

DATE: June 26, 2019

TIME: 3:00 pm

PLACE: Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:

Jim Huffman
Amela Brudar Excused from Item 1
Helen Avini Besharat
Colette Parsons
Jennifer Stamp Excused from item 1
Susan Ockwell
Yinjin Wen
Karenn Krangle
Muneesh Sharma

REGRETS:

Grant Newfield
Matt Younger
Derek Neale

RECORDING

SECRETARY: K. Cermeno

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	3338 Sawmill Crescent (EFL parcel 13) (formerly 3310 Marine Way)
2.	3600 E Hastings Street - Deferred
3.	3680 Hastings Street - Deferred
4.	3235-3261 Clive Avenue - Deferred
5.	1636 Clark Drive - Deferred

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Jim Huffman called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. The panel then considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address:	3338 Sawmill Crescent (EFL parcel 13) (formerly 3310 Marine Way)
Permit No.	DP-2019-00363
Description:	To develop the site with a 26-storey and a 6-storey residential rental building consisting of 337 dwelling units; all over two levels of underground parking.
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Complete Development Application
Review:	First as DP
Architect:	GBL
Delegation:	Daniel Eisenberg, Architect Peter Kreuk, Landscape Architect
Staff:	Kevin Spaans

EVALUATION: 7/0 (Support with Recommendations)

• Introduction:

Development Planner, Kevin Spaans, began by noting the proposal site is located within the Town Square Precinct of Area 1 of the East Fraser Lands.

It is a high-profile site bounded by Marine Way to the north, Sawmill Crescent to the east, Road A to the southeast, and Kent Avenue to the southwest. The total site area is approximately 53,800 square feet and there is an 11'-0" grade change from north to south.

The site to the west is currently a single storey warehouse where future 6 storey residential is anticipated. Across Sawmill Crescent is Parcel 14 which is currently zoned for 7 storeys of office use and is intended to be a recognizable gateway for the East Fraser Lands commercial district.

Across the Marine Way is a substantial berm of mature trees with a townhouse development further north. There is no sidewalk on the north side of Marine Way.

Proposed are two 100% affordable rental buildings: a six storey wood frame construction mid-rise to the south side of the property, and a 25 storey tower to the north with an allowable partial 26th storey. The total FSR is 5 as is permitted by the CD-1. The building contains 337 affordable rental units 123 of which are family-sized units. The buildings are spaced between 44' and 54' apart. There are two levels of parking generally following the outline of the site.

The East Fraser Lands plan originally anticipated that the tower would be located at the south end of the site with the midrise located at the corner to better relate to the adjacent future developments, however there was a desire to land a wood building on the site and it was deemed this was better achieved with the proposed configuration.

The *East Fraser Lands Area 1 Design Guidelines* anticipate an architectural response that introduces an urban character to at the entrance to the Town Square precinct. Setbacks along Sawmill Crescent are expected in the guidelines to be tighter – approximately 6.5' – to reinforce this sense of urbaneness. However, in order to provide for more separation at grade and higher quality private outdoor space for residential units, a setback of approximately 12' is provided along all frontages.

The *Guidelines* generally anticipate that towers distinct cues for navigating the community. All buildings are anticipated to achieve a high standard of quality, materiality, and architectural design, but taller buildings are anticipated to be particularly exceptional. The *Guidelines*

particularly emphasize articulation to mitigate a perceived sense of mass. The proposed tower is represented as a full height mass punctuated by two storey aperture extrusions on all elevations, with additional modulation provided at the north and south by way of additional glazing and balconies. The floorplate for the tower is a maximum 6999 sf as permitted by the *Guidelines*.

This expression is generally repeated with the midrise building, except that the north and south facades are expressed as large aperture elements. Note, as a result of the architectural expression and the footprint of the building, some units (such as the 4th level of the midrise) are not provided with private outdoor space.

The proposal is targeting to meet Step 3 of the BC Energy Step Code which is reflected in the relatively low window-wall ratio on some frontages. Sustainability strategies for the building are primarily focused on building envelope and technology.

All buildings are intended to distinctively reflect the history of the site and the *Guidelines* provide three different material palette themes for Area 1 of the East Fraser Lands: Industrial, Contemporary west coast, and Riverine. This application appears to target the industrial palette, which is anticipated to include dramatic structural elements, galvanized steel, wood and cementitious wall, panels and others. The proposed palette is a combination of red-brown corrugated metal panel, cementitious panel, and glass.

In terms of Landscaping, the site is comprised of a central courtyard with a children's play area, an outdoor lounge, and walkways leading to at-grade interior residential units. Because of the significant grade change at site, stepped planters are provided at the south end of the site. Parking is accessed at the southwest corner off of Kent Avenue.

Note, two vehicular loading and a class B loading spot are provided at grade adjacent to the entrance lobby.

The main tower entrance is located off of Sawmill Crescent, as is the main midrise entrance. A large indoor amenity space is provided on the main level of the tower, and a housing office is located at the northeast corner. A side door is provided from the loading area to the midrise.

Rooftop amenities are provided in the form of outdoor lounges with urban agriculture on the midrise, and barbeque spaces and lounges on the roof of the tower adjacent to private patios.

Advice from the Panel is sought on the following:

1. Please provide feedback and advice on the overall architectural expression of both buildings, with particular regard given to:
 - a. Overall response to future context;
 - b. The buildings' relationship with the public realm at grade;
 - c. The performance of the tower as a potential "cue" for wayfinding in the community;
2. Please provide feedback and advice on the proposed material and colour palette with consideration of the anticipated "Industrial" material palette in the *Design Guidelines*.
3. Please provide feedback and advice on the proposed landscape design, with particular regard given to:
 - a. The provision of at-grade loading spaces within the central courtyard;

- b. The quality of the child play area;
- c. The quality of landscaping along property edges.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

The Architect for the proposal (Daniel Eisenberg, GBL Architects) gave a synopsis of the architectural design strategy as follows:

This project is generally aligned with design principles of the area, which emphasizes to recall the historical nature of the site. This is expressed through the site's vocabulary and materiality.

Buildings are oriented to maximize publically accessible outdoor space and to provide for high-performing circulation through the site.

The parti is quite simple with a single strong form articulated with extrusions.

An outdoor amenity area is provided at grade for the use of both buildings. All amenity spaces, including common roof patios, are provided for the use of all residents in both buildings.

The space between the two buildings facing Sawmill Crescent includes areas for loading and drop off outside of the main tower entrance. The Site does not have a lane provided therefore was important to provide this space at the entrance, and make it large enough for maneuvering of trucks as they cannot back up on streets.

The site's edge streetscape is dictated by the various frontages and there are points of entry on every building face. The midrise has a main entrance off of Sawmill Crescent with one elevator and stair case. There is a secondary entrance facing north to provide for direct access to the loading area.

At-grade residential units are design to create a seamless transition between the public realm and private outdoor space. These units are expressed as strong two-storey townhouse expressions. There is access to the streets from the townhouses and inside of the building.

The upper levels of the midrise building zig zag along the site providing for a sense of articulation. This is where the metal cladding does its magic by reflecting off the sunlight which breaks down the mass of the midrise building.

Altogether the midrise building is broken down into 4 separate elements.

Regarding the orientation of some of the units in the tower and the provision of penetrations in the balcony walls to open up additional views: the units are facing south and north, north Champlain heights and south the Fraser River and views are secured from inside the units.

All units along the south have been provided with deeper balconies to prevent overheating.

The windows assist with cross ventilation of the quarter units. Balcony boxes allow opportunity to install a separate structure that will detach the balcony from building structure to mitigate thermal bridging the balconies from the studio units have been deliberately reduced and mostly have Juliet balconies.

The different balcony arrangements provide variation in the facades of the buildings. This variation helps to articulate the different units and provide for a variety of views.

There is semi private patio space associated with the office at grade facing Marine Way.

The Landscape Architect for the proposal (Peter Kruek, Durante Kruek Ltd.) presented additional information on the design strategy of the landscape and public realm as follows:

Indoor and outdoor amenity spaces are design to maximize socialization.

The courtyard space has joint uses as it is vehicular in nature with a large open space kids can play within. The courtyard has been “cranked up” to maximize outside space there is an indoor outdoor amenity space.

The roof top of the midrise building has a significant amount of agriculture and the rooftop of the tower includes a common amenity space as well as private patio space

The buildings are targeting step 3 of the energy code which requires to provide an enhance envelope performance.

The applicant team then took questions from the panel.

• **Panel’s Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**

- Having reviewed the project it was moved by Ms. Parsons and seconded by Mr. Wen 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 of courtyard to more formally define the loading area and provide more of a buffer between the children’s play and functional uses;
- Design development of color palette;
- Design development of landscape in particular along the Marine Way edge to the north.

• **Related Commentary from the panel:**

Panel members expressed general support for the project.

Some Panel members recognize that the buildings have a strong parti and character, and that the style and expression or architecture relates to the future and past.

Panel members note that the massing is appropriate for the context.

The large amount of rental units is always a positive and welcomed.

Some Panel members expressed support for the rationale at the west property edge where a drop results from a grade change between properties. Panelists noted that the property to the west will not be around very long and regrading will likely resolve the issue in the near future;

Panelists felt the wayfinding is acceptable.

Panelists felt the provision of amenity spaces on the roof top are a positive feature of the design and that the children’s play area is in a good location. A Panelist suggested that the applicant consider durability of play structures to ensure ease of maintenance.

Panelists expressed mixed opinions on material choice and color. Comments included:

- If materiality and palette draw inspiration from the former industrial uses on the site there should be references to the previous timber mill. The material palette shown is more reflective of a Rail Town industrial typology.
- Would be nice to see more color variation and the applicant should consider introducing different colors at the window boxes.
- The shadows and dark coloring of material palette are borderline relentless.
- Fascinated with the color however not sold with what exactly it is, renderings look interesting but the models did not truly reflect end results.
- Consideration should be given to making the midrise building different to reduce the relentlessness of the color scheme.

A Panelist recommended consideration be given to the provision of accessible units or accessible-ready units.

Some Panelists noted that the fin elements are preventing sun to corridors.

A Panelist noted concern that the material palette may make the buildings look “cheap” and expressed that even if this is a rental development it should still be held to a high architectural standard.

The proportions of the site are good but the tower is not acknowledging the corner of the site or the adjacent property. The corner at Marine Way and Sawmill Crescent could be acknowledged through changes in the site design and the architectural expression.

Panelists commented that the edge of the internal portion of the site where the parking ramp is requires further development, can still be an open framework.

A Panelist noted that the East and West edges of balcony boxes especially at the north facing units need more light and openings in the solid walls of the balcony frames should be explored.

The Panel noted one of the biggest concerns is the buildings relationship to the public realm, in particular the courtyard. The courtyard should be a more comprehensively designed piece - as proposed there a lot of competing elements.

The Panelist noted that as these are rental buildings there will likely be lots of people moving in and out -more than one group moving every month -and the higher traffic at the loading area because of this will be compounded by regular garbage collection. Further design development is needed to ensure that the loading area is more formally designed and does not result in conflicts between people using the site.

A Panelist recommended that further consideration be given to the programming of the amenity rooms as the design progresses to make these highly usable common spaces.

A Panelist noted that the ‘in and out’ from main lobbies is difficult.

A Panelist noted that shadowing of the sidewalk across the street could take precedent over the private space and rooftop.

Panelists noted that more landscape should be provided along Marine Way to provide screening and increase livability, especially for the residential units facing this area; it is a very frantic street that will have a lot of noise and activity.

Panelists noted that a stepped garden rather than a long fence would be a better interim design response along the west property line.

Panelists noted that there should be a focal point on the corner of Marine Way and Sawmill Crescent and/or space should be provided in the courtyard for some public art.

- Applicant’s Response: The applicant team thanked the panel for their comments. The meeting adjourned and other agenda items were deferred to a rescheduled UDP meeting on July 3, 2019.