

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: January 16, 2008

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
John Wall, Chair
Walter Francl (Excused Item 3)
Tom Bunting (Excused Item 1)
Douglas Watts (Excused Item 1)
Richard Henry
Bill Harrison
Albert Bicol (Excused Items 1, 3 & 4)
Martin Nielsen
Mark Ostry
Gerry Eckford (Excused Item 3)

REGRETS: Bob Ransford
Maurice Pez

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	2000 West Georgia Street (Aquarium Expansion)
2.	99 West 2 nd Avenue
3.	1890 Spyglass Place (NEU Building - SEFC)
4.	1598 Columbia Street (Parcel 4 - SEFC)

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Wall called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. After New Business the meeting considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 2000 West Georgia Street (Aquarium Expansion)
 DE: 411499
 Description: Additions to the Vancouver Aquarium and expansion of the external pools and exhibits.
 Zoning: RS-1
 Application Status: Complete
 Architect: Mussen Catell Mackey
 Owner: Vancouver Aquarium
 Review: Second Review (First Review November 21, 2007)
 Delegation: Mark Thompson, Musson Cattell Mackey Partnership
 John Nightingale, Vancouver Aquarium
 Bruce Hemstock, PWL Partnership
 Staff: Anita Molaro

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-0)

- **Introduction:** Anita Molaro, Development Planner, gave an overview of the proposal. The application is to expand the Aquarium and will include a new Artic Canada exhibit, a new plaza, including a Bill Reid sculpture, new washroom facilities, a new two-storey bistro, new loading facilities, re-arranged pool areas for sea mammals and office facilities. At the review in November, the Panel liked the forms that were being developed to unify the buildings and supported the public viewing opportunities. The Panel also supported the Bistro and supported the concept of the formal plaza but thought it could use more programming aspects. The Panel had some concerns regarding the connectivity and accessibility of the plaza and felt there needed to be some more design development.

Ms. Molaro noted that the Panel had expressed six items of concern and described the issues and how the applicant has resolved them.

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

Has the applicant resolved/addressed their previous concerns with respect to?

- Avison Way - public realm interface
- functionality

North Elevation

Plaza Elevation

- Materials - guardrails, deck rail and screening
- building cladding

And any other comments the panel would like to provide?

Ms. Molaro took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Bruce Hemstock, Landscape Architect, described the revisions to the public realm interface on Avison Way and noted that because of the "critical root zone" of the trees, the front entry could not be moved closer to the drop-off area. Regarding the plaza, Mr. Hemstock noted that they are trying to achieve a barrier free entry and have lowered the plaza by two feet. A sloped walkway will be added to accommodate disabled access. Regarding the exterior cladding, Mr. Hemstock stated that a re-evaluation took place regarding a more robust skin within a rain-screen system and an

aluminum composite panel will be used on most of the walls. The north elevation, which was another concern of the Panel's, has also been reconsidered with a layered massing approach.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider design development to the north face of the project to better engage the park;
 - Consider including an educational program regarding the sustainable systems that reduce energy and water use in maintaining the life support and ecology systems in the Aquarium;
 - Consider increasing the canopy on the seating in the plaza to provide better weather protection; and
 - Consider completing the Avison Way improvements in the first phase to complete the sense of arrival.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel unanimously supported the proposal and thought the applicant had made vast improvements from the previous review.

The Panel agreed that the Avison Way interface and the entry to the Aquarium had been improved although the Panel was concerned how it was phased and thought it was important to complete the project in the early phase so that there is a strong sense of arrival. One Panel member suggested there be more whimsy in the shelter at the arrival area. Also, the Panel thought the change in building cladding was an improvement and it was felt it would stand the test of time. They also thought the 'fish scales' on the cladding would be interesting and well as the LED lighting. A couple of Panel members had some concerns regarding graffiti on so much blank wall.

The Panel also agreed that lowering the plaza was a huge improvement in connecting the Aquarium to its public realm. Most of the Panel liked the "Greenscreen" that will be hung from the underside of the deck as well as the deck and rail. One Panel member was concerned with the size of the glass canopy for seating in the plaza as it didn't offer much weather protection.

The Panel thought there needed to be some resolution on the north wall as it seemed to be a blunt termination of the building and felt that it should engage more with the park, but left it to the applicant to decide on the solution.

Regarding sustainability, most of the Panel was disappointed that there wasn't any opportunities to educate the public regarding the planned sustainable aspects of life support systems of the building and the ecology system. They felt it could be a branding of the building and was a missed opportunity.

- **Applicant's Response:** Dr. Nightingale noted that the Aquarium is all about sustainability but agreed that there could be more thought given to other sustainable opportunities. He stated that they would like to be able to do the whole face of Avison Way at once, but stated that when the older building is removed they will need to be able to remove the fence. He added that the goal is to not have a gap in the entrance experience. Regarding the north face of the building, Dr. Nightingale noted that they are trying to make the whole development fit together and said he appreciated the need to continue looking for solutions.

2. Address:	99 West 2 nd Avenue
DE:	411230
Description:	A 12-storey and 7-storey mixed-use commercial/residential development.
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Howard Bingham Hill Architects
Owner:	Pinnacle International
Review:	Second Review (First Review June 6, 2007)
Delegation:	Peter Kreuk, John Bingham, Vito De Cotiis
Staff:	Mary Beth Rondeau

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-3)

- **Introduction:** Mary Beth Rondeau, Development Planner, noted that the development application was returning the Panel after rezoning. The development is part of three parcels being developed by Pinnacle International. Ms. Rondeau noted that the proposal is generally the same in terms of uses however the shared open space on the lane has changed as it has been integrated with Parcel 1 across the lane. The application will be going to Council for a text amendment to increase the height of the tower from 106 feet to 116 feet. The proposed increase does not create shadow impacts on the public plaza.

Ms. Rondeau noted that the uses will remain the same for the retail at grade and will wrap the plaza along West 2nd Avenue with live-work unit at the east end. As well the residential will remain the same with parking and loading off the lane.

Ms. Rondeau took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** John Bingham, Architect, addressed the Panel's concerns from the previous review. He noted a window wall system and building form had been introduced as well as a simplified colour scheme. Mr. Bingham described the expression of the tower noting that the corner has been rotated and placed between two vertical elements of glass. Also the canopy has been enlarged over the retail level on the corner. The approach on the tower has been to exaggerate the vertical while exaggerating the horizontal nature of the low rise. The two buildings work in harmony with one another using similar elements. Mr. Bingham also described the refinements to the exterior and interior amenity spaces.

Peter Kruek, Landscape Architect, noted that the water garden had been redesigned to strengthen the water source and indicate the flow of water to the lane level while integrating an access stair and children's play area. There is an element in the lane noting where the old shoreline was located which carries through the parcel to the north. The emphasis is on a softer, more natural landscaping on the lane.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider making the colour scheme for exuberant on the project;
 - Consider refining the corner rotation as related to the overall tower expression;
 - Consider more architectural distinctiveness related to the history and character of SEFC.

- Consider adjusting the proposed lane building elevations to improve the continuity of the public realm between developments on both sides of the lane.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal as well as the additional height to the tower.

The Panel did not support the more subdued colour palette as they thought the simplification had gone too far. They agreed that the original colour scheme was preferred. There was some reservation with the current building form as the Panel felt the project didn't have the original exuberance that it had at the first Development Permit Review. One panel member thought the applicant had misinterpreted the minutes from the previous meeting where panel had recommended clarifying the formal expression and not stripping-back the proposal. It was noted that the minutes of the past meeting included following recommendations:

“The Panel thought the architectural treatment needed to be calmer against what the Panel felt was generally a bit too busy of a composition with a variety of architectural expressions. Panel members felt that perhaps the colour palette was a too muted.”

A couple of Panel members thought there were subtle improvements to the scheme, but suggested including more contrasting colour.. Several Panel members commented that the drawings seemed to show the design better than the model.

Most of the Panel thought the rotation on the tower was a bit timid and should be more strongly and uniquely expressed particularly at the top of the building. They felt it needed more clarity as related to the other architectural treatments of the tower and one Panel member suggested that the spandrel glass could be more differential to mark the rotation. Mr. Bicol liked the rotation because it reduced the amount of direct western exposure and improved the passive cooling of the facade.

Several Panel members were concerned with how the building meets the ground particularly along the Manitoba Street frontage where the ground plain slopes to the north. They encouraged the applicant to look at the first two feet of the building base and to make it a stronger expression that enhances the public realm.

One Panel member appreciated that the facades were treated differently and that this would improve the passive energy performance of the building but was concerned with the amount of glass and the lack of shading at the penthouse level. The Panel also had some concerns regarding the window wall system noting that the number of mullions could be reduced to increase the overall R-value.

The Panel agreed that the planning of the ground floor was much improved from the previous scheme; with linkages between the entry and interior and exterior amenity spaces have a stronger resolution. As well, the Panel liked the changes to the water garden. One Panel member suggested lowering the playground area to an intermediate level and not having it come straight out from the amenity area. Also, a couple of Panel members suggested expanding the entry to the playground area and introducing a place for parents to sit to watch their children. It was noted by the applicant, that there is a significant 12' slope across the site from 2nd Avenue to the mid point of the lane. Several panel members recommend staff and the applicant look at re-grading the lane to reduce the impact of the grade change on the landscape and improve the continuity of the public realm treatment between developments on both sides of the lane.

The Panel liked the changes to the roof areas as they felt it was much simpler and liked the addition of the urban agriculture. Some of the Panel thought the lobby in the east building was harsh in the way it addresses the street.

Several Panel members expressed their disappointment that the project lacks a connection to South East False Creek (SEFC), and that it doesn't capture a sense of place. They added that the project does not show as a gateway building to SEFC, and that it reads more like a background building.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Bingham agreed that he may have misread the Panel's previous comments regarding colour and was happy to revisit the colour choices. Also he agreed to look at the rotation on the tower and adding more contrast.

3. Address:	1890 Spyglass Place (NEU Building - SEFC)
DE:	N/A
Description:	Construct an Energy Centre
Zoning:	FCCDD
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Walter Francl Architect
Review:	First Review
Delegation:	Walter Francl, Walter Francl Architects Gerry Eckford, Eckford + Associates Stephanie Robb, Pechet & Robb Studio Chris Baber, City of Vancouver, Project Manager, NEU
Staff:	Scot Hein

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-0)

- **Introduction:** Scot Hein, Senior Urban Designer, introduced the proposal for the SEFC Neighbourhood Energy Centre. Mr. Hein noted that the project would be using sewer heat recovery. He added that the project will be going to the Development Permit Board (DPB) on March 25, 2008.

Mr. Hein noted that there have been a lot of discussions with the neighbours and that there is general support for the project and the proposed stack design. One of the reasons the project will be going to the DPB is to allow the neighbours the opportunity to speak to the future planning of the area.

Mr. Hein described the urban design noting the building will be located under the Cambie Bridge. With respect to the form and architecture, Mr. Hein stated that the City does have expectations for general design quality, including more specifically, the design of exhaust stacks.

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

- General approach to site planning given the circulation patterns that are emerging in the area;
- Building form and character (there is an expectation that the building contribute in terms of CPTED performance under the bridge); and
- The design approach taken to the exhaust of emissions.

Mr. Hein took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Walter Francl, Architect further described the project. He noted that it is a simple little building in a very humble location that will be registered as LEED™ Platinum. Essentially the project is a collection point for all the sewage coming out of SEFC. The sewage will run through a heat exchanger, where the heat is distracted from the sewage, and then that energy is pumped back into SEFC. The building will also have some boilers that are required for supplementing the heat in the winter time. More of the building will be underground than on the surface, which will house noise-generating functions as well as the boilers and pumps. The electrical room which will not be underground will be within a concrete enclosure. Mr. Francl also described the architecture including the roof form and material palette.

Gerry Eckford, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans noting the pedestrian circulation and types of plantings that are proposed. He noted that the road alignment hasn't been determined as yet on Commodore Street. Mr. Eckford added that there a lot of fun elements that will be included in the landscaping.

Stephane Robb, Design Consultant, stated that her firm had been asked to work on the stack element of the project. There are five different pieces of equipment that require venting. Each piece of equipment has its own flue. The central three flues go directly back to the main boilers. One of the flues will be used for the emergency generator and the fifth flue is a spare. The size of the flues will be approximately two and three feet in diameter. It was decided that there be some type of interpretive device on the flues to register what is going on in the facility. The proposal is for LED light fixtures in a polycarbonate housing that will measure the heat output and would be fastened to the top of the flues. The maximum height of the flues is 22 metres and they will be made of stainless steel. Ms. Robb noted that there is a fair bit of design work that still needs to be done on the flues.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider attention to possible CPTED issues;
 - Consider ways to mitigate access to the roof; and
 - Design development to strengthen the pedestrian route from the Cambie Street promenade to the seawall and waterfront.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel unanimously supported the proposal and congratulated the applicant team for an interesting scheme on a challenging site.

The Panel thought it was a great concept but had some concerns around executing the details and the design within a workable budget. Two Panel members thought the building was competing with the bridge deck and suggested that the zinc roof was unnecessary. Another Panel member noted that the building should be simple and clean.

The Panel agreed that there were many landscape elements that could be considered to be public art but were concerned about possible CPTED issues. They asked the applicant to take into consideration the public realm and landscaping and to make something that we can all be proud of and that would be sustainable over time. A couple of Panel members were also concerned about the possibility of people getting onto the roof from the bridge deck.

Some of the Panel were concerned with the break in the continuity of the pedestrian walkway. They felt it was too important of a pedestrian route to divert people into the plaza. One panel member suggested adjusting the location of the flues to lessen their impact on the promenade. A couple of Panel members thought there should be a rationale in terms of linking the elements of the neighbourhood beyond the site. One Panel member thought the landscaping on the south end needed some work.

The Panel agreed that the landscaping plans were well done, but noted that the continuity of the landscape treatment was critical and that it should extend beyond the site boundary and be integrated within the surrounding public realm. A couple of Panel members liked the drip line planting idea. One Panel member thought the foot print of the below grade area should be expressed in the landscaping.

The Panel liked all the design ideas and thought they would capture people's attention and that pedestrians would stop and take time to look at the building. The Panel particularly liked the design for the flues and thought they were well done and imaginative. One Panel member thought the buttresses seemed to overwhelm the design.

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

4. Address:	1598 Columbia Street (Parcel 4 - SEFC)
DE:	411068
Description:	Multiple dwelling
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Nick Milkovich Architects
Owner:	Millennium South East False Creek Ltd.
Review:	Design Update
Delegation:	Stu Lyons, Greg Borowski, Roger Bayley, Nick Milkovich, Peter Kruek
Staff:	Scot Hein

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Roger Bailey stated that the applicant team had responded to the sustainability measures the City was looking to include in SEFC and that these measures had not changed the quality or character of the buildings.

Greg Borowski, Architect, described the layout of the buildings in Parcel 3, 6 and 10 along with the makeup of the elevations and the various materials being used. The exteriors will have Swiss Pearl panels with limestone on the lower levels and brick around the retail. There will also be a blind system on the windows.

Stuart Lyon, Architect, noted that Parcel 2, 5 and 9 were further along than Parcel 4 and that the construction was up to the third floor. They have also been through a higher level of value engineering. Mr. Lyon noted that one of their sites contains a non-market building. Mr. Lyon described the materials being used noting the fritted glass. The market building will have a curved wall that requires a curtain wall product to work for energy requirements. He added that they have improved the frontage of the rental building and have scaled down the truck bay. Mr. Lyon stated that a consultant has been hired by Millennium regarding the commercial/retail units. He added that the square has not been designed as yet and as well the Salt Building's use has not been determined, although the possible use could be a brew pub, restaurant or bakery.

Nick Milkovich, Architect stated that the development of Parcel 4 had been difficult and they have fought to keep as much as possible as the UDP were told at the last review. The stepping of the building is the same and the fish scale was also retained but will look a little different. Some of the materials have been changed as they couldn't save the glass as a shadow box in the spandrels. They are currently looking at another material that will do something similar. Mr. Milkovich added that he wants some life in the panels that will play the role of a shadow box. He added that the profile has changed slightly and described the detailing of the façade. Mr. Milkovich noted that they are trying to design something in the reflecting pools that will animate the water with the light dancing off the building. They are currently looking at some acrylic tubes with a light feature. Peter Kreuk, Landscape Architect, further described the landscaping in the courtyard noting the public art that will link the upper pool to the lower pool. He is looking at something that will grab the colour and reflect off the surface of the building. As well, he is looking at adding a waterfall at the top of the pool from Athletes Way. Mr. Kreuk also noted that VANOC is interested in relighting the Cambie Bridge.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.
