

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: December 6, 2006

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Walter Francl, Chair
Nigel Baldwin
Shahla Bozorgzadeh (Items #1 and #2)
Tom Bunting
James Cheng (Items #1 and #2)
Eileen Keenan
Margot Long
Bill Harrison
John Wall
Peter Wreglesworth
C.C. Yao

REGRETS: Albert Bicol

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	699 Howe Street/801 West Georgia Street
2.	1955 Wylie Street
3.	399 Smithe Street

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Francl called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. and asked Ms. Long to give an overview of the Monday Development Permit Board Meeting regarding Waterfront Station. Mr. Francl also noted that there will be documentary producer at the December 20th meeting to video tape the session as he will be making a documentary on the Olympics. Mr. Francl noted the presence of a quorum. There being no other Business, the meeting considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address:	699 Howe Street/801 West Georgia Street
DE:	410870
Use:	50-storey residential/hotel tower and rehabilitation of portions of the Georgia Hotel
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	IBI/HB and Endall Elliot
Owner:	
Review:	First
Delegation:	Alan Endall, Jim Hancock, Hilde Heyvaerts, Robert Lemon, Kim Perry
Staff:	Ralph Segal/John Ward

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-2)

- **Introduction:** Ralph Segal, Senior Development Planner introduced this application, a redevelopment of the Georgia Hotel, which is a heritage site and includes the completion of the seismic upgrading to the hotel. To the north of the hotel is the 100 foot site on which a 47 floor building is proposed. A rezoning on this site was approved in 2002 with a scheme designed by Bing Thom. This application received development approval but was not built. The current project is for a 512 foot tower. The previous zoning did allow for 531 feet however the applicant will be not pursuing the full height. The applicant is asking for 17.9 FSR for the whole site including the Hotel Georgia of which 9 FSR will be commercial use. The remaining proposed 8.9 FSR of building density is residential use. The project is within the density parameters of the original rezoning. The redevelopment of the hotel is also part of the application. The Panel adjourned to the context model where Mr. Segal completed his presentation.

The Panel's input sought on the following:

- Overall architectural quality;
- Architectural excellence of the tower, including its top, given its height and prominence;
- Streetscape character on Howe Street, including the porte-cochere;
- Response to sustainability objectives; and
- Improvements and renovation to the Hotel Georgia heritage building and landscaping

Mr. Segal took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Allan Endall, Architect, further described the project using the context model noting the redesign of the tower and its relationship to the Hotel Georgia. He described in detail the porte-cochere where the entrance to the hotel as well as the office/residential tower will be located. He also described the restoration plans for the Hotel Georgia.

Robert Lemon, Heritage Architect, described the conservation and restoration proposed for the Hotel Georgia. He noted that the Heritage Commission would also be looking at the project. The guest rooms will be resized and the ballroom will be rebuilt bringing back the historical details. The Howe Street lobby and entrance will be returned to its original configuration and the original revolving door will be reinstated on Georgia Street.

Jim Hancock, Architect, further described the design of the tower including the use of motorized blinds on the south west side of the building which will be powered by photo-electrical cells. He also noted that the building is to be heated geothermally. He described the location of the loading dock at the end of the porte-cochere, noting that a series of water jets will be on during the day as a water fountain and shut off when delivery trucks come into the loading bay.

Kim Perry, Landscape Architect, described in detail the landscaping plans for the fourth floor roof terrace on the Hotel Georgia. He noted the mosaic pattern on the ground plane, the exterior fireplace and the water garden as well as the infinity pool. He added that the water from the pool will cascade over the east edge and will be seen from the guest rooms on the third floor. He noted that the standard treatment is being maintained on Georgia Street but that the sidewalks will be replaced. He added that they are working with Engineering to add street trees and a new canopy on the Howe Street side of the Hotel Georgia.

Hilde Heyvaerts, Architect, described the materials and colour palate being planned for the tower. She also described the type of windows and the LED lights being used on the edges of the tower to highlight the tower.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - The top of the tower needs to be resolved with greater simplicity;
 - The glazing system on the tower façade should be clarified in response to the different orientations and simplified in its expression and
 - Work with City Staff to improve the design and finishes in the public realm.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the application.

The Panel complimented the applicant and stated that many of the features were better than the previous scheme for the site. Most of the Panel agreed that the resolution of the whole tower and base was an improvement and much better integrated into the site and into the neighbouring Georgia Hotel and that it had earned its density through the design.

Most of the Panel felt the design of the tower was a bit too complex, with perhaps too many cladding types and should be simplified. As well, the top of the tower was not yet satisfactorily resolved, noting that it would benefit from further refinement, with a reconsideration of the extending glass screens and on the north side the box-like form. The bottom of the tower and its relationship to the Hotel Georgia, seemed to be better resolved than the top of the tower. Several members of the Panel said they would like to see a stronger sense of play between the hotel and the tower. The Panel agreed that the relationship of the tower to the Hotel Georgia was thoughtfully and skillfully executed and appreciated the hotel being preserved and brought back to its former glory.

The Panel felt that further design development might reduce the size of the southeast corner balconies which are very deep towards the top of the tower. They didn't believe the

balconies would give much sun shading and they felt the cantilevered expression of the balconies got weaker near the top of the tower.

Most of the Panel appreciated the lighting consultants work and thought the night lighting would enhance the character of the Hotel Georgia but the Panel had mixed feelings about the lighting design elements proposed on the tower and thought further testing should be done to verify its effectiveness.

The Panel agreed that the porte-cochere was very well done and congratulated the architect on bringing natural light into the area. The Panel liked the pool area and the way the bottom of the pool shows as a "skylight" over the porte-cochere area. They felt it would be a lovely arrival area for the Georgia Hotel and the tower. Several members acknowledged the loading bay and thought it was well designed.

Several members of the Panel encouraged the applicant to bringing elements of the porte-cochere design out onto the street. Materials from the porte-cochere should be incorporated into the Howe Street and the lane public realm finishes. The Panel agreed strongly that the applicant work with Engineering and Planning Staff to improve the public realm as this is one of the most important corners in Vancouver. The Panel liked the landscape plan for the project and felt the roof top garden plan and would present itself well to the surrounding buildings.

The Panel liked the floor plan design and its response to the HSBC building. They agreed that the suites were very livable. Most of the Panel agreed that the applicants design responded well to sustainable design criteria.

- **Applicant's Response:**
Mr. Endall thanked the panel for their comments.

2. Address:	1955 Wylie Street
DE:	410693
Use:	Mixed use, retention of Maynard's building
Zoning:	C-3A
Application Status:	Preliminary
Architect:	Interform
Review:	Second (1 st review October 11, 2006)
Delegation:	Michel Panzini, Peter Kreuk, Ian Kent
Staff:	Ralph Segal/John Wall

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-3)

- **Introduction:** Ralph Segal, Senior Development Planner introduced this application for the Maynard's site which is located in the block between West 1st Avenue, West 2nd Avenue, Wylie Street and Cambie Street. This is a preliminary applicant under the C3-A zoning. Mr. Segal noted that the Panel didn't support the applicant previous review. He added that this is an important site as it is the gateway to both the downtown core and the new South-East False Creek Development (SEFC). Adjourning to the model, Mr. Segal gave an overview of the development.

The Panel's input is sought on the following:

1. Overall massing:
 - Response to Panel's previous concerns regarding main (bridge-facing) building
 - Resultant redistribution of mass (i.e. "Wylie Building")
2. Open Space:
 - Response to Panel's previous concerns regarding quality/usability of open space
 - Resultant quality of Public Realm
3. Heritage Response:
 - Additions to Maynard's Building
 - Interface between old and new
4. Overall Liveability
5. Has the proposal "earned" the increase in density to 3.3 FSR and height (to 177 ft. from guideline height of 90 feet)

Mr. Segal took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Michel Panzini, Architect, explained the spirit of the project noting the changes since the last review.

Peter Kreuk, Landscape Architect, described how the landscaping had evolved with the architecture noting the landscape design in the public spaces for added sunlight. He also described the water feature and the addition of a garden wall to separate the public and private spaces in the development.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - There was general support for the density but also concern about livability in some of the units, particularly on the top floor of the bridge building.
 - General concerns about the massing for the units on the Maynard building, as the Panel felt the previous scheme was more successful.

- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the application. The Panel felt the response to the Panel's previous concerns had been well handled and most of the Panel felt the project had earned its 3.3 FSR heritage density.

The Panel agreed that the new scheme is a better fit on the site and will have a better relationship with the surrounding buildings. Several members of the Panel liked the distribution of the massing on bridge building but felt it needed further development on the top, as it seemed cut off and flat. A couple of members felt the massing could be better distributed on the site. One member of the Panel felt the bridge building could go to 90 feet noting that the Police Building and the Montreaux are 90 feet. Several members of the Panel supported the extra floor on Building B as they felt it won't have much of an impact on the surrounding buildings.

The Panel felt the open spaces were greatly improved and by combining the open space into one large space, would improve access to afternoon sun. One member of the Panel felt the landscaping was too residential and needed to be simpler and 'grittier' in character, in keeping with the industrial history of the area.

The Panel felt the townhouses would help the ground plain with regards to CPTED issues. They also felt that the semi private zone between the building and the public right of way in front of the townhouses needed some sort of screening or terraces to make it safer for the residents. One member of the Panel noted that the open space is shared by the public and private residents and needed further resolution to distinguish these areas.

Several members of the Panel felt the units on the upper floor of the building facing the bridge seemed long and narrow. They were concerned about too many borrowed light bedrooms and suggested the applicant may want to develop them into studios.

One member of the Panel felt the public realm along 2nd Avenue and Wylie Street was a bit squeezed. They also felt that the entry off 2nd Avenue has some potential CPTED problems with its being deeply recessed off the street.

Several members of the Panel liked the previous scheme for the unit layout on top of the Maynards building. They preferred the simplicity of the massing at the top of the building in the previous submission.

Several members felt the atrium space wasn't well resolved and needed some design development.

One member of the Panel suggested having more retail spaces along Cambie to animate the lower building edge and the large adjoining plaza.

- **Applicant's Response:**
Mr. Panzini thanked the panel for the opportunity to make a better project and added that in the next round they will come back with a more solid presentation.

3. Address:	399 Smithe Street
DE:	410541
Use:	Retention of the Homer, mixed use tower
Zoning:	DD
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	GBL Architects
Review:	Second (1 st review August 30, 2006)
Delegation:	Stuart Lyon, Brian Beresford, Richard Wittstock, Daniel Eisenberg
Staff:	Francisco Molina/Yardley McNeill

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-4)

- **Introduction:** Francisco Molina, Development Planner, presented this complete development application that was reviewed by the panel in August and was not supported. The proposed development comprises an ensemble of buildings including an existing five storey office building built in 1974, an existing three storey heritage building built in 1912 and a new residential tower, mini apartment manse, and office and retail complex. The applicable Zoning allows an outright density of 5.0 FSR. Using discretionary FSR allowances for the retention and preservation of the on site historic building, the applicant is proposing 7.22 FSR.

The four concerns of the panel at the previous review were:

- Concerns about the overall expression of the massing and recommendation to give further consideration to the integration of the various components of the proposal and the choice of colours for the project;
- The building expression needs to develop an architectural expression that responds to the immediate context of the office and heritage buildings;
- Consider a better placement for the amenity area and locating the indoor amenity space next to the outdoor amenity area is recommended; and
- Consideration should be given to enrich the public realm (street treatment). Look at adding street trees, street furniture.

Using the context model, Mr. Molina described the changes to the project since the previous review and took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**
Stuart Lyon, Architect, described more of the details of the development including the changes made since the last review. He noted that they took the tower and made a simpler core with a punched wall and added a lantern piece to the top so that the tower would have a stronger relationship to the Homer heritage building.

Brian Beresford, Landscape Architect described in the detail the landscaping plans for the public realm and the courtyard between the Homer Building and the new townhouse building. He also described the landscaping plans for the lane as well as for the residential patio decks on the podium.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider a better placement for the amenity area on the lane;
 - Design revision of the base of the tower on Homer Street including deletion of the brick frame elements at the base of the tower on Homer Street.

- Consideration should be given to enrich the design and material palette in the public realm; and
 - Design development to better integrate the lantern feature on the top of the tower to the rest of the building expression.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the application and felt that the applicant had responded well to the previous review from the Panel.

The Panel liked the basic idea of the punched window and window wall tower. There was mixed reaction to the four storey lantern feature on the top of the tower, with most feeling that it was not yet well integrated into the language of the rest of the building.

Some member of the Panel felt that the glazed facades of the lower portions of the Homer Street façade as shown on the previous scheme was a stronger response and related better to the commercial building. Several members of the Panel didn't support the brick frames as design elements on Homer Street and felt the previous expression was stronger. Several members suggested having the concrete frame from the upper portions of the tower should continue to the ground. Several Panel Members commented that they liked the punch tower expression but would prefer the use of brick rather than painted concrete.

Some of the Panel felt the Homer Street elevation in the previous scheme was more respectful of the Homer heritage building.

Most of the Panel felt the indoor/outdoor amenity on the lane was not large enough to be meaningful and they were concerned that it would not be used by the residents. One member suggested combining the two amenity areas together to make for a larger, more attractive space over the commercial area roof.

The Panel felt the massing of the townhouses on Smythe was too low and could be one storey higher. They also observed that they did not relate well to the street that they were fronting onto. Most of the panel liked the three townhouse bays presented in the previous scheme.

The Panel agreed that the landscaping had been cleaned up but there was concern about the lack of design attention given to the public realm on Homer Street. They would like to have seen additional trees and an upgraded boulevard treatment rather than exposed aggregate currently proposed. The Panel felt the courtyard between the townhouses and the Homer was improved.

Several members of the Panel felt the loading area didn't seem to be integrated and was unresolved. They suggested more planting and perhaps a reconfiguring the loading bays.

- **Applicant's Response:**
Mr. Lyon thanked the Panel for their commentary.