

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: March 10, 2010

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Bruce Haden (Chair)
James Cheng
Jane Durante
David Godin
Jim Huffman
Steve McFarlane
Vladimir Mikler
Maurice Pez
Scott Romses

REGRETS:
Robert Barnes
Jeff Corbett
Oliver Lang
Maurice Pez

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	984 West Broadway
2.	1418 East 41 st Avenue

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Haden called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. There was some New Business regarding the selection of a vice-chair. As there wasn't a decision the item was put over until the next meeting. The meeting then considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 984 West Broadway
DE: Rezoning
Description: Ten-storey commercial building with retail at grade on Broadway and Oak Street frontages and office use on the 2nd through 5th floors.
Zoning: C-3A to CD-1
Application Status: RZ
Review: First
Owner: Blue Sky Properties
Architect: Chris Dikeakos Architects
Delegation: Richard Bernstein, Chris Dikeakos Architects
Jennifer Stamp, Durante Kreuk Landscape Architects
George Steeves, Sterling Cooper Associates
Staff: Alison Higginson and Dale Morgan

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-0)

- **Introduction:** Alison Higginson, Rezoning Planner, noted that the site is located at the south east corner of Oak Street and West Broadway. The site is in the Central Broadway Uptown Office District and the current zoning is C-3A which permits a maximum density of 3.3 FSR which includes a 10% heritage transfer. Across the lane to the south there is a RM-3 zoned multi dwelling site and the remainder of the block was rezoned to CD-1 to encourage conversion to hospital related uses. The CD-1 permits a density of 1.70 FSR. Rezoning is required for the subject site in terms of the requested FSR and building height. The proposed FSR is 5.15 in all commercial, retail service and office uses. The proposed building height is 131 feet or 11 feet higher than the recommended maximum in the C-3A guidelines for the sub area. All of the uses can be considered under the current zoning. In terms of policy, the rezoning application is being considered under existing policy in the Central Plan and Metro Core Jobs and Economy Land Use Plan which will strongly support increasing commercial capacity in the Uptown Office District along central Broadway to capitalize on current and future transit investment. As part of the project, the applicant is proposing to accommodate a future connection to a transit station which is anticipated as part of the UBC line.

Dale Morgan, Development Planner, further described the proposal noting that the site is located on the south east corner of West Broadway and Oak Street. The present use of the site is a single storey commercial with parking at grade and on the roof. There is also a free standing sign and several small trees and shrubs scattered across the site. The Broadway corridor has a mix of older low rise commercial development with office towers that vary between six and nine storeys. New mixed high density residential has also been developed along West Broadway. Mr. Morgan described the context for the area noting that the zoning supports medical type uses. A ten foot set back has been requested to increase the distance between the CD-1 and RM-3 zones and Engineering has asked for a road dedication for a future widening of Oak Street and a portion of West Broadway. Access to the parking garage will be off the lane for the new project. The massing is based on a percentage of the frontage and typically has a low rise massing continuously across

the site. The height is about eleven feet higher than what the guidelines recommend and as well the corner is considered to be a portal into Vancouver bringing views of the downtown core and the north shore mountains. Mr. Morgan noted that the applicant is planning to achieve LEED™ Gold equivalency. Amenity space is planned for the top floor and as well there will be a garden on the podium with a water feature. The sidewalk will need to match City Engineering standards with a minimum width of 4 1/2 feet.

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

1. Form of Development: C-3A has a maximum density of 3.3 FSR and a recommended height maximum of 120 feet and preferred office use for this part of Broadway. The application is proposing a density of 5.15 FSR and a height of 131 feet. Is the Panel supportive of the proposed density and height?
2. Building Massing and Expression: The C-3A guidelines limit building massing to a percentage of the site frontage; building heights above 70 feet up to 120 feet are 50% maximum of the site width. The applicant is proposing a building width for the high rise portion that represents 67% of the site width or 100 feet.
3. Public Realm: There is a requirement for possible 2.5 metre road widening of Oak Street and widening of the sidewalks along West Broadway, providing a minimum sidewalk width of 4.5 metres along both West Broadway and Oak Street. Given the potential location of a LRT transit station at this intersection, is this sidewalk width adequate, particularly at the station entry?
4. Sustainability: The applicant is seeking LEED™ Gold equivalency. The Panel is asked to comment on the sustainable aspects of this application.

Ms. Higginson and Mr. Morgan took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Richard Bernstein, Architect, further described the project noting that they have tried to address all the City policies. A community amenity contribution is planned through the rezoning in terms of including a transit station access on the corner of West Broadway and Oak Street. He noted that it is a very prominent corner and they wanted to capture the significant views by framing the corner of the building that would make a statement. The tallest element is supported by a secondary massing which creates a vertical break to lead the eye to the lobby access. Mr. Bernstein described the floor layouts noting that the office space could be used by either a single tenant or multiple users. The transit station access will include all the TransLink requirements for elevators, stairs and escalators. The retail functions will be grouped on West Broadway with access to the loading bays from the lane. Mr. Bernstein noted that the architectural expression was based on sustainability initiatives that will help reduce the heat gain on the south façade. Mr. Bernstein described the proposed materials for the project.

George Steeves, Sustainability Consultant, noted that the sustainable measures include low flow toilets and other green measures. They have done energy modeling on the building and as yet do not know what heating system they will use although they have looked at heat pumps and heat recovery.

Jennifer Stamp, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans for the project noting that street trees will be added into the streetscape. There are two main amenity levels. The first one is adjacent to the office spaces and will be used as a space for office staff to take breaks. A water feature is being considered to help soften the street noises. The top penthouse level has two main uses. There will be a meeting room at the corner and an exercise room on the south end. The two areas are treated differently with consideration for the views. There will be a seating area on roof top deck near the meeting rooms with

more garden space off the exercise room. A high efficiency irrigation system is planned with the use of a cistern.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider refinement of façade detailing for added effectiveness with respect to both energy use and aesthetic consideration. This could include eliminating the east slab extensions and increasing solar shading on the west side;
 - Consider LEED™ certification; and
 - Consider enhancing the corner distinctiveness now and in the future to enhance the visibility of the future transit station.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal.

The Panel supported the height and density and form of development and thought the project had some unique opportunities because of the corner site. They also thought the massing was well considered and was compatible with other buildings along West Broadway. Most of the Panel thought the width of building was acceptable as they saw that the design made sense for the functional layout of the interior spaces. They added that the building did not mimic the form of the other buildings along the street and helped to add some diversity.

The Panel supported the plans for the public realm and agreed that the transit station entry was adequate however they added that it could be made more distinctive. A couple of Panel members suggested making more of a statement with the articulation of the ground floor retail and to make the area more inviting. Another Panel member suggested using an art piece to announce the entry.

Most of the Panel encouraged the applicant to follow the LEED™ process all the way through to certification. The Panel had some concerns regarding the slab extensions but felt there were some ways to resolve the issue although they did challenge the merits of using them as they felt they had little positive impact for sustainability and would not deal well with solar heat gain. One Panel member encouraged the applicant to pay more attention to the façade performance and the use of external shading elements especially on the west side of the building as they would be more effective than using slab extensions. Another Panel member noted that using vertical fins on the west façade would help with the early sun but not the sun in the later part of the day. One Panel member suggested using more passive elements and as well patterning of the metal panels to make the south facade more memorable as it will be seen from Oak Street by passing motorists. Another Panel member suggested the applicant look into having the building plug into a neighbourhood energy system.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Bernstein noted that the client intends to move forward with the project. The application is both a rezoning and development permit application and hoped there was enough information for only one review of the project from the Panel.

2. Address:	1418 East 41 st Avenue
DE:	RZ/DE413542
Description:	To rezone this site from C-1 to CD-1 to allow for a 4-storey building with retail at grade and 34 rental units under the S.T.I.R. program.
Zoning:	C-1 to CD-1
Application Status:	RZ/Complete
Review:	First
Owner:	Christa Vina Investment Ltd
Architect:	Matthew Cheng Architects Inc.
Delegation:	Matthew Cheng, Matthew Cheng Architects Inc. Bryan Marthaler, DMG Landscape Architects
Staff:	Ingrid Hwang and Dale Morgan for Sailen Black

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-0)

- **Introduction:** Ingrid Hwang, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal for a new concurrent rezoning and development application. The applicant has applied to rezone from C-1 to CD-1 to allow an increase in the density and height beyond what is permitted under the current zoning for a mixed-use development with retail on the ground floor and 34 rental residential units on floors two through four. The project will be built under STIR program (Short Term Incentives for Rental) approved by Council in June 2009. STIR provides a strategic set of incentives to encourage and facilitate development of new market rental housing. Incentives available and which are being requested by the applicant include concurrent process, a reduced parking standard, waived DCLs, rental property assessment (through a Housing Agreement) and a bonus density. Ms. Hwang described the site context noting that the rezoning application is for the southeast corner of East 41st Avenue and Knight Street. There is residential to the east with a gas station to the west and on the north there is a vacant lot and a restaurant/pub. On the north east corner are small retail stores and restaurants. Ms. Hwang also noted that Victoria/Fraserview/Killarney Vision is the primary policy for the site which also borders the Kensington-Cedar Cottage Vision area. Under the Vision Rezoning Policy, social and affordable housing projects are encouraged and additional area planning is not required.

Mr. Morgan further described the proposal noting that the project was modeled on the C-2 guidelines. The building is primarily brick with a glass base and will also include bay windows and enclosed balconies. Mr. Morgan noted there are some issues with the side yard due to the proximity of the single family bungalow and potential overlooks issues. A large open space is planned for the 4th floor deck and will be for private use. There is no requirement under the zoning for a common amenity space. Mr. Morgan described the proposed height and density for the project.

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

1. Form of Development: This is a concurrent application, combining both rezoning and development permit processes. The rezoning deals primarily with the general form of development, density and height, while the development permit application deals with more specific aspects of a development proposal. The Panel is asked to distinguish support between the rezoning and the development permit application. Is there support for the proposed height and density and general form of development?
 2. East Sideyard: The Panel is asked to comment on the east sideyard adjacencies, the relationship of the single family bungalow, building separation, window placement and location of the residential entry.
 3. Residential Entry: The panel is asked to comment on the location, size and visibility of the residential entry.
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4. 4th Floor Open Space: Comments are requested on the location of the large open space relative to the single family backyards.
5. Architecture: How may this building be improved? The Panel is asked to consider the following:
 - Should more brick be introduced at the base?
 - More variety of window type and placement.
 - Corner treatment.
 - Roof form and detailing.
6. Sustainability: The applicant is seeking LEED™ Silver equivalency. The Panel is asked to comment on the sustainable aspects of this application.

Ms. Hwang and Mr. Morgan took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Matthew Cheng, Architect, described the project noting that his client plans to clean up the corner and help improve the neighbourhood with the building of the project. Mr. Cheng described the proposed materials which will include brick facing and some flush metal siding on the top floor.

Bryan Marthaler, Landscape Architect, further described the landscaping plans noting that they have kept the landscape fairly simple. They are proposing some art work in the sidewalk with the use of score lines in the concrete and some under planting on the two trees on East 41st Avenue. There is also a tree on Knight Street and they are planning on adding another tree. The second and fourth floor will have some concrete planters which will have suggesting plantings found in the urban agricultural guidelines. Mr. Marthaler described the proposed planting material and noted that a high efficiency irrigation system is also proposed. Privacy fencing is proposed for the ground floor patios.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Design development to the eastern end of the building including increasing the setback to improve the neighbourly relationship to the adjacent single family dwelling and consider adding the density to the 4th floor;
 - Relocate the residential entry closer to mid block;
 - Design development to the landscape with consideration to CPTED issue including providing gates all openings in the rear yard;
 - Consider screening transformer;
 - Design development to the store front to increase variety and quality and as well improve the base expression;
 - Improve the stairwell so that it is more than a required fire exit;
 - Design development to enhance the corner;
 - Add continuous weather protection along the retail frontage; and
 - Consider LEED™ certification.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the project.

The Panel supported the rezoning as well as the height and density but noted that there could be some further improvements for the Development Permit stage and would like to review the project at that time. They also supported the use noting that there was a need for rental housing in the city.

The Panel supported the choice of and quality of the materials. However, several Panel members thought the base expression could be improved by adding more brick to give greater solidity as well as further articulation and interest to the building.

The Panel did not support the entry location and thought it could be improved so that the residents wouldn't be coming and going in front of the house. Several Panel members thought the entry could be relocated at mid block or on Knight Street.

Some of the Panel thought the east yard could be enlarged and that the building could be stepped away with an additional floor added to the top of the building. This would also eliminate the close proximity of the building to the neighbouring house. They also noted that the store front was rather relentless and could be broken up with different materials. The Panel thought the corner treatment didn't work as there wasn't any weather protection going around the corner and not much articulation of the glazing. They wanted to see more development on the corner.

A couple of Panel members supported the elevator being moved to where the second set of stairs will be located. They noted that moving the elevator wouldn't impact the delivery of goods and they also thought an entry on the east side was unnecessary.

The Panel thought the design and articulation didn't show any sustainability measures for the project. The Panel encouraged the applicant to seek LEED™ Silver certification. It was also suggested that the applicant identify from the early stages of the project what the sustainable measures are that will be achieved.

One Panel member suggested using the landscaping to screen the transformer as it would also act as a buffer to the single family house next door. Another Panel member suggested adding street furniture.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Cheng said he appreciated all the comments from the Panel.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.