

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: October 13, 2004

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Bruce Haden, Chair (Items 1 - 2) (excused Item 3)
Mark Ostry (Chair, Item 1)
Larry Adams
Robert Barnes
Jeffrey Corbett
Alan Endall
Marta Farevaag (present for #3 only)
Ronald Lea
Jennifer Marshall
Brian Martin

REGRETS: Steven Keyes
Margot Long

RECORDING SECRETARY: Carol Hubbard
Scot Hein (Agenda Item 3. Southeast False Creek)

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1500 Homer Mews
2.	2020 Harrison Drive (Icelandic House)
3.	Southeast False Creek

1. Address:	1500 Homer Mews
DE:	408703
Use:	Residential (18 storeys, 61 units)
Zoning:	CD-1
Applicant Status:	Complete
Architect:	Nick Milkovich
Owner:	Concord Pacific Group
Review:	First
Delegation:	Nick Milkovich, Arthur Erickson, Peter Webb, Gerry Eckford
Staff:	Jonathan Barrett

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-0)

- **Introduction:** Jonathan Barrett, Development Planner, presented this application, located at the easterly end of the Beach Neighbourhood. The proposal is for an 18-storey tower with a two-storey townhouse base. The underground parking also includes 11 spaces for a future marina for which there is currently no development application.

The guidelines established at the rezoning stage were fairly specific, and illustrate a 16-storey solution for this site; however, the proposed 18-storey building is at the same height (53 m) indicated in the by-law. The guidelines illustrate the building extending to the corner, whereas the proposal is to pull it back, which improves the separation from the neighbouring building. As well, the floorplate suggested in the guidelines is 600 m² whereas the proposal is for 647 m². The guidelines also illustrate a 6-storey form facing David Lam Park, and this has been reduced to two storeys in this proposal. The setback from the waterfront walkway also differs from the guideline illustration, varying from 4.4 m to 5.8 m where the guidelines suggest a setback of 7.5 m.

The advice of the Panel is sought on the following specific aspects of the proposal:

- tower height;
- floorplates - whether the increase impacts shadowing and views from adjacent buildings;
- setbacks, the relationship between the seawall and the townhouses and continuity with the adjacent Kings Landing development.

General advice is also sought on:

- townhouse scale, character and rhythm;
 - relationship between the tower and the townhouse base;
 - overall building character and building;
 - overall landscape systems.
- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** Nick Milkovich, Architect, described the design rationale and Gerry Eckford, Landscape Architect, reviewed the landscape plan. The applicant team responded to questions from the Panel.
 - **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - design development to the northwest corner to enhance the base/tower relationship and the corner treatment (the simplicity of the corner expression lacks resolution);
 - design development to increase the sense of entrance;
 - detailed development to the north façade, given there is not enough information to fully understand the intent.

- **Related Commentary:**

The Panel unanimously supported this application and found it a welcome departure from the somewhat over-articulated buildings that surround it. The Panel also found it to be an appropriate solution for this prime location at the terminus of the neighbourhood. In many ways it will be a landmark building that will set itself apart from its neighbours.

The Panel had no concerns with the height and regarded the number of storeys to be a non-issue given the building is within the height limit established for the zoning. It was considered to be an elegant solution, successfully achieving the same height with more floors. The Panel appreciated the way the tower is carried to the ground. Some Panel members wished the tower were higher, and one Panel member regretted that a building of this stature could not have a greater floor-to-ceiling height.

The Panel also supported the increased floorplate sizes and found the analysis clearly demonstrated that there are no negative impacts on views and shadowing. Given its form, the impact of the tower is generally better than the guideline solution.

The two-storey townhouse base was unanimously supported. The Panel found it an interesting variation from the homogeneous townhouse massing seen to date in Concord Pacific developments. It was also noted that a more typical 4 - 5-storey townhouse base would not complement the tower in the same way given it is not a particularly tall building. As well, the 2-storey massing greatly improves livability, both for the townhouse units themselves and for units in the lower part of the tower. There was a suggestion that some subtle richness could be introduced to the north elevation of the townhouses, with some design detailing at the roof level. A Panel member also questioned whether the mews should not be completely open where it opens to David Lam Park so that the semi private open space daylights on the park in a more positive way.

The setbacks were also unanimously supported. The proportions appear to be adequate and the relationship between patios and public circulation well articulated.

Some Panel members thought the northwest elevation could benefit from some relief.

The only concern with respect to the relationship of the tower to the base related to the corner treatment which seems unresolved. It was thought the corner lacked definition. There was also a strong recommendation from several Panel members to strengthen the sense of entry to the building. In general, the Panel found the tower/base relationship to be a major improvement over the guidelines.

The courtyard was considered to be well handled and the Panel liked the deck opening on both sides of the building. A minor comment about the landscape was that the paving materials to the underground parking seem to echo the paving on the pedestrian walkway, which could be confusing.

It was noted that other Concord Developments were also designed by high level design architects in whom the Panel has considerable trust and faith, but the working drawings were relegated to less competent firms. Given the drawings presented in this proposal are not particularly well detailed, there was a concern that the quality of architecture is carried through on this building.

Finally, it was thought that a forward-looking project such as this should have a sustainable design strategy.

- **Applicant's Response:** In response to the Panel's concern that the high quality architecture indicated at this stage is followed through to completion, Mr. Webb noted that Concord Pacific has previously distinguished the design architecture from the working drawings. However, for this project they intend the design architects to be involved at a detailed level and intimately involved in the process, unlike other projects.

2. Address:	2020 Harrison Drive (Icelandic House)
Use:	Seniors' Assisted Housing (82 units)
Zoning:	CD-1
Applicant Status:	Rezoning
Architect:	Henriquez & Partners
Owner:	Icelandic Care Home HOFN Society
Review:	First
Delegation:	Gregory Henriquez, Chris Phillips, Albert Teng
Staff:	Lynda Challis, Dale Morgan

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (5-3)

- **Introduction:** Lynda Challis, Rezoning Planner, introduced this application to amend CD-1 zoning to allow the existing Icelandic Care Home to provide 82 seniors' independent living units. The site, which is just over an acre in size, is located between Harrison Drive to the north and SE Marine Drive to the south and has a significant change in elevation of 11 m north to south. The site is part of a larger CD-1 zoning that includes the Finnish Canadian Home and Finnish Canadian rental apartment. It was originally rezoned from RS-1 in 1961. To the west of the site contains the German Canadian Care Home governed by its own CD-1. To the north across Harrison Drive is zoned RS-1. Policy supports the proposed use and the community vision recommends the use in a low rise form. The Icelandic Care Home no longer meets Ministry of Health standards.

The rezoning application has undergone a number of revisions to the form of development since it was first submitted in January 2004. The original proposal with 88 units was for a three-storey building with a seven-storey wing along the east side (illustrated as Option B). The density of the existing two-storey development is about 0.5 FSR and the original proposal would increase it to 1.35 FSR. Staff were concerned about the high increase in density and the compatibility of introducing a higher form into this context, and in June 2004 a revised scheme (D) was submitted for 82 units with four storeys in the west wing, five storeys in the east wing and three storeys in the centre. The density was reduced to 1.29 FSR. This proposal was taken to the community and considerable concern was expressed about view impacts, traffic and parking, as well as setting a precedent for future development. The current proposal (E) has been aligned with the east and west property lines to increase its depth, the maximum height has been reduced from five to four storeys and the height above Harrison Drive has been reduced to two storeys. This option maintains the 82 units but the FSR has increased to 1.32.

Dale Morgan, Development Planner, noted that design development to date has been in response to the reactions of the neighbourhood, the main issue for the neighbours being building height and view obstruction. The Panel is requested to review the various options. The Panel's advice is sought on the following:

- General issues of use, density and form of development;
 - Building height and massing with regard to the preservation of public and private views;
 - Architectural expression.
- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** Gregory Henriquez, Architect, reviewed the various options for the site and responded to the Panel's questions.

- **Panel's Key Issues:**
 - Strong support for the use;
 - Willingness to consider 1.3 FSR with a building form that addresses view and massing concerns;
 - Support for considering a building form that incorporates the key organizational principles of Option C (a single storey component and a higher building component oriented to minimize view impacts);
 - General support for the direction indicated at this early stage for the building form and character.

- **Related Commentary:**

The Panel agreed that this is a very challenging site. The proposed use was unanimously supported.

The majority of Panel members thought the proposed density could be accommodated on the site, but would be much easier with a lower density.

While the Panel ultimately voted in favour of the submitted option E, it was thought to be very much a compromise solution, and not a particularly good one. It was suggested it might impact more people than a taller solution. A comment was made that it is unfortunate the development potential of the adjacent German Canadian Care Home site was not illustrated for comparison purposes and to provide a realistic demonstration of the future of the neighbourhood. It was also noted that the neighbourhood has to expect that there will be some view loss with any development that occurs on this and neighbouring sites. As well, the site's location adjacent to a major arterial route should be acknowledged given it does provide a buffer between Marine Drive and the residential neighbourhood to the north.

The scale on Marine Drive was thought to be appropriate, noting that at whatever height the rhythm and scale on Marine Drive should be residential.

One Panel member thought Option E was further compromised by the bridge element. Greater transparency would improve it and allow some views through.

From an urban form point of view most Panel members tended to favour Option C as a massing option, although acknowledged it would not be supported by the neighbours. One Panel member offered there may not be a solution that will not cause some negative impact and be opposed. It was also suggested there may be even more options that have not yet been explored. The Panel certainly thought Option C had more potential in terms of livability and neighbourliness.

The Panel thought commentary on the architectural expression was premature at this stage.

One Panel member found the 60 ft. separation between the buildings to be unacceptable, particularly given it could set a precedent for neighbouring development. As well, all sides of the scheme should be residential in character, not just the Harrison Drive frontage.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Henriquez said while he agreed with the Panel members thought Option C is the best architectural solution, the reality is that without approval of Option E in its current form the project will not proceed.

3. Address:	Southeast False Creek
Use:	Mixed
Zoning:	CD-1
Architect:	Hotson Bakker Boniface Haden/VIA/Stantec
Owner:	City of Vancouver
Review:	Second
Delegation:	Graham McGarva, Norm Hotson, Joyce Drohan, Derek Lee, Jeff Olson
Staff:	Ian Smith, Karis Hiebert, Brian Sears

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-0)**• Introduction:**

Ian Smith, Central Area Senior Planner for Southeast False Creek (SEFC), outlined Council's motions and instructions to staff from their meeting on July 26, 2004. His presentation noted Council's expectations for a high quality development that is characterized by its leadership in the promotion, implementation and education of evolving principles of sustainability. Mr. Smith emphasized Council's high expectations for the development as well their expectations for economic performance. He referred to the previous plan prior to Council's July instructions which was characterized by larger development sites, point towers above podium forms and a contiguous waterfront open space system.

Scot Hein, development planner for SEFC, reviewed the approvals process noting that staff would bring forward more developed information at the sub-area re-zoning stage following Council's approval of the Official Development Plan. The first two sub-areas are anticipated to include the sites associated with the 2010 Olympics Athletics Village and the Private Lands between First and Second Avenues. Mr. Hein highlighted the significant Council instructions which have influenced the new plan from their July 26, 2004 meeting including the following:

THAT Council establish a target of 1/3 (non-market)/ 1/3 (affordable)/ 1/3 (market) housing policy for the SEFC City-owned Lands;

THAT SEFC provide a full-size community centre serving all of SEFC, including a community boating facility for non-motorized recreational boating;

THAT only Low and Mid-Rise buildings be permitted, west of Quebec Street, with the intent to realize the target density;

THAT, while 26.4 acres of park is preferred, slightly less park space (up to 2.64 acres less park) may be considered in order to meet other priority objectives;

THAT the intent is not to widen 1st Avenue but to include building lines on City Lands to widen if necessary in the future after staff report back on the comprehensive transportation plan for SEFC including the Downtown Streetcar;

THAT a more active water's edge as a lively destination be pursued - encroaching into 30 m setback if necessary (phase so as to minimize encumbrance with False Creek sediment contamination management);

THAT instead of almost all residential, consider the opportunity for more than 200,000 sq. ft. of commercial development and jobs - especially of compatible activity such as eco-businesses, artistic businesses, net portal offices, and live-work; and

THAT the Salt Building and one or both of the other heritage buildings be kept generally in-situ (do not move them).

THAT the SEFC ODP explicitly express the intent for architectural excellence and to bring significance to community buildings as 'signature' designs; and ensure a distinctive design image for the whole community;

THAT Council confirm as a priority, the policy requiring environmental sustainability (and LEED) that provides a new level of "base case" sustainability performance that can be applied to other projects in the City and implement demonstration projects to showcase especially innovative environmental measures (take risks to experiment) - such as using alternative energy and maximizing green roofs;

THAT Council confirm as a priority the policy requiring significant urban agriculture;

THAT Council confirm that the SEFC ODP boundaries will include City and adjacent private lands - and that this be reflected in an integrated Illustrative Plan and phasing policies;

THAT Council confirm that the SEFC development on City-owned lands be structured with a variety of parcel sizes so as to foster an incremental quality to the pattern of that development; and

THAT Council confirm as a priority the policy of universal design to provide high levels of accessibility, acknowledging that there are some exceptions that may be necessary related to rowhouse or multi-storey residential units; and include provisions for aging in place, including accessibility, mobility, and safety in the SEFC ODP.

THAT the Southeast False Creek Official Development Plan and its Illustrative Plan be further developed with the following instructions: show strong preference for pedestrians, bicycles and transit over cars; reallocate park to provide a better balance between the east and west including smaller parks in the east neighbourhood providing that they do not dissipate usable park space; provide direct linkage of the Ontario greenway/bikeway into the park system; develop roofs as green spaces and for recreation with some consideration of linkages; and investigate approaches to bring water in closer association to the in-situ Salt building.

THAT in completing the ODP and Illustrative Plan for SEFC, staff consider possibilities to narrow the exclusively residential streets to provide greater area for development or park.

THAT the ODP be amended to make provision for the preservation, maintenance, and incorporation into the site of found artifacts and any discovered heritage fabric.

Given these Council instructions, and the design response to them embodied in the new plan, staff have developed 15 questions which are intended to illicit more general advice from Panel members at this stage. Mr. Hein emphasized that a more detailed review by the Panel would occur at the sub-area re-zoning stage, and related development permit applications, where greater understanding of programming, public realm systems, commercial viability, Olympic requirements and Council's more definitive instructions on sustainability performance are known. Mr. Hein confirmed that future reviews by the panel would be done in the context of draft design guidelines for each sub-area. His questions, with respective Panel commentary, are summarized below. Mr. Hotson, Ms. Drohan and Mr. Lee reviewed various aspects and characteristics of the plan in response to Council's instructions including the guiding planning principals.

- **Panel Comments:** The Panel reviewed the materials and offered advice as follows:

General Advice: The new plan was strongly supported noting a strong preference for the concept of a "working framework" that was both robust, and flexible, as a strategy to implement new sustainability approaches over time. Members generally agreed that the plan responded effectively to the July 26, 2004 instructions and commended Council for the change in direction, specifically the adjustments to economic performance expectations for the development. Members, while acknowledging the proponent's intentions to develop three specific sub-areas, felt that more character defining detail will be necessary at the re-zoning

stage to clearly distinguish each sub-area environment and looked forward to their next review where greater resolution of technical requirements, including road and public realm systems, parcelization, heritage, artifacts, and most importantly - sustainability qualities/features/systems that would characterize the overall development and the distinct sub-areas. The Panel expressed very high expectations for the development, specifically in its leadership, education, applicability to future development throughout the city and for architectural and public realm excellence.

Advice sought on USE

1) Is the village centre appropriately located?

Panel members generally agreed that the village centre was appropriately located but were unsure of the extent of ground oriented commercial programming that would ensure long term viability. The village identity will benefit by accommodating a variety of uses with greater intensification. Design of the public realm should announce the village location from both Main Street and 2nd Avenue to ensure integration with the surrounding context.

2) Are the related ground-oriented retail frontages appropriately located with respect to longer term viability?

Panel members were unsure about long term commercial viability with respect to Council's instructions at 200,000 square feet and suggested that further study be completed to inform the sub-area re-zonings. Members confirmed strong support for flex space, especially at grade, as referenced on the colour coded plans (red and orange references). Further analysis of floor to floor heights, and related building height limits, should be analysed to ensure interchangeability of uses both at grade, and on upper floors, to fully realize the flex-space concept.

3) Are the activities planned for the lower scale waterfront oriented sites appropriately located?

Panel members strongly supported the activities, and proposed building typology, for the waterfront and encouraged the city to pursue necessary negotiations to realize this aspect of the plan which was seen as integral to the success of the development and village centre. Panel members emphasized that the appropriate design response should be of very low scale and industrial in expression to reflect the working history of the waterfront and more specifically, shipyards activities. Some members felt that the hotel site was too prominent on the waterfront and suggested a more internal siting while remaining integrated with the village centre. The east - west bike routes, noting five possibilities for travel in this orientation, should not rely on the waterfront, with pedestrian emphasis on a boardwalk concept, for commuting or faster travel. The panel recommended consideration of aggressive parking relaxations for these waterfront sites, and for the development as a whole.

4) What uses should be considered at grade for 1st and 2nd Avenue frontages?

Is the community centre and school appropriately located?

Panel members confirmed support for the community centre location given proximity to larger open space programming but expressed some concern with the school location noting its prominence as a prime development site highly visible from the north shore of False Creek. Flex space uses with retail emphasis as presented were supported. Panel members noted that efforts were required to maximize the Second Avenue setback on the north side given the vehicular environment impacts as a well utilized truck route. Opportunities for double-fronting ground uses that provide pedestrian interest at grade, and for the internal courtyards, were encouraged for First Avenue.

*Advice sought on DENSITY/FORM OF DEVELOPMENT
(Placemaking/Imagability considerations)*

5) Is the overall planning concept legible? (is the urban structure coherent noting the three distinct "grains" or sub-areas (work/ship/rail yards))

Panel members felt the plan was generally legible and well conceived for the ODP level of detail presented. Further design development at the re-zoning stage for the sub-areas, and for specific development permit applications, to achieve greater clarity of the sites distinguishing qualities is required. A greater mix, and intensification of uses, that more clearly announce the village centre, more specifically the Salt Building, should be pursued. Efforts to capitalize on the site's working history and memory through integration of heritage resources and artifacts is crucial to the success of the overall development

6) Is the parcelization strategy appropriate and will it facilitate incremental development of varying scale noting Council's instructions?

Panel members felt that the new plan provided a robust framework that could accommodate a wide range of proponents, uses and building types over time. A more incremental approach through smaller parcel patterning provides greater opportunities to "learn as you go" which could yield greater value in the application of sustainability approaches both on and off site. The plan was seen as more democratic with greater opportunities for participation and ownership over the previous plan.

7) Does the plan capitalize on the in situ heritage resources (5 sites) in creating/enhancing sub-area identity? (overall approach supported by Heritage Commission)

Panel members strongly supported the approach taken in utilizing in-situ heritage resources as a strategy for place-making and sub-area definition. Appropriate uses for these buildings should be identified to ensure that the historic buildings are well utilized while assisting pedestrians in their understanding of the site's urban structure. The suggested relationship of these buildings to their immediate new context should be strengthened at the sub-area re-zoning stage.

8) Is the open space system, related courtyard emphasis and pedestrian network successful as an integral component of the overall concept and does it contribute to placemaking?

Panel members generally supported the overall open space structure and believed that it could be well integrated through further design development at the sub-area re-zoning stage. The scale of buildings that define the larger open space components was seen to be appropriate although concern with shadowing on the "hinge" park was expressed. Further refinement to the adjacent building forms for this park, including pursuit of terraced forms, should be pursued at the re-zoning stage. Further clarification of the edge/public access/private open space relationship for the two generic "crescent" buildings adjacent to the westernmost park is required. The courtyard approach for both the public and private lands was strongly supported noting that further clarity to differentiate between public and private spaces is necessary at the next stage. Members recommended that the Official Development Plan address the proposed courtyard concept with respect to public access, design technical expectations, noting that success/implementation may be dependent upon by-law compliance and other legal mechanisms such as ROW agreements.

9) Is the hierarchy of streets legible and are they appropriately scaled noting Council's instructions?

Panel members agreed with the proposed hierarchy of streets and general dimensional attributes presented in the schematic cross-sections. Further detailed refinement to ensure that Council's expectations for "tight" streets should be pursued. Panel members expressed expectations for a high quality public realm, including external expression of sustainability,

materials and detailing at the sub-area re-zoning stage. Specific streets should be identified where surface parking is appropriate.

10) Is the building typology appropriate for the site's position in the city?

Given advice on typology, are designated heights and respective locations appropriate?

Building typology, including proposed heights and form, were generally supported noting the panel's strong support for the new direction taken. The panel also believed that the proposed north-south siting of buildings yielding greater view potential was supportable. Detailed analysis to ensure that proposed FSR's are achievable with more refined massing, including greater articulation, is necessary in advance of ODP consideration by Council. The panel supported some east-west modulation in heights to emphasize important site entries and features including the hinge park and village centre. Panel members looked forward to their review of more detailed building typology, that more clearly, and outwardly, expresses sustainability and the industrial context that characterizes this area of the city, at the next stage.

11) Should the massing approach be characterized by modulation through varied heights and form and if so, does the plan effectively achieve that goal?

Panel members supported some east-west modulation in building heights across the site to emphasize logical places of emphasis. The overall north-south massing approach that locates lower heights approaching the waterfront, with heights rising towards the private lands, and scaled down to a second avenue streetwall was supported.

12) Is the proposed building form adjacent to larger open spaces appropriate?

Panel members felt that more detailed shadow analysis is required at the next stage noting concern with overshadowing on the "hinge" park. Further analysis of solar access for internal courtyards is also required.

13) Does the network of lane oriented courtyards, and related building form, provide an appropriate response to 2nd Avenue impacts, the industrial context to the south and as transitional form to the water?

Panel members agreed with the courtyard approach taken, specifically for the private lands, noting that more work is required to confirm how public spaces will be secured.

14) Commentary on the pedestrian and bicycle network?

Panel members felt that the proposed bicycle network, characterized by five east-west routes, was well conceived. Members expressed general support for a vibrant pedestrian network with an emphasis of activity occurring on the streets/sidewalks first. Mid-block connections was viewed as an important component of the overall network noting longer east-west block lengths for the private lands. Further analysis to ensure that secondary connections are appropriately located, well utilized, public, safe and integral to the overall network is necessary at the next stage.

15) Which option for the Manitoba Street approach to the Salt Building is preferred?

Panel members preferred the option presented in the overall plan as opposed to the option characterized by the one-way couplet with the triangular forecourt traffic island. An additional setback for new development on the southeast corner of First Avenue and Manitoba Street was recommended to further reveal the south facade of the Salt Building as a strategy to announce the village centre.

Mr. Hotson thanked the panel for their commentary and advice which was considered very helpful at this stage and looked forward to more detail resolution that addressed the Panel's advice at the sub-area re-zoning stage.