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## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

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**DATE:** April 5, 2000

**TIME:** 4.00 p.m.

**PLACE:** Committee Room #1, City Hall

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL  
P. Grant Chair [excused from Item 4]  
L. Berelowitz  
T. Bunting  
J. Cheng [Deputy Chair]  
J. Lutsky  
B. Palmquist [excused from Item 2]  
G. Raynard  
K. Ross  
S. Tatomir

**REGRETS:** R. Hughes

**Acting Recording Secretary:** M. Penner

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ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING
1. 1400 West Georgia Street
2. 3580 West 41 <sup>st</sup> Avenue
3. 3501 Euclid Avenue
4. 525 West 10 <sup>th</sup> Avenue

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<b>1. Address:</b>	<b>1400 West Georgia Street</b>
DA:	404752
Zoning:	DD
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Musson Cattell Makey
Owner:	Palladium Projects Inc.
Review:	<b>Second</b>
Delegation:	F. Musson, A. Grant, J. Philips
Staff:	R. Segal

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## **EVALUATION: [8 - 0] - Support**

- **Introduction:**

The Development Planner, Ralph Segal, introduced this proposed project and advised the Panel had not supported the original submission due to various concerns, which included the relationship of the tower architecture as compared with the existing Georgian Towers, the location of the proposed vehicular access point, as well as doubt about the proposed five townhouses at the Alberni Street edge of this project.

However, Mr. Segal advised Planning felt strongly about several aspects of this project; that it was important the street-interface receive a positive, strong streetscape identity as well as the domesticity of the street. Staff felt that Alberni Street had the potential of obtaining a strong streetscape identity and therefore it was thought that the townhouses were an appropriate part of this project. He reiterated Staff and the Panel's concern about the need for more semi-private space and that when shielded from the street it becomes that more valuable, usable and protected. For these reasons, staff had met with the applicant and concluded that the townhouse expression should be reinforced, rather than done away with which had resulted in a much stronger townhouse approach. Mr. Segal further referred to the changes in the architecture of the new tower bringing it more in line with the existing tower. He also addressed the amended entry identity, which included disabled access which would now connect to a more embellished Georgian Towers entry and that the revised landscaping proposed to encompass the whole block, including existing surface [garage] parking.

Mr. Segal requested the Panel's comments on the over-all revised project, including the public realm treatment of this block of Georgia Street, the vehicular access, as well as the townhouses along Alberni Street.

- **Applicant's Opening Comments:**

Mr. Musson referred to the revised landscape plans and noted that only a couple of the existing trees could be saved [as a per an arborist's evaluation] and a number of boxed elders would need to be removed. He added that a type of maple would be used for the proposed strong double row of the street trees for Georgia, along with a series of layers of planting against the facade of the building.

In response to a Member's question about the existing Georgian Towers building, Mr. Musson advised that the renovation presently in progress was not part of the development, but that the landscaping would be extended to encompass the entire block and that as per the Panel's previous advice, they had revised the architecture of this project to relate more to that of the existing tower, and to further this integration,

planned to utilize the same colour scheme to pull the old and new towers together, and that the amenity facilities would be shared by tenants from both buildings.

Mr. Musson noted that to further the relationship between the two towers, they had revised the proposed tower so as to make it more geometric in form. He noted that they had added to the number of proposed townhouses which had been stepped up, and had been moved back to 12 ft. from the property line, which would provide a street wall, and had also reconfigured the entrances to the tower, and that the garage access underneath the proposed townhouses had been revised.

He further explained that the material would be a combination of clear and translucent panels for this tower. In response to a question about the present entrance to the existing tower, Mr. Musson advised this could be utilized as a potential retail space and the small, recessed entrance area could be utilized as a seating area. In response to whether any suites would be handicapped equipped, Mr. Musson informed the Panel that this was a requirement for hotels, but did not apply to rental units.

The Landscape Architect advised the Panel of the revised direction taken on the diagonal pathway through the project, from Alberni to Georgia, and to work on the geometric form of how that would combine the two towers. He also referred to the landscaping along the parking structure on Broughton Street, i.e., keeping the few healthy trees and replacing the rest, as well as adding trees to present a double row of trees along Georgia Street, and that evergreen would be planted against the property edge.

*Panel reviewed the posted materials.*

- **Panel's Comments:**

The Panel felt the applicant had responded well to the Panel's concerns and were unanimous in their comments regarding the improved architecture with specific emphasis on the revamped townhouses wrapped around the corner of Alberni and Broughton, which would improve the environment, as well as provide a good buffer against blustery weather. They also were pleased to see the reconfigured of the semi open space area and that the proposed landscape plan to surround the entire block was well done. It was also mentioned that the vehicular access had been handled particularly well because of the curved drive leading up to the building. Also mentioned was the proposed plaza off Georgia Street being on the same level as the street providing better visibility from Georgia.

However, various Panel members felt that the landscaping along West Georgia Street could be punched up a bit, that the grass strip be carried all the way down to Nicola Street, and that the pedestrian entrance off of Georgia Street appeared to be weak, compared to the Alberni Street entrance. Also, that the Alberni Street lobby entrance was timid and should be more articulated architecturally. It was also noted that the tower could be slimmed up, that it appeared too squat compared to its height. Some mention was made of the rather plain blank retaining wall which could possibly incorporate a similar pattern and rhythm as proposed for the paving and street tree planting along Georgia. Another comment suggested that perhaps there should be articulate materials or a stronger contrast in the proposed colour palette imposed on this new tower to bring it into the present day, rather than placing too much emphasis in trying to tie the new tower in with the old, bland, existing building.

The Chair stated that this design was much superior to the previous one and well received by the Panel. He referred to the Members' comments about resolution of the traffic, access, the improved architectural articulation, the resolution of the townhouses at the base of the building and that this revision softened the base of the tower, and the landscape connections through the site were much improved. However, the

Chair also noted the various comment made about putting more effort into the landscape consideration next to the existing tower as it moved down Georgia Street, that tower materials perhaps could contrast more, and that the primary pedestrian lobby entrance off Alberni Street be more articulated.

Upon voting, The Chair advised the Applicant that he had the full support of the Panel.

- **Applicant's Response:**

Mr. Musson was indeed pleased to hear the Panel's favourable comments, as opposed to their previous ones.

<b>2. Address:</b>	<b>3580 West 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue</b>
DA:	404817
Zoning:	C-2
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Ramsay Worden
Owner:	Van City Enterprises
Review:	First
Delegation:	Doug Ramsey
Staff:	Anita Molaro

**Note:** Mr. B. Palmquist was excused from the discussion of this Application

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**EVALUATION: [7 - 0] - Support**

• **Introduction:**

The Planner, Ms. Anita Molaro, commenced by briefly explaining the C-2 guidelines for the benefit of the new Panel Members. The three most pertinent ones were Council's instruction for the Director of Planner to refer all proposed height relaxations over 40 ft. under the C-2 Residential Guidelines to Council for advice; second, that the Council instruct the Director of Planning to amend the guidelines to add a general clause to indicate that the project should have a very good architectural design, should use quality exterior materials, and that the project be referred to the Urban Design Panel for advice; and third, when there is a conflict between the District Schedule and the Guidelines, the Director of Planning shall administer that the Guidelines take precedent - some of the items in the guidelines cover the issues like facade treatment, quality of streetscape. Weather protection, pedestrian interest, community compatibility with residential zones, terracing, shade and shadow, privacy impact, landscape, balconies, height, views and the distribution of residential FSR based on the type of site and appearance.

Ms. Molaro introduced the development application that the design of which had previously been based on an approved Development Permit, which had been an exemplary example of a C-2 project. She informed the Panel that the approved permit had proposed a building of three storeys on West 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue which met the 40 ft. height limitation in a C-2 zone and, therefore, did not require Council approval. The applicant had now made a new application, seeking a height relaxation of almost 43 ft. at the southeast corner and adding a 4<sup>th</sup> floor to the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue elevation. Given the nature of these changes, Council directed this application be presented to the Panel in accordance with the above- referenced guidelines.

Ms. Molaro described the site location being mid-block on the south side of West 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue between Dunbar and Collingwood Streets, that the zoning was C-2 on both sides of the site, with IGA and parking lot across the street and RS-5 single family residential across the lane. She further advise that the site was affected by a 17 ft. building line along West 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue. The site slopes down from north to south typically 4.5 ft. with a diagonal cross slope of approximately 7 ft. from the northwest to southeast corners and that the guidelines did permit a height relaxation for sloping sites greater than 5 ft. The Planner described this development as a mixed use project with retail on West 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and a proposed health care office at the rear, as well as 27 residential units [825 to 1,200 sq. ft. in size], two of which are double fronting with a window well on the west property line, and that the combined FSR was 2.42 [1.86 residential and .56 commercial].

Ms. Molaro advised this three-storey expression proposed the 4<sup>th</sup> floor to be pushed back on both the front and rear facades; the front and rear of the building are generally articulated, as per the guidelines.

She requested advice from the Panel on the proposed building's overall architectural quality, form, massing and materials; streetscape and landscape response, including the rear yard compatibility and any other urban design issues in the Guidelines, that the Panel wished to discuss.

- **Applicant's Opening Comments:**

Mr. Ramsey briefly detailed the sequence of what had transpired since this project was originally presented to the Panel approximately 2 years ago. Essentially they have put on a 4<sup>th</sup> floor to the front half of the building; previously the back, which faced the lane, had 4 storeys but due to the 40 ft. height limit the back portion of the building has been pushed down, so that commercial area on the ground floor was stepped up some 3.5 ft. For the most part, the commercial floor is a flat slab all the way through, the 4 units that have been put on in the front of the building keep it basically the same elevation as what was previously proposed, but the upper floor had been pushed back 4 ft. Any inconsistency on the model are due to the balcony shown across the back.

He advised that the previous Panel's had asked that the planters be removed and that the model still had the planters along the base. In response to a query about the rear of the building having been lowered, Mr. Ramsey confirmed that the building was 4 storeys at the rear elevation but had been raised 2 ft. 10 in. to accommodate the commercial space. Originally there had been a higher floor-to-floor ceiling on the front commercial portion, which had resulted in the rear elevation being raised 2 ft. 10 in. He further advised the corner had a height of 42 ft.10 in. which resulted in one of the units being stepped down because of the 7 ft. cross-over. Therefore in order to minimize the height at this front corner to attain the height of 42 ft.10 in. they stepped that unit down 7 ft.3 in., e.g., the rest of the average cross height is 40 ft. 4 in., resulting in a slope down of 7 ft. 3 in. He further confirmed 4 units had been added to the front and that 3 of these had been stepped down.

Mr. Ramsey explained that the back half of the building had been rented out as a health care office [i.e., alternative medicines, etc.] and that this facility would have an entrance off the front designated for that particular tenant. He noted that when consulting with the community originally, there had been concern about the back lane elevation which resulted in part of the setback on the ground floor in order to soften the back lane elevation rather than bring it right up to the property line.

*Panel viewed the model and posted drawings*

- **Panel's Comments:**

The Panel advised that they approved of the C-2 zoning as a vehicle for urban infill, and compared this project as a basic design that CD-2 was intended to fulfill and that perhaps the City should be more relaxed about minuscule things like an extra foot or two at the one corner of a building, rather than expect a project to evolve into strange contortions in order to fulfill a zoning guideline. It was felt that the form of articulation on the street and the type of proposed materials and proportions were exemplary. Others commented that the stepped down corner of the roof at the rear should be straightened out, as it gave the appearance of a settlement problem. There were favourable comments about the proposed materials.

The Chair's summarized the Panel's support of this project and referred to the positive comments about C-2 infill strategy and that this project appeared to fulfill the promise of that strategy. He also referred to the approval of the signage. The Chair confirmed that the "settlement problem" of the southeast corner needed to be handled with a better resolution in spite of the height overage. However, it appeared that mechanical element on the roof appeared to be 'floating' and would require a revisit by the applicant; and although there were some concerns about views regarding the adjacent buildings, as well the commercial in the lane, it was generally felt that this project could be achieved.

- **Applicant's Response:**

The Applicant thanked the Panel for their comments and support.

Upon taking a vote, the Chair advised the Applicant that they had the full support of the Panel.

**3. Address: 3501 Euclid Avenue**  
DA: 404932  
Zoning: C-1  
Application Status: Complete  
Architect: Gomberoff, Policzer, Bell, Lyon  
Owner: City of Vancouver  
Review: First  
Delegation: S. Lyon, A. Tscudar, B. Hemstock  
Staff: Bob Adair

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**EVALUATION: [7 - 1] Support**

- **Introduction:**

The Development Planner, Bob Adair, advised that this project had been reviewed approximately one year ago and had included a larger development application to the north. The original project consisted of a high rise with two separate low rise buildings; however, Concert Properties had now subdivided this project and the high rise buildings had been redesigned for a housing cooperative.

Mr. Adair informed the Panel that the elevations and massing of this project were similar to the original proposal and described the two four-storey wood frame buildings, containing 79 units, and constructed over an underground parking garage. As this development will now consist of two separate applications, there would be an additional parking entry off Tyne Street. He described this site as being along Euclid, close to Joyce Street and the SkyTrain. A community centre is located to the west along Euclid, as well as a new school that has recently been approved. Across the street to the south are single family developments in the RS-1 zone and a townhouse project.

The buildings would be organized around a common court yard, with entries to lobbies off Tyne Street and Euclid Avenue. Because this project would now be oriented more towards families, a childrens' play area has been added as well as a large amenity space near to entry to the court yard.

The unit mix had been amended to accommodate 3-, 4- and 5-bedroom units; the ground level units would all have access from the street as well as from the public walkway. The proposed cladding materials would be - vinyl siding and Hardi Panel. The roof forms have changed slightly, and the pitch increased.

Staff were seeking the Panel's advice on the following:

1. any aspects of the proposal, e.g., urban design and detailing
2. success of the entries into these ground level units
3. design of the southeast corner of the buildings, as it would form half of what would be the gateway to the proposed public walkway
4. approach to materials and detailing

In response to a question about the proposed court yard, Mr. Adair advised that on the current scheme landscape had been proposed to close off the courtyard so that it would be much more protected for the children and reduce disturbance to other residents in the area. After some thought about CPTED's point of view concerning safety, it had been decided that this approach would be supportable.



- **Applicant's Opening Comments:**

Mr. Lyon referred to the revised landscaping aspect, the built form, etc. He informed the Panel that this was a BC Housing project whose rules and regulations were less flexible; this project would offer a different mix of 4, 3, and 2 bedroom units and although all the units have changed, the general massing was similar to the original, as well as the entrances to the buildings in the same place as before. These buildings conform to the master plan which allowed two buildings on the site with a courtyard. One departure from the original plan was the incorporation of a second parking entrance. Market housing was proposed for the high rise. He briefly described this exceptional site as being near a soccer field, right across the field from the community centre, close to the skytrain, and all other amenities. Mr. Lyon noted that the ground level units would all have patios and exterior entrances, but there would be internal circulation as well, as required by BC Housing.

He described the proposed materials as a number of different vinyls, available in a variety of colours, and Hardi Panels with wood trim.

Mr. Hemstock briefly outlined the challenge of the new program for the courtyard, and the importance of making this project feel like it belonged in the neighbourhood. They had followed the notion of providing individual entries, proposed special gateway treatments at entries to the site, and that the common amenity space part of a prominent play area in the courtyard.

In response to a query from a Panel Member as to how the courtyard would relate to the buildings and how they would relate to the landscaping, he advised that each suite would have an entry off the sidewalk, most would have a set of stairs because of the grade change, they would also have their own patio and lawn space which would be divided by planters. This form of separation would apply whether it would be an outside or courtyard unit; however, there would be no fencing. Also when asked how the number and size of suites, number of bedrooms, etc. was determined, Mr. Hemstock advised this would be based on research, i.e., the demand in a certain neighbourhood, etc.

*Panel Members reviewed the model and revised posted drawings.*

- **Panel's Comments:**

The Panel felt were pleased with this rather elegant proposal. They liked the proportions of the elevation and were impressed with the general palette of materials as well as the clever range of colours. Some referenced the large windows which would provide more light into the units. They liked the elevation proportions and felt the FSR was not an issue. There was also approval noted for the privacy of the play area, i.e., for the resident children only, thereby providing a safety element.

A cautionary observation noted by a number of Members referred to approximately 19 units of the proposed 79 appear to have uncovered balconies largely unprotected, which would lead to premature deterioration due to our inclement weather, thereby aging the entire project. The applicant was strongly urged to cover those roof decks. There was also concern about the massing and that the footprint of the building related strongly to the angles of the struts to the detriment of the cadence of the building; that the structure required stronger articulation. Several Members noted the lack of sunlight falling on the courtyard play area in this revised approach. There was also a strong feeling that the originally proposed connecting pathway to the high rise should be re-introduced into this scheme.

The Panel also felt that the 23 ft. setback on the south side was too extreme, giving this project more of a suburban look, rather than urban, and suggested the setback could be reduced to 16 ft., as on Tyne Street, allowing more space to be added to the courtyard. There was also a proposal to increase the number of parking spaces, the unused could be rented out for economic profit to the project. It was also noted that some fine tuning to the location of the building footprint to the west could improve the livability of the court yard and amenity space.

The Chair noted there seemed to be general support for the project and some excellent observations made with particular reference to the execution of detail with all the different materials that would be applied. There were many kudos for the choice of materials and colour; however, reference as to how the actual detail might resolve some of the joinings of these materials was also made. A good issue noted was regarding the roof deck and potential down stream problems associated with those conditions, along with suggestions to prevent this by extending the roof. He noted the various comments about the courtyard and the access and relationship to buildings in the future. The Chair referred to a good point made about the size of the court yard and light access to that court yard, as well as a possible relaxation of the streetscape setback in order allow the courtyard to be increased. Also several members commented about the front door/back door aspect regarding the entries from the street and suggestions with respect either making it a backdoor or enhancing it more as a front door.

- **Applicant's Response:**

The Applicant thanked the Panel for their commentary and would certainly take all these comments into account in their next round.

The Chair advised the Applicant they had the support of the Panel.

*The Chair, presenting Item 4, was excused at this time.*

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<b>4. Address:</b>	<b>525 West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue</b>
DA:	404963
Zoning:	C-3A
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Grant Sinclair Architects
Owner:	BC Principal's & Vice Principals' Association
Review:	First
Delegation:	P. Grant, G. Hull
Staff:	M.B. Rondeau

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*Deputy Chair: James Cheng*

#### **EVALUATION: [7 - 0] Support**

- **Introduction:**

The Development Planner, Ms. Mary Beth Rondeau, introduced this proposed a three-storey custom office building with underground parking and loading off the lane, at an FSR of approximately 2.6, located on a 50 ft. lot, sloped from West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue north to the lane. The proposed height would be 30 ft. on West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue to a maximum height of 43 ft. at the lane, resulting in a 13 ft. height relaxation. This property is zoned C-3A with a maximum allowable FSR of 3.0 with an outright FSR of 1.0, which the Applicant would have to earn. The proposed materials for this building would be concrete, glass and standing seam metal siding [with no stucco]. Underground parking and loading would be off the lane.

Ms. Rondeau asked the Panel for advice on an increase in density from 1.0 to 2.6 FSR, an increase in height from 30 ft. to 43 ft. and the treatment of the east wall facing the VanCity building. She also noted that the canopy structure in the southeast corner would have to be demountable and that the design would likely change.

- **Applicant's Opening Comments:**

The Applicant advised the client for this project was the B.C. Principals' and Vice Principals' Association; the upper two stories would be for their requirements and the main floor would be sublet, allowing the tenants to walk in off the street and that the front of this building would be used by their client and as well as their tenant. This building would also contain an interior atrium which would provide light to the interior spaces of the upper two floors. He was also pleased to advise that this project would contain gallery space for childrens' artwork from across Canada.

Mr. Grant further advised that the proposed cladding, insulation and good rain screen would be applied to the exterior east wall of the building. It would also incorporate a glazed wall elevator lobby entrance on the main floor. The applicant went on to advise that the east curved wall would be concrete.

Mr. Grant asked the Panel's advice on whether the design had earned the extra density and height relaxation; and the proximity of the VanCity garage; the proposed cladding thickness and reflective solar green skylight; would there be an overlook issue from the building next door? Mr. Grant advised that their model had been viewed by the upper two floors of the VanCity building but had received no commentary about the proposed colours or materials.

*Panel Members viewed the model and posted materials.*

The Chair reiterated the Applicant's questions to the Panel, as to whether the design had earned the extra density beyond the 1.0 FSR and relaxation of the permitted height of 30 ft., as well as comments about the proposed treatment along the VanCity garage access, and asked for their comments.

- **Panel's Comments:**

The Panel commenced by unanimously supporting the height relaxation, not only in the lane but on West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue as well, along with the proposed FSR increase; complimented the Architect on this delightful and interesting piece of architecture and stated that it was indeed a suitable project for this type of infill and would work well on this difficult sites. Favourable comments were also noted about the skylight and the light well created by the curved eastern wall, as well as the selection of materials and proposed colour palette. A Member noted that with the proposed east wall being on the property line, fire separation issues would not allow any openings in that wall and therefore the chosen materials of concrete, detailed with metal, were most appropriate.

Comments were made about the positive design of the proposed canopy and felt that for the City should find a way to keep the canopy as designed.

The Chair thought the Panel was very clear in its commentary, that this project had more than earned its density and height relaxation rights and would support any effort to preserve the canopy overhanging the property line. He also noted that the wall treatment along the lane was an excellent facade and hoped the Building Department would be convinced to approve of the proposed skylight right on the property line and congratulated the Applicant on this fine piece of architecture.

However, the Chair also noted his concerns about the corners being stained from our incessant rain and would result in unsightly staining, especially facing West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

- **Applicant's Response:**

Mr. Grant thanked the Panel Members for their very kind comments - thought there were very good comments about the details nature that the design development that need to be resolved and we will certainly some of those things to the best of our abilities - and will be raised