
URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: March 19, 2003

TIME: 4.00 p.m.

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Walter Francl, Chair (excused Item #1)
Jeffrey Corbett
Gerry Eckford
Richard Henry
Reena Lazar
Stuart Lyon (Chair, Item #1, excused Item #5)
Sorin Tatomir

REGRETS: Helen Besharat
Joseph Hruda
Kim Perry
Maurice Pez
Ken Terriss

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Carol Hubbard

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1451 Homer Street
2.	2576 Kingsway
3.	2582 Kingsway
4.	370 East Broadway (Kingsgate Mall)
5.	2096 West 46th Avenue

1. Address:	1451 Homer Street
DA:	407362
Use:	Daycare (2 storeys)
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Walter Francl
Owner:	Concord Pacific Developments
Review:	First
Delegation:	Walter Francl, Bruce Hemstock, Shira Golden
Staff:	Jonathan Barrett

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-0)

- **Introduction:** Jonathan Barrett, Development Planner, presented this application for a Daycare facility in the Beach Neighbourhood at Homer Street and Pacific Boulevard. He briefly reviewed the neighbourhood context and noted the Beach Neighbourhood Guidelines anticipated a daycare in this location. Parking for the daycare has been provided in the adjacent building (tower 1A). Staff have no issues at this stage.
- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** Walter Francl, Architect, described the design rationale, noting that because the structure is so small they felt it had to stand on its own without being completely foreign to what is around it. It is quite a tight site and there are requirements for outdoor space, covered and uncovered, on both levels. The roof form overhangs provide the required covered space on the upper level and the projected deck for the lower level. Bruce Hemstock, Landscape Architect, briefly reviewed the landscape plan and the design team responded to the Panel's questions.
- **Panel's Comments:** The Panel unanimously supported this application.

The Panel found it an exciting architectural form that fits well in the neighbourhood. Both the architecture and the landscape architecture are very nicely resolved and the tightness of the site is compensated by its adjacency to David Lam Park.

The Panel strongly recommended exploring an easement for the use of the adjacent triangular grassed area. It may not be extensively used but it will help to open up the entrance which is somewhat under emphasized due to the geometry of the site.

A recommendation was made to consider more of a buffer between the main play area and the sidewalk, and there was a word of caution that the wooden trellis elements could be a maintenance problem.

The daycare will be an excellent addition to the Beach Neighbourhood and the Panel looks forward to seeing it built.

2. Address:	2576 Kingsway
DA:	407300
Use:	Mixed
Zoning:	C-2
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Terry Yen
Owner:	Donna Chan
Review:	First
Delegation:	Terry Yen, Donna Chan
Staff:	Eric Fiss

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (4-3)

- **Introduction:** Eric Fiss, Development Planner, presented this application in the C-2 zone on Kingsway near 34th Avenue which cuts across behind the site. The adjacent C-2 property (2582 Kingsway) is also being redeveloped. Staff's attempts to get the two owners to work together for one project were unsuccessful and the two sites are being developed independently. The site is 33 ft. x 104 ft. and the proposal is for a 3-storey mixed use building containing 1,100 sq.ft. of retail space on the ground floor. The second and third floors contain eight studio dwelling units. Total FSR is less than 1.80 (1.44 residential, 0.33 retail). Loading and garbage and access to surface parking is from the lane. Materials are brick, metal panel, concrete block, aluminum storefront glazing and fabric awnings. Some enclosed balconies are provided on the second and third floors.

The advice of the Panel is sought in the following areas:

- whether the residential density is appropriate and producing livable dwelling units;;
- architectural quality, the form and massing including impact on residential development across the lane;
- streetscape response, the wall-window composition and articulation;
- adequacy of private outdoor open space which is all achieved in either enclosed or open balconies;
- pedestrian weather protection;
- materials, including side and rear elevations;
- landscaping and relationship to the public realm.

Mr. Fiss noted that the remaining adjacent site on the corner is owned by Neon Products and contains a large, two-sided billboard. This is likely to remain for some time.

- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** Terry Yen, Architect, briefly described the project and responded to the Panel's questions.
- **Panel's Comments:** The Panel narrowly supported this application.

The proposed density was supported. Comments were made that it is unfortunate that advantage is not being taken of the potential density because it is unlikely these parcels will be redeveloped for some years to come. Some Panel members expressed disappointment that to date the redevelopment of Kingsway has been less than successful.

The Kingsway façade was considered to be satisfactory. The Panel stressed that the focus should be on the first floor in terms of quality of materials and finishes to ensure an appropriate pedestrian interface.

Some Panel members would have preferred to see something more durable than fabric awnings although others found the fabric acceptable. There were some recommendations to provide coloured awnings to add some interest to the project. Certainly, the design of the awnings should be a part of the architectural contribution to the scheme. A recommendation was also made provide a break in the canopy in anticipation of two different tenants who can create individual storefront expressions. Similarly, it was recommended that the sign band be broken up to allow tenants to provide different signs. The sign band should not extend over the entry to the residential units.

There was a suggestion to include flower boxes on the Kingsway frontage as well as the back to help soften the façade and add to the streetscape, and to differentiate the residential entry from the entry to the retail to ensure it does not appear like an all-commercial building.

A recommendation was made to re-examine the balconies at the rear. They are quite deep and will be very dark.

One Panel member recommended greater articulation on the lower level of the rear elevation as it meets the lane and cautioned that attention be given to potential safety and security and graffiti problems in the lane. It was also noted that more thought needs to be given to what appears to be a conflict between the garbage enclosure and the loading stall. One Panel member recommended adding a window in the stair since this will be a primary entrance for the residents from the parking area.

Concerns were expressed about the livability of the units. One Panel member thought the bedroom niches were unworkable. It was strongly suggested that more work needs to be done on the plans.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Yen said he will take into consideration the Panel's comments which he found very good.

3. Address:	2582 Kingsway
DA:	407377
Use:	Mixed
Zoning:	C-2
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Terry Yen
Owner:	Ken Sam
Review:	First
Delegation:	Terry Ken, Ken Sam
Staff:	Eric Fiss

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-1)

- **Introduction:** Eric Fiss, Development Planner, presented this application in the C-2 zone on Kingsway near 34th Avenue which cuts across behind the site. The adjacent C-2 property (2576 Kingsway) is also being redeveloped. Staff's attempts to get the two owners to work together for one project were unsuccessful and the two sites are being developed independently. This site is 33 ft. x 85 ft. and the proposal is for a 3-storey mixed use building containing 1,100 sq.ft. of retail space on the ground floor. The second and third floors contain five dwelling units, two studio units at the front and three larger 1-bedroom units at the rear, for total residential density of about 1.23 FSR. Materials are similar to the adjacent proposal.
- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** The architect had no further comments. The property owner, Ken Sam, described the history of the site and his unsuccessful attempts at consolidating the four properties on this block.
- **Panel's Comments:** The Panel strongly supported this application.

The Panel strongly recommended providing a third floor expression on Kingsway and did not favour the terracing. It was suggested this could be achieved by creating a central lightwell/courtyard and redistributing the massing, perhaps separating the two upper units. A comment was made that skylighting into the stairwell could make the top floor units quite exciting.

The Panel thought more design development was needed to the façades and stressed that the success of the project will depend on the quality of materials and detailing at the ground level.

The Panel noted that the adjacent billboard poses a particular challenge to this building. Given the billboard site is unlikely to be developed for some time it is important that the prominently exposed fire wall be treated more handsomely, possibly with a combination of masonry materials. Some Panel members recommended turning the brick on this façade. It was also recommended, if possible within code requirements, to include some fenestration which may ultimately need to be bricked in.

Further design development was recommended with respect to the treatment of awnings and window-wall proportions, differentiation between the residential and commercial entries and individuality of the signage.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Yen said he liked the idea of creating a courtyard and thanked the Panel for the comments.
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4. Address:	370 East Broadway (Kingsgate Mall)
DA:	406733
Use:	Commercial
Zoning:	C-3A
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Hotson Bakker
Owner:	Vancouver School Board District No. 39
Review:	Second
Delegation:	Alan Baniface
Staff:	Bob Adair

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (4-2)

- **Introduction:** Bob Adair, Development Planner, presented this application, first reviewed by the Panel in June 2002. The proposal is to add a floor of retail at grade on what is currently a parking lot for Kingsgate Mall. The retail comprises general retail and restaurant space facing the corner plaza and Staples office supplies store above. Rooftop parking is proposed above Staples, accessed by a ramp along the Broadway property line. Exterior cladding materials include clear glazing, sandblasted concrete, some brick and corrugated metal siding along the top. The site is zoned C-3A which has a maximum FSR of 3.0. The rooftop parking is included in FSR calculation. While supporting the use and density, the Panel did not support the project and expressed a number of design concerns, in particular the general expression of the building as a whole, which was considered to be too corporate in character and not an appropriate urban design solution for this important location. There was also some concern about a proposed arcade along East Broadway and the location of the entry of the mall. There was concern about the general corner treatment, including the design of the signage and the design of the plaza area at the corner. There were also a variety of edge treatment issues, including the treatment of the parking ramp along the north facade and the need for greater transparency.

Planning staff believe the applicant has made significant progress in this submission, acknowledging the challenge of working with a number of stakeholders. In general, it is believed that the architect has managed to address most of the issues raised by staff and the Panel. In summary, Planning supports the general approach of this revised submission and most of the concerns are of a detailed nature.

The advice of the Panel is sought in the following areas:

- expression of the corner. Staff believe much progress has been made and it is acknowledged that signage is critical for the application. In general, there is agreement that there will be a major amount of signage on this corner. The Panel's advice is sought as to whether the signage can be further integrated into the building and the architectural treatment strengthened at the corner;
- exterior materials and whether the use of additional brick might help to tie the development more strongly into the Mount Pleasant neighbourhood;
- edge conditions and adequacy of the landscape treatment of the rooftop parking area.

- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** Alan Boniface, Architect, gave a brief overview of their approach to the project and reviewed the revisions made to the scheme since the Panel's previous review. Jeff Philips, Landscape Architect, reviewed the landscape plan and the design team responded to questions from the Panel.
- **Panel's Comments:** The Panel supported this submission and noted that considerable progress has been made since the previous review. The applicant team was commended for the improvements.

With the exception of the signage, the Panel found the corner expression quite successful. The plaza has been very nicely resolved and the treatment of the stair around the corner and the water feature are very successful. It was noted that this is a landmark corner of the city and the architectural expression and the signage must respond accordingly. There was a recommendation from one Panel member to seek the cooperation of the Engineering Department in allowing the corner treatment to extend out to the curb.

There was a lot of commentary about the scale of the signage on the corner. Many Panel members still found it too much like a billboard and strongly recommended that it be integrated further into the building. While the renderings show a subdued red, this is unlikely to be the colour that is ultimately achieved given the bright red of Staples corporate image. It was noted that there will also be restaurant signage below the Staples sign. One Panel member suggested there could be potential for an arcing, free-standing element in the front that picks up on the geometry of the corner, making it a stronger icon and a more memorable landmark.

The Panel strongly supported the layering of the materials, the colours and the overall transparency of the building. Some Panel members suggested extending the brick to the end of the parking ramp, if not to the full extent of the frontage, while others saw no need for more brick.

It was suggested the mall entry lacks strength and legibility.

One Panel member expressed disappointment that this scheme turns it back on the existing mall, suggesting there should be access to the mall from the corner of Kingsway and Broadway. There is no prominent access to it from the rooftop parking.

With respect to the rooftop parking and landscaping, some Panel members thought it was unfortunate the loading does not allow for more landscaping but found the proposal generally satisfactory. Others strongly recommended that far more be done with the rooftop landscaping, including green edges that share the landscaping with the street as well as offer screening from overlook.

The Panel appreciated the beautifully drawn elevations and expressed the hope that they are an accurate reflection of what is ultimately constructed, noting that the transparency of the interface with the sidewalks is an important aspect of the pedestrian experience. It was stressed that this approach be strongly pursued as the project proceeds.

- **Applicant's Response:** With respect to the signage on the corner, Mr. Boniface commented that part of the mandate they have been given by Planning over the last few months is to move the signage out of the realm of the storefronts, completely away from the first two floors. This is part of the reason or the superstructure above the second floor. He noted they have chosen to create a skylight that lights the space below.

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5. Address: 2096 West 46th Avenue
DA: 407279
Use: Residential
Zoning: C-2
Application Status: Complete
Architect: Gomberoff Bell Lyon
Owner: Transpacific Realty Ltd.
Review: First
Delegation: Eric Schroeder, Damon Oriente
Staff: Anita Molaro
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EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-0)

- **Introduction:** Anita Molaro, Development Planner, presented this application in the C-2 zone. The site is located on 46th Avenue at West Boulevard and there is no lane separating the site from the adjacent residential. The proposal meets the requirement for a 25 ft. setback for the first floor, extending to a 37 ft. setback at the fourth floor level. Materials are a combination of brick, hardiplank for the upper floors, brick, stone and concrete. The building form attempts to avoid an obvious front and rear facade and each elevation is treated with the full composite of materials. The proposal is within the 40 ft. height limit for this zone.

Planning have no major issues with the proposal. The Panel's advice is sought on the following:

- 46th Avenue transition and massing towards the adjacent residential front yard;
 - whether further articulation is needed within the composition of the elevations (e.g. the integration of the materials, parapet line);
 - choice of weather protection components on the retail side of the project.
- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** Eric Schroeder, Architect, briefly described the project and responded to the Panel's questions. Damon Oriente reviewed the landscape plan.
 - **Panel's Comments:** The Panel unanimously supported this application and generally found it quite a handsome project. The Panel liked the fact that no one elevation can be considered the back of the building.

The transition to the adjacent single family house was generally supported. The Panel recommended deleting the fence, at least in its current location, to remove the sense of barrier between the two buildings. One Panel member thought it needed to take a stronger step back at the corner and recommended creating something in the landscaping to find a middle ground between the two types of structures.

The Panel generally supported the articulation of the elevations. The cornice at the top of the building was considered somewhat weak and fragile looking, and suggestions were made to deepen its proportions or to cant it slightly, or to eliminate it altogether. Greater attention should be given to the proportions of the fenestration, particularly at the corners.

With respect to materials, some concern was expressed at the use of hardipanel in this location. A suggestion was made that prefinished metal panel would be more appropriate. Most Panel members

found the fabric awning satisfactory, provided it is detailed well. A comment was made that the awning is too small to be effective as weather protection but is a good addition as an ornament.

There was a suggestion to take another look at the proportions of the residential lobby as well as some of the ground floor unit plans.

The landscaping in front of the commercial storefronts should be removed.

It was recommended that attention be given to the relationship between the bedroom projections and the parking ramp to ensure the bedrooms windows are not looking onto the ramp railing and guard rail.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Schroeder explained that to break down the building they tried to create a building within a building so that the central portion of the elevation is a little bit different than the corner pieces. He agreed there is some coordination needed with respect to the fenestration.