

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** April 6, 2011

**TIME:** N/A

**PLACE:** N/A

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:  
Robert Barnes  
Helen Besharat  
Jeff Corbett  
Jane Durante (Excused Item #1)  
Alan Endall  
Jim Huffman (Excused Item #1)  
Geoff McDonell (Excused Item #2)  
Arno Matis (Excused Item #1)  
Scott Romses (Chair)  
Norm Shearing  
Alan Storey

**REGRETS:**  
Gregory Borowski  
James Cheng  
Norm Shearing

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

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### ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

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| 1. | 7101 Granville Street (Shannon Mews)       |
| 2. | Douglas Elementary (2150 Brigadoon Avenue) |
| 3. | 3026 Arbutus Street                        |
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**BUSINESS MEETING**

Chair Haden called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. Mr. Haden introduced the new Panel members who were attending their first meeting. There being no further New Business the meeting considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

- 1. Address:** 7101 Granville Street (Shannon Mews)
- DE:** Rezoning
- Use:** To redevelop a 4 hectares site with residential buildings ranging in height from 4-storeys to 10-storeys. The maximum permitted density would be increased from 0.6 FSR to 1.93 FSR. A total of 800 housing units is proposed. The existing mansion, gatehouse and coach house would be retained.
- Zoning:** RS-6 to CD-1
- Application Status:** Rezoning
- Review:** First
- Architect:** Busby Perkins +Will
- Delegation:** David Dove, Busby Perkins + Will Architects  
Robert Lemon, Robert Lemon Architects  
Jane Durante, Durante Kreuk Landscape Architects  
Bruno Wall, Wall Financial Corporation
- Staff:** Sailen Black and Alison Higginson

**EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-0)****Introduction:**

Alison Higginson, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal for a rezoning from RS-6 to a site specific CD-1 to permit redevelopment of this ten acre site with 800 dwelling units in seven new buildings. There are three heritage buildings on the site, being the Shannon Mansion, a coach house and gatehouse, along with a brick and stone perimeter wall. The Mansion and Wall were designated as protected heritage structures in 1974. The Coach house and Gatehouse are listed on the Vancouver Heritage Register and are proposed to be designated if the rezoning proceeds.

The site has an interesting history of zoning and development. In 1967 the site was purchased by the current owner, Wall Financial Corporation and was rezoned from RS-1 to CD-1 in 1968 to permit development with two-storey multiple dwellings containing 162 rental units, which were designed by Erickson Massey Architects. In 1973, that CD-1 by-law was repealed and the zoning reverted to RS-1, making the existing development non-conforming. In 1996, the site and surrounding area were rezoned from RS-1 to RS-6 as a result of a community-wide rezoning initiative. In 2005, City Council adopted the Arbutus Ridge, Kerrisdale, Shaughnessy (ARKS) Community Vision. The ARKS Vision document is silent on how to treat large sites that are not zoned CD-1.

After receipt of a rezoning enquiry in 2009, staff reported to City Council to seek direction on whether they were prepared to consider a rezoning application for the Shannon Mews site. Council agreed that a comprehensive rezoning application for the entire site could be considered and approved eleven Guiding Principles which staff were to use in their consideration of a rezoning application. After consideration of initial options, five further evaluation criteria were developed.

The Guiding Principles, along with other City policies related to sustainability for greener larger sites, replacement of rental housing, provision of park space for current and future residents, and heritage retention, will form the basis of staff's evaluation of this application.

Sailen Black, Development Planner, further described the proposal for the site that extends from the intersection of West 57th Avenue and Granville Street. The proposal is to remove the Massey Erickson townhouses and replace them with seven mid-rise buildings ranging in height from five to ten storeys. The ten storey forms will be located on Granville Street mid-block and mid-site west of the Mansion. Significant terracing is planned and is intended to mediate the visual effect of height by stepping down the buildings. Site coverage has been kept relatively low through the introduction of higher building forms which intended to preserve the garden-like nature of this post World War I estate. Plans are to preserve many of the listed and unlisted heritage buildings and elements while adapting some features such as the symmetrical Rose Garden.

The applicant is also proposing to create a public park space intended to provide a new framed view into the site foregrounding the existing Mansion, with wide dimensions to invite public use, and an alignment that builds on the Italianate Garden's open space and opens view lines to the south.

There are also plans for substantial tree retention in general, including the notable copse of three Copper Beach trees. The proposal will maintain the traditional vehicle entry location with its oblique orientation to the Mansion while proposing new framing buildings and parkade ramps.

Advice from the Panel on this application was sought in two general areas.

1. Considering the site's unique history, size and character, what opportunities exist on the property for:
  - Creative responses to the existing heritage buildings and landscape through new development
  - Improved sustainability through site-scaled interventions
  - The formation of a more complete community than currently exists in the area, offering places to live, work, shop or play
  - The creation of open and appealing public spaces, and their optimal program uses
  - Appropriately scaled and secured semi-private and private open spaces, including consideration of CPTED principles
2. Given the surrounding context and differing edge conditions, what opportunities exist around the boundary of the site and beyond for:
  - The most appropriate balance between new development and nearby homes in terms of view, daylight, shadowing and the visual expression of higher buildings;
  - The creation of permeability and openness in all senses, from the treatment of the different sections of perimeter wall, to visual connections into and out of the estate, to pedestrian routes and pathways through and around the site.

Ms. Higginson and Mr. Black took questions from the Panel.

**Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Robert Lemon, Architect, further described the proposal noting the history of the site. He stated that the proposal was the next evolution of the site which had seen many changes over the years. The primary aspects of the proposal deals with the relationship of the buildings to the landscape. The Mansion is designated heritage as well as the perimeter Wall which means it is legally protected with the Heritage By-law. The Coach House and the Gate House are listed on the register. In addition there are landscape areas that have heritage value that aren't formally

identified. This includes the Rose Garden and the Italianate Garden plus the Copper Beeches (trees). It has always been an enclosed, very private site and the proposal would have some openings that will give views to the Mansion. Seismic upgrading is planned to the Mansion which currently contains fourteen units which will be reduced to nine. The main floor which currently has vacant principle rooms will be restored as amenity space for the residents. The original billiards room and the library will be restored. The Gate House will be upgraded seismically and retained as a residence and the Coach House will also be upgraded seismically and used for five townhouse units. The wall presents particular problems because it is covered with ivy which will need to be removed to preserve the wall. This will also allow for openings in the wall for views into the site. Mr. Lemon noted that they have looked carefully at the Erickson and Massey buildings and may preserve the northeast townhouse building.

David Dove, Architect, noted that they have been working on the plans for the site since mid 2008 and have gone through a variety of options and densities for the site. The current plan will include 800 units. He noted that the site is heavily contoured with a 46 foot drop from the northeast to the southwest. The proposal will retain the heritage elements with three access points to the site including the current driveway. The new buildings will frame the Mansion and views. Mr. Dove described the architecture noting the building at the corner of West 57th Avenue and Granville Street will be a rental building with 195 units and will contain a wide variety of layouts. The existing residential units in the heritage buildings will be retained and kept as rental units. Block C and Block D frame the site line and garden that is a foreground to the Mansion. He noted that the lowest forms will front Adera Street and wrap around to West 57th Avenue. Mr. Dove also noted that there will be openings in the existing perimeter wall to allow for gateways into the site. The major entrance/exit on Granville Street will have a signalized intersection to provide residents a controlled means of turning north and south onto Granville Street and there are two entries planned for West 57th Avenue.

Jane Durante, Landscape Architects, described the landscape plans noting there are approximately 400 trees on the site with about 50% of them on the outside edge. They are interested in opening the vistas to the Mansion and there will be one from Adera Street and one over the Rose Garden. Eventually there will be a management plan for the long term monitoring of the health of the trees. She noted that a few unhealthy trees will need to be removed but they will be replaced. The plan was to put a series of residential buildings into a garden context that would take its cue from the existing garden 'rooms'. The original Rose Garden had about 400 rose bushes with a structure at the eastern end that will be replaced. They are planning to add some hard landscapes including balustrades and columns with lights. The Italian Garden is intact and was restored in the 1970's but the concrete will be restored and some plantings will be added. The rest of the landscape including the courtyards around the new buildings will be new to the site. Ms. Durante described the proposed circulation through the site which will include permeable paving. Private space is planned around the perimeter of the buildings. They are planning to have an opening in the existing wall on Granville Street that will allow visual penetration into the Rose Garden through to the Mansion. A public area will be accessed off West 57th Avenue that will not have access to the private areas of the site. The beeches will be saved and there is a hole in the parking garage so their roots don't get disturbed. The French Garden will be mostly gravel with benches and trees. Regarding sustainability, Ms. Durante noted that there is approximately seven acres of garden so it will need a lot of irrigation and so rain water will be collected and stored in cisterns. They are also interested in providing urban agriculture and some of the roofs will have urban agriculture and amenity spaces and the townhouses will all have their own urban agriculture area. As well there will be an east/west public access across the site.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

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

- Play up the hidden aspects and mystery behind how the site is perceived from outside its property, while also revealing important views into the project.
- Consider adding publicly accessible amenity space in the Mansion.
- Design development to calm down the massing and simplify the forms with less stepping in plan and less terracing.
- Public and private landscapes were well developed but a clearer interface could be developed further.
- Distribution of density and forms needs further careful study.
- Public permeability for the public realm could be pushed further.
- Sustainability strategy should focus on passive design rather than relying on district energy, or other mechanical (active) strategies.

**Related Commentary**

The Panel supported the proposal and thought it was an exciting property and an ambitious project.

The Panel supported the use, and form of development and they agreed that it was important for the applicant to sensitively maintain the estate-like landscape character and the heritage aspects of the site. They thought they had a good start for what was a challenging project. The distribution of density was a concern for the Panel as they thought the form and heights as presently proposed needed more work. Although the Panel was in agreement regarding the use they felt there was a lack of amenity space for the residents or public at large. Several Panel members suggested turning one of the smaller heritage buildings into a public amenity or public use rather than another residence.

The Panel felt one of the most important qualities of the site was the aspect of its hidden nature which was a result of the existing mature trees and the garden wall. They felt that this element needed to be retained and optimized while trying to open up the views to the Mansion and reveal it to the public as the hidden gem.

The Panel agreed that having mixed-use or retail on the site was not appropriate and thought it should be kept all residential and amenity. They also agreed that it was a positive move to enhance the existing open and park spaces and create a variety of new open spaces.

The Panel had some concerns with the scale and articulation of the building massing and would like to see some further distant views towards the site from afar. They hoped that the ten storey buildings weren't visible from a distance as it would erode some of the mystery and appeal of the site. One Panel member noted that Block B seemed to be pushing Block D to the east and that the massing showed almost too much articulation in the stepping. Another Panel member thought the new buildings should have a modern design in keeping with that aspect and spirit of the Erickson Massey townhouses that will be removed.

Several Panel members had concerns with two sets of light at West 57th Avenue and Granville Street and didn't want to see left turns from the site onto Granville Street.

The Panel was impressed with the landscaping plans and the respect to the heritage buildings and the site and liked that the existing trees would be preserved. They thought the public realm was well considered although there are challenges with the public and private areas and how they interfaced. They also thought the public permeability issue, which was laid out by the City, could be enhanced and enriched.

Regarding sustainability, some of the Panel thought it was a missed opportunity to not maximize the tops of the roofs. They would also like to see sustainability expressed in the landscaping with the use of such things as water collection. The Panel would like to see a better sustainability strategy regarding energy performance. They didn't want to see the applicant rely on district heat as the solution to everything, but wanted them to raise the bar in the energy performance and passive design of the buildings to take some of the load off the mechanical means as a way to achieve their sustainability strategy.

**Applicant's Response**

Mr. Dove said he appreciated the comments and agreed that the massing could calm down.

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<b>2. Address:</b>	<b>Douglas Elementary School (2150 Brigadoon Avenue)</b>
DE:	414517
Use:	To construct a new school fronting Brigadoon Avenue with reconfigured playfields and parking areas. The existing school will remain on the site.
Zoning:	RS-1
Application Status:	Complete
Review:	First
Architect:	Colbourne Architectural Group
Owner:	Vancouver School Board
Delegation:	Allan Hepburn, Colbourne Architectural Group Jason Wegman, PWL Partnership Anne Lee, Vancouver School Board
Staff:	Pat St. Michel

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## **EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-1)**

### **Introduction:**

Pat St. Michel, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for Douglas School which is part of the Vancouver School Board (VSB) initiative of school upgrading and renewal to address seismic safety. As part of the program, additional and enhanced school and multi-purpose spaces that serve both the school and the larger community, called Neighbourhood Centres for Learning and Development, are being provided.

The existing school fronts Victoria Drive, and consists of an original 1912 building with subsequent additions from 1949. The building is not on the Vancouver Heritage Register, but rated quite highly in a separate assessment of the heritage qualities of Vancouver schools. In recognition of the heritage value of the school, and given its placement and the scale of the overall school property, the proposal is to build a new building fronting on Brigadoon Avenue, and subsequently to seek proposals from outside interests to redevelop, encouraging adaptive reuse of the 1912 building.

It is a sloping site, in total about 15 m from the northeast corner to the southwest corner of the site. The proposed new school is a partial three storey building terracing down into and integrating with the slope.

The main entry is oriented to Brigadoon Avenue. Lay-by's are proposed on Brigadoon Avenue to accommodate drop-off activity on the narrow local street. Secondary entries to the Early Learning area and to the Multi-purpose room are located on Brigadoon Avenue. Existing playing fields to the east and south of the school will be retained.

The Neighbourhood Centre of Learning is part of the school and will be located at the eastern end of the building and includes the gymnasium, library and a large multi-purpose room.

The primary building materials are sealed ground-faced concrete block, and horizontal wood siding, with stand-up metal seam roofing on 'tipped' roof forms. Stained wood columns and brackets area located at entries and covered outdoor areas.

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

- Architectural expression, in particular the ‘tipped’ roof form;
- Quality of materials and the use of colour, in particular the colour of the wood siding; and
- The entry expression and relationship to Brigadoon Avenue.

Ms. St. Michel took questions from the Panel.

**Applicant’s Introductory Comments:**

Allan Hepburn, Architect, further described the proposal noting that the primary deterrent of the site is that it is a series of plateaus sloping down across the site. He said they have chosen to locate the new school largely fronting on Brigadoon Avenue so there are playing fields on both sides to advantage of the southern exposure. Mr. Hepburn further described the architecture noting they are trying to use wood as much as possible in terms of structure. He also described the general arrangement of the functions in the building noting that the classrooms are designed as small learning communities. The main entrance will be in the centre of the building, fronting Brigadoon Avenue. There will also be an entrance on the south side of the property. All the public spaces will be on the main floor including the school office, the library and enlarged foyer for informal group learning. There is also a multi-purpose room, music room and gymnasium planned. Mr. Hepburn noted that there will be opportunities for outdoor classroom space. He described the materials and colour palette noting the metal panels, with ground face block, and wood above on the exterior.

Jason Wegman, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans for the proposal noting that the grade changes made it a challenging exercise but they have turned them into playful elements that will be central to the overall structure of the school. He noted that the unhealthy trees on Brigadoon Avenue will be replaced with new trees. As there are a number of grade changes on the site, they are planning some new ramps and stairs between the levels. There will be different opportunities for play including a new adventure play area as well as some integrated seating. Mr. Wegman described the plans for sustainability noting that a rain garden is planned using storm water.

The applicant team too questions from the Panel.

**Panel’s Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**

- Design development to the window system expression;
- Design development to the east elevation regarding the roof angle;
- Design development for a better front entry expression;
- Consider a stronger colour palette;
- Consider a stronger sustainability strategy.

**Related Commentary**

The Panel supported the proposal and was glad to see that the heritage building would be retained.

The Panel thought there was a good reason for the roof form in terms of bringing light and ventilation into the spaces and they were supportive of the overall expression. They thought that in general the building form and massing was appropriate, but falls short in the expression and composition of the window systems. They thought there seemed to be an ambiguity going on whether to compose the glazing with a vertical or horizontal expression, with most of the Panel supporting the more horizontal expression and a few verticals. One Panel member thought the variety of window types added some liveliness to the design.

Some of the Panel thought the east elevation where the roof takes on a different angle was a bit jarring. A couple of Panel members had some concerns regarding the tipping roof with one Panel



member suggested they have a floating expression. Several Panel members thought the front door entry needed to be expressed more.

The Panel supported the proposed materials and colour palette and liked that natural materials would be used. They supported the natural cedar stain however one Panel member noted that the stain would need to be reapplied on a regular basis. Most of the Panel but thought the blue colour looked more like an after thought and needed to be applied in a stronger way or dialed all the way back. One Panel member though the colour palette could be more lively and suggested adding colour to the tipped roofs. A couple of Panel members had some CPTED concerns for the coloured block.

They thought the entry expression was appropriate with the use of columns and the overhang as it was a familiar expression for schools. With the entrance off Brigadoon Avenue one Panel wondered if something could be done with the roof surface as they were visible from the classrooms. One Panel member suggested adding a canopy out to the street from the Brigadoon Avenue entrance. A couple of Panel members found the stair location odd and suggested widening them and making them more central.

The Panel thought the applicant had taken advantage of the grade changes in a positive way. They were glad to see there was a plan to retain the trees. They supported the landscape design and thought it was well considered and creative as well as a good response to the site. One Panel member thought the upper ramp could be improved and some program space could be added on the way up.

Some of the Panel was disappointed with the lack of a sustainable strategy.

**Applicant's Response**

Mr. Hepburn thanked the Panel for their comments.

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<b>3. Address:</b>	<b>3026 Arbutus Street</b>
DE:	414295
Use:	To construct a new 4-storey mixed use commercial/residential building.
Zoning:	C-2
Application Status:	Complete
Review:	Second
Architect:	Matthew Cheng Architects
Owner:	Freshdawn Enterprise Ltd.
Delegation:	Matthew Cheng, Matthew Cheng Architects Allison Good, DMG Landscape Architect
Staff:	Bob Adair

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### EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-1)

#### Introduction:

Bob Adair, Development Planner, described the proposal noting the site is on the east side of Arbutus Street between West 14th and West 15th Avenues with a lane to the south. To the east is the 50 foot wide former CPR rail corridor, now zoned ACODP, which allows transportation uses including rail, transit and cycling paths. Mr. Adair described the context for the area noting the low density residential across Arbutus Street.

The proposal is for a 4-storey mixed-use building, with commercial on the ground floor and three storeys of residential above. Two levels of underground parking and loading are accessed from the lane to the south. The main residential entry is from Arbutus Street.

Mr. Adair noted that the proposal was reviewed by the Panel on February 9th and was not supported. The Panel asked for improved architectural expression, improvement to the colour, materials and detailing, better use of plant material at the rear, exterior light to the exit stairs, development to the parking ramp and additional screening in the loading and transformer areas.

Mr. Adair noted that the applicant had revised the proposal and the following changes have been provided. The changes include:

- replacing the previously proposed granite finish on the main floor with Arriscraft, the same as on the upper floors, to provide a more unified expression to the façade. The treatment of the retail storefronts and the canopy has been revised. The roof has been notched to reflect the indentation in the floor plans at the rear.
- additional areas of Arriscraft have been added to the rear of the building, reducing the amount of hardi panel. Additional detail drawings have also been provided. The main roof soffit has been specified as cedar.
- Additional landscaping has been provided on the second floor deck at the rear and plant material has been revised.
- glass block has been added to the exit stairs.
- additional screening has been noted for the openings off the lane along the south elevation.

Mr. Adair noted that staff still want to investigate the possibility of getting the transformer moved from the lane to the underground level.

Advice from the Panel on this application is sought on the proposed changes and on the proposal as a whole.

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**Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Matthew Cheng, Architect, further described the changes noting that they have tried to improve the building. They are planning lighting fixtures on the front of the building as well as the addition of glass blocks in the stairwell. He noted that they are proposing to use cedar soffits in the roof overhangs to give a natural touch to the building. Regarding the transformer, Mr. Cheng noted that they have talked to BC Hydro and the City's electrical engineer about moving the transformer into the underground. The concern is that if it stays outside at grade the size would be 12 feet by 12 feet but putting it into the underground means that the size would be around 24 feet by 30 feet. Mr. Cheng noted that they have worked with the City's engineer regarding the parking ramp. He said he felt the guidelines had been fulfilled with the addition of a mirror and traffic signals. He added that it is unfortunate that the ramp is at the high point of the site. Mr. Cheng said they are going to commit to LEED™ certified.

Allison Good, Landscape Architect, noted they have tried to improve the connections with street parking to the CRUs so people don't cut through the plantings. Additionally, the rear façade and how it relates to the greenway has been improved with second floor planters with trailing plants and plants that will grow up to make for a greener wall. There will also be a large planter between the two rear units for privacy and to articulate the green edge.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

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

- Consider taking sustainability strategies more seriously;
- Design development to the canopy of the residential entry;
- Design development to the parking ramp to add more light and a decorative screening;
- Design development to the stairwell to reduce the amount of glass blocks.

**Related Commentary:**

The Panel supported the proposal and thought the changes were positive. The Panel thought the materials and colour palette were less busy and better fit the Arbutus corridor style. They also thought the architecture was reading better with the exception of the residential entry. There was mixed feelings about the curved canopy with most of the Panel wanting to see a stronger expression. One Panel member suggested the entry canopy should extend further out from the building.

There was still some concern regarding the parkade tunnel with several Panel members suggesting it could incorporate screen elements better. One Panel member encouraged the applicant to design the screen as a custom pattern rather than 'off-the-shelf' item and to detail it to have a more complimentary relationship to the garage screen. Several Panel members wanted to see more light into the ramp. It was still a concern with the length of the parking ramp and tight curve at the bottom. One Panel member suggested the applicant should check with a traffic consultant to see if it was workable. Another Panel member suggested breaking up the east wall with some openings into the parking ramp with some landscaping.

Several Panel members thought that since the site is sloping there should be some design development on the canopy on the south side of the building. A couple of Panel members thought the detailing could be improved with something more horizontal. The Panel supported the additional lighting of the stairway however a couple of Panel members thought there might be too much glass block. Another Panel member would like to see transparent glass used in the stairwell. One Panel member noted that if the applicant was going to use Hardi-panel then an aluminum transition detail should be incorporated at vertical joints. The Panel liked the use of cedar for the soffits.

The Panel was in support of edible landscaping but thought there needed to be more robust plants along Arbutus Street where there would be pedestrian traffic especially the plantings at the curb. It was suggested that the edible plants be placed elsewhere on the site. One Panel member was concerned with the green wall and hoped the applicant wasn't creating a condition for graffiti before the planting filled in and suggested starting with more mature plants. Another Panel member suggested recessing the planters on the terrace to minimize the height.

A number of Panel members said they would like to see more sustainability strategies in the architecture and suggested bringing a LEED™ consultant on board.

**Applicant's Response:**

Mr. Cheng thanked the Panel and said he appreciated their comments. He said he also liked the idea of the screen around the parking ramp.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.