

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: October 1, 2003

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Helen Besharat, Chair
Jeffrey Corbett (excused Item 1)
Bruce Haden (excused Item 2)
Reena Lazar
Eva Lee (present for Item 1 only)
Brian Martin (present for Items 1 and 2 only)
Kim Perry
Sorin Tatomir
Ken Terriss (present for Items 1 - 3 only)

REGRETS: Stuart Lyon
Mark Ostry
Jennifer Marshall

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Carol Hubbard

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	201 Burrard Street
2.	728 Pacific Boulevard
3.	2055 Yukon Street
4.	2483 Spruce Street

1.	Address:	201 Burrard Street
	Use:	Mixed
	Zoning:	CD-1
	Applicant Status:	Rezoning
	Architect:	VIA
	Owner:	Marathon Developments
	Review:	First
	Delegation:	Graham McGarva, Ron Lea, Graeme Stamp, John Ryan
	Staff:	Ralph Segal/Phil Mondor

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-0)

Introduction: Ralph Segal, Development Planner, presented this application for a Text Amendment to the Burrard Landing CD-1. When this block was rezoned in April 2001, Council approved the extension of Canada Place Way, the Shaw Tower and an 800-room hotel, all on the assumption of the Trade & Convention Centre proceeding. This application is for the hotel component and seeks an amendment to allow for a live/work element to be included in the mix of uses. The current proposal is for a 500-room hotel up to level 24, with live/work above and a change to the tower form. There will no change to the previously approved density. The approved zoning also allowed for a slight intrusion into the 10th/Cambie view corridor.

The advice of the Panel is sought as to whether the proposed change to the tower massing, as a consequence of the change of use, is appropriate. Feedback is also requested on the fit of this revised waterfront tower floorplate and form in the neighbourhood including its fit on Burrard Street and the skyline.

The Development Planner and Phil Mondor, Rezoning Planner, responded to questions from the Panel.

Applicant's Opening Comments: Graham McGarva, Architect, briefly described the change in the program and the design team responded to the Panel's questions.

Panel's Comments: The Panel unanimously supported this application for Text Amendment and considered the inclusion of live/work use to be very appropriate.

The Panel complimented the applicant on the extensive and thorough view analysis. A comment was made that it would also have been helpful to see more contextual elevations, showing the streetscape in all directions, in order to more easily analyse some of the height relationships with neighbouring buildings.

The Panel strongly supported the proposed revised tower form, with the following comments and suggestions:

- there needs to be an in-depth analysis of the roofline on this dominant site. One Panel member preferred an earlier idea for the rooftop that was depicted on the photomontage but not on the model;
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- acknowledging the challenges associated with trying to respond to the changing composition of the Panel, one member considered that the integrity of the tower itself should take precedence over any need to directly reference adjacent towers. It was suggested there could be greater emphasis on the fundamental three-part parti rather than multiple stepping in response to neighbouring buildings;

- concerns were expressed about impacts on the Marine Building which the Panel considers to be one of the most important buildings in the downtown. The challenge of preserving the delicacy of its massing was acknowledged, and a suggestion made that it may not be within the scope of the envelope of this building but rather a question of scale. It was noted that in one of the views from the 9 o'clock gun, the Marine Building appears to be more crowded than in another option. Another comment was that the distance between this tower and the Shaw Tower might be greater than necessary, at the expense of some of the wider view of the Marine Building. Less of a gap between the two towers - possibly on the upper floors - could achieve a wider angle display of the Marine Building;
- the importance of the ceremonial nature of Burrard Street was acknowledged and a concern noted about the street level on Burrard being broken up with a number of smaller scale uses. The emphasis of the corner to address the larger scale of Burrard could be stronger;
- this building will undoubtedly be a landmark tower in the downtown. The Panel will therefore give considerable attention to all the architectonic details at the development application stage;
- sustainability cannot be ignored in this important building and will need to be addressed in the next submission;
- without a very well designed skin this building is unlikely to meet expectations for a great building and architectural excellence appropriate for this site;
- there could be more "play" at the top of the building where it protrudes into the view corridor - possibly a little more chamfering or a greater emphasis on its crystalline structure;
- treatment of the ground plane will be very important in terms of how people move through the site. The restaurant use at the corner may not be best option - there needs to be further analysis on the kind of activity that will occur on this corner;
- given the prominence of this site at the end of Burrard and next to the convention centre, there was a suggestion from one Panel member it should have been identified for a higher building, allowing for a taller, more slender form;
- one Panel member thought more attention should be given to the interaction of the different uses within the building rather than differentiating these uses on the outside;
- the proposed sign on the north elevation is too big/dominant;
- one Panel member questioned the ramp/garage entry on Canada Place Way.

Applicant's Response: Mr. McGarva thanked the Panel for its comments and that some very perceptive points were raised. He assured the panel that, as the project moves forward, they will be getting to the details and really make them work.

2.	Address:	728 Pacific Boulevard
	Use:	Residential
	Zoning:	BCPED - CD-1
	Applicant Status:	Rezoning
	Architect:	James Cheng
	Owner:	Pacific Place Developments Corp.
	Review:	Second
	Delegation:	James Cheng, Walter Francl, Matt Mehan, Chris Phillips
	Staff:	Jonathan Barrett/Phil Mondor

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-0)

Introduction: Jonathan Barrett, Development Planner, introduced this rezoning application in Area 6A, False Creek North. The Panel reviewed the proposal in July 2003, in a workshop, when various options were considered. At that time, there were diverse opinions with respect to the location of the road. There was also some discussion about the height of the building on the point, and concerns about the lack of commercial use.

The subject proposal is a refinement of one of the options. A principle change has been the addition of a substantial park space. The Panel's comments are sought in the following areas:

1. the urban structure in this neighbourhood;
2. appropriateness of the street location;
3. overall urban form of the project;
4. neighbourhood relationships and the height and relationship of buildings.

All the buildings will be reviewed individually by the Panel at the DP stage.

There are no issues with respect to the use and density.

Applicant's Opening Comments: James Cheng, Architect, described the proposal is greater detail and briefly reviewed the Panel's comments at the previous workshop. Chris Phillips reviewed the landscape plan and described the various types of park throughout the city. Walter Francl, Architect, noted the central road scheme allows for more space between the buildings. The applicant team responded to the Panel's questions.

Panel's Comments: The Panel unanimously supported this rezoning application and commended the applicant on the exhaustive analysis which it found very convincing.

The Panel was persuaded by the applicant's arguments regarding the position of the road and unanimously supported its mid-block location. Linking the green space with the road is key to the success of this option. The treatment of the road surface will also be a major factor. The Panel stressed that it should be treated as a piece of urban design to make it less like a vehicular thoroughfare and more of a place where cars and pedestrians have equal prominence, possibly with greater emphasis on pedestrians. It should have a character that is appropriate to the neighbourhood and be treated in a way that discourages its use as a shortcut between Marinaside Crescent and Pacific Boulevard. A comment was also made that this road location also provides for better dimensioned development parcels as well as freeing up space between the buildings.

The proposed building heights were fully supported, as was the proposal to have a variety of designers which will help to bring some diversity to the neighbourhood. A comment was

made that the architects should keep in mind that these buildings will be the backdrop for the many people who will be using the sea wall, usually as a slow pace.

One Panel member recommended making provision for public events in Coopers Park, including public art or information kiosks.

There were questions about the inclusion of public art, including something that links towers B and D to ensure permeability and access.

One Panel member questioned the social housing interface, suggesting it should be strengthened to make it more like a part of the whole neighbourhood. It currently appears to be somewhat isolated from the rest of the scheme.

Attention to the interface with the Plaza of Nations was stressed, both now and in the future. If the plaza continues to be used for outdoor concerts this will need to be addressed in the design of the adjacent townhouses.

Opening up the corner at the Cambie bridge off ramp was strongly supported by the Panel. It was suggested the connection to the bridge should be reinforced to ensure access across the road and into the park and the seawall.

The provision of 'through' townhouses to provide "eyes on the street" was strongly endorsed although there were some questions about how well it will work. Further development of the townhouse interface was encouraged for the next stage of the design. Careful attention will also need to be given to interior unit plans to ensure there are active spaces at the public interface.

There was a recommendation to locate some amenities at the base of some of the buildings so that there is some animation and interaction with the public areas.

Applicant's Response: Mr. Cheng noted there will be funds provided for public art in the rezoning.

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3. Address: 2055 Yukon Street (400 West 2nd Avenue)
 DE: 407823
 Use: Mixed/ALW (9 storeys)
 Zoning: C-3A
 Applicant Status: Complete
 Architect: Hancock Bruckner Eng & Wright
 Owner: Yukon Crossing Properties Ltd.
 Review: First
 Delegation: Jim Hancock, Lena Chorobik, Kim Maust, Robert Lemon
 Staff: Mary Beth Rondeau
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EVALUATION: SUPPORT (4-3)

Introduction: Mary Beth Rondeau, Development Planner, presented this application in the C-3A zone. The proposed development is on two adjacent sites at the intersection of Yukon and 2nd Avenue and comprises the entire block. The two sites will remain separate but share development rights under a single site covenant. The application also seeks to rehabilitate and maintain the existing heritage structure on the site (occupied by Kirmac Collision) and add it to the Heritage Register.

The proposal is for artist live/work studios above retail use. The ALW use is the only residential use permitted in this sub-area of the C-3A zone, adjacent to industrial lands. The height is approximately 94 ft. (eight storeys).

The advice of the Panel is sought on whether the project earns the requested height and density as well as general advice on the proposed massing.

Applicant's Opening Comments: Jim Hancock, Architect, briefly described the design rationale, noting the response to the ceremonial nature of West 2nd Avenue. Lena Chorobik reviewed the landscape plan and the Heritage Architect, Robert Lemon, provided a brief history of the heritage building, noting that much of the rehabilitation work will involve uncovering what is already there.

Panel's Comments: The Panel supported this application and thought it earned the requested height and density. In general, the project was supported both for its architecture and landscaping.

The Panel generally liked the corner treatment which takes advantage of the unique geometry of the site, and strongly supported the preservation of the Kirmac building.

The Panel offered the following comments and suggestions:

Kirmac building: Extending the rhythm of the Kirmac building to the new structure is appropriate but most Panel members had concerns about repeating the brick. In particular, there were concerns about replicating the colour. One suggestion was that it could be concrete block or some other masonry material. While the Kirmac building may not be monumental, it is still a valuable heritage resource and mimicking it diminishes its historic integrity. There was support for the attempt to bring back the clock on the building.

One Panel member also stressed the importance of how the roof of the Kirmac building is treated given its high visibility.

Entries: There needs to be greater emphasis on the entries, particularly the residential entry.

West Façade: A comment was made that the west façade seems very weak in comparison to the east end of the building. Given this façade will be highly visible, particularly from the Cambie bridge where its relationship with the Kirmac building will not be evident, it was strongly recommended that it be designed as a façade with its own integrity.

Rooftop Amenity: The importance of the amenity area in a live/work building was stressed and there were suggestions for improving the blank walls and to introduce some natural light to make the amenity area more usable and inviting. There was a suggestion to consider locating the amenity across from the elevator.

There seems to be an awkward interior relationship with the amenity area at the end of the corridor. Locating some small indoor amenity space next to it would make the outdoor space work better.

Fenestration: One Panel member found the windows facing the Kirmac building to be unresolved.

Corridors: There was a recommendation for the long corridors to be wider to encourage the display of art and for ease of movement for people carrying supplies. It was also suggested to revisit the elevator orientation so that natural light can be experienced at the entry on each floor.

There was support for the idea of being able to see artists at work but if this does not occur an alternative might be possible to introduce a gap in the event it is not used as a studio. There was also a concern expressed that the success of the corridors will be very dependant on the detailing of the hand rail. Another suggestion was to consider having doors opening onto the corridor.

Parapets: There was support for the big oblique wall but a suggestion that there could be better resolution next to the elevator penthouse where it seems a bit tight. One Panel member also questioned the height of the parapet in relation to the Kirmac building.

Lane Treatment: There was a suggestion to investigate whether some of the many doors on the lane elevation could be combined. Careful treatment of the lane, whether by the developer or Engineering Services, would also be appropriate given its importance facing the heritage building.

ALW Units: A comment was made that most of the units are too small for artists, noting also that 9 ft. ceilings are not exceptional.

Livability: The livability of some of the units was questioned in terms of natural light access including layout and entry experience (Units 215, 213 and 203.)

Applicant's Response: Mr. Hancock agreed that some of the AWL units will be increased in size. With respect to the rooftop amenity, he noted the project is over FSR which means the roof will be changed dramatically as the project proceeds. He agreed with the comments about the western façade and the use of brick.

4.	Address:	2483 Spruce Street
	DE:	407180
	Use:	Mixed
	Zoning:	C-3A
	Applicant Status:	Complete after Preliminary
	Architect:	W. T. Leung
	Owner:	Leeda Developments Corp.
	Review:	Second
	Delegation:	Wing Leung, Peter Kreuk
	Staff:	Mary Beth Rondeau

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-0)

Introduction: Mary Beth Rondeau, Development Planner, presented this complete application in the C-3A zone. She briefly reviewed the C-3A Central Broadway Guidelines and highlighted the issues raised at the preliminary stage. The Panel unanimously supported the preliminary submission in January 2003 and it was subsequently approved in principle by the Development Permit Board. The proposed massing generally complies with the guidelines.

The advice of the Panel is sought regarding the treatment of the corner and in general whether the requested height and density have been earned. As well, whether the height should be increased from 110 ft. to 120 ft.

Applicant's Opening Comments: Wing Leung, Architect, noted the floorplate has been reduced somewhat in response to a condition at the preliminary stage, however, it was not possible to add more square footage to the top of the building without exceeding the maximum FSR. It was therefore put into the ground floor retail which also allowed for additional stepping and improved sun access at the corner. Peter Kreuk, Landscape Architect, briefly described the landscape plan and the design team responded to questions from the Panel.

Panel's Comments: The Panel unanimously supported this application and thought it earned the requested height and density. All the changes have resulted in an improved project.

The Panel supported the proposed treatment at the corner and hoped to see a restaurant that spills out onto the street. It would add some needed animation on this block of West Broadway and provide a signifier to the building. A suggestion was made to increase its usability by adding a glass roof, if this is possible to do without compromising the FSR calculations.

The revised upper landscaped area was strongly supported.

Two Panel members questioned the colour scheme and thought this building warranted something bolder. There were also recommendations for design development to the canopy detailing to improve pedestrian experience.

One Panel member expressed concern about the elevations not responding appropriately to their orientation, suggesting the south and west elevations will have considerable heat gain. The addition of brise-soleil or eyebrow detail was recommended, not only to improve the health of the building but to add some excitement to these facades.

Given the project is seeking the maximum FSR, one Panel member strongly urged that the issue of sustainability be given serious consideration, not necessarily to LEED silver standard

but possibly adding some elements such as local materials to contribute to sustainability and further earn the density being requested.

The Panel supported the proposed height and appreciated the efforts to further slim the building. There were suggestions to increase the verticality of the building and to add more height in places. There was also a recommendation to consider increasing ceiling heights within the units.

Applicant's Response: Mr. Leung thanked the Panel for its comments. He noted the canopy details will be addressed in design development. With respect to the colours, he commented that colour schemes are typically changed during design development.

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