

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** April 11, 2007

**TIME:** 4.00 pm

**PLACE:** Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:  
John Wall, Chair  
Walter Francl (Item #2)  
Tom Bunting  
Maurice Pez  
Douglas Watts  
Richard Henry  
Bob Ransford  
Gerry Eckford

**REGRETS:** Albert Bicol  
Martin Nielsen  
Bill Harrison

**RECORDING  
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

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ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	Parcel 11 (SEFC): 1 Athletes Way
2.	175 Robson Street
3.	3350 Victoria Drive (Trout Lake)

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**BUSINESS MEETING**

Chair Wall called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. There being no New Business the meeting considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address:	Parcel 11 (SEFC): 1 Athletes Way
DE:	411198
Use:	SEFC Community Centre with group daycare facility
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Erickson/Francl/Milkovich
Owner:	City of Vancouver
Review:	First
Delegation:	Walter Francl, Nick Milkovich, Peter Kreuk, Rudy Roelofsen
Staff:	Scot Hein/John Greer

**EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-0)**

- **Introduction:** Scot Hein, Development Planner, introduced the application for a community centre in South East False Creek. Mr. Hein gave an overview on the past submissions and the status of those submissions and noted that Site 5 is the only site in SEFC that the Panel had not seen.

The community centre is at the north-east corner of the Olympic Village site, bounded to the east by a new park, to the north by the waterfront walkway and to the west by an open plaza. To the north, east and west, the site enjoys unrestricted views to the city and north-shore mountains.

The community centre has been designed to present its southern façade to the urban street and its northern curved face to the plaza fronting the waterfront. The main entry lobby bisects the building, connecting Athletes Way to the waterfront with a large, fully glazed three storey gallery space. All parking and loading components are located on a single level underground.

The community centre will have a day care on the third floor with an extensive play garden located on the north facing roof deck.

The Panel's advice was sought on the following:

- General attitudes about form and expression;
- Ground plane and public realm interface on the north end and south side;
- Execution of the building envelope.

Mr. Hein took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Nick Milkovich, Architect, further described the plans for the community centre. He noted the building will include a daycare on the third level, a two storey restaurant overlooking the westerly plaza, a boating centre plus gymnasium and other activity rooms. The project will achieve a LEED™ Platinum rating as a measure of its commitment to sustainable building design for SEFC.

Mr. Milkovich described the boating programs which will include a dragon boat program, rowing program, and kayak programs. He noted the boating centre will be an animated element on the waterfront.

Walter Francl, Architect, described some of the key elements shaping the building. He described the programming noting location of the gymnasium, the restaurant and the office spaces. The upper floor will have meeting spaces overlooking the water and adjoining deck space. The building will include natural ventilation, an envelope designed to reduce heat loss, louvered windows on the south side to protect from heat gain, and solar reflectors on the roof to preheat domestic hot water.

Peter Kreuk, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans for the community centre. A variety of spaces have been set up to interface with the public realm. The north facing plaza is a continuation of the interior spaces. Capping the project is a large sloping green roof. An interior green wall is proposed for the entry lobby.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Consider a more integrated public/private interface between the community centre, plaza, seawall and future waterfront access;
  - Consider ways to carry the ground plane out to the street edge;
  - Concern regarding the free standing covered work area;
  - Consider how people will get their boats to the water; and
  - Consider a more seamless interaction with overlapping community centre uses and waterfront activities.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel unanimously supported the project and thought it continued the legacy of the Vancouver City Park Board providing a great civic building. The Panel liked the building form, how it relates to the site and the organization of the building program. They thought it was a large building with a low approach and would be a strong landmark on the south shore of False Creek. The Panel thought the materials, expression and detailing of the façade were well handled.

One Panel member thought the parking access was too far off Ontario Street and would be more appropriate down by the turn-around on the west end of the building. Most of the Panel thought the parking ramp was tight.

Some of the Panel thought the free standing covered work area should be put down on the docks and the size expanded for kayak storage. One Panel member thought the public private interface was too hard a line and was separated from the water's edge.

The Panel thought the atrium was a strong focal point. One Panel member thought it was a missed opportunity not having a green wall on the north side as it would be a great place to harvest the north light into the space.

Several members of the Panel felt there should be more articulation on the north façade as it is a significant sized wall. One Panel member thought there should be more attention given to the way people will use the facility noting that there is a need for a drop off area so they can get their boats to the water.

One member would like to have seen the building out over the water with the pedestrian/bicycle walkway on the south side of the building.

The Panel thought the landscaping elements would make for a great outdoor space and suggested enhancing the interface between the public walkway and the waterfront. They also liked the public space on the north side plaza and thought it shouldn't be compromised with any structures. Most of the Panel thought the outdoor childcare area was creatively done.

The Panel applauded the applicant for LEED™ and other sustainable measures being used in the building and asked the applicant to consider opportunities for making sustainability a landmark statement in the building

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Francl noted that they are not involved in any development past the property line. Mr. Hein added that the walkway was out for tender. There are some opportunities on the north edge to diffuse the lines a bit and give some better integration to the plinth. Mr. Francl thanked the Panel for their comments.

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2. Address:	175 Robson Street
DE:	411173
Use:	20-storey hotel/residential building with ground floor commercial and 3 levels of underground parking
Zoning:	DD
Application Status:	Preliminary
Architect:	Relative Form Architecture - Joys Chow
Owner:	Mayfair Properties Ltd.
Review:	First
Delegation:	Abdullah Jamal, Joys Chow, Derek Lee
Staff:	Anita Molaro/Paul Huber

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**EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-2)**

- **Introduction:** Anita Molaro, Development Planner, introduced the application for a 29-storey mixed-use hotel/retail/residential building located at the northeast corner of Cambie and Robson Streets. The development will offer a boutique hotel with long term rental accommodation. The complex will include conference facilities, pool/spa and other social amenities to both hotel guests and long term residents. Landscaping will be a major component in the enhancement of the complex. Small retail units will be located at street level. The application includes a 10% heritage transfer of density applied to the residential portion of the FSR and a 15% hotel bonus applied to the hotel room portion. Both of the increases in density can be considered under the Downtown Official Development Plan. The height limit on the site is 150 feet which is relaxable to 300 feet. The proposal is asking for a height of 192 feet as the site is affected by a view corridor limiting its height to 196 feet.

Staff are supportive of the request for FSR and height relaxation and the general massing arrangement on the site.

The Panel's advice was sought on the following:

Does the Panel support:

- The modest increases in density requested (10% heritage and 15% hotel)
- The height relaxation up to 196 feet (view cone)

Does the Panel support the urban design response developed for this site and its relationship with the surrounding context taking into consideration:

- Siting,
- Tower form and massing,
- Street wall
- Site access
- Landscape

As the applicant team moves forward in its design development of the proposal does the Panel have any early advice that they would like to provide on the architectural resolution/materiality/expression for the proposal given:

- The nature of its context, and
- Nature of its use as a hotel/residential building.

Ms. Molaro took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Abdullah Jamal, Architect, further described the project noting there are three other hotels and a YMCA in the area. The complex is made up of four basic elements including the podium, the tower, the connectors and the courtyard. The podium covers the whole site and is two storeys on Robson Street stepping up to 3 storeys on the north-east side. The tower will accommodate 108 hotel suites in the lower seven levels with 73 residential units on the upper eleven levels. The urban garden within the courtyards is an opportunity for a visual amenity for the surrounding buildings.

Mr. Jamal stated that there are several strategies being explored regarding sustainability. These include geothermal exchange, conservation of water, control of heat gain, passive solar heating and other energy-saving practices.

Derek Lee, Landscape Architect described the landscape plans for the project. The lobby entrance will have a water feature that will set the theme for the development. The courtyards on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> level will have water features and areas for relaxation. The project will employ sustainable initiatives with a high efficiency irrigation system as well as green roofs.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Consider how to address the set back transition from the neighbouring Robson Street property;
  - Consider design development for the CRUs as well as the building entries;
  - Consider more sustainable strategies;
  - Consider a stronger statement regarding materiality; and
  - Consider design development of the massing to better reflect the infill, city fabric nature of this site.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel agreed that the site could accommodate the additional density and supported the height relaxation although one Panel member thought the design had not earned the additional density and height.

The Panel liked the water garden and the courtyard elements as they thought they were well designed. They thought the landscape architect had done a good job in designing the landscape plan with a lot of rich spaces being created. Some of the Panel felt the courtyard could be more open and more neighbourly. Some Panel members felt more could be done in the public realm.

The Panel had some concerns regarding the skewed portion of the hotel and thought the building shouldn't compete with its landmark neighbour, the CBC Building. Some of the Panel thought there should be a better link to the hotel to the east and suggested a subtle architectural approach. Another Panel member suggested a quieter approach to the building elevation and thought the break at mid height didn't work. Several Panel members thought the frames on the commercial at grade was a little bare and suggested more design development to simplify the building forms. One Panel member suggested reorienting the building and being orthogonal to the city grid. Another Panel member thought it could be skewed but not at the current angle. The Panel felt the success of the building would be the architecture and use of materials.

The Panel also thought there were some issues with the break in street wall set back along Robson Street with several members of the Panel encouraging the applicant to pursue the

idea of an arcade or other device to accommodate the transition and to create a better transition to the neighbouring building.

The Panel thought the resident's lobby space needed to be more refined. One Panel member thought the connection between the residential and hotel wasn't well resolved.

Regarding sustainability, the Panel thought the submission was lacking in a commitment to the principles of sustainability. They suggested the applicant address this issue at their next submission to the Urban Design Panel.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Jamal advised the Panel that they had engaged a sustainability consultant. He thanked the Panel for their comments.

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3. Address:	3350 Victoria Drive (Trout Lake)
DE:	411148
Use:	A new ice rink to replace the existing rink facility that will serve as a 2010 training/practice facility
Zoning:	RS-1
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Walter Francl Architect Inc. - Stefan Apeli
Owner:	Vancouver Park Board
Review:	First
Delegation:	Walter Francl, Stefan Apeli, Chris Philips, Rudy Roelofsen, Per Palm
Staff:	Anita Molaro

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**EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-0)**

- **Introduction:** Anita Molaro, Development Planner, introduced this application for the new ice rink at Trout Lake. During the Olympics, the ice will be operated at Olympic ice size, 13 feet wider than the National Hockey League size. After the winter games, the 13 foot portion of ice surface will be converted to the spectator seating area. During the Olympic Winter Games, the rink will be operated as a training facility for Short Track Speed Skating.

The roof structure will consist of a single longitudinal steel arch in the vertical clerestory plane this is supported by a buttress wall at the north and south end of the ice rink. The arch will support glue-laminated timber beams. The ice rink is to be designed to LEED™ gold standards.

Advice from the Panel is sought on the following:

- Overall architectural resolution - siting and form;
- Landscape concept;
- Proposed materials;
- Integration with existing building; and
- Front and side yards variance required.

Ms. Molaro took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Walter Francl, Architect, further described the plan for the Trout Lake Ice Rink. He noted the plan is for the first phase in John Hendry Park with the building of an Olympic size ice rink with a new community centre being added at a later date. Mr. Francl described the sustainability initiatives noting they are designing for LEED™ gold. There are plans to take the storm water off the roof and manifest that it into a stream that runs down along the entry path.

Chris Philips, Landscape Architect, briefly described the landscape plans for the proposal.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Consider a different highly reflected material for the roof;
  - Consider putting up guards or other measure to reduce access to the roof; and
  - More resolution for the water feature.



- **Related Commentary:** The Panel unanimously supported the project and thought the project was well handled and long overdue. The Panel liked that the building faced the park and supported the front yard variance.

Several members of the Panel had concerns about the colour of the roof as they felt it was important that the roof material not cause glare to the neighbours across the street. There was also concern regarding maintenance and what it would look like when it got dirty. Several members agreed that the white on the model was preferred over the colour on the material board. Also there was concern about people climbing onto the roof and suggested landscaping and other measures to prevent access.

One Panel member felt there should be more work done on how the storm water was taken off the roof. The Panel thought the landscaping was well done.

The Panel felt the integration into the existing community centre worked and the shape of the terrace responded to the alignment of the building. Some of the Panel had concerns regarding the drop off area.

One Panel member thought the exit closest to the intersection read as a secondary entrance and encouraged the applicant to review the design.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Francl thanked the Panel for their commentary.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.