
URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: May 15, 2002

TIME: 4.00 p.m.

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Walter Francl, Chair
Helen Besharat
Jeffrey Corbett
Gerry Eckford (excused Item 3)
Richard Henry
Reena Lazar
Stuart Lyon
Kim Perry
Sorin Tatomir
Ken Terriss

REGRETS: Joseph Hruda
Maurice Pez

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Carol Hubbard

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1175 Broughton Street
2.	2137 West 10th Avenue
3.	700 West 8th Avenue

Richard Henry asked the Panel to consider the benefits of recognizing extraordinarily beautiful projects. If there is some method of instituting a declaration for particularly worthy projects that come forward it might have some influence on the Director of Planning, Development Permit Board or City Council in considering whatever levels of discretion can be applied to an application. This might avoid exceptional projects being whittled back to meet regulations and guidelines, the end result of which is the loss to the city of a beautiful building.

The Panel agreed with the proposal but no conclusion was reached as to how it should be applied. One suggestion was to apply some kind of seal on the model so that it is a visible declaration of the Panel's unanimous endorsement. It would be applied rarely and might occur after the usual vote for support or non-support is taken.

Panel members agreed to give the suggestion further consideration for discussion at a future meeting. The Senior Development Planner will also be consulted.

1. Address:	1175 Broughton Street
DA:	406589
Use:	Institutional (Congregate Housing)
Zoning:	RM-5
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Studio One
Owner:	Roman Catholic Archbishop
Review:	First
Delegation:	Tomas Wolf, Mary Chan-Yip
Staff:	Bob Adair

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-1)

- **Introduction:** Bob Adair, Development Planner, presented this application. The previous two rezoning submissions were not supported by the Panel. The rezoning was approved in principle by Council in April 2001. The proposal is for a 9-storey building containing 97 units of congregate housing. The ground floor contains dining and kitchen facilities and a multi purpose space to be shared with the adjacent church which owns this property. There is an exercise room on the second floor and a small common area on each floor. Underground parking is provided for the use of this building as well as the church.

The form of development, use and density were approved by Council, subject to some design conditions. These included additional setback from Davie Street, design development of the tower expression and improvements to the landscape and the granite retaining wall. Staff have no significant concerns with the proposal and seek the Panel's response to the general design and landscaping.

- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** Tomas Wolf, Architect, said they have worked hard with staff to reach agreement on the issues raised previously. The size of the units, at 270 sq.ft., meets the guidelines for congregate housing. Materials are painted architectural concrete and glass.
- **Panel's Comments:** The Panel strongly supported this application. It is an attractive, simple building that fits well in its West End context. Lightening the colours was considered a notable improvement.

Several Panel members noted the lack of any direct relationship with the adjacent church. It was recommended there be a stronger functional connection to improve the transition for the people who will be moving back and forth between the two buildings.

There were concerns expressed about some of the common areas, particularly the small meeting areas on each floor which seem isolated and may be little used. It was suggested they might be more appropriately located opposite the elevator lobby. There also seems to be a privacy issue in connection with the large patio next to the exercise room on the third floor where there are two units facing onto the patio.

With respect to landscaping it was recommended that more thought be given to the elderly residents who will use the roof terraces, by providing small groups of seating for conversations. A recommendation was also made to try to match the material of the arbour with the awnings and arbours on the building to help tie things together better.

With respect to the architectural expression, one Panel member thought the very high floor to floor height on the ground floor was creating a somewhat blocky base for the floors above, suggesting something be done to give it a proportion more like the spandrels higher up the building.

The question of scooter parking was raised by some Panel members. It was suggested it is impractical for scooters to be parked separately from where they are charged. It was noted there are likely to be a lot of scooters in this building.

Two Panel members had serious concerns about the livability of the units, considering them far too small, particularly for residents in the upper age bracket with mobility problems. Regardless of their size, it was thought that far greater thought needs to be given to the design of the units to make sure they will work for the older residents.

The Panel generally agreed that this project is responding to a strong demand for congregate housing and was pleased to see it go ahead.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Wolf agreed with the comments about scooter storage and said it can be accommodated. With respect to the size of the units, Mr. Wolf said they have worked on the issue for some time. While it is a matter of providing enough units to satisfy the economics of the project, they have had considerable discussions with the City's Social Planning Department who are satisfied with what is being proposed. Part of the building will be used by Vancouver Coastal Health Authority who are also satisfied that the size of the units is appropriate. The amenity spaces have also been reviewed a number of times and the conclusion was that they should provide one large space and a series of small spaces. The Columbus Charities Association has a long, successful history of operating seniors' buildings and they are also satisfied with the size of the units.

2. Address:	2137 West 10th Avenue
DA:	406553
Use:	Residential (7 storeys)
Zoning:	C-7
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Kasian Kennedy
Owner:	Adera Equities
Review:	Second
Delegation:	Gerry Kennedy, Norm Couttie, Chris Gowing
Staff:	Anita Molaro

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-1)

- **Introduction:** Anita Molaro, Development Planner, presented this application which was not supported by the Panel when it was reviewed on April 3, 2002. Following a brief description of the context, Ms. Molaro reviewed the Panel's previous concerns, noting the Panel supported the general massing arrangement and a height relaxation from 40 ft. to 60 ft. The guidelines specifically identify this block for considering a height relaxation because of its relationship with the adjacent C-3A zone.

In summary, staff seek the Panel's advice on how the proposal has addressed the issues raised previously: the building mass and resolution of the two components; the two-storey streetwall expression with the shoulder treatment; the end conditions; the street level entry resolution; landscape treatment along the lane and resolution of the left-over area on either side of the building.

- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** Gerry Kennedy, Architect, advised they re-studied much of the elevation of the previous scheme. Rather than raising the podium they have expressed very clearly a top, a middle and a base and believe the proportions are now quite appropriate. Attention has also been given to resolving the expression. Mr. Couttie described the proposed wall system.
- **Panel's Comments:** The Panel strongly supported this application which it found considerably improved since the previous submission. The applicant was commended for the effort made to respond to the Panel's earlier concerns.

The Panel particularly noted the vastly improved treatment of the rear elevation which is now equal to the front. Several Panel members commented that such a well treated lane is seldom seen. One Panel member still questioned the 17 ft. high parking spaces at the rear, and thought they might better be converted to something more useful, such as storage.

A suggestion was made to take another look at the lower terrace to make it more usable, perhaps with the addition of some seating. One Panel member questioned the necessity for the small trellises at the unit entries. Also, that the large trellis in the rear is not well resolved.

There was a recommendation to revisit the area where there are two units on each side of the private garden on the ground floor where there are too many blank walls.

There was a suggestion the entry massing element could be more clearly identified to make it stronger and more formal. It was noted the building has an unusually prominent entrance gesture at the rear.

In general, the Panel was very pleased with how this project has progressed.

3. Address: 700 West 8th Avenue
DA: 406619
Use: Hotel
Zoning: CD-1
Application Status: Complete
Architect: Brook Development Planning
Owner: Beaconsfield Holdings Ltd.
Review: First
Delegation: Chuck Brook, Dick Stout, Simon Lam, Gerry Eckford
Staff: Mary Beth Rondeau

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-1)

- **Introduction:** Mary Beth Rondeau, Development Planner, presented this application which follows from a rezoning. The proposal is to use the existing surface parking lot on West 8th Avenue and upgrade the front of the existing Holiday Inn on West Broadway. The proposal is for one level of hospitality hotel rooms, convention rooms on the second floor and hotel rooms on the third, fourth and fifth floors. In addition, across the 8th Avenue frontage ten townhouses are proposed. These relate to the adjacent FM-1 Fairview Slopes neighbourhood. There will also be a facelift to the Holiday Inn frontage, including a glass and metal canopy for pedestrian weather protection.

Staff have no major concerns with the proposal. The Panel's comments are sought on the livability of the townhouses noting there is a walkway which is shared with the ground level hotel hospitality suites. Comments are also requested on materials. There is also a question about sun access for the townhouses.

- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** The applicant team described the project in greater detail and responded to the Panel's questions.
- **Panel's Comments:** The Panel strongly supported this application.

The Panel found it a very handsome scheme, nicely resolved. The massing is very appropriate, particularly along West 8th Avenue. It was also thought to be a very welcome addition to this particular corner where redevelopment is long overdue. The north face of the hotel addition was thought to be quite interesting and a nice backdrop to the townhouses, although one Panel member thought it might be over-complicated.

The Panel was pleased to see the proposed improvements to the existing hotel frontage and encouraged further development to this aspect of the project, including clarifying the entrance to make it more special. Anything that can be done to make the front edge more pedestrian friendly would be welcome.

The Panel agreed that sun access and privacy for the townhouses were the main issues for this project. Little can be done about sun access and it need not detract from the livability of the townhouses in this urban location. Sunlight should be captured wherever possible, however, and one Panel member thought there may be opportunities, possibly through translucent roofs, to bring light down into the units. Lightening the 6 ft. "eyebrow" expression might also allow more sun into the courtyard.

Far greater concern was expressed about privacy, in particular with respect to the hotel ballroom overlooking the top floor of the townhouses. The proximity is very close and the view from the ballroom will be towards the north. The use of the townhouse roof decks therefore will be severely impaired without substantial screening, which in turn becomes an impediment to the view from the ballroom. The Panel thought the courtyard should be fully for the use of the residents rather than the hotel.

Some Panel members were concerned about the amount of stucco being proposed, particularly at the end of the townhouses where there are no windows. A comment was also made about the lack of overhang and the risk of rain penetration. It was also suggested the colour palette might be revisited, being somewhat hard edged and cool at present.

There were concerns about the gap between the two buildings and the two large stucco walls. The separation it creates was thought to be a good idea but it need only provide visual access through from 8th Avenue rather than a functioning access that may not be well used.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Stout thanked the Panel for its comments. He explained that not all the end walls of the townhouses are stucco. The eastern walls of each block are split faced block. With respect to the screening of the upper decks of the townhouses and the conflict with views to the north from the hotel, Mr. Stout said the decks do wrap around to the front of the townhome, with finger trellises above, so there is some feeling of privacy. He said they will consider all the Panel's comments. Mr. Brook also thanked the Panel for its constructive comments. Mr. Lam noted the courtyard will be for the use of the townhouse residents.