

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: February 11, 1998

TIME: N/A

PLACE: N/A

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Nigel Baldwin (Chair)
Joyce Drohan
Geoff Glotman (present for Items #2 - 4 only)
James Hancock
Peter Kreuk (excused #3 and #4)
Bill McCreery
Stacy Moriarty
Garth Ramsey
Denise Taylor Ellis
Peter Wreglesworth

NEW MEMBERS:
(Non Voting this meeting):

Sheldon Chandler
Patricia Campbell
Per Christoffersen
Joseph Hruda
Norman Shearing

REGRETS:

Craig Lamb
Jim McLean

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:**

Carol Hubbard

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

- | | |
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| 1. | 1768 West Broadway |
| 2. | 3330 SE Marine Drive |
| 3. | 3500 Vanness (Building B) |
| 4. | 3500 Vanness (Building A) |
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- 1. Address: 1768 West Broadway**
DA: 402821
Use: Mixed (4, 6, 12 storeys, 125 units)
Zoning: C-3A
Application Status: Preliminary
Architect: Gomberoff Policzer Bell/Brook Dev. Planning
Owner: Intergulf Development
Review: Second
Delegation: C. Brook, T. Bell
Staff: Ralph Segal
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EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-0)

Introduction:

The Development Planner, Ralph Segal, presented this application, first reviewed by the Panel December 17, 1997. It was not supported at that time. The Panel's principal concerns were to do with the relationship to Broadway and the strength of the streetwall. Other issues related to connection to the westerly development, the similarity of the floor plan and massing of the two tower elements, and the location of the taller building on the site. The application has now been totally revised. The higher element is now located at the corner of Pine Avenue, and a lower, 6-storey element brought forward to present a much stronger frontage on Broadway.

It was noted the design guidelines for this site refer to a maximum height of 70 ft. The Panel's advice is sought on whether there are advantages in exceeding 70 ft., noting major objections about view blockage have been expressed by residents of the Monte Carlo building on the south side of West 10th Avenue.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Chuck Brook briefly described the revised proposal which they believe is a superior scheme that responds to the Panel's earlier concerns.

Panel's Comments:

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

The Panel unanimously supported this proposal and considered it significantly improved since the last review.

The Panel strongly supported relaxing the guideline height. It was generally felt that an alternative scheme that respects the 70 ft. guideline would be somewhat relentless and monolithic and less sympathetic to the residents to the south, whereas this proposal provides sufficient public benefits to warrant relaxation. Given the increase in residential developments in this section of Broadway, relaxing the 70 ft. guideline allows for taller towers with stronger residential expression.

The revised distribution of the massing on the site was fully supported.. Locating the tower at the corner of Broadway and Pine provides a good balance to the existing office tower at Burrard and makes the whole block more cohesive. It is preferable to put the massing in a tower in one location for the offsetting benefit of the 6-storey view-preserving midrise at the other end of the site. Even if taller buildings are ultimately developed across the street in the future, the 6-storey element is a positive gesture for the short-term

The Panel noted the need for design development with respect to the building expression and the need for all the components to be more subtly knit together. The expression of the 6-storey mid-rise seems especially confusing. Some Panel members suggested a richer, more animated

expression, while others preferred a simpler, more urban approach. As well, several Panel members commented that the tower, particularly at the corner, has more of a commercial than residential appearance which should be addressed as the design progresses. Attention to how the buildings meet the ground will help to provide an attractive streetscape along this section of Broadway.

The main courtyard will need to be very carefully resolved in terms of its uses and how it relates to the retail on both sides on Broadway. Given it is north-facing, particular effort should be made to encourage people to enter the space. There were concerns about the small courtyard to the east of the site. It was considered too small to function properly as a courtyard, and suggestions were made to reduce the space to a gap and abandon the attempt at making it a courtyard.

The Panel was very supportive of the project's attitude to the lane.

The applicant was commended for the high standard of presentation materials for this preliminary application.

2. **Address: 3330 SE Marine Drive**
Use: Church
Zoning: CD-1 Text Amendment
Application Status: Rezoning
Architect: Howard Bingham Hill
Owner: Fraserlands Church
Review: Third
Delegation: Ken Chow, Mike Hill, Nicholas Lai
Staff: Lynda Challis/Eric Fiss
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EVALUATION: SUPPORT (9-0)

Introduction:

Lynda Challis, Rezoning Planner, presented this application to amend the text of an existing CD-1 by-law. It was not supported by the Panel on the previous two occasions it was reviewed, in July and November 1997. The application seeks to increase the FSR from 0.25 to 0.6, and building height from 35 ft. to 50 ft. A relaxation of the building envelope regulations is also sought, relating to an 8 m landscape setback adjacent to the buffer area. The Panel previously supported the proposed use but expressed concerns about the form and density. The Panel's comments are sought on the applicant's response to previous concerns as well as comments on the height of the gymnasium, the relationship of the southeast corner of the addition to the adjacent park and buffer, and site coverage noting, that the amount of surface parking has been decreased and the increased site coverage relates to a low visibility location. The Development Planner, Eric Fiss, briefly reviewed the proposed form of development.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Mike Hill, Architect, noted the FSR has been increased slightly as a result of response to the Panel's previous comments about circulation and layout. The revised submission attempts to respond to the issues of height and form.

Panels Comments:

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

The Panel considered the clarity of the plan and general legibility of the organization to be significantly improved. The application for rezoning was unanimously supported.

Several areas require major design development, particularly the roof forms and articulation of the masses. The chapel and its relationship to the main church entry is not quite resolved, and several Panel members found the gymnasium roof forms overly complex and working against the integrity of the church. There were no major problems raised about the proposed FSR and, with one exception, no concerns about height.

The Panel had serious concerns about the southeast corner and its relationship to the adjacent park. Several Panel members thought it was "brutal" and needed serious reconsideration to find a more positive solution. The workability of the parkade may need to be looked at again, which may result in a softening of the corner. The entry to the underground parking and its relationship to the plaza and chapel needs careful consideration.

A comment was made that it appears the gymnasium cannot be constructed without destroying part of the reserve, and the relationship of the reserve becomes critical with the reduced setback. At the development application stage it will be important to provide results of a survey indicating the size and condition of the trees to indicate whether or not it will be possible to build close to the reserve.

Applicant's Response:

Mr. Hill said they will seriously consider the suggestions made about the program space and planting at the southeast corner. He noted the trees in the reserve are mainly alder.

3. **Address: 3500 Vanness (Building B)**
DA: 402729
Use: Residential (4 storeys - 39 units)
Zoning: CD-1
Application Status: Complete
Architect: Howard Bingham Hill
Owner: Greystone Properties
Review: First
Delegation: Brian McAuley, Larry Doyle, John Bingham, Peter Kreuk
Staff: Yardley McNeill

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (1-7)

4. **Address: 3500 Vanness (Building A)**
DA: 402724
Use: Residential (20 storeys - 257 units)
Zoning: CD-1
Application Status: Complete
Architect: Lawrence Doyle Architect
Owner: Greystone Properties
Review: First
Delegation: Brian McAuley, Larry Doyle, John Bingham, Peter Kreuk
Staff: Yardley McNeill

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (1-7)

Note: These applications were reviewed together and each project was voted on separately.

Introduction:

Yardley McNeill, Development Planner, presented these applications in the Collingwood Village Neighbourhood. Ms. McNeill briefly described the site context and the development applications for a 4-storey seniors market residential building (Building B) in Sub Area 6, and a 20-storey residential rental tower (Building A) in Sub Area 4. Following a brief review of the design guidelines that apply to this neighbourhood, Ms. McNeill asked for the Panel's advice on averaging the tower plate sizes, the nature of the form of development for the senior's market building, resolution of the tower form vis-a-vis the public realm, and the form of development of the 6-storey podium.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

The project architects, Lawrence Doyle and John Bingham reviewed the materials proposed for Building B and Building A, respectively. Brian McAuley, Greystone Properties, briefly described what has been developed to date in Collingwood Village and the rationale for this component.

Panels Comments:

After reviewing the model and posted drawings, the following points were made by Panel members:

The floor plate averaging is not successful in this case;

The tower needs more articulation in two areas - at the junction between the top of the 4th floor and 5th and 6th floor on the podium, and further up the tower somewhere;

Setting back the tower at higher elevation doesn't necessarily mean it takes on a wedding cake look. It can be set back once or twice in a very simple way that doesn't necessarily mean it will fall in line with the rest of the architecture around there;

Angling the west façade, is an interesting idea but unfortunately it creates some quite awkward spaces in the inside corner - question the livability of some of the units tucked into the inside corner;

The wider end of the tower faces south and onto the 4-storey whereas it might be better if it were flipped over to face north and the thinner end presented to the seniors residence;

The grade level pedestrian access is not as obvious as it could be;

The tower comes down way too hard on the park;

The building needs to be stepped in a more significant way. More articulation is needed between the base and the tower;

The relationship of the park to the street and the pedestrian access needs to be further enhanced;

The entrances on the seniors building are reasonably well done and articulated and the doorways are legible. - question why it can't turn the corner and orient to the park;

Don't see the project in general fitting together - the geometry and the massing in the corner of the tower doesn't come together very successfully, those units aren't working. The balcony doesn't necessarily have to come to the end of the building;

The two buildings are so different and they don't quite fit on the site the way they should in terms of making distinct public spaces on the street and more clear private spaces in the interior, particularly on Gaston Street. This could be resolved through the landscape plan but maybe also in terms of how some of the units might face Gaston Street as opposed to Crowley;

The ground level on Vanness seems to work but because it is so tight as you turn the corner to the east against the sidewalk, it loses any sense of units on a street;

The variable floor areas can only fatten the building below and take up more space and leave less for landscaping and other uses;

Aesthetically, I am a little bothered by the difference in roof shapes between the seniors' and the low rise portion of the tower. They don't seem to work together;

The streetscape along Crowley and Vanness is very elegant. The detailing and sense of entry and punctuations into that wall make for a very nice urban situation. On Gaston it breaks down somewhat because there are no pedestrian access points and a rather large vehicular access. It needs to be reduced to reduce the impact on the streetscape;

It is unfortunate there are two schemes together because while they do occupy the same space they seem to be totally disparate. The seniors' building is quite reminiscent of Collingwood buildings and maybe there is some way the two can be brought together. There is only a very small amount of brick on the tower;

Don't think the asphalt hipped roof works very well with the architecture of the tower and its low component. Architecturally they ought to have some similarity in roof forms. The roofscape ought to be thought about more carefully. The six storey element attached to the tower needs some

thought about what people are going to look down onto. Consider projections or trellises or something if people are going to be given access to that roof;

Have a problem with where entries are located - don't quite understand the rationale. On Gaston Street all the vehicular areas are located directly opposite the entrance to the building across the street, which is very unfortunate. Vanness is the least desirable edge of this development and the vehicular entry should be limited to that street. Surprised to see the tower entry on Vanness, considering it's on the north side of the building and on the LRT side. From a marketing point of view it would be better to use the courtyard as an entry to this project. There should be more attention given to the design of the courtyard and how it will be used by the residents. There don't seem to be any entries from either building into the courtyard;

The setback of the seniors' building along Gaston seems to be too close to the park edge and too far away from Gaston. The nice pedestrian character along Crowley should continue around Gaston; Gaston is an important street for people walking through to LRT;

Regarding the sloping of the façade, those units won't get sunlight. It also creates awkward livability conditions;

Generally like the palette of materials, but the juxtaposition of them needs more attention;

The relationship of the highrise to the low rise - try to marry the two forms. On the lowrise the use of more traditional forms is probably more appropriate;

Question the interior of the lowrise vis-a-vis adaptable housing - the universal design guidelines don't seem to relate to the plans;

On the tower it is unfortunate that the change of architectural expression is through the use of paint with very little relief in the form itself. Where there is a change in colour should be a change in plinth;

Agree with the plate averaging;

On the loading bay issue, it looks like an 8 in. concrete wall separating that and the parkade entrance. A bit tenuous. Beef that up somehow and make it an actual portal, a loading bay with a door on it;

The top of the lowrise should be dealt with in terms of overlook from surrounding towers;

Compliments on trying to add some change to this neighbourhood;

These particular buildings don't relate particularly well to each other;

The courtyard area issues have not been resolved, e.g., the tot lot is in the shade in the morning when the kids will use it. The whole courtyard space looks very awkward;

Nothing is shown to indicate it is designed for 65+ and aging in place;

Problem with the 6-storey podium and its relationship to the highrise tower. The podium doesn't provide eyes on the street;

It feels like it needs one more level of refinement - the whole project wants to shift slightly to the west so that it addresses the two major streets a little better and eases the tightness between the public walkway and the park and units that face it;

The lowrise needs more delight;

No problem with the averaging of the floors, but it needs to achieve some sort of multiple personality on the building in a different way. Question all the vertical concrete elements on the façade, and would prefer to see those elements combined to create a two part personality with the concrete in one portion of the building and glass in another. Together they could effectively work to slenderise it visually;

Difficulty with the lowrise. The plans are quite good but it's in a question of coming to grips with an elevational treatment;

With respect to the roof, the attempts to tie the cornice line to the 4-storey of the tower by the three raised elements is quite weak and not worthwhile;

There is a problem with some of the outside access requirements of animating the street into what are essentially interior corridor buildings. It works quite successfully when they are units that are street oriented and street addressed, but the gesture of trying to have front doors into sliding patio door living rooms, not sure it works that well;

On the tower, no problem with the averaging of the floor plate in principle but the interior corner is quite dark it creates some very long units with relatively long narrow glass frontages - question the livability of these units;

The technical problems have been addressed very well in terms of waterproofing and durability;

There seems to be a clear desire by the City and the developer to treat this as a site where the two buildings are integrated or have a strong relationship to each other. However, there is no relationship between these two buildings, which is the most difficult problem with the project;

The brick and metal fence around the whole site is an exceptionally weak method of bringing the buildings together;

The onus is on the 4-storey building to do a great deal more towards bringing those two buildings together. Suggest articulation both in plan and three dimensionally to give the 4-storey building a lot more strength on the site.;

Given this opportunity for two simultaneous buildings, there could be a great deal more effort made at using the two buildings to bracket and make very positive public spaces -- don't see that happening here at all;

The general conclusion on these two projects was that the issues of the Planning Department are also of concern to the Panel. The buildings have to find a comfortable relationship to each other, and the space between the two buildings needs to have more focus and scale. As proposed, the buildings have no relationship to each other, to the extent that they are even alien to one another. It was noted the Panel conducted a special workshop on this site about eighteen months ago. While the Panel was sympathetic to the developer's concerns about floor plate averaging and timing issues it was felt that the City's goals with respect to tower placement, streetwall and street access had to be respected.