
URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: May 20, 2009

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Martin Nielsen, Chair
Richard Henry
Oliver Lang
Steve McFarlane
Maurice Pez
Jane Durante
Douglas Watts

REGRETS:
Mark Ostry
Bruce Haden
Gerry Eckford
Vladimir Mikler
David Godin

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1372 Seymour Street

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Wall called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. There being no New Business the meeting considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 1372 Seymour Street
DE: 412219
Description: Construct a 33 storey tower residential building containing a 37 space child daycare on the ground floor of the podium level. The proposal includes a 10% heritage density transfer and an additional density for the daycare.

Zoning: DD
Application Status: Complete
Architect: Hotson Bakker Boniface Haden
Owner: Onni Development (Pacific Street)
Review: Second (First was Preliminary [July 16, 2008])
Delegation: Alan Boniface, Hotson Bakker Boniface Haden
Brady Dunlop, Hotson Bakker Boniface Haden
David Stoyko, Sharp & Diamond Landscape Architects
Chris Evans, Onni
Staff: Anita Molaro

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-0)

- **Introduction:** Anita Molaro, Development Planner introduced the proposal (complete DP after preliminary DP) for a 35-storey residential tower. Ms. Molaro noted that when the Panel saw the proposal last it was for a 33 storey residential tower. The Panel provided input to, and the Development Permit Board (DPB) approved a number of design conditions that the applicant has addressed. These include tower location and shaping, public realm interface, interface with adjacent property, orientation of the two townhouses, scale of the lane podium building and the amount and usability of the outdoor semi-private space. The Panel supported the previous height and the DPB supported a further modest height increase of two floors to achieve a number of neighbourly objectives including views, privacy and the reduction of shadow implications. The DPB approved conditions to reduce the tower plate, which is now within the 6,500 square foot maximum (previously 6,660 square feet) as well as the tower shaping particularly as it relates to the 501. Other options were to reduce the length of the lane elevation and shift the tower to reduce overlap and improve tower separation. The DPB also approved a condition to reorient the prow to the Granville Street Bridge/Seymour Street off-ramp. The Panel had raised a concern regarding solar orientation with the previous west facing facades to orientate south. Ms. Molaro noted that improvements with the tower reconfiguration/location resulted in an increased open space within the courtyard and as well the circulation in the space has also been simplified. The applicant has addressed the scale of the podium massing as it relates to the 501. Other public realm improvements have been achieved on the townhouse frontage (Seymour Street) with the addition of a double row of trees. A number of other landscape treatments, namely the lane treatment, have been resolved. Landscaping and a green wall separating the daycare space with the neighbouring social housing project have also been resolved. Ms. Molaro noted the LEED™ Gold strategies which include curtain wall, fritted glass, textured concrete, metal panel cladding, moveable privacy screens and aluminum shading devices.

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

1. Does the revised proposal; tower shaping, form, placement, height demonstrate an improvement within the context of a neighbourly urban design response (privacy, views, shadowing)?
2. Resolution of the podium scale of adjacent to the lane and across from the 501;
Resolution of the public realm interface/townhouse on both Seymour Street and Pacific Street frontages;
Quality of the open space and landscape treatments;
Quality of proposed materials.
3. Sustainability attributes (objective for Gold level).

Ms. Molaro took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Alan Boniface, Architect, described the reasons why the design was changed noting that the City had relaxed a number of issues including allowing for extra height. The tower has been moved back and does not conflict with the view cones and gives more room from the neighbouring tower (501). The applicant team wanted to deal with the bridge differently allowing for high quality graffiti along the streetscape to make the units along Seymour Street unique. Moving up the tower there is another unique condition in dealing with car lights, noise and the setting western sun and they thought it would work to have screens that could respond to those conditions. It was also important that the podium condition be pulled away from the tower. Pacific Street has a different street condition as they decided against the traditional townhome relationship with the front door on the street. The green aspect in the design was important and he congratulated his client for choosing to go for LEED™ Gold equivalent. He noted that there will be roof top gardens and will include a functioning kitchen and gathering spaces for the users of the building. There is also a small room for gardening tools. Mr. Boniface noted the sunshades and fritted glass are being added to the tower and the roof top element holds the solar panels.

Mr. Boniface noted that originally they were going to do a geothermal building but when they did the cost analysis they decided to go another route. They are looking at district steam which is nearby or if not they will be using high efficiency boilers. The shading of the glass is a huge component with through ventilation. Some of the ponds will be used for storm water retention with a cistern in the basement. Also the roof top solar panels will convert energy to be used on the site.

David Stoyko, Landscape Architect, noted that they wanted to create an example of a downtown urban response with the landscaping that fit with the architecture. They also wanted to have some fun with the geometry to create different spaces that have a variety of functions for the residents. They also looked at ways to integrate sustainable aspects into the landscaping with the use of green roofs, urban agriculture and storm water management. The streetscape is an important aspect of the project and a lot of attention was given as to how the bridge relates to the site. The water features are integrated throughout the site and bring light and sparkle to the landscape.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Design development to the Seymour podium elevation to allow better access to daylight and increased performance of screening elements;
 - Design development to the lane elevation of the exterior, single loaded corridors to improve daylight access and appearance;
 - Design development to the lane elevation of the townhouse units facing Pacific;

- Design development to simplify and refine tower elevations and consider the addition of colour on the north side of the tower.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and thought there had been many improvements since the review at the preliminary application stage.

The Panel thought the response had reconciled the issues of a very difficult site condition, with several Panel members complimenting the applicant. They also thought the prow was improved in terms of its neighbourliness to the adjoining tower (501). As well they thought the shape and resolution of the tower was more attractive and allowed for more privacy particularly from the 501. The Panel supported the additional height as well as pulling back the podium. In terms of the podium level, the Panel thought it was successful on the Seymour Street side and had a strong relationship with the Granville Bridge. However, they were not convinced that the podium worked on the lane way side with a couple of Panel members stating that it felt like a stand alone building. They added that single-loaded corridors can be a challenge and felt they looked undeveloped and relentless in the model.

The Panel members thought the tower elevations had improved in terms of its solar response however there was still room for further editing and refinement, with the potential for the use of colour on the north side of the tower. One panel member thought the top of the tower was not well resolved with a number of competing elements. Most of the Panel supported the response along Pacific Street and thought it fit well with the neighbouring building although a number of Panel members thought the end panel facing the lane was too severe and were concerned that the blank party wall had a negative impact on the view to the west on Pacific.

The Panel thought the landscaping reflected the architecture of the building noting that in the previous submission there was an issue with the relationship between the daycare and the social housing site. A couple of Panel members thought the water feature on the Seymour Street side wasn't well integrated into the architecture and would be too shady because of the amount of tree cover and deep overhangs. In addition, some of the Panel was concerned with the amount of trees along Seymour Street noting that they would not allow much light into these units. One Panel member thought the courtyard could be opened up more and made more colourful or more animated. One Panel member had some concerns with CPTED issues in the courtyard as the amount of traffic through there will be limited. The panel supported the double row of trees along Pacific Street. One Panel member noted that LEED™ registration might be worth it from a marketing perspective as no developers are registering their buildings at this point.

Regarding sustainability, the Panel agreed that the south face was successful and commended the applicant for achieving LEED™ Gold equivalency. They also agreed that the orientation of the building was successful. One Panel member noted that it was important to let the orientation dictate suite layouts and material choices. A couple of Panel members thought the screens could be improved to have a better relationship between appearance and performance in terms of shading. One Panel member hoped the cistern didn't get taken out through value engineering and suggested there needed to be storage for the landscaping equipment.

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

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.