

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

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**DATE:** September 2nd, 2020

**TIME:** 4:00 pm

**PLACE:** Webex

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

Walter Francl  
Marie-Odile Marceau  
Brittany Coughlin  
Alan Davies  
Michael Henderson  
Adrien Rahbar  
Sydney Schwartz  
Karenn Krangle  
Angela Enman  
Jennifer Stamp

**REGRETS:**

Muneesh Sharma  
Margot Long  
Matt Younger

**RECORDING**

**SECRETARY:** M.Sem

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ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1015 E Hastings Street (RZ-2020-00012)

**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: 1015 E Hastings Street  
 Permit No. RZ-2020-00012  
 Description: To develop the site with two mixed-use buildings at 14 storeys and 12 storeys (plus rooftop amenity) with 163 housing units comprised of 85 non-market units, 53 market rental units, and 25 transitional housing units. Additionally, the proposal includes an 80-bed shelter with associated services, and social enterprise space. All three levels of underground parking consisting of 59 vehicle spaces and 318 bicycle spaces. The proposed building height is 42.5 m (139.44 ft.), the total floor area is 14,510 sq. m (156,184 sq. ft.), and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 6.80. This application is being considered under the Downtown Eastside Plan. Zoning: M-1 to CD-1  
 Application Status: Rezoning Application  
 Review: First  
 Architect: Low Hammond Rowe Architects  
 Delegation: Christopher Rowe, Architect AIBC CPHD LEED AP, Principal  
 Jennifer Marshall, Architect AIBC, FRAIC, Principal, Landscape Architect  
 Margot Long, Architect BCSLA, FCSLA, AALA, ASLA, LEED® GA, Principal  
 Susan Tatoosh, Executive Director, Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society  
 Staff: Marcel Gelein & Patrick Chan

**EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations: (10/0)**

- **Introduction:**

Rezoning Planner, Marcel Gelein presented the rezoning application at 1015 E. Hastings St. under the Downtown Eastside Plan. Marcel Gelein 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.

This is a rezoning application for 1015 E. Hastings St. from Low Hammond Rowe Architects on behalf of BC Housing, in partnership with the City of Vancouver and Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society. The mandate of the centre is to meet the needs of the urban Aboriginal People making a transition to the urban community. The centre provides programs in health and welfare, social services, human rights, culture, education, recreation and equality for all genders of Aboriginal People of all age groups.

The proposal is for one lot located in the “Hastings East” sub-area of the Downtown Eastside Plan Area between Raymur Avenue and Glen Drive.

The site and the area to the south and east are currently zoned M-1, which permits industrial and other uses that are generally incompatible with residential land use however the intent is not to permit uses that are potentially dangerous or environmentally incompatible when situated near residential districts. A maximum height of 30.5 m and FSR of 5.0 is permitted under this zoning.

Sites to the north are zoned M-2 which permits industrial and other uses that are generally incompatible with residential uses.

The site to the west is a zoned CD-1 and is mixed use development completed in 2018 with market and non-market residential units, industrial flex space and commercial uses. It has a height of 36.6 m (120 ft.) and FSR of 6.15.

The site is currently vacant and has an area of approximately 2,154 sm. (23,074 sf.). The site is bounded on the south by the Hastings Viaduct and its abutment and ramp. The elevated frontage along Hastings St is approximately 50 m (164 ft.) and 37 m (121 ft.) along Glen Drive. The site along its western edge abuts the CN Rail right of way, an active rail corridor that services the Port of Vancouver. Further, CN Rail has plans to increase capacity of line by twinning the track. To the north is a lane.

This project is being considered under the Downtown Eastside Plan. There are various relevant policies in the plan including:

- Section 9.2 Increase affordable housing options for DTES residents
- Section 7.7.1 and 7.7.2 speak specifically to Building Height + Density – between Campbell Avenue to Clark Drive recommends:
  - Height between 45-120 feet however, will consider up to 150 ft.
  - Density between 2.5-6.0 FSR however, will consider up to 7.0 FSR
  - Increase in height and density are dependent on site size, location, neighbourhood and urban design conditions and provision of 20 - 30 per cent social housing through rezoning.
- The project also supports the Housing Vancouver Action Strategy which supports modest increase in heights and density to enable non-market housing in recently approved community plans.

This proposal is to rezone the site from M-1 to permit a 14 and 12 storey building plus rooftop amenity spaces that includes:

- 163 units of social housing and market rental including:
  - 85 units of non-market housing
  - 53 units of market rental housing
  - 25 units of transitional housing
- 80-bed shelter and associated services
- Social enterprise spaces (café and bike repair shop)

Proposed density is for 6.80 FSR and a height of 42.5 m (139 ft.). The proposal includes 2.5 levels of parking, including 59 vehicle parking spaces and 318 bicycle parking spaces.

Development Planner, Patrick Chan started by outlining the site conditions and challenges which includes a steep drop of nearly two floors from Hastings to the lane. He then gave an overview of the policies relevant to the project with a brief description of the proposed project before concluding with Staff questions for the Panel.

A CN Rail track sits immediately west of project, which has some impacts on how far the building can build at its west-edge, its window-placements and acoustic issues. There are also some comparable height buildings nearby.

Policies relevant to the project:

#### Downtown Eastside Plan (Hastings East Sub-Area)

The DTES Indigenous Place-making should underpin all new developments. Indigeneity should be the ground from which projects build from, and not just an overlay. For rezonings along Hastings, from Campbell to Clark Drive, the recommended height and density are 120 ft. max and 6.0 FSR. Form-wise a reference to the area's slimmer site and building-widths should be explored. This is especially relevant for longer sites, where the building(s) could be articulated as a series of smaller rectilinear and more vertically-oriented volumes. A variegated roof profile in a sawtooth form can help further express the verticality. Upper levels should also be sculpted back and use more glazing to lighten the appearance of bulk and height. Buildings could also be sculpted or oriented to lessen impacts on views to the Northshore Mountains. Character-wise, the DTES Plan encourages developing a tripartite façade expression, which draws from a colonial era building composition based on Palazzo Revivalism. To allow for more variety of uses, an 18 ft. floor-to-floor is desired for the retail floors. A higher ground-floor also helps form a "base" for the building. Adequate porosity should be provided to the ground floor façade to establish more visual connections between the public sidewalks and the interior. The lane is another area that should be developed to enhance the lane-as-public realm.

#### M-1 District Schedule

Form-wise, a height of 100 ft. and density of 5.50 FSR can be considered without rezoning. The use is largely industrial.

#### Proposed Form of Development

An L-shaped building, with one wing along Glen and the other along the lane, is proposed. The Glen-wing is 13-storeys and the lane-wing is 15-storeys. (Including roof amenity-rooms)

Patrick Chan notes the building's density and height are more than the ones anticipated in the DTES Plan. However, certain aspects of this proposal do respond to the DTES Plan, and is also attentive to its surroundings:

- Overall Massing + Articulation: The two wings' different heights, along with the rooftop amenity-rooms "boxes" can be considered as an alternative interpretation of the saw-tooth roof profile. Recesses on each wing's wall-planes accentuate verticality and break bulk.
- Building Identity + Wayfinding: The amenity-boxes on the roof help create a distinct roof-line that helps building identity. The social enterprise space (with its circular form that contrasts with the overall more rectilinear geometries) at the Hastings-Glen corner helps anchor that corner; activating this space may be a catalyst for that junction to become a future vibrant node.
- Building Footprint + Siting + Landscape: Taller building is set more than 60 ft. from the Hastings property-line to allow a wider aperture to the Northshore Mountains when standing on the viaduct, compared with a typical building-footprint/siting that hugs the sidewalk. Additionally, this deeper front setback creates a courtyard along Hastings. Despite this courtyard is not accessible directly from the viaduct due to safety and grading reasons, it still visually opens up the otherwise narrow sidewalk there. This is a creative way to respond to the existing harsh conditions of the viaduct sidewalk and to lessen impacts on views.
- Shadowing: The increased shadow extent does not negatively impact the M-1 lots' usability.

This project is an exercise in balancing unit layout and efficiencies, housing program operations, responding to the harsh viaduct-sidewalk conditions, providing usable sunny open-spaces and minimising accident risks and noise-disruptions from the railway for the future residents. Considering these factors, along with a postcolonial, contemporary Indigenous approach to architecture, one might evaluate the building based on the spatial relations it has with its surroundings, the benefits it offers the neighbourhood, housing needs, as opposed to

simply how well it has replicated a desired architectural-historical expression (e.g. the colonial era tripartite form).

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

Siting + Massing +: Height

Impact of height on the surroundings

The L-shaped footprint's response to its surroundings

The articulation of the wings to break perceived width/bulk

Public Realm Interface:

The courtyard's relationship to the public realm, especially the viaduct sidewalk

The social enterprise space's location/design in terms of anchoring the corner

The lower floors' relationship to the lane (especially the turn at Glen to the lane)

Wayfinding to the building entries from the viaduct and Glen

Indigenous Place-Making + Building Identity

Elements/areas of the building suitable for further development to express contemporary Indigenous character (at later Development Permit stage)

Building composition and relationship with nearby buildings to create a future node.

General Livability

Balconies, lane aspect, safety and solar shading

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Susan Tatoosh, Executive Director, Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society began by acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. We have been working with our partners several years and happy to see the momentum that has been building over the past year. To finally breathe life into this critical project. The Friendship Centre has been operating the emergency shelter at the 201 Centre since 2009. And we have been advocating for new shelter and homes that will serve the needs of our indigenous communities. The new homes and sheltered plans at 1015 E Hastings is a great opportunity for people to come together from all walks for life and feel accepted and valued. This project has been designed to celebrate the rich and vibrant indigenous history and traditions and reflect our values of inclusiveness and belonging which is the heart of The Friendship Centre. With the planning and design well underway we can look forward to the future and opening day when residents will open the door to their new homes, neighbours will connect to each other through community events and gatherings and people from different backgrounds will be welcomed to share their cultures. Thank you.

Christopher Rowe, Principal, Low Hammond Rowe Architects began by presenting the site of the project.

Project is at the edge of tidal water wave near Burrard Inlet located near a place called Group of Boulders. We will follow up more on how the indigenous culture will be applied to this project when it comes back from Development Permit. The site is a city blocked carved into by the rail line, with 5 metre setback. There is a 3 storey rise from Raymur. Complex programming has brought challenges to the project. The transitional housing connects to the shelter, affordable housing is above and market housing is to the east and the social enterprise. The three entrances to the left is the shelter, then the affordable housing and then market rentals on Glen Dr.

The entry is welcoming and secured. To the left of the entry is the fenced screen access to the court yard space and to the east is an entry court yard shared by the café space of the social enterprise and entrance into the affordable rental housing, around the corner on the right is the entrance of market housing rental, in the middle there is a two storey high space below is a bike shop. The bike shop shares the lower level entrance with the market housing. From an urban design point of view, this project can recapture Hastings Street and view from the neighbours to the west, notwithstanding the bill board in the way until further development happens on the east. The mass is brought right to the corner as a response to the Hasting Street guidelines. The service spaces are recessed and picked out in a different material that in addition to the open corridor gives opportunity to break up the mass. There is opportunity to bring the landscape up from the ground along the railways. The elevation is looked at as the base line for further development in its next phase of work where staggered illustration elevation pattern is used to avoid anything that is too guardium and institutional. Tripartite composition is perceived at this stage and will be reviewing a number of different options to elaborate the façade.

Margot Long, Principal, PWL Partnership Landscape Architects Inc. began by noting the site was very challenging with the Architects for this project turning this into an amazing opportunity.

This is the second project worked on that is on this water way and both of them are indigenous projects. Despite the site being challenging with strong industrial over lay as it is close to rail line, project looked at ability to connect back to the land and water.

At lower level on Raymur Street at the right away is the future expansion area. Until that area expands we see this area for canoe storage, informal basketball, picnic tables, storm water collection and secured space to move from lower level up to the shelter terrace which is one level up.

Hastings St. and Glen Dr. is the main entrance to the building. The shelter entrance and the court yard – has been envision as an oasis, south facing with the box covering it, there is opportunity to be outside and under cover, great indoor and outdoor relationship to the lounge, terrace area. In the shelter area you are looking through a series of layers of landscape out past Hastings St to the southern area.

The affordable housing entrance provides seating and a spill out area for cafes. We have the sidewalk adjacent to the street because there is limited area and additional right of way being worked on. The idea is to work with the grade change as you step down and provide a larger entry to the market rental housing, bike shop and the town houses.

At the transitional housing level and the amenity roof deck there are a number of extensive green roofs. The lounge has a variety of different spaces for group gatherings and respite for individuals. Access is off the lounge and off the elevator corridors. The idea is to always be able to connect to a roof space. When you look down you will see a series of terraces of landscape which will extend all the way down to the rail tracks. The idea is connecting moving spaces- living spaces down to the ground level and at the top, connecting the roof scape to the visual linkages to the mountains on the north.

Next level up is the market rental housing with south facing terrace and a north east facing terrace is off the elevator corridor, fitness room, south facing terrace is off the amenity space and urban agriculture, and gathering space . The north and east facing terrace is an outdoor kitchen, potential yoga deck or another respite space.

The top floor on the 15<sup>th</sup> level is the affordable housing roof deck. We worked with the community on this one, it being a strong link to the sisters, views connect back to north shore and water. At the far North West corner is a fire pit with views of north shore mountains. There is an informal play area for kids with opportunity to grow urban agriculture, gardening , cultural stage which acts as a space for gatherings, carving activities , a large table to gather and eat, and flexible space - furniture can be moved for larger gathering,

All the roof decks have connection to the amenity spaces inside. We are borrowing the landscape, north shore mountains and borrowing the amenity spaces as well.

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

Having reviewed the project it was moved by **MR. FRANCL** and seconded by **MR. DAVIES** 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 the lane elevation.
- Design development to the Hasting Street public realm in terms of adding greenery (on City property).
- Reconsider the location of the bike shop entry so it reads more prominently.
- Design development to legibility to affording housing entry.

- **Panel Commentary:**

- The panel felt that this is a very well resolved rezoning application. The different income needs targeted for the housing will create a sustainable future for the City. The panel is supportive of the uses and feels that they will make a significant contribution to the neighbourhood.
- Panel supports the height and massing. They noted the height was appropriate to the context. The panel felt that the modest increase in height is well earned. The massing has been very well handled.
- Panel supports the L-shape footprint and the siting given how it creates the southern courtyard. It is also an appropriate response to the rail line.
- The panel noted that the north and south facades look similar and suggested that balcony placement may be a method to provide further differentiation.
- Panel supports the articulation of the wings and how well they are broken up. The notches for the windows at the end of the hallways are very successful.
- Regarding the wayfinding and public realm, Panel was supportive of the landscape treatment. The portal creates a strong identity for the shelter.
- The rooftop landscape uses are excellent.
- Panel noted the legibility of the affordable housing entry and bike shop entrance need improvement. The affordable housing entry is deep into the site. Additionally, more separation should be created between the bike shop and the market residential entry.
- Panel noted further animate the lane elevation needs improvement. The panel suggested considering draping greenery over the edge of the building to soften it.
- The social enterprise space is extremely successful and well placed. The panel liked the curved storefront and the placement of the columns. Some panel members commented on more animated uses along Hastings would provide further activation.

- Panel noted they are looking forward to the development of the indigenous character of the building when it comes back to the panel at the Development Permit stage.
- The building has a strong character and a strong pride of place.
- Some panel members noted design development is encouraged for the over-hangs which could present potential challenges with unintended use and maintenance.
- Panel noted this building will create an interesting sky line specifically the box feature at the top creating a unique look and strong identity.
- The panel suggested terracing down the western façade and open up some uses in this sideyard so it is not a blank wall.
- Regarding the livability of the units the suite layout is good, livable and the team has created human spaces.
- The panel had no concerns with balconies only being provided at the two bedroom units.
- Panel appreciates the sustainability strategies that are being proposed and encourage applicant to take it beyond step four which will bring value to the project. In addition, the panel appreciates that cooling is proposed for the building. The panel asked the applicant to consider solar shading.
- Panel noted their support for the courtyard, it animates the street, can be used for ceremonial and public space. The panel appreciated that the screen along Hastings can be pulled back and the courtyard opened up to the street.
- Regarding the Hasting Street frontage, panel suggest more vegetation on the street.
- Panel encourage applicant to seek opportunities to further animate the east elevation at the top of the building.
- The panel had concerns with the application of the copper material goes up the base of the building. The height at Hastings Street is fine, but it reads high along the lane.
- Consider aligning the market entry with the break above.
- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant team thanked the panel for their comments.