

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: January 28, 1998

TIME: N/A

PLACE: N/A

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Nigel Baldwin (Chair)
Joyce Drohan (excused #1)
James Hancock (excused #5)
Peter Kreuk (excused #2)
Jim McLean (not present for #5)
Stacy Moriarty
Denise Taylor Ellis
Peter Wreglesworth

REGRETS:
Geoff Glotman
Craig Lamb
Bill McCreery
Garth Ramsey

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:**
Carol Hubbard

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1405 Anderson (Granville Island Theatre)
2.	955 Richards Street
3.	500 Broughton Street
4.	1221 Homer Street
5.	2705 West 10th Avenue

1. Address: 1405 Anderson (Granville Island Theatre)

DA: 402977

Use: Mixed

Zoning: FCCDD

Application Status: Preliminary

Architect: Hotson Bakker

Owner: CMHC

Review: First

Delegation: Norm Hotson, J.P. Mahé

Staff: Rob Whitlock

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-0)**Introduction:**

Rob Whitlock, Rezoning Planner, presented this application to develop a theatre complex, "Under the Bridge", on Granville Island. The proposal includes retail and theatre entry at ground level, with the second floor devoted almost entirely to six movie screen theatres, ranging in size from 130 - 280 seats. Display space for the B.C. film industry will be provided as well as some programming for local film producers and festival events.

There is no specific FSR established for Granville Island, rather the Granville Island Reference Document sets out maximum floor space totals for eleven broad use categories. Height is limited to 55 ft., and the form of development parameters speak to reflecting the historical qualities of Granville Island. Staff believe some technical modification to the Reference Document may be required to expand one of the land use categories. The island is Crown land so effectively there is no zoning in place. At this stage, there is no parking specifically being provided for this project. It is being handled within the overall allotment for the island.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Norm Hotson, Architect, said the principal goal is to develop an entertainment complex to inject a new activity into the island mix for nighttime. The ground floor uses are intended to interact well with cinema use. Mr. Hotson described the proposal and design rationale.

Panel's Comments:

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

The Panel unanimously supported this proposal.

The proposed uses are entirely compatible with existing Granville Island uses and consistent with the objectives for the island. This particular location is also very appropriate; it will provide an excellent addition to what is currently a dark area. It will extend the liveliness of the Granville Island environment and likely provide a residual benefit to some of the existing island uses. The building has been nicely integrated into the existing fabric. Circulation issues seem to have been well resolved. The Panel was also enthusiastic about the direction being taken with respect to materials.

The applicant was strongly encouraged to ensure that individuality of the retail store fronts is achieved so that they will contribute to animation at street level and give the appearance of a number of small storefronts rather than one big building.

The Panel was satisfied that parking issues are being addressed by others.

Given the transparency of the upper theatre level from Anderson Street, the applicant was urged to ensure that the interior design is an extension of the exterior architectural vocabulary. The concern was that the more typical imagery associated with this use could be quite jarring and inappropriate in this context.

With respect to the skylight, the comment was made that its appearance and long term maintenance could be a serious problem in this harsh location with birds roosting above.

Although one Panel member had reservations about the proposed projection signage, others strongly supported it and thought it provided an opportunity for greater expressiveness.

2. **Address: 955 Richards Street**
DA: 402919
Use: Mixed (16s+26s+21/2s+4s - 290 units)
Zoning: DD
Application Status: Preliminary
Architect: Rafii Architects/Brook Development Planning
Owner: Bosa Ventures Inc.
Review: First
Delegation: Chuck Brook, Jane Durante, Foad Rafii
Staff: Mike Kemble
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EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (2-4)

Introduction:

The Development Planner, Mike Kemble, presented this application for the northwest corner of Nelson and Richards Streets. The DD zoning for this site allows 5.0 FSR and 300 ft. height. Mr. Kemble briefly reviewed the Downtown South guidelines that apply to this site, and described the proposed development.

Areas in which the advice of the Panel is sought relate to:

- tower massing and character: two towers vs. one; general architectural treatment and massing of the towers;
- podium base treatment, particularly the residential townhouse expression along Richards Street;
- landscape and open space treatments, both the public realm and private areas of the site.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Chuck Brook noted that rigid adherence to the guidelines suggests one larger tower and podium for this site. However, this two tower scheme provides an opportunity to break down the scale with a finer grain that is a more appropriate response to this site. Another major benefit is diminished shadow impact on the proposed City park.

Panels Comments:

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

The Panel did not support this application. There was unanimous support for the two tower massing for this site as opposed to a single tower solution. There were, however, serious concerns about the strength of the base, the open space at the northwest of the site, and the multiplicity of architectural styles.

Concerns were expressed about the scale of the podium relative to the two towers. The townhouses at the north end of the site seem diminutive and set back too far. There needs to be a much stronger framing of the street and a stronger relationship with the Savoy podium across the street. The townhouses need to have a much greater vertical expression than shown currently. With respect to the towers, there was a recommendation from one Panel member to further reduce the tower width above the cornice line to bring down the scale of the massing.

A major concern, unanimously expressed by the Panel, related to the architectural vocabulary. There seem to be a number of disparate styles which should be pared back considerably so that only one style is dominant. A more sober expression for the tower tops was suggested, and

reconsideration of the overall architectural vocabulary and organization of the elevations was strongly recommended.

Another area of major concern was the open space at the north end of the site. It is clearly residual space that needs to be dealt with somehow, but public open space may not be the best use since it will always be in shadow. It is not an appropriate location for outdoor activities. One suggestion was to take another look at the exterior open space between the towers with a view to enlarging it by reconfiguring some other space, or extending the slab over the lane entrance. A thorough re-examination of the open space plan for the project was strongly recommended.

The double row of street trees was strongly supported.

3. Address: 500 Broughton Street

DA: 402159

Use: Community Centre/Park and Parking

Zoning: CD-1

Application Status: Complete

Architect: Henriquez & Partners

Owner: City of Vancouver

Review: Second

Delegation: Richard Henriquez, Gregory Henriquez, Ben Barron, Jim Meschino

Staff: Mike Kemble

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-0)**Introduction:**

The Development Planner, Mike Kemble, presented this complete application. The Panel supported the preliminary application in March 1997 and it was subsequently approved in principle by the Development Permit Board. Mr. Kemble reviewed the Panel's previous concerns and how this submission attempts to respond. The areas in which the advice of the Panel is sought relate to the integration of the park with the walkway, treatment of the viewing deck and skylights, and the north end of the park. Staff consider the submission has responded very well to the issues previously identified.

Panels Comments:

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

The Panel liked the way this project is developing. Given the complexities of the program the Panel thought the applicant had done an excellent job of fitting it all together. The application was unanimously supported.

The Panel particularly liked the marine character of the building and the organic nature of the park edge. There was a suggestion to reinvestigate the stair to add some strength to the relationship between the park and the building. It was thought the upper level park might be a little too formal next to an elementary school. It was suggested that something that has more of a children's scale to it and a less formal grain would make it more attractive for the immediate users and create a unique park within the overall Coal Harbour park system.

The Panel remained concerned about the lack of hard surface play area. The structured play areas provided are good but inadequate for the 300 school children. There was a recommendation to investigate the possibility of closing off the Broughton turnaround during peak school break periods.

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4. **Address: 1221 Homer Street**
DA: 402673
Use: Mixed
Zoning: DD
Application Status: Complete
Architect: Rositch Hemphill
Owner: Cressey Development Corp.
Review: Third
Delegation: Keith Hemphill, Brian Martin
Staff: Mike Kemble
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EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-2)

Introduction:

Mike Kemble, Development Planner, presented this application, last reviewed and unanimously supported by the Panel in December 1997. The application has now been upgraded to a complete submission. Concerns raised previously by the Panel related to a lack of information about the context, the need for considerable design development to the ground plane, clarification with respect to private roof decks, and comments about the residential entrance on Homer. Other issues related to livability of residential suites, appropriateness of the semi public space, and landscaping details. Mr. Kemble briefly reviewed the applicant's response to the previous concerns and noted the areas in which the Panel's comments are sought on this complete submission, namely, ground plane treatment and landscaping details; residential suites' livability; and the semi public open space.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Keith Hemphill, Architect, reviewed the changes made to the proposal since the last review.

Panels Comments:

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

The Panel supported this application and thought it responded quite well to earlier concerns. The residential entry is much improved.

The Panel expressed disappointment at the very limited amount of information given on the landscape plan. In particular, there are no details provided regarding planting material or structures on the roof decks.

Panel members had a major concern about ground plane treatment at the corner of Homer and Davie Streets, in particular it was felt the hedges were inappropriate to the circulation. The policy which restricts retail entries to Davie Street was questioned for this corner situation.

There were a lot of concerns about inefficient suite configurations and excessive diversity in suite layouts. The awkwardness of circulation inside the building fails to live up to the promise of the very well ordered exterior. Livability remains a concern, particularly for some corner units.

The Panel felt some progress had been made on the top of the tower but that it needed a lighter expression, perhaps decreasing the height of the vertical wall, and achieving a more definite "hat".

Finally, some issues for the Planning Department to consider would be the development of transition guidelines around this project as a prototype; the need for stronger guidelines with

respect to turning corners with retail; and reinforcement of the need for the Panel to have full information when reviewing complete applications.

Applicant's Response:

Mr. Hemphill said every effort has been made to address the Panel's earlier comments but noted they are also disappointed with the landscape information. He explained, the planting material for the planters separating the private decks is intended for privacy screening. With respect to the ground plane, he said they believe the retail should be allowed to turn the corner. If the corner retail is a single unit and its principal address is Davie Street, it seems unreasonable not to allow that unit to have access on Homer. Mr. Hemphill said he believes the roof works with the overall massing of the building as proposed. The upper two storeys are intended to be very light. Brian Martin, Cressey Development Corp., added they are satisfied with the scale of the roof as shown. He apologized for the inadequacy of the landscape plans, and agreed there is some work to be done on the variety of units.

5. **Address: 2705 West 10th Avenue**
Use: Residential (35 townhouse units)
Zoning: RS-1S to CD-1
Application Status: Rezoning
Architect: Brook Dev. Planning/James Hancock
Owner: Dino Bonnis & Adrian Gomes
Review: First
Delegation: Chuck Brook, Jim Hancock
Staff: Rob Whitlock, Eric Fiss
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EVALUATION: SUPPORT (4-0)

Introduction:

The Rezoning Planner, Rob Whitlock, presented this application for rezoning. He briefly reviewed the proposal which is for 35 ground-oriented units, 18 of which will be guaranteed rental. Proposed height is 40 ft., and 52 underground parking spaces will be provided. Following a brief description of the zoning context, Eric Fiss, Development Planner, reviewed the design, highlighting the areas in which the advice of the Panel is sought, namely the character of the proposed development, density, livability and general landscape issues. Proposed density is 1.54 FSR.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Chuck Brook referenced other recently approved projects that can be compared to this application. He described the application, noting the trade-off for the increased density is the 18 townhouses which will be for market rental in perpetuity. James Hancock, Architect, briefly reviewed the architectural response, stressing the attempt that has been made for a design that fits this Kitsilano neighbourhood.

Panels Comments:

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

The Panel unanimously supported this application. This kind of densification and this form of housing were strongly supported. It is very appropriate for this particular site. The provision of guaranteed rental units was commended and considered to be worth the density being sought. The proposed architectural character is very appropriate for Kitsilano.

The Panel supported the proposed height and agreed with the applicant's rationale with respect to consideration of site topography.

Generally, the unit layout is such that major rooms achieve a good aspect. The exceptions are a couple of units on the lane which have master bedrooms at grade, and some units in building A adjacent the side of building B which might be helped by bays or projections. Livability of the units backing onto the commercial lane will need to be carefully considered as the project progresses.

One Panel member suggested the units on Stephens Street should be either raised somewhat or lowered. At present, they are neither sunken nor at grade, which is a kind of grading awkwardness that could get compounded over time as the neighbourhood redevelops.

There were no concerns about the loss of the existing trees on the site; preserving one is acceptable.

Given that half the project will comprise rental units with some shorter term residents, the applicant was urged to ensure the outdoor space is carefully designed for long term success in terms of choice of landscape materials and the degree of maintenance required.

There were some comments that the project is a little “tight”, which may ultimately mean a slight reduction in density, but overall the Panel was very supportive.