
URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: November 17, 1999

TIME: 4.00 p.m.

PLACE: Committee Room #1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Joseph Hruda (Chair)
Per Christoffersen
Paul Grant
Roger Hughes
Sean McEwan
Keith Ross

REGRETS: James Cheng
Sheldon Chandler
Joe Werner
Patricia Campbell
Gilbert Raynard
Norman Shearing

NOTE: Quorum not present for Item 2 as Chair had requested to step down.
400 Great Northern Way had to be deferred to December 1, 1999.

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Louise Christie

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING
1. 1300 West Pender
2. 400 Great Northern Way - Postponed - Lack of Quorum
3. 3410 Euclid Avenue

1. Address: 1300 West Pender
DA: 404511
Use: Residential (40 storeys, 271 units)
Zoning: DD
Application Status: Preliminary
Architect: Howard Bingham Hill
Owner: Pinnicale International
Review: First
Delegation: John Bingham, Jim Whittle, and Alasdair Hamilton of Howard Bingham Hill and David Rose of Pavic and Associates
Staff: Ralph Segal
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EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (1 - 4)

- **Introduction:** Ralph Segal, Development Planner introduced this proposal for a predominantly residential development in the Triangle West neighbourhood where views and pedestrian circulation have always been important issues. A residential tower with commercial at base is set on the west side of this triangular site. Most importantly, pedestrian movement through the middle of the site links across the lane with the stepped pedestrian plaza off Georgia Street, straight through between the (formerly) West Coast Transmission building (the ‘West Coast’) and the condo development, ‘The Point’. The other notable aspect of the context is a continuation of the public realm treatment down along Jervis Street to the pedestrian crossing to West Pender Street. The height relaxation sought will raise the tower from 300 to 350 ft. and, as there will be view issues from the upland towers and possible shadow impacts, this is a critical issue. View analysis has been done and notifications mailed. On the harbour side, where the shadow falls, there is a park, a two storey school and non-market housing (including two proposed towers), and the extra 50 ft. in height may stretch the shadow onto the park. In terms of the applicant’s design rationale, this shadow falls within that already mostly cast by the Harbourside towers. The zoning for this site is 7.0 FSR to which a Heritage Density Transfer (HDT) of 24,000 sq. ft. (the maximum ten percent) is being requested. Certainly, HDT is deemed as a good thing to encourage preservation so every opportunity is scrutinized but the Panel must comment on the urban design aspect. In terms of the overall massing, the floor plate is larger, being 7,200 sq. ft. versus the 6,000 to 6,500 sq. ft. of ‘The Point’ because the majority of the FSR is taken up in the tower to keep the podium level low, preserving views through the adjacent plaza and underneath the ‘West Coast’, which is suspended off its core. This unique building, from which the HDT is being requested, will require heritage designation. The advice and intent was to keep this project clear through at the base but the model is not clear and the base is higher than the view through from under the ‘West Coast’. Finally, within the context of the Triangle West public realm, should the view open up for the pedestrian, or would it be better to have a street wall, which would reflect the heritage building across Jervis Street. There is more space sought on the street, in terms of Triangle West.
- **Applicant’s Opening Comments:** John Bingham presented the issues relating to view corridors and the development of the site, which are stringent, particularly in regards to getting the FSR onto the site. The HDT is 21,000 sq. ft. above the 300 ft. height. Maintaining the view corridors down between the towers is important and the parapet height is the same as the one for the ‘West Coast’ but, as this effects the view underneath, it will have to be resolved. Currently, most of this view is blocked by greenery about 10 ft. high. To preserve the view corridor down Broughton Street, the tower is on the

Jervis Street end. The views between the Harbourside towers out to the mountains have been maintained by twisting the orientation of the tower to align with the Pender Street grid. The other positive aspect was the pedestrian flow down between the buildings, separating the commercial and residential aspects of the project, which also opens the street up from the lower northern end. The City normally desires 80 ft. between towers but at the closest point, the adjacent building across the lane is only 60 ft. distant. By adjusting the balcony line around to the side and moving closer to the property line on Pender Street, the tower can be manipulated in plan to achieve the equivalent of a 15 m movement to obtain a 75 m separation. The recreation space is limited to 10,000 sq. ft., with the swimming pool and recreation space on the roof. The materials will be a curtainable metal panel system in light colour to reduce the visual impact of the building.

- **Panel's Comments:** The Panels comments about the geometry and orientation of the tower were positive. Concerns were expressed about the shadow cast by the tower, the proximity of it with the tower across the lane, and the bulk and massing, which could be partially alleviated by moving the curved element lower down and looking in more detail at the treatment of the balconies. One member proposed moving the tower north to give relief to 'The Point', and, to accent the Triangle West area, the building could be more sculptured, like the prow of a ship. The promenade and water theme along Jervis Street was favoured, provided the water feature was dramatic. At the intersections of West Pender, Melville and Jervis streets, there should be exploration at the pedestrian level in terms of relation to the heritage building across the street.. It was questioned if the large staircase was suitable, particularly as it would not be linked to other plazas to the south by a bridge across the lane, and therefore it was suggested that the area of the lower green space/ rooftop/commercial area and staircase be given more study as an amenity for the entire block, as opposed to a circulation space with little public value. A panel member commented that it would be more neighbourly to preserve the openness. It was questioned if this configuration of commercial, a distraction to viewing this landmark tower from the distance, would be viable. A solution suggested was to consider distributing the over height portion of the tower mass to the triangular portion of the site in a low rise configuration, thereby reducing the tower impact and reinforcing the Pender Street edge and the drama of the 'flat iron' form of the site, particularly the corner treatment at Broughton. The Panel agreed the project should be kept low and there was generally a need to have a fresh look at the site, with more public and greener space. The Chair added that there is a problem with the additional height of the tower which disrupts a nice stepping down of the towers in this area which reflects the topography from Georgia Street to the waterfront. He suggested taking some of the mass off of the tower and making a more dramatic statement on the triangular site but the question may be if the site can accept 24,000 sq. ft. HDT.
- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Bingham thanked them for their good comments which will be considered during re-evaluation, having already moved the density around the site in previous configurations. There is room for enhancement and significant design development to this PDP.

2. Address: 400 Great Northern Way

Cancelled due to lack of quorum. The Chair, Mr. Hruda, asked to be excused.

DA: 404544
Use: Elementary School (St. Francis Xavier)
Zoning: CD-1

Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Raymond Ching
Owner:	St. Francis Xavier Parish
Review:	Second

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|---------------------|---|
| 3. Address: | 3410 Euclid Avenue |
| DA: | 404550 |
| Use: | Elementary School (Collingwood Village |
| Zoning: | CD-1 |
| Application Status: | Complete |
| Architect: | Davidson Yuen Simpson |
| Owner: | Vancouver School Board |
| Review: | First |
| Delegation: | David Simpson of Davidson Yuen Simpson, Arch.; Alan Shatwell and Tony Cowan of Downs Archambault and Partners; and Henry Ahking, Manager of Planning Facilities of the Vancouver School Board |
| Staff: | Bob Adair |

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (4 - 1)

- Introduction:** Bob Adair, Development Planner, introduced this new elementary school for 200 students in the Collingwood Heights neighbourhood, near the Joyce Street SkyTrain Station. The school is flanked by Gaston Park (a playing field) and by Collingwood Neighbourhood House (community centre), with which it will share the gymnasium. To the north is a six storeys residential development, and to the south, across Euclid Avenue, are single family houses. The proposed two storey school has one level of underground parking with access from Euclid Avenue, through the existing community centre parking garage. The building is set at an angle to the street for demarcation of different play areas for different age groups and to enhance the joint pedestrian access it shares with the community centre. The main issue is the design of this shared plaza area, which includes the access to underground parking, the loading bays, and the pedestrian access to the school. This also involves issues of safety and security. Other concerns are the limited window areas in the classrooms, and the relatively unarticulated building form, both of which are apparently the result of a very tight budget.
- Applicant's Opening Comments:** David Simpson first commented on the design of the plaza area. It is all paved since it also serves as the required fire-truck access. When designing this plaza with its three distinct play areas, four existing trees were also taken into consideration, as was the enhancement of the entrance to the community centre for night time users. The three separate play areas are for three different age groups within the school. In future, some play equipment will be added. The Minister of Finance places restrictions on design, only allowing ten percent of the building area for windows but, through a value analysis and by keeping to the simple rectangular form, the budget has allowed good quality materials like a brick base and metal roofing which will give the structure a distinctive appearance. Previously, there was discussion with the community centre as to how the school would be integrated as part of the community. It has been positioned off the grid to reflect the geometry of parts of the park and to create interesting outdoor spaces. This also puts the entrance closer to the street to give the school its own character. Option for squaring the building to the street left an area at the back not visible from the street which was felt to be a security risk. Fencing is minimal on the park side so the intermediate students can play on the grass area. There is a four ft.

fence around the kindergarten area to give security, and, at the back, there is a triangular fenced area with a gate for the school's use. The designated drop-off area is in front of the school but as the catchment area is small, traffic is not perceived as being a problem.

- **Panel's Comments:** The Panel took time to look at the drawings and model. It was recognized that there were challenges because of budgetary restraints but the lack of glazing for children spending all day in this building was considered deplorable. The applicant was congratulated on the quality of the metal roof and brick base. Although a little awkward, it was felt to be a practical design, probably relating well to small children. One panel member thought that the oblique geometry compromised the outdoor space and its utility and placed the school too close to the community centre. It was also suggested that the building massing would be enhanced by use of deeper soffits and the perceived bulkiness reduced visually.. The Panel thought the landscaping was very important. One member asked the applicant to reconsider the sidewalk edge with the park, to move the front fence closer to Euclid Avenue to enlarge the green area for the kindergarten. It was also suggested that, if the fencing in the back was more of a wall, it could become part of the play experience and further that a more direct entry from the street to the building entry should be considered across what is proposed as a lawn area. Children are likely to choose the more direct, shorter route and this should be acknowledged in the landscape design. Although the Panel complimented the applicant on the quality of materials and the colour scheme, the building was perceived as bulky.
- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant thanked the Panel for their very appropriate comments, especially concerning the park area at the front. Mr. Simpson assured the Board that, when the building was seen in context beside the community centre, it would not be as bulky as it appeared in the elevations. They would, however, consider the suggestion of a deeper overhang.