

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: July 2, 2008

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Gerry Eckford, Chair (Excused Item 3)
Maurice Pez
Douglas Watts
Richard Henry
Bill Harrison (Item 1 only)
Albert Bicol (Excused Item 1)
Martin Nielsen, Chair (Item 3)
David Godin

REGRETS:
John Wall,
Walter Francl
Tom Bunting
Mark Ostry

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1241 Harwood Street
2.	2300 Kingsway
3.	1338 South West Marine Drive

BUSINESS MEETING

Douglas Watts who represented the UDP at the Development Permit Board on Monday, June 30th, gave a brief overview on the application at 1237 Howe Street, previously seen at the UDP on April 23, 2008.

Chair Eckford called the meeting to order at 4:15 pm and noted the presence of a quorum. The Panel considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 1241 Harwood Street
DE: 412106
Description: To develop a multiple dwelling with 40 units in 18 storeys, with 3 levels of underground parking and to restore through a heritage revitalization agreement and designation the heritage house on site, which will contain an additional 8 units.
Zoning: RM-5A
Application Status: Complete
Architect: Bing Thom Architects
Owner: Acadia Development Inc.
Review: First
Delegation: Dan Du, Bing Thom Architects
Michael Heeney, Bing Tom Architects
Chris Phillips, Philips Farevaag Smallemberg
Robert Lemon, Robert Lemon Architects
Staff: Ralph Segal/Yardley McNeil

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (1-5)

- **Introduction:** Yardley McNeil, Heritage Planner, introduced the proposal for a site in the West End with a house that was constructed in 1903 called Eastwood Place. The property is one of the rare surviving examples how the West End looked at the turn of the last century. It was evaluated with the heritage registry was first created in the early 1980's. It was classified as a Tudor building and then last year it was reevaluated and came out as meriting an A status on the registry. It went to the Heritage Commission and they endorsed the change in the property's category. If the property proceeds to Council, that will be one of the changes that will be made on the site. Ms. McNeil described the architecture and the garden noting that there is a very rare tree on the site. It is considered to be one of the finest examples of heritage trees in Vancouver. The tulip tree was added to the property at the time of construction in 1903 and is now 150 feet in height. The proposal intends to retain the house, two trees and the essence of the garden. The house was converted to apartments in the 1930's. The rental use will be retained when the property is redeveloped and as well two more suites will be added. The house will be restored and will be moved approximately 7 feet to the east to allow for more room for the new tower. The tree will be retained intact and the gardens in front of the house will also be retained. It is Council's policy to consider bonus on sites with heritage and the bonus density will come from both the house and the tree. The proposal will go through a series of reviews including the Urban Design Panel, the Heritage Commission and then a public hearing. It will be going to the Council in the spring of 2009.

Ralph Segal, Senior Architect/Development Planner, further described the proposal. Generally speaking the West End has seen zoning put in place that reduced height. There are some provisions by which height can be increased. The outright height envelope in the district schedule is 60 feet. Under guideline provisions, that height can be increased to 110

feet if there are no buildings closer than 80 feet. The site would qualify under the guidelines. There is a further provision that provides for a 190 foot height but that applies only to sites where there is no other building higher than 110 feet on the block face. Mr. Segal noted that there is a building of 110 feet within the block and so the site is precluded from going to the maximum height of 190 feet. There is also a view cone passing through the site and limits the height to 185 feet.

Regarding bonus density, Mr. Segal noted that in heritage terms that there are provisions in the by-law for bonus density to be injected onto a site for heritage preservation. The house will accommodate 8 market rental units for the life of the building, landscape garden and a tulip tree. The tree, while it will be preserved, it is potentially risky considering that most of the root ball is on the adjacent property. Ultimately under discretionary zoning and other bonusing parameters, the tulip tree's future could be maintained. At the moment that is not secured.

Mr. Segal noted that they had gone through several development options for the site. He described the bonus density and FSR calculations. In terms of the overall siting and configuration, staff are supportive of the way in which the very slim tower has been configured on the site to try and accommodate the heritage house and the tree.

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

1. Does the proposed project massing and height (increased from 110 ft. to 185 ft.) integrate the heritage bonus density so as to create an appropriate urban design "fit" within the surrounding context?
2. Does the landscape treatment address the heritage and streetscape aspects of the site?
3. Is the proposed design providing for sustainability?

Ms. McNeil and Mr. Segal took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Michael Heeney, Architect, introduced the project noting that it is an unusual project and started over three years ago. The site was recently sold and the proceeds went to a charity. The new owners want to redevelop the property and save the tree. The costs associated with keeping the tree and not being able to build within the root ball and maintain the tree have been financially onerous. It has been a delicate balance to try to get the density on the site. Mr. Heeney noted that they had gone through a number of designs before they settled on the current proposal.

Dan Du, Architect, further described the proposal. He noted that they have contacted the neighbour to get an agreement in writing that they are willing to protect the tree. They have engaged an architect to look at the development potential for the site. The neighbour has agreed to keep the tree in the future development. The house and the tree are a major component of the proposal. The intention is to keep all the exterior features of the house. The house will continue to have rental units and the units will be increased from six to eight. The base of the tower consists of amenity spaces, services and access to the underground parking. From the 3rd level to 18th level will be residential units. There are four units per floor to 7th floor and from the 8th floor to the 17th floor will be two units each floor and the top floor unit will be a penthouse that the owner will occupy. Mr. Du noted that they want to achieve a balance between the view, light and comfort. He added that they are working with their mechanical engineer to come up with measures to improve the comfort in the suites. He said that they are confident that they can achieve LEED™ Silver accreditation. They are proposing a green roof, geothermal, high performance mechanical system, low flush toilets, etc. On the passive side they are working to refine the building envelope.

Robert Lemon, Architect, noted that what is interesting about the house is that it has been changed several times with a major conversion in the 1930's to an apartment building. Mr. Lemon thought that one of the wings had been added in the 1920's. There was a later addition of a balcony which will be taken off. Also two small wings on either side will be removed. The landscaping will remain.

Chris Phillips, Landscape Architect, said that apart from the tree and the terraces one of the findings in the heritage assessment was the relationship of garden to the building. The strategy is to preserve and rebuild the terraces as well the social terrace will be reconstructed. A public access will be reconstructed with a seat at the top to enjoy the gardens. Mr. Phillips noted that they had been through a detailed assessment of the tulip tree with their arbourist. It is a long lived tree and has established a parameter to ensure the life of the tree. There is a cedar tree that is as old as the tulip tree that will be retained also. The landscape plans for the tower will be clean and contemporary.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Concerns about the overall expression of the massing;
 - The building expression needs to develop an architectural expression that responds better to the heritage building; and
 - Consideration of sustainable design issues.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel did not support the proposal as they thought there was a serious issue of massing on the site.

The Panel supported the preservation of the house and the tree and thought the tower was handsome and elegant. However, the Panel was uncomfortable with the massing of the tower and thought it seemed to loom over the heritage house and was not paying respect to the property. The Panel felt it was the right approach to have the tower on the west side of the property. There is recognition that a slim tower was the right approach but the Panel thought it was not the right location for a tower of this height.

The tower units on the east side are up against the heritage house and the set back on the west is too small for a tower of this size. One Panel member suggested gaining a few feet by moving the house to the east. The Panel thought that doubling the density on the site did not work and suggested some of the density be transferred to another property. A couple of Panel members thought the parking access should be from the lane. A couple of Panel members thought the parking could be reduced and suggested the applicant approach the City to relax the number of parking spaces.

The Panel thought the landscape plans were well done and respected the tree and the grade as well as the heritage aspects of the property and were pleased to see how much effort was going into saving the tulip tree.

Regarding sustainability, the Panel thought there were some severe problems with the west and south facades. One member suggested adding visible solar shading devices on the exterior of the building to reduce the heat gain. Another Panel member suggested that other sustainable measures should also be considered. They were disappointed that the applicant hadn't taken sustainability into consideration when designing the building. They felt that more passive measures needed to be imbedded into the form. However, the Panel did commend the applicant for pursuing LEED™ Silver and for incorporating geothermal exchange and hoped that it could be connected to the heritage house.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Heeney said he heard what the Panel had to say about too much density being squeezed on the site. He noted that it had been a struggle and that originally the tower was to be higher and slimmer but the City didn't want to challenge the view cone. Mr. Heeney said they will be addressing the issue around fenestration on the two facades and will be perusing solutions.

2. Address:	2300 Kingsway
DE:	412217
Description:	To construct a mixed use commercial and residential project with a total of 276 housing units, a 37 space childcare facility, a temporary community garden all over 5 levels of underground parking.
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Hotson Bakker Boniface Haden Architects
Owner:	Holburn Developments (Kingsway) Ltd.
Review:	First
Delegation:	Norm Hotson, Hotson Bakker Boniface Haden Architects Michael Cheung, Hotson Bakker Boniface Haden Architects Mary Chan, DMG Landscape Architects
Staff:	Ralph Segal

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (3-4)

- **Introduction:** Ralph Segal, Senior Architect/Development Planner introduced the proposal for a mixed-use commercial and residential project at the corner of Kingsway and Nanaimo Street. The proposal has rezoning approval. Referring to the drawings, Mr. Segal noted that there had been some adjustments to the form of development. Mr. Segal noted that the corner of Nanaimo Street and East 30th Avenue is proposed, in the interim, as an urban agriculture garden for residents in the project. This is only a temporary use as this portion of the site will be built out in the future as an apartment building, as approved in the rezoning. Mr. Segal also noted that the location of the daycare had been changed since the rezoning. At rezoning it was on the top floor of the building that is to be on the corner of Nanaimo Street and East 30th Avenue and has been relocated at the east edge of the property facing Nanaimo Street.

Advice from the Panel is sought on the tower design, the Public Realm and quality of design around and through the site, the quality of the relocated daycare and sustainability.

Mr. Segal took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Norm Hotson, Architect, further described the proposal. Mr. Hotson noted that there were two previous architects on the project. They have tried to refine the scheme by simplifying the massing for a clean tower element. It will be a simple tower with window wall glazing and some solid elements with glazed balconies. A large tenant is proposed for the retail as well as a coffee shop, liquor store and pub. Mr. Hotson described the daycare noting the green walls and the outdoor children's play area.

Mary Chan, Landscape Architect, described the design noting the strong pedestrian connections and pedestrian interaction. There are street trees planned for Nanaimo Street and the laneway. The mews connects from East 30th Avenue to Kingsway. The daycare has a series of green walls and a green roof on the building at the eastern end. "The Hills Community Garden" is in a prime location where it will receive plenty of sun.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Design development along Kingsway to make for a richer ground plain with the use of canopies, awnings, street furniture and landscaping;
 - Soften the edge condition on the lane in front of the live/work units;
 - Design development to the laneway and pedestrian mews by using richer materials to differentiate between the two;
 - Not so much differentiate between the two, but an integration of automobile and pedestrian that put the priority on the pedestrian. Akin to Granville Island.
 - Resolve the grade conditions especially along Kingsway and around the pub access and patio;
 - Consider ways to integrate "The Hills Community Garden" into the project and protect it from vandalism; and
 - Consider the addition of sustainable measures on the tower to reduce solar gain.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel did not support the proposal. The Panel agreed that the revisions from the rezoning to the submission were supportable as well as the density and general organization of the spaces particularly in the daycare.

The Panel did not have a problem with the density on the site and agreed that Kingsway needs to be a corridor for density. The area is evolving and this site could be the future for Kingsway. The Panel also agreed that there needed to be some design development on the project especially in the public realm. The Panel liked the design of the tower, its shape and the relationship with the angle on the street. One Panel member noted that the prow worked to make for a prominent corner. However, they felt the base of the tower needed work and that the streetscape needed landscaping and other design elements to enhance the public realm. One Panel member noted that this kind of density needed to give back a quality to the neighbourhood and that required an intensity and richness of landscaping to support the amount of density. One Panel member suggested adding seating on Kingsway or other kinds of street furniture while several Panel members suggested adding canopies, character and detail elements as well as lighting to add visual interest. Another Panel member noted that there wasn't any indication of signage. Also it was noted that the grading transitions needed to be developed. The CRU's don't seem to have an apparent entrance and the entrance to the tower was not celebrated or articulated. The Panel thought the patio height on Nanaimo Street was too much and the corner pub access had no sense of containment, no relationship to the sidewalk and needed to be resolved.

The Panel also felt the mews and the laneway still needed work to differentiate them. The Panel suggested that there should be a uniform treatment along the mews using higher quality materials. One Panel member suggested using rough cobbles in the laneway to slow vehicles and to make for an interesting pattern in the paving.

The Panel liked the disposition of the masses although there was some concern with the townhouses that face the daycare noting that residents will need to have children to feel comfortable living there. It was also felt that the rear townhouse patios needed to be better separated from the daycare open space although the Panel did like the location of the daycare. They felt it would have been a mistake to have the daycare on the top floor of the future apartment building. One Panel member was worried that the elevations for the daycare were brutal and seemed to be depending on the green wall. Most of the Panel had concerns with the access to parking for the townhouse residents. Several Panel members noted that the daycare building was the best part of the project.

Several members of the Panel thought the set of live/work units on the lane didn't work as they had a hard edge to the lane with no interior connection into the building. The

residents will have to come out their front door and then go back into the building to access the parking. They felt the units were in a dissolute part of the lane and although they will look onto the green wall of the daycare, they seemed separate and isolated. Several Panel members suggested design development to soften the edge condition by turning the lane into a richer place in this location.

The Panel liked the idea of the "The Hills Community Garden" but several Panel members had doubts as to whether there would be enough residents who would use the garden. One Panel member suggested making the garden permanent on the site and suggested it could be added to the roof of the future building as urban agriculture. Several Panel members had some concerns with vandalism and encouraged the applicant to take some measures to protect the garden area.

Regarding sustainability, the Panel was disappointed with the lack of features and the applicant's lack of concern with incorporating sustainability into the design of the buildings. It was noted that sustainability can not be an after thought but needed to be integrated into the architecture. It needs to be a proactive approach with an environmentally responsive design. One Panel member encouraged the applicant to use external shading devices and noted that using them would allow for sun access into the units in the winter and would keep it out in the summer. Using high shading co-efficient glass is less effective as it doesn't let the sun into the units when needed. Also, the Panel member questioned the applicant on why the building was designed similar to glass towers in the downtown where a view is required. Reducing the glazing percentages would change the performance of the building. Another Panel member noted that it was easy to achieve LEED™ Silver and was not convinced that LEED™ Gold could be achieved for the daycare. However, most of the Panel commended the applicant for striving for LEED™ Gold for the daycare with one Panel member suggesting the skylights should face south to let in sunlight in the winter as well as passive heating. One of the Panel members was disappointed that the sustainability consultant/engineer was not present at the meeting.

A couple of Panel members applauded the developer for having tenants already in place for the commercial spaces. They also noted that these would be affordable units which would be a great addition to the market.

The Panel was disappointed that there was no context model provided by the applicant and felt it was difficult to assess the project without the reference of surrounding buildings. Also having the rezoning model would have been helpful. They felt it was too important a project to not have had all the information made available to the Panel.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Hotson said he appreciated the Panel's comments. He agreed that the scale of the model worked against them as it did show up the work that needed to be done on the ground plane. Mr. Hotson also agreed that canopies, awnings and signage will add a lot of animation to the project but that they are not at that level of detail as yet. He assured the Panel that they will get there. Similarly the landscaping needed to be strengthened. Mr. Hotson said he appreciated the comments regarding sustainability and for the most part agreed with the Panel. He said he agreed with the point regarding the building orientation and the moves that might be made.

3. Address:	1338 South West Marine Drive
DE:	411338
Description:	To construct a new 5 storey mixed-use building with 4 storeys of residential and ground floor commercial and 1 storey of underground parking.
Zoning:	C-2
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	DYS Architects
Owner:	Lan Pro Holdings Ltd.
Review:	First
Delegation:	Norm Chin , DYS Architecture Gerry Eckford, Eckford & Associates Landscape Architecture Gary Hackett, Lan Pro Holdings Ltd. Fran Hackett, Lan Pro Holdings Ltd.
Staff:	Anita Molaro

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-0)

- Introduction:** Anita Molaro, Development Planner, described the proposal noting the property is at the end of South West Marine Drive just before it goes over the Arthur Laing Bridge. The proposal is for a five storey building with one storey of commercial and four storeys of commercial. Residential is a conditional use in C-2. Ms. Molaro described the context for the neighbourhood noting the other surrounding buildings and zoning. The lot is 300 feet long and varies in depth between 135 to 146 feet. There is a seventeen foot dedication that is required along the frontage and the site has a slope of almost ten feet. The project consists of a 108 dwelling units ranging from studios to 2-bedroom units. An amenity room is planned for the first floor with some outdoor amenity space. The parking access for the site is aligned with the cross connection under the bridge. Commercial parking is on the first floor level covered with the roof terraces for the residential. The building massing has been stepped to address the length of the building and the slope of the site. The massing also addresses its relationship to the bridge. The proposal is seeking a height increase beyond the typical four storey C-2 height limit of 45 feet and is seeking a height of 75 feet which can be considered in C-2. Liveability for the units with respect to noise impacts is a concern between the bridge head and the railway line and the airport noise. The applicant has prepared an acoustical report that includes measures to address these impacts. The proposed materials are painted concrete for the residential components with a combination of masonry and metal cladding. Landscaping elements include a second row of trees.

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

Urban design response including:

- massing response, given the various site challenges, including the proposed height; and
- overall building design/character.

Ms. Molaro took questions from the Panel.

- Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Norm Chin, Architect, further described the proposal. He noted the site will have a 10 foot setback which has inspired them to create the L-shape form of the building. The sloping nature of the slope also inspired the notion of created the two L-shape forms and stepping the building on the site. It creates an opportunity for an open courtyard along the front and becomes a connection to the at grade commercial parking at the back of the site. It also delineates the long site by stepping it and creating the forms to help break down the building. Mr. Chin noted that

liveability of the units was a major concern being that the site is close to the bridge, airport and railroad tracks. The majority of the units will have an enclosed balcony to address acoustical concerns. The owner decide early on to focus on the notion of affordability. It's a challenging site already and what this project hopes to do is address affordability by offering smaller units and also some larger units. Liveability is also addressed by the proposed suite heights which will be on average around 8' 6". The front elevation is heavily articulated to capture the notion of the bridge with the repeating bays. The materials were chosen because they are durable and low maintenance. The materials were also inspired by the location of the property because of the amount of industrial buildings in the area. Regarding sustainability, Mr. Chin said they have considered the window to wall ratio, which will address acoustics and thermal comfort.

Gerry Eckford, Landscape Architect described the landscape plans noting that a double row of trees will be added to the street front. He said they are trying to create a pedestrian environment and a relationship between the units and the landscape element that tries to buffer the traffic on the on-ramp. There will be a water feature in the courtyard. On the south side there are larger patios and have thickened up the plantings.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider replacing the tree in the courtyard with a fountain.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and commended the applicant for taking the initiative for offering more affordable housing. They also thought it was an appropriate transition to the bridge.

The Panel acknowledged that it is a difficult site to build on and thought the applicant had offered a good solution. The Panel supported the height relaxation and the overall building design. They also supported the materials noting that having good quality materials would benefit the building over time. One Panel member thought the elevator overrun didn't look adequate.

Regarding liveability, the Panel thought there should be more of these units built in the city. They also liked the design of the open space. Several Panel members thought the inboard bedrooms worked given the noise and pollution challenges. One Panel member suggested using acoustical glass to help buffer the noise.

The Panel thought having the commercial parking brought into the back of the building was a good idea. The Panel also thought the drive way opposite the street end worked and was logical and well thought out.

Regarding the landscaping, the Panel liked the streetscape plans and thought they were well conceived. They also liked the landscaped courtyard but thought the cherry tree might have a hard time surviving. One Panel member suggested adding a fountain for white noise. Another Panel member noted that there was a good level of greenery to mitigate the challenge of the on-ramp.

Regarding sustainability, the Panel thought it was well done as the orientation of the building was north-south with the use of punched windows. One Panel member noted that there may be a problem with noise when the windows were open but didn't support using air conditioning. One Panel member noted there weren't any sustainable strategies and hoped that these would be considered.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Chin thanked the panel for their positive comments adding that they will continue to explore more sustainable measures.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:56 PM.