

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: March 24, 2010

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Bruce Haden (Chair)
Robert Barnes
James Cheng (Excused Item #1)
Jeff Corbett (Item #1 & #2)
Jane Durante (Excused Item #1)
David Godin
Jim Huffman
Vladimir Mikler
Scott Romses

REGRETS:
Oliver Lang
Steve McFarlane
Maurice Pez

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1401 Comox Street
2.	1304 Hornby Street
3.	960 Kingsway
4.	3068 Kingsway

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Nielsen called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. There being no New Business the meeting considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 1401 Comox Street
DE: RZ/DE413347
Description: To construct a new rental residential development consisting of a 22-storey tower and a 2-storey building.
Zoning: RM-5 to CD-1
Application Status: RZ/Complete
Review: Second
Owner: Westbank
Architect: Henriquez Partners Architects
Delegation: Gregory Henriquez, Henriquez Partners Architects
Jennifer Stamp, Durante Kreuk Landscape Architects
Ian Gillespie, Westbank
Staff: Karen Hoese and Ralph Segal

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-0)

- **Introduction:** Karen Hoese, Rezoning Planner, introduced a concurrent rezoning and development permit application for the project that was previously seen by the Panel in November 2009. The application will be under the STIR Program (Short Term Incentives for Rental) which was approved by Council in June 2009. It provides a strategic set of incentives to secure the provision of rental housing. The incentives available and which are being requested by the application include concurrent processing, a reduced parking standard, waived DCLs and bonus density. Since the Panel last saw the application a further public benefit has been incorporated into the development. This benefit is for 3,500 square feet of amenity space which is to be shared by Q-munity, the Queer Resource Centre and Gordon Neighbourhood House. The intention of the application is to rezone the site from RM-5 to CD-1 to allow an increase in density and height beyond what is permitted under the current zoning. The West End RM Guidelines apply and provide direction with regard to the design and development of the site. Also under the Green Rezoning Policy, the project is required to meet a minimum of LEED™ Silver equivalent.

Ralph Segal, Senior Architect and Development Planner, further described the form of development noting the zoning guidelines that would allow for an increase in height and density. There is almost a five times increase in density proposed. The applicant has submitted a detailed shadow analysis that described in particular the impacts for the mini-park located in front of Gordon Neighbourhood House. Mr. Segal described the shadow impacts on the park noting three different massing options that were included in the study. The proposed tower will have a floor plate of approximately 5,900 square feet and is comparable to other towers in the West End. Mr. Segal described the context for the surrounding area noting the location of other towers. The proposal is for 198 feet to the main parapet (or 216 to the top of the tower which includes the amenity space). Regarding the impact from the building on private views, Mr. Segal noted that there will be a diminishment of between five to fifteen percent for affected units in neighbouring towers. Given distances involved and available views that remain intact, this is considered to be an acceptable impact. A sunny open space has been provided at the Comox Street and Broughton Street corner. Mr. Segal noted the concerns from the last review of the Panel. The key aspects included: concern for the green building performance of the tower as the

Panel asked for further consideration be given to passive design strategies; concern that the wrap around balconies contributed visually to the overall bulk of the building. Also the Panel had a negative reaction to the strong brick lower treatment of the tower which has been removed from the design.

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

1. Does the overall form of development create an acceptable "fit" within the neighbouring context, taking into account the RM-5 Zoning and Guidelines including aspects of open space, sun access, views and livability?
2. Does the proposed site planning and landscape, including set-backs and on-site public, semi-public and private open space, contribute to the pedestrian amenity and livability?
3. Has Sustainability/Green Building Design been appropriately addressed?
4. Does the proposed architectural character contribute to the West End context?

Ms. Hoese and Mr. Segal took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Gregory Henriquez, Architects, touched briefly on the primary changes since the last review. The architectural expression at the base of the building has been redesigned to slim down the building and to create more space in keeping with a modernist building. It will be a modest building and one of the first rental building to be built in the West End in thirty years. The brick has been removed and the building has been simplified in terms of responding to some of the sustainability features. The balconies were a random series around the building and they have now used them to create a statement at the front of the building. The space between the building (the mews) has been opened up and in terms of its shadowing, the building won't affect the park until late in the afternoon. In terms of views, all the primary views of the neighbours have been maintained. A little element has been added on the front of the resource centre which will have a series of meeting rooms for the neighbourhood.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consideration should be given to increasing the thermal comfort of the west facing units by reducing heat gain and/or increasing ventilation to those units;
 - Design development to improve the Broughton Street relationship at grade particularly when addressing the transition to the tower façade;
 - Consider revising the tower form to reduce shadowing on the mini park but only if this can be done without sacrificing the design integrity of the project; and
 - Consider targeting a higher level of sustainable design than LEED™ Silver.
- **Related Commentary:** The panel supported the proposal and those it was improved since the last review.

The Panel thought the tower had a modern look and was appropriate for the West End. As well the Panel thought the resource centre was a little gem on the site. Regarding the shadow impacts, the Panel noted that even if the building was ten storeys lower it would still impact the amount of sunlight on the park. The Panel supported the height noting that it was similar to lots of other buildings in the neighbourhood. They agreed that rental housing was very much needed and supported the use.

A couple of Panel members were concerned with the Broughton Street façade regarding the glazing as it carries right to the ground and seemed a little harsh. They also thought more

design development would help to improve the townhouses. A couple of Panel members thought the amenity building could be improved with the addition of public lighting and a more distinct entrance. One Panel member thought the front door on Comox Street felt somewhat truncated and would like to see it improved.

The Panel thought there was still room for improvement with the tower and suggested the building could be made more slender. Although the impacts on views and sun access was not going to be significant, the Panel thought making the building more slender would improve the amount of sunlight on the park. A couple of Panel members thought the Broughton Street corner (south east) might need to be modified to allow for more sun access on the mews.

Since it will be a rental building which means people could be moving in and out of the building each month, several Panel members expressed concern that there was only one loading dock. Also they expressed concern with there only being two elevators as only one elevator would be operational when people were moving in or out of the building.

The Panel supported the landscape plans and the setbacks with one Panel member noting that the big front yard gave the site a more residential character. One Panel member suggested the front garden could have some plantings that would add colour in the winter months. The Panel member was concerned that the potted trees might not survive.

Regarding sustainability, several Panel members were concerned with the potential solar gain on the south and west facades. It was noted that the thermal fins could contribute to undesirable heat loss in the winter. The Panel thought that LEED™ Silver was the bare minimum and would like to see some specific strategies on how this performance would be achieved. The Panel recommended the applicant go higher than LEED™ Silver with one Panel member suggesting the applicant target LEED™ Gold.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Henriquez thanked the Panel for the comments and said they will endeavor to make it a better building.

2. Address:	1304 Hornby Street
DE:	Rezoning
Description:	Rezone to increase density from 5.0 to 12.44 FSR to allow construction of a 31-storey (309 foot) tower.
Zoning:	DD to CD-1
Application Status:	RZ
Review:	First
Owner:	Concert Properties
Architect:	Bingham + Hill Architects
Delegation:	John Bingham, Bingham + Hill Architects Richard Henry, Richard Henry Architects Bruce Hemstock, PWL Partnership Farouk Babul, Concert Properties Ltd.
Staff:	Karen Hoese and Anita Molaro

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-0)

- **Introduction:** Anita Molaro, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a rezoning of this site from DD to CD-1 to allow an increase in the density beyond that permitted under the current zoning. The proposal can be considered under the Transfer of Density Policy. Ms. Molaro described the policy context for the site as well as the Downtown South Guidelines that provide direction with regard to the design and development of the site. The site is impacted by the Queen Elizabeth Park View Corridor which limits the height on the site to 366 feet. The proposal also falls under the Metro Core Policy/Capacity Review Study which allows for the consideration of a rezoning proposal in Downtown South to view corridors where public benefits may be achieved. Under the Green Rezoning Policy, a minimum of LEED™ Silver or equivalent is required. Ms. Molaro described the context for the surrounding area noting the other buildings in the area. The proposal is seeking an increase in the density from 5.0 to 12.44 FSR. The proposal is for a 31-storey tower with 193 residential units and three commercial retail units at grade. There will also be seven levels of underground parking. An amenity space is proposed at the corner of Drake and Hornby Street with a lounge on the second level and exterior amenity space. The proposal is targeting LEED™ Gold and will include a green roof.

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

1. Does the Panel support the proposed tower form of development taking into consideration:
 - Tower separation and neighbourliness
 - Height and subsequent density
2. Any other comments the Panel may have:
 - Shadow impacts
 - Landscaping treatments
 - Material treatments

Ms. Hoese and Ms. Molaro took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Richard Henry, Architect, further described the proposal noting that they did consider going taller with the tower and considered bringing more density on the site but they ran into some obstacles. There were problems in getting enough parking because of the size of the lot. When finished it will have the deepest parking garage in the city at seven floors. If they added more height they would have to accommodate an additional elevator and given the small floorplate size, that is not practical. Mr. Henry described the architectural design for the proposal noting there is to

be an iconic soft landmark element proposed for the corner. The balconies, fenestration, articulation and material treatments have been selected to pursue the idea of a tall, slender and vertical expression. A green roof is proposed in order to meet the green quota. They will be collecting and channeling water into water column which will store the storm water for repurposing for irrigation and potential toilet flushing. A continuous balcony is proposed on the south west exposure to mitigate solar gain. CRU's are proposed along Drake Street on the ground floor.

Bruce Hemstock, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans noting the residential entry has a light element to identify the entry. The commercial will have simply expression with easy access to the CRU entries. The podium will have a fire pit near the covered area outside the amenity room.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider relocating the amenity room at north east corner at grade;
 - Design development to the shadow boxes including consideration to given to increasing size and colour refinements;
 - Consider roof level refinement including giving consideration to enhancement of translucent shroud and making the green roof plate horizontal.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and thought it would be a tall and elegant building.

The Panel supported the tower separation, neighbourliness, height and density and thought it was an attractive building. They liked the verticality in the tower and the colourful materials including the colour around the windows. Although the Panel liked the shadow box elements, they thought they should be increased in size and brought down to grade or floated above the streetscape.

The Panel thought ground floor space should all be all retail and that the amenity space should be moved to the second floor off the deck. The Panel had some concerns regarding the roof level refinement and suggested making the green roof horizontal. The Panel supported the landscape plans and particularly liked the outdoor living space with the gas fireplace and the extensive and intensive green roofs. They also liked the water elements and the green privacy screen.

The Panel congratulated the applicant for targeting LEED™ Gold registration. There was some concern with the energy performance of the building as there is a large percentage of glazing to wall ratio. Also some of the balconies seem small and the applicant was encouraged to make them useable so they don't present a thermal penalty. Also, it was suggested that a solar control element needed to be provided on the west façade. One Panel member suggested roughing in for solar hot water for the future on the roof.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Henry thanked the Panel and said they appreciated the support and comments. Their intention with the shadow box elements is that they will be part of the art component and will be working with an artist on the design.

3. Address:	960 Kingsway
DE:	RZ/DE413541
Description:	To rezone this site from C-2 to CD-1 to allow for a 6-storey building with retail at grade and 40 rental units under the STIR program.
Zoning:	C-2 to CD-1
Application Status:	RZ/Complete
Review:	First
Owner:	N/A
Architect:	Matthew Cheng Architect
Delegation:	Matthew Cheng, Matthew Cheng Architect Bryan Marthaler, DMG Landscape Architects
Staff:	Grant Miller and Sailen Black

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (0-7)

- **Introduction:** Grant Miller, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal for a concurrent rezoning and development permit application for a C-2 site with approximately 100 feet of frontage on Kingsway and East 19th Avenue to allow the development of a six-storey mixed-use building with commercial at grade and guaranteed market rental residential units above. The site falls within the Kensington Cedar Cottage Vision Area and specifically the Kingsway/Knight Neighbourhood Centre Area. Further, the application was made under the Short Term Incentives for Rental Program (S.T.I.R.). The site is at the western end of a nine block section of Kingsway centered on Knight Street (between St. Catherines and Commercial Streets). An area Planning process resulted in up zoning the surrounding area from RS-1 to RM-1. While no changes were proposed to the C-2 zoning on Kingsway at that time, more vision participants supported the consideration of an additional storey or two on mixed-use developments than opposed where amenity could be achieved. The S.T.I.R. program that was adopted by Council in June 2009 provides incentives for the private development of guaranteed rental units. These incentives for this proposal include: DCL waiver for rental units; parking requirement reduction; and additional density consistent with policy and attention to urban design.

Sailen Black, Development Planner, further described the proposal for a forty unit apartment building with commercial on the ground floor. The proposal is located between Fraser Street and Clark Drive in the Kensington Cedar Cottage area, which is a busy part of Kingsway in terms of vehicle movement but with relatively low-scale commercial. The adjacent sites are zoned for C-2 and the site on the east side may remain as is for now due to its shape and size. Zoning across the lane and across East 19th Avenue is RM-1 with some multiple dwellings which are permitted to 35 feet in height. The nearest single family zoning is on the west side of St. Catherines Street. The applicant is proposing a 40 unit apartment building with commercial space on the ground floor. The material palette includes brick, stucco at the 5th and 6th floors and fiber cement spandrel panels. The proposal responds to its four-storey context with front shoulders on the 4th floor at the two outer bays, steps at the front and sides, but not the back at the 5th floor. The materials change at the 5th floor. The residential entry will be at the rear of the building where it can be addressed off of East 19th Avenue before it turns into a lane condition which must accommodate building services.

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

- Are the proposed materials and forms an appropriate response to this context.

- How well does the rear elevation and building base respond the unique site circumstance, noting combination of a street on angle to the site with lane condition which will relatively exposed to public view due to south lot.

Mr. Miller and Mr. Black took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Matthew Cheng, Architect, further described the proposal noting that the Kingsway side is all commercial on the ground floor. The form has evolved from the C-2 form in which the zoning allows for 3-storey with a setbacks. The lower portion will be all brick with the upper floors with stucco and lighter materials. There is a small frontage on East 19th Avenue where the residential entry will be located. Elements such as a wood trellis and heavier landscaping will be introduced to relate to the residential across the lane.

Bryan Marthaler, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans for the site. The landscaping off Kingsway is fairly minimal. There are two existing street trees which will be protected and another tree will be added. Paver detail will be added to the front entrance surface. Drought tolerant planting are being proposed for the back. On the second floor there are semi-private yards with open metal railings. There will be some planter beds separating units. A high irrigation system is also planned.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider an over all redesign that respects the uniqueness of the site and its adjacencies, the importance of Kingsway, and doesn't reference C-2 too closely;
 - If using the C-2 form of development consider shifting the density towards Kingsway to create a more straight forward five to six storey streetwall addition with the base material going to at least the setback point;
 - Treat lane façade with the same level of design intention as Kingsway;
 - Relocate residential entry to Kingsway.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel did not support the application as they felt the applicant was going in the wrong direction with the design.

The Panel acknowledged that this was a new topology for Vancouver with a different urban context. They felt the design looked like a 4-storey box with a 2-storey box added to the top. The Panel also felt that the C-2 scale worked well with the current zoning but didn't for the proposed development. They encouraged the applicant and the planners to come up with a different topology as Kingsway needs buildings that have some dignity. They wanted to see an honest 6-storey building and as well thought there should be a strong rationale for this type of topology to make sense.

The Panel supported moving the residential entry to Kingsway. One Panel member noted that the lane expression needed to read as a residential entry unless it was moved to Kingsway. Also, several Panel members thought the lane elevation needed to have the same care and attention as the Kingsway side.

The Panel didn't mind the blank walls on the side of the building but felt they should to be a clean and simple design. Several Panel members noted that Kingsway is made up of smaller sites and thought that should be reflected in the façade of the new building. Several Panel members encouraged the applicant to use another material on the building rather than stucco.

Several Panel members thought the residential patios at the back should have more landscaping. A couple of Panel members questioned the use of urban agriculture because they weren't sure where that would be located.

Regarding sustainability, it was thought that the applicant was confused regarding the LEED™ requirements and encouraged them to certify for LEED™ Gold.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Cheng said it was a challenging design given the new topology and thought the Panel had made some good comments.

4. 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/Complete
Review:	First
Owner:	Pawa Holdings
Architect:	Mathew Cheng Architect
Delegation:	Mathew Cheng, Mathew Cheng Architect Bryan Marthaler, DMG Landscape Architects Lucy Pawa, Pawa Holdings
Staff:	Grant Miller and Sailen Black

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (1-6)

- Introduction:** Grant Miller, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal for a concurrent rezoning and development permit application for a C-2 site with approximately 72 feet of frontage on Kingsway east of Rupert Street to allow the development of a six-storey mixed use building with commercial at grade and guaranteed market rental residential units above. The site falls within the Victoria Fraserview Killarney Vision Area and specially the Kingsway/Joyce (Collingwood) Neighbourhood Centre Area. Further, the application was made under the Short Term Incentives for Rental Program (S.T.I.R.). The site is at the western end of the 12 block section of Kingsway centered on the Safeway at Tynne Street (from Rupert to Boundary) identified with the surrounding area as the Neighbourhood Centre, and is a low priority for future planning. The Vision provides no specific direction regarding small mixed use developments in this area.

The STIR program, which was adopted in June 2009, provides incentives for the private development of guaranteed rental units. These incentives include: DCL waiver for rental units, parking requirement reduction and additional density consistent with policy and attention to urban design.

Sailen Black, Development Planner, described the proposed design. He noted that there is C-2 commercial on both sides of the site. The application is for a 30 unit apartment building with about 3,531 square feet of commercial space. The proposed density is 3.42 FSR which is about 37% more than the 2.5 FSR normally permitted for mixed-use in the C-2 District Schedule. The design presents a highly variegated form on the front elevation, including angles in plan, steps in the floor plate and different wall patterns. In contrast, lot line walls and inset side walls are relatively simple in pattern.

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

- Commentary on the overall architectural and landscape design;
- Given the variety of different materials and forms demonstrated, what would the Panel recommend as the optimal combination for this particular context and site size;
- Given the adjacency to single-family dwellings, whether the Panel feels the design is sufficiently neighbourly.

Mr. Miller and Mr. Black took questions from the Panel.

- Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Mathew Cheng, Architect, further described the proposal noting that it was a challenging project as there isn't much in the way of guidelines from the City regarding the program. The building has been designed to line up

the commercial with Kingsway while the residential portion of the building is perpendicular. The building will be four storeys with a two storey form on top.

Bryan Marthaler, Landscape Architect, noted that there are currently two streets that will be protected. The private outdoor spaces are planned for urban agriculture. Drought tolerant plants will be planted with edible fruit.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider overall simplification including potential elimination of the fourth floor setback at the Kingsway side, simplifying the window pattern and material palette;
 - Increase the distinction of the residential entry on Kingsway
 - Design development to enhance the overall quality of the lane elevation including consideration of creating a larger upper floor setback
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel did not support the proposal and thought a more simple approach to the design was needed.

The Panel recognized that it was a difficult task to deal with the strange site iteration and the narrowness of the site. Also the Panel said that when the 6-storey wood frame buildings were first approved the Panel thought there would be some different topologies but that hasn't happened. Several Panel members thought the setback for the two storeys was not working for the project and suggested simplifying the massing as well as the material palette. On the Kingsway elevation, the lower two thirds of the project seemed much stronger and as well the retail level was distinctive. A couple of Panel members suggested simplifying the window patterns and thought there didn't need to be a big distinction between the penthouse suites and the rest of the building. Also, they thought the top levels needed to relate to the lower levels.

Several Panel members suggested the back façade be considered in relation to the single family dwelling across the lane. One Panel member noted that some of the decks on the top floor were off bedrooms that had no windows and thought they should be relocated.

The Panel thought the residential entry on Kingsway needed some design development to make it a clear expression as the entry. One Panel member suggested pulling back the CRUs to announce the entry. Several Panel members suggested allowing the store owners to use their imagination for the signage to make a more interesting frontage.

One Panel member noted that the landscape was well done on the three suites on the podium level. Another Panel member thought there needed to be more greenery on the podium level and also thought there might be some problems with having trees in pots.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Cheng thanked the Panel for their comments

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.