

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: November 7, 2007

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

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

REGRETS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1409 West Pender Street
2.	711 West Broadway
3.	4338 Commercial Drive
4.	1138 Granville 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: 1499 West Pender Street
DE: 411520
Use: Two residential Towers and a 5-storey live/work podium
Zoning: CD-1
Application Status: Complete
Architect: IBI Group/HB Architects
Review: Second
Delegation: Jon Stovell, Jim Hancock, Jennifer Stamp
Staff: Ralph Segal

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-2)

- **Introduction:** Ralph Segal, Development Planner, introduced the application for a mixed-use development in the 1400 block of West Pender Street. Council approved the rezoning in respect to the increased density on the site. Mr. Segal noted that at the rezoning stage, the proposal was supported by the Urban Design Panel at the meeting of August 2, 2006. Referring to the model, Mr. Segal described the proposal and other developments in the surrounding area.

The proposal was for a complete development application to permit a mixed-use development comprising of one 36 story tower, a five storey live/work podium and a ten store mid-rise tower.

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

- Overall quality of project's architecture.
 - Project's interface with the public realm on 3 streets, as well as the Pump House Plaza.
 - Proposed treatment of the blank elevator core walls on Pender Street.
 - Shaping and treatment of the space between the proposed podium and Dockside, including adequacy of daylight access.
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Jim Hancock, Architect, further described the proposal noting that five storeys had been removed from the tower to improve the views for the buildings behind the project and to improve shadowing impacts. Regarding sustainability, Mr. Hancock noted that they are currently at 38 points on the LEED™ scorecard.

Jennifer Stamp, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans for the project noting the water features at the entries that will animate the public realm.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider more design development to the east plaza to better relate to the pump house station plaza;
 - Consider more design development to the slot between the project and the Dockside building;

- Consider design development of elevator core walls; and
 - Consider design developments to make for stronger and better defined entries.
 - Design development of architectural details to better realize the inherent potential of the proposed sculptural building.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and commended the applicant for a high quality project.

The Panel liked the carefully sculptured form of the project but had some concerns regarding possible technical difficulty in bringing the window wall and the curtain wall together. One panel member suggested only using window wall at the large continuous balcony to help simplify the transition between systems.

Several Panel members suggested that height and density could be taken off the podium and added to the shorter tower.

The Panel had some concerns with the space between the Dockside building and the proposed podium noting that a number of suites overlook the area. One panel member asked the applicant team to consider how the space looks from above.

Some of the Panel liked the LED lighting designed for the south side of the towers as they felt it would give a night-time signature to the building, however others raised concerns about potential light pollution. One of the Panel members thought the colour palette was too cool and suggested adding a warm contrasting material or element.

Several Panel members thought the parking exhaust could be massive and the potential impact on the two plazas and Pump House Plaza should be carefully considered. Also the Panel thought the lobby in the main tower needed to have a stronger entry. Most of the Panel thought the scale of the retail seemed compressed and needed to be more strongly differentiated from the upper units. Also some of the Panel thought the east plaza on Broughton Street could have a stronger interface to Pump House Plaza.

A couple panel members questioned why the width of exposed concrete on West Pender was the same for both towers, and suggested the width of exposed concrete on the short east tower could be narrower. A couple of other Panel members suggested adding narrow slot windows to the stair wells of the exposed concrete core walls in order to create a playful element and to give a more interesting light at night as well as to add natural light during the day.

Several Panel members thought it was wasteful to include air conditioning in the building with one Panel member suggesting the money could be better spent improving the way the façade reacts to the environment. The Panel would like to see more in the way of sustainability and suggested using cisterns for water collection and adding green roofs.

The Panel felt that in order to make the sculpted tower design work, attention to detail would be critical, and more development of the fine scaled details was still needed.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Stovell thanked the Panel and noted that the design calls for a curtain wall on the west and east sides of the buildings. As for sustainability the applicant has committed to achieve LEED™ Silver. Mr. Stovell also noted that air conditioning is a market expectation. The applicant is sensitive to the Dockside and the podium will have single loaded suites to protect the privacy of the tenants at the Dockside. Also there will be some landscaping treatment coming down that wall to soften the edge and will be maintained as a private area.

2. Address:	711 West Broadway
DE:	Rezoning
Use:	17-storey tower and an 11-storey tower on a 3- to 7-storey podium, all in residential use. The existing hotel tower (Holiday Inn) on Site A would not change except for streetscape and facade improvements.
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Rezoning
Architect:	Henriquez Partners Architects
Review:	First
Delegation:	Ian Gillespie, Gregory Henriquez, Brock Cheadle, Ross Dixon
Staff:	Ralph Segal/Michael Naylor

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (9-1)

- **Introduction:** Michael Naylor, Rezoning Planner, noted that the application was to amend the existing CD-1 zoning for the site located on the corner of West 8th Avenue and Heather Street. The site was rezoning from C3-A to CD-1 in 1996 with the purpose of allowing for residential development. The current application is looking for a change in the FSR on Lot B from 2.35 to 6.16 and the mechanism by which this would happen is through a transfer of bonus density from the Woodward's site.

Ralph Segal, Development Planner described the background regarding the overall urban design objectives for the Broadway Corridor. He noted that the guidelines suggest buildings in Fairview slopes should terrace down the slope. From a staff perspective, this proposal is being presented as a very green building with the terracing prominently portrayed in the massing. Mr. Segal noted that there will be some improvements incorporated into the Holiday Inn as well to the Broadway sidewalk with respect to glass rain protection, surface treatments and green walls.

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

- Whether the proposed land use, density and height is supportable;
- Whether the proposed built form is appropriate within the surrounding context of the Broadway Corridor and West 8th Avenue;
- The quality and scale of the public realm interface on West 8th Avenue and Heather Street; and
- The proposed built expansion.

Mr. Naylor and Mr. Segal took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Gregory Henriquez, Architect, further described the project noting the design was an attempt to deal with a very difficult site. He added that because of the complexities of the site, the proposal is a perfect example of how to use EcoDensity in a thoughtful way to mitigate some hard urban design problems. Mr. Henriquez stated that they are proposing geo-thermal for the site and have hired a consultant.

Ross Dixon, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans for the project noting the green walls, bamboo planting along Heather Street, and the pool in the courtyard which may be used to collect water for irrigation.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider increasing the height of the project over the height of the Holiday Inn; and
 - Consider design development to the townhouse interface to the street.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal noting that the project was a precedent for future development and were impressed by the approach the architect has taken with the design.

The Panel supported the land use, height and density with several Panel members noting the density along Fairview slopes is low in terms of residential use and could be increased. One Panel member did not support the density and thought the project wasn't right for the area. The Panel supported an increase in the height at the centre of the project in front of the Holiday Inn as they thought the project could go higher than the hotel. One Panel member thought there could be some modification of the upper form in the north-east corner of the site to balance the mass between the east and west sides of the building.

The Panel thought the green walls were also supportable and made for a sustainable measure in the project. One Panel member urged the applicant to use a cistern to irrigate the green walls. One Panel member stated that the building did not need air conditioning as it won't have a south façade and will have deep balconies. It was suggested to not use geo-thermal and use the money to make the facades even better. Also, one Panel member has some concerns regarding the concrete extensions as this might make the suites cold in the winter on the north side of the building.

The Panel thought the balconies were the most successful elements of the architecture and hoped the applicant would not be restricted on the size of the balconies. One Panel member suggested adding even more gardens in the project and several Panel members suggested making the balconies as big as possible.

The Panel thought there was a lot of quality and scale in the public realm although several Panel members thought the relationship the townhouses will have to the street was abrupt and needed some design development. The Panel thought the streetscape along West 8th Avenue was interesting and well designed.

The one concern the Panel had was how the building fits into the context in the neighbourhood. They noted that the project will transform the area as it is the first building of its kind. In some ways the complexity of form seems like it would be better suited to SEFC, in the downtown core or Gastown where it would fit an urban context where you get tight, interesting spatial conditions.

The Panel did agree that the three dimensional, sculptural building would be visible from the Cambie Street Bridge and downtown and recommended that the applicant consider this view as the massing is developed.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Henriquez, thanked the panel stating that he appreciated all the thoughtful advice.

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3. Address: 4338 Commercial Drive
DE: 411372
Use: Irregular corner site; 4 storeys mixed-use.
Zoning: C-2
Application Status: Complete
Architect: W.G. Architecture
Review: First
Delegation: Wojciech S. Grzybowicz, Yuri Afanasiev
Staff: James Boldt
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EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (4-6)

- **Introduction:** James Boldt, Development Planner, introduced the application for a mixed use building at Commercial and Kingsway. Mr. Boldt noted that this was the first major development on this section of Kingsway. He added that the application has been well received by staff and embraces the irregularity of the lot. There are some challenges with the site and in general deals well with livability. The top floor of the building will have single loaded corridors with common decks and through units and north views. Mr. Boldt noted that the applicant is using a large palette of materials. Mr. Boldt asked for comments from the Panel on the materials being used as well as the sustainability features. He added that C-2 zoning does not have any components in the guidelines to address sustainability. Mr. Boldt also asked the Panel to comment on form and composition.
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Wojciech Grzybowicz, Architect, noted the shape of the building complies with the C-2 zoning. He added that Mr. Boldt had covered all the details and didn't have anything else to add.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Concern regarding materiality, build-ability, water proofing and weather proofing;
 - Concern regarding the build-ability of the proposed HardiPlank® horizontal guardrails; consider a different material that would better suit the design and expression;
 - Consider the reducing the number and simplify expression of proposed building materials;
 - Consider further design development to the window details so that they can be achieved using the proposed window systems; and
 - Further design development of the lane elevation to better reflect the scale and rhythm of the neighbouring properties.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel did not support the application. The Panel supported the form and development and the Panel commended the applicant for an ambitious architectural composition but were concerned that it was to be a wood frame building. The panel thought the expression and detailing of the building suggested a concrete building and were concerned that it would be difficult to achieve in wood frame. The Panel liked how the building steps on the site and generally like its overall expression.

The Panel thought the Kingsway site deserved an interesting project but had some concerns about the choice of materials and the complexity of the details and how they will all come together. The Panel agreed that the use of HardiPanel® on the balcony faces would

cheapen the façade as the joints would show and suggested either using stucco or metal panels on the balconies. There was a bigger concern regarding the use of HardiPanel® l with planters on a wood frame building as some of the Panel thought there could be challenges with water proofing the building. The Panel also had some concerns regarding the areas of transition, where the elements of glass and HardiPanel® come together. One Panel member thought the pointy corner on Kingsway could be emphasized more and the Panel suggested the applicant use a more continuous metal window system rather than the proposed vinyl system.

Some of the Panel had concerns with the common balcony on the upper floor and thought it wouldn't be used very much as there was no relationship to an indoor amenity space. The Panel thought the unit floor plans were acceptable.

The Panel thought the lane treatment needed work and were disappointed that the Landscape Architect was not present at the Panel to defend the landscape plans. The Panel thought the lane treatment was very weak and even the proposed metal screens would not offer any privacy into the neighbouring units on the lane.

The Panel was disappointed with the lack of expressed sustainable measures and felt it was a professional responsibility to put sustainable measures in new projects. One panel member noted that the applicant had already achieved some sustainable measures in their design and should note them in their design rationale.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Grzybowicz recognized the detailing was challenging for the project and it had been difficult to convince the client to build a concrete structure. He agreed to reconsider the use of the hardy board and liked the choice of using metal instead. He also agreed with the comments regarding the window system. Mr. Grzybowicz said that they have an envelope consultant involved and problems will be addressed. He added that they will be using a rain-screen system on the walls. He noted that it is a very limited area on the lane, about 2 feet, but they could consider using some vines or a green wall on the lane. He also agreed that they could enhance the elevation on the lane to make for a better transition to the residential.

4. Address:	1138 Granville Street
DE:	411393
Use:	To construct a new apartment building with ground floor retail one level underground parking and 6 upper floors containing 36 dwelling units, and including the purchase of Heritage Density.
Zoning:	DD (sub-area K-3)
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Christopher Bozyk Architect
Review:	First
Delegation:	Ernst Loots, Rob Vrooman, David Rose
Staff:	Bob Adair

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-0)

- **Introduction:** Bob Adair, Development Planner, introduced the application for a rental residential building on Granville with retail on the ground floor. Mr. Adair noted that the applicant is requesting a parking relaxation to go to zero in return for making the residential part of the building all rental. He added that policy work is still to be done regarding the parking. Mr. Adair described the architectural design including the materials being used. He added that staff is in support of the project as they believe it to be a very expressive building. The only concern staff had was with the lack of an enclosure in the parking and loading areas at the rear of the building. Mr. Adair asked the Panel for their comments.
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Ernst Loots, Architect, further described the project. He noted the banners on the front of the buildings, the enclosed balconies and other architectural details.

David Rose, Landscape Architect noted that the landscaping will be simple with the dead trees being replaced on Granville Street.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider some greenery on the lane elevation; and
 - Consider a green roof and roof top decks.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and agreed that there was a demand for rental housing in this area of the downtown.

Most of the Panel supported the parking relaxation and suggested the applicant provide a couple of co-op cars for the development. One Panel member suggested one level of parking would be appropriate.

The Panel liked the playfulness of the enclosed balconies and thought the design of the building was well done.

The Panel thought more could be done with landscaping and suggested adding a green roof for some urban agriculture and roof top decks. Also most of the Panel thought there needed to be some greenery on the lane and suggested adding plantings to the trellis.

- **Applicant's Response:** Rob Vrooman, Amacon, thanked the Panel for their comments. He noted that the building had evolved from a retail building to a rental building with retail on the ground floor.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.