

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: May 21, 2008

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
John Wall, Chair
Walter Francl (Absent for Item #1)
Tom Bunting
Maurice Pez
Douglas Watts (Excused Item #1 & #4)
Richard Henry
Bill Harrison (Absent for Item #1)
Albert Bicol (Excused Item #1 & #2)
Martin Nielsen (Absent for Items # 3, 4 & 5)
Mark Ostry
Gerry Eckford
Bob Ransford

RECORDING SECRETARY: Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	701 West Georgia (Workshop)
2.	1669 East Broadway
3.	299 East 7 th Avenue
4.	3212 Dunbar Street
5.	505 Abbott 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: 701 West Georgia Street (Workshop)
DE: 411749
Description: Workshop to explore alternatives to the massing and architectural expression. Note: the previous review by the Panel received non-support.
Zoning: CD-1
Application Status: Complete
Architect: Abbarch Architecture Inc.
Owner: Cadillac Fairview Corporation
Review: Second (First Review: March 26, 2008)
Delegation: Jeremy Woolf, Abbarch Architecture Inc.
Ralph Giannone, Giannone Associates
Finley McEwen, Cadillac Fairview Corporation
Staff: Dale Morgan

EVALUATION: Non Voting Session

- **Introduction:** Dale Morgan, Development Planner introduced the workshop for a proposal at the corner of West Georgia and Howe Streets. The last review by the Panel received non-support with issues identified that related to the public realm treatment, the Howe Street façade requiring more design development, the retail component on West Georgia Street needing further clarification to achieve a greater prominence and more resolution in the landscape plans. Mr. Morgan reviewed the rezoning conditions for the site.
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Ralph Giannone, Architect said they had spent the last number of weeks rethinking the architectural design based on the criticism from the Panel. They started again from the first principles and looked at the rezoning to find the spirit and intent for the proposal. They have addressed the input and in some ways completely redesigned the proposal. Mr. Giannone said they had looked at it from an urban design point of view looking at the public realm and the urban rhythm of the street. They also looked at the proposal from the enhancement of the public square across the street. Also, they looked at other store fronts within the city to see who was successful. Abercrombie & Fitch are still driving the addition economically. Mr. Giannone noted that they have to take into consideration the site, elevators, lay-by, the Four Seasons Hotel and create something that is appropriate to the site. He noted that one of the issues they looked at was the confusion as to where the entrance to the mall was located which was an element that needed to be accentuated. He added that they now have a landscape plan and a landscape architect for the proposal. There has been a lot of discussion regarding the landscaping and specifically the public realm treatment. They plan on making it a significant spot in the city, something that has presence that can address the square opposite. Mr. Giannone described the architectural plans noting the massing for a strong corner element. They are looking at using a water element at the corner with glass canopies for a clearer access to the Four Seasons Hotel. They are also looking at a green roof although the hotel can't use it they are looking at making it accessible from the office building.

Finley McEwen of Cadillac Fairview Corporation noted that the Four Seasons Hotel are not happy tenants. They are a mid block hotel and want to have a corner location. Mr. McEwen said in discussions with hotel management, they were adamant that the lay-by needed to stay as it is used for tour buses by their guests.

Chris Phillips, Landscape Architect noted that there is little opportunity for landscaping on the horizontal plane although they are looking at the Georgia Street façade and public realm but the landscape plans are still being worked out.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel and staff.

- **Related Commentary:**

- there were positive moves made in response to the commentary from the last review;
- having a major public art component on the corner was a strong solution and will give some energy to the street;
- the art piece had to be light and more festive, less about water and more about a particular connection to the culture of the area with something that relates to the Art Gallery square, night life or the city;
- the stone element on the mall entrance makes for a strong element;
- there was still concerns with the façade and the property line as it still hides the Four Season entrance;
- there needs to be something that brings the public a sense of ownership;
- the little sliver of a gallery doesn't have a purpose and the space is a slot that looks down into the mall. It needs to turn the corner to draw people visually down to the Four Seasons Hotel;
- the Georgia Street side was well done but the Howe Street side needs some work. The only thing that jumps out is the second storey. It could be curved rather than a straight edge. Might like to replicate the West Georgia Street façade on Howe Street and have the two sides come together;
- the idea of glazing and louvers on Howe Street would work, but consider the scale of the elements and how they knit the various elements together;
- entry to the mall works better;
- creating some kind of public art would make it a compelling space;
- the Four Seasons Hotel visibility was not a clear connection to the hotel and needs a smoother transition for getting pedestrians in and out of the hotel;
- the dominant presence was not on West Georgia Street and adding a water wall could be a simple solution which would add texture;
- the Abercrombie & Fitch area seems too compressed and needs more scale. The space doesn't turn the corner and there is something wrong with the window above with the shutters;
- the project has come a long way and now has a clear hierarchy.
- care has been given to the entry to the mall as it emerges out of the ground and could be a strong element on the corner;
- the various elements needed to be weaved back together as they were a little disconnected;
- the new base condition for the office tower is well done and could be a strong element if it connected to the roof fascia above the mall and gallery and helped knit the pieces together;
- the relationship to the IBM tower had been resolved for a better connection which makes the two buildings feel like they are part of the whole block.

2. Address:	1669 East Broadway
DE:	412066
Description:	To construct a four storey mixed use building with 2.5 levels of parking.
Zoning:	C3-A
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	IBI/HB Architects
Owner:	Vancouver Coastal Health Authority
Review:	First
Delegation:	Tony Gill, IBI Group Bruce Hemstock, PWL Partnership George Venni, Wesgroup
Staff:	Dale Morgan

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-3)

- **Introduction:** Dale Morgan, Development Planner introduced the proposal for a health care facility on East Broadway. Mr. Morgan described the zoning in the area as well as the type of developments. After an extensive search for a site to build a health care facility, Vancouver Coastal Health decided to develop the site on East Broadway that they already owned. Mr. Morgan noted that there is a RM-4 site to the west that is undeveloped at this time. Access to the site is off the lane with a 1m set back on East Broadway and a two foot setback on the lane. The program needs for Vancouver Coastal Health do not allow them to occupy the whole building and they will be renting out some of the space until their needs change. There are plans for a pharmacy and coffee shop in the ground floor retail. The building will be primarily brick cladding with a row of trees along East Broadway and landscaping on the 2nd and 3rd floor roof level and a green wall along the lane.

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

1. Earning: Has this project earned the discretionary increases in height and density, in terms of architectural quality and enhanced public realm treatment?
2. Neighbourliness: Comments are requested on the side yard relationship with RM-4 site with respect to grade conditions, neighbourliness & CPTED issues and rear yard relationship with C-3A across the lane with respect to lane treatment, sun access and overlook.
3. Architectural Expression: General comments are requested on the architectural expression, including materiality and responses to solar orientation.

Mr. Morgan took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Tony Gill, Architect, further described the proposal. He noted that the program on the main floor will be for ambulatory care space. There will be an open stair to the second floor and two elevators in the lobby. Vancouver Coastal Health Authority will occupy all the space other than a small area on the third floor. Over two phases they will eventually occupy all of the third floor and the fourth floor as well.

Bruce Hemstock, Landscape Architect, described the landscaping plans for the proposal. He noted there is some concerns regarding CPTED issues along the side yard. The selection of the plant materials and height of the plantings are designed to minimize CPTED issues. A green screen is planned for the back wall. Also architectural concrete is planned for the streetscape on East Broadway.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Design development to the south-west corner of the retail;
 - Attention needs to be paid to possible CPTED issues;
 - Design development to enhance the landscape design including the roof decks, the public realm and green wall; and
 - Consideration should be given to more sustainable measures.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and supported the increased height and density along the Broadway corridor.

The Panel agreed that the additional height and density was appropriate for the Commercial and Broadway transit hub although a couple of Panel members didn't think it had been earned through architectural expression and public realm treatment. There was consensus among the panel that project was a 'back-ground' or 'Yeoman' building, which was considered to be appropriate for a midblock site. However, several panel members thought the building was disappointing but supportable.

The Panel thought there was a missed opportunity with the stepping south-west corner as a transition to the neighbouring residential site to the west. Also the Panel was concerned with possible CPTED issues. Several Panel members agreed that the west retail bays be set back from the south building line and not from the west building face. This would make a better transition to the site next door and would provide an area for outdoor seating. One panel member thought the southwest corner should be set back on all floors to open the corner to the sky.

The Panel was disappointed with the lack of outdoor greenery and thought more access should be given to the roof. One Panel member thought the landscaped decks would contribute positively to the mental health of the patients and staff who work there and felt they should be exploited. Several Panel members thought there would be a lot of people coming to the building and suggested benches be integrated into the public realm on East Broadway. Several Panel members suggested a nicer quality of materials for the sidewalk at the property line and the base of the building. Another Panel member thought the planters on the roof decks would disappear over time and was concerned with the lack of a commitment to the landscaping. One panel member suggested using more of the green wall system on the west façade to improve neighbourliness.

Most of the Panel agreed that for a LEED™ Silver building there didn't seem to be a lot of noticeable sustainable features other than the solar shading devices. It was noted that the concrete projection on the south façade would not provide any sun shading and should be moved to the head of the windows to be effective. They also thought the green wall at the back of the building didn't go far enough and encouraged the applicant to pursue more sustainable measures through out the project. One panel member suggested that more could be done to better relate the south façade to the values and character of the Commercial Drive neighbourhood; noting that this could be done with operable windows, more sustainable features, colour and a finer grain building details.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Gill noted that their partner wants the patients to feel that they are in a comfortable environment and that is the kind of building they have designed.

3. Address:	299 East 7 th Avenue
DE:	411440
Description:	To construct a 9-storey mixed-use building with parking, including the retention and restoration of the Heritage C building on this site.
Zoning:	IC-3
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	IBI/HB Architects
Owner:	Main Street Title Holding Inc.
Review:	First
Delegation:	Martin Bruckner, IBI/HB Architects Robert Lemon, Heritage Consultant Larry Diamond, Sharp & Diamond Landscape Architects Richard Wittstock, Amacon
Staff:	Sailen Black

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (10-0)

- **Introduction:** Sailen Black, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a nine-storey mixed-use dwelling with artist's live-work units. The proposal includes the retention and restoration of a Heritage "C" building on the site. Mr. Black described the zoning and the proposed use for the site. He noted that live-work units must have a separate ventilated work space and the amenity room on the main floor may be used for this purpose.

The proposal is to increase the density by about 14% from 3.41 FSR to 3.0 FSR though a Heritage Revitalization Agreement, in compensation for the costs of restoring the heritage building.

Mr. Black also described the surrounding development noting that the Brewery Creek residence on the north-east corner of the site and the historic path on the east side of Scotia Street.

James Boldt, Heritage Planner, gave a brief history of the area, noting that the Vancouver Brewery Garage was constructed in the 1920's. The first building on the site was built in 1888 and none of those buildings have survived. The heritage building is listed on the Vancouver Heritage Registry and is one of the few remaining historical commercial buildings. The area has become populated with artists and the proposed use for the heritage building is artist's studios.

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

- Architectural and landscape design proposed in general; and
- The siting and sculpting of the proposed density, within the limits of a nine-storey form.

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

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Martin Bruckner, Architect, said his firm had been working on the project for over a year. Mr. Bruckner further described the project noting the buildings are arranged around a central courtyard. Building heights are highest along the western portion of the site and reduced along the eastern edge to blend into the residential neighbourhood. The heritage building is in poor condition and is currently being used as an auto body repair shop. The project will rehabilitate the building for artist

studios. Mr. Bruckner added that no new building elements will be added to the garage in order to retain its existing and historic profile.

Larry Diamond, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans for the project noting the play ground area, artists display garden, storm water channel and water feature and feature plantings. One of the elements that had been taken into consideration was the industrial language with a couple of key themes. He noted that a lot of thought has been given to storm water management within the courtyard. There will be a mixture of hard and soft surfaces with industrial elements. He estimates that the courtyard will be well used by the artists and was designed to be used by them. Mr. Diamond also noted there will be series of terraced, green roofs.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Design development to improve the layouts, light access and privacy for the inside corner units of the building;
 - Consider design development to the massing to provide a more elegant step down at the north side and a better transition to the red low rise building, and consider more height for the south mass;
 - Consider adding urban agriculture; and
 - Provide a stronger and more interactive interface between the public realm and semi-private realm at the courtyard level.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel unanimously supported the proposal and noted that the project provided an important type of housing. They also strongly supported the rehabilitation of the heritage building.

The Panel liked the architecture and thought there were a lot of interesting things going on in the project. They also thought it was an appropriate use and density for the site and deserved its height although a couple of members commented that it seemed to be a struggle to get all the density on the site in a comfortable manner.

The Panel members thought the inside corner of the west building needed some design development as it was creating a lot of difficult unit layouts. One Panel member suggested using Juliette balconies on those inside units. A couple of Panel members suggested taking the building up another storey on the north end and redistributing the mass to help resolve the tough suites layouts. Another Panel member preferred that the massing didn't step down to the other heritage property which would give it a more satisfying and clear attachment. The Panel agreed that the proposed materials were supportable. A couple of Panel members thought the canopy from the new building to the heritage building actually overshadowed the heritage building.

Several Panel members questioned the mixture of live-work and residential in the same building, noted that they were not distinguishable and asked why there was not a clearer distinction between the unit types.

The Panel really liked the landscape plans for the project and thought the courtyard would be well used. They suggested allowing as much public access as possible and to make it more open to the neighbourhood.

The Panel liked the use of green roofs and the storm water management. Several Panel members suggested the applicant include spaces for urban agriculture in the landscaping

and thought that they would be well used by the artist community. Another Panel member liked the environmental responses especially the west façade and the sustainability in the design although the penthouse west façade glazing needed some work with respect to shading.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Bruckner thanked the Panel for their comments noting that they still have lots of work to do.

4. Address:	3212 Dunbar Street
DE:	412085
Description:	Social and Supportive Housing project.
Zoning:	C-2
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	DYS Architecture
Owner:	Vancouver Coastal Health Authority
Review:	First
Delegation:	Dane Jansen, DYS Architecture Diana Klein, Sustainability Consultant with Eco-Integration Jonathan Losee, Jonathan Losee Ltd.
Staff:	Anita Molaro

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (9-0)

- **Introduction:** Anita Molaro, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a social and supportive housing project at the corner of West 16th Avenue and Dunbar Street. The site faces three streets. The proposal is for retail at grade with 51 non-market units. The amenity space and entry for the facility comes will be off West 17th Avenue. Ms. Molaro described the C-2 zoning regulations and guidelines for the height relaxation being sought as well as other zoning and developments in the area. Service, parking and loading will be located off West 16th Avenue. The unit size will be at 320 square feet and the proposed materials are masonry, metal cladding and glass handrails, metal panels and aluminium fencing.

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

Urban design response including:

- massing response including resolution of massing at the southwest (height) and northeast corners and their relationship to adjacent building/context;
- overall building design/character including resolution of the elevations and their various orientations;
- liveability of the units;
- design of open space; and
- use and quality of the proposed materials - masonry/metal panels/aluminium fencing.

Ms. Molaro took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Dane Jansen, Architect, further described the proposal noting they have designed a 60 year building.

Diana Klein, Sustainability Consultant, described the sustainable measures for the building noting that they will be achieving LEED™ Gold. She also noted that they are working on the energy side of the building by trying to reduce the dependency on fossil fuels and are looking at energy modeling with geo-exchange and a radiant system possibly a heat exchange system.

Jonathan Losee, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans noting the front garden which will be gated for security purposes. Street trees will be added with some textural interest in the hardscape materials. The second floor balcony is to have planters.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - design development to the north-east massing & east facade to reduce impact on neighbour;
 - design Development to the retail to improve the Cru entries and the relationship of the entries to adjacent grade; and
 - consider making the useable front patio area larger by reducing the planters.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel unanimously supported the proposal.

The Panel thought it was a good project and acknowledged the applicant's challenge with the grade transition. Most of the Panel thought the east facade was unfriendly to its neighbour and suggested design development to reduce the large blank wall. One Panel member thought the building massing could step down on the northeast corner as well as adding more mass at the Dunbar and 17th avenue corner to help continue the street wall. Most of the Panel thought the biggest challenge was how the building meets the grade especially around the retail and that the entrances needed to be better articulated. Several Panel members noted that the applicant had proposed three different materials for the building and they suggested the materials could be simplified by using two materials. One Panel member was concerned with future envelope issues and suggested the applicant consider a concrete building. Some of the Panel thought the entry along West 17th Avenue could be pushed more towards Dunbar Street. One Panel member thought the patio on the south west unit wants to be on Dunbar Street rather than on West 17th Avenue.

The Panel had no issue with the layout of the units as they thought they were liveable.

The Panel thought the landscaping, although small, was well done and would be functional. One Panel member suggested using French doors from the amenity space to the front patio to open up the area. Several Panel members suggested making the patio area larger by reducing the planters. One Panel member suggested combining the two patios on West 17th Avenue. Also, the Panel member thought the small element on the very east side adjacent to the stair was awkward. It was suggested that the staircase be shifted to the west and then adding a planter to improve neighbourliness. Most of the Panel would like to see the roof used but understood the challenge.

The Panel said they appreciated the applicant achieving LEED™ Gold and for their sustainable measures. One Panel member suggested adding more solar shading on the south side. It was mentioned that using high level materials will contribute to the durability and sustainability of the building and would be cheaper to maintain the building over time. One Panel member thought there were a couple of issues regarding sustainability noting that the overhangs on the west façade wouldn't work. It was suggested that the applicant look at passive versus mechanical energy to reduce the heat load as it will be less costly to maintain over time and to look at the possibility of a net zero building.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Jansen thanked the Panel saying that he appreciated their comments. He also acknowledged Ms. Molaro for her support. Mr. Jansen noted that they had been back and forth with the design on the north-east corner.

5. Address:	505 Abbott Street
DE:	412115
Description:	Social and Supportive Housing project
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	GBL Architects
Owner:	Atira Women's Resource Society
Review:	First
Delegation:	Stuart Lyon, GBL Architects Irmina Jozkow, GBL Architects Pawel Gradowski, Durante Kreuk Ltd.
Staff:	Anita Molaro

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (10-0)

- **Introduction:** Anita Molaro, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a social housing development for a 9 storey building with retail at grade and 108 non-market units, twelve of which are to be two bedrooms. There is to be a number of amenity spaces, the primary one on the second floor with direct access onto a landscaped roof. Another landscaped roof is planned for the north end of the 3rd floor and another off the south end at the 8th floor level. Ms. Molaro described the buildings in the surrounding area as well as the guideline principles for International Village. She noted that the guidelines state that the building should reflect but not imitate the character of Gastown which typically includes masonry facades, strong frame work, punched windows and expressed lintels, sills and cornices. Also the building should serve as a background building to the Sun Tower.

Ms. Molaro noted that the entry for the social housing will be at the south end and incorporated into the retail frontage. The proposed materials are brick masonry in two colours with metal cladding and spandrel glass and window walls. The applicant is targeting LEED™ Gold.

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

Urban design response including:

- massing response including resolution of massing at the southwest and northeast corners and their relationship to adjacent building/context;
- overall building design/character including resolution of the elevations and their various orientations;
- liveability of the units;
- design of open space; and
- use and quality of the proposed materials - masonry/metal panels/aluminium fencing.

Ms. Molaro took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Stuart Lyon, Architect, further described the plans for the project noting the building will house the Atira Women's Resource Society. The program will include small, self-contained units, 17 covered parking spaces and ground level retail. Some of the units have been designed for families. The primary outdoor amenity space will be located in the sunniest spots on the site, raised one floor above parking and is attached to the indoor amenity space. Mr. Lyon described the material noting the brick will be supplemented by metal cladding.

Pawel Gradowski, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans for the proposal noting the gardens, urban agriculture, water features, common patios, playground area and

an assortment of other programmed elements. Sustainable principles include efficient storm water management systems, intensive green roofs, reduced heat island effect and water conserving plant material.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**

The Panel had no substantial concerns with this proposal; however the panel did ask the applicant to consider a more solid masonry expression on Abbott and West Pender Streets

- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal unanimously and thought it was a great piece of urban fabric that fits in well with the heritage area and would be an important contribution to the neighbourhood.

The Panel felt the building would insert itself well into the heritage neighbourhood with a rational and solid form but with a contemporary streetscape design that provides counterpoint and interest to the street. - The Panel liked the irregular geometry of the site plan as it made for an interesting plan form and was a nice response to the Sun Tower and the Paris Block. They thought it was a well executed building and liked the choice of materials. One Panel member suggested adding an accent colour on the concrete fin.

Most of the panel liked the undulating roof form over the retail as it works with the changes in elevation. One Panel member would like to see the roof project a little more to make it big enough that a canopy wasn't required. Another Panel member would like to see the roof straightened out to give more light into the CRUs.

The Panel thought the liveability of the units worked very well and particularly liked the corner units which will have light on two sides.

Several panel members had some concerns about the bay window expression and suggested the applicant consider a more solid brick expression on the Abbott Street façade or add a taller brick parapet on top of the bay windows. One Panel member noted that the angle of the west façade bays was south-west and should be treated the same as the north-west façade.

The Panel liked the landscaped roof amenity and thought it was going to be well used. A couple of Panel members suggested adding a window at the edge of the children's play area so that they could see the comings and goings in the lane. Another Panel member suggested adding more intimate spaces in the roof garden by adding some covered outdoor areas and some benches looking into the water element.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Lyon thanked the Panel for their well thought out comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.