
URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: July 12, 2000

TIME: 4.00 p.m.

PLACE: Committee Room #1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Roger Hughs [Deputy Chair]
Lance Berelowitz
Tom Bunting
James Cheng [Items 1 and 2 only]
Alan Endall
Jack Lutsky
Brian Palmquist
Sorin Tatomir

REGRETS: Paul Grant
Bruce Hemstock
Gilbert Raynard
Keith Ross

Acting Recording

Secretary: M. Penner

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1673 Bayshore Drive [<i>“Traders”</i>]
2.	189 Ontario Place
4.	Northeast False Creek Urban Design Study - WORKSHOP

1. Address:	1673 Bayshore Drive ["Traders"]
DA:	404739
Use:	Restaurant and Pub
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Complete and Rezoning
Architect:	Downs Archambault & Simon Gould Consulting
Owner:	562270 BC Ltd.
Review:	Third
Delegation:	S. Gould, R. Kolodziej, R. Way, A. Johnson,,
Staff:	R. Segal

EVALUATION: [6 - 1] Support

- **Introduction:**

The Development Planner, Ralph Segal, introduced this revised project for "Traders" restaurant /pub by presenting a brief summary of the zoning application: noting there was a concrete pad in place with a 3,500 sq. ft. footprint; the zoning permitted a 5,000 sq. ft. restaurant with a height of 5 m and that after several attempts, the Applicant had down-sized this project to just over 6,600 sq. ft. with a height of 9.1 m. Mr. Segal stressed that the applicant would be asking Council for an increase in floor area of over 1,600 sq. ft. and a height increase of over 4 m, and that staff would be seeking Panel's advice as to whether the revised project merited such approval from Council.

Mr. Segal referred to Panels' previous commentary [which rendered non-support] seeking a more marine-like feel at this location, a more articulated roofline, a less box-like structure, and more open balconies. He also noted this very high profile site would interface not only with the Bayshore Hotel, but all of the walkways, park system, and surrounding residents as well.

Mr. Segal referred to the revised model, noting the attempt to introduce more nautical forms, change in colour palette and materials, including the introduction of teak wood, and that major consideration of this project would fall on the design. He emphasized that Council would have to deal with the Applicant's deviations from the existing zoning regarding floor area and height restrictions. However, bearing in mind the location, a compelling design would be part of the formula as to whether this scheme merited staff going forward positively to Council with a recommendation that this scheme was deserving of more floor area and height to accommodate the sought after restaurant and pub.

A Panel Member noted the discrepancy of the square footage shown on the posted drawings from the figure of just over 6,000 sq. ft. referred to in the opening remarks. Mr. Segal stated this would require clarification from the Applicant, whose letter he had received late that day advising staff of a reduction to 6,054 sq. ft. from the previous 6,600 sq. ft.

- **Applicant's Opening Comments:**

By way of clarification concerning the reduced floor area, Mr. Way, Downs/ Archambault,

advised that although the same configuration of the two floors were kept, their previous submission had not included a deduction for service areas, service rooms, elevators, stair wells, etc. and those dimensions had been excluded from this revised presentation.

Mr. Segal advised the Applicant that there were no exclusions for service areas, elevators and the like in the calculation of floor area and, therefore, the calculation of 6,600 sq. ft. would stand.

The Applicant referred to Panel's previous recommendation to remove one staircase and he confirmed that this was not an option.

Mr. Way advised when they were asked to look over this project with a fresh view, he was intrigued by the octagon concrete pier structure and had used this as a source for this design. They had viewed the distant context, landmarks, and felt in comparison their project was relatively insignificant mass-wise and thought the added concrete piers or "masts" would be distant focal points. By way of breaking down the mass and box-like structure, a curved metal [copper] roof form was introduced which alluded to the boat hulls and metal sheds across the harbour. He also referred to the service block previously on the west side of the building which had been brought inside to present a clear entry. Mr. Way explained that the sheer mass of the metal panelling on the west wall, curving into a roof element was to add intrigue - a counterpoint to the glass, and felt the curved roof tied into the concrete piers, as well as create a partial ceiling on the north side. He also pointed out this curved roof top would screen the mechanical from surrounding residences.

Mr. Gould referred to the "history" of the sale of this property to his client, who had been advised there was roughly 7,000 sq. ft. buildable, with a 5,000 sq. ft. pad and that height had not been discussed. His client had therefore anticipated building a 5,000 sq. ft. restaurant with the balance of 2,000 sq. ft. on the second floor. However, when they had referred to the zoning they had realized there was only 5,000 sq. ft. buildable and the pad was only 3,291 sq. ft. The obvious solution had been to add another storey. He described the first design was for a restaurant higher than 5 m with a lot of outside patio space on the west side; however, they had been instructed by the vendor and hotel management that they did not wish to see any outside or roof top patios. Mr. Gould concluded by noting that with these restrictions, the viability of doing this project, with the cost of the pad and the cost of the building, they would need a bare minimum of 200 seats to make this venture economically feasible. This had resulted in the present day submission of a 2-storey structure, with reduced and enclosed patios.

Mr. Segal advised Mr. Gould the issue at hand did not revolve around whatever financial considerations had been implied at the time of purchase, but rather the project's urban design, not economic performance.

The panel viewed the model and posted materials.

The Chair summarized the specific issues requiring the Panels input, namely: the height and architectural design, and whether this revised design merited/justified the requested increases in floor area and height.

- **Panel's Comments:**

The Panel stated unanimously they had no issue with the height [some felt it could go even higher]; the commentary regarding the revised project ranged from having come a long way, to it being a clever revision, to liking the abstracted, non-literal kind of reference to the marina around it; and although some felt the architecture fitted all the required areas on the site and provided an intriguing form, the Panel was unanimous in their recommendation for refinement in the architecture, and crisper lines between the shroud and the glass. It was also noted that the service area of almost 45% on each floor was excessive, seeing that restaurants survived by the number of customers. Although some felt the building appeared to be a "plain glass box" from the north facade, others felt it presented a calming effect.

However, one Member stated this revised proposal was not sufficiently stellar to warrant a fairly substantial revision to the zoning, nor did it warrant recommending an almost 30% increase in floor area and height to Council for approval.

Some Members felt the simpler palette, materials, glass, concrete and metals as well as some teak wood was well integrated and that the roofing material was innovative. The Panel was receptive to the curved roof; however, a few felt the most prominent south facade needed to be emphasized, although it was an improvement from the previous frenetic facade. Most Members felt the concrete piers could be eliminated, or brought down to the roof line, or reduced to only one, to announce the waterfront character.

In referring to Mr. Gould's dissertation about the original "deal" struck between his client and the vendor, the Panel was unanimous in advising the Applicant that this was a matter between his client and the vendor and should not be used as a tool for appealing to the Urban Design Panel for recommendation of increased floor area and height in order to attain the previously-calculated economic gain.

The Chair summarized the Panel's comments, noting the unanimous support for the proposed height increase and support for the project in general. The architectural form had improved considerably - some Members thought it was clever, with a certain wit to it. He thought the main issue was the contrast of the curved foil to the 'glass box' and that this contrast between the two elements should be accentuated in the continuation of this development. The Chair noted there was some difference of opinion on whether the concrete piers should extend beyond the roof, or be lowered. There were comments about extending the roof curve on the north side. With regard to the increase in floor area, it didn't appear that the Panel objected specifically to the increase; however, the issue was that the area created a certain mass and seemed to be problematic in the expression of the mass of this building. The Chair stressed the Panel felt considerable progress had been made with this architectural parti to create a lightness in the building and maritime character, and that the Panel felt a roof top patio would be most appropriate for this project.

- **Applicant's Response:**

Mr. Way expressed their appreciation for the Panel's commentary. He also advised they had attempted to design a more prominent, extended roof line, increase the refinement of the corners, etc.; however, the property owners to the west and south sides of the site were adamant about there being no encroachments on their properties.

The Chair stressed that the Panel had been asked to vote on the support of this project for a design that would justify an increase in floor area and height, but only with further refinement of the architectural character and qualifications voiced in their comments.

The Chair called for the vote and advised the Applicant they had the support of the Panel; however, subject to the Panel's commentary regarding proposed conditions.

2. Address:	189 Ontario Place
DA:	4051-5
Use:	Mixed
Zoning:	C-2
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Tomizo Yamamoto
Owner:	41 st /Main Development
Review:	First
Delegation:	T. Yamamoto, W. Armstrong-Taylor
Staff:	B. Adair

EVALUATION: [0 - 7] Non-Support**• Introduction:**

The Development Planner, Bob Adair, introduced this C-2 zoned site bounded by 41st Avenue, Main Street and Ontario Place and that the treed lane [owned by the City] on the west side of the property would be opened up to provide vehicular access to the site. He described this project as a 4-storey building, with commercial on the main floor and 3 storeys of residential above, with slightly over 2.0 FSR in residential on the upper 3 floors. There would be one level of parking at grade and one underground. The Applicant proposed retail and office spaces around the perimeter on the ground floor and the proposed materials would consist of concrete and brick base, and vinyl siding above on the residential portion of the building, with fabric and glass canopies. Mr. Adair confirmed that 100% of the site could be covered of the ground floor in C-2 zones, but the residential part had to be set back 15 ft. from the lane and the Guidelines further suggested that each residential floor be stepped back an additional 5.6 ft. in order to reduce the impact on the neighbourhood.

Mr. Adair requested Panel's comments on the following issues:

1. Building form at the rear - the C-2 Guidelines recommend that the building step back in order to reduce impact on the adjacent residential area, and that staff was concerned this did not step back enough.
2. Council's amendments to the Guidelines of 2 years ago specified good level of architectural design, and while this building was competently designed, staff would like comments on the general design, given that this a prominent corner.
3. The new lane - staff has had significant responses to the notification letters in terms of the impact on the adjacent residents concerning this new lane. The Engineering department is adamant that it should be opened.
4. The proposed height relaxation of 1.5 ft. at the southwest corner.

To a question from the Panel regarding height issues, Mr. Adair advised all height relaxations had to be reported directly to Council. Also, the motion to amend the residential C-2 Guidelines was to ensure projects should have good architectural design, use quality exterior materials, and be referred to the UDP for advice.

The Applicant noted the site sloped by 3 ft., resulting in 1.5 ft overheight at the southwest corner and 1.5 ft. under the maximum height at the northeast corner.

In response to a question concerning shadowing on the neighbourhood, Mr. Adair advised shadowing had been measured at 10:00 a.m., Noon and 2:00 p.m. and had found there to be virtually no shadowing.

However, staff was concerned about the massing impact.

- **Applicant's Opening Comments:**

Mr. Yamamoto referred to the soil conditions noting the reason why there would be only 1 level underground parking. The residential entry would be off Ontario Place. Business fronts would be on East 41st Avenue and Main Street.

Ms. Armstrong-Taylor, Landscape Architect, noted the site didn't have any trees; new street trees were proposed for the south side, with a green boulevard and pavers leading to the entrance on Ontario Place. The same pavers would be used on the 2nd floor [1st level of residential use] and the fairly large terraces off the residential units would have small maple trees in planters with ornamental grasses in containers. In response to a question from the Panel, Ms. Armstrong-Taylor advised they would look into the possibility of moving the old large plum and cherries blossom trees in the lane to other areas on the site, and that due to an existing bus stop shelter on East 41st Avenue, fewer trees would be planted there than on Ontario Place.

It was confirmed that the materials would be vinyl siding on the top the floors, fabric canopies in green over the windows and steel and glass canopies over the entrances on the street level, brick mostly on the ground floor with a concrete base; that the canted cornices would be wood and the window casings would be vinyl.

Panel viewed the model and posted materials

The Chair reminded the Panel of the main issues: the massing, quality of materials, and height relaxations and to keep in mind the quality and architectural expression of the building as per Council's directive for C-2 developments.

- **Panel's Comments:**

The Panel didn't have great concerns about the height or setbacks of this project, but agreed this was a challenging site in its visibility and prominence from all directions. They agreed that the project was monotonous and somewhat boring. Also, as the bulk of the building had been pushed to the extreme limits of setbacks, this made the architectural expression plain and unremarkable; it was also referred to as "background" architecture. It was suggested a less repetitive symmetrical kind of treatment to the bulk of the building would lend more recognition to the commercial-oriented frontages on East 41st Avenue and Main Street, and to give Ontario Place and the lane a more residential character. It was also suggested that reducing the FSR would provide more room to step back the lane massing and the south frontage. It was felt that Ontario Place should project a more residential character with a more prominent residential entrance. Some Members felt the proposed materials were well-handled, others felt there was too little demarcation between the commercial and residential uses, and suggested a variety of options, including better articulation of the top floor.

Regarding the landscaping, the Panel liked the introduction of the green boulevard along Ontario Place and suggested more grass and trees should be added wherever possible.

The Panel suggested the proposed canopy selections should be reversed, noting that signage on coloured cloth canopies would be more appropriate for the commercial element, as well as add animation to the street level.

The Panel felt the model and drawing renditions were insufficient in size in order for them to better critique this submission and in general it was felt that this project did not meet the standards of Council's C-2 policy.

The Chair summarized the Panel's comments noting the architectural character could be improved if the context would take into account a better expression of the facades reflective of the commercial and residential sides, but had no problem with the height and setbacks. However, there were other massing issues along the lane elevation, particularly the height of the one-storey roof over the southwest corner ramp. It was also suggested this roof could be improved by extending the private decks to encompass this space, and that more landscaping be incorporated. Although it was thought there was precedent for this kind of corner building on a main street in Vancouver, there was also recognition that this was an important building, but that it lacked impressive architecture. Other architectural issues were the signage and selection of canopies. Major concerns were the use of materials a possible lack of detail quality that Council expects.

- **Applicant's Response:**

Mr. Yamamoto mentioned they had considered utilizing different facades and differentiating some of the elements, but as this was a small building he felt that open balconies facing Ontario Place and enclosed balconies on East 41st Avenue and Main Street would be enough differentiation for the streets while presenting a unified impression. Concerning the materials, they had thought of using the brick element all the way to the top; however, the owner had objected for economic reasons. Agreed their materials lacked detail; however, they were just at the beginning of this project and could improve as per Panel's suggestions.

The Chair called for the vote and advise the Applicant he did not have the support of the Panel.

3. Address:	Northeast False Creek Urban Design Study - WORKSHOP
Use:	Mixed
Zoning:	CD-1
Architect:	James KM Cheng
Owner:	Concord Pacific/BC Pavilion Corp.
Review:	Second
Delegation:	J. Cheng, M. Meehan, M. Koropecy
Staff:	M. Gordon

EVALUATION: Workshop - no vote taken

- **Introduction:**

The Senior Planner, Michael Gordon, advised this work-in-progress Workshop would focus on the Northeast False Creek [NEFC] sector with intent to formalize a plan for the overall sector, as well as some rezoning initiatives.

Mr. Gordon advised they intended to present this urban design study to Council in September, along with one referral to public hearing regarding Beatty Street's rezoning. He reiterated the City's intent to provide space for high tech offices in this location, as well as a better pedestrian environmental, strategize the current roadway network, and enhance the Cambie Bridgehead. He requested the Panel's opinion on the following issues:

1. The overall picture of moving the office development potential from the site between the Dunsmuir and Georgia viaducts adjacent to GM Place.
2. Changes to the pedestrian network, as well as the roadway network in the area.
3. On the patterning of open spaces vs building mass and the creation of activity nodes.
4. Any comments on scale and massing.

- **Applicant's Opening Comments:**

Mr. James Cheng, the Coordinator for the overall False Creek North Urban Design Study, noted their need to: [i] review guidelines for the NEFC area bounded by the Cambie Bridge, Quebec, Main and Beatty Streets and that the Panel's urban design principles would also apply to the sub-areas, and [ii] to transfer office density to the Bridgehead site, and extend view corridors of Smithe, Georgia and Robson Streets. The second stage of their study would be to integrate the existing urban fabric within the NEFC area. He estimated they were approximately 30% through the process.

They intended to recommend the commercial mixed-use zones be extended to Abbott Street, Chinatown and the International Village, as well as connect existing and future park sites to Science World and CityGate complexes. Mr. Cheng advised that area traffic studies were on-going.

Mr. Meehan, Concord, explained their intent was two-fold: [i] they were not looking for extra density; and [ii] were not trying to convert office to residential, but rather take their existing density and move it around the site. Also, they intended to enhance their existing negotiated amenity package with the City, by adding view corridors and improve the pedestrian and public realm.

In response to a Member's inquiry concerning increased density/creating open space, Mr. Cheng noted there would only be gain, which would be derived from utilizing open spaces underneath the viaducts, and that an open space requirement would apply to each sub-area.

In response to the Mr. Gordon's time-line of approaching Council in September, he was asked what conclusions were to be reached by that date. Mr. Gordon advised they hoped to have a statement of principles and an overall agreement on the structure of the area, as well as establish future land uses; however, some aspects of this project would not get detailed until later in the fall. Also to attain a comfort level pertaining to the Bridgehead rezoning, which would require an overall agreement to change the scale and character. Mr. Cheng noted their plan was to achieve an amendment to the existing ODP for Concord's lands by September.

When asked whether the Plaza of Nations would be part of this study, Mr. Cheng advised the 'bones' would remain, as they've had one zoning approved for the construction of an hotel.

In answer to a request for a brief outline of the key priorities pertaining to the area's traffic restructuring, Mr. Timm advised they were unable to comment at this time as this issue was part of the overall on-going Downtown Transportation Study.

Mr. Cheng confirmed their strategy was to first of Workshops with the UD Panel, followed by a Workshop with Council, to ensure they would politically support the principles, and then planned to approach the public, but only with Staff's and Council's consent that they were heading in the right direction.

- **Panel's Comments:**

The Panel agreed this proposed project was a great opportunity for the City to fill in this area.

The Panel noted there was a lot of information to be absorbed but concurred Staff/Developers, et al were on the right track do make this a viable workplace and connect the False Creek area to the city. The Members also looked forward to viewing the next presentation, to obtaining more details on the different developments, and advised a massing model would be helpful. They had no problem with the proposed transfer of density and approved of the proposed re-alignment of the various streets encompassing this area, which would provide pedestrian-friendly access corridors.

Some Members felt the physical infrastructure of Cambie Bridge would have a huge impact on the physical environment and needed to be dealt with. The Panel also felt the open space at the bridge ramp would be more defined by the effect of future buildings.

The Deputy Chair commented on the fact that the market place had determined this development objective which would yield interesting public benefit just by virtue of the fact of moving this high tech precinct over to the Cambie Bridgehead and extending it to Yaletown.

- **Applicant's Response:**

Thanked the Panel for their comments.

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