

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** September 9, 2020

**TIME:** 4:00 pm

**PLACE:** WebEx

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

Alan Davies  
Walter Francl  
Marie-Odile Marceau  
Sydney Schwartz  
Margot Long  
Adrien Rahbar  
Muneesh Sharma  
Karenn Krangle  
Brittany Coughlin  
Jennifer Stamp

**REGRETS:** Angela Enman  
Michael Henderson  
Matt Younger

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** M.Sem

### ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1. 5098 James Street - DP-2020-00442
2. 3350 Marine Way (EFL Parcel 14) - DP-2020-00467

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1. Address: 5098 James Street  
Permit No. DP-2020-00442  
Description: To develop a 6-storey residential building with 87 units over 3 levels of underground parking. The approximate building height is 17.7 m (58 ft.), the approximate total floor area is 6,911 sq. m (74,390 sq. ft.), and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 3.20.
- Zoning: CD-1  
Application Status: Complete Development Application  
Review: First  
Architect: Arno Matis Architecture – Arno Matis and Isabella de Souse  
Landscape Arch: PFS Studio – Michael Derksen  
Owner: Jonathan Cooper, Holborn Group  
Philip Jiang, Holborn Group
- Staff: Ryan Dinh
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#### **EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations: (8/2)**

##### **Introduction:**

Development Planner, Ryan Dinh, presented this development permit application at 5098 James Street following the CD-1(704) bylaw and Little Mountain Design Guidelines, which was approved by Council in 2018. The CD-1 bylaw allows on this site a 6 storey building. The proposed building will provide 87 strata units with 53% family units.

Ryan noted that the site is located in proximity to Queen Elizabeth Park, at the corner of James Street and E. 35th Ave. Little Mountain area is vacant but will includes buildings from 6 to 12 storeys. The site will create a sense of entry and transition to the community, and create an active interface with public realm (James Street), the midblock connection and the lane. The building will also meet the Green Building policy as per rezoning requirements.

The proposed building is fronting 2 streets, a midblock connection and active lane and is sitting within the required yard setbacks. Ground floor units have their private access and patio from grade for street activation. A gym and children play area is located at the north east corner of the building, and another common amenity space is provided by the main entrance. The building facades are animated with a number of voids and projections and various balconies, with the use of glass, metal panel, and aluminum framed windows. The building is located further away from the require rear yard in lieu of the provision of upper level setback.

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

- Comments on the success of the proposal in relation to the Little Mountain Design Guidelines in particular
- Comment on the architectural expression, materiality, landscape design and the contribution to the central spine - James Street of the Little Mountain area.

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

**Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Ground oriented units with at-grade patios and landscape help activate James Street and lane, and allow for better connection with residential buildings across from the lane. The amenity spaces facing the street and lane also contribute to the public realm activation. The walkway in the north is provided to support connections between the development and Queen Elizabeth Park as per Little Mountain Design Guidelines. Leveled and curve planters reinforce the character of the building.

Landscaping at grade is layered with lush planting, concrete planters and seating to transition from public to private space and to provide privacy for individual patios. Planting character continues from James Street to E. 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue. A small common outdoor space at lane is provided as a children play area.

The planning and applicant team then took questions from the panel.

**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 of the project with the following recommendations to be reviewed by City Staff:

- Re-consider the need and location of the children play area
- Increase the size of the indoor and outdoor amenity areas
- Consider extensive green roof at level 7
- Retain all existing trees shown in the rezoning document and that fall within this development application.

**Related Commentary:**

- Architectural expression is attractive and well-considered.
- The building successfully responds to the Design Guidelines, but not tree retention.
- The panel is supportive of the articulation and materiality. Some panel members suggested reconsidering the reflective quality of the materials.
- The landscape design has been well handled.
- The large at-grade patios with landscape are well done and have a good relationship to public realm- there is a successful transition from public to private.
- It was also felt that patios being too shielded from public realm. Suggestion of more seating at the corners.
- The gym and the lounge are small given the number of unit proposed.
- Considerations of treatments for roof top (green roof and accessible amenity garden/patio)
- There were comments on the children play area being small, recognizing the building is within the proximity to park and public plaza. Many panel members felt that an on site

children's play area was not needed given that there will be a future public children's play area directly adjacent to the site. If an on site children's play area is required then it should be relocated so it does not sit between mechanical shafts/vents and the parking ramp. Consider locating it near the front door and provide benches for parents.

- The northern pedestrian path needs more visual interest. Also consider adding more benches along the site edges adjacent to these paths.
- Encourage to target more energy points and pursue thermally breaking balconies, future climate models and planning for further passive strategies
- The removal of the large trees along James Street is a huge loss to the project, particularly given the approved rezoning drawings show the trees being retained. It was noted the legacy tree retention strategy has not been met.
- Soft and lush design is quite polished, less reflective material is suggested
- There were no details provided on the street character such as public realm treatments, street tree location/species/size.
- The tree cover and vegetation on the site was supposed to be significant, however the on site trees are small species and the roof top is proposed as river rock. At a minimum an extensive green roof should be provided.

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

2. Address:	3350 Marine Way (EFL Parcel 14)
Permit No.	DP-2020-00467
Description:	To develop a 6-storey mixed-use residential building consisting with 178 secured market rental units and commercial use at grade; all over two levels of underground parking consisting of 134 vehicle spaces and 353 bicycle spaces. The approximate building height is 22.87 m (75 ft.), the approximate total floor area is 13,761 sq. m (148,129 sq. ft.), and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 3.07.
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Complete Development Application
Review:	First
Architect:	Yamamoto Architecture - Taizo Yamamoto
Landscape Arch:	Van der Zalm + Associates – Travis Martin
Sustainability:	Emma Conway
Owner:	Wesgroup - Fabian Leitner, Brad Jones
Staff:	Kevin Spaans

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

### **Introduction:**

This proposal is for a six storey mixed-use building comprised of five storeys of secured market rental dwellings above a single storey of commercial retail and live-work units at grade, atop two storeys of underground parking.

The site is located in Area 1 of the East Fraser Lands district located in the southeastern-most corner of the city, on lands formerly occupied by the Canadian White Pine lumber facility. Parcel 14 falls within a sub-area referred to as the Town Square precinct, the commercial core of the district.

The site is governed primarily by two documents. The first is the East Fraser Lands Town Square Precinct By-law which provides for up to 7 storeys or 30.67m in height. Further, as with any by-law, it provides for a range of allowable uses, select of those being multiple dwelling, live-work, office, and retail.

Density in the Town Square Precinct is not determined on a site by site basis, but is rather a proportion of allowable floor area divided amongst the buildings in the entire precinct. On evaluation of the particulars in the by-law, staff has confirmed that the proposal is compliant with the allowable density on the site.

The second document is the East Fraser Lands Area 1 Design Guidelines. As with other design guidelines, this document provides a framework for the urban design performance review of DP proposals, but also includes indicative forms of development for each of the parcels, and assigns each of the sites with an “urban design role” and a number of “characteristics”.

In the case of Parcel 14, the urban design “role” is for the site to act as the west ‘gateway’ block taking advantage of its high exposure to Marine Way, providing the first indication of the commercial core at the centre of the district.

Select key characteristics on the site include:

- Distinctive building at the west entry to the precinct
- Massing to correspond generally with height on Parcel 15\*
- Live/work uses fronting on Sawmill Crescent with a strong urban character
- Commercial / Live-Work uses include: Live- Work, Residential, Manufacturing, Cultural, Recreational, Institutional and Service uses

While the design guidelines demonstrate general forms and massing on each of the sites, they anticipate revisions to be made reflecting more significant design development at the time of each individual DP applications.

Looking closely at the indicative design, the site is shown with a pronounced flatiron-form building that scales down from 6 or 7 storeys at the corner to 5 on the southeast side of the site, and 4 on the northeast. This was originally with the expectation that adjacent buildings would have lower overall adjacent heights than have ultimately been approved. The expectation for stepping down to context no longer applies to this site. The indicative design includes surface parking accessed off the lane to the east, with a mid-block pedestrian connection off of Sawmill Crescent.

Recently approved and / or constructed context includes Parcel 13 to the west, Parcel 15 to the east, and Parcel 16.2 to the south, all of which include taller tower forms up to 26 storeys in concert with lower, 6 storey podiums. Further to the southeast is Parcel 16.1 at 7 storeys.

The proposed building differs from the indicative design as follows:

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- Rather than two discreet buildings, the proposal is for a single building with a uniform height of 6 storeys;
- The upper portion of the building is an s-shaped bar building sitting on top of the single level of retail units which follows the curvature of the realigned Sawmill Crescent;
- The mid-block connection is deleted and the surface parking is covered;
- The design of the corner is presented as an aperture or extruded frame rather than a flatiron form.

At grade, retail units are bookended at the northeast and the southeast by live-work units. The public realm is proposed to include outdoor seating areas and plantings fronting the public sidewalk.

At Level 2, the applicant is proposed a large elevated outdoor amenity courtyard facing west atop the commercial retail units on Level 1, and a smaller courtyard to the east. Substantial indoor amenities, including communal kitchen, media room, gym, and meeting room face the courtyard.

As seen in the renderings, the material palette is primarily comprised of corrugated metal panel which generally complies with the industrial material palette suggested in the Design Guidelines, and employed in other areas of the district.

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

#### **Urban Design 'Role' and Anticipated Character**

1. When compared to the flatiron-style building anticipated by the EFL Area 1 Design Guidelines, does the building sufficiently mark the corner of Marine Way and Sawmill Crescent, and formalize the entry into the Town Square precinct?
2. With particular regard given to the anticipation that Parcel 14 contributes to a strong urban character, particularly along Sawmill Crescent, please provide feedback on the following:
  - a. The proposed infilling of at-grade space previously identified as surface parking, and vehicular and pedestrian access;
  - b. The variance of building form and massing from that demonstrated in the indicative massing, and;
  - c. The organization of uses on Level 1 and the at-grade landscape design strategy.

#### **Sustainability**

1. Understanding that the approved East Fraser Lands Official Development Plan, and relevant regulations, anticipates a development achieving LEED Gold equivalent at a minimum, please comment on the applicant's green building strategies.

#### **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

The parcel is on the western side of the town square and the gateway into the town centre. To the north is Marine way and to the south is Sawmill Crescent which is more pedestrian, quieter street. In terms of the guidelines, the original guidelines geometry shows the intersection of Sawmill and Marine was much

more oblique so it created a more flat iron corner on the site. The tower was originally proposed on the southern side. The revised geometry of the site, the intersection becomes more perpendicular and the flat iron corner becomes more blunted and the tower to the west is shifted to the northern side of that site. By changing a lot of office use to rental you end up with a different floor plate configuration which is why we are now looking at five storey of wood frame off of the concrete podium. The wood frame would allow us to do a more sustainable project in terms of the wood itself and the performance of the building. It also allows us some opportunities when it compares to the guidelines, in particular the open space, by covering over the parkade deck and reconfiguring the building we are able to provide a lot of outdoor space and a lot of south western outdoor space.

There is a significant increase in outdoor amenity space.

In terms of site orientation and organization the frontages are very different. Vary ways with busy arterials, pedestrian oriented street that leads to the town square, the focal point is the North West corner that is anchored by retail space and the retail access to follow to the curve of Sawmill and turns into the Woodwork at the south east corner. Ground level parking is covered by second level podium.

Both the scale of the street is quite significant. We have a unique relationship with the building where it is a different kind of scale so the façade is more about the vertical rhythm and less about a composed streetscape you might see elsewhere.

The buildings on the top right, the material palette have become a bit more restrained, the forms have become more simplified and the podium is much more defined as a single volume.

The sturgeon is an interesting reference because it gives a lot of clues in terms of directional building and also how the skin behaves will help us respond to different parts of the site. For example on the north facing side the balconies are more linear to help break down that façade and provide some sound buffering from the traffic; whereas on the southern side the fins can open up horizontally and provide solar shading to the south facing windows. The building geometry itself and treatment of the skin is part of the sustainability approach. The wood frame also allows us to do a better envelope in terms of thermal bridging.

In term of materiality the metal is in reference to the industrial character but also creates a texture that unifies the building and the skin concept is used with the material planning. Inside the skin element the material changes to a more flat and smoother panel which still has a horizontal stripe with is consistent with the fine grain texture but a quieter, softer inside skin feel.

From the aerial, you can see the size and exposure of the amenity space.

The approach of the building from the west with the new tower doesn't give the same flat iron symmetry you would as the guidelines imagine but the corner is an important element and allows us to create an intersection of the north side residential mass and the rhythm of commercial that meets it along Sawmill.

To show the rhythm of the balconies and vertical fins along the north side and they are interesting character for the vehicle passing and also provide some privacy and acoustics for units. Along the lane and areas that don't need as much opening, the concrete helps to anchor the metal to the ground level paving.

South east, there is a portion that is a one storey street wall but it is only limited to a small area and given the double height of the retail it will give some height to the streetscape but also help emphasize the curve of Sawmill. There is a green planter on the lane side which gives a nice outlook for the units.

The renderings were presented.

Sawmill and Marine Dr. Strong commercial retail along that entry point that wraps around the laneway and Marine Dr.

Patio spaces have been included the along retail.

Sturgeon concept integrate that into the paving's and scale like patterns , looking at using more riverine and river rock , plantings.

Unit are semi private patios spaces with planting and usable outdoor space, and divisions between each unit with small trees creating a bit more atmosphere and personal scale along the street frontage.

Top north east corner along Marine Dr., this is a more higher speed frontage , the building does a good job of showing that, breaking down the pedestrian scale giving a neighbourly feel and residents will have their own personal private yards.

Podium – some uses outdoor urban agriculture, dog park, middle plaza there is a long table, lounge seating.

Outdoor space – large green space, planting and atmosphere for units that faces out to east  
Presented the children play area.

The plant palettes were presented.

Emma Conway Sustainability Consultant presented the sustainability strategies for this project. Development plan for area is Built Green rating goal. The energy target is 35% better than the model national energy code for building. Total we have 150 points out of minimum 100 points required.

Emma presented the energy model used for this project.

The planning and applicant team then took questions from the panel.

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

Having reviewed the project it was moved by **MR. FRANCL** and seconded by **MS. SCHWARTZ** and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

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

- Design development to the mews-lane interface to increase greenery and active uses



- Design development to the material at CRU and Live Work base to further differentiate from the residential mass above.
- Define the second residential entry on Sawmill and further define the residential entry on Marine
- Design development of corner expression at Marine and Sawmill to address both frontages
- Design development to the rooftop treatment to address the EFL bird strategy

### Related Commentary

There have been many changes since the design guidelines, however the panel feels that the approach is appropriate. The departure from the original form is very successful. Also the mix of uses at grade is an improvement over the guidelines.

The panel felt that the corner expression of the building was very uni-directional and that the corner orientation needs more recognition, but the panel did feel it was a good corner building. Furthermore the panel felt that the revised scheme is an improvement into the town square area.

Panel generally supportive of massing approach.

Panel supportive of the Sturgeon design concept but suggests advancing design at the northwest corner of the building to help distinguish between head and tail, and to improve the prominence of the building at Marine Way and Sawmill Cres.

Panel generally supportive of the indoor and outdoor residential amenities being proposed.

Panel suggests materially contrasting the base of the building will help express sturgeon concept even more.

The panel was in support of the variance in building form/mass from the guidelines. The proposed solar orientation is excellent/better than the original, and the singular Z shaped building was supported.

Panel is supportive of the public realm design approach, supply of greenery, and usability of public and semi-public spaces.

Panel suggested the following improvements to the landscape / public realm design to improve the urban design performance, livability, and pedestrian experience:

- Further greening along Sawmill Crescent;
- Wider planting areas outside of the live-work units;
- Exploration of further greening at the north-south lane / mews;
- Incorporating native trees and edible plantings in the design of the outdoor amenity area, and in the east side elevated courtyard;
- Exploring landscape features intended to further animate the corner of Marine Way and Sawmill Crescent, including but not limited to public art installations.

Panel appreciates the quality of the Level 2 outdoor residential amenity.

The changes that have happened in the building massing and response to the guidelines were well received by Panel. They appreciated seeing the evolution of the scheme from the original guidelines.

Panel was supportive of the urban character of Sawmill Crescent and the infilling of the surface parking, and the removal of the mid-block connector. All felt that the infill and the creation of the rooftop garden is a better use of the open space.

Panel suggests further definition of the main residential lobby at Marine Way and the secondary residential lobby on Sawmill Crescent.

Panel noted concern with the treatment of the uppermost roof and recommended exploring roof systems other than ballast, such as extensive green roof technology, or treatment that could address the Vancouver Park Board's East Fraser Lands bird strategy

Regarding the cladding, Panel appreciated that the corrugated metal reflects the sturgeon concept, but felt that this material is over-applied. Panel suggest differentiating the CRU and Live Work materiality with residential to give more identity to residential above. Some panel members noted building is dark and heavy, and could be lightened, suggesting that the applicant explore alternative materials. Panel suggested considering darker bricks for the CRU.

The Marine Drive elevation is well resolved. The panel encouraged design development to the Sawmill elevation to get it to a similar level of detail and resolution.

Panel suggests parking access and CPTED strategies could be better developed.

Panel acknowledged the energy modeling submitted and appreciates sustainability aligns with targets. Panel encouraged looking at the passive cooling strategies and planning for added cooling loads in future was encouraged.

Given how active the lanes in EFL are and the walkability of the neighbourhood, the panel has concerns with the lane feeling to harsh. They felt that the building should be set back from the lane to accommodate large trees. The panel also considered the inclusion of some more active uses along the lane such as an arts space between the entry and the loading.

There is a good mix of units

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