

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** December 16, 1998

**TIME:** N/A

**PLACE:** N/A

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:  
Joyce Drohan (Chair)  
Patricia Campbell  
Sheldon Chandler  
Per Christoffersen  
James Hancock (excused #2)  
Peter Kreuk (excused #2)  
Sean McEwan  
Jim McLean  
Norman Shearing (excused #2)  
Peter Wreglesworth

**REGRETS:**  
Geoff Glotman  
Joseph Hruda

**RECORDING  
SECRETARY:**  
Carol Hubbard

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ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1001 Hornby Street (Wall Centre Phase II)
2.	1601 West Georgia Street (Bayshore Drive)

**1. Address: 1001 Hornby Street (Wall Centre Phase II)**

DA: 403769

Use: Mixed (6 storeys)

Zoning: C-3A

Application Status: Complete

Architect: Nigel Baldwin

Owner: Intergulf Development Group

Delegation: Nigel Baldwin, Joe Werner, Wendy Armstrong-Taylor

Review: First

Staff: Mary Beth Rondeau, Ralph Segal

**EVALUATION: SUPPORT (9-0)****Introduction:**

Ralph Segal, Senior Development Planner, briefly reviewed the history of this site. The Panel last saw the project when the site was being rezoned to allow the transfer of more heritage density (beyond the 10 percent permitted under the zoning). The additional density was located predominantly underground in convention facilities as well as in the podium. At that time, the Panel had expressed some concern about the impact on the podium, namely the loss of some of its earlier transparency and an awkward geometry on the plaza side. There was also some disappointment expressed about the mechanical cap. Mr. Segal stressed that the City expects this revised scheme to have the same high qualities approved at the previous DP stage, including its innovative energy efficiency characteristics.

**Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Peter Busby, Architect, briefly described the revised proposal and Chris Phillips, Landscape Architect, reviewed the response to the Panel's earlier concerns, particularly with respect to Volunteer Square.

**Panel's Comments:**

Following a review of the model and posted drawings, the Panel commented as follows:

The Panel unanimously supported this submission. The applicant was complimented on the tower and the improved cap treatment. There remained some disappointment in the way the tower meets the ground, although it was acknowledged that this was partly because the Panel had found the initial submission to be such a singular and spectacular design. The Panel accepted that the current tower-on-podium form has been a necessary evolution of the scheme in response to the functional requirements of the hotel, and still felt it was a very elegant tower and a welcome addition to the Vancouver skyline.

There were mixed opinions regarding Volunteer Square and Panel members noted some confusion and lack of clarity about what is actually intended. Some Panel members thought there might be more of a connection to the hotel while others suggested going further with developing its distinctness, either with soft landscaping or hard landscape elements towards the hotel. Clearly, the Panel felt this was an area that needed further design development once the program for the space is firmly established.

There was a recommendation to ensure there are strong connections to and from Burrard Street to encourage passersby to enter the space en route along Burrard. There was a concern that the open spaces now appear as quite separate parts.

With respect to landscaping, there was a recommendation to ensure there is sufficient soil depth for the proposed feature tree, and suggestions to find a way to make the waterfall treatment more continuous along Nelson Street.

The Panel urged the expansion of the weather protection and there were several suggestions to extend the curving canopies on the park side towards Nelson Street where it was felt a much stronger gesture was warranted. A more substantial approach to the weather protection was also called for in the area of the existing drop-off, with a suggestion to separate it from the tower canopy to avoid the awkward alignment.

The Panel agreed strongly with the Development Planner that commitment to very high quality is essential for this project to succeed, and it was stressed that achieving the refined image that has been anticipated will depend heavily on the ultimate detailing of the skin.

A major concern of the Panel was the relationship of the tower to the podium and the need for it to be expressed with greater clarity. Having evolved to a tower on a podium form, there is now a weakness in the way the tower sits on the plinth. It seems somewhat tenuous on long, skinny columns that fail to match the muscularity of the columns of the original scheme. Some modelling may help the tower as it meets the base to give it more strength. In general, however, the Panel thought the current podium design responded well to earlier concerns about transparency.

There remained some concern about the relationship of the podium to the existing building and it was felt the gesture on the park side was particularly weak and unresolved. One Panel member thought there needed to be a greater elevational change between the podium and the existing building.

Given its prominent location, there was a suggestion to have some areas of the kitchen space visible from the street; otherwise it was thought the screening was acceptable.

The Panel thought greater consideration should be given to the roofscape, if only as a visual amenity. It was felt the roofscape provided an opportunity for creating a more interesting plane in the overall grouping.

With respect to the hotel access, the Panel supported the narrowing of the vehicular access but was concerned about potential congestion for both vehicles and pedestrians in the drop-off area. In this respect it was felt the outside areas seem quite mean, with a suggestion to find some way of sacrificing some of the interior space to make this area more generous and comfortable for people.

Applicant's Response: Regarding the structure, Mr. Busby stressed that every effort has been made to ensure the columns read strongly, noting they are very significant elements. He said they will endeavour to address the Panel's comments.

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**2. 1601 West Georgia Street (Bayshore Drive)**

Use: Residential

Zoning: CD-1

Application Status: Rezoning (Text Amendment)

Architect: Hancock Bruckner

Owner: Aoki Corp.

Review: First

Delegation: James Hancock, Jane Durante, Michael Geller

Staff: Michael Gordon, Mike Kemble

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

This application was presented by Michael Gordon, Senior Planner. The Panel last reviewed this site about four years ago and the applicant is now proposing a number of changes. Mr. Gordon briefly reviewed the context and the guiding principles for the design of the area. Following a brief review of the proposed changes, he noted the issues relate to treatment at the corner, the height and massing of the buildings, and impact on the view corridor. The Development Planner, Mike Kemble, explained there were ten urban design principles that shaped this project in 1991 and a key principle related to public views, especially diagonal views to the north. He noted one of the proposed changes reduces the amount of unrestricted view, as well as there being a tightening of the space between buildings. The Panel's opinion is sought as to whether the proposed changes represent an adequate response to the original objective to preserve north westerly views

**Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Michael Geller noted there are two rights-of-way that have to be accommodated. He briefly reviewed the proposal, noting the changes result in a number of benefits for both the developer and the City. Jim Hancock, Architect, explained the rationale for re-siting of Building G, and Jane Durante reviewed the landscape plan.

**Panels Comments**

After reviewing the model and posted drawings, the Panel commented as follows:

The Panel unanimously supported the proposed Text Amendment. The Panel acknowledged the reasons for moving building D and agreed it is likely the only option. The change in building G from terraced form to a point tower was also fully supported.

With respect to the Cardero/Georgia corner, the Panel stressed that its treatment will be critical to this high profile corner. There were suggestions to ensure there are good connections from the cul de sac to the various pedestrian connections through the site, and mixed opinions on the corner landscape treatment. Some Panel members called for making it stronger while others felt the views through might be more important. This is clearly an area that the applicant will need to negotiate with the City. An observation was made that moving the tower to the west does create a more interesting prospect at this corner and there may be opportunities for some views through which would be helpful. There was also a recommendation to further consider the historical aspects of this important corner.

Regarding the distribution of the massing, concerns about density focused on the adjacency of some of the uses, noting the somewhat uncomfortable relationship that exists on the neighbouring Marathon site, between a high-end condominium building and a non-market housing component. There was concern that the fusion of the family housing and market condominiums may be too aggressive in this instance. The Panel did not support the proposed division of the open space according to the various uses and generally felt it should all be dedicated to the family housing and

provide a visual amenity only for the market housing. It was suggested that more effort should be given to providing roof terraces for the condominium building.

With respect to the distribution of height in this precinct, the Panel generally agreed with the proposal for building G and the transfer of density to Cardero Street. There was a further comment regarding the necessity for building G to so specifically address the street and a question whether there could be a stronger gesture to address the park in some way.

There were no major concerns about the impact of this proposal on the view corridor, although the applicant was urged to provide a transparent base for both buildings C and B, with the use of pilotis strongly encouraged.