

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** December 19, 2007

**TIME:** 4.00 pm

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

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:  
John Wall, Chair  
Walter Francl  
Tom Bunting  
Maurice Pez  
Douglas Watts  
Richard Henry  
Bill Harrison  
Martin Nielsen (Excused Item 3)  
Mark Ostry  
Gerry Eckford (Excused Item 3)  
Marl Shieh  
Bob Ransford  
Ann Kjerulf

**REGRETS:** Albert Bicol

**RECORDING  
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

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ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1955 Wylie Street
2.	749 West 33 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue
3.	1300 Granville Street
4.	2995 Wall Street
3.	4338 Commercial Drive

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**BUSINESS MEETING**

Chair Wall called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. There being no New Business the meeting considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 1955 Wylie Street  
DE: 410693  
Use: Mixed use, retention of Maynard's building  
Zoning: C-3A  
Application Status: Complete after Preliminary  
Architect: Panzini/Buttges  
Review: Third (1<sup>st</sup> review Oct 11/06, 2<sup>nd</sup> review Dec 6/06)  
Delegation: Dirk Buttjes, Buttjes Architecture Inc.  
Ian Kent,  
Peter Kreuk, Durante Kreuk Landscape Architects  
Staff: Ralph Segal

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

- **Introduction:** Ralph Segal, Development Planner, introduced the application (Complete after Preliminary) which was not supported by the Panel at the first review in October. The zoning is C-3A and the proposal will retain the Maynard's Heritage building with some additions to the roof and restoration of the façade. The most substantive issue had to do with the height and the Development Permit Board gave the proposal a relaxation at their meeting in March. The proposal is now back as a Complete Application after being supported by the Panel at the second review in December 2006.

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

1. Public Realm/Open Space
  - Has the treatment of the Cambie Street promenade between West 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and West 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue been satisfactorily resolved?
  - Do the various on-site courtyards and garden areas provide appropriate resident amenity?
2. Architecture
  - Has the resolution of the project's architectural expression, including the addition to the Maynard's Building, advanced satisfactorily?

Mr. Segal took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Dirk Buttges, Architect, further described the proposal noting the changes to the public realm on Cambie Street. He also described the changes on Building B with use of brick on the townhouses. Also a glazed atrium has replaced the roof garden between building A and B. Mr. Buttges also noted that the two-storey addition on the existing Maynards Building has been reduced in scale.

Peter Kreuk, Landscape Architect, described the landscaping for the project noting the courtyard space will contain a water feature a benches. There will also be an open lawn area and pathways through the project that connect to the entrances. Mr. Kruek noted that the streetscape will be done in conjunction with the SEFC public realm design.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Design Development to Building A to improve the public realm interface at the Cambie Street and West 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue corner;
  - Consider more contrast in the brick colour to differentiate the new buildings from the Maynards Building; and
  - Consider design development to the walkways connecting Building A & C and the courtyard in Building C.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel unanimously support the proposal noting the treatment along Cambie Street had been well considered and satisfactorily resolved. The Panel noted that it will be useful public access to the sea wall.

The Panel thought the pedestrian entrance off West 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue was still unresolved and was set back into a dark, poorly defined space. Several panel members suggested reducing the size of the bridge walkways between Buildings A & C to increase the amount of day-lighting into the entry mews and the building C courtyard.

Some of the panel noted that the entry to the site on 1<sup>st</sup> and Cambie will be an important pedestrian access point and could do more. Some Panel members were concerned with the location of the children's play area as they felt it was too close to the ground floor units. The Panel thought the amenity space between Building A and C was cleverly done and would be sunny during the day. One Panel member was concerned with the height of the gates noting that they needed to be taller to keep people out of the courtyard.

Some of the Panel thought the CRU at the corner of West 2<sup>nd</sup> and Cambie Street had a blank wall and suggested adding a garage style door to open up the space. They were concerned that pedestrians wouldn't notice the retail in that area. Several Panel members commented that the corner seemed disjointed and weak and needed stronger definition. One panel member suggested pulling the building line out to the corner to achieve a better defined public realm, and noted that this corner will not be used for outdoor seating.

Several Panel members complemented the applicant on the solution to the Maynards building noting that it was simple modern addition using industrial elements. One panel member questioned if the upper mass could be more engaged with the Wylie Façade of the Maynards building. Also several Panel members would like to see a green roof on the Maynards building. A couple of Panel members thought the brick was too red and did not compliment the Maynard's brick and would like to see more contrast in the colour.

Several Panel members suggested strengthening the south end on Building A to make a clearer statement. Also, one Panel member suggested making some kind of feature out of the mechanical units on Building A and B.

Several Panel members were disappointed in the sustainability features in the project noting the proposal is close to South East False Creek (SEFC) which will be incorporating many sustainable measures. One Panel member suggested adding storm water management as a measure as it will be critical to use for irrigation. Also the Panel hoped that the applicant would add an extensive green roof on Buildings A and B.

A couple of Panel members thought the landscaping at the ground plane could be stronger. It was also suggested that the water element in the courtyard should face both ways and not just onto the street. Also it was suggested to buffer the ramp to the underground parking with a thick planting.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Buttjes said he agreed with most of the Panel's comments, particularly opening the courtyard space in Building C. He noted that the unit's primary living space faces the street but the courtyard needs light and space. Mr. Buttjes also noted that there is now a sustainability consultant on the project who will be doing an extensive review.

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2. Address:	749 West 33 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue
DE:	Rezoning
Use:	To develop a Campus of Care eldercare facility consisting of 4 buildings (4 to 8 storeys) at 1.4 FSR, with underground parking.
Zoning:	CD-1 Amended
Application Status:	Rezoning
Architect:	IBI Group - HB Architects
Owner:	
Review:	First
Delegation:	
Staff:	Joanne Baxter/Sailen Black/Mary Beth Rondeau

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**EVALUATION: SUPPORT (10-0)**

- **Introduction:** Joanne Baxter, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal for a Campus of Care facility at the corner of West 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Heather Street on the previous St. Vincent's Heather Hospital site. The former hospital was closed and demolished in 2004. Ms. Baxter noted that the rezoning for the site will be going to Council for consideration. This is a long term project and is only at the conceptual stage at the moment. The site is over seven acres in size and Phase 1 is now under construction at the southeast corner of the site. .

Ms. Baxter described the existing development in the surrounding area. The site will eventually include five buildings providing a range of geriatric-related hospital and ancillary uses, including the provision for additional supportive and assisted housing.

The Community Visions allows the foot print of the new hospital to take its queue from the former hospital. There will be an open space for the residents and for visitors with linkages to both Children's and Women's Hospitals. There will also be a children's daycare facility for staff and residents in the area.

Sailen Black, Development Planner, described the over all plan for the site noting there is a major fall off in grade from the south-east corner down to the north-west corner of the property. This offers an opportunity for a sculptured height to the buildings, with the massing helping to preserve the views for the surrounding neighbourhood. Mr. Black also noted that there will be some significant trees preserved. He added that staff feels the proposal responds well to the site, and they support the overall form of development and character of the proposal.

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

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Richard Henriquez, Architect, noted that they are attempting to extend the streets into the project to continue the city grid. He noted that the grade would be built up on the site in order to accommodate wheelchairs. Given that most of the major streets are flat, there is to be a lot of open space on the outside of the project in order to be sensitive to the neighbours. Mr. Henriquez added that the rezoning needs to be in place before the hospital can plan their programs.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Consider reducing the amount of hard surface paving, and increase the amount of open space;
  - Open space should emphasize a pedestrian oriented environment easily navigable for seniors; and
  - The buildings should strive not to be institutional in character; rather they should reflect the character and expression of assisted living, long term stay residences. .
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel unanimously supported the proposal and felt it was the appropriate use and height and form of development that will work well on the site.

The Panel liked the treatment of continuing the city grid along West 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue into the site. They also liked the stepping down across the site to the west. The Panel thought the applicant had used the appropriate response for the open space in the north-west corner but would like to see more open space within the site for the residents and visitors. They were not concerned with the encroachments of height on the north side because of the other institutions located near by. One Panel member was concerned with the three metre set back on the north edge saying it seemed tight and reminded the applicant and staff that they need to account for possible future development on the adjoining site.

The Panel thought the density could be increased on the site with one Panel member suggesting there could be higher elements in the centre portion of the property.

The Panel thought the design was clear and simple with a few Panel members suggesting the proposal seemed too uniform and wants to be broken up a bit or that it could be more urban and less of a campus plan. Three Panel members felt that architectural expression should be in the guidelines. Another Panel member suggested that the nature of the assisted living should be of a different character and scale from the hospital and to make it less institutional.

The Panel supported the applicant in keeping the trees and making as much green space as possible as they thought the proposal would look more residential and less institutional. One Panel member thought the set backs along Heather Street should be used more actively. One Panel member suggested tying in the Wellness Walkway to the site and having connections away from the site out to the streets and transit. A couple of Panel members suggested making the roofs actively used as well as green. One Panel member felt the interior of the site was too automobile oriented, especially the route to the northwest open space, with lay-bys and other compromises. Another Panel member felt there was not enough safe and secured open space for persons with disabilities or dementia. Also, one Panel member asked the applicant to consider a district energy system to tie into the surrounding buildings.

The Panel agreed that it would be a fantastic development for ageing in place, and thought it would become an important facility in the city.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Henriquez said he appreciated the comments from the Panel. He agreed that there needs to be another level of design development to make the buildings more residential and less institutional looking.

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3. Address:	1300 Granville Street
DE:	Rezoning
Use:	Development of a 23-storey residential tower with lobby access off Rolston Crescent and a 2-storey commercial podium fronting Granville Street. Proposed maximum height of 220 ft. and FSR of 8.25 or 175,245 sq. ft. Includes heritage restoration of the Yale Hotel, retention and upgrading of its existing SRA units, and transfer of the SRA units to the City. The Cecil Hotel will be demolished.
Zoning:	DD
Application Status:	Rezoning
Architect:	Busby Perkins + Will
Review:	First
Delegation:	Martin Nielsen, Busby Perkins +Will Gerry Eckford, Eckford & Associates Landscape Architecture Mark Shieh, Rize Alliance Properties Ltd. Robert Lemon, Robert Lemon Architect Inc.
Staff:	Anita Molaro/Karen Hoese

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**EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-0)**

- **Introduction:** Karen Hoese, Rezoning Planner introduced the application for a proposal that includes the Yale and Cecil Hotels on Granville Street. Ms. Hoese noted that the Downtown Transportation Plan recommends reconfiguring the street grid between Howe and Seymour Streets and removing the Granville Loops. The Plan seeks improvements to the crosswalks and an improved pedestrian crossing. Also, Rolston Crescent will be extended. Ms. Hoese added that the urban design vision for the Granville Loops area is to be reported to Council in spring 2008. Also, Council approved the policies and guidelines in January 2007 for the new Neighbourhood Commercial Centre proposed for under the Granville Bridge south of Pacific Avenue.

Anita Molaro, Development Planner, using the context model, described the proposal for the site as well as the development plans for the surrounding Granville Loops area. She noted that the Yale Hotel, which is on the Heritage Registry, will be retained and remodelled. As the Cecil Hotel is not on the Registry, the building will be demolished and a new residential tower with a commercial podium will be built.

Ms. Molaro noted that the upgraded Yale Hotel will contain 44 SRA units and ownership will be transferred to the City of Vancouver. Also, the current pub will continue to operate after the restoration of the hotel.

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

- does the panel support the urban design response developed for this site and its relationship within the surrounding context taking into consideration;
  - tower form, massing, height and density (8.25 FSR);
  - street wall/scale and articulation - both Granville Street and Rolston Crescent;
  - landscape;
  - street uses interface; and
  - other comments that panel would like to provide.
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Martin Nielsen, Architect, further described the project noting that the Yale Hotel is one of the oldest buildings in the city. Part of the building dates back to 1889 with an addition dating to 1909. Mr. Nielsen added that the Vancouver Heritage Commission supports the retention of the hotel. Mr. Nielsen described

the proposed tower and podium design noting the stepped form the tower will take with horizontal slabs that push in and out similar the “Jenga” puzzle. This design will offer more outdoor terraces for the residential units.

Gerry Eckford, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans noting the rooftop will provide for garden plots, storage, seating and communal barbecues. Also a children’s play area will be provided. He also noted that a new row of street trees will be planted on Granville and Drake Streets. Mr. Eckford described the sustainability measures which will include a stormwater management system for irrigation.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel’s Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Noting that this is a Gateway building the Panel strongly recommends reducing the podium height and increasing the height of the tower to achieve a more balanced massing as seen from the Granville Bridge; and
  - Consider design development to the Granville Street and Rolston Crescent streetscapes to improve its fine grain development.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel unanimously supported the project and congratulated the applicant and heritage consultant for a courageous scheme. They felt the proposal had earned the density and the building will be a breath of fresh air in the urban architecture in downtown Vancouver.

The Panel commended the applicant for restoring the street and keeping the neon sign. One Panel member suggested increasing the patio area on the street to give a sense of arrival on the Granville strip.

Most of the Panel agreed that the urban design response was well considered with respect to the tower form, height and density. Most of the Panel thought there was room for some additional height to the tower. They suggested taking some of the density off the lower shoulder and putting it on the tower as a way to improve the massing. The Panel added that having residential on Rolston Crescent didn’t work and that commercial/retail use was appropriate for the area and would better serve the neighbourhood. One Panel member was concerned with the light wells into the existing SRAs on the south side of the Yale Hotel as the sidewalk might block the light.

Some of the Panel members commended the developer for their fresh and courageous approach and for limiting the area of the balconies to the maximum permitted FSR exclusions, as they thought it would add to the architectural character of the building and improve liveability. One panel member noted that the idea of a ‘backyard in the sky’ is a great idea.

Some of the Panel felt there were some issues with the street wall and that there needed to be some further design development to the streetscape along Rolston Crescent and Granville Street. One panel noted that the ground floor treatment along Rolston is perfunctory and under developed. The Panel felt it was too early in the process to comment on the landscaping but did feel that it was moving in the right direction.

One Panel acknowledged the excellent sustainability measures and commended the applicant for seeking LEED™ Gold.

- **Applicant’s Response:** Mr. Nielsen thanked the Panel for their commentary on the height and massing. He added that the Panel’s feedback will help with the evolutions of the Granville Loops area.



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4. Address:	2995 Wall Street
DE:	409890
Use:	To develop multiple residential buildings (townhouse) all over one level of underground parking.
Zoning:	C-2
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Ramsay Worden Architects
Review:	First
Delegation:	
Staff:	Mary Beth Rondeau

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#### EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-2)

- **Introduction:** Mary Beth Rondeau introduced the proposal noting that a previous scheme had been before the Panel in 2006. The site is located in the Hastings Renfrew area and is a remnant of an industrial property. The site was later changed from Industrial to C-2. Ms. Rondeau described the types of dwellings allowed in a C-2 zoning.

The previous proposal was unanimously supported by the Panel. The application proceeded to the Development Permit Board and was deferred due to issues of scale, to reconsider a multi-family scheme with fewer units overlooking the tracks and industry; a form more consistent with the surrounding community patterns and a noise attenuation strategy that minimizes impact on the residents who will face the industrial area.

Ms. Rondeau described the architectural expression of the proposal noting that the number of units facing the tracks has been reduced with a number of the units facing sideways to the tracks. In terms of density the previous scheme had 1.38 FSR and this scheme has an FSR 1.32. The number of units has gone from 52 to 48 and the height has been reduced several feet. Ms. Rondeau described the rear yard setbacks noting there is an increase in the setback being requested. She also described the stepping requirements under the C-2 zoning.

Ms. Rondeau noted that the applicant had purchased a portion of the road which allowed for a widening of the greenway and for some traffic calming. She also noted that the landscaped area at the end of the street is public property and therefore could not be extensively landscaped.

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

- Increase to the rear yard setbacks

Ms. Rondeau took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Doug Ramsay, Architect, further described the project noting the sustainability features the owner is investigating includes the use of geothermal heat recovery, upgrades to the windows, dual flush toilets and low flow shower heads. Mr. Ramsay noted that the plans were taken back to the neighbours for their comments and the building was changed from an apartment type topology to a more ground oriented stacked townhouse style. Mr. Ramsay noted that there has been analysis done by an acoustical engineer regarding the noise from the tracks and the industrial area.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

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- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Design development to the open space in the middle of the site to provide a stronger landscape identity;
  - Design refinement for a stronger entry and the way people will move through the site; and
  - Design development with how the residents will access their units from the parkade.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and commended the applicant on a delightful project.

The Panel thought the new proposal fit in well to the single family streetscape and opened up the site allowing for more landscaping and views through the site. One panel member commented that the character of the proposal was appropriate for the neighbourhood. The Panel thought the architecture was beautifully detailed and there was a good use of materials. One Panel member noted that there was playfulness to the project that the previous scheme didn't have.

The Panel agreed that the requirement for stepping the rear yard as asked for in C-2 zoning was not necessary given the context adjoining industrial uses and they supported the proposed intrusions into the rear yard.

A couple of Panel members suggested the applicant may want to rethink how the owners will get to their units from the underground parking and also how guests will know where to go. They thought there was not a strong enough sense of entry to the site and to each building. The Panel also agreed that the open space in the middle of the site was problematic. They thought it either needed to be for public or private use. Several Panel members struggled with having the amenity down in the east corner of the site and wondered if it would be used.

Several Panel members thought there should be more outdoor space for general use and that the open space was ill-defined and needed a stronger identity. One Panel member suggested a small rain garden to play with the water coming down the street or storm water management. A couple of Panel members thought that having stairs from the unit to a patio didn't work. A couple of Panel members suggested celebrating the trains with an overlook area for train watching.

Several Panel members encouraged the applicant to do everything they could to mitigate the noise from the tracks and to improve the liveability of the units overlooking the tracks. One Panel member suggested using water as a white noise by adding fountains. Also one Panel member encouraged the applicant to pursue geo-thermal.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Ramsay thanked the Panel for their comments. He noted that some design development still needs to be done in the open space in the middle of the site.

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5. Address:	4338 Commercial Drive
DE:	411372
Use:	Irregular corner site; 4 storeys mixed-use building.
Zoning:	C-2
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	WG Architecture
Review:	Second (1 <sup>st</sup> Review Nov 7/07)
Delegation:	
Staff:	James Boldt

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**EVALUATION: SUPPORT (9-1)**

- **Introduction:** James Boldt, Development Planner introduced the proposal and reminded the Panel of their concerns from the last review.

Mr. Boldt took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Wojciech Grzybowicz, Architect, further described the design changes for the proposal. He noted that the horizontal elements have been changed from Hardy Board to aluminium panels also the some horizontal elements have been added to the design of the building facing Commercial Street. Regarding sustainable measures, Mr. Grzybowicz noted that they are proposing geo thermal, using recycled material for the decks, carpeting with recycled fibre and they are adding large roof overhangs to reduce the need for a cooling system and for better protection from the elements.

Jenny Liu, Landscape architect noted that the landscaping will be of a contemporary design with plantings that will complement the architecture. Vines are to be planted on the metal grids and more trees will be added.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Consider design development to simplify the detailing of the building and the different materials;
  - Carefully consider the envelope of the building with regards to water proofing issues.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and commended the applicant for their response to the issues raised at the previous review. However, the Panel felt there was still some substantial design development and refinement that needed to be done on the project.

The Panel thought that switching the horizontal panel would be an improvement to the envelope of the building. A number of the Panel were concerned with the aluminium panels as they had some water proofing concerns. One Panel member suggested the applicant hire an envelope consultant for the project in order to flush out any problems. Another Panel member felt there were too many materials and colours at play that would detract from the strength of the building. The Panel would like to have seen a sample material's board showing the metal panel.

One Panel member thought the corner detail wouldn't work and felt the original scheme was a more effective architectural statement. One Panel member had concerns regarding

the interfaces and connections and how they would express themselves over the building. It was felt that these details still needed to be resolved.

A couple of Panel members thought there was a lack of clarity regarding the proposed landscaping. Another Panel member suggested the applicant leave out the evergreen vines on the grid. Also, one Panel member noted that the landscaping at the corner of Commercial Drive and Kingsway needed to be more robust. Most of the Panel thought the lane treatment was an improvement.

One Panel member commended the application for the generous units and thought it was a commendable project for the East side of Vancouver. Also several members of the Panel commended the applicant on the sustainability approaches.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Grzybowicz thanked the Panel and noted that they are working with a envelope consultant. He added that it has been a challenging project but he did not want to do another stucco building as he felt there was a lot of potential on the corner and wanted to make a dynamic looking building.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:51 p.m.