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## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

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**DATE:** December 17, 2008

**TIME:** 4.00 pm

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

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:  
John Wall, Chair  
Tom Bunting  
Douglas Watts  
Walter Francl  
Gerry Eckford  
Richard Henry

**REGRETS:**  
Albert Bicol  
Martin Nielsen  
David Godin  
Mark Ostry  
Bill Harrison  
Maurice Pez

**RECORDING  
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

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| ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING |                        |
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| 1.                             | 1258 West Broadway     |
| 2.                             | 6338 - 6432 Ash Street |

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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: 1258 West Broadway  
 DE: 412570  
 Description: To develop this site with a 12 storey mixed-use building containing retail and residential uses (49 dwelling units) all over two levels of underground parking having vehicular access from the lane.  
 Zoning: C-3A  
 Application Status: Preliminary  
 Architect: W.T. Leung Architects  
 Owner: Yuanheng Broadway View Development  
 Review: First  
 Delegation: W.T. Leung, W.T. Leung Architects  
 Barry Krause, W.T. Leung Architects  
 Joyce Troost, W.T. Leung Architects  
 Darren Swift, Durante Kruek Ltd.  
 Staff: Dale Morgan

**EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-0)**

- **Introduction:** Dale Morgan, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a new development between Alder and Birch Streets. The applicant is seeking a conditional density of 3 FSR plus 10% heritage density transfer for a total of 3.3 FSR. It will be a 12-storey mixed-use development with commercial at grade and a small office component on the second floor with residential on the remaining floors. Mr. Morgan briefly reviewed the area context and the zoning guidelines.

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

**Density & Massing:** The applicant is proposing a density of 3.3 FSR, importing 10% additional density through a density transfer. Can the site handle this extra density? Should more density be relocated at the base, noting the number of "void spaces" and the limited second floor area? Does stepping the massing to allow south facing units a view to the north, negatively impact the adjacent building to the west?

**Streetscape Massing:** The guidelines require a continuous 30 feet high street wall with continuous weather protection. The residential entry breaks the continuity. Does the Panel feel the entry is perhaps too wide? Could it be pulled back further from the street with retail space wrapping the corner?

**Building Separation:** The building proposes a west side-yard of just under 30 feet. The mid rise massing of the adjacent building has a side-yard of 17 feet for a total distance between buildings of approximately 47 feet, which increases to 61 feet as the building narrows towards Broadway. Does the Panel consider this building separation adequate?

**Materials:** The Panel's advice is requested on the material, colour choice and application.

Mr. Morgan took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Mr. Leung further described the proposal noting the residential apartment lobby entrance is through a glazed canopy and landscaped courtyard. The tower has been sculpted to provide a wider setback from the westerly neighbour. Mr. Leung noted that the building has been designed with LEED™ Silver sustainable measures. All four facades have been designed to respond to their orientation, view and solar gain considerations. Mr. Leung described the materials that will be used noting the natural stone for the commercial floors.

Darren Swift, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans stating that they tried to be as generous as possible with the landscaping on the patios. Mr. Swift described the plans for the courtyards, including the screening element and water efficient plant material.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Design development to the west façade to reduce the amount of vision windows facing the neighbouring project;
  - Additional sustainable features should be considered including a passive design response for the south facade;
  - Consider design development to the entry courtyard and entry pavilion, and;
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and felt the site could carry the additional 10% density being proposed.

The Panel thought the massing of the building was successful and liked the horizontal and vertical stepping of the massing. They also thought the massing would provide interest and some interesting views to the north. The Panel liked the narrow profile and thought the position of the building on the site was optimal. Moving the tower further to the East would negatively impact the east roof garden and neighbouring site. They also supported the proposed height of the building. The Panel thought the building separation was adequate. The Panel supported the Broadway streetscape; several Panel members noted that the entry courtyard element shouldn't be much narrower as it will become compromised. One Panel member stated that the landscape response at that entry seemed a little reserved and suggested upgrading the proposed materials. Another member would like to see more detail on the commercial patio area on the north side of the building. The Panel generally supported the materials and colour choices for the proposal, but recommended the material on both sides of the Broadway residential entry be the same stone material.

A couple of Panel members were concerned that there was a lot of glass on the bedrooms looking west and suggested the applicant look at the ratio between the vision glazing and spandrel glazing. One panel member suggested that the proposed building should not show more windows to the neighbouring building than the neighbouring building shows to it.

The Panel suggested more refinement in terms of elevation although they thought the general direction was great. The panel also suggested adding more landscaping to the lower roof elements, particularly the entry pavilion. Several Panel members were not convinced that all the street trees could be accommodated and suggested simplifying of some of the planters.

The Panel thought the sustainability strategy was a little weak especially on the south façade. A couple of Panel members noted that on the west elevation the horizontal concrete projects were not required because they would be creating heat loss and noted

the neighbouring building would provide adequate shading from the afternoon sun. They thought it was more important to take care of the south side façade where there is potential for more solar heat gain. It was also suggested that the applicant do energy modeling for the building before they come back to the Panel with the complete application.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Leung thanked the panel for their comments and good points.

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|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2. Address:         | 6338 - 6432 Ash Street                                                                                                                               |
| DE:                 | N/A                                                                                                                                                  |
| Description:        | To develop 35 townhouses with 18 secondary basement suites with one level of underground parking.                                                    |
| Zoning:             | RT-1 to CD-1                                                                                                                                         |
| Application Status: | Rezoning                                                                                                                                             |
| Architect:          | W.T. Leung Architects                                                                                                                                |
| Review:             | First                                                                                                                                                |
| Delegation:         | Wing Ting Leung, W.T. Leung Architects Inc.<br>Stefan Fogelfaenger, W.T. Leung Architects Inc.<br>Lena Chorobik, Viewpoint Landscape Architects Inc. |
| Staff:              | Paul Cheng/Michelle McGuire                                                                                                                          |

#### EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-0)

- **Introduction:** Michelle McGuire, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal for a rezoning of the site from RT-1 to CD-1 to develop 35 townhouses over one level of underground parking with an internal courtyard. Eighteen of the townhouses include a secondary basement suite with access from the lane. The site is close to the new 49<sup>th</sup> Avenue Canada Line station. Ms. McGuire described the surrounding context noting the zoning guidelines. She also described the density noting the proposal is for 1.2 FSR and 35 feet in height.

Paul Cheng, Development Planner, further described the proposal. Mr. Cheng described the zoning guidelines for the site. To the west of the site is Tisdale Park and to the east is the block facing Cambie Street. The site will have three groups of townhouses with the ones facing the lane allowing for rentals in the lower level units. On the western façade external operable blinds are proposed for the main windows. Planning is requiring a mid-block access and that will be a public right-of-way. Mr. Cheng noted that under the EcoDensity Initiative there is City policy that states any rezoning has to either achieve LEED™ Silver certification or a sustainability that's equal to LEED™ Silver.

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

- 1) In the light of the fact that the rezoning policy calls for a sloped-roof expression and considering the context, is the overall form and height of the development supportable with respect to overshadowing, overlook, privacy, and neighbourhood character?
- 2) Does the proposal provide an acceptable level of design quality to the public realm with respect to:
  - a) The mid-block public access.
  - b) The material treatment of the buildings and the landscaping facing the street and rear lane.
  - c) The relationship of the main floor elevation to the adjacent grades.
- 3) Taking into consideration that the sites directly adjacent are also subject to rezoning, does the proposal provide an acceptable interface with the adjacent sites with respect to neighbourliness and future developability?
- 4) Has the proposal attained an acceptable level of sustainability in its design?

Ms. McGuire and Mr. Cheng took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Wing Ting Leung, Architect, further described the proposal noting there will be two and three storey townhouses with two or three bedrooms. The units on the lane will have a basement suite that can be rented out as a mortgage helper or be used by extended family members. Mr. Leung described the sustainable features noting the external sun shades on the west side.

Lena Chorobik, Landscape Architect, noted that presently there are single family houses on the street with open yards and would like to preserve that open feeling with the landscaping. There are some existing small street trees and some larger trees that will need to be removed from the site as they are within the building's footprint. An arbourist will be assessing the trees with one tree in particular to be moved elsewhere on the site. A public sidewalk is not proposed through the site. Ms. Chorobik said they are proposing a greening of the lane with trees and will be maximizing the outdoor space for the lower units with some planting around the stairways and the fence. The proposal for the main courtyard is for raised planters with a couple of seating nodes.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Consider design development to the roof including the roof hatches;
  - Consider design development on the parkade walls;
  - Reduce the exterior grades on the south side of the site relative to existing street elevations;
  - Eliminate the exterior stairs to the second floor lane units; and
  - Widen the public passage way and improve way finding through a distinctive landscape treatment.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and thought the architectural style suited the area.

The Panel thought it was acceptable to have a flat roof on the project with a couple of Panel members suggesting the applicant explore the roof design on the north and south sides as they were a bit severe looking and the roof hatches were also uneven.

Some of the Panel thought the parkade walls needed some design development and suggested the applicant explore the proposed materials. One Panel member thought the slab extensions needed work.

Since it will be a massive development, several Panel members suggested varying the colour to distinguish the buildings from each other. Several Panel members noted that the relationship between the main floor and adjacent grades had been handled better on the north side of the site and thought the south side should be brought down to reduce the large foundation wall next to the adjacent properties.

Several Panel members suggested relaxing the front setback to 10 feet with most of the Panel suggesting the applicant eliminate the exterior stairs on the second floor lane units to reduce any security problems and to bring more light into the ground level units. Several Panel member thought that if the building was brought forward more space could be added to the courtyard.

The Panel commended the applicant for the rental suites on the lower floors off the lane and thought for that reason the extra density and height was warranted.

Some Panel members suggested having as much planting as possible on the site and that the mid-block public access was warranted. Several Panel members suggested widening the public passage to make it more apparent in the landscape. They also thought the landscape and building architecture didn't acknowledge the pass through. Also, a couple of Panel members thought the courtyard could use more space.. One Panel member

thought the roof top decks and plantings on the element facing the park needed to be pulled back so the edges of the balconies couldn't be seen from the street.

Regarding sustainability, the Panel applauded the applicant for including exterior shades with one Panel noting that City policy isn't just about LEED™ Silver but is also about obtaining five energy points.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Leung thanked the Panel for their good points noting that they could address the width of the walkway as well their other comments.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 6:33 p.m.