

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: May 20, 1998

TIME: N/A

PLACE: N/A

PRESENT: Joyce Drohan (Chair)
Sheldon Chandler
James Hancock
Joseph Hruda
Peter Kreuk
Sean McEwan
Jim McLean
Norman Shearing
Peter Wreglesworth (excused Item #1)

REGRETS: Patricia Campbell
Per Christoffersen
Geoff Glotman

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Carol Hubbard

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1407 Granville Street
2.	1221 Seymour Street
3.	1768 West Broadway

- 1. Address: 1407 Granville Street**
DA: Parkade
Zoning: CD-1
Application Status: Rezoning
Architect: Architectura
Owner: City of Vancouver
Review: First
Delegation: Richard Bernstein, Roman Czemerys (Architectura)
Raymond Louie, David Durocher (Engineering Services)
Staff: Michael Naylor, Jonathan Barrett

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (3-4)**Introduction:**

Michael Naylor, Central Area Planner, presented this rezoning application. The site is located under the Howe Street ramp between Beach Avenue and Pacific Street, in the Granville Slopes Neighbourhood. The objective is to relocate the surface impound vehicle facility currently occupying the site for the new dance centre. The selection of this site for the relocated impound lot was endorsed by Council at the time of the dance centre rezoning. Michael Naylor briefly described the site context and governing policies. The height of the proposed development ranges between 3 and 4 storeys, proposed density is 3.97 FSR with 158,000 sq.ft. of floor space. The facility will accommodate 267 impounded vehicles, in addition to which there will be 51 parking spaces for public use. The City's parking meter maintenance and coin collection operations will be accommodated in the Beach Avenue frontage, along with a small retail space. The advice of the Panel is sought with respect to the proposed land use, the density, and the architectural design and its fit within this predominantly residential context.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Richard Bernstein, Architect, reviewed the proposed access/ingress arrangements. He explained that the significant constraint of the diagonal bridge stanchions from the Howe Street on-ramp to the bridge essentially dictates that the parkade structure is built to the property line. The proposed development is 1 m from the Granville Street bridge. The intent is to keep tow truck traffic away from the SEGS and Beach Neighbourhoods. The proposed 51 public parking spaces will be available for visitors to the dance centre, the yacht club and nearby parks. Mr. Bernstein briefly described the proposed architectural expression.

Panel's Comments:

After reviewing the model and posted drawings, the Panel commented as follows:

The Panel did not support this application for rezoning. The Panel complimented the applicant on the overall presentation. In terms of the operations of the proposed parkade it is very well resolved and has clearly been thoroughly researched.

The Panel's principal area of concern related to the proposed use and the noise and visual impacts of a 24-hour impound facility on this predominantly residential neighbourhood. A number of suggestions were made for mitigating these impacts.

With respect to its fit within the context, it was suggested that the use of the tower elements and corrugated metal were strong. However, the steel frame approach seems to be creating a somewhat alien character that is neither residential nor indicative of the parkade use. If the multiple frame concept is to be pursued, it was suggested that toning down the larger of the frame elements might be helpful.

The Panel was concerned about the 1 m setback from the bridge deck and suggested the perimeter of the building might be treated in a more creative way to provide greater articulation and a friendlier aspect to the neighbourhood. The 1 m setback creates quite a dark gap that will make it very difficult for anything to grow in the long term. Given the proposal maximizes the parkade operations, the Panel felt there should be opportunities for sacrificing some of the impound spaces for the benefit of the building and the surrounding neighbourhood. The Granville Street elevation was found to be especially weak. One suggestion was to make something more of the payment office, to make it a recognizable element on the street. Some Panel members stressed the need for a more residential appearance on the Beach Avenue frontage.

The negative visual impact of the parkade roof on the residential buildings that will overlook it was of serious concern to the Panel. Measures to mitigate the impact of the lights on the roof will be essential given the proposed 24-hour operation of the parkade. Coloured asphalt on the roof will not be sufficient to soften the visual impact. Increased landscaping and trellises were suggested for improving the overview. It may be necessary for the roof to be enclosed to adequately address noise and light problems.

The Panel strongly recommended that this application take the opportunity to provide a pedestrian connection from the bridge to the Granville Slopes neighbourhood. It would be a very valuable amenity and one that might help to animate the building and make it more pedestrian friendly.

Finally, there was a recommendation to increase the amount of public parking in this building, given the limited amount of parking available in the dance centre and the number of parks nearby.

Applicant's Response:

Mr. Bernstein said he felt the Panel's suggestions could be achieved in design development. Raymond Louie noted Engineering Services has looked at opportunities for making a connection from the Granville bridge to the street below and a pedestrian flow study is being conducted to determine the best location.

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2. **Address: 1221 Seymour Street**
DA DE403244
Use: Residential (12 storeys, 136 units/Social Services Centre)
Zoning: DD
Application Status: Complete
Architect: Davidson Yuen Simpson
Owner: City of Vancouver
Review: First
Delegation: Dane Jansen, Stuart Thomas, Gerry Eckford, Bob Nicklin
Staff: Ralph Segal
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EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-0)

Introduction:

Ralph Segal, Senior Development Planner, presented this application for a 12-storey non-market housing project with a drop-in centre in a 2-storey podium. The application seeks the maximum 5.0 FSR permitted for social housing. The proposal contains 136 units. 30 will be operated by Coast Housing for people with mental disabilities, 15 by McLaren Housing for people with AIDS, and 91 by Affordable Housing for core-need housing. 117 of the units average 340 sq.ft. A variety of outdoor spaces are provided for various functions. The advice of the Panel is sought in particular with respect to the treatment on the lane side of the project. The Downtown South public realm treatment is being provided, i.e., 12 ft. setback and double row of trees.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Dane Jansen, Architect, briefly described the project and the Landscape Architect, Gerry Eckford, described the landscape plan.

Panels Comments

The Panel reviewed the model and posted drawings and offered the following comments:

The Panel unanimously supported this application. It was generally felt that the massing was very well resolved for a very complex building program on a relatively tight site.

There was mixed response to the proposed colour scheme. It was suggested some cues might be taken from a similar project closer to Granville bridge which also has some strong colours that are tempered with some lighter tones as well. Particular attention should be given to detailing of the slabs at the french balconies in order to avoid staining in the long term.

A major area of concern was the relationship of the tower to the base, and a recommendation that the tower be expressed to the ground in certain locations. It was felt more could be done to more strongly express the streetwall on Seymour Street while integrating the tower and providing a better resolution of the entry to the drop-in. This would also contribute to achieving a better balance in the overall streetscape, given the project across the street has a very strong streetwall expression. A more articulated base treatment similar to the project close to the Granville bridge might be considered. The use of brick on the frame was supported, although there was some concern that the frame treatment overall is somewhat rigid and overbearing, particularly on the lane side. Lightening the frame treatment at the lane was recommended to ensure as much light as possible penetrates the adjacent open space.

There were concerns expressed about potential security problems in the deep alcove at the residential entry. As well, there were general concerns about the outdoor spaces. It was suggested that much greater emphasis could be given to landscaping in a building of this nature in terms of providing opportunities for learning and for therapy. Full advantage should be taken of the roof top space to provide accessible gardens. The proximity of the mechanical space to the outdoor spaces was also identified as a potential problem area.

- 3. Address: 1768 West Broadway**
DA: 402821
Use: Mixed Use (11 storeys, 125 units)
Zoning: C-3A
Application Status: Complete after Preliminary
Architect: Brook Development Planning/Gomberoff Policzer
Owner: Intergulf Development Group
Review: Third
Delegation: Chuck Brook, Tom Bell
Staff: Ralph Segal
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EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (2-6)

Introduction:

Ralph Segal, Senior Development Planner, presented this application. The Panel saw the project twice at the preliminary stage and it was approved in principle by the Development Permit Board on March 23, 1998. The Panel's concerns were addressed in the prior-to conditions, in addition to which the Board imposed a height reduction from 12 to 11 storeys in response to concerns raised by residents of the Monte Carlo building on West 10th Avenue. Mr. Segal briefly described the refinements made to the scheme since the preliminary submission. FSR previously in the tower has now been redistributed elsewhere in the project, including an additional level on the Broadway-fronting townhouses and extra massing on the Pine Street frontage. Staff are generally supportive of the revised submission and believe the adjustments to the massing respond well to the Board's conditions. Staff will be seeking improved visibility around the residential entrance. The main area in which the advice of the Panel is sought is the resolution of the materials and the exterior treatment generally.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Tom Bell, Architect, distributed computer-generative perspectives to illustrate the revised proposal.

Panels Comments:

Following a review of the model and posted drawings, the Panel provided the following comments:

The Panel generally supported the massing of the project which it felt had been improved since the preliminary submission. Increasing the height of the townhouses along Broadway was seen as a very positive move. It gives the project more presence and provides a stronger streetwall on Broadway. Panel members had a number of serious concerns about the project, however, and the complete submission was not supported at this time.

The Panel had major concerns about the extensive use of stucco. It was strongly suggested to explore opportunities for increasing the amount of brick, and the rationale for the use of the brick was considered quite weak. It was recommended that the brick be carried down to the ground wherever possible, and used in a much stronger, three-dimensional way. In several areas it looks somewhat appliqué. At the same time there was a recommendation to delete the small two-storey grid on the westerly tower which seems counter to the rhythm that has been set up. The drab colour of the stucco was also of concern. The Panel would look for a greater variety in colour as well as a more complementary palette between the stucco and the brick.

There were concerns that the brise-soleil should be in aluminum and not steel which could create ongoing maintenance problems. These sun-deflecting devices would also be more convincing if they were used only on the south side of the development.

Serious questions were raised about the open space. The private open space on Broadway and the entrance to the westerly tower in particular needs to be much more transparent and generous. If possible it should have far greater prominence and a stronger identity from Broadway. With respect to the plaza itself, it was strongly recommended that the planters be eliminated in favour of trees in the ground. As well, the routes through to the westerly tower should be much more clearly defined. The use of paving patterns was recommended in the resolution of the plaza. It was thought that the landscape at the southwest corner could make much more of a contribution to the usable open space.

There were serious concerns expressed about the townhouse entries in the inner court. At the next level of design something will need to be done to give the recessed patios more light and space to make them more pleasant.

The full potential of the northeast corner has not yet been achieved and will need to be given greater attention in the next stage of the design. As well, the entry to the east tower needs to be given much more prominence, which might go a long way towards giving the corner the kind of character that is called for.

Dedication of the important Pine Street frontage to bicycle storage should be reconsidered.

The townhouse roof decks were strongly supported in terms of improving the overview from neighbouring buildings.

Applicant's Response:

Mr. Bell said the comments are all very good and should help in the refinement of the project. Chuck Brook noted they are looking at alternative colours.