relatively deep in the north-south direction. The applicant has suggested a number of articulation strategies, as described below, to enhance the experience of the proposed development from the public realm and surrounding development. The material palette for the building includes glazing and wood cladding as the primary elements in its design language.

The project submission will meet the requirements for building sustainability set by the Vancouver Green Buildings Policy for Rezoning Amended in April 2017. This application is pursuing the low emissions green buildings requirements.

Advice from the Panel on this application is sought on the following questions.

1. Please comment on the architectural expression, & articulation of the massing of the building with consideration of the below:
 - a. Is the scale and relationship with the neighboring context successfully established a finer grained expression/ rhythm appropriate with the character of the area?
 - b. Is the articulation of the facade sufficient to produce a high quality addition to the streetscape and ameliorate the density of the proposal?
 - c. Consider the expression, colour, reflectivity, shape, proportions, fenestration, material treatment, screening and varied materials with regard to the above.
2. Please comment on privacy particularly with regard to the requirements of the 'long-term stay units' block and if it satisfactorily addresses issues of privacy and livability.

3. Please comment on the quality of the at grade public realm interface with particular consideration of how the building interfaces with its public spaces and their relationship with the entry points for the different uses of the building.

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

The applicant noted that the streetscape building is in line with the C-3A Broadway guidelines and conforms to existing view cones and the Vancouver General Hospital's helicopter requirements. The proposed building heights respect the City's view cones and were developed in consultation with BC Emergency Health Services, Helijet, and Vancouver General Hospital to ensure the hospital's helicopter flight path is not impacted by the development. The applicant presented the program which included the following elements:

- Indoor space – hotel lobby restaurant and bar, commercial retail, below grade CRU, hotel ballroom and meeting rooms
- Outdoor space: lower plaza at Broadway and Laurel plaza, upper plaza at Broadway and Laurel plaza, west roof, east roof
- Short term and long term hotel suites.
- Five levels of underground parking are anticipated, with one below grade CRU at ball room level.

The Applicant noted that there are three design themes to the proposal:

- Lightness: The façade has been developed to express the separation of planes through the use of fly past detailing/shadow edge. On the podium levels, screens appear to float off the surface.
- Transparency: Each mid-rise façade surface has a layered expression; surfaces seem to float past each other. Screen elements on the podium and building edges create a play of light and shadow, enhancing the sense of transparency
- Materiality: Materials are simple but high quality and timeless in nature, wood, glass and concrete are predominant and have demonstrated their ability to weather well. Wood elements in weather protected areas add warmth and scale to the public realm. An organic frit pattern further softens the glass material both on the tower and at grade.

The applicant then presented the original renderings proposed from W Broadway and Laurel St looking southeast. They noted regarding privacy and overlook, that a double frit has been introduced to block visibility where privacy issues may be a concern. This allows transparency in the glass to achieve desired mountain and garden views. The planting on the east side of the building further increases suite privacy and has been significantly increased on the east tower east façade from the original rezoning submission.

The applicant noted regarding public realm, that expression of the hotel entry on Broadway was enhanced with feature canopy elements and weather protection. The drop off area now includes canopies, screening, landscaping and expressed wood design elements in weather protected areas.

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

Having reviewed the project it was moved by Mr. Davies and seconded by Mr. Francl 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:

- Design development to refine the ground level on Broadway to refine the frontage for CRU entrances, the hotel lobby and the public realm.
- Explore removing or further developing the glass 'fly-past' projecting edges of the curtain wall system.
- Explore strategies to enlarge the exterior pub deck area.
- Design development to provide level access to the level four exterior decks for the hotel guests.

- **Panel Commentary:**

The Panel supported the massing, form, scale and relationships of the building with the neighbourhood context.

The Panel appreciated overall the contemporary expression, façade treatment, glass frit pattern, material palette and colour choices of the proposal. The Panel noted that the architectural expression is a significant contribution to the street.

Some panelists recommended further differentiating the Eastern and Western towers as they currently read too similarly.

Panelists expressed appreciation for the quality of the lane treatment

The Panel noted that the façade was overall well-articulated except at ground level. Further, the Panel strongly suggested a finer grained expression of retail CRU units along Broadway was required with consideration of a more centralized, mid-block location of the hotel lobby.

The Panel noted that the applicant should consider softening the lane elevation further in particular from level 03 upwards as the building face on the lane feels abrupt given the use across the street.

The Panel appreciated the addition of use of the wood cladding as a material choice particularly how well applied it is to the soffit edges. The Panel suggested use of real wood in areas where it was not exposed.

The Panel noted that privacy concerns had been well resolved but strongly suggested opening up the level 04 roof deck for hotel guest access with appropriate measures maintained to secure privacy such as screening. The Panel noted that the lack of balcony space on the long term stay units on the east building could be addressed with consideration of the use of the Level 04 roof deck.

The Panel suggested exploring opportunities to make the plaza and pub deck larger, helping with the scale of building by providing more outdoor space. The Panel also suggested considering means of improving accessibility between the pub deck and plaza

The Panel felt the planters on Laurel Street could use more landscape refinement.

The Panel noted the addition of some feature at the corner plaza might help close the space and recommended the exploration of opportunities for additional weather protection throughout the proposal.

The Panel strongly supported the designs aesthetic intentions with its highly considered detailing.

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