
URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: January 13, 1999

TIME: 4.00 p.m.

PLACE: Committee Room #1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Joyce Drohan (Chair)
Per Christoffersen (excused Item #1; not present for #4)
Geoff Glotman (present for Item #2 only) (excused #1 and #3)
James Hancock
Peter Kreuk (excused Item #2)
Norman Shearing (excused Item #1)
Peter Wreglesworth (excused Item #1; not present for #4)

REGRETS: Patricia Campbell
Sheldon Chandler
Joseph Hruda
Sean McEwan
Jim McLean

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Carol Hubbard

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING
1. 500 - 800 & 900 Canada Place Way (Trade & Convention Centre)
2. 3200 East 54th Avenue (Champlain Mall)
3. 1088 Marinaside Crescent
4. Beach Neighbourhood Guidelines

1. Address: 500 - 800 & 900 Canada Place Way
Use: Trade and Convention Centre
Zoning: CD-1
Application Status: Rezoning
Architect: Musson Catell Mackay & Zeidler
Owner: Greystone Properties
Review: 5th Workshop
Delegation: Mark Whitehead, Dave Galpin, Alan Endall
Staff: Rob Jenkins/Ralph Segal
-

Note: There was no quorum for this item since only three members were present. The applicant team chose to proceed, noting that a vote is not taken in a workshop discussion.

- **Introduction:** Rob Jenkins briefly reviewed the process for this project. The Panel last saw the proposal on November 18, 1998, and in early December, City Council approved a comprehensive development agreement which includes the zoning-like provisions for this application. Council also approved in principle the form of development and design development conditions, similar to a rezoning. Greystone intends to proceed with a number of Development Applications this year, the first of which will be for the hotel in early February. There will be memorandums of understanding to address cross-application and public realm issues such as the plaza (including access), the colonnade design, parking and access, and rights-of-way.

Ralph Segal, Senior Development Planner, noted that most of the information presented today relates to the hotel. With respect to the design development conditions approved by Council, Mr. Segal pointed out that the condition relating to the definition of the plaza does not require the substantial reinforcement suggested previously by the Panel because it was found to present unresolvable program difficulties. The remaining conditions, however, do respond to the Panel's recommendations.

- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** Dave Galpin, Greystone Properties, confirmed the project will proceed in five components, each of which will be reviewed by the Panel at the CDP stage. Today's information update is based on the design conditions approved by Council, and the intent is to now establish the generating principles and design rationale, particularly for the hotel. Mr. Galpin stressed that each CDP submission will allow the Panel to see the progressive evolution of the project as a whole. The project design team then reviewed the project and the urban design issues.
- **Panel's Comments:** Following a review of the model and posted materials, the Panel provided the following commentary:

Panel members acknowledged the significant improvements made to the project. The comments were generally favourable and supportive.

With respect to the southeast corner, the Panel stressed the need to resolve the design of the space between the phase one and phase two towers. It is very awkward at the moment. There were concerns that if it is not addressed early it may be difficult or impossible to resolve later. It was

recommended that the City require a satisfactory resolution as part of the hotel plan. It was suggested there needs to be a strong element between the two buildings for there to be a successful integration.

It was stressed that the arcade is an extremely important part of this project. Its evolution to date has largely turned the project around and given it the civic scale the Panel has been looking for. However, the Panel cautioned that the arcade should not become eroded in any way through the process. The applicant was urged to give the arcade additional strength, and to ensure that it more closely engages the various buildings it crosses, especially to provide some diversity over the length of these potentially relentless arcade elements. A fully weather protected connection to the Seabus will be important. Although it need not be to the same scale as the arcade element, it should provide a related extension to the arcade system.

The Panel thought considerable progress had been made on the treatment of the podium, and there was support for the transparency of the prefunction areas. The roofscape on top of the hotel podium was strongly supported. It was felt that more work is needed, however, to successfully integrate all the pieces, particularly at the northwest corner in relation to the stairs, the arcade and the prefunction lobby.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Galpin concurred with the Panel's focus on the northwest and southeast corners which they also recognize as the project's weak points.

2. Address:	3200 East 54th Avenue
DA:	403146
Use:	Champlain Mall (Mixed Use)
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Preliminary
Architect:	W. T. Leung/Brook Development Planning
Owner:	Champlain Properties Inc.
Review:	Second
Delegation:	W.T. Leung, C. Brook, M. Monteiro, P. Kwasnicky, J. Durante
Staff:	Eric Fiss

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-0)

- **Introduction:** Eric Fiss, Development Planner, presented this application for a major redevelopment of the Champlain Mall. It was not supported by the Panel when it was first reviewed on October 7, 1998. The Panel's previous concerns related to the density in terms of the organization of the residential uses on the site, the lack of variety and hierarchy of spaces, servicing and site movement. The location and identity of the library was also an issue. The Panel's advice is sought on the applicant's response to the previous concerns. As well, the Panel's comments are requested on the revised site configuration, its relationship to the surrounding context, how the two portions of the site relate to each other, the overall site organization, and the outdoor open space treatment.
- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** Chuck Brook stressed that this is a preliminary submission at this time, noting also that considerable effort has been made to respond to the issues raised by staff and the Panel. Mark Monteiro, Civitas Urban Design and Planning, reviewed the guiding urban design principles that were applied to the reconfiguration of the project. Jane Durante reviewed the changes to the open space plan, and Paul Kwasnicky, Architect, explained the rationale for the library location.
- **Panel's Comments:** The Panel reviewed the models and posted drawings and commented as follows:

The Panel unanimously supported this submission and appreciated the major effort made by the applicant in reconsidering the scheme. The Panel also acknowledged the high quality of the presentation materials.

The Panel noted considerable improvement in the site planning. The generous amount of open space is a major improvement to the project which has contributed to the clarity in the overall organization of the site. The centre park is a welcome addition. One Panel member suggested the open space could be further maximized by locating the visitor parking at the ends of the access roads.

The Panel noted some uncomfortable conditions that exist in places where the relationship between residential blocks makes some of the townhouses seem a bit tight in the corner quadrants. As well, block 'L' which faces the commercial access was noted as needing further design development to provide greater separation for the residential units. The applicant should look for a more creative way of dealing with these areas, including different unit types, which may also help to address a continuing concern about the homogeneity of units across the site.

The relationship to the surrounding context was generally found to be appropriate, noting that a site of this size tends to create its own context. With respect to the relationship between the two components on the site, the Panel thought there should be greater clarity between the two expressions. Some adjustment to the residential expression of the commercial component was recommended to help make it more distinctive. The revised vehicular organization of the site has made a big improvement to the relationship between the residential and commercial components. As well, the library now seems to be a much more positive community catalyst for the whole development. The Panel agreed with the importance of close attention being given to the back of the existing building with landscaping and trellises. It was suggested the addition of a strong horizontal (by way of trellis or shadow line) might also be helpful.

Given the scale of this project and the large amount of hard surface on the site, the Panel strongly recommended the introduction of a great deal more diversity in surface treatment, both in terms of providing opportunities for play within a hierarchy of road uses as well as contributing to sustainability by way of permeable surfaces. The Panel stressed that sustainability issues need to be considered in a project of this size.

In general, the Panel responded very positively to this application and thought it had the potential to be a very good project, subject to refinements in the architectural expression and satisfactory resolution of the uncomfortable conditions in some areas.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Leung acknowledged that the issues raised by the Panel are areas that need more work. He noted that since this will be a phased development there will be a variety of unit types.

3. Address:	1088 Marinaside Crescent
Use:	Marina
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Rezoning
Architect:	Busby and Associates
Owner:	Concord Pacific Group Inc.
Review:	First
Delegation:	Peter Busby, Matt Meehan
Staff:	Jonathan Barrett

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-0)

- **Introduction:** Jonathan Barrett, Senior Planner, presented this application for an expanded marina in False Creek North in the Quayside Neighbourhood. The proposed facilities include a public walkway extended over the water on the axis of Davie Street, with a cafe, marina office and Granville Island ferry stop at the end. An issue for consideration in this regard relates to the blockage of street-end views. The proposed new marina is intended to accommodate 132 large boats. The Panel is asked to consider the appropriateness of the location of this marina and whether it is encroaching too far into False Creek, noting it extends beyond the harbour headline. Comments are also sought on the location of the marina office and the restaurant.
- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** Peter Busby, Architect, noted the original rezoning called for a marina for 260 boats. However, it has now been determined there is a need to accommodate larger vessels. He stressed there is a commitment to providing high quality infrastructure. He briefly described the proposal.
- **Panel's Comments:** After reviewing the model and posted drawings, the Panel commented as follows:

The Panel unanimously supported this application and found it a very attractive proposal.

The Panel particularly supported the public access at the end of Davie Street and the extension of the walkway out onto the water. It will be a significant public amenity. Panel members had no concern about the blockage of street end views, noting that in this instance the main aspect at the end of Davie Street is beyond this bay to the other side of the creek.

The Panel had a number of operational concerns. Access to the marina from the marina parking and how boaters will get supplies to and from their boats will need to be very carefully worked out. The various uses on lot 4H, including the marina parking, will need to be very clearly delineated to ensure proper servicing for the marina. One Panel member wondered if the marina was trying to achieve too much in terms of public access, making the layout inefficient. The suggestion was to restrict public access to the Davie Street extension and the access to the restaurant.

The restaurant, particularly the service aspects of it, will need to be very carefully worked out to make sure the seawalk experience is not adversely affected. There were no concerns about the proposed siting of the restaurant.

With respect to the Granville Island ferry dock, the Panel recommended that adequate weather protection be provided. It was also suggested the ferry dock might be pulled back closer to the shoreline to make it more convenient for ferry passengers.

There were mixed views regarding the extension of the moorage beyond the harbour headline. In any event, the Panel felt there was a need to demonstrate that the congestion in the marina will be adequately addressed in terms of public safety.

The Panel generally felt the quality of the proposal promises to produce an excellent development. It was recommended that consideration be given to including some public art pieces in the scheme to celebrate the public access aspects of the whole precinct. Noting that achieving public access has proven to be somewhat illusive throughout the rest of north False Creek, it was felt that this project sets some important precedents for tying False Creek to the water in a very positive way.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Busby noted the operational issues have been an ongoing concern and they believe they can be satisfactorily resolved. He noted there will be a loading zone on the water.

4. Address:	Beach Neighbourhood Guidelines (500 and 600 Pacific Boulevard)
Use:	Marina and Residential
Architect:	Hulbert Group
Owner:	Pacific Place Development Corporation
Review:	First
Delegation:	Rick Hulbert
Staff:	Jonathan Barrett

Jonathan Barrett presented the draft CD-1 guidelines for the Beach Neighbourhood (500 & 600 Pacific Street), and briefly reviewed the minor changes that have occurred since the rezoning of the easterly portion of this neighbourhood.

Rick Hulbert, Architect, briefly described the evolution of the guidelines, noting they are quite specific about defining the public realm but less specific in terms of defining the envelope for each tower.

In the general discussion that followed, the following points were raised:

- has the Panel's recommendation to increase the height of the podium buildings around the crescent been addressed in the guidelines?

(Jonathan Barrett explained it was a Council decision to limit the height of these buildings. He noted the rezoning report for the westerly portion of the site will reiterate the Panel's concern.)

- with respect to 3.1 (f), should a dimension be given, noting the first storeys will vary? Would this guideline also apply to the mews?
- 3.2 (c) (overall design and character of the highrise towers): whether the "same design family" condition should apply only to the base of the towers;
- 3.7.3 (j): based on the Panel's earlier comments, should commercial use be included to provide animation?
- Precinct 6, p.14 - question "possible 1st level retail at this location";
- there is no reference to commercial use to animate the edges of the park, as recommended by the Panel;
- 3.5.1 Materials - question the reference to "metal framework"; should this not refer to "metal cladding"?
- Precinct Guidelines, p.8 - question the reference to "confirmation that density is achievable";
- environmental concerns: given the City is looking at developments such as Southeast False Creek which has a direct relationship to a project like this, the guidelines need to be much stronger in the call

for sustainable design. The intent statement is not strong enough. There are also opportunities in the landscaping component to consider sustainable initiatives;

(Mr. Barrett explained this issue will be addressed in the rezoning report)

- 3.6.2 (a) - is “adequate balcony space” quantifiable?
- 3.7.2 Mews - suggest incorporating a reference to the quality of lighting;
- 3.7.3 Parks and Open Space - paragraph (h) and (j) should be stronger about weather protection;
- Precinct 6, p.14 - the Panel had recommended a through road at Beach Avenue;

(Mr. Barrett explained this recommendation was not endorsed by Council)

- p.18 Parks and Open Spaces - is there an opportunity for introducing a skateboarding amenity?
- p.4 - should the diagonal dimension be given as well as the floorplate size?

In conclusion, the Chair reiterated the Panel’s continued concern about the low-rise buildings on the crescent. It is a missed opportunity, both in terms of defining the park and in terms of being grossly out of scale with the towers.