

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** November 30, 2011

**TIME:** N/A

**PLACE:** N/A

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:  
Robert Barnes  
Helen Besharat (Excused Item #1)  
Gregory Borowski  
Jeff Corbett (Excused Item #1)  
Jane Durante (Excused Item #2)  
Alan Endall  
Jim Huffman  
Arno Matis  
Geoff McDonell (Excused Item #1)  
Scott Romses  
Norm Shearing  
Alan Storey

**REGRETS:** James Cheng

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

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### ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

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| 1. | 475 Howe Street     |
| 2. | 104 East 1st Avenue |
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**BUSINESS MEETING**

Chair Romses called the business meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. Alan Endall gave an overview of the joint meeting between the Public Art Committee and the Urban Design Panel on November 23rd to discuss the art installation at West Pender Place. Mr. Romses also gave an overview of the Development Permit Board meeting on November 28th where 400 SW Marine Drive was presented to the Board and was approved. Ms. Harvey let the Panel members know that their term expires on December 4th and that if they want to continue on the Panel their various organizations need to recommend them for approval by the incoming Mayor and Council in January. Mr. Romses then noted the presence of a quorum and the meeting considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. **Address:** 475 Howe Street  
**DE:** N/A  
**Use:** Proposal for a 30-storey office tower containing 3-storey commercial/retail podium and seven levels of underground parking. The Class A heritage building (Old Stock Exchange) at 475 Howe Street will be retained and restored. A maximum density of 21.21 FSR (398,625 sq. ft.) and a maximum height of 392.6 feet is proposed.  
**Zoning:** DD to CD-1  
**Application Status:** Rezoning  
**Review:** First  
**Architect:** Iredale Group Architecture  
**Owner:** Swiss Real Investments  
**Delegation:** Selwyn Dodd, Iredale Group Architecture  
 Peter Hildebrand, Iredale Group Architecture  
 Margot Long, PWL Partnership Landscape Architects  
**Staff:** Franz Gehriger, Swiss Real Investments  
 Karen Hoese and Anita Molaro

**EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-1)****Introduction:**

Karen Hoese, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal noting the site is in the central business district at the corner of Howe and Pender Streets. As part of the proposal the existing two storey commercial buildings will be demolished. The Old Stock Exchange Building (475 Howe Street) which is a Category A building on the Vancouver Heritage register and will be retained, renovated and designated. The purpose of the application is to rezone the site from DD to CD-1 to increase the density beyond what is permitted under the current zoning. The proposal is for a 30-storey office building extending over and above the existing Stock Exchange Building. The site is constrained by view cones. In addition all rezonings are subject to the Green Rezoning Policy and requires that the proposal achieve LEED™ Gold and eligible for certification at the end of the process. For this proposal a target of LEED™ Platinum is proposed as well as certification.

Anita Molaro, Development Planner, further described the proposal. She described the context for the area noting that adjacent to the site to the west is a small underdeveloped site with a small 8-storey office building at the corner of Hornby and Pender Streets.

The proposal is to retain the existing Old Stock exchange building and insert an office building beside and above the existing building. The program of the building is to retain the existing retail/commercial space in the old stock exchange of retail/commercial space in the first two

levels of the new development. The third level of the building is to be reserved as amenity space.

The proposal is incorporating a sophisticated passive design response as part of the building's exterior cladding treatment.

There are two view cones affecting this site. The Queen Elizabeth Park View Cone would limit the height to 345 feet and the Cambie View Cone limits the height to 375 feet. The applicant is proposing to protrude through both of these view cones going beyond the Queen Elizabeth View Cone with a total overall height of 424 feet. The rationale that is being considered here is that the protruding element falls generally within the 'view shadow' of the Jameson building for the lower view cone and the view shadow of the Fairmont Pacific Rim Hotel. Future development can be considered to enter into the view shadow of existing buildings if they do not create an additional significant impact on protected views of the mountains.

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

#### **Form of Development**

Does the panel support the urban design response developed for this site:

#### Building's Siting:

- neighbourliness response to the Jameson building including tower placement and tower separation of thirty feet.
- impact on the developability of the small development site next door
- massing response and integration of the new tower with the Old Stock Exchange Building (Heritage 'A')

#### Proposed Height:

- up to the underside of the Cambie view cone (approximately 375 feet) top of roof including the lower view shadow above 345 feet (proud of the Jameson building)
- plus the additional height up to 424 feet (penthouse, mechanical overrun and architectural screen) as part of the view shadow (proud of the Fairmont Pacific Rim Hotel) subject to a Higher Building Review UDP at the DE (development application) stage.

#### Density:

- Office 21.2 FSR

Any other comments from the Panel, noting that this is a rezoning application:

- are their additional considerations/opportunities/measures that should be considered to further express/enhance the building's architectural contribution to the skyline.
- any commentary on the building's external treatments and expression, including the passive design elements, vertical and horizontal shading devices.
- landscape treatments: Green roofs, sky gardens, vertical green walls.

Ms. Hoese and Ms. Molaro took questions from the Panel.

#### **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Franz Gehriger gave some history on the Stock Exchange Building. He said their goal was to develop a sustainable and distinct office building combining heritage with a modern office building.

Selwyn Dodd, Architect, further described the proposal noting they are designing a market office building with no residential component and only commercial amenity space at the podium level. They are committed to respect the heritage of the Stock Exchange Building including preservation of the entire building and the reinstatement of the original façade at street level. The building will also be upgrade seismically.

Peter Hildebrand, Architect, described the architecture noting the tower is stepped back to give respect to the heritage building. He added they wanted to 'float' the tower as well to provide a transition space to the existing heritage building. They intend to use fresh air in the building's passive system. As part of the sustainable strategy they wanted to have that guide the architecture as well. They have incorporated a screen to defuse the light, control heat gain, and to help shape the building.

Margot Long, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans. She noted that they had incorporated an interior/exterior landscape on the first three levels. The amenity space will be used as a gathering space. She added that they are hoping to reinstate glass blocks in the sidewalks that were part of the history of the area. They will be using extensive living green roofs and will cover the Stock Exchange Building with an accessible green roof. Rain water will be collected and stored in cisterns and used in a variety of different ways on the landscaping. Ms. Long described the green wall, noting there is a door at every level for access to the planters. The interior green wall will be used to vent the air.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

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

- Design development to address tower relationship with the Jameson Building including measures to increase the separation between the two buildings and privacy measures between the office and residential uses.

**Related Commentary:**

The panel supported the proposal and remarked that it was a high quality presentation.

The Panel commended the applicant for their commitment to heritage preservation and sustainability. As well, they commended them on their commitment to achieve a high level of urban design. They noted that the project showed a lot of promise. Although the tower separation wouldn't be considered very neighbourly in a residential tower the Panel thought it worked in the downtown commercial core. However, several Panel members had some concerns with the separation between this building and the Jameson Building and thought some further consideration should be given to increasing the separation or the architectural expression.

The Panel agreed that this development wouldn't adversely effect the future development of the adjoining site.

Several Panel members thought the podium piece felt a little foreign to the building. They felt the tower should come to grade in a confident way.

The Panel supported the height and density and as well as the use. They agreed that the massing response was well handled and that the street wall massing on the new portion won't compromise the heritage building. They felt the heritage building would still be seen as a stand alone building.

Several Panel members thought the angled roof helped to ease the proportion and enhanced the tower's appearance on the skyline.

There were mixed opinions regarding the expression of the green wall but the Panel felt it needed to be well detailed to make it successful.

**Applicant's Response:**

Mr. Hildebrand said the Panel's comments would benefit the design as they look at the level of detail and take they take it to the next stage. Mr. Dodd said they would consider the Panel's comments.

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2.	<b>Address:</b>	<b>104 East 1st Avenue</b>
	<b>DE:</b>	415202
	<b>Use:</b>	Development of a 12-storey tower and a 6-storey mid-rise connected by a 4-storey walkway from 2nd to 5th Floor. 170 residential units.
	<b>Zoning:</b>	CD-1
	<b>Application Status:</b>	Complete
	<b>Review:</b>	Second
	<b>Architect:</b>	Raffi Architects
	<b>Owner:</b>	Cressey Developments
	<b>Delegation:</b>	Foad Raffi, Raffi Architects Jennifer Stamp, Durante Kreuk Landscape Architects Jason Turcotte, Cressey Developments
	<b>Staff:</b>	Sailen Black

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**EVALUATION: SUPPORT (10-0)****Introduction:**

Dale Morgan, Development Planner, noted that the proposal had been reviewed by the Panel during the rezoning stage. He described the context for the area noting the site is in Southeast False Creek. The proposal is for a 12-storey tower with a 6-storey mid-rise building. Mr. Morgan reviewed the Panel's concerns from the rezoning review. He then described the rezoning design conditions. Describing the proposal, Mr. Morgan noted there is urban agriculture on the roof of the mid-rise with a children's play area. The applicant has picked up on the rail yard history of the area with the use of several elements.

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

- Has the application adequately addressed the Rezoning Conditions?
- Are there any other issues of concern?

Mr. Morgan took questions from the Panel.

**Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Foad Raffi, Architect, further described the proposal noting the south units are designed with a different ratio of glass to floor area, with bigger units on the north with more glass for light and facing the view. He noted that they have extended the elevator to the top of the tower with a common landscaped deck. The entry area will have a glass awning that may get extended outwards. The industrial character of the building is established through the incorporation of metal screens as well as canvas awnings.

Jennifer Stamp, Landscape Architect, noted that the plans haven't changed much since the Rezoning stage. Some of the improvements include a line of bright trees against the west wall of the mid-rise building, as well as a metal trellis and vines. A trellis is planned over the parking entry and the proposed water channel has been angled. She added that they are talking to a public art consultant that will likely tie into the rail yard character.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

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

- Design development to improve the prominence of entry canopy;
- Design development to the south façade of the tower;
- Consider expressing the sustainable strategies on the elevations;

- Design development to the semi public plaza space at the end of the north/south promenade.

**Related Commentary:**

The Panel supported the proposal and remarked that it had a clean rationale and was well organized.

The Panel thought the canopy needed more expression and suggested integrating it into the Meccanica sign. Also they thought the entry should be closer to the sign as a way of expressing the entry better. The south and the east façade could still use further work, and in particular the south façade on the tower, which seems to be the weakest area of the project.

There was a suggestion to bring more of the industrial screen expression into the building, particularly on the south elevation as part of the passive design sustainable strategy. A number of Panel members thought the project could be more expressive in its sustainability and passive strategies on the elevations. Several Panel members suggested the applicant needed to work on the thermal envelope.

The Panel agreed that adding an amenity space on the roof was good idea. Several Panel members thought there was an issue with liveability in the long units on the south side. Several Panel members thought there needed to be some simplification to the upper floors and suggested adding some balconies.

Most of the Panel thought more durable material should be used rather than the fabric awnings, but would like to see them used as a way to add colour to the project.

Most of the Panel supported the landscape plans, with one Panel member suggesting the greenery over the parking entrance could be further enhanced. A couple of Panel members thought the landscaping could be improved on the west corner as viewed from Quebec Street. Some Panels members thought there needed to be some design development to the semi public plaza space at the end of the north/south axial promenade. Using public art as a way to express the history of the site was supportable.

**Applicant's Response:**

Mr. Turcotte noted that there will be a loss of the light industrial uses in the area but they are trying to find a way to incorporate that use into the project. Currently the site is occupied by a handcrafted car company which has been there for thirty years. Mr. Foad thought there were lots of good comments from the Panel and would endeavor to improve the project. Regarding the liveability of the units, Mr. Foad noted that they have done these units before and people love them and are very marketable. He added that the drawings didn't show the glass separation between the bedroom and the living areas. Also, he said they would look at doing improvements to the entry canopy and the east elevation.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.