

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: October 11, 2006

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Walter Francl, Chair
Nigel Baldwin (left at 6:15 PM)
Shahla Bozorgzadeh
James Cheng (arrived at 5:20 PM)
Margot Long
Bill Harrison
John Wall
Peter Wreglesworth
C.C. Yao

REGRETS: Peter Wreglesworth
Albert Bicol
Eileen Keenan
Tom Bunting

RECORDING SECRETARY: Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	4887 Cambie Street
2.	833 Seymour Street
3.	1955 Wylie Street
4.	5475 Dunbar, 3625 & 3641 West 39 th Avenue
5.	275 East 8 th Avenue

BUSINESS MEETING

Margot Long gave an overview of the DPB meeting of October 10, 2006 and Brent Toderian, Director of Planning was a guest of the meeting for the first thirty minutes.

Chair Francl called the meeting to order at 4:20 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum.

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| 1. Address: | 4887 Cambie Street |
| DE: | Rezoning |
| Use: | 3-unit fee simple rowhouses |
| Zoning: | CD-1 |
| Application Status: | Complete |
| Architect: | Art Cowie (with Richard Balfour) |
| Review: | First |
| Delegation: | Art Cowie, Otto Lejeune, Thomas Frauenberger, Rick Balfour, and George Moen |
| Staff: | Joanne Baxter, Dale Morgan |

EVALUATION: Support (3-2)

- **Introduction:** Joanne Baxter, Rezoning Planner, presented this rezoning project. Ms. Baxter stated that the Panel's advice is sought on the use, density and form of development. The site is located on the north west corner of West 33rd Avenue and Cambie Street. The property is a single piece of land, 80 x 124, and currently has a ranch style house which was built in the 1960's. The area around the site is single family, with ranch style and some new two story homes. In terms of Council Policy the whole area went through a Community Visioning process which culminated in a community vision which was adopted by City Council in November 2005. The community did express an interest for new housing forums in their neighbourhood. Ms. Baxter noted that what is being proposed is a housing demonstration project. Ms. Baxter advised the Panel to consider the project on the basis of following three criteria: the applicant is demonstrating a new housing forum in the area; there is a degree of improved affordability and there is a degree of neighbourhood support. When this application goes before Council, they will be seeking Staff's advice and an evaluation on these three aspects. The project demonstrates fee simple row houses consisting of three row houses oriented towards Cambie Street, three double garages at the rear of the site and a secondary dwelling unit of 500 square feet over each double garage making a total of six units on the site. The density proposed is 1 FSR with a maximum of three storeys.

Dale Morgan, Development Planner, referring to the model, provided an overview of the site and briefly described the site context and stated that as a demonstration project it is important that the highest possible standards are achieved as this project will set standards for any future development.

Comments requested by the Panel on the following questions:

- 1) Use and Density: Is the Panel supportive of the proposed use and density for this site? Is the site size appropriate for the proposed density?
- 2) Form of Development: In conceptual terms, does the Panel support the form of development? The Panel's detailed comments are also requested on the following issues:
 - Neighbourliness and edge conditions
 - Liveability
 - Building relationship to grade
 - General building massing
 - Entry identity for the rear units

3) Demonstration Project: In the view of the Panel members, what are the key elements needed to make this rezoning proposal a successful housing demonstration project of fee simple row housing?

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Mr. Cowie and the applicant team presented a visual presentation by video. Mr. Cowie pointed out that this is a demonstration project and it is designed as affordable accommodation for empty nesters. This project will be the first of its kind in the City. The applicant team responded to questions from the Panel.
- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - There was general support for the use and density but also concern about liveability in some of the units, particularly in the rear.
 - Design development to refine the architectural expression of the party wall/firewalls and their extension beyond the wall and roof surfaces.
- **Related Commentary:**

The Panel supported this application.

With respect to density, one Panel member felt it could go higher while the majority supported the use and density as proposed.

Some members also felt the project was designed to respond to Cambie Street but did not respond well to the West 33rd Avenue frontage. The north and south elevations are identical, yet one is an interior lot side elevation and the other is a south facing street frontage.

The Panel felt that there was a significant issue was around liveability especially in the rear units with regards to light and outdoor living. One Panel member felt the floor plan in the rear units could use some refinement with regards to bathroom placement and bedroom proportions. Several other members felt more windows could be added especially on the south side of the project. There was also concern regarding privacy between the entries to the lane units and the rear deck and the dining spaces in the street front units. Landscaping and screening should be designed to address this.

The Panel was concerned about the emphasis of the fire/party wall feature and felt they could be better integrated into the design so as not to be so strongly emphasised in the architectural expression. The extension of these walls as balcony privacy screens was seen as excessive. The penthouse top floor elements on the street front units could be better integrated into the building form so as not to appear as add-ons.

On the whole, the Panel felt this was a supportable project.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Cowie thanked the Panel for their comments. He noted that several neighbours have expressed interest in developing their properties with a similar project. He also stated that the roofs will have vegetation on them to help soften the facade. He mentioned that they had looked at having the site face West 33rd but were restricted to have the entry on the front street. He agreed with the Panel regarding the party walls and stated that they will look at making them smaller and changing the material.

2. Address:	833 Seymour Street
DE:	410152
Use:	Capital 6 Redevelopment - 43 Storey Tower with 3 Cultural Amenity Spaces
Zoning:	DD
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Howard Bingham Hill Architects
Owner:	Orpheum Condominium Properties Ltd.
Review:	Second
Delegation:	Doug Nelson, John Bingham, Gerry Eckford
Staff:	Ralph Segal

EVALUATION: Support (5-0)

- **Introduction:** Ralph Segal, Development Planner, presented this application for the redevelopment of the former Capital 6 site on Seymour Street. This proposal is for a 42-storey, predominately residential building, containing a series of cultural amenities which include an expansion to the Orpheum Theatre stage area and back of the house facilities. In addition, the proposal includes a full rehearsal hall and School of Musical Excellence in association with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. The cultural amenities resulted in a density bonus that brings the FSR to 18.70 from the zoned 5.0 FSR.

Council approved the cultural amenity bonus and concluded that the proposed height of 413 feet was acceptable.

The advice of the Panel is sought on the following:

Has this complete submission satisfactorily addressed Preliminary Development Permit Board design conditions (reflecting Panel's previous concerns) regarding:

- Simplification of tower expression
 - Better integration of podium with Orpheum
 - Improved ground floor interface of sidewalk
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** John Bingham, Architect referred to the model and gave an overview of the site noting the changes to the project since the last Panel review.

Doug Nelson, Architect pointed out some of the detail in regards to the façade and the spoke about the fritted glass on the concrete wall.

Gerry Eckford, Landscape Architect gave an overview of the landscaping plans noting the plan for the podium level where they have created a children's play.

The applicant team responded to questions from the Panel.

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

The Panel had no substantial concerns with this proposal.

- **Related Commentary:**

The Panel unanimously supported this proposal. The applicant team was congratulated for what appears to be a lot of hard work and the Panel agreed that the scheme is much improved.

The Panel felt the applicant was successful in simplifying the tower expression although one member of the Panel felt it had lost some of the playfulness seen in the previous scheme. One Panel member suggested breaking down the grid, as it doesn't sit well with the strong horizontal expression of the curving façade.

The Panel agreed that there is a better integration of the podium with the Orpheum. It was agreed that the piano pieces were a bold move and helped tie the Orpheum and this site together and would make for a great piece of public art. A couple of members of the Panel suggested extending the piano pieces out to the street.

They agreed that the street level is more interesting but would encourage the applicant to use a richer material palette for the podium base materials. The glass and concrete materials currently proposed could be a bit austere. The applicant is encouraged to look at other materials such as stone that could lend more richness to the facade. Several Panel members felt the glass on the concrete wall wasn't necessary.

One Panel member felt that the lane elevations and finishes were still underdeveloped and could use some additional design attention.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Bingham thanked the Panel for their commentary and added that they appreciated the advice.

3. Address:	1955 Wylie Street
DE:	410693
Use:	Mixed-use, retention of Maynard's Building
Zoning:	C-3A
Application Status:	Preliminary
Architect:	Interform
Owner:	Orpheum Condominium Properties
Review:	First
Delegation:	Michel Panzini, Ian Kent, Peter Kreuk
Staff:	Ralph Segal

EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (0-5)

- **Introduction:** Ralph Segal, Development Planner introduced this application. The project consists of a 12 storey tower on the corner of West 2nd Avenue and Cambie Street, an 8 storey tower on the corner of West 1st Avenue and Wylie Street and a 2 storey heritage structure which will be increased to 4 stories at the corner of Wylie Street and West 2nd Avenue. The site is zoned C3-A which provides for 1.0 FSR with a maximum height of 30 feet. The zoning permits a conditional development up to 3.0 FSR and in addition a heritage transfer equal to 10% is sought bringing the total to 3.3 FSR.

The Panel's input was sought on the following:

1. Massing and Height
 - Overall configuration and massing of buildings on this unique site (convergence of three axis), particularly as seen from Cambie Bridge and surrounding streets (Cambie Street, West 2nd Avenue, Wylie Street and W 1st Avenue)
 - Appropriateness of proposed increase in height from guideline. 90 feet to approximately 117 feet measured from base surface (111.28 feet measured from grade at Cambie/West 2nd Corner).
 2. Public Realm:
 - Has the desired enhancement of the Public Realm been achieved in terms of building interface (pedestrian interest, edge definition, safety and security) and landscaped treatment of:
 - Cambie Street setback as a pedestrian route to False Creek
 - West 2nd Avenue
 - Wylie Street
 - West 1st Avenue (with reference to SEFC Public Realm Plan)
 3. Heritage Response:
 - Compatibility of rooftop addition (eight 2-storey units) with heritage Maynard's building.
 4. Liveability:
 - Has satisfactory liveability been provided for dwelling units (outlook, on-site open space, amenities, etc)?
 5. Have the requested increases in density (to 3.3 FSR) and height (to approximately 117 Feet) been "earned"?
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Michel Panzini, Architect described the project in greater detail. He noted that this is an important site on a key corner and was a difficult site to design. Respect needed to be shown to the heritage building and how to blend three buildings together that are different from one another.
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Peter Kreuk, Landscape Architect described the landscaping for the project noting the internal courtyard with a water feature and use of the green house on the 6th level of the heritage building.

Ian Kent, Development Consultant, described the sustainability approach for the project.

The applicant team responded to questions from the Panel.

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

- General concerns about the distribution of mass especially on the Cambie Street building. There were suggestions to consider either redistributing some density to the other buildings on the site or reworking the building height to break down the length of the building;
- Design development to the courtyard to allow more light into this area;
- Relocate the main entry on the Wylie Street building; and
- Design development with respect to the units in the courtyard to allow for more privacy.

- **Related Commentary:**

The Panel unanimously did not support this application. The Panel agreed that this is a difficult site but found that the site seems to be over-massed.

The Panel members felt that the massing as seen from Cambie Street could be strengthened by removing some of the bulk from the top of the building especially on the north corner. It was suggested that stepping the mid portion of the block could reduce the height. One member of the Panel felt this building could be split into three blocks with one block the same height as the Police building, the middle building the same height as the Montreux and the other building could be up to 90 feet in height. It was suggested that extending the West 2nd Avenue townhouses could make for a stronger streetscape and help the buildings to relate better to each other. One Panel member suggested distributing the density through the other buildings on the site. Other members of the Panel felt the length of the building made for too dominate a building as seen from the bridge. The scale and massing of the Montreux development across the street was cited as an example of what might be seen as a maximum height and bulk for a building on this site.

The Panel felt the public realm had some problematic areas but for the most part worked well. One member of the Panel felt the double row of trees on Cambie Street was an elegant solution and helps to enhance the value of the units. Another member of the Panel would like to see the public open spaces lightened up with the addition of more green spaces as you move towards the water.

The Panel felt the heritage response worked well in the site but a couple of members felt the trees on the top floor took away from the building integrity.

In terms of the liveability the Panel felt there didn't seem to be very much outdoor amenity space. The courtyard is in the shade most of the time and in the winter will always be in shade so it won't be well used. Having the main entry off courtyard for the Wylie Street building seems awkward and people might have trouble finding the entry. The Panel would like to see the courtyard opened up as the set back between the buildings is tight and the suites that face each other won't have much privacy. The Panel suggested having the prime living space on the corner might resolve this issue.

The Panel did not support the increase in density.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Panzini thanked the Panel for their comments and stated that with the difficulty of the site and the available land, the larger building needs to be on the west side of the site. Also they didn't want to overload the heritage building. Mr. Segal reminded the Panel that this is a preliminary application and that the applicant can fine other massing solutions for the site.

4. Address:	5475 Dunbar, 3625 and 3641 West 39 th Avenue
DE:	Rezoning
Use:	Residential
Zoning:	RS-5 to CD-1
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Formwerks Architecture
Review:	First
Delegation:	Robert Cadez, Taylor Johnson, David Goodyke
Staff:	Joanne Baxter, Dale Morgan

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-0)

- **Introduction:** Joanne Baxter, Rezoning Planner introduced this rezoning project which is a sixteen unit housing demonstration project. The site consists of three legal lots and is located on the northwest corner of West 39th Avenue and Dunbar Street. There is a Dunbar Community Vision adopted by council in 1998 and that Vision sets the direction for the community. As part of that Community Vision there was an opportunity to provide alternate forms of housing in terms of row housing, fourplexes and duplexes primarily along the arterials of Dunbar Street, West 16th Avenue and West 41st Avenue. This is a housing demonstration project and Council can consider it in advance of any further area planning. There are some criteria that must be considered: does the project demonstrate a new housing type that is not currently available in the Dunbar community; does it have approved affordability; and does it have a degree of neighbourhood support. The proponent did a pre-application consultation with the community where four options were put forward and this is the option that came as an application to the City.

Dale Morgan, Development Planner, referring to the model described the project in further detail.

The Panel's advice was sought on the following:

1. Does the Panel support the proposed multiple dwelling use and a density of 1.1 FSR for this rezoning?
2. Does the Panel support the proposed form of development of 16 ground oriented units, including 11 rowhouses, a 4 plex and a duplex in the rear yard?
3. Further detail comment is requested on:
 - Transition with neighbouring RS-5 context
 - Building setbacks
 - Privacy and overlook
 - Location of the parking ramp and exit stairs.

Ms. Baxter and Mr. Morgan took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Taylor Johnson, Architect, referred to the model and described the project in greater detail and responded to questions from the Panel.

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

The Panel had no substantial concerns with any aspect of this proposal.

- **Related Commentary:**

The Panel unanimously supported this application and thought it was very well handled. The multiple dwelling use and density were supported.

The project was thought to be well handled in terms of its transition from the single family homes in the neighbourhood and the Panel congratulated the applicant on doing a good job as a housing demonstration project and infill for the area.

One Panel member had some concern about the entry to the units off the lane and felt that may be problematic.

One member of the Panel noted that planting mature trees between the RS-5 and the project as buffer would be a good idea.

The Panel felt that this project was sensitively done and should set the standard for any future projects to follow in the area.

Some Panel members noted that the fourplex is pulled back in line with the single family homes on West 39th Avenue but the sideyard of the townhouses fronting Dunbar are much tighter. The fourplex could move forward slightly. The sideyards of the townhouses to the lane and flanking West 39th are tight. It was felt that removing one of the townhouses might be necessary to improve this setback condition.

- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant team thanked the Panel for their comments.

5. Address:	275 East 8 th Avenue
DE:	410347
Use:	Residential
Zoning:	C-3A
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Neale Staniszakis Doll Adams Architects
Owner:	0740783 B.C. Ltd.
Review:	Second (first review July 19)
Delegation:	Tom Staniszakis, Ken, Jennifer Stamp
Staff:	Dale Morgan

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-0)

- **Introduction:** Dale Morgan, Development Planner, presented this application in Mount Pleasant, which was reviewed by the Panel on July 19, 2006 and was not supported. The site is located at the corner of Scotia Street and East 7th Avenue. Mr. Morgan described the changes the applicant has made since the last review.

The Panel's advice was sought on the following:

- Has this redesign addressed key issues regarding concerns of the Panel;
- Is there too much density on the site,
- Have they successfully addressed the massing;
- Materiality.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Tom Staniszakis, Architect briefly described the design rationale and the response to the Panel's previous comments. Jennifer Stamp, Landscape Architect described the changes since the last review including the change of location of the amenity space and the improvements to the rain treatment. 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.

- **Related Commentary:**

The Panel unanimously supported this application and acknowledged that the scheme was much improved and sets a high standard for future development in the area.

Several members of the Panel encouraged the applicant to add a green roof on the tower. One member stated that it wasn't necessary that it be open to the residents of the building however another member of the Panel liked the accessible roof top that was in the first scheme and encouraged the applicant to add the rooftop access back into the new scheme.

The Panel thanked the applicant for including the previous model in the presentation as it assisted them in seeing the changes to the project.

One member of the Panel felt there was still too much density on the lane and that it could be modified to improve the massing.

The Panel suggested additional planting around the parking ramp to soften the edges. Also one Panel member suggested adding more trees to the ground floor patio areas for added privacy.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Staniszki addressed the issue of access to the roof top stating that it would be fairly complicated as they would need to take the elevator on more stop and that adds to the height of the building. He agreed with the comments about the green roof and plans to discuss that concern with the client.