

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: October 7, 2009

TIME: 4.00 pm

PLACE: Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

PRESENT: MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:
Gerry Eckford
Jane Durante
David Godin
Bruce Haden
Vladimir Mikler
Mark Ostry, Chair
Maurice Pez
Douglas Watts

REGRETS:
Martin Nielsen
Richard Henry
Oliver Lang
Steve McFarlane

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

| ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. | 1372 Seymour Street |
| 2. | 4880 Main Street |

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Ostry called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. Mr. Eckford, who attended the Development Permit Board on Monday, gave an overview of the applications that were presented. The meeting considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. Address: | 1372 Seymour Street |
| DE: | Rezoning |
| Description: | construct an additional 6 storeys of residential and add an increase in building height. |
| Zoning: | DD |
| Application Status: | Complete |
| Review: | Third (second was complete) |
| Owner: | Onni Development (Pacific Street) |
| Architect: | Hotson Bakker Boniface Haden |
| Delegation: | Alan Boniface, Hotson Bakker Boniface Haden Brady Dunlop, Hotson Bakker Boniface Haden David Stoyko, Sharp & Diamond Beau Jarvis, Onni Group |
| Staff: | Ian Cooper/Anita Molaro |

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-0)

- **Introduction:** Ian Cooper, Rezoning Planner, noted that the Panel had reviewed the application before as a DP. The applicant has applied for a rezoning from DD (Downtown District) to CD-1 (Comprehensive Development) and is requesting an addition of six floors to the tower resulting in a maximum height of 405 feet to the top of the elevator core (392 feet to the top of the parapet). Mr. Cooper also noted that there will be an increase in the FSR from 7.2 to 7.78. There are no land use issues and the residential component, childcare society and childcare facility are permitted under the DD zoning. Mr. Cooper noted that the MetroCore policies permit height increases up to view cones through rezoning to help generate community amenities. Extra community amenities generated through the rezoning including a cash contribution for heritage conservation and the fit-out of the multi-use space for the Vancouver Society of Childcare Centres when only a shell was to be provided previously.
- Anita Molaro, Development Planner, described the history of the application noting that originally the height of the tower was 300 ft which had been increased through the DE process to 336 ft. The DE was approved by the Development Permit Board on July 27th subject to a number of design refinements. The applicant has decided to apply for a rezoning to further increase the height up to the underside of the view cone under the downtown capacity policy where a public benefit is offered, such as being a receiver site for transferred heritage density. Other changes from the approved DE proposal, in this rezoning proposal is a slight increase in the floor plate on levels eleven through nineteen from 6,500 square feet to 6,630 square feet. As well, a reduction of two floors off the podium massing adjacent to the lane is proposed. Ms. Molaro noted that policy work is under way as to whether or not to adjust/modify the view cone policy. She added the UDP will be having a workshop on the view cone issue in an upcoming session.

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

- Does the Panel support the additional tower height and subsequent density as proposed within the context of the Downtown Domed Skyline and the draft Granville Bridge gateway concept?
- Comments on the proposed tower with respect to its resolution as a skyline feature, and the potential insertion of the extended glazed element insertion into the view cone.
- Any other comments the Panel may have:
 - shadow impacts
 - landscaping treatments
 - material treatments

Mr. Cooper and Ms. Molaro took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Alan Boniface, Architect, further described the proposal noting that they had moved more area up to the top of the tower from the podium. They have removed two floors from the podium and added six floors to the tower. He also noted that some of the design considerations from the Panel have not been incorporated into the podium as they are awaiting the rezoning decision.

Brady Dunlop, Architect, noted that the landscaping hasn't been touched other than some minor improvements with the relationship to the architecture.

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 supported the proposal.

The Panel supported the additional height on the tower and thought it made for a more elegant building and that any shadow impacts would be minor. They also thought the glassy element on the roof was a minor intrusion into the skyline although a couple of Panel members were not convinced with the proposed height of the element. A couple of Panel members thought the corner at Pacific Boulevard and the lane needed some improvement but thought reducing the height of the podium made it more successful. One Panel member suggested improving the quality of the stairs noting that they could be a primary access for the residents on levels 3 and lower.

One Panel member was concerned with the featured green wall that it might grow moss rather than plantings. The Panel thought the landscape treatment was supportable and was a high quality response in terms of the hard and soft surfaces. One Panel member had some concerns with the water elements noting that it would be in shade most of the time.

Regarding the LEED™ Gold, one Panel member noted that in order to achieve this performance the project needs to achieve many points on the energy side and was concerned that with the amount of glazing that might be hard to achieve.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Boniface thanked the Panel for their comments stating they would be useful as they move forward with the project.

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 2. Address: | 4880 Main Street |
| DE: | 412116 |
| Description: | To construct a 4-storey mixed-use retail/residential building with 2 levels of underground parking. |
| Zoning: | C-2 |
| Application Status: | Complete |
| Review: | First |
| Owner: | Staburn Group |
| Architect: | Rostich Hemphill & Associates |
| Delegation: | Keith Hemphill, Rostich Hemphill & Associates Jeff Wren, Staburn Group |
| Staff: | Bob Adair |

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (4-3)

- **Introduction:** Bob Adair, Development Planner, noted that the proposal was on the only developable site on the east side of the block on Main Street with a partially dedicated lane to the east. The proposal will have commercial at grade with three storeys of residential above with underground parking and loading at grade off East 33rd Avenue. The main pedestrian entry lobby will be off East 33rd Avenue. The proposed materials include an architectural concrete base with a combination of brick and stucco above. A cultured stone accent area has been proposed to mark the residential entry area. On the north elevation, the applicant has included balconies on the northwest corner and pulled the top floor unit back from the side. The site has some unique challenges including lane access and the design challenges of an exposed north elevation that will likely remain exposed for many years into the future. There are also some FSR challenges with a 10 foot lane dedication at the rear and the required 7 foot setback along East 33rd Avenue. The site qualifies for the full FSR based on the existing lot size, but the challenge is to try to locate that floor space on a reduced allowable footprint. To assist in the FSR challenge, staff have agreed to some minor setback relaxations to help achieve a reasonable level of development. The applicant has pulled back the top floor on the northwest corner to improve the appearance from the north.

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

- General comments on the relative amounts of concrete, brick, and stucco, and their arrangement on the façade.
- More specific comments on the north and south elevations

Mr. Adair took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Keith Hemphill, Architect, noted that they struggled with the planning for a Class B loading truck to be able to turn around in the lane. They opened up a portion of the building so that there is visual access to reduce CPTED issues in the lane. They also did some landscaping to the walls and for some screening. Mr. Hemphill noted that the setbacks created a challenge to fit the density onto the site. In C-2 zoning there is a requirement to have a concrete firewall adjacent to the neighbouring site (school). They tried to soften the wall by reworking the unit plans by adding a balcony on the corner to get a more interesting shape on the edge of the building. Mr. Hemphill noted that how they pattern the wall, what they do with colors, and how they deal with the edges will be important. The upper floor is setback two feet on the front portion of the building with some enclosed balconies to add rhythm to the façade. There is currently one

commercial tenant however there is potential in the new building for smaller CRUs. Mr. Hemphill noted that there isn't a lot of landscaping however, the east side terrace will have some greenery to soften the wall and the trees on the lane will be retained. The upper decks will have landscaping for privacy screens.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Consider simplifying the materials;
 - Design development to the corner entry;
 - Design development to the 4th level;
 - Design development to the fire wall;
 - Continue the landscaping on East 33rd Avenue;
 - Consider other sustainable measures.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel marginally supported the proposal and thought it was a good straight forward C-2 project.

The Panel thought the residential entry was well handled but thought the East 33rd Avenue elevation material could be simplified. The Panel thought the 45 degree angle for the corner entry didn't work and thought it eroded the architectural expression at the street. They also suggested that some consideration be given for sidewalk signage.

Several Panel members suggested the 4th level units should be elevated in importance as penthouse suites with the use of better quality materials and design. Some Panel members suggested that the 4th floor not be set back from the main building massing to better relate to the Main Street building typology. Some of the Panel members thought the façade should be more playful in order to fit better with the spirit of Main Street. A couple of Panel members said they would like to see brick on the east elevation especially on the first two floors as way to acknowledge the heritage buildings along Main Street.

Several Panel members suggested the applicant work with the school to come up with a solution to the blank fire wall. The Panel thought the concrete block as not good enough with one Panel member suggested the block could be over-clad. Another Panel member suggested having a contest for the children to paint the wall. They thought the wall needed to be vibrant as it is likely to be there for some time into the future. Another Panel member asked if was possible to take the setback down two floors on the north wall. This would make a difference and would soften the expression for both the neighbours and pedestrians.

A couple of Panel members suggested continuing the landscaping along East 33rd Avenue to define the base of the building and to separate the residential from the commercial. There was some concern regarding the planters on the deck as they aren't accessible for watering and maintenance and will tend to look abandoned over time. Several Panel members thought there needed to be access to the terraces to insure that they will be well kept. One Panel member suggested adding a couple of trees on the lane to soften the view.

One Panel member thought the applicant should consider the long term performance of the envelope. The glazing to wall ratio was well handled but there are other sustainability initiatives that could be included. It was suggested that there is an opportunity to combine the retail with the residential in order to use the energy being rejected from heating the commercial. Also, it was suggested the plumbing could be clustered for the kitchens and bathrooms to reduce some of the construction costs.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Hemphill thanked the Panel for their comments. He stated that they would strive to incorporate their comments to improve the project. He agreed that the landscaping could be improved as well as the north wall. He added that there are some constraints on the site which include the lane dedication and setbacks. He also agreed that working with the school on design development for the wall was a good idea.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m.