

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: May 27th, 2020

TIME: 4:00 pm

PLACE: Webex

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:

Walter Francl
Marie-Odile Marceau
Margot Long
Adrien Rahbar
Sydney Schwartz
Muneesh Sharma
Jennifer Stamp
Karenn Krangle
Angela Enman

REGRETS:

Matt Younger
Brittany Coughlin (part of applicant team)
Alan Davies (part of applicant team)
Michael Henderson

RECORDING

SECRETARY: M.Sem

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	6409-6427 Cambie St

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Jennifer Stamp called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. The panel then considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 6409 – 6487 Cambie St
Permit No. RZ-2019-00082
Description: To develop a 10-storey mixed-use building with 127 strata residential units, office spaces on levels two and three, 37-space childcare facility on level two, and commercial retail space at grade with live/work units at the lane; all over two levels of underground parking consisting of 163 vehicle spaces and 306 bicycle spaces. The proposed building height is 39.83 m (130.7 ft.), the total floor area is 13,945 sq. m (150,103 sq. ft.), and the floor space ratio (FSR) is 4.09. This application is being considered under the Cambie Corridor Plan.
Zoning: RT-1 to CD-1
Application Status: Rezoning Application
Review: First
Architect: Acton Ostry Architects
Delegation: Mark Ostry – Acton Ostry Architects, Bryce Gauthier – Enns Gauthier Landscape Architects, Dan Brown – Kane Consulting (sustainability)
Staff: Ryan Dinh & Tess Munro

EVALUATION: Support with Recommendations (8-0)**• Introduction:**

Rezoning Planner, Tess Munro, provided a general background on the Cambie Corridor Plan and the vision for the immediate neighbourhood (Langara). She also spoke to the specifics of the Plan's expectations for the subject site, as well as current and anticipated contexts. Tess concluded her presentation with a description of the site and a summary of the rezoning proposal.

Development Planner, Ryan Dinh, gave an overview of the neighbourhood context in relation to the proposal, followed by the expectations of the built-form guidelines for mixed-use development. He then gave a brief description of the proposed project before concluding with Staff questions for the Panel.

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

1. Does the Panel support the form and massing of the building, in relation to the Cambie Corridor Plan and the immediate neighbouring properties
2. Given the context, please comment on the quality of public realm and pedestrian amenity, particularly at the building corner and the active link.
3. Given the major intersection location, please provide preliminary comments on architectural expression, particularly the corner expression, to inform future development permit application.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

The applicant noted that the massing and form of development aligns with Cambie Corridors Plan principles and responds to the adjacent building to the north, where the base and top elements are aligned and setbacks at various floor levels are provided to define the relationships. The tripartite expression includes active retail at grade, office and child care above, and residential on the top. The massing is broken down into two distinct forms separated by a recess gap to minimize the long building frontage. The projection at north end of building was provided to match the neighbouring setback.

The applicant also noted that the north massing is expressed horizontally similar to the adjacent existing building, and the south massing is oriented vertically to anchor the end of the block at the corner. The podium roof deck is provided for children play associated with the childcare centre. A row of 2.5 storey townhouses defines the lane and creates a court yard for access and outdoor common space and activities. The common amenity spaces are provided on the ground level that connects to a mezzanine level, and on the ninth floor, which is contiguous with a large roof deck amenity space.

The public realm responds to the character of Cambie Street with trees along the bike lane and plantings along Cambie and the mews. In the corner plaza, there is a seating element at the intersection. Private roof decks for the townhomes are provided. The common amenity area includes planters, outdoor kitchen and urban agriculture.

The applicant noted they meet the policy guidelines on the energy targets.

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

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

- Design Development to the Cambie Street public realm and work with the City of Vancouver Engineering Department to accommodate street tree planting between the bike lane and sidewalk (given that Cambie is a 'green infrastructure corridor'); Prioritize trees and pedestrians.
- Design Development to enhance the corner building expression at Cambie and 49th Ave and explore an increase in height as a means to achieve this.
- Reconsider the landscape treatment at the ground floor at Cambie and 49th to allow for patio seating and pedestrian movement.
- Design Development to enhance the landscaping and corner expression at Cambie and 49th to create more open space.

- **Panel Commentary:**

Form and Massing in the Cambie Corridor Context

- There was general support from panel for the form, height, density, massing, setbacks and relationship to context.
- The panel supports the organization of the uses on site.
- The panel liked the courtyard, the mews, and the office/retail uses.
- Panel members appreciated the use of podium to establish lower area at a more human level/pedestrian scale.
- The massing is thoughtful and the horizontality is well handled.
- Quality of the Public Realm and Pedestrian Amenity
- The public realm within the property line is well handled. The public realm outside the property line is lacking. The Cambie Corridor is purported to be a 'green infrastructure corridor', but it lacks greenery. Panel members encouraged the incorporation of trees along Cambie between bike lane and sidewalk. It seems that cars and bikes have been prioritized over pedestrians. There is no buffer from the Cambie traffic which is a huge transportation corridor. Cambie needs more pedestrian character outside the property line. It is also missing a gateway focus
- Panel members appreciate the quality of public realm and the opportunity for different vegetation and seating, and encourage more green-infrastructure.
- Panel member noted green space planted along the commercial frontage, and suggest design development at the commercial edge to make it easier for pedestrians to walk under canopy along that frontage from one store to another, especially when it is raining.
- Panel members suggested design development to enhance the space at grade and provide seating for pedestrians.
- Panel members appreciated the live work studios and how the lanes are addressed.

Panel members like the retail entry off of the mews and the southeast corner café.

- The panel felt there is more opportunity to express the corner public amenity. Consider recessing the corner even more to allow for a café.

Preliminary Comments on Architectural Expression, Corner Expression

- Panel members noted that the architectural expression at the corner could be stronger; there is more opportunity to express this corner and further add more public amenity and reset the corner.
- Given the prescriptive requirements the tripartite expression is well handled.
- Consider unifying the south and east facades of the 1-0 storey tower – the striated expression takes away from the corner

- The panel had no issues with the cantilever over the Mews.
- The east and west elevations of the tower appear similar. Consider further variation and solar response.
- The panel felt that the corner tower could be higher.

Other

- Panel members suggested concrete retaining walls and pathways instead of blocks to be more fitting with the building character.
- Panel members noted the amenity space is small and encourage more space in the amenity area on the top floor.
- Panel members appreciated the daycare and noted it was well handled and well thought out
- Panel members note that if reducing of minimum area for studio by 2 square meters, there was suggestion to return this space to amenity.
- Panel members suggested flexible movement in and out of the space for the outdoor space adjacent to the amenity space, and perhaps providing additional amenity space on the rooftop at the Southern massing. Consideration to provide extensive green roof over the level 8 and 9 roofs that are overlooked by level 10.
- Panel members encouraged the applicant to explore opportunities to address the blank section of the wall at the south end of the Mews
- Panel member noted the mezzanine at the level 2 amenity does not provide much daylight opportunity and the lower level appears not to have barrier free access.
- Consider more urban agriculture at level 9.
- Consider more greenery on the lane to match what is happening across the lane.

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