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## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

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**DATE:** June 30, 1999

**TIME:** 4.00 p.m.

**PLACE:** Committee Room #1, City Hall

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:  
Joseph Hrudá (Chair)  
Patricia Campbell  
Sheldon Chandler  
James Cheng  
Roger Hughes (present for Item 1 only)  
Sean McEwan  
Keith Ross (present for Item 1 only)

**REGRETS:** Per Christoffersen  
Paul Grant  
Gilbert Raynard  
Norman Shearing  
Joe Werner

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Carol Hubbard

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ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING
1. 601 Canada Place Way (Retail Pavilion)
2. 999 Canada Place Way (Pier Extension)
3. Seabus Terminal

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1. Address:	601 Canada Place Way
DA:	404281
Use:	Retail (4 storeys)
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Prelim
Architect:	Architectura
Owner:	Vancouver Port Authority
Review:	First
Delegation:	Dave Galpin, John Evans, Alan Endall, Clive Grout
Staff:	Ralph Segal/Anita Molaro/Rob Jenkins

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### **EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-0)**

- **Introduction:** Rob Jenkins provided some background information on the process to date. The subject application is the fourth DA of the various components of the convention centre complex. Following later will be applications for the plaza and the seabus connection.

Ralph Segal, Development Planner, introduced this preliminary development application for the retail pavilion. A major change has taken place since the Panel last saw this component at the CDA stage when it comprised two components, connected at the ground floor level but maintaining the Granville Street end view corridor. The footprint has not significantly changed but an element has now been placed in the Granville Street view corridor, contrary to Council policy which requires the street end views to the north to be maintained. For Granville Street, some intrusions may be permitted provided some view experience is maintained of the water and mountains, and provided they are designed at low scale and to create landmark interest at the end of the street perspective. The Panel is asked to comment specifically on whether it believes this policy is met, noting it will be reported to Council when it is asked to consider the form of development. The proposal is to provide a roofed, glazed atrium containing a ferris wheel, to create a new visual terminus on the Granville Street end view corridor. Mr. Segal also noted a condition of the CDA was to enlarge the view gap and increase the width of the ground level open pedestrian link to the plaza along the Granville Street alignment to create a generous public route that will draw pedestrians from Granville Square Plaza. As well, a change has been made to the porte cochere since the CDA stage, which raises questions as to whether it will function as a true pedestrian precinct.

- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** David Galpin explained there has been an evolution since the Panel's last review of this component. He noted that most of the project is Provincially funded with the exception of the retail pavilion and the hotel. The CDA froze the form of development, based on Greystone's response to market conditions at that time. The colonnade will come later and it may precede the plaza. The daycare is also part of this application and it is located on the southeast corner at the upper level. The current schedule demands that the retail pavilion be incorporated into the structure below, which in turn is incorporated into the marine works below that.

John Evans, Trilogy, explained this component represents the city's part of the overall waterfront development because its economic viability will be driven by its ability to compete with other retail/entertainment destinations within the Lower Mainland. It also provides an opportunity to anchor Gastown, and to create a destination at the foot of Granville Street. The building is intended to be experiential, entertainment oriented, it is not cinema-anchored and the retail use will be ancillary.

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the architecture is also an important part of the attraction and the building is intended to be a “showstopper” in the city. There has been a conscious decision not to make the building transparent. It is intended to operate 20 hours a day.

Alan Endall explained they have identified some key objectives for the project in design terms: to create a singular identifying sense of place for the project, an intensely integrated and interconnected building with a synergistic mix of uses. To achieve this it was necessary to create a single building to establish the critical mass and sufficient animation and activity to create a vibrant place. They also wanted to create a unique and memorable destination, emphasizing entertainment and food and beverage. He explained it would be more like an Expo pavilion than a traditional downtown retail building. Key to the project is the integration of the building with adjacent plazas, to create a strong destination to anchor the terminus of Granville Street. As well, to create a strong entrance to Portside and an indoor public oriented space that can be used year round. Mr. Endall reviewed the urban design issues at work on the site and the design rationale.

- **Panel’s Comments:** Following a review of the models and posted drawings, the Chair reminded the Panel of particular areas in which comments are sought, namely: the Granville Street end view corridor, pedestrian connectivity at ground level along the Granville corridor, the Howe Street end public edge at the porte cochere, and the form and character issues along Canada Place Way. The Panel commented as follows:

The Panel unanimously supported this application. The applicant was complimented on the significant improvements that have been made to the scheme since the Panel last saw it.

The Panel did not share staff’s concern about obstructing the Granville Street view corridor. Generally, the concept for framing and covering the street-end view with an atrium was considered a worthy and valid approach. The landmark form was felt to be a worthy substitute for an unlimited view, and a welcome addition to the urban design fabric of the city. While it may be pushing the boundaries of the policy, it has been done creatively to arrive at something better. It was noted the view of the mountains is still maintained from Georgia Street.

There were reservations expressed, however, about the ability to make the atrium as transparent as described. The applicant was urged to keep the structure as simple as possible and to use whatever means are necessary to achieve the transparency proposed. As part of the effort to minimize the obstructions it was suggested the height of the arcade on the plaza side be reconsidered. It seems too high at 40 ft. and it diminishes the value of the two arcades that are parallel to the street. If it is lowered to, say, 20 ft. it would provide more effective weather protection as well as make it easier to integrate. It would also allow more view through the central atrium.

The Panel strongly supported the proposed changes to the porte cochere and agreed with the need to develop it as a shared space for cars and pedestrians, with the pedestrian character prevailing. The entire space should read as a “place to be” rather than just a drop-off area. There were some questions about the retail kiosks separating the pedestrian realm and the drop-off. One suggestion was for these units to face both ways so they are not turning their backs on the car drop-off. The need for continuous canopies was noted.

Some concern was expressed by one Panel member about the dependence on tenant improvements and the need to provide more opportunity for the tenants to create vibrant and attractive storefronts for the public to enjoy.

The Panel was generally comfortable with the way the Granville pedestrian corridor is handled with the narrow street through the building. There were, however, concerns about the relationship of the back of this building to Granville Square where it was felt more needed to be done at the pedestrian level. Given the impact that blocking the view corridor has on Granville Square it is important for this project to find a neighbourly way of dealing with it. Linkage from the downtown core across Granville Square is strongly recommended. It was noted there is an opportunity for a pedestrian bridge to Granville Square.

The architectural character of the street front along Canada Place Way was generally supported, with some concerns about some of the formality at the southeast corner and a need for more transparency in the middle.

Disappointment was expressed by one Panel member that the “grand gesture” seems to fall apart when it reaches the Howe Street corner. It was suggested that effort be applied to opening it up more to make it much more inviting. Overall, however, the Panel was pleased to see this project taking a less serious approach than seen previously.

- **Applicant’s Response:** Mr. Galpin assured the Panel they are working with the owners of Granville Square and are also looking for ways to enhance Canada Place Way by developing retail on the south side of the street. There is a possibility of putting a fairly generous set of stairs from Granville Square onto Canada Place Way. A connecting bridge is also an option under consideration. With respect to the porte cochere and the integration of the plaza, it has been their intention to run paving materials through and a commonality of materials and detailing. The retail kiosks could become information kiosks for the convention centre rather than static retail.

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2. Address:	999 Canada Place Way
Use:	Pier Extension
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Musson Cattell Mackey
Owner:	Vancouver Port Authority
Review:	First
Delegation:	Dave Galpin, Frank Musson
Staff:	Ralph Segal/Anita Molaro/Rob Jenkins

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#### EVALUATION: SUPPORT (4-0)

- **Introduction:** Rob Jenkins noted that while this application differs in terms of process, the Panel's role remains the same. Ralph Segal described the evolution of the design for the pier extension, the main purpose of which is to obtain additional cruise ship berth capacity. It is a more modest scheme than seen previously.
- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** Frank Musson, Architect, explained the design rationale and described the more simplistic approach to the scheme which maintains the integrity of the Canada Place sails.
- **Panel's Comments:** After reviewing the model and drawings, the Panel commented as follows:

The Panel fully supported this simple and modest approach to the design of the pier extension and was pleased to see the integrity of the important landmark sails preserved.

One Panel member had some concerns about the symmetry of the meeting room volume and felt the highly sculptural nature of Canada Place called for something more complex. It was suggested it might be advantageous to create some vaulted ceilings in at least some of the rooms and perhaps mask the overall meeting room volume. Another member also expressed regret at the loss of the existing prow form and would like to have seen it reintroduced.

The Panel questioned the traditional response to the end of the pier and thought a more complex structure for the flag pole might be more appropriate. Creating a meaningful "destination" at the ground plane at the end was also suggested.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Musson noted the flagstaff is approximately 90 ft. high, which has been generated to some degree by the height of the masts which support the sails. He added, it will also be more complex than shown currently, with guying etc., and the intention is to have a raised podium at the base, and some interpretative signage.

3. WORKSHOP:	Seabus Terminal
Zoning:	CD-1
Architect:	Musson Cattell Mackey
Owner:	Vancouver Port Authority
Review:	First
Delegation:	Dave Galpin, Murray McKinnon, Frank Musson
Staff:	Ralph Segal/Anita Molaro/Rob Jenkins

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- **Introduction:** Ralph Segal, Development Planner, explained the intention is to get the Panel's early reaction to the progression of the Seabus terminal design.
- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** David Galpin noted the Panel's earlier comments on the design of the seabus terminal had led them to reassess. They are now seeking the Panel's concurrence as to the appropriateness of the slight shrinking and modifications to the envelopes that have been made so that marine design can be frozen.
- **Panel's Comments:** In the general discussion that followed the Panel indicated its full support for the direction shown. They liked the tower element and it was suggested some subtle advantage could be taken of the alignment to the Cordova connector. Detaching the terminal from the scalloped edge was strongly endorsed.