

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** December 12, 2018  
**TIME:** 3:00 pm  
**PLACE:** Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall  
**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:  
Helen Avini Besharat  
David Jerke  
Colette Parsons  
Derek Neale  
Jim Huffman  
Muneesh Sharma  
Amela Brudar  
Grant Newfield

Items 2 & 3

**REGRETS:**  
Susan Ockwell  
Leslie Shieh  
Yijin Wen  
Marie-France Venneri

**RECORDING  
SECRETARY:** K. Cermeno

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### ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

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| 1. | 708-796 Renfrew Street and 2906-2908 East Georgia Street |
| 2. | 2499 E 48th Avenue                                       |
| 3. | 2133 Nanton Avenue - Arbutus Center Block C & D          |
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**BUSINESS MEETING**

Vice Chair Helen Besharat called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. After a brief business meeting the panel considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 708-796 Renfrew Street and 2906-2908 East Georgia Street  
 Permit No. RZ-2017-00075  
 Description: To develop the site with two residential buildings at four storeys along Renfrew Street and five storeys from the lane, consisting of 73 secured market rental housing units; all over one and a half levels of underground parking with 40 vehicle spaces. The proposed floor area is 4,964 sq. m (53,436 sq. ft.), the floor space ratio (FSR) is 2.07, and the building heights are 12.8 m (42 ft.) on Renfrew Street and 16.7 m (54.7 ft) at the lane. This application is being considered under the Affordable Housing Choices Interim Rezoning Policy  
 Zoning: RS-1 to CD-1  
 Application Status: Rezoning Application  
 Review: First  
 Architect: GBL Architects  
 Owner: Nav Bains, Bains Holding Group Inc.  
 Delegation: Daniel Eisenberg, Architect, GBL Architects  
 Mike Knauer, Architect, GBL Architects  
 Grant Brampton, Landscape Architect, PWL Partnership  
 Staff: Michelle Yip & Susan Chang

**EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations**

- **Introduction:**

Rezoning Planner, Michelle Yip, described the site for this rezoning application, on the east side of Renfrew Street between Georgia and Adanac St in Hastings-Sunrise, as within four blocks of Hastings Street, three schools, Hastings Community Park and community centre, Hastings Park and the PNE, and directly adjacent to the Adanac Bikeway. The site is surrounded primarily by RS-1 zoned single-family homes with the exception of the block directly south of the site, which is zoned C-1 and consists of one- to three-storey commercial and mixed-use buildings.

The rezoning site comprises seven lots zoned RS-1 and currently occupied by single-family homes. The frontage along Renfrew St is 231 ft. and there is a 20 ft. grade change across the site.

The proposal is being considered under the *Affordable Housing Choices Interim Rezoning Policy*, which allows for consideration of up to six storeys at this location (i.e. a site fronting a Frequent Transit Network arterial and within close proximity of a local shopping area). In response to community input from the spring of this year, the proposal has been revised to two residential buildings at 4 storeys along Renfrew St and 5 storeys from the lane, containing 73 secured market rental housing units at 2.07 FSR.

Development Planner, Susan Chang described the proposal as 4 storeys fronting Renfrew St and 5 storeys as viewed from the lane (due to the slope). Given the significant frontage, the massing has been broken into two buildings (with a connection at the lower levels facing the lane), and a 12 ft. building separation. Both buildings provide a shoulder setback (at level 4) facing Georgia and Adanac St and further terracing of the massing towards the rear in keeping with the sloping topography.

The public realm and level 1 include the following features:

- Ground-oriented units (with patios) on Renfrew and Georgia St frontages;
- Two-level townhouses on Adanac St and lane, to transition to single-family context;
- Small forecourt on Renfrew St to create a more welcoming entry to passage between buildings;
- Twin residential entries on Georgia and Adanac St. Secondary residential entries off passage between buildings;
- Building is notched at the southwest corner to retain two magnolia trees;
- Level 1 is stepped in two directions to follow grade and retaining walls and terraced landscaping along flanking streets, due to slope;
- Amenity room and co-located outdoor space is located at the passage between buildings.

Setbacks at grade are 12 ft. on Renfrew St, 6 ft. at Adanac St, and 8 ft. on Georgia St, bearing in mind balconies are exempt. In terms of sustainability, this is a Passive House proposal.

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

1. Is the overall approach to height, density and massing supportable and in particular transition to adjacent single family properties?
2. Is the at-grade interface with the public realm and common amenities successfully resolved?
3. If desired, provide comments on detailed architectural expression, to assist the applicant in a future DP application (Note: non-voting question.)

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

We wanted the massing to follow the slope of this challenging site. In the previous design, the community pushed back against the retail uses on level one, so it was replaced with ground level studio units facing Renfrew St. This allowed us to crop the overall height of the building. The building was split into two buildings with a 12 ft. separation providing a courtyard space which includes the amenity space and play area for children. A notch was created to retain the Magnolia trees. Roof is sloped for a more residential expression. We introduced solar shading along the balconies to address the privacy issues with the neighborhood and to provide protection from the summer sun.

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. Sharma 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 consider courtyard entry as primary entry to bring people in and to animate the space.
- Consider adding additional benches in the landscape areas;
- Consider improving or revisiting the location and program of the interior amenity room.

- **Related Commentary:**

The Panel noted there were improvements from the previous massing and overall was a successful project. A panelist noted it was a positive move from 5 to 4 levels and liked the splitting of the building to two to provide some relief on the front elevation. However the space between the buildings is tight which limits amount of light and one unit's orientation to courtyard is a concern. Minimizing shadowing down the hill and use of roof top spaces as outdoor space could also be

considered. This is a project that could lend itself as a Passive house therefore it would be beneficial to elaborate on the details.

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

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2. Address:	2499 E 48th Avenue
Permit No.	RZ-2018-00030
Description:	To develop a 4-storey Senior's Community Care Facility building consisting of a total of 100 community care units; all over one level of underground parking. The proposed floor area is 7,669.9 m <sup>2</sup> (82,558.67 sq. ft.), the building height is 13.7 m (44.9 ft.) and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 1.91. The application is being considered under the Victoria Fraserview/Killarney Community Vision.
Zoning:	RS-1 to CD-1
Application Status:	Rezoning Application
Review:	First
Architect:	Integra Architecture Inc.
Owner:	Jerry Liang, Sunrise Senior Living
Delegation:	Shawmus Sachs, Architect, Integra Architecture Steve Watt, Architect, Integra Architecture Michael Patterson, Landscape Architect, Perry & Associates
Staff:	Tiffany Rougeau & Brenda Clark

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#### **EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations**

- **Introduction:**

Rezoning Planner, Tiffany Rougeau, introduced the project as a rezoning application at 2499 E 48th Avenue proposing to rezone one vacant lot under the Victoria-Fraser View Killarney (VFK) Community Vision.

The site is located between Nanaimo and Clarendon adjacent Corpus Christi School and Parish to the west. The lot is currently vacant and zoned RS-1. The surrounding context is primarily composed of single-family housing zoned RS-1, with several seniors' housing projects across the street.

To the immediate east is Shannon Oaks and Shannon Oaks West, a 3.5-storey independent seniors living facility operated by the Baptist Housing Society and to the south of Shannon Oaks is Clarendon Court, a 4-storey seniors assisted living facility. To the north across the street is Nanaimo Park.

The proposal is for A 4-storey Senior's Community Care Facility, Class B with a total of 100 units (The top 2 floors will be dedicated to memory care needs.) This will all be over one level of underground parking accessed from Waverley.

The proposal has been made under the VFK Community Vision plan which includes:

- 21.1: Support for small developments designed for seniors near parks, shopping and transit.
- 21.2: Support for provision of low-rise purpose built seniors' housing - some providing for different levels of care

It is also desirable for Class B Community Care Facilities to be located in residential neighbourhoods. This use is conditionally permitted in all residential zones throughout the City, including RS-1.

Development Planner, Brenda Clark, summarized the project as generally attractive and supportable at this location, with good access to public transit, shopping and community services. The Victoria-Fraserview neighbourhood is very walkable and well-suited to seniors housing. Nearby parks include Nanaimo Park, Killarney Park, and Gordon Park. The site measures approximately 126 ft. wide by 341 ft. long, similar to seven single family lots. It is flanked by a large playing field and a school to the

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west, single family homes (RS-1) to the south, and two large seniors' complexes across Clarendon Street.

The building is proposed as 4 storeys, with a maximum height of 15.01 m (52'-3"), similar to the seniors projects to the east, but considerably more massive than the single family residences to the south. The FSR is proposed as 1.91.

Proposed setbacks are as follows:

East: 3.7m (12'-3") at corners, 9.24 m (30'-4") to the building face.

North: 4.78m (15'-8")

South: 5.61m (18'-5")

West: 3.3m min., 7.26 m (23'-10") to the building face.

The project generally complies with many aspects of the Seniors Supportive and Assisted Housing Guidelines (SSAHG), Community Care Facility - Class B and Group Residence Guidelines.

Form of Development issues include:

- four storey building creates morning shadow on adjacent playing field to west;
- massing transition to single family neighbours to south (2.5 storeys);
- insufficient common outdoor space for residents and visitors at grade and on upper floor balconies; and,
- inadequate privacy of ground floor units.

Advice from the Panel is sought on the following:

1. General massing, setbacks, and neighborliness to the RS-1 context and the school playing field to the west.
2. Quality of the shared indoor and outdoor amenity spaces for 100 Community Care residents.
3. Materials and details for the future Development Permit application.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

This is the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunrise Living project Integra has worked on locally. Sunrise has a fixed program related to the user groups in the facility. This project includes 2 floors of memory care at the top of the building. Normally, a walking route is provided around the building, but it is becoming more and more difficult to acquire a squarish site in Vancouver.

The design of the building is intended to fit in with the surrounding context. A shoulder set back was provided on the top floor at each end of the building, to fit better with the single family to the south, and the lower seniors' buildings to the east. The mansard roofline was adjusted to lessen shadowing on school playing field, and the east and west facades were articulated to give visual interest to the 300' long building.

Key items of the program is drop off/and pick up area of site, loading and parking for Sunrise bus for residents is at the northwest corner, adjacent to the playing field, to have less impact on the neighbours. The porte cochere entry lines up with the driveway access to Shannon oaks

The landscape around the building provides some seating nodes and smaller street trees on Waverly. The primary amenity space is on the west of the building, overlooking the playing fields. A central fragrant garden is incorporated, along with vegetable plots. The outdoor open space is secured by a fence which returns to the building face, leaving the remainder of the site more open.

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. Jerke and seconded by Mr. Neale 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:
  - Provide rooftop amenity with indoor space and washroom.
  - Improve the indoor-outdoor connection, by relocating some ground floor communal spaces (i.e. Great Room or Patio Room) on the west and some offices on the east, to take advantage of outdoor amenity and park spaces.
  - Simplify the materials and details, and "calm down" the architectural expression.

- **Related Commentary:**

The panel unanimously agreed that the proposed building is good contextual fit in the neighborhood in terms of height and expression. Seniors housing is well suited to this location, close to open space and the school.

Many panelists encouraged the applicant to revisit and improve the amenity spaces, including a roof top terrace to take advantage of the unused space and views, with a smaller indoor amenity with washroom facilities to support for private and other gatherings.

1. Provision of rooftop amenity space would enable family interaction, as the current configuration provides very little private space for families. A covered outdoor area, as well as a washroom, would be a nice space for families to interact.
2. The location of porte cochere has squeezed building to park and the ground plane needs further study. The indoor and outdoor ground floor amenity spaces could be improved upon, by creating a strong visual connect and good light exposure. Amenity areas should take advantage of the western exposure.
3. 'Calm down' and reduce the number of architectural materials and simplify the detailing.

The amenity spaces should take advantage of the surrounding neighborhood and adjacencies. Seniors love to watch children playing, and overview of the park and school is ideal.

The panel members commented extensively on design development of outdoor amenity areas, as improvements would benefit the residents and their families, whether located on the roof or the main floor, as follows:

- A lot of the site is dedicated to vehicular circulation, including the Porte cochere, which has squeezed the building. The porte cochere should be more compact in front of the building, in order to enlarge the western outdoor amenity area overlooking the playing fields.
- Consider layby along the street to reduce on site traffic movements, and develop more meaningful and usable outdoor spaces for residents.
- There should be more "flow through" from the building entry to the western outdoor amenity, which is achievable by reworking the locations of the dining room, offices, etc., and opening up the central space for visual communication from one side to the other, to capitalize on sun and natural light.
- Provision of rooftop amenity space would enable family interaction, as the current configuration provides very little private space for families. Several private areas should be

provided. A covered outdoor area, as well as a washroom, would be a nice space for families to interact.

- A walking loop was discussed, along with weather protection around the building, particularly for seniors walking outdoors.
- Overshadowing of the playing field could be ameliorated by reduction or elimination of mansard roofs, which increase the shading.
- One panel member noted the importance of window design over the park, for privacy as well as sun access.

The possibility of skylighting above the top floor to bring light down to the hallway was discussed.

A number of panelists noted to simplify the number of materials and calm down the architectural expression at the Development Permit stage.

Consideration of heat loss and energy modelling was recommended for the next stages of the project, specifically referencing window mullion patterns and building massing.

- **Applicant's Response:** The applicants thanked the Panel for their comments and advised the items discussed would be incorporated in further revisions.



3.	Address:	2133 Nanton Ave - Arbutus Center Block C & D
	Permit No.	DP-2018-00896
	Description:	To develop the site with an 8-storey mixed-use building consisting of residential (41 dwelling units), retail and community uses on Block C, and a 12-storey mixed-use building consisting of commercial at grade and residential above with 202 dwelling units on Block D; all over three levels of underground parking. The proposed total gross floor area above ground is approximately 31,500 sq.m (339,063 sq.ft).
	Zoning:	CD-1
	Application Status:	Complete Development Application
	Review:	Third (First as DP)
	Architect:	DIALOG
	Delegation:	Vance Harris, Architect, DIALOG Val Castilla, Architect, DIALOG Cheryl Bonwmeester, Landscape Architect, PWL
	Staff:	Grace Jiang

### EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations

- **Introduction:**

Development Planner, Grace Jiang, introduced the project as The application is the last phase of the DP application for the Arbutus Center redevelopment. The subject site is on the interior half of the overall site. The surrounding context includes the first two phases of development Block A & B to the East, two 6-storey residential buildings to the North and West, a two-storey senior facility on the south, and the linear Arbutus Village park borders the Northwest edge. There is a 5 meters crossfall over the site from northeast to southwest corner.

The proposal is for a mixed use development, including Block C & D and a public square between the two blocks. Block C proposes one 8 storey building. A coffee shop and an Adult Day Care (ADC) is on the ground level fronting the public square, and a Neighbourhood House (NH) is located on the level below, and a strata amenity room is on P1 level. Block D contains one 12 storey building fronting Yew Street and the public square, one 4 storey townhouse interfacing with the linear park, and a courtyard. A restaurant is on the ground floor defining the north edge of the public square. The amenity room is contiguous with the courtyard. Both buildings provide a green roof and a rooftop outdoor amenity space. The underground parking runs north to south serving both buildings. Residential entrances and parking access are located on Yew Street.

The DP application is under an amended CD-1 bylaw approved by council in July this year. The proposal generally meets the technical requirements in the CD-1 bylaw with respects to the use, height and overall density for the entire site.

However, the UDP at rezoning stage identified key issues of the form of development, such as unbalance distribution of density over the entire site, out of context massing and bulky buildings, overshadowing on park, Public Square, and neighboring properties, architectural expression. Rezoning approval conditions also seek significant improvements of Block C & D to mitigate the overall massing and shadow impact through measures including reducing terrace heights, providing substantial shoulder setbacks above level 8, and vertical breaks on long east façade.

The DP application made a few major revisions to address the mentioned issues:

- reduce the height of north end terraces of Block D from 10, 8, 6 storey to 8, 6, 4 storey respectively, which significantly reduce the extent of shadowing onto the park and north property;

- create an 8 storey base expression on the east elevation of Block D to break up the scale. To achieve this, the east building face from level 2 to level 8 are pushed outwards 1.6 meters;
- provide vertical breaks on east façade;
- provide further setback on 3rd and 4th floor of townhouses to reduce the shadow on the park;
- sculpt the northeast corner of block C to improve solar access to the public square; and
- Architectural expression of both buildings is simplified, but some of the balconies are removed.

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

1. Please comment on the success of the Block D building in terms of the mitigation of the overall massing and shadow impact;
2. Please comment on the success of the performance of public square with respects to solar access, activation, and place making; and
3. Please comment on the success of overall architectural expression and the ground floor elevation in terms of articulation and pedestrian interest.

The planning team then took questions from the panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

The upper levels of the Townhomes have been pulled back away from the park to address the concern of over shadowing; therefore there will be more terracing in the massing but contributing back to the private amenity of these units.

For the shoulder that was requested in the U street elevation of block D, facing east, we have intentionally picked up from the brick modules from block A and treat the street wall in a respectful way to think about the urban volume.

There has been a change in resolution in the upper floors with a more open fenestration pattern to separate the massing from the lower portion of the building. Have made various moves to lighten the top of the building.

Brought the face of the building out to half the distance the balconies previously projected. On the façade we are showing no projected balconies.

On the east façade have pushed the two brick volumes façade towards the street, and from the 9 to the 12th floor we have kept the glass portions which cascades down to the main floor of the same plain to create a cohesive design.

We have provided Juliet balconies.

Landscape design has improved since rezoning. Both rooftops now provide more of an amenity. Sun exposure was a critical component. The courtyard is now more of a passive area with transitions in the paving pattern. There are accessible accesses coming from the U street. Along the south façade on building C there is improved neighboring transition with lots of open spaces. Overall, you will see a lot of layered planting, seating, vertical elements, and a water feature.

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. Avini-Besharat and seconded by Mr. Huffman 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:
  - Widen the weather protection for retail uses and entrances to public facilities and along the plaza spaces;
  - Simplify the access to the courtyard on block D.

- **Related Commentary:**

The new scheme is a huge improvement. The massing has been contained and the stepping is more pronounced and meaningful. Breaking up the townhouse block would be beneficial as the townhomes appear to be crushing in to the building. The idea of base and top is more successful. A panelist noted the vertical sections combined with the curtain wall were successful.

Any improvements to the walkway and its interface with the building would be good. Look at the ground plain where the buildings touches the grade, how the glass turns, what is the materiality, quality of materials, and recessing the doors.

A panelist noted concern with the street renderings, the street is not welcoming. The entire exterior surface is something one should be more aware of.

The office space would benefit from facing the park.

Depending on the time of year, shadowing continues to be an issue. Suggest reviewing solar orientation and how this building is reflecting that. Livability issues could be further reviewed, especially with windows to the living room and there are some privacy issues of the corner unit.

Review the usability of the courtyard at building D, it seems isolated and could contribute to the breaking up of the townhouses. Access to the courtyard in building D is quite convoluted and would benefit from simplification. A panelist suggested the courtyard should follow through with a courtyard elevator to be more inviting.

In general the plaza is well proportioned with some good exposure during the summer months. Some suggested connecting the plaza to the park. There is still quite a bit of shadow despite small improvements. The majority of shadowing is where the retail is. This takes away from successful activation. Any modifications to create the corner to have more solar access where restaurants and cafes are will be a win for project. Additionally, weather canopy in the main plaza would be beneficial.

Additional comments included the parkade appears a bit strong and harsh. Suggest deeper weather protections (4ft to 8ft). The water feature is visually nice but the concern is its function in terms of sustainability. A suggestion was to make this feature more interactive. The bike storage was handled well. Reconsider the spot of the water jets, currently in a shaded area at grade.

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