

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: June 17, 1998

TIME: N/A

PLACE: N/A

PRESENT: Joyce Drohan (Chair)
Patricia Campbell (excused Item #4)
Sheldon Chandler
Per Christoffersen
Geoff Glotman (excused Item #1 and #3, present for #1 - #4 only)
James Hancock
Joseph Hruda
Peter Kreuk
Sean McEwan
Jim McLean (present for Item #1 - #3 only)
Norman Shearing (present for #1 and #2 only)

REGRETS: Peter Wreglesworth

RECORDING SECRETARY: Carol Hubbard

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1768 West Broadway
2.	2330 Kingsway
3.	1001 Hornby Street/1088 Burrard Street (Wall Centre II)
4.	3585 West 40th Avenue
5.	3718 West Broadway (at Alma)

Business:

Ralph Segal reported on the recent Council decisions regarding development applications in the C-2 zone. As an interim measure, all C-2 applications which seek relaxations will be referred to Council for advice. The Director of Planning was instructed to amend the guidelines to indicate that C-2 projects should have very good architectural design and use quality exterior materials, and that C-2 applications should be referred to the Urban Design Panel for advice.

This matter will be considered further at the July 15 Panel meeting, noting that the two C-2 applications on today's agenda will likely contribute to the discussion.

1. Address: 1768 West Broadway

DA: 402821

Use: Mixed Use (11 storeys, 125 units)

Zoning: C-3A

Application Status: Complete after Preliminary

Architect: Brook Development Planning/Gomberoff Policzer

Owner: Intergulf Development Group

Review: Fourth

Delegation: Tom Bell, Eric Schroeder, Don Wuori

Staff: Ralph Segal

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (9-0)**Introduction:**

Ralph Segal, Senior Development Planner, presented this application. On May 20, 1998, the Panel reviewed a complete submission that was not supported. The application has now been revised to respond to the Panel's concerns which were primarily to do with detailed architectural design and the landscape design in certain areas. The Panel was concerned about the extensive use of stucco, the amount of brick and the way it was being handled, the treatment of the small plaza on Broadway including the building entries off the plaza, and a recommendation for roof decks on the townhouses. Staff believe the applicant's response has been excellent and all the items identified by the Panel have been well addressed.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Tom Bell, Architect, briefly described the refinements made to the scheme.

Panel's Comments:

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

The Panel unanimously supported this submission and congratulated the applicant on the very positive improvements that have been made.

The Panel strongly endorsed the rationalization of the brick treatment and was pleased to see the brick piers and the corner element on the tower come down to the ground. The outdoor space has been improved significantly, particularly at the entrances, and the courtyard is now much better organized in terms of circulation. The subtle colour palette was also strongly supported.

There was one expression of regret that the Pine Street elevation was not livelier, but overall the Panel felt the project had become quite an elegant scheme reflecting very good quality. It will make a valuable urban design contribution to this part of Broadway.

2. **Address: 2330 Kingsway**
Use: Mixed
Zoning: C-2 and RS-1 to CD-1
Application Status: Rezoning
Architect: Timothy Ankenman
Owner: Synergy Projects Ltd.
Review: Second
Delegation: Timothy Ankenman
Staff: Scot Hein

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-2)**Introduction:**

Scot Hein, Development Planner, presented this application, first reviewed by the Panel March 11, 1998. It was not supported at that time. There was general support for the proposed uses, and the scale and architectural expression, but there were concerns about the weakness of the 2-storey massing at the corner. The proposed density was generally supported but with the recommendation to transfer some of the density from the East 30th frontage to Kingsway. The Panel had concerns about the extent of surface parking, including the autocourt, and concerns about the parking and loading systems in general. In addition, there were issues relating to residential livability, particularly for units facing the autocourt, and the corner development next to the beer and wine store and the pub.

Mr. Hein noted that since the Panel last saw this project, Engineering has indicated it no longer has an interest in pursuing the Clarendon Connector at this location, which has resulted in a larger site for the project. Major revisions have been made to the proposal since the last review. Overall FSR is now 2.2, of which 1.72 FSR is residential. The Panel's advice is sought on the revised massing and form at the corner and the appropriateness of 1.45 FSR on this portion of the site. Comments are sought with respect to the revised vehicular and pedestrian circulation.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Timothy Ankenman, Architect, described the revised proposal.

Panels Comments

The Panel reviewed the model and posted drawings and offered the following comments:

The Panel supported this rezoning application and reiterated its support for the proposed uses on this site. It was felt that considerable improvement had been made to the project, particularly on the Kingsway frontage which generally now has a much richer façade.

The proposal for the pub was generally supported but the need for continuous weather protection was emphasized.

The Panel's main area of concern related to the southerly portion of the site. It was strongly suggested that the children's play area would be better located more centrally. As well, it was felt there is an opportunity to improve pedestrian movement to provide a better south-north link through the site, and a better connection for the outdoor space on the northerly portion of the site. To allow a configuration that would embrace the outdoor space a bit more it was suggested that efforts be made to move the massing of the building towards the perimeter of the site. Certainly, the corner of Nanaimo and East 30th was thought to be a poor location for the children's play area since this corner will undoubtedly become much busier in the future.

The Panel had serious concerns about the commercial parking court and urged that it be enclosed to allow the creation of a landscaped amenity space for the benefit of the residents. There were also concerns about noise and safety and security, particularly at night time, for the ground floor residents of the southerly building next to the parking. CPTED issues will be an important consideration at the next level of design.

The Panel generally felt attention should be given to reinforcing the corners, the entries, and the pedestrian links through the site. Softening the treatment at the lane was also strongly recommended.

Applicant's Response:

Mr. Ankenman commented that moving the playground to a more central location will seriously affect the entries and circulation on the site.

3. Address: 1001 Hornby St./1088 Burrard St. (Wall Centre II)

DA: previous DE 401256
Use: Hotel (41 storeys, 556 rooms)
Zoning: DD to CD-1
Application Status: Rezoning
Architect: Busby and Associates
Owner: Calmont Investments Ltd.
Review: First
Delegation: Peter Busby, Jeffrey Staates
Staff: Ralph Segal/Lynda Challis

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (1-7)**Introduction:**

Lynda Challis, Rezoning Planner, presented this application to permit the transfer of 17 058 m² (183,619 sq.ft.) of heritage density to the Phase 2 portion of Wall Centre to allow for additional hotel conference facilities below grade and in the podium, and to allow for additional storeys in the tower. The site comprises two parcels which are being developed in two phases. Phase 1 is complete and includes the Sheraton Wall Centre Hotel at the corner of Burrard and Helmcken, a residential tower at the corner of Hornby and Helmcken, and an entertainment pavilion along Hornby Street. The north lot is now being prepared for development of the second phase which has an approved Development Permit for a 138 m (450 ft.) hotel tower at the corner of Nelson and Hornby and a public open space, 'Volunteer Square', at Nelson and Burrard. The rezoning application is guided by the transfer of density policies and guidelines which encourage heritage density transfers as a means of preserving heritage buildings, and particularly encourages transfers to sites where the impact of the additional density is minimal.

The proposal is for a 41-storey tower above a 4-storey podium. The new proposal is still within the 138 m height limit. The lower 25 floors of the tower include 344 hotel rooms, with 64 residential units above. An executive meeting space is planned for the penthouse floor. The additional heritage density will be transferred from two sites, 440 Cambie Street and the former Vancouver Public Library on Burrard Street. This density would generally be absorbed in three areas of the building: 30 percent for a large ballroom and associated facilities located below grade between Volunteer Square and the underground parking; 35 percent in the podium which has been redesigned to include more meeting space and improved pedestrian/vehicular access to the new hotel; the remaining density in the tower with lower floor-to-floor heights. The tower would increase from 35 to 41 storeys but with no change in the overall height.

Staff have no concerns about the proposed rezoning and strongly support the proposal to absorb a significant amount of heritage density on this large site, almost completely without affecting the previously approved massing and height.

Ralph Segal, Senior Development Planner, briefly reviewed the design issues. The areas in which the advice of the Panel is sought relate to: the proposed revisions to the podium; the detailed architectural treatment; the tower cap; Volunteer Square and the overall open space. Regarding the proposed transfer of density, the only criterion necessary under the guidelines is to be able to accommodate density from the heritage density bank, for which the public benefit has already been achieved by way of the preservation of heritage properties.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Peter Busby, Architect, explained that detailed structural analysis and wind tunnel testing has been carried out which has resulted in the need to square off the tower top to accommodate the large dampers recommended to address tower vibration under certain wind conditions. Attempts have

been made, however, to maintain the directionality of the tower top which is located asymmetrically. There is a very slight increase (900 mm) in tower width which has no impact on shadowing. With respect to the changes to the podium, Mr. Busby said they believe it makes for a more urban solution, and he welcomed the Panel's comments on the podium edge treatments. Jeffrey Staates explained that the open space plan is basically unchanged, with the same circulation routes across the site. The entry from the existing motorcourt has a stronger relationship to the new hotel tower.

Panels Comments:

The Panel reviewed the model and posted material and commented as follows:

The Panel supported this rezoning application and remained enthusiastic about the elegant and dynamic tower form.

The majority of Panel members were disappointed at the loss of the previous proposal's sculptural qualities and urged the applicant to do everything possible to strengthen the directionality at the top. This building will be highly visible from many different locations in the city and, as such, it calls for the very best treatment at the top.

With respect to the podium, while recognizing the functional restrictions the Panel also felt strongly that additional transparency was required on the Hornby Street façade. The use in this location calls for far greater animation. Consideration should be given to moving some of the meeting rooms to a less prominent location. It was noted that the podium of the previous scheme was much more dynamic and memorable. Anything that can be done to recover some of the earlier dynamism in the way the building meets the ground would be a worthwhile exercise. The tower needs to be more formally separated from the podium. While the strong streetwall is a positive contribution to the street it unfortunately overwhelms the tower to the extent that the quality in the upper portion of the tower is all but lost at street level. Its proximity to the Electra should also be considered. The way the podium meets the tower on the Nelson façade demands particular attention.

The Nelson/Hornby corner should be much more exposed by pulling back some of the massing to make it more of a "place". Weather protection should be provided on the corner. Greater reinforcement of the building entry is also called for so that it is obvious on Hornby Street.

Concerns were expressed about the uncomfortable relationship of the new and the existing hotel in the way the two façades come together. It was suggested that much greater effort should be made at extending some of the elements of the old across into the new component for a more comfortable transition.

With respect to the open space, careful consideration should be given to the proportions of Volunteer Square in relationship to the surrounding green spaces. There was also a comment that while the strong sweeping motion which serves to draw pedestrians off Burrard Street is very effective, it is unfortunate that it is necessary then to mount stairs in order to proceed through the site. While the landscape materials are good quality, there was a question as to whether the black granite might be too sombre. The design of the Square implies that little happens beyond it, whereas much could be done in terms of connecting the existing building with the new, bringing more animation to that outdoor space. It was suggested that extending the existing weather protection elements would be one effective means of creating that activity.

Applicants Response:

With respect to the podium, Mr. Busby thanked the Panel for its constructive comments which he said will give them direction for the development permit stage.

4. **Address: 3585 West 40th Avenue**
DA: 403103
Use: Multiple Dwelling/Retail (4 storeys, 12 units)
Zoning: C-2
Applications Status: Complete
Architect: Timothy Ankenman
Owner: Cypress Park Development Corp.
Review: First
Delegation: Timothy Ankenman
Staff: Scot Hein, Ralph Segal
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EVALUATION: SUPPORT (0-7)

Introduction:

The Senior Development Planner, Ralph Segal, noted that the majority of C-2 applications are not normally referred to the Panel. However, City Council recently directed that all applications in the C-2 zone which seek relaxations be referred to Council, first seeking the Panel's advice. This is an interim measure pending the availability of new C-2 guidelines which the Planning Department has been instructed to prepare. An important direction from Council is that C-2 projects should have very good architectural design and use quality exterior materials.

The Development Planner, Scot Hein, introduced the application, noting this particular site presents particular challenges not normally seen in the C-2 zone. As well, the site is within one of the three commercial nodes identified in CityPlan's ongoing "visioning" process. In their contribution to this process, Dunbar residents have expressed concerns about height, building bulk, architectural quality, public realm quality, and containment of densification within the arterials. A previous approval for this site was for an all-residential seniors project. At that time, Council indicated a preference for the crossing to be on Dunbar Street rather than 40th Avenue. The current application proposes loading off 40th and residential vehicular entry off Dunbar. Adjacent zoning directly east and south of this site is RS-5. To the north and west is C-2. The shallowness of the site (66 ft. less 7 ft. dedication) presents particular challenges. As well, the site slopes down north to south more than 5 ft. and has no lane.

The proposal is for a mixed use project, fronting on Dunbar, containing 4 CRUs at grade and 12 double-fronting residential units above. Residential access is via a walkway from 40th Avenue. Proposed height is 40 ft., FSR 2.4 (1.9 residential, 0.5 commercial). Given the absence of a lane, a rear yard setback of approximately 11 ft. is sought to the east that will require Board of Variance relaxation. The advice of the Panel is sought on architectural quality (form and massing; streetscape; materials); access (split crossing); zoning (rear yard setback; circulation/treatment/landscaping within the rear yard; property line treatment).

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Timothy Ankenman, Architect, reviewed the design rationale. He noted the neighbourhood's concerns about 4-storey buildings in the C-2 zone and explained that the attempt has been made to give the project the impression of being 3-storeys by means of articulation and setting the top floor back in places. Because this is a shallow site, a single loaded corridor system is proposed. As well, the rear façade has been designed to avoid privacy conflicts with the neighbourhood.

Panel's Comments:

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

The Panel did not support this application and unanimously considered that the challenges of the C-2 zoning were beyond what this site can reasonably accommodate.

Panel members supported the streetscape and the streetwall on Dunbar Street but had major concerns about the overall massing of the building, and particularly the façade facing the adjacent residential area. A number of suggestions were made. Serious consideration should be given to the building having a more residential feel in response to residential neighbours. The bulk of the fourth floor should be reduced, either by eliminating a storey or taking a completely different approach to the roof design. Another suggestion was to consider setting back the entire upper floor with a continuous recess at the perimeter.

There was mixed response to the proposed vehicular access off Dunbar which was seen to have some advantage but at the same time was tending to aggravate the problems experienced at the east property line. The difficulties posed by the absence of a lane and the shallow depth of the site were acknowledged, and it was noted that ordinarily much more generous setbacks would be provided next the adjacent residential neighbourhood.

The Panel's biggest area of concern about this project related to its east façade. Noting the restriction of accessing the units from this side, clearly a great deal more work is required to effectively address issues of privacy and overlook and to achieve a much more sensitive transition to the adjacent residential zone.

Finally, with respect to C-2 projects in general it was suggested that it might be appropriate for the Planning Department to consider discretionary density for the C-2 zone.

Applicants Response:

Mr. Ankenman had no further comments.

5. Address: 3718 West Broadway (at Alma)

DA: 403195

Use: Mixed (4 storeys)

Zoning: C-2

Applications Status: Complete

Architect: Studio One Arch.

Owner: 4145 Investments Ltd.

Review: First

Delegation: Thomas Wolf

Staff: Scot Hein

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

The Development Planner, Scot Hein, introduced this application which is before the Panel as a result of Council's recent directive that C-2 projects be referred to the Panel for advice. The site is at the southwest corner of Broadway and Alma, surrounded by other C-2 sites. Since there is no adjacency to a residential zone, the lane setback prescribed by the guidelines is not required. The site slopes approximately 9 ft. from southwest to northeast. Residential vehicular access is proposed off Broadway, with loading off the lane which dead-ends at Alma. The proposed 4-storey development comprises 5 CRU's and 27 residential units. Proposed density is 2.82 FSR, of which approximately 2.3 FSR is residential. The application seeks a minor height relaxation above the 40 ft. limit which is exceeded at the Broadway frontage and portions of the Alma frontage by several feet, although this is compensated somewhat by the slope of the site. Proposed materials are brick veneer, concrete, metal spandrel panel/aluminum glazing system and some stucco. The advice of the Panel is sought on the architectural and landscape quality (form and massing, streetscape, materials, and proposed landscaping for public realm and the second floor rear yard deck). Comments are also sought with respect to access, and on view impact given the height relaxation being sought.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Thomas Wolf, Architect, briefly described the design rationale, noting the building has been broken down into three components, each of which is supported by 2 ft. wide concrete columns.

Panel's Comments:

After reviewing the posted drawings, the Panel offered the following comments:

The Panel unanimously supported this application. The context of the site among other C-2 developments, and the slope of the site, has tended to favour this proposal by allowing a much more graceful response than has been seen in other C-2 locations. The Panel found the architectural quality very supportable. Its simple expression has a certain charm and is very appropriate for this particular site.

It was recommended that a stronger statement at the corner would be helpful to signify its special position at the end of the commercial zone on Broadway. One suggestion was to make a diagonal cut across the corner to create a grade level space for an outdoor seating area, for example.

Several Panel members recommended softening the treatment of the podium, especially on the south elevation. It was stressed that the success of the concrete base will depend a great deal on the quality of the finish. It was strongly recommended that the amount of landscaping material be increased to allow vines to grow on the wall, and to delete the individual planter boxes in favour of one continuous planter on the deck. One Panel member also suggested reconfiguring the CRUs to allow the creation of some additional public open space.

Everything possible should be done to control the signage along Broadway, to avoid a variety of signage that will dominate the streetscape. Signage should be simple yet animated, in keeping with the simplicity of the building.

The Panel supported the proposed high quality materials, with the possible exception of the stucco on the rear elevation. Given the amount of stucco is fairly small it was strongly suggested that it be replaced by the metal panel shown on the other elevations.

One Panel member expressed regret that the vehicular crossing is on Broadway rather than Alma, given the highly pedestrianized nature of Broadway.

Applicant's Response:

Mr. Wolf said he generally accepted the Panel's comments.