

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: January 12, 2011

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Robert Barnes
James Cheng
Jeff Corbett (left at 5:30 PM)
Jane Durante (Excused)
Jim Huffman
Oliver Lang (Chair)
Maurice Pez
Scott Romses
Alan Storey

REGRETS:
Bruce Haden
David Godin
Steve McFarlane
Vladimir Mikler

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1. 8495 Granville Street
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BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Lang 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: 8495 Granville Street
 DE: Rezoning
 Description: To redevelop the 3.2 acre site by demolishing the existing supermarket, replacing it on the Granville Street frontage, and adding residential units. A total of 357 units are proposed for this development in three buildings. The proposed heights are 16, 15, and 9 storeys, with a maximum height of 72 metres (236 ft.). The density allowed on the site would increase 2.50 FSR to 2.80 FSR.
 Zoning: C-2 to CD-1
 Application Status: Rezoning
 Architect: Henriquez Partners
 Review: First
 Delegation: Gregory Henriquez, Henriquez Partners
 Rui Nunes, Henriquez Partners
 Jennifer Stamp, Durante Kreuk Landscape Architects
 Ian Gillespie, Westbank
 Staff: Scot Hein and Dwayne Drobot

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-1)

- **Introduction:** Dwayne Drobot, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal for the redevelopment of the Safeway site at West 70th Avenue and Granville Street. Mr. Drobot noted that the Marpole Plan, drafted in 1979, identified the site as a commercial area and is on the list of potential future community plans. The existing Safeway building is considered a Heritage A building and will be demolished. However, the Glulam beams on the façade will be retained and moved to the new Safeway façade along Granville Street. A pocket park is planned on Cornish Street and as well there will be 357 residential units spread over three buildings. An internal autocourt with access points off West 70th Avenue is planned along with a new pedestrian activated light.

Scot Hein, Development Planner, further described the proposal noting that it was important site. He noted that there isn't a definitive plan for this part of Marpole, however this will happen through a formal process in the future. Mr. Hein described the context for the area noting there is a distinctive signature for the area for the retail and although it isn't entirely vital it has potential. He added that there has been a number of C-2 sites in the area that have enquired about redevelopment recently. Mr. Hein described the proposed architecture noting that retail in this part of Granville Street could be revitalized. There has been some discussion as to whether this is a gateway site. He noted that the corner site that currently has a bank is a potential for redevelopment in the future.

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

- Would the site be a candidate site for a library?
- Does the site need more open space?
- Are there any issues with the proposed height and density for the site?
- How the project interfaces with Granville Street.
- Is the form of development supportable?

Mr. Drobot and Mr. Hein took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Gregory Henriquez, Architect, further described the proposal noting that they worked hard on the transition from the single family houses on the other side of Cornish Street. They have two storey townhouses that relate to the housing across and they have stepped back the volume of the next building to a 7-storey building which is similar to Elm Park Place at Elm Street and West 41st Avenue. The base of the 14-storey building includes a liquor store, which currently exists on the site and will have its entrance of West 70th Avenue. There will also be a couple of commercial units that will be neighbourhood oriented such as doctors, dentists, physiotherapists, etc. There is also an opportunity for the second floor to be office use.

The new Safeway has been moved to the front of the site. The current building was built in the 1960's. The idea of having the Safeway along Granville Street is that there will be a connection with the other retailers along the street. Mr. Henriquez noted that they tried to respect the history of the site and to make it look identifiable as a Safeway. Through community consultation the residential building has been reduced in height by eight storeys and the other tower will be seven storeys with urban agriculture on the roof. The amenity space for the residential building goes out onto a private terrace. He noted that since Granville Street is very busy, the residential units facing the street will be more financially viable. All the movement for delivery trucks will be internal so they won't affect the Cornish Street residents.

Mr. Henriquez noted that the bank on the corner has a long term lease and may be redeveloped sometime in the future. He added that he thought the site was the economic anchor for south Granville Street and should provide vitality and a rebirth to the retail.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider design development to Tower A regarding overshadowing on the roof top areas;
 - Consider design development regarding the transition of scale to the single family residential nearby;
 - Consider making the library entry more accessible with a presence at grade.
 - Consider design development to the internal space between Safeway and the 7-storey building.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the uses and the increase density and for adding public amenities.

The Panel supported the housing use on the site and liked that there were a number of unit types and as well supported the STIR program. One Panel member noted that people will be able to stay in the neighbourhood when they downsize. They thought the best part of the project was along Cornish Street where there is currently a blank wall noting that the townhouses were well done. They also thought the tower on the corner worked well. The Panel supported the library use but felt it needed some street access. Several Panel members would like to see other public amenities in the project as well with one Panel member suggested a theatre. Some of the Panel members would also like to see public art added to the project.

The Panel thought the retail off the lane needed to be developed with one Panel member noting that it could be used as a bike shop or workshop. Several Panel members had concerns regarding the density facing the single family homes. Some Panel members

thought the 7-storey building was oppressive and would like to see a couple of storeys taken off that building and put on the Safeway which could strengthen the Granville Street elevation. One Panel member noted the development on Cambie Street over the Save on Foods store and though residential could be better integrated into the site.

The Panel thought the Granville Street side was a bit of a challenge and assumed that during the development permit stage it would be developed a bit more. They noted that it needs to be inviting as it steps away from the street. Several Panel members suggested it be more open to animate the street.

One Panel member noted that the scheme is almost too respectful to the Safeway and didn't see it as a 21st Century vision. The Panel was concerned with the location of Building A as they thought it would cast shadows on the roof deck. They also noted that it pinches pedestrian movement on the sidewalk. Another Panel member suggested rotating the Safeway ninety degrees that would free up the entire south side of the project. It was also noted that the section between Safeway and Building C was not a people friendly place.

The Panel supported the reuse of the Glulam beams in the design for the new Safeway store.

A couple of Panel members were concerned with the internal loading and vehicle access and thought the experience could be improved. They also thought more emphasis should be given to the pedestrian.

There was some concern regarding the trees above Safeway with one Panel member noting that they will need a large soil volume to make them viable.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Gillespie thought the comments from the Panel were good. He noted that they had been working on the project for over three years and that there were lots of generations before the design presented to the Panel. He said he wanted the best solution for the site. Mr. Gillespie thought the comments regarding the library having an entry at grade, was a good comment. Mr. Henriquez said he thought the comments were interesting. He noted that Safeway is a global retailer that has an identity that needs to be understood from store to store.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.