

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** June 30, 2010

**TIME:** 4.00 pm

**PLACE:** Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:  
Bruce Haden (Chair)  
James Cheng  
Jeff Corbett  
Jane Durante  
David Godin  
Jim Huffman  
Steve McFarlane  
Maurice Pez  
Alan Storey

**REGRETS:**  
Robert Barnes  
Oliver Lang  
Vladimir Mikler  
Scott Romses

**RECORDING  
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

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ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	3068 Kingsway
2.	2305 West 7 <sup>th</sup> Avenue (Kitsilano Neighbourhood House)
3.	2699 Kingsway

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**BUSINESS MEETING**

Chair Haden 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.

1. Address: 3068 Kingsway  
 DE: RZ/DE413545  
 Description: To rezone this site from C-2 to CD-1 to allow for a 6-storey building with retail at grade and 30 rental units under the STIR program.  
 Zoning: C-2 to CD-1  
 Application Status: RZ-C  
 Review: Second (first was non-support)  
 Owner: Pawa Holdings  
 Architect: Matthew Cheng Architect Inc.  
 Delegation: Matthew Cheng, Matthew Cheng Architect Inc.  
 Bryan Marthaler, DMG Landscape Architects  
 Staff: Grant Miller and Sailen Black

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

- **Introduction:** Sailen Black, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a 6-storey building just east of Rupert Street on Kingsway. He noted the context for the area which includes the Synala Housing Co-op to the east. The proposal is for a 30 unit apartment building. He noted that the previous design presented a variegated form on the front elevation, including angles and different wall patterns. In contrast, the design now has lot line walls and inset side walls that are comparatively simple and the rear wall is essentially flat. Mr. Black described the key aspect needing improvement from the previous review by the Panel regarding a more forthright expression of height facing Kingsway.

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

- Panel commentary on the overall architectural and landscape design
- Comment on the angled roof line proposed at 6<sup>th</sup> floor facing Kingsway
- Has the revised design responded to previous Panel comments

Mr. Black took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Matthew Cheng, Architect, noted that there were a couple of discrepancies between the drawings and the model. The two volumes are stepped back on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor and as well he described the location of the brick and concrete on the elevations. He also noted that the roof line could be improved. Mr. Cheng said his struggle is with the blank wall because it might be there for awhile before any development takes place on the adjacent site. He plans to bring the brick around the corner to articulate the side wall and as well he also plans to use hardy panel on the remaining portion of the wall.

Bryan Marthaler, Landscape Architect, noted that the previous review was positive and so there aren't any changes to the landscaping. They are trying to adapt Vancouver's urban agriculture guidelines to bring in a lot of edible plants and as well include some private garden space. They will be preserving the two existing street trees and adding some decorative exposed aggregate paving with concrete banding for the sidewalk.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Consider a brighter colour palette;
  - Design development to the diagonal roof overhang to increase the visual impact;
  - Consider enhancing the residential entry;
  - Consider reflecting the Kingsway geometry in building components including the possibility of doing this for the entire sixth floor.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and said they appreciated the applicant taking the Panel's comments into consideration. They supported the density and height.

The Panel supported the simpler expression and the massing noting that it wasn't easy to design a building for an area that isn't fully developed. A couple of Panel members suggested the applicant take into consideration the final form of development for the street. They noted that some consideration also needs to be given to the side walls as they will be visible for some time.

A couple of Panel members noted the roof line and thought it was interesting as it gives a uniform line although a several Panel members weren't sure that the angled roof was the way to go and seemed unresolved. They also thought that decreasing the serrated edge on the top level would enhance the façade. There was some concern that the overhang looked bulky and didn't complete the corners.

A couple of Panel members noted that the previous window design was more traditional. They also found the colour scheme to be a bit heavy and needed to be more striking. A couple of Panel members noted that the residential entry was similar to the other doors and needed to have something that made it more special and inviting.

A couple of Panel members would like to see the retail defer to the overall geometry of Kingsway with one Panel member suggesting the use of commercial canopies.

The Panel supported the plans for the landscaping.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Cheng thanked the Panel for their comments noting that they were trying to design a humble building.

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2. Address:	2305 West 7 <sup>th</sup> Avenue (Kitsilano Neighbourhood House)
DE:	RZ/DE413905
Description:	To rezone this site to allow for renovation of two existing heritage buildings and the addition of an infill building for a neighbourhood house, childcare and seniors housing.
Zoning:	RT-8 to CD-1
Application Status:	RZ/C
Review:	First
Owner:	Kitsilano Neighbourhood House
Architect:	Sean McEwen Architect
Delegation:	Sean McEwen, Sean McEwen Architect Randy Sharp, Sharp & Diamond Landscape Architects Catherine Leach, Kits Neighbourhood House
Staff:	Grant Miller and Marie Linehan

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**EVALUATION: REZONING - SUPPORT (8-0) DE - SUPPORT (5-3)**

- **Introduction:** Grant Miller, Rezoning Planner, introduced the project, which is a concurrent rezoning and development permit proposal. The project is the Kits Neighbourhood House that sits on the northwest corner of West 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Vine Street. There is an existing program on the site with a day care, two heritage buildings and their proposing an infill that will contain affordable housing for seniors. The proposal is inline with the City wide housing objectives.

Marie Linehan, Development Planner, further described the proposal noting that the site contains three fifty foot lots. The proposal is undergoing a rezoning because of the combination of uses on the site as well as the increase in density. Existing on the site is the heritage hall which contains the Kitsilano Neighbourhood facilities. There is another heritage listed building referred to as the Hay House and was originally a single family home and now houses the admin functions for Kits Neighbourhood House. In the new the proposal it will contain the day care. The heritage hall will be part of a heritage revitalization agreement with the City. Ms. Linehan described the architectural plans for the proposal noting that the bulk of the addition is occurring between the two existing buildings. It will be a four storey building contain 15 units of senior housing over three floors and the ground floor will house the expanded Kits Neighbourhood House admin and service space. The building is intended to read as a separate infill form but will be connected to the existing buildings in order to share exit stairs, elevator and to provide direct access for the seniors units to the services and programs that Kits Neighbourhood House offers.

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

- Proposed massing;
- Bulk of the addition in terms of its proximity to both existing buildings on the site and how the connecting pieces are handled;
- In terms of the ground floor treatment and front yard public space area, the nature of the day care play area as being a sunken, excavated area;
- Treatment of the elevation of the ground floor of the new building in terms of expressing a more public function and differentiating it from the residential units above;
- The overall materials palette in terms of the use of the more traditional materials for the new infill building.

Mr. Miller and Ms. Linehan took questions from the Panel.

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- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Sean McEwen, Architect, further described the proposal noting that the intention was to use the heritage buildings as book ends for the project. They plan to retain the existing buildings on the site and the new infill is to have a strong visual connection to the neighbourhood. He described the use for the new building noting that there is to be 15 units for seniors. He said the intent of the massing is to respect the scale of the heritage buildings while keeping the development at three storeys. Mr. McEwen added that there are number of green building policies included in the proposal with plans to certify in the future. There is currently a childcare program and they are intending to relocate it into the Hay House with a play area in front. Mr. McEwen stated that that the proposed parking is for only six stalls as the staff for the most part uses transit.

Randy Sharp, Landscape Architects, described the landscaping plans noting there are some massive red oak trees on the site. They have expanded the corner plaza from an urban design point of view so that the area can be used for special events. They are also planning to create a rain garden in the area. The heritage hall entrance has been highlighted as well as the main atrium with special paving. The grade change to the daycare reduces the height of the play structure and will help to damp the sound from the children. He added that there will also be a roof top garden and the amenity area will be expanded on the Vine Street side of the site.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Design development to the connections between the centre block and the heritage buildings, increase the sense of joint or reveal between new and old with special attention to the materiality and quality of the glazed joint.
  - Consider detail simplification for the senior's housing component.
  - Consider the possibility of moving the senior's housing block further north to accentuate the heritage buildings.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the rezoning as well as the use, density and form of development. However, there were some concerns regarding some of the architectural expressions and thought more work had to be done to make the three pieces work together.

The Panel thought the proposal would be a great amenity for the neighbourhood and agreed that the form was consistent with the area. The Panel had some concern regarding the interface with the neighbours to the north. They also thought the new building would add more shade on the lane although they agreed that there won't be any overlook issues onto the neighbours. Most of the Panel liked the way the buildings were fitted on the site as they thought it reflected the Kits character. They noted that adding a modern building to announce the entrance to the project worked well. The Panel commended the applicant for retaining the Hay House as it adds to the project.

A couple of Panel members had some concerns regarding the treatment to the Hay House suggesting a more ambitious approach could be undertaken as they thought it was somewhat timid. There was also a suggestion that more density could be put behind the Hay House and that the connecting elements needed to be stronger with special attention given to the glazing joints. Although bringing the house forward level with the hall seemed to make sense in terms of creating an over all plan, the massing seemed chunky and squeezed into the middle. One Panel member suggested having a glass roof as there was

a considerable amount of shading on the hall. Another Panel member thought the atrium and the glass element with the amount of frontage almost read as another building and thought it worked better in the drawings than on the architectural model.

Most of the Panel members had some concerns with the detailing of the new building noting that the two heritage buildings have a lot of fine details and although emulating that would be a mistake they thought the expression could be simplified. They noted the use of glass handrails on the hall and thought they were out of character with the rest of the site.

The Panel didn't have any concerns with the sunken children's outdoor play area as they felt it would get lots of sunlight.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. McEwen thanked the Panel for their comments noting that it is a complex project. They intend to take another look at the detailing and more design development as they continue with the project. He said they plan to continue working with staff to improve the design.

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3. Address:	2699 Kingsway
DE:	413737
Description:	To construct two 4-storey mixed use buildings on this site.
Zoning:	C-2
Application Status:	Complete
Review:	First
Owner:	Wally King Holdings Ltd.
Architect:	W.T. Leung Architects Inc.
Delegation:	Wing Ting Leung, W.T. Leung Architects Inc. Gerry Eckford, Eckford & Associates Landscape Architects
Staff:	Bob Adair

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#### EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-0)

- **Introduction:** Bob Adair, Development Planner, introduced the proposal on the north side of Kingsway. Mr. Adair described the context for the area noting a 20 foot sewer right-of-way running north through the site up to the 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue SkyTrain Station. The City owns the property and there are plans to make it a pedestrian link to the station along the sewer right-of-way. The site is in the middle of the Norquay Village Neighbourhood Center and local shopping area. Mr. Adair described the Norquay Village planning process noting that a report is planned to go to Council in the fall recommending adoption of the rezoning guidelines for this portion of Kingsway. The guidelines will allow privately initiated rezoning applications for sites in the area. The zoning will remain C-2 and developers will be free to develop under C-2 zoning even if the new guidelines are approved. In addition there may be City initiated rezonings of the neighbourhood to the north but this hasn't been finalized as yet.

The proposal is a fairly standard C-2 development with ground floor commercial and three storeys of residential above. Commercial parking is accessed by the lane as there isn't any development allowed in the right-of-way and the two buildings will have separate access. As well the access to the residential parking is off the lane, one in each building. The retail wraps the corner into the right-of-way and is set back at the ground floor level. Brick is planned for the first three floors on the Kingsway frontage changing to paneling with wood frames on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor. Security gates are planned at the lane and mid site which will be open during the day.

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

- Articulation and streetscape issues along Kingsway
- The handling of the right-of-way break in the streetscape and whether or not additional sculpting is desired both at ground level and in terms of section to provide stronger pedestrian amenity
- Material and detailing issues
- Given the length of the building is any refinement worth looking at
- Any comments on quality of materials

Mr. Adair took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Wing Ting Leung, Architect, further described the proposal noting that it is a shallow site. As well the actual gross density is lower than what would normally be seen on a C-2 site.

Gerry Eckford, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans. They tried to pick up the narrative of Kingsway and celebrate the history of the streetcar. There will be some

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imagery that was near by and will play that up in the corridor. They have had to place major planting in planters so that the City is able to get into the right-of-way for any maintenance or repair to the sewer line.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Consider making the central fence removable in the sewer right-of-way to diminish the split of the right-of-way of the two buildings
  - Design development to the sewer right-of-way slot to dramatically enhance its distinctiveness as a uniquely scaled urban cut
  - Consider locating prominent glazed stairways on both sides of the slot
  - Consider green roofs
  - Design development to ensure quality retail space at grade including consideration of signage, lighting and materiality.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and thought it was an appropriate building for Kingsway.

The Panel thought it was a handsome building and that the Kingsway façade was a good fit for the neighbourhood. A couple of Panel members thought the two pieces should be similar to help reinforce the cut through. Also most of the Panel members thought the retail level could be handled differently perhaps with the addition of colored canopies and lighting to make for a bolder approach.

The Panel liked the landscape plans in the gap but thought the treatment above it was a bit severe. They thought the gap was an unique and interesting opportunity and they felt it was being treated more like a party wall and needed to be more distinctive. One Panel member suggested reversing the balconies or adding Juliette style balconies. The Panel agreed that the gap made for active space for the residents and added focus to the building. Several Panel members thought the fence at the end of the gap was odd and didn't work from a CPTED point of view. Most of the Panel would like to see the stairs reoriented. It was suggested to glaze them and then pop them out into the courtyard which would add to the vibrancy of the gap. The result would be that the residents would use them more often.

Most of the Panel would like to see roof top access especially for the top units and they would also like to see the addition of a green roof.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Leung thanked the panel for their comments.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.