

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: August 21, 2019

TIME: 3:00 pm

PLACE: Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:

Colette Parsons (Chair)

Helen Avini Besharat

Muneesh Sharma

Yinjin Wen

Colette Parsons

Karenn Krangle

Derek Neale

excused items 1 & 2

Matt Younger

Jennifer Stamp

excused items 2 & 3

REGRETS: Jim Huffman
Grant Newfield
Amela Brudar
Adrien Rahbar
Matt Younger

RECORDING

SECRETARY: K. Cermeno

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1. 3220 Cambie Street

2. 1616 W 7th Ave

3. 1289 Nicola Street

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Colette Parsons called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. The panel then considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 3220 Cambie Street
 Permit No. RZ-2019-00037
 Description: To develop a 6-storey mixed-use building with retail units at grade and 49 strata housing units; all over two levels of underground parking with 62 vehicle parking spaces and 99 bicycle parking stalls. The proposed building height is approximately 23.6 m (77.4 ft.), the floor area is 5,175 sq. m (55,706 sq. ft.), and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 3.76. This application is being considered under the Cambie Corridor Plan.
 Zoning: C-2 to CD-1
 Application Status: Rezoning Application
 Review: First
 Architect: Olson Kundig & IBI Group
 Delegation: John Hallock, Architect, Olson Kundig
 Bryan Pendz, Architect, Olson Kundig
 Mark Bruckner, Architect, IBI Group Architect
 David Stoyko, Landscape Architect, Connect Landscape
 Owner: Kaylen Blomkamp, Wesgroup
 Staff: Susan Chang

EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations (7-0)

- **Introduction:**

Rezoning Planner, Tess Munro, began by noting this site is a single lot currently zoned C-1 and formerly occupied by gas station, located on the southeast corner of Cambie Street and 16th Avenue. The site is considered under the Cambie Corridor Plan - Phase 3. The Plan anticipates mixed-use buildings in this location, up to 6-storeys, with retail at grade and residential or commercial uses above. The applicant is proposing a 6-storey mixed-use building with commercial at grade and residential above. There are 49 strata units and a density of 3.76 FSR is proposed.

Development Planner, Susan Chang, began by noting the site is located in the Cambie Village shopping area where new built form is intended to build upon the character of the area. Proposals should provide activated pedestrian environments along the shopping streets as well as enhanced lanes. The suggested density range anticipated is 2.5 - 3.0 FSR and 6 storeys. The proposal is seeking 3.76 FSR and height of 77.4 ft. This is a corner site with a 142 ft. frontage and a depth of 105 ft. There is an approximate 6.6 ft. cross fall from southwest to northeast corner. Context ranges from 3 - 8 storeys at this intersection and RT-5 across the lane which allows for up to 3 storeys and 35 ft. The existing buildings are 2 storeys. Cambie Corridor Plan begins at 16th Ave therefore north of 16th (C-2C) and across the lane to the west (RT-5) are not included as part of the Cambie Plan. The Plan anticipates a 4 storey street wall with upper floors stepped back from Cambie St. and stepped massing facing the lane to transition in scale to the existing neighborhood as well as to minimize shadow impacts. The proposed massing presents alternating inset balconies which provide vertical breaks in massing in lieu of upper storey setbacks facing Cambie and the lane. Height is proposed at 77.4 ft. due

to the sloped site condition and proposed high performance envelope design with increased ceiling heights. Rear yard setback is reviewed based on shadow impacts and livability of units which generally results in an approximate 70 ft. building depth. The application exceeds the building depth given the balconies are inset in lieu of projecting balconies. Amenity room and collocated outdoor space is located at level 2 facing the lane and building entry is off the 16th and lane corner.

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

1. Does the Panel support the proposed form of development including:
 - a. Height and variance from shoulder setbacks.
 - b. Setbacks and relationship to the residential buildings across the lane.
 - c. Density of 3.76 FSR.
2. Public realm vitality at the street and lane interface including landscape design.
3. Sustainability strategy and balcony accessibility.

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

The vision for this site is to make the gateway as the entrance to the Cambie corridor. We managed to come up with a design that varies only slightly from the policy. Key drivers were activating the public realm, building articulation and modulation. There were challenges in developing the proposal while meeting traditional guidelines. We focused on the outdoor spaces and daylight to optimize the interior spaces and allow this to shape the building form. Building massing and form began on the ground by activating the public realm with transparency along the retail by opening up store front elements store front to the street. Setback to the commercial level has allowed widening of the sidewalk and lengthening the overhang to enhance the experience. We have broken down the massing to avoid one long façade and provide a more legible scale to the neighbourhood. By setting back the overall massing, we have been able to provide corner windows to the units enhancing fresh air and livability. We shifted the boxes horizontally to create integrated balconies to promote privacy and protection to each residential unit while providing daily fresh air. The integrated balconies address thermal bridging between interior and exterior spaces. A garden space connected to the lobby has been programmed in to breakdown the scale and relate more to the residential level. The amenity space has been relocated on the lane side to activate the lane.

The focus of the landscape design relates the urban and residential edge. We want to be respectful to the form and materials of the architecture. Stepping on the second level, the intent is to respect neighbouring properties by having a green buffer. On the roof there we are trying to get in as many trees as possible, bringing out the views while greening out as many edges as possible.

Sustainability is following the Greens Building Policy. We are trying to increase solar shading while providing glass and sunlight into the units. Sustainable elements include planters in the rooftop garden for heat gain, rain water retention, and continuous internal thermal element.

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 Mr. Sharma and Ms. Ockwell 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 the corner of 16th and Cambie to create a larger public space and better overall corner experience.

- **Related Commentary:**

The panel expressed support for the form of development, heights, setbacks and density. The panel agreed it is a beautiful building and refreshing to see a different design along the Cambie Corridor. The materials are high quality and moving forward suggest the applicant maintain the metal, brick and wood in particular the brick detailing. Consider a lighter soffit to increase daylighting to units.

Consider adding more glazing to the residential lobby, presently there is a lot solid wall. Consider screened exterior space for the lobby garden to contribute greenery to the lane interface. Consider further activation (i.e. can be more glazing or more landscaping) at the ground level (lane) and given the amount of windows at the upper levels, be sensitive to overlook.

Consider roof top planter setback so that planters do not contribute to height. Consider view of roof below that is visible from balconies due to balcony configuration. The amenity space appears small and roof top common amenity space is encouraged.

Balcony accessibility will need to be addressed. A panelist noted side to side balconies may result in future noise issues between units. The sustainability strategy was supported by the panel. Additional comments included consider bike access and use of retail elevator.

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

2. Address:	1616 W 7th Avenue
Permit No.	DP-2019-00407
Description:	To develop the site with an 11-storey mixed-use building with two levels of community amenity spaces at grade and 43 residential units, and four 2-storey townhomes along W 7th Ave. The proposed building height is 36.5 m (119.7 '), the floor area is 4,717 sq. m (50,783 sq. '), and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 5.4.
Zoning:	C-3A
Application Status:	Complete Development Application
Review:	First
Architect:	IBI Group
Delegation:	Mark Bruckner, Architect, IBI Group Architecture. Jane Durante, Architect, Durante Kreuk
Owners:	Michael Bosa, Solterra
Staff:	Carl Stanford

EVALUATION: Resubmission Recommended (4-2)

- **Introduction:**

Development Planner, Carl Stanford, began by noting the subject site is zoned C3A in the Burrard slopes Sub Area and is located at the 1600 block on West 7th Avenue, on the south-west corner at Fir Street and W 7th Avenue. The site is approximately square in shape and has an area of 874m²/ 9,406sf. The West 7th Avenue frontage measures 28m/ 92' and 34m/110.7' along Fir Street. West 7th Avenue is a Greenway and a City Bike Route. There is significant sloping grade, falling approximately 3.35m/ 11' from the lane.

The site is presently occupied by a small 2 storey commercial structure with parking at grade and vehicle access from Fir Street and the lane. The site is directly west of the Granville Street Bridge vehicle off ramp. The immediate environs to the south, east and west is zoned C3-A with two CD- 1 sites to the north east off west 6th Avenue and one CD-1 site a block away to the east. The built environment is a mix of older low rise commercial buildings and more recent residential development. The immediate neighbors are; to the north a 9 storey social housing (111') building, to the East, 'The Terraces' a 13 storey mixed use tower, (32.6m/ 107'), to the South 'The 'Fircrest' 'a 12 storey residential tower (34.13 m /112') and to the West 'The Virtue' an 11-storey residential tower (30.48m /100'). They are all within a 10 to 12 storey range in height with the Granville Bridge connector directly on the east side.

Governing policy includes the C-3A District Schedule, C-3A Urban Design Guidelines- Burrard Slopes Sub-area, the Bridgehead Guidelines, and the Central Area Plan: Goals and Land Use Policy C-3A - Central Broadway.

The outright density permitted is 1.0 FSR with a maximum conditional density of 3.0 FSR in accordance with Section 4.7 of the C-3A District Schedule. A transfer of heritage density up to 10 percent of the maximum permitted density is permitted under Section 4.7.5 of the C-3A District Schedule. In the previously approved scheme an FSR of 3.3 was achieved (2884m²/ 31,041sf). The additional bonus residential density is sought in return for the provision of the public amenity. The total area including the amenity would be 4720m² (50,806sf) or 5.4 FSR. The amenity area is excluded from FSR yielding a net 4.77 FSR.

The Building mass should occupy at least 75% of the street frontage with tower plates having a maximum floor space of 510 m² (5,500sf) a maximum east/west dimension of 22.0 m (72') and a maximum north/south dimension of 27.0 m (88') and the application is broadly in line with these requirements. The C-3A district schedule calculates front, side and rear setbacks as 3.7m (12'), 3.7m (12') and 4.5m (14.92') respectively.

The outright height is 9.2 m (30.2'). The height can be increased to a maximum which is unspecified in the District Schedule through Section 4.3 of the Zoning and Development By-law. Under the -3A Urban Design Guidelines, Burrard Slopes Sub-area, tower elements are considered to be any portion of a building over 22.0 m (72') in height and should be separated from other existing residential tower elements by at least 25.0 m (82') Where adjacent sites are not fully developed, the proposed tower should maintain a distance of 12.5 m (41') from the interior side and rear property lines however, where the rear of the site abuts a lane, this required minimum should be decreased by half of the lane width. As a corner location, this site qualifies as a tower site, ie: heights above 22m/ 72'. The proposed sideyard setback is less than the recommended 12.5m/ 41' sideyard for tower elements adjacent to undeveloped lots. The intent of this large setback is to maintain adequate separation between buildings higher than 72'. In this instance, the adjacent site is too small to enable a tower development and staff therefore recommends the proposed setback of 15' is acceptable. The proposal is separated from the nearest existing towers as follows:

- On the site west of the immediate west adjacent site by 34.7m/ 114'
- On the north site, across West 7th Avenue by 27.2m/ 89.5'; and
- On the south site, across the lane by 21.7m 71.2'.

Towers should have a maximum height of 30.5 m (100') under C-3A Burrard slopes guidelines. The applicant is requesting a relaxation to increase the height limit from the outright height of 9.2 m. (30') beyond the guidelines recommended 30.5m/ 100' to 36.5 m (119'-8"). The height of the proposed building increased from 111.3' of the previously approved DP to 119.67' because of the technical and program requirements for the music studio cultural amenity space.

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

1. Please comment on the form & contextual fit of the project with particular consideration of the below:
 - a. Is the scale and relationship with the neighboring towers appropriate and is the articulation of the proposed form consistent with the character of the area?
 - b. Does the proposal adequately demonstrate the mitigation of substantial impact on the visual privacy of those living in nearby towers?
 - c. Does the proposal adequately demonstrate best efforts to minimize the disruption of significant distant views from surrounding sites, and provide attractive views for existing adjacent developments?
2. Please comment on the architectural expression, articulation and functional design with particular consideration of the below:
 - a. Does the proposal demonstrate a persuasive urban design approach for the articulation of its massing and its outward canted form?

- b. Does the proposal satisfy the distinction for an effective treatment of base, middle and top?
 - c. Is the the proposal's detailed design and material selection appropriate?
 - d. Is the value of the layout of the cultural amenity space sufficiently flexible to facilitate long term viability and meriting the additional height?
(Please Note: City staff were working with the applicant on the program/ technical requirements. Therefore you may consider this item in the context of the value of it as a key element of the proposal generating additional height and density and discuss it in general FOD terms.)
3. Please comment on the success of the public realm interface with particular consideration of the below:
- a. Is the at grade interface of the buildings sufficiently activated with provision for a lively public realm?
(Please Note: Consider the number and type of entries at grade, entry locations, canopy depths & canopy soffit design, building use, the amount of glazing at pedestrian level; and the public realm design.)
 - b. Are the lobby entrances spatially appropriate to the scale of the building they serve?

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

The design of this building is contextually based. It is a small site constrained by the size / slope of the site, and challenges from the adjacent access ramp.

The residential entrance has a generous overhang. The townhouses on west 7th are raised for privacy. The sidewalk and boulevard patios step down transitioning into the townhouses. The massing in the tower piece has been developed to come down to the grade at the corner of the building.

The public realm curve to the building face has increased, with the angularity addressing the corner more. The amenity entrance is at the top of Fir Street. There are canopies to extenuate the amenity entrance at the top of the hill. The amenity goes along the corner to the lane broken by a patio.

The original design approved height was approximately 110' with 11 floors. While working with City staff to accommodate their program, a strategy to fit in the cultural amenity increased the height to 119' with the height increase due to the functionality of the amenity space.

There is a bike lane on west 7th. There is little landscaping due to the small piece of land available. On Fir Street there is a standard city sidewalk, with boulevard street trees in the hands of the engineering department. In front of the townhouses entrance are raised planters. There will be two penthouses that will be planted, with an area for BBQ, table and added trees.

The window to wall ratio is 43 percent glazing. The intent is to use the most up to date window to wall system with improved thermal in the framing.

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. Ockwell and seconded by Ms. Besharat 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 for a more coherent and consistent design approach to the perimeter expression of the building at its base and its upper stories with improved articulation of the form of development on all four sides and appropriately detailed information for review.
- Design development of the public realm interface of the building to develop a more persuasive approach that better addresses the treatment of the entries (with canopies, gates, additional design development), lobby spaces (more spatially appropriate/ functional) and an improved public realm in general;
- Design development of the amenity space with a co-located outdoor space and additional improvements including consideration of roof top amenity.

- **Related Commentary:**

Most Panel members expressed concerns that the drawings were insufficiently detailed with inadequate information to comment on view blockages and privacy and separation/ relationship with neighbors. The model answered more questions than the booklet did. It would have been great to have more elevations showing the view issues with greater clarity. Therefore it is difficult to provide commentary in regards to views and privacy.

(Note to Applicant: The original DP submission booklet did not correctly indicate the separation distance from the neighboring tower to the South. The C-3A guidelines require a separation distance of 25m/ 82'. The previously permitted development permit relaxed this to an absolute minimum of ~24m/79'. The height threshold of 22m/ 72'. should be indicated on elevations and sections.)

Most panel members felt that the scale and height of the building was appropriate but that there were issues with the character and architectural expression. There was a lot going on and the building expression was busy with too many material choices. A general improvement to the architectural elements/ character of the building is required, including the vertical fins which have no functional element and are not resolved with the canted character, grade or bridge ramp. There is a lot going on in all the elevations which don't relate to each other. It would be better if design was more coherent. The east and south façade have no solar shading provided.

Some panel members felt the execution of the crown of the building needed more excitement. The angled façade isn't helping these issues and is fighting its resolution. The materials utilized at the top of the building materials are not cohesive and there is no element of excitement.

Most panel members noted that opportunities were missed for the design of the cultural amenity space. It hints at its functional use with a keyboard expression but is insufficiently developed. It would be desirable to have design development that speaks to the cultural space better as it is currently not making the connections. It is disconnected from what is happening above. The cultural amenity is a highlight of the building and this 'music box' should be expressed as an important focal point. It could be a 'gem' dependent on how it is highlighted is with a more coherent design approach. The cultural amenity experience seems compressed. The lobby does not fit with a successful use to the cultural amenity. The door is small and needs to accommodate coming and going traffic. Presently, the cultural amenity appears more of an office space in its outward expression. On the north side the materiality wraps around and changes in the corner and this is not quite successful.

The townhouses had steep stairs, a weak interface and were not inviting. They needed re-design for a more urban yet contemporary design. Development is needed at the steep ramp and steep stairs to the townhomes. The townhouses could use more rain screening, and more definition.

Many of the panel members felt more needed to be done with the design of the lobbies. The entry and experience at lobbies quite compressed for both cultural amenity and the apartments. The cultural space lobby is tight, with insufficient enough space to move equipment. There is a busy solid wall, entrance to the lobby which needs further design development, especially with the soffit expression and materiality at the base landscape level.

Most panel members felt the at-grade interface needed work with more design development for an improved active space and to create further definition of all the entries. Further they noted there is disconnect with the base and upper portion of the building and the base requires further development in how it relates to the sidewalk and to the pedestrian.

Some panel members expressed concerns on the provision of a windowless amenity room with no access to the exterior. The amenity needed some access to an outdoor space. A roof top amenity would be welcomed along with a covered space and washroom.

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

3. Address:	1289 Nicola Street
Permit No.	DP-2018-00038
Description:	To develop a 6-storey Passive House residential building with 13 market units; all over 1 level of underground parking accessed from Harwood Street. The proposed building height is approximately 19.7 m (64.7 ft.) and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 1.73 (including an additional 10% Heritage Density Transfer).
Zoning:	RM-5A
Application Status:	Complete Development Application
Review:	First
Architect:	Cornerstone Architecture
Delegation:	Scott Kennedy, Architect, Cornerstone Simon Richards, Architect, Cornerstone Luke Han, Architect, Cornerstone Peter Kreuk, Landscape Architect, Durante Kreuk Ltd.
Staff:	Susan Chang

EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations (5/2)

- **Introduction:**

Development Planner, Susan Chang, began by noting this is a development permit application that will proceed to the Development Permit Board. The proposal is predominantly 5 storey with a partial 6th floor residential building in RM-5a district in the Beach Neighborhood of the West End. FSR Proposed is 1.73 which includes a 10% heritage density transfer and 5% for zero-emissions buildings (in this case, Passive House) in addition to the allowable 1.5 FSR. There are 13 units proposed including 3 rental units per the one to one replacement of existing rental housing units required in this district.

The site is located at the southeast corner of Nicola and Harwood measuring approximately 56 ft.x132 ft. with no lane. Tree retention is proposed at the corner and parking accessed from Harwood St. The area slopes to the north so that the neighbouring site is approximately a storey higher. The context is comprised of a range of 7-10 storey buildings and to the north is a 4 storey residential building with a courtyard configuration.

West end guidelines seek the siting and massing of new development to ensure livability and compatibility with adjacent development with respect to streetscape, open space, view, sunlight access and privacy. At the same time, acknowledging this is a challenged site given the site configuration, location, and existing development to the north. In terms of building character, a wide range of building types has been built in the West End. A common design theme for development has been to emphasize a simple building massing, as exemplified by the early mansions, and masonry apartments.

The building has been massed to conform to the building envelope and outright 60' height with the exception of the partial upper storey in order to minimize shadowing to the outdoor spaces of the neighbouring property. Shadow studies, HAD and view analysis have been provided. Massing is located towards the east side of the site with outdoor space located at the west. The proposal is seeking a relaxation to the front yard that aligns with the neighbouring building. The amenity room is located at the corner on level 1 and entry is at the north end of Nicola Street. Cladding materials are noted as cementitious finish and metal roof.

Advice from the Panel is sought on the following:

1. Please comment on the massing strategy and compatibility with the adjacent building.
2. Architectural expression and materiality.
3. Street interface, outdoor space and landscaping.

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

The challenge on this project is the neighboring site. The neighbouring building configuration has most of their living spaces looking across the site and the courtyard. It is an unusual building that could not be approved today but is charming with vaulted spaces, courtyards and very livable. It has made the placement of this building difficult. We tried our best initially to locate as much of our building to the corner and had proposed 5 units. The zoning changed during the application process and the project was revised to replace the existing 3 rental units and take advantage of 5% FSR for Passive House. A story was dropped and spread longer which helped with the massing and increased the number of units. The intent is to keep the building in the corner as much as possible and improve privacy for the courtyard next door and some views. We met with the neighbours a couple of times but it's difficult to get an agreement when you are interfering with their view. Another concern of the neighbours is for privacy to their courtyard so we have only one window facing the courtyard and will plant a green wall to add character. The aesthetic comes from the client who wanted a European feel. We will build using an ICF forming with concrete in the middle and styrofoam type face to sculpt the detailing. The finish will be very durable. Tree is retained at the corner and retaining wall maintained. There will be a series semi private patio spaces and private patio where the building steps back. There is a common amenity area trying to get solar exposure. The planters on the upper roof are metal planters. Intention is to get some vines going up the back side to soften that face of the building. There were some challenges with overheating. There will be a low window ratio with thick walls.

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 Mr. Sharma and seconded by Mr. Wen and was the decision of the Urban Design Panel:

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

- Consider any additional building forms or massing elements that will help neighboring properties;
- Further consideration of viability of the green wall system versus putting in more windows;
- Consider the roof form and how it impacts the neighbors to the north and overall architectural expression of building.

Related Commentary:

The panel supported the concept of the passive house and concrete building a positive. The massing strategy is handled well. It is a challenging site because of its adjacencies. The elevation change and 4 sides of the building are well handled. The architecture expression was the main concern. The style is not consistent with the rest of the buildings in the area. The style appears to be creating unnecessary bulk and massing. A panelist noted this is an imposing building and concerned that the architectural expression and materiality will start precedence and the essence and character of the west end will be lost. The architectural expression and materiality is reading more like a movie set. The north façade expression should be more pleasing with compatibility to the neighbours. Look at making the building less aggressive towards the courtyard. The entry appears tacked on and the columns detract from the overall design. The panel recommended a common roof deck space.

The panel noted the landscape was simple and successful. If going forward with the green wall approach, talk with neighbours and consider maintenance. The parkade entry is unusual however if it works the panel found acceptable. The curve wall to the parkade is quite high at the street edge, might benefit from stepping back a bit.

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