
URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: July 23, 2003

TIME: 4.00 p.m.

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Stuart Lyon, Chair
Helen Besharat (not present for Item 4)
Bruce Haden (excused item 3)
Reena Lazar
Jennifer Marshall
Brian Martin
Kim Perry

REGRETS: Jeffrey Corbett
Eva Lee
Mark Ostry
Sorin Tatomir
Ken Terriss

RECORDING SECRETARY: Carol Hubbard

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1616 Bayshore Drive
2.	1380 Hornby Street
3.	4387 West 10th Avenue
4.	2290 Cambie Street (495 West 7th Avenue)

1. Address:	1616 Bayshore Drive
DA:	407671
Use:	Mixed
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Downs Archambault & Partners
Owner:	Blue Tree Management Ltd.
Review:	First
Delegation:	Mark Ehman, Al Johnson, Jane Durante
Staff:	Ralph Segal

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-0)

- **Introduction:** Ralph Segal, Development Planner, introduced this application. The program for the site includes market and non-market residential uses, retail on Cardero Street, and a child daycare centre. A major underground parkade, serving this and adjacent sites, is already in place. The proposal responds very closely to the Design Guidelines, and the only issue identified by staff relates to the height of the amenity which exceeds the guideline recommended height of 23 m by 2 m, and its potential shadowing impact.
- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** Mark Ehman, Architect, briefly described the design rationale and the applicant team responded to the Panel's questions.
- **Panel's Comments:** The Panel unanimously supported this application and liked the building's simple elegance.

The applicant team was commended for the variety of uses on the site. The Panel was pleased to see the child daycare use together with seniors residences, which can be a very successful combination. The Panel also liked the mix of the market and non-market housing, with no clear visual distinction between the two.

The Panel was enthusiastic about the amenity for the performing arts which it thought would be a very successful space. A comment was made that this has been a good opportunity to be able to tailor an amenity to the specific interests of the residents. A suggestion was made to revisit the program of the third floor amenity space for the non-market component, to add some glazing and make it more open and inviting. There was also a suggestion that this amenity space might be better relocated to the 8th floor in place of a couple of units which seem a bit problematic.

The Panel had no concerns about the additional 2 m height relaxation being sought. It was thought to be quite minimal and insignificant. It was suggested there could be some relief from the sea of concrete by adding some playfulness to the expression of the rooftop amenity, possibly incorporating signage indicating the performing arts lodge use. A comment was made that the amenity roof element may be too heavy. There was also a recommendation to add some landscape treatment to the lower roofs to improve overlook. A concern was expressed that the south-facing metal roof might be a problem for adjacent tower units with respect to reflection.

The Panel was encouraged to see an 8-storey base to this project. However, several Panel members found the southwest corner of the base, facing Georgia Street, to be the least successful part of the

scheme. Recommendations were made to give this facade greater interest and articulation, and to create some architectural celebration at the corner. It was suggested that the Georgia Street elevation seems to be treated like the back of the building.

A comment was made that the axis of Hastings Street could be reflected more strongly at the entry.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Ehman thanked the Panel for its comments.

2. Address:	1380 Hornby Street
Use:	Boutique Hotel and Restaurant
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Rezoning
Architect:	Chris Bozyk
Owner:	Umberto Menghi
Review:	First
Delegation:	Chris Bozyk, Randy Olafson, Robert Lemon, Gary Shoten
Staff:	Scot Hein, Alan Duncan

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-0)

- **Introduction:** Scot Hein, Development Planner, presented this rezoning application, noting it will return to the Panel at the development permit stage. The site is on the east side of Hornby Street, just north of Pacific Boulevard. The proposal is to complement and expand the existing restaurant operation and introduce a 13-storey boutique hotel component. The site includes the Leslie House, a Heritage “A” building built in 1888 and likely the oldest house in the city. This proposal retains the Leslie House in its current location as well as retains and integrates the building at the southerly corner, although the latter is not part of this application. The existing DD zoning allows 5.0 FSR residential use and 300 ft. maximum height. The rezoning seeks approval for the boutique hotel which is not currently a permitted use. The proposed height is 154 ft. 9 in.

A previous rezoning application for this site had a more literal “Tuscan” style approach to the architectural treatment and massing, and its 170 ft. height raised objections from the north and across the lane. This revised scheme is reduced in FSR and height, and pulls away from the common property line. It also has a more refined, less literal, interpretation of Italian architecture.

The proposal has been reviewed and supported by the Heritage Commission.

The advice of the Panel is sought in the following areas:

- whether hotel use is appropriate for this site;
 - density;
 - form of development;
 - whether the Leslie House is crowded by the massing on the site;
 - side and rear setbacks.
- **Applicant’s Opening Comments:** Chris Bozyk, Architect, briefly described the design rationale. He also referred to an earlier submission for this site that was not pursued. The design team responded to the Panel’s questions.
 - **Panel’s Comments:** The Panel unanimously supported this application. The boutique hotel use was strongly supported and the Panel considered the proposed FSR to be very achievable on this site.

While the Panel was glad that the previous scheme was not pursued, preferring the more modern expression of this proposal, some regret was expressed by one Panel member that it now lacks some of the delight and interest that the former rendition embodied.

With respect to the general assemblage of buildings on the site, the Panel was generally in support of the effort to break the building down to respond more gently to the building behind. There was also a suggestion that this could go further, possibly lowering one section and increasing the height of the tower.

The Panel strongly supported the proposed restoration of the Leslie House which it felt earned the requested heritage bonus. However, one Panel member found these efforts somewhat token at present, suggesting the building needs to defer to the heritage house in a different way.

The Panel acknowledged the applicant's dilemma of either crowding the Leslie House or the lane but felt that, in this case, the house should take precedence. A comment was made that this design solution will bring more attention to this "little gem" in the middle of the city. The Panel had no concerns with the proposed rear setback.

In general, the Panel thought the success of the courtyard and the heritage renovation will depend on how the building comes to the ground and how it relates to the courtyard and the Leslie House. Further design development was recommended on this aspect of the scheme.

A comment was made that this is not a very efficient building, with a considerable amount of circulation contributing to the extra bulk between the buildings. It was questioned whether this could be reduced to a glass corridor, introducing light through to the courtyard to the north. It was stressed that the bridge between the house and the new building will need to be detailed with great care.

While the view impact on the adjacent building was acknowledged, it was felt that the assets gained by the city in terms of a high quality piece of urban design outweigh those issues. A comment was made that, given the use of the adjacent open space and the distance between this project and the neighbour's south wall, privacy is not an issue. However, the wall facing the courtyard will need to be very attractively detailed. There were no concerns about the amount of glazing on the side wall elevation.

One Panel member thought the module of three units facing south could have a more modern expression.

There was a suggestion to consider more glazing in the two units facing Hornby Street.

Given the bonus density is squeezing somewhat the site coverage and the courtyard, a suggestion was made to explore freeing up the base in favour of additional square footage at the top. In general, the Panel had no concerns about the building being higher.

The Panel found this an exciting, modern project and looked forward to seeing it proceed.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Boyzk commented that they have been working to reduce the height of the building although they would like to explore the possibility of going higher.

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| 3. Address: | 4387 West 10th Avenue |
| DA: | 407672 |
| Use: | Mixed-ALW |
| Zoning: | C-2 |
| Architect: | Oliver Lang |
| Owner: | RoarVentures Ltd. |
| Review: | First |
| Delegation: | Sergio Rodriquez, Oliver Lang, Bruce Haden |
| Staff: | Eric Fiss |
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EVALUATION: SUPPORT (4-1)

- **Introduction:** Eric Fiss, Development Planner, presented this application in the C-2 zone, noting that the residential guidelines seek high quality architectural design and materials. The site is in an existing C-2 commercial zone on West 10th Avenue in Point Grey, with RS-1 residential neighbourhoods to the north and south. The 66 ft. x 115 ft. site is located mid-block between the Varsity Theatre and a 1920's commercial building. The site slopes significantly to the north to a maximum of 8 ft. The proposal is for four storeys of mixed use comprising 2,600 sq.ft. of retail on the main floor (0.34 FSR) and ten residential units above (2.4 FSR). Seven of these units are for artist live/work use. Underground parking is proposed, accessed from the lane. The application seeks a height relaxation to 45 ft. Height relaxations may be considered providing the additional height does not cause increased shadowing or view obstruction and taking into account the provision of non-combustible building materials, and the slope of the site. Proposed materials include concrete, aluminum storefront glazing and metal mesh.

The advice of the Panel is sought on the use and livability, architectural quality, the height relaxation, and the landscape design.

- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** Oliver Lang, Architect, described the design rationale and the applicant team responded to the Panel's questions.
- **Panel's Comments:** The Panel strongly supported this application and generally found it to be a refreshing departure from typical C-2 projects.

With one exception, the Panel supported the proposed height and in general the Panel found the proposal to be a very innovative and outstanding design. The Panel found the indoor/outdoor "slots" a very interesting and creative solution.

The Panel considered the units to be exceptionally livable and the courtyard improved by having the units face outwards. The linear shape of the live/work units has been very well handled, with good natural light penetration.

Much of the Panel's commentary related to the proposed metal mesh material. Concerns were expressed about the experimental nature of this material and how it will stand up over time, including the potential for water penetration. There were also concerns about its reflectivity, particularly on the south elevation. The Panel stressed that the use of this material will put extra pressure on the designers to achieve a very high level of detailing to ensure the building's success. It was strongly

recommended by one Panel member that commercial quality detailing be employed rather than basic residential detailing.

Given the east and west elevations will likely be exposed for some time, the detailing of these walls will need to be carefully considered.

One Panel member questioned whether the glazed storage area is permissible.

The sustainability aspects of the scheme were a major concern for one Panel member who seriously questioned using the same treatment for the north and south facades of the building, without regard for the differing climatic conditions of these orientations. It was suggested that the use of brise soleil, either indoor or outdoor, would be a natural, modern solution for this building.

One Panel member had serious concerns about the proposed colour scheme and the use of the “super graphic” motif on the building.

- **Applicant’s Response:** Mr. Lang agreed the Panel had identified some very valid issues, including those relating to sustainability. He stressed the detailing will be very carefully handled. He explained that the height resulted from a long optimization process and noted that most of the building is within the 40 ft. maximum. Most of the additional height is in the front of the building.

4. Address:	2290 Cambie Street (495 West 7th Avenue)
DA:	407204
Use:	Commercial (4 storeys)
Zoning:	C-3A
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Kasian Kennedy
Owner:	Canadian Tire Real Estate Ltd.
Review:	Second
Delegation:	Michael McDonald, Joanne Stich, Mary Chan-Yip
Staff:	Mary Beth Rondeau

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-0)

- **Introduction:** Mary Beth Rondeau, Development Planner, presented this application. The project was first reviewed by the Panel in February 2003 and not supported. The application seeks a density of 2.5 FSR which includes 0.5 FSR for rooftop parking. The outright height in the C-3A zone is 30 ft. and the guidelines suggest a maximum of 90 ft. with a 30 ft. podium base. A 25 ft. setback on Cambie Street is also recommended. Ms. Rondeau briefly described the revised submission and sought the Panel's comments on whether the additional density has been earned.
- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** Michael McDonald, Architect, reviewed the Panel's previous concerns and how they have been addressed in this revised scheme. Mary Chan described briefly described the revised landscape plan and the design team responded to the Panel's questions.
- **Panel's Comments:** The Panel unanimously supported this submission and acknowledged the positive improvements made to the scheme since the last review.

The Panel fully supported the proposed density. There were also no objections to the proposed height, with some suggestions that it could be higher in places, including the 7th/Cambie corner where the wedge shaped element might benefit from greater verticality. Another suggestion about this element was to flatten it out which would reduce some shadowing on the street. The Panel felt that the basic box was an elegant building but the signage elements of wedge and column arm take away from the urbanity of the building and create an automall image that is out of context.

The applicant was commended for the environmental initiatives of the project. The Panel thought the pedestrian amenity on the rooftop parking area could be further improved, however, stressing the importance of weather protection, circulation and pedestrian safety. Different surface treatments were recommended, as well as a more residential type of lighting to make it friendlier and less stark. These improvements would also benefit the neighbours who overlook the building.

With respect to the column and lintel running around the top of the project, a comment was made that it seems a bit high, suggesting better integration and a possible reduction in its height would be an improvement.

There was a recommendation to improve the quality of the material at the service entrance on 7th Avenue, to provide something more interesting than concrete.

The Panel thought this project should be very innovative with its signage, less suburban. This high profile site and ownership provides a good opportunity for something much more than typical Canadian Tire imagery. One suggestion was to consider something three-dimensional for the triangle of the Canadian Tire logo, possibly including some blade signs in places, particularly for people approaching from 7th Avenue. A comment was made that it needs to respond to both the scale of the automobile traffic as well as the pedestrians, creating the challenge of providing greater transparency at the base and more substance at the top. In general, the applicant was encouraged to pursue the signage in a more urban way, noting this could work to the advantage of the store. One Panel member also thought more could be done with the signage for the Best Buy component, suggesting a neon wall sign behind the glass would be a little more interesting than the typical signage.

The Panel strongly supported the proposed bicycle hub amenity at the corner of 7th and Cambie. There were concerns, however, that it currently is not very inviting and needs further design development. For example, there is little room between the bike pump and the wall and the central location of the fountain deters people from gathering in the middle. The column placement obscures the corner from view.

Concerns were expressed about the treatment of the corner entry, with recommendations to strongly detail the entry as opposed to just having a gash in the elevation. Suggestions were made to perhaps peel away some of the harsh, light material and reveal some of the structure to add some liveliness. Consideration should also be given to the placement of the benches.

In general, the Panel found the scheme much improved and liked the direction the project was taking.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. McDonald appreciated the Panel's recognition of the improvements made to the scheme. With respect to the rooftop parking, the safety of pedestrians is crucial for Canadian Tire and this will be studied further. Mr. McDonald acknowledged there is more work to be done on the bicycle hub at the corner and said they are keen to see it work well as an amenity on the bike route.