
URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: December 3, 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
Bill Harrison
Martin Nielsen
Mark Ostry
Walter Francl
Gerry Eckford
David Godin

REGRETS:
Maurice Pez
Albert Bicol
Richard Henry

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

| ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. | 738 West 8 th Avenue |
| 2. | 6511 Granville Street |

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: 728 West 8th Avenue
DE: 412534
Description: To build a 17 and 11 storey residential building with townhouses over 3 levels of underground parking.
Zoning: CD-1
Application Status: Complete
Architect: Henriquez Partners
Owner: Beaconsfield Holdings Ltd.
Review: Second (after rezoning)
Delegation: Gregory Henriquez, Henriquez Partners
Brock Cheadle, Henriquez Partners
Matthew Thomson, Phillips Farevaag Smallemberg
Staff: Ralph Segal

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-0)

- **Introduction:** Ralph Segal, Development Planner, introduced the proposal noting that it had been supported by the Panel as a rezoning application. The proposal is for the parking lot behind the Holiday Inn on West Broadway. Mr. Segal noted that the form of development was the same as at rezoning but the design had been advanced. The proposal was approved in principle along with an FSR along West 8th Avenue of 6.62 and is more than doubling the C3-A density. He added that this would be a good exercise in EcoDensity. The increase in density in terms of community benefits comes from the transfer of density from the Woodwards site, provision for six affordable housing units to be managed by a housing co-operative located West 8th Avenue, and, as well a \$1,000,000 contribution to various streetscape improvements including the Heather Street Bikeway. Using the architecture model, Mr. Segal described the proposal noting the sustainability components which include rainwater harvesting, closed loop geo-thermal heating and cooling system, solar shading and living walls and roof gardens.

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

- Building architecture and landscape plans;
- Streetscape design;
- Sustainability.

Mr. Segal took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Gregory Henriquez, Architect, further described the proposal noting that because of shading impacts they had decided not increase the height as was suggested at the last review. As the townhouses have a narrow frontage, Mr. Henriquez noted that a variety of experiences along the street have been created.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider adding a green roof or accessible gardens to upper level roofs; and
 - Consider design development to the 2nd floor affordable housing units.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and thought it would set a new precedent for Fairview Slopes.

The Panel agreed that the proposal seemed to be delivering what was promised except for some of the roof decks. One Panel member noted that the lower penthouse roof should be developed as useable space. The Panel members thought the overall massing and general architecture had improved since the rezoning stage and that the density was supportable. They felt the project would be a contrast with other projects in the area and with more sustainable components. They thought the street views from the west were well handled. The Panel also agreed that the quality of the architectural details would be important would be needed to resolve any remaining design issues.

A couple of Panel members were concerned with the 2nd floor suites and thought they were a little tight and would not get a lot of light. One Panel member thought the water feature could make the units cooler and darker and suggested adding more greenery. Another Panel member thought there might be some liveability and privacy issues but thought the water feature was fantastic.

Most of the Panel liked the landscaping and streetscape plans. They liked the balance between the greenery and the architectural components and thought they were well handled. One Panel member thought the only exception was the roof and thought the green wall should come up and be folded over to make it a trellis at the top of the building. They also liked the reflected nature of the water features.

The Panel agreed that the sustainable components were well done and would make for an interesting building.

Several Panel members were concerned with the quality of the architectural drawings noting that they should be more detailed at the DE stage. The renderings were lacking in shadow lines and articulation that would more properly reflect the real condition at the various wall junctions.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Henriquez thanked the Panel for their comments and added that they will endeavour to take them into consideration and hoped to live up to the Panel's expectations for the proposal.

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| 2. Address: | 6511 Granville Street |
| DE: | N/A |
| Description: | To allow development of a 3-storey Seniors Supportive and Assisted Housing development with one level of underground parking. |
| Zoning: | RS-6 to CD-1 |
| Application Status: | Rezoning |
| Architect: | Neale Staniszki Doll Adams Architects |
| Review: | First |
| Delegation: | Jerry Doll, Neale Staniszki Doll Adams Architects Wanda Felt, Neale Staniszki Doll Adams Architects Rob Barnes, Perry + Associates |
| Staff: | Sailen Black/Michelle McGuire |

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-1)

- **Introduction:** Michelle McGuire, Rezoning Planner, covered the policy context for the Arbutus Ridge/Kerrisdale/Shaugnessy (ARKS) Community Vision, the rezoning policy, and EcoDensity.

Sailen Black, Development Planner, described the proposal for the Granville Seniors Assisted Living project at the southwest corner of Granville Street and West 49th Avenue. He also described the zoning for the area. Mr. Black stated that the senior's housing guidelines recommend buildings be compatible with surrounding neighbours in terms of operations, scale and density and architectural character. The guidelines also recommend the appearance be akin to residential rather than institutional development.

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

- Siting: relationship to nearby residential properties and bikeway in terms of massing, height, location of programmed spaces and service areas.
- Scale: perceived scale, height and density.
- Character: compatibility of architectural character in relation to the existing context.

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

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Jerry Doll, architect, further described the proposal noting the project will include 62 rental units for seniors with associated amenities. Mr. Doll described the architectural plans and the proposed features for the project. He noted that the site will be developed to harvest rain water which will be retained in the water features.

Rob Barnes, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans noting the pedestrian experience on Granville Street needs to be improved as the trees are currently encroaching on the sidewalk. There will be a couple of outdoor patio spaces. One of the spaces will overlook a water feature and a walled garden with a water feature is planned at the back of the site.

Wanda Felt, Architect, described the sustainable features noting the project will be designed to either a LEED™ Silver equivalent or to a Built Green Platinum rating. They are also looking to see if geothermal is possible for the project.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider improving the pedestrian experience to the site;
 - Design development to better integrate the building into the neighbourhood;
 - Consider increasing the active outdoor spaces; and
 - Design development to the grade in the outdoor spaces.

- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal in terms of the use, height and density.

The Panel thought the siting relationship to the existing buildings in the neighbourhood was reasonable, however they thought the character and scale was not generally compatible with the existing context. The Panel noted that the intersection of 49th and Granville is an important intersection in the City and more attention should be paid to how the project addresses the corner. They felt the trees along Granville Street were critical to the development and their long term viability was important. One Panel member would like to see an arbourist report as to which trees might be lost. A couple of Panel members thought the trees could be thinned out to support changes in the design with another Panel member noting the critical elevation was the one on Granville Street should the trees not survive.

Most of the Panel thought the project massing lacked the hierarchy of a typical manor home in the neighbourhood with the constant eave & ridge line made the building look more like a townhouse building. Also, they thought the massing at the corner of West 49th Avenue and Granville Street needed work and could have a stronger residential expression at grade. Several Panel members thought the colour scheme needed more refinement.

The Panel thought there was a high degree of sustainable strategies. They liked the plans for rainwater harvesting but questioned the balance between the water features and the amount of useable open space.

The Panel were concerned that some of the exterior spaces were recessed below the ground floor level and thought they should be brought up and the stairs eliminated. One Panel member noted that there were some difficulty with the entrance to the site as it is pulled tight on the lane and suggested centering it on the site.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Doll said he appreciated the Panel's comments and their support for the site, density and height. Mr. Doll added that the character and expression of the project could be worked out. Mr. Doll said he wanted to make sure the majority of the trees were kept and that the corner at West 49th Avenue and Granville Street was well defined.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 6:42 p.m.