
URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: March 25, 2009

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Martin Nielsen, Chair
Mark Ostry
Bruce Haden
Oliver Lang
Steve McFarlane
Maurice Pez
Gerry Eckford
Douglas Watts
Vladimir Mikler
David Godin

REGRETS:
Richard Henry
Jane Durante

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	2080 West Broadway
2.	538-560 West Broadway

BUSINESS MEETING

The Panel elected the new Chair and Vice Chair for 2009. Martin Nielsen will be the new Chair and Mark Osprey will be Vice Chair.

Chair Nielsen called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. The Panel considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 2080 West Broadway
DE: 412784
Description: To develop this site with a 7 storey mixed-use building containing retail uses at grade, and a total of 136 dwelling units on levels 2 to 6 over 3 levels of underground parking having vehicular access from the south lane.
Zoning: C-3A
Application Status: Complete
Architect: Howard Bingham Hill Architects
Owner: Pinnacle International
Review: First
Delegation: Doug Melson, Howard Bingham Hill Architects
John Bingham, Howard Bingham Hill Architects
Peter Kreuk, Durante Kreuk Ltd.
Staff: Dale Morgan

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-2)

- **Introduction:** Dale Morgan, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for 7-storey mixed use development located at West Broadway and Maple Street. The application is for retail and townhouses at grade with residential above. Mr. Morgan described the M-1 site context noting the separate site to the south and the dedicated lane between the two sites that dead ends at the rail line. The Arbutus Corridor Official Development Plan, adopted in July 2000, calls for the Arbutus Corridor to be preserved for rapid transit and Greenways purposes with a future extension of the Millennium ALRT line along Broadway with a possible station at the intersection of West Broadway and Arbutus Street. Mr. Morgan described the history of the site noting that several years ago there was a development enquiry for a large format retailer, which was not supported. Subsequently, guidelines specific to block entitled Broadway-Arbutus C-3A and 2000 Block West 10th Avenue (North Side) Guidelines were written and adopted by Council in 2004.

Mr. Morgan also noted that the intent of the Guidelines is to:

- a) To assist in the transition of the Broadway-Arbutus district into a vibrant shopping area which connects and unifies this local shopping area within the Arbutus Neighbourhood Centre;
- b) To ensure the size and scale of future developments are compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood and local-serving character of the Arbutus shopping area;
- c) To encourage a strong residential component above the Broadway and Arbutus street level and on the north side of the 2000 block of West 10th Avenue with a high degree of livability;
- d) High quality public and private realms and building form which respects adjacent buildings and takes into consideration sun light access and private views;
- e) Ensure that vehicular traffic is well managed so that the area remains accessible, and surrounding residential areas are not negatively impacted.

Mr. Morgan added that it was the City's desire that both sites be developed concurrently and that a comprehensive development be undertaken that would look at both sites as a whole, however, both sites are separate legal entities with no legal constraints that would otherwise tie the two properties together with the exception of providing parking for the grocery store use. It is anticipated that the IGA store will be closed and eventually demolished. The future development of this site is yet unknown, although current policy identifies residential uses as the preferred use. Also social planning has identified this site as a possible location for daycare.

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

1. **Density:** Does this application satisfactorily earn the discretionary increases in density up to 3.0 FSR?
2. **Height:** The proposed height at 77.6 feet exceeds the recommended Guideline height of 70 feet and is slightly higher than the other recent C-3A next door at 75.3 feet. Subject to private view impacts, is this height supportable?
3. **Massing:** Is the Panel supportive of the general massing concept of two larger elements? Is the skewed alignment of the mid level massing justified? Does the massing "fit" within the Broadway/Arbutus neighbourhood in terms of scale and identity?
4. **Retail Uses:** The Guidelines suggest minimum depths of 50 feet, maximum recommended frontages of 50 feet and ceiling heights between 14 and 17 feet. However, several potential CRU's propose a depth of less than 30 feet and a portion of the potential larger space will have a reduced ceiling height of less than 11 feet to underside of the concrete slab to enable a partial floor of residential units above. What is the Panel's view of these "less than recommended" spaces?
5. **Livability:** General comments are requested on unit livability, in particular the 2nd level units at the lane, overlooking the at grade parking. Could (should) these units come down to grade?
6. **Lane Treatment & use:** Notwithstanding the functional requirements for loading and parking, is the lane sufficiently pedestrian friendly? Should the loading areas be reduced in width, with more landscaping and less parking? Would townhouses at grade be supportable along the lane?
7. **Materiality & Architectural Expression:** Should there be greater consistency of materials on all building frontages, in particular, for the base treatment or does the change in materials give visual emphasis to the principal façade? General comments are requested on the overall architectural character.
8. **Parking below Grade:** The entry stair and elevator to the parking level is mid block and faces onto Broadway as a key entrance, emphasized with full height glass walls that partially light the first floor parking level and make the entry/arrival sequence more pleasant to experience. Should this idea be further enhanced with light wells, or enlarged stair or transparent elevator cab, to add further value to what is prominently identified as an important portal?
9. **Sustainability:** General comments are requested on the LEED initiatives seeking silver compliance. Have they gone far enough?

Mr. Morgan took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** John Bingham, Architect, further described the project noting that they had several public meetings with the neighbourhood. Mr. Bingham described the uses that are planned for the retail.

Doug Nelson, Architect, described the overall building plans noting the Broadway massing to give a low rise/high rise component. The upper level massing has been developed to offer more daylight and views to people on the south side of West 10th Avenue and the lane

which created some terracing and residential outdoor spaces. He noted that the colour palette would be simple with masonry at the retail level.

Peter Kreuk, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans noting the pedestrian zone on the lane as well as parking spaces. Some urban agriculture is planned for sixth level as well as a children's play area. The tops of the buildings are all private outdoor roof terraces which are accessed by stairwells with a substantial amount of plantings. The mechanical space sits behind a screen with maintenance access through the elevator/stair extensions.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - To provide a contextual study including building massing of the neighbouring M-1 site;
 - Design development to correct the compromised height of the retail units;
 - Design development to improve the lane treatment and associated landscaping;
 - Design development to the parkade stairs and residential entry;
 - Design development to improve how the building meets the ground and provide greater differentiation between ground level and the residential portion; and
 - Design development to provide more differentiation and articulation of the long retail frontage.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and complimented the applicant team for a handsome piece of architecture.

The Panel thought the proposal had earned the increase in density and height with a couple of Panel members suggesting it could go higher. They agreed that the ceiling height of the retail was an important component and warranted the additional height as it fits the Broadway corridor context. They also noted that the retail would not be successful with a ceiling height of less than eleven feet.

Most of the Panel had some concerns regarding the future development of the site to the south noting that it was hard to know if there were going to be some adjacency problems with the future building without a contextual study of possible massing. Also, most Panel members were not sure the townhouses on the lane would be appropriate since the type of development across the lane was still unknown. The Panel thought the City and the applicant needed to have some sort of strategy in place for the M-1 redevelopment and the future mass transit site.

The Panel liked that there were a number of unit types, although several members thought the units at the lane were not of the same standard of livability although some thought the units would be more affordable.

A couple of Panel members were concerned with the concrete slab in front of the parking noting that the space could be dark wells and would need good lighting to make them work. Most of the Panel supported the idea of having neighbourhood parking along the lane as well as some viable landscaping. Several Panel members thought the lane treatment on the west half was a little stark and could use some design development. One Panel member thought that the trellis on the back wall, unless it was attached to the ground, wouldn't stay green.

The Panel had some concerns regarding the parkade entry stairs along West Broadway as they would be visible from the parking and suggested they be more dramatic. Several Panel members noted that the residential entry was recessed and thought it could be more

interesting if there was a dramatic canopy to emphasize the area and make a connection to the street.

The Panel noted that there weren't a lot of areas for greenery nor many opportunities for the residents to enjoy the outdoor amenities although they thought the uses for the roof were well done.

Several Panel members thought the colour scheme could be improved as well as the materials at the ground plane noting that the weakest part of the proposal was how the building meets the ground.

A couple of Panel members thought the corner piece on Maple Street and the horizontal piece closer to Arbutus Street could have more contrast. They thought it was important with this type of building to identify a couple of design pieces that could be special and made as visual features. They also thought there needed to be more differentiation as the building seemed to have the same expression on all four sides.

Regarding sustainability, the Panel thought the applicant could go further but supported the applicant achieving LEED™ Silver compliance. One Panel member suggested adding a cistern for irrigation and low water consumption for plantings. A couple of Panel members noted that the solar screens needed to be consistent. One Panel member suggested using the elements on the slab extension where they make sense and to do energy modeling. Also, it was suggested that the applicant consider the operable windows have the proper indoor shading elements to handle more effectively the internal heat gains during the summer. Consideration should be given to the buildings active systems and combine the retail and residential systems for energy recovery. Also, recommended, was having the suite layouts be consistent so that the washrooms and kitchen cores are back to back which could save the applicant money. Since the City has now adopted the ASHRA model, the applicant was encouraged to demonstrate compliance with this standard.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Bingham noted that they did ask for extra density and were turned down. He thanked the Panel for their good comments adding that they had gained a lot of insight which would help to refine the project.

2. Address:	538-560 West Broadway
DE:	N/A
Description:	To permit construction of a 6-storey, 4.84 FSR office building with retail/service uses in the grade level.
Zoning:	C-3A to CD-1
Application Status:	Rezoning
Architect:	Studio One Architecture
Owner:	Orca West Developments
Review:	First
Delegation:	Tomas Wolf, Studio One Architecture Jonathan Losee, Jonathan Losee Ltd. Kal Bachra, Orca West Developments Damien Crowell, PGL Environmental Consultants
Staff:	Anita Molaro/Alison Higginson

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-4)

- **Introduction:** Alison Higginson, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal. The site is currently zoned C-3A Commercial District, which permits a conditional density of 3.0 FSR. A maximum density of 3.3 FSR is possible with a transfer of heritage density.

The purpose of the rezoning application is to create a Comprehensive Development District or CD-1 by-law which would increase the allowable density to 4.84 FSR to permit a 6-storey retail/office development. The proposed uses and height can be considered under the current C-3A zoning and applicable guidelines.

The policy context for consideration of the rezoning application is firstly the Central Area Plan, which encourages office development in the Uptown District along Central Broadway; and the Metro Core Jobs and Economy Land Use Plan, adopted by Council in 2007, which reaffirms the Broadway Uptown Office District's role as a second downtown and encourages opportunities to increase commercial capacity to capitalize on rapid transit investment.

Ms. Molaro further described the proposal noting that it was first received last fall. Staff asked the applicant to withdraw the application and to consider the view corridors in relation to the height of the building. The applicant has revised their application from an 8-storey building to 6-storey building. That has also meant a slight adjustment in the FSR. The site is a 200 foot wide frontage mid block along West Broadway between Ash and Cambie Streets. Ms. Molaro described the context for the area as well the zoning. She noted that a sidewalk widening is being sought along West Broadway. To accommodate the additional density the proposal has been massed to respect the height limitations described within the Guidelines. The applicant has looked at shadow impacts and has confirmed the impact would preserve the sun to the north sidewalk from equinox to equinox. The proposal is attending to meet the EcoDensity action items for rezonings for new buildings to achieve a LEED™ Silver level.

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

Does the Panel support the proposed form of development including the height, proposed use and the resultant density being achieved?

And any other comments that the Panel would like to provide, such as:

- The proposed building articulation, materials and finishes;
- Landscape treatments, and
- Sustainability attributes.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Tomas Wolf, Architect, noted that the project had been started about a year ago and that the proposed building will offer employment opportunities. The first floor will contain retail, with retail and office space on the second floor. The top four floors will be office space. Mr. Wolf described the architectural plans noting the materials and colour scheme.

Jonathan Losee, Landscape Architect, noted that they are limited to landscaping perimeter planters at different levels. Mr. Losee stated that there isn't an opportunity to plant on West Broadway as there are no existing trees although with the widening of the sidewalk there may be some landscaping opportunities. He also described the proposed colours and plant material.

Damien Crowell, Environmental Consultant, noted that they had gone through the LEED™ Checklist with the applicant. They are planning to achieve LEED™ Silver.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider a more elegant massing with more articulation on the site;
 - Consider opening the massing to the views;
 - Design development required in terms of building detailing and materials selection;
 - Stronger and more explicit commitment to sustainable strategies; and
 - Design development to enhance the pedestrian experience.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal but thought that significant design development was still required and that the project should come back to the panel at the DE stage.

The Panel supported the density and height as well as the use. The Panel noted that the applicant was able to bring in the previous application that was rejected by staff. They thought the previous scheme was a better solution in terms of the height and density. They felt it would be a better project and complied with more of the Zoning Guidelines. The Panel hoped there was some flexibility regarding height as it was suggested that a more elegant massing form could be achieved on the site.

Several Panel members noted that the proposal didn't seem to relate to West Broadway the way other newer building do as it doesn't open up to the views. They also noted that the materials and articulation will be very important to overcome the difficulties of the massing. One Panel member noted that the design will be won or lost on the details and thought the articulation was artificial. Several Panel members added that they would rather see a straight forward rectangular building.

Several Panel members noted that the streetscape needs to be handled properly and access to the 2nd floor needed to be done right for the commercial success of the retail/office space.

The Panel thought the proposal seemed to be generally weak in the presentation of sustainable aspects of the building. They encouraged the applicant to be more convincing in terms of the goals and how they would be achieved when the application comes back to the Panel. One Panel member noted that it was really important to go beyond specifying that they will achieve LEED™ Silver. He suggested the applicant needed to show how they will achieve those points. The key elements are energy and performance and the Panel member thought the applicant would have a challenge to meet the ASHRA points that the

City requires. Another Panel member hoped that there was more emphasis in making the proposal a high performance building and incorporating EcoDensity.

Regarding landscaping, it was noted that there needs to be a better understanding on how the building meets the ground and as well, the pedestrian experience needs to be taken into consideration and what the signage will look like. Also, it was suggested that a conversation with Engineering should take place regarding the street trees otherwise it could be a bleak sidewalk.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Wolf thanked the Panel for their comments noting that they would come back for a successful conclusion.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.