

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: July 4, 2007

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
John Wall, Chair
Walter Francl
Tom Bunting
Douglas Watts
Albert Bicol
Martin Nielsen
Gerry Eckford

REGRETS: Maurice Pez
Mark Ostry
Richard Henry
Bill Harrison
Bob Ransford

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1096 West Broadway
2.	601 East Hastings Street
3.	6101 Oak Street

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Wall called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. There being no New Business the meeting considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

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| 1. Address: | 1096 West Broadway |
| DE: | 411434 |
| Use: | 11-storey building with retail on the ground floor and residential above |
| Zoning: | C-3A |
| Application Status: | Complete |
| Architect: | Nigel Baldwin Architects Ltd. |
| Review: | First |
| Delegation: | Nigel Baldwin, Chris Sterry, Jim Ross |
| Staff: | Dale Morgan |

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-0)

- **Introduction:** The Panel adjourned to the model, where Dale Morgan, Development Planner described the surrounding area and the design development for the project. The property is located on central Broadway in the Fairview sub-area. The proposal is for an 11-storey mixed use development with commercial at grade and three levels of underground parking. The applicant is seeking a density of 3 FRS plus 10% heritage density transfer for a total of 3.3 FSR. The height is approximately 120 feet. The site is on the southeast corner of West Broadway and Spruce Street with a 100 foot frontage and grade drop across the site of 13 feet. Mr. Morgan noted that there have been a number of new developments in the area in the last few years. The C3-A Guideline massing allows for a continuous 30 foot high base podium, an intermediate building massing up to 70 feet with 75% of the frontage width, and the tower form to 67% of the frontage width up to 100 feet.

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

1. Discretionary Earnings: Has this project earned the discretionary density 3.0 FSR (plus an additional 10% for a total of 3.3 FSR) and a height increase from 30.2 ft to approximately 120 feet?
 2. Urban Form: Does the building fit into the overall emerging pattern of development along the Broadway corridor? The tower form is setback 23.5 ft from the podium/street edge, as compared to 1070 and 1030 West Broadway where the towers are placed at or close to the street edge. Given the small site, slope and corner condition, is this an acceptable response?
 3. Architectural Expression: Comments are requested on the materiality and architectural expression.
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Nigel Baldwin, Architect, further described the project noting that the tower was set back to create some difference in the streetscape along West Broadway. He noted that he created a glassy tower with an angled face. The 10 foot set back along Alder Street allows for the three large trees to remain and to have an open space on the corner to accommodate a café. The 2nd floor units have been set back to allow for some patio space.

Chris Sterry, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans for the project noting the solid green wall that is proposed along the lane to provide privacy for the outdoor space

that is next to a small indoor library area. Mr. Sterry also noted the landscaping for the communal outdoor space as well as the roof decks and balconies.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Design development to the overhang on second floor units on west Broadway to improve natural light access;
 - Consider design development to the patio area on the corner of Spruce Street and West Broadway with regard to pedestrian circulation and use;
 - Design development to the 2nd floor courtyard and relationship with the exterior accessed 2nd floor units;
 - Consider improving the relationship with the library and the outdoor terrace; and
 - Consider reducing the area of exposed painted concrete on the south façade.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel unanimously supported the proposal and thought the project had earned the discretionary density as well as the 10% heritage density transfer.

The Panel supported for the tower setback along West Broadway as they felt it offered greater variability on West Broadway and helped break down the monotony of the series of small towers that are all in a row. Some Panel members suggested that the tower massing should either have a stronger symmetrical or asymmetrical form. One Panel member thought the exterior spiral stair on the north side seemed a little pinched

The Panel thought there were some very strong elements on the project including the roof top gardens and fireplaces, the expression of the landscape coming to the building edges and the treatment of the building in terms of breaking up the massing.

The Panel supported the Spruce Street building setback but several members suggested some design development to the transition between the patio space and the sidewalk by considering a different resolution than the proposed stairs to help integrate the patio into the sidewalk and make for better pedestrian circulation.

Most of the Panel felt the long canopy on the 2nd floor of the West Broadway frontage would restrict light access to the suites and suggested lifting the cornice line to improve the liveability of the units. One Panel member suggested the overhang on the west façade could be turned around and made vertical. The Panel liked the layout of the suites but thought the townhouses on Spruce Street were too small.

The Panel felt the relationship between the outdoor amenity and interior amenity space needed some work as they thought it wouldn't be used and would like to see the outdoor space have a stronger definition. The Panel was concerned with the private/public transition of the two units on the podium facing the courtyard and thought the units could have semi-private transitional spaces and improved material treatment of the south facing wall. Also, the Panel thought the internal library space was too small and suggested improving its relationship to the outdoor terrace area.

The Panel supported the proposed materials of predominately glass wall and painted concrete with stone tile accents at the base, however there was some concern about the amount of painted concrete on the south façade and recommended design development to reduce it's area. Several Panel members thought the black band of stone below the 2nd floor units on West Broadway needed to be lowered or reduced in height to improve light and views to the 2nd floor residential units. Several Panel members commented on the frames of the building with some liking them and some finding them somewhat busy.

One Panel member had concerns about the location of the garbage in the basement as they thought it would take a lot of work to get the containers up to the lane.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Baldwin thanked the Panel for their comments. He said he agreed with the comments regarding the overhang on the West Broadway side of the building and the depth of the black band of stone.

2. Address:	601 East Hastings Street
DE:	409938
Use:	Six-storey mixed-use (SNRF/Residential/Retail) building proposed by Union Gospel Mission
Zoning:	DEOD
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Orbis Architecture
Review:	First
Delegation:	Raimund Littmann - Orbis Architecture Jeremy Fry - Union Gospel Mission
Staff:	Sailen Black

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (0-6)

- **Introduction:** Sailen Black, Development Planner, introduced the application for a 6-storey mixed use building with a special needs residential facility, retail and residential uses to be operated by the Union Gospel Mission. The Union Gospel Mission has similar existing programs operating at 604 East Cordova Street. The property is located at the corner of East Hastings and Princess Streets, one block north of the Strathcona Community Centre. The area is in the Downtown Eastside Oppenheimer zoning district and has a distinctive urban grain, characterized by the use of historic buildings of tall, vertical bays, extensive use of brick as a finished material and strong, regular window placements. The design guidelines for the area suggest the general principle that new development should pay special attention to compatibility in terms of building height, bulk, frontage module, materials, roof and cornice lines, window detailing and landscaping.

The building is designed with each floor having a purpose and is organized with a vertical hierarchy, with accommodations and other services provided on a “moving-up” principle. The first floor will be for a community drop-in centre and dining room; the second floor for overnight shelter for the homeless and education facilities; the third floor will contain an access controlled environment for group living during alcohol and drug recovery; the fourth floor will be for self-contained, independent living spaces; the fifth floor will be for mixed use, including staff lounge, dormitories and 2-bedroom units; and the sixth floor will be used exclusively for administration including executive offices, accounting and human resources.

On the original application, staff had concerns about the dining entrance and absence of retail on East Hastings Street which have been addressed. Staff continues to have concerns regarding the resolution of the design including the quality and programming of the landscape, the extensive use of painted concrete as a finish, the architectural detailing and character elements including windows, and the strength of the cornice line.

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

- The architectural and landscape design proposed, including the articulation of the façade and the use of painted concrete.
- **Applicant’s Introductory Comments:** Jeremy Fry, Special Project Contractor - Union Gospel Mission, noted that the Union Gospel Mission has been serving the homeless within a few blocks of this location since 1940. As the City has grown, the UGM has outgrown the current facility at 604 East Cordova Street and needs to expand to meet the increasing demands of the neighbourhood.

Mr. Littmann, Architect, further described the floor plans noting the programming of the building had been developed in Toronto and had resulted in a successful model in treating people with drug and alcohol addictions. He also noted that there will be 1 1/2 levels of underground parking which will be used by the staff and volunteers.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Simplify the building's façade treatment and corner expression, but provide a stronger tri-partite division with more refined details and robust articulation;
 - Establish a brick or stone diadem on the building façade
 - Design development of the public realm interface thru improved street level articulation and more street trees;
 - Improved street-level entry definition thru design development and by not recessing the corner entrance;
 - Design development to the courtyards to make them more liveable; and
 - Include sustainable measures into the design of the building that reduce operating costs and improve liveability.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel did not support the application but congratulated the applicant for the commitment of the organization to provide housing and other facilities in the neighbourhood.

The Panel supported the massing of the building and thought it fitted within the context of the area.

The Panel had some major concerns regarding the architectural treatment of the building. They agreed that the building wants to have a strong brick façade and look like an old warehouse building which would complement the other buildings in the neighbourhood. Several members of the Panel suggested establishing a diadem with brick or stone with painted concrete on the other floors above. One member of the Panel suggested using a steel or lighter frame material at the 6th level that might allow for a classical tripartite and provide more of an office expression. The Panel supported a simple clean presentation of the street with a more robust articulation of the façade. They added that the money could be spent on the street level and not on the underground parking.

The Panel was not convinced that Hastings and Princess Streets is a major intersection in the city that needs a strong corner expression. As well they had some concerns about the entry to the building and suggested that it not be recessed or moved away from the corner.

Some of the Panel thought the layout of the offices needed to be reworked as there are some deep areas that needed to be opened up to let in more light.

The Panel was very disappointed that the landscape architect was not present to defend the plans. The Panel agreed that the courtyards need work as they will not see the light of day often enough to make them useable. It was suggested that adding street trees would go a long way to strengthen the articulation of the building.

The Panel was also very disappointed in the lack of any sustainable measures in the building. They stressed that this had to be addressed early in the development of the project and couldn't be pasted on at a later date. It was noted by the Panel that this was a great building for natural ventilation. One member of the Panel added that any

sustainable measures regarding energy would help to decrease the ongoing operating costs in the future.

One member of the Panel stated that good architecture and a good sustainable environment would actually help improve people's health. Since the project is really about health and healthcare, good architecture is part of that. The ground plane with better material has an impact, having good units with natural ventilation has an impact. All these things will help with recovery for the people who will use this facility. The Panel realized the challenge regarding the budget but stressed that it was a question of where the money was spent.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Littmann thanked the Panel for their comments noting they were very valid points and would discuss them with his client. He added that he was confident that a number of the issues could be successfully handled.

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3. Address: 6101 Oak Street
DE: 411456
Use: 30 Unit Townhouse complex on top of one level of underground parking
Zoning: CD-1
Application Status: Complete
Architect: Formwerks Architectural
Review: Second (First review at Rezoning March 14, 2007)
Delegation: Craig Rowland, James Bussey, Gerry Eckford
Staff: Paul Cheng
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EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-0)

- **Introduction:** Paul Cheng, Development Planner introduced the application noting that at the previous review by the Panel, the applicant was asked to return as the landscaping wasn't developed and there was some concern regarding the interface with the public realm and how the private courtyard was handled. Mr. Cheng noted that the rezoning had been approved. Mr. Cheng gave a brief overview of the project.

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

- Is the landscaping acceptable for the semi-private courtyard and also facing the public realm?
- Is the soil depth enough for the planting that is being proposed?

Mr. Cheng took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Craig Rowland, Developer, further described the architectural design of the project. Gerry Eckford, Landscape Architect, described the landscaping plans for the site. He described the courtyard design which has been reconfigured from the previous design seen by the Panel at the first review. He noted the small seating area at each end of the courtyard as well as the brick planters. Mr. Eckford also noted the private entrances to the units and the arbours at the two main public entries. James Bussey, Architect, described the changes in the architecture since the last review. He added that the project has been designed to utilize the space for inner city living and sustainability. He noted that there is good access for transit, schools and parks.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - The Panel had no substantial concerns with this proposal.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel unanimously supported the application.

The Panel was very supportive of the project but felt that there could be a more substantial and formal treatment on Oak Street.

The Panel liked the flow between the buildings into the interior courtyard space. Several Panel members would like to have seen more room for the patio spaces and suggested making room for eight foot patios. The Panel agreed that the public realm had been well handled.

A couple of Panel member suggested the applicant look at the window interface on the upper floors of the units so that they don't look into the bedrooms in the building opposite.

Another Panel member had a concern regarding the fifteen foot separation in the internal walkway and suggested moving building 2 and 3 outward to make for more liveability.

One Panel member thought there seemed a waste of outdoor space to not have more patio area on the south facing units along West 46th Avenue.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Rowland thanked the Panel for their comments and agreed to address the patio areas on the south facing units.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.