

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: October 21, 1998

TIME: N/A

PLACE: N/A

PRESENT: Joyce Drohan (Chair)
Sheldon Chandler
Per Christoffersen
James Hancock
Joseph Hruda (not present for Item #1)
Peter Kreuk (excused Item #2)
Sean McEwan
Norman Shearing

REGRETS: Patricia Campbell
Geoff Glotman
Jim McLean
Peter Wreglesworth

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Carol Hubbard

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	500 Pacific Boulevard and 600 Pacific Boulevard
2.	1138 Melville Street
3.	3564-3580 West 41st Avenue

1. Address: 500 Pacific Boulevard and 600 Pacific Boulevard

Use: Marina and Residential
Zoning: BCPED to CD-1
Application Status: Rezoning (Text Amendment)
Architect: Hulbert Group
Owner: Pacific Place Dev. Corp.
Review: Second
Delegation: Rick Hulbert, Don Wuori, Matt Meehan
Staff: Jonathan Barrett

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-0)

Address: 600 Pacific Boulevard
Use: Marina and Residential
Zoning: BCPED to CD-1
Application Status: Rezoning
Architect: Hulbert Group
Owner: Pacific Place Dev. Corp.
Review: Second
Delegation: Rick Hulbert, Don Wuori, Matt Meehan
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EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-0)**Note:**

These applications were introduced together but the Panel commented and voted on each application separately. The Panel also offered some comments on the proposed new park, noting that this is under jurisdiction of the Park Board.

Introduction:

Jonathan Barrett, Senior Planner, provided an overview of the project. The ODP for the site was approved in 1990. The use is primarily residential with a small amount of service-commercial and includes four non-market housing sites. Also included in the overall proposal is an extension of the marina and a park. The Park Board is responsible for the design of the park. The development has a fairly formal design structure, with a formal array of towers around the park and the crescent, generally stepping down to the water.

500 Pacific Boulevard - Text Amendment:

Analysis has determined the non-market housing should be on "dirt" (unencumbered) sites so that their construction schedule is entirely independent of private interests. This has generated the transfer of 50 non-market units. As well, a change in building heights is being sought to add 4 and 2 storeys to Buildings J and G, respectively. The Panel's comments are requested with respect to impact on views, shadowing on the park, and the scale on the water.

600 Pacific Boulevard:

Mr. Barrett briefly reviewed the Panel's comments from the workshop held in April 1998. Total number of units is 220. The proposal also includes the expansion of the marina. There has been a general increase in height of the towers and some additional density. The Panel's comments are sought on the proximity of massing to the water, the proximity of the non-market housing to the bridge deck, the Beach Avenue connection, and the overall design, fit and scale of the development.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Rick Hulbert, Architect, described the design rationale for the project and Don Wuori reviewed the Landscape Plan.

Panel's Comments:

The Panel reviewed the model and posted materials and provided the following comments:

George Wainborn Park:

The Panel strongly supported the proposed park and the improvements made to the many smaller adjacent outdoor spaces. The Panel supported the introduction of diversity in the lower portion of the park, as well as the potential for outdoor activities throughout the park. A suggestion was made that there may be the potential to include a children's water play area. There was a recommendation for the trees to be as large as possible, with adequate growing medium to ensure they can quickly achieve the stature illustrated. As well, the quality of paving materials should reflect the calibre of the overall design and be worthy of a civic park of this nature. Given the scale of the park, it was felt greater consideration should be given to weather protection. One suggestion was to include gazebos, or at the very least to extend the weather protection on the prow.

With respect to the water's edge, the Panel hopes there will be opportunities for doing something other than the more typical hard edge treatment seen in other parts of False Creek, or at least look at increasing animation at the edge. The Panel also felt strongly that greater consideration should be given to animating the perimeter of the park at the base of the buildings with some retail-commercial use. Something at the southwest and southeast corners might also be appropriate.

Finally, there were a number of comments about the need to address sustainability in a park of this scale, and a recommendation that the Park Board consider carefully sustainability systems, e.g., water management, in a very neighbourhood-wide way.

Text Amendment:

The proposed transfer of 15 non-market units to the westerly side of the site was generally supported. The need to provide dirt sites for the non-market housing has generally improved opportunities for views, but more could be done in this regard. There could be opportunities to reduce the bulk of some of the buildings adjacent to the park to enhance views from the upper floors. It was also suggested that the southerly non-market building might take on a more linear configuration to improve the livability of units adjacent to the bridge.

There were no concerns about the increased tower heights, and the increased height of the northerly building gives it much more strength against the bridge, which is positive. The offset from the ramp is also a big improvement. One Panel member questioned whether the additional height might be distributed differently to improve both towers, noting the additional four storeys on Building J makes it very similar in height to Building K.

The application for Text Amendment was unanimously supported.

Rezoning Application:

One other suggestion related to the second part of the Text Amendment, is to reconsider the distribution of the density over buildings N and O to lessen the impact of the very strong height and symmetry of the market housing against the lower non-market housing immediately to the west. The building closest to the water (O) could stand to be appreciably higher. This would also require adjustment to the towers stepping up to the towers on the crescent to achieve a smoother

transition. General support for the other increases in building heights B J and G with one call for additional height distributed over buildings J and K.

The Panel unanimously supported this application. The very strong symmetry of the market housing was acknowledged, however, the panel cautioned that the resulting contrast between this and the now random nature of the non-market housing should be tempered by ensuring diversity in the design of the market housing. The integration of landscape and architecture was seen as a very positive aspect of the project. The mews were generally supported, with one recommendation to carefully consider the sight line at the terminus of the westerly mews.

The Panel did not support the right-in/right-out proposal for the Beach Avenue extension. There was support for extending the pedestrian and bicycle routes through but strong encouragement for normalizing the street pattern and making it a through street. Restricted access was seen as inappropriate for a high density neighbourhood such as this as it fails to integrate with the existing street system and connect the two adjacent neighbourhoods.

One Panel member expressed concern about the extension of the marina into the park, and questioned the need for framing with the southerly arrangement of trees, given the framing that already occurs at the upper end of the park.

Notwithstanding the Planner's explanation that the maximum height of the podium buildings around the crescent has been agreed to by Council and is unlikely to be revisited, the Panel felt very strongly that it remains a major consideration for the success of the urban design of this project. In relation to the very high towers the podium height as shown is an extremely weak urban design element. The Panel felt strongly that it would be unfortunate if this matter is not reconsidered. One member suggested the height should match the mature height (80') of proposed trees here.

The Panel looks forward to reviewing the design guidelines. Several members urged that they demonstrate sufficient flexibility in the massing and tower layouts so that it does not become necessary to forego density in order to achieve livability. This is also expected to relieve the strong symmetry of the scheme.

Finally, the Panel stressed that in a project of this scale, and given its proximity to Southeast False Creek, there needs to be a much greater response to sustainability issues. The Panel urged the incorporation of firm sustainability initiatives, including information on what might be appropriate for this site and how it can be accommodated.

Applicant's Response:

Mr. Hulbert said it is quite a significant project with many issues to be resolved. He noted the Panel has made a significant contribution to the project during its evolution and they will continue to try to be responsive.

2. **1138 Melville Street**
Address: 1138 Melville Street
DA: 403460
Use: Retail/office
Zoning: DD
Application Status: Complete
Architect: Architectura
Owner: Peterson Investment Group
Review: Second
Delegation: Alan Hartley, Jane Durante
Staff: Mike Kemble

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

Mike Kemble, Development Planner, presented this application, last reviewed by the Panel on August 26, 1998. The Panel did not support the application at that time. Mr. Kemble briefly reviewed the history of the site, which is on the south side of Melville Street between Bute and Thurlow Streets. The Panel's concerns with the previous submission included the proportions of the building, the tight separation with the adjacent building, the setback on the lane, and the architectural expression. The Development Planner reviewed the applicant's response, noting some significant changes have been made to the scheme. The Panel's advice is sought on the revised tower massing and character, response to neighbouring buildings and exterior finishes; podium level treatment along the base, the street interface and relationship to the podium of the neighbouring Orca building.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Alan Hartley, Architect, explained where the additional height has been distributed in the building, noting a shift of density has created greater opportunities to use daylight at midday at the lane side. He briefly reviewed the design rationale, and Jane Durante reviewed the landscape plan.

Panels Comments

Following a review of the models and posted drawings, the Panel commented as follows:

The Panel found the revisions to the project quite successful and unanimously supported this submission.

The materials and the lighter colour palette were generally supported, noting the expectation is that the spandrel glass will actually have a livelier appearance than shown on the model

The proposed siting of the tower was considered appropriate, and the Panel supported the additional height which it felt improved the overall mass of the tower, especially at the top. The reduction in the north-south dimension has improved the proportions and the building is now starting to respond better to its neighbours.

Some Panel members thought the cornice line was overstated and needed to be downplayed somewhat. Recommendations were also made to play down the vertical expression in terms of the contrast of materials, suggesting the change of colour and the grids on the east and west façades might actually be shortening the perception of the tower. There were several comments regarding the "super grid" on the sides of the tower. One suggestion was that a material change might help to soften its impact, and returning to a glass expression was another.

The Panel's main concern related to the frame and the front entrance to the building, and the somewhat uncomfortable condition at the entrance doors. Some Panel members thought the

previous submission was more complementary to the modernistic character of the upper portions of the tower. Other suggestions were to make changes to the frame, pulling it out towards the street and making it less one-dimensional. One comment was that it needs to be resolved with the architecture of the building itself. There were also concerns about its scale. As well, it was noted that the space in front of the building has lost a lot of the generosity of the previous scheme.

The landscaping was generally supported, with one comment that it might be simplified somewhat. The linkages through to provide mid block pedestrian routes are welcomed.

Applicant's Response:

Mr. Hartley agreed with the recommendation for a more generous setback at the entry, noting there may have been a misunderstanding of the Panel's previous comments.

3. ADDRESS: 3564-3580 West 41st Avenue

Address: 3564-3580 West 41st Avenue

DA: 403544

Use: Mixed

Zoning: C-2

Application Status: Complete

Architect: Ramsay Worden Arch.

Owner: VanCity Savings

Review: First

Delegation: Doug Ramsay

Staff: Anita Molaro

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-0)**Introduction:**

Anita Molaro, Development Planner, presented this application. She noted it is before the Panel as a result of Council's recent directive to seek the Panel's input on C-2 applications. Ms. Molaro briefly reviewed the site context. The proposal is for a mixed use development containing up to six CRU's and 23 residential units. The residential entry is off 41st Avenue. The roof form meets the 40 ft. maximum height requirement. The Panel's advice is sought on the architectural quality, form and massing, streetscape response, materials, including the rear elevation, and side property line finishes.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Doug Ramsay, Architect, had nothing to add to the planner's presentation.

Panel's Comments:

Following a review of the model and posted materials, the Panel commented as follows:

The Panel unanimously supported this application. There was strong support for the streetscape, the architectural quality, and the materials selection and handling. There were a few minor concerns.

Careful attention should be given to detailing the cornice to address long term weatherproofing. The Panel particularly liked the rich articulation on the 41st Avenue elevation. The streetscape character of the retail is very successful and will provide a very nice pedestrian environment. One Panel member questioned the panelization of the bays which seems somewhat out of character with the otherwise fairly crisp approach to the building. There was also a suggestion that the easterly end of the 41st Avenue façade might be further considered, noting the rhythm that is set up seems to be chopped off. The success of the retail will depend on its exposure from the street and the ability for commercial activities to flow out onto the sidewalk. In this respect, the Panel strongly suggested eliminating the planters which will offer much more flexibility for the retail units.

The Panel thought more attention should be given to the interior side walls, either in colour or variation of materials. They will be quite visible from the east and west on 41st Avenue in this mid block location.

The Panel strongly supported the lane treatment which is very sympathetic to the neighbouring residences. There were some concerns that the open nature of the courtyard with the retail units coming off it will have security problems and be vulnerable to vandalism. CPTED issues should be carefully considered in this area.

Overall, the Panel found this to be a very attractive scheme. It shows considerable improvement over some other C-2 proposal the Panel has seen in recent months. It responds well to the objective of the zoning which is to enhance a commercial strip and add urbanity and densification to commercial arterials.