

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: October 5, 2011

TIME: N/A

PLACE: N/A

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Robert Barnes
Helen Besharat
Gregory Borowski
James Cheng (Excused Item #1 & #2)
Jeff Corbett
Jane Durante
Alan Endall
Arno Matis (Excused Item #3)
Geoff McDonell (Excused Item #2)
Scott Romses
Norm Shearing
Alan Storey

REGRETS: Jim Huffman

RECORDING SECRETARY: Lorna Harvey

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1.	8440 Cambie Street
2.	8108-8150 Cambie Street
3.	2211 Cambie Street

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Romses 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:** 8440 Cambie Street (400 SW Marine Drive)
DE: 415005
Use: To develop a mixed use, transit oriented development comprised of two residential tower of 26 and 35 storeys, an office tower of 15 storeys, an 11 screen movie theatre, a three storey retail podium and five levels of underground parking. The project also includes the construction of two neighbourhood plaza and a ground oriented pedestrian mews.
Zoning: CD-1
Application Status: Complete
Review: Fourth
Architect: Perkins + Will Architects
Owner: PCI Group
Delegation: Peter Busby, Perkins + Will
 Ryan Bragg, Perkins + Will
 Bruce Hemstock, PWL Partnership
 Andy Croft, PCI Group
Staff: Anita Molaro

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (10-0)**Introduction:**

Anita Molaro, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a site at Marine Drive and Cambie Street. She noted that the site is to reflect the local character and context of the area, acknowledge its unique and historical connection to the Fraser River, industrial lands and the evolving context of a surrounding residential neighbourhood (north side of Marine Drive). Ms. Molaro reminded the Panel that they had reviewed the project in May and identified a number of areas needing improvement including the public realm, building massing, architectural expression and landscape design. Ms. Molaro described the proposal noting that a rental housing component (STIR) will be located within the podium of the residential tower. She stated that the residential tower will have a slim profile and small floor plates of less than 5,500 square feet. The separation between the two towers at the rezoning was just over 51 feet and this has been increased to 61 feet to address the privacy interface. The office/retail/theatre component has been re-massed to address some of the Panel's previous concerns to reduce the boxiness and increase its architectural distinction. Ms. Molaro also stated that Planning and Engineering staff have recognized that there needs to be some sidewalk expansion along the Cambie Street frontage. Staff are still working through the details of the specific design that will increase the sidewalk width. This would allow the applicant to expand the retail footprint under the guideway to front Cambie Street and to also provide an improved access down to the bicycle mobility center. Ms. Molaro noted that the Panel had seen the proposal in various formats before and that this was the first time the Panel was seeing the proposal at the DE stage. The Panel supported the proposal at the Rezoning stage in May 2011 and Council approved the rezoning in July 2011. She added that the applicant is proposing LEED™ gold.

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

Has the proposal adequately address the rezoning conditions on the form of development through its detail design, and what other improvements should be considered, if any:

- within the parameters of the public realm, pedestrian connectivity, legibility and public open space treatments.
- within the parameters of building mass and scale (office), building relationship (residential towers), and transition into a human scale pedestrian focused environment.
- within the parameter of the overall architectural expression and excellence given the prominence of this site and demonstration of high quality sustainable building practice towards announcing Vancouver civic identity.
- within the parameters related to secondary architectural elements including elevators, stairs bridges and treatment of storefront, weather protection, signage and lighting systems and material treatments.
- within the parameters of integration, interface and treatment of the existing transit station and the podium structure.
- landscape treatments throughout including:
 - north plaza, pedestrian mews and upper and lower south plazas.
 - roof treatments, including residential and office access and usability.

Ms. Molaro took questions from the Panel.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Peter Busby, Architect, further described the proposal noting the office building's response to solar issues from the southwest sun. He noted that there has been a lot of work done on the separation between the residential towers and the retail street front. In terms of sustainability, the project will be LEED™ Gold and will also provide a District Energy System for the entire node using geo exchange, heat pumps and a water circulation system that will be energy efficient. He stated that they have considered all the materials in the building. He added that there has been a fair bit invested in the design and passive response of the building's envelope.

Ryan Bragg, Architect, stated that the additional sidewalk area that they achieved with Engineering and Planning is an additional eight feet in the public realm, with the hope that they can increase that amount further with future negotiations with them. This will help them to activate the street front. Mr. Bragg described the architecture noting that the office tower has been broken down into three volumes and the facades have been narrowed. The residential towers have a central volume with two other flanking volumes, and echo the language of the office building. There will be an accent of colour running through the residential building and they also have an industrial reference of the area, such as in the proposed steel frame for the storefronts at grade.

Bruce Hemstock, Landscape Architect, described the plans for the public realm noting that they wanted to create layers of landscaping on some specific themes: transportation, industrial, Fraser River, Simon Fraser and the First Nations. They also wanted to make sure that the open spaces fronting Marine Drive can be seen by the community and are welcoming. The plaza is a great size for community gathering with a connection to the Canada Line. On the other side of the plaza is a boardwalk that helps to animate the edge of the plaza. They will be expressing the Fraser River with a water feature. The plaza will contain a number of areas for seating. Mr. Hemstock described the materials noting the use of basalt and concrete along with the plant material.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:

- Design development to improve the connection to the Canada Line;
- Design development to the public realm along Marine Drive and Cambie Street;
- Consider moving the children's play area;
- Consider expanding the weather protection on the storefronts.

Related Commentary:

The Panel supported the proposal and thought there were many positive improvements since the last review.

The Panel commended the applicant for a comprehensive submission. They agreed that it was an important project and they found it easy to understand the changes that had been made since the last review. The Panel liked the improvement along Cambie Street with the addition of the extra eight feet. They also supported the changes to the Canada Line connection and interface, as well as the increased and improved separation between the residential towers. A couple of Panel members thought the connection to the Canada Line could be improved as it still seemed pinched.

The Panel had some concerns with the public realm landscaping and thought it could be softened more with street trees. As well, they thought there were more opportunities that could be taken with the public realm along Marine Drive and Cambie Street frontages. One Panel member thought there was too many trees on the edge of the bus loop and suggested they be moved up into the site.

Some Panel members had some concerns regarding the convex shape of the storefronts. While some of the Panel thought it might be a problem, others supported the shape and thought people who live in the community or use the site on a daily base wouldn't have any issues in locating the stores.

Several Panel members thought the children's play area might need to be relocated in order to receive more sunlight. As well, several Panel members mentioned that there could be more development of the clear storey scale as they thought it seemed out of place with the rest of the articulation and scale of the project.

The Panel liked the development of the office tower and thought it had been greatly improved. However a couple of Panel members thought it could be more developed in order to relate better to the articulation and language of the residential towers. As well several Panel members thought the canopy on the high-movement storefront side could be expanded for better weather protection.

Applicant's Response:

Mr. Busby said he appreciated the thoroughness of the Panel's comments.

2.	Address:	8108 - 8150 Cambie Street
	DE:	N/A
	Use:	The application proposes a mixed use development project with 446 market units, 59 Rental units under the STIR program, 14 “Choice of use” units (residential or commercial) and 10,000 square feet of retail/commercial space. The built form is two towers of 31 storeys and 24 storeys respectively on a four storey podium base. The application is part of the Marine Landing area in the Cambie Corridor Plan.
	Zoning:	C-1 to CD-1
	Application Status:	Rezoning
	Review:	First
	Architect:	James KM Cheng Architects
	Owner:	Intracorp
	Delegation:	James Cheng, James KM Cheng, Architects Terry Mott, James KM Cheng, Architects Jake McEwen, Intracorp
	Staff:	Anita Molaro and Dwayne Drobot

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (9-0)

Introduction:

Dwayne Drobot, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal and noted that the site is located at the northeast corner of Cambie Street and Marine Drive and includes the full frontage along Cambie Street between Marine Drive and West 64th Avenue. The policy is the Cambie Corridor Plan which was approved by Council in May 2011. Mr. Drobot reviewed the policy and mentioned that they expected to see two towers on the site. He explained some of the principles including that a corner plaza was planned for Cambie Street and Marine Drive as well as retail units and a podium on the southern part of the site. The site is adjacent to the Canada Line guideway.

Anita Molaro, Development Planner, explained to the Panel that at the last review she handed out the Cambie Corridor principles and they would be referencing them in this review. She added that the Panel has seen variation on the proposal before as part of the discussion around the Cambie Corridor and that their commentary had informed the urban design principles that were adopted within the Cambie Corridor Plan which received approval from Council. Ms. Molaro described the context and proposed development in the area.

The site is fronting onto Cambie Street which extends to West 64th Avenue, and has the Canada Line Portal immediately adjacent the site. The proposal has two towers; one at 285 feet and the other at 235 feet. The project also includes a 6-storey podium, and a 4-6-storey podium that will include rental housing on the upper floors with 2-storey residential units on the lower floors that are proposed to be adaptable live-work units facing both the lane mews and Cambie Street. The retail area will be a single storey component at the base of the Marine Drive tower that wraps the corner facing onto Cambie Street, but does not extend to the open spaces in front of the live work units. At the northerly end of the site a small boutique retail unit is proposed. The project is proposing LEED™ Silver which was the requirement at the time that application was submitted to the City. Ms. Molaro noted that the fire-lane access alongside the Canada Line guideway is no longer a priority once the consolidation of the site occurs, but will be re-programmed as an off-street bike lane and sidewalk.

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

- the scale of the commercial podium at the base of the Marine Drive tower, and what measures are needed to connect this commercial activity with the northerly retail component
- what measures are needed to improve and support the viability of the northerly retail unit
- should more active uses be incorporated along the Cambie Street frontage to better serve the local community
- the built form and interface relationship of the podium (residential live-work units) to both pedestrian frontages (Cambie Street and lane),
 - Cambie Street: given the proposed landscape setback and treatments and the measures needed to ensure that this frontage actively engages the pedestrian
 - the lane mews: strategy and treatments of the lane and its interface in providing access for supporting the retail and live-work activities on the site
- measures that should be considered to ensure the proposed open space along Cambie street is active, usable, adaptable and relevant to the residents of the site and to the community
- Does the panel support the rezoning and subsequent form of development including taking into consideration the Cambie Corridor Design Principles (refer to handout on principles) including:
 - building siting, tower form and massing, and increase in density(5.72 FSR residential 5.58 plus 0.14 retail) and height (285 feet and 235 feet)
 - distribution of uses (retail and residential)
 - neighbourliness including shadow and view impacts
 - LEED™ Silver strategies

Ms. Molaro and Mr. Drobot took questions from the panel.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

James Cheng, Architect, further described the proposal noting that the lane was designed as a mews. The property has been set back five feet for a rain garden and they are hoping that when the site next door is developed they will do the same and will make the lane a pedestrian mews. Mr. Cheng mentioned that the penetration open space network through the site was aligned with the existing streets. The creation for the north and south plazas was important as a place for people to pause before they cross the street. He added that the heart of Marpole is Granville Street where most of the commercial activity will be concentrated. Their concern was that having too much retail on the site would not be viable due to the fact that it doesn't front a main street and there is a huge concentration of retail planned for the site across the street next to the Canada Line Station. The neighbours said they would like to see a coffee shop on the site and as a result the plaza on the south side was planned to take advantage of the sun with an outdoor seating area in front of the retail. At the ground plane of the lowrise podium, the units are designed as live/work spaces for work at home/artists to provide another option to the commercial/retail on the site. Regarding sustainability, Mr. Cheng noted that they are connecting to the district energy that is being proposed for the area. The building will respond to the different orientations and as well there are green roofs planned for the lower roofs with community gardens for the rental residents. A rainwater retention tank is also proposed to collect water for irrigation. Mr. Cheng described the landscape plans for the site, noting that public art is proposed for the south plaza and as well a public art walkway is planned along the west side of the site. The idea is to create a multi-use outdoor space along this edge that is in keeping with the character of the Cambie Corridor Heritage Boulevard. The lane mews will have boulevard trees with rain gardens and then along the east/west there will be more water features that connect mid block. The roof areas will be community gardens with water retention. Along the south plaza will be hardscape with sculptures and some street trees to reduce the noise and visual impact from the traffic.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:

- Design development to improve the edge along the Cambie Street frontage;
- Consider rethinking the amount of commercial/retail spaces on the site;
- Consider strengthening the podium along Marine Drive including better utilizing the amenity space

Related Commentary:

The Panel supported the proposal and thought the use, tower form, massing and height were all consistent with the Cambie Corridor Plan.

The Panel thought the applicant needed to continue working to improve the retail, live/work and art pathway along the Cambie Street edge, as they had some concerns regarding the design. Some Panel members thought that the design should be stronger, while other thought it could have a more passive, residential expression on the street. The Panel found it hard to believe that the retail at the south plaza would be viable considering it will be adjacent to the large commercial/retail across the street.

Some of the Panel members thought the retail on the north plaza might be viable considering there are lots of residential neighbourhoods all across the city with similar sized 'pavilions' of commercial activity. Several Panel members suggested it could be a small coffee shop or other community amenity. They also suggested that the applicant look further at developing the live/work, and push the idea further to play up the more urban side of the units along the Cambie edge with more quiet backyard spaces along the lane mews to make the public realm interface more inviting.

Several Panel members suggested the applicant consider working further with the community to offer more community or public spaces within the development. They liked the idea of the gallery space and thought it would strengthen the public art component of the project. Another Panel member thought the live/work units should be flexible and perhaps used for some other purpose.

Panel members also discussed the podium level adjacent to Marine Drive. One Panel member suggested strengthening the podium especially in relation to the development across the Street (PCI Development at 8440 Cambie Street).

The Panel supported the landscape plans and liked the treatment on the lane and thought creating a mews was an appropriate move.

Regarding sustainability, a couple of Panel members thought the applicant should take the development to the next level and achieve LEED™ Gold and as well that the green design should be expressed more in the architecture.

Applicant's Response:

Mr. Cheng thanked the Panel for some great comments. He agreed that some work was still needed to be done with the public spaces on the Cambie Street side of the site and promised to continue working on the design.

3.	Address:	2211 Cambie Street
	DE:	415022
	Use:	To construct a 6-storey mixed use building, with two levels of underground parking
	Zoning:	C-3A
	Application Status:	Complete
	Review:	First
	Architect:	Iconstrux Architect Ltd.
	Owner:	Port Capital Group
		Arno Matis, Iconstrux Architects Ltd.
	Delegation:	Julian Pattison, Considered Design Inc. Tobi Reys, Port Capital Group
	Staff:	Ann McLean

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (9-0)

Introduction:

Ann McLean, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a site located at the southwest corner of Cambie Street and West 6th Avenue, at the south foot of the Cambie Street Bridge. She explained that the lot is an irregular shape, with an angled and curving frontage on Cambie Street. The portion on West 6th Avenue will be immediately adjacent to the one-way access from West 2nd Avenue to Cambie Street. The west side of the property has lane access. Ms. McLean described the context for the area noting that the area has mostly mixed-use zoning. The proposal is for a 6-storey building over two levels of underground parking. There will be one or two retail units at grade with fifteen residential units above. Parking for the commercial units will be at grade off the lane with the residential parking underground and accessed by a car lift. The entry for the residential units will be from Cambie Street at the south end of the site. Two entries for the retail units are planned with one off Cambie Street and the other from West 6th Avenue. Ms. McLean stated that the Guideline recommendations influence building height in the area and that the height should step down as the building descends the slope to allow for a widening of the view as the bridge is approached. As well new building in this area should not block views to City Hall from downtown and the bridges. The Guidelines recommend a maximum height of 6-storeys and Ms. McLean remarked that the building will not impede existing views. She also explained that setbacks are not required on front of the building but that on the lane, the residential portion of the building must be set back twenty-five feet from the centerline of the lane. However, a deck will project into this setback to provide screening of the at grade parking and to provide a landscaped buffer for the residents. Ms. McLean added that while it is not required for the development permit, the applicant will be pursuing LEED™ Gold.

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

- Discretionary Earnings: Has this project earned the discretionary density 3.0 FSR (plus an additional 10% for a total of 3.3 FSR) and a height increase from 30.2 ft to approximately 70 feet?
- Urban Form: Does the building fit into the overall emerging pattern of development along the Cambie Corridor? Given the small site, slope and corner condition, is this a supportable response?
- Architectural Expression: Are the proposed materials, detailing and expression suitable?

Ms. McLean took questions from the Panel.

Applicant's Introductory Comments:

Arno Matis, Architect, further described the proposal noting that it is a high profile site with some challenges due to its small size and adjacency to the underground Canada Line. He explained that they wanted to look at the urban design condition with the desire to move pedestrians from the Canada Line Station up and onto Cambie St. He said they looked at the history of the site on False Creek and realized that at one time the property would have been on the waterfront. They referred to the history of the area and as well picked up the vocabulary of the Cambie Street Bridge. Since there is a lot of traffic moving past the site they also wanted to bring that movement energy metaphorically into the design of the building by creating a spiral expression. Mr. Matis described the materials noting that it would be mostly a concrete and streamline glass building. Mr. Matis described the sustainability strategy noting that the stair core will have glass on the west side of the building to make it more useable for the residents. The passive solar approach was to extend out the floor slabs to allow for shading. He noted that there is a courtyard for the penthouse on the sixth level which has a small tree. Mr. Matis added that they are considering a public art component and the owner has talked to Tamar Frank about a lighting display on the building.

Julian Pattison, Landscape Architect, further described the landscape plans noting they wanted to integrate the site with the street trees along West 2nd Avenue. Since the laneway is visible from West 2nd Avenue, they will be using high quality materials. They will have three green roofs on the building including an intensive green roof above the podium level which is more of a garden space for the units. The roof top will be an extensive green roof.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:

There were no substantial aspects that needed improvement

Related Commentary:

The Panel supported the proposal and thought it was an interesting piece of architecture.

The Panel agreed that the applicant was to be commended as well as the client for a well crafted project. They felt the applicant had earned the density and supported the height. They also felt it would fit into the emerging pattern on the Cambie Corridor, as well as stand out as a distinct gateway building to the Cambie corridor.

Although the Panel liked the form they thought the construction detailing and how it was built would be critical to the success of the project. A number of the Panel members were concerned with the potential for water streaks on the white concrete, and stressed the importance of careful detailing.

One Panel member suggested the balcony guard elements be another material rather than concrete with another Panel member suggesting they should be discrete. Although the Panel supported the landscape plans, one Panel member was concerned with getting access to the 5th floor for maintenance.

The Panel supported the sustainability strategy, with one Panel member suggested the applicant take advantage of the passive design to minimize the technology (air conditioning) on the building. Another Panel member thought there could be some structural challenges with the vastly offset core.

Applicant's Response:

Mr. Matis thanked the Panel for their comments. Mr. Reys said they were looking forward to starting the project.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.