

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** September 28, 2005

**TIME:** 4.00 pm

**PLACE:** Committee Room No. 1, City Hall

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:  
Alan Endall, Chair  
Nigel Baldwin  
Robert Barnes  
Shahla Bozorgzadeh  
James Cheng  
Marta Farevaag  
Ronald Lea  
Margot Long  
C.C. Yao

**REGRETS:** Larry Adams  
Edward Smith  
Peter Wreglesworth

**RECORDING  
SECRETARY:** Debbie Kempton

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ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1323 Barclay Street
2.	1055 Richards Street
3.	525 West Broadway Avenue

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**BUSINESS MEETING**

Chair Endall called the meeting to order at

1. Address: 1323 Barclay Street  
DE: 409286  
Use: Residential (4-storeys)  
Zoning: RM-5  
Application Status: Complete  
Architect: Matthew Cheng  
Owner: Kallista Properties  
Review: Second  
Delegation: Matthew Cheng  
Staff: Bob Adair

**EVALUATION: NON-SUPPORT (8-0)**

- **Introduction:** Bob Adair, Development Planner, introduced this application. Mr. Adair noted that this is a revised submission after the original submission received non-support from the Panel on June 22, 2005. At that time the main issues that the Panel identified were the streetscape and landscaping.

Mr. Adair said that the Applicant has addressed those issues. The slab has been lowered in the front yard with a minimum of 2.5 ft. of soil to enable planting in the front street. The Applicant has made an element out of the balcony and porch structure below and expression of the balconies has been taken into the expression of the building. As well, Mr. Adair noted that identification of individual unit entries has been achieved and the scale and visibility of the main entrance was addressed. The stairs have been flipped from the original submission and now provide a much more direct connection to the elevator as well as a more spacious lobby. The main entry to the building is identified by means of a trellis structure and staff want the Panel's opinion on that.

Additional screening for ramp has been proposed. The exit stairs from the parking garage turn into the common courtyard in the back for more security and there are some raised planters and landscaping proposed at the lane.

The areas in which advice of the Panel are sought include:

- Expression of entries as seen from the street for both the side entries and the street fronting units. Comment on whether the trellising effect is the best way to handle the side yard entry.
  - Overall aesthetic of the building, materials and expression.
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Matthew Cheng, Applicant, did not have any comments for the Panel.
  - **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
    - further design development to better define and strengthen the entry situation to the building including consideration of a more hierarchical expression to the primary public entry, private entries to individual units, and exit routes, etc;

- consider a stronger landscape edge and possibly raising and gating the private yards of units fronting the street;
- design development to strengthen and define the primary entrance on the east side yard to achieve a stronger differentiation from other entrances.

- **Related Commentary:**

The Panel unanimously did not support this application. The panel felt that the overall expression is still too ambiguous and further simplification would be warranted along with careful selection of materials and colors.

Several Panel members suggested careful consideration of the proposed window patterning, particularly as it applies to livability, natural light and day light between living and bedroom areas.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Cheng said that there are a lot of comments from the Panel that he will take into consideration.

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2. Address: 1055 Richards Street  
DE: 409696  
Use: Residential (18-storeys)  
Zoning: DD  
Application Status: Complete  
Architect: Rafii Architects  
Owner: Cressey Richards Development Ltd.  
Review: First  
Delegation: Foad Rafii, James Patillo, Peter Kreuk  
Staff: Mary Beth Rondeau
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#### EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-0)

- **Introduction:** Mary Beth Rondeau, Development Planner, introduced this complete application. Ms. Rondeau reviewed the site context in relation to surrounding towers and explained that this block is close to being finished which makes tower placement a particular consideration.

The proposal is for 18 storeys of all residential use on a site that is constrained by a 165 ft. view cone. There will be a typical setback, second row of trees and townhouses in relation to the street as per the Guidelines. A small drop off area is proposed and parking access off of the lane. There will be an opportunity for landscaping off of the lane, which staff are always looking for. The spaces facing the lane will be for amenity uses to keep the residential units off of the lane.

The tower floor plate in this proposal is approximately 6,300 sq. ft. which is below the suggested maximum of 6,500 sq. ft. in the Guidelines. The tower width however, is proposed at 97 ft. and the absolute maximum tower width in the Guidelines is 90 ft. Noting that this site is constrained by the view cone making it challenging to achieve the massing on this site.

Areas in which the advice of the Panel is sought include:

- comments on the proposed tower width of 97 ft. given that it exceeds the absolute maximum of 90 ft in the Guidelines;
  - comments on the symmetrical approach to massing overall and resolution of the tower;
  - comments on the treatment of semi private open space as well as the symmetrical treatment of street wall podiums;
  - comments on the materials at street level and the appropriateness of a softer, fine grain material and increase of masonry up to the podium.
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Foad Rafii, Rafii Architects Inc., noted that the extra length of the tower is an attempt to get the allowable 5 FSR without having to go for an extra 10 percent of heritage density. The design has tried to incorporate bigger slots to reduce the apparent tower width. Peter Kreuk, Landscape Architect, reviewed the landscape plan. The applicant team responded to questions from the Panel.
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- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**

- further design development to the overall treatment of roof areas on the 4<sup>th</sup> level including clear differentiation of the type of uses intended;
- better interface of the north wall to the existing adjacent townhouses;
- consider lightening the overall exterior expression by using more of the lighter wheat tones and less of the predominant darker brown color;
- consider introducing more textured and lighter coloured materials at the street levels and possibly utilizing more of the masonry cladding on the 4 storey podium.

- **Related Commentary:**

The Panel unanimously supported this application and generally found it to be well planned. Some members of the panel would like to see further refinement of the heavy expression to the top of the tower and noted that the stairs on top appeared "tacked on". The majority of panel members supported the extra tower width of 97 ft. given the site constraints and the fact that the 90 ft. tower width is just a guideline. There was also a majority of support for the symmetrical design although a few Panel members commented that there could be some deviation from the symmetry at the street wall podium adjacent to the existing townhouses. Further refinement to break up the massing at the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> level was also suggested by some Panel members.

The rationale for having the amenity spaces at grade was acknowledged; however several Panel members were concerned that the spaces may not receive as much use as they would if the indoor and outdoor amenities were better related. One Panel member asked the applicant to consider creating an opportunity for children to play in one of the proposed outdoor amenity spaces.

Several Panel members expressed concerns about the proposed balconies with one Panel member commenting that the balconies are visually interesting but they don't feel protected. Another Panel member suggested taking the outer balconies around to the side of the building to soften the look of the tower.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Rafii thanked the Panel for their positive comments and said that he will respond to the Panel comments and try to achieve as many of the items identified as possible. Mr. Rafii plans to add more elements to the roof top and improve the programming of those spaces.

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3. Address:	525 West Broadway
DE:	408752
Use:	Mixed
Zoning:	C-3A (3-storays, 41 units)
Application Status:	Complete after Preliminary
Architect:	Busby/Perkins/Will
Owner:	PCI Holdings Corporation
Review:	First
Delegation:	Peter Busby, Gerry Eckford, David Dove
Staff:	Mary Beth Rondeau

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#### EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-0)

- **Introduction:** Mary Beth Rondeau, Development Planner, presented this complete after preliminary application. Ms. Rondeau noted that this is an important site at the intersection of Cambie Street and Broadway. This site is the location of a significant transit interchange adjacent to the future RAV line which will run down Cambie Street, as well as the future millennium line extension under Broadway.

This proposal is very similar if not the same as the preliminary development application in terms of use. This is a large site with 3 streets and no lane access. In terms of height, there are many view cones and view corridors on this site so where you would expect to see significant height at such an important corner it is not possible because of the view cones.

A change from the preliminary development application is the orientation of the upper massing from east/west type shapes to a more desired north/south massing which is closer to C-3A zoning intent to allow light and views through from the north to the south. Beyond that we are looking at significant design development and refinement to the building. One condition that came out of the preliminary process was that the street interface is important and the slope on Cambie Street, as well as all of the big retail should be looked at carefully. The applicant has gotten the proposal down to 2 driveway entrances with all vehicular access coming off of West 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue. There will be glass display panels along Cambie Street and the applicant has worked hard to ensure that those will be animated. With respect to slopes on the site, the grade changes have been creatively addressed.

There are a couple of issues on Broadway such as the treatment at the corner with the slope. As you move into the site the slopes become such that stairs are required. We are not looking for a big open space just a really good street interface and resolution.

There is a significant setback area proposed on the street outside of London Drugs which totals 40 ft. from the curb to the front of the store. Staff are concerned about how well that space will function when the retail is closed.

Ms. Rondeau summarized the comments from the Development Permit Board at the preliminary development application review relating that the Board generally thought that the street wall presence was too strong and there were view issues related to the proposed massing.

Areas in which the advice of the Panel is sought include:

- comments on the street interface at the Cambie Street and Broadway corner as well as the issue of the stairs;
- comments on the proposed setback on Broadway;
- **Applicant's Opening Comments:** Peter Busby, Busby Perkins & Will Architects, briefly reviewed the scheme noting that they have separated the building from the north to the south in response to the preliminary development application comments. The view opportunities have focused on the views out and maximizing the distance between buildings.

Mr. Busby stated that the entire project uses high quality materials with the idea of creating a flowing horizontal pedestrian scale for the building. The flush, no hands glazing coming out of the solid dark plate at the Cambie Street and West 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue elevations will really showcase what is in the building.

With respect to the proposed setback issue, Mr. Busby stated that the applicant team feels strongly that it works with the anticipated crowds for this high traffic area. He also notes that continuous rain protection will be provided. In terms of signage, there will be graphic designers working on a signage package as this application moves forward.

A canopy structure is proposed that includes glass over top and underneath will have shaved wooden structures to form tree like structures that will be like pieces of sculpture. These wooden structures also support other canopy structures and serve to soften the look.

A green roof is being proposed with water collected on the roof and absorbed, dispersed and used on site. The green strategy on this project is at the developers lead with a commitment to pursue LEEDS certification, possibly with a silver certification. A commitment has also been made to use organic finishes, planting and green roofs.

Gerry Eckford, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans and noted that he supports the applicant team's notion that the setbacks can be wider to accommodate the transit, commercial and restaurant users.

The applicant team responded to the Panel's questions.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - consider widening the proposed stairs at the Royal Bank/Broadway corner;
  - give careful consideration to lighting and signage as the design develops;
  - suggestion to consider adjustments to the residential plan form to enhance view potential and minimize overlook issues to adjacent buildings;
  - recommendation to strengthen the identification and prominence of the RAV station as design development progress and discussions continue with RAV staff;
  - recommendation to provide a better separation between the residential entry and parking entry;

- RAV entrance is recessed and needs a stronger identity.

- **Related Commentary:**

The Panel unanimously supported this application with some lighting concerns with respect to the proposed 40 ft. setback from the curb to the front of London Drugs. In general, the Panel found this complex program to be well resolved and well presented. It was felt that this project will set a new standard for development on Broadway; especially with the proposed 2 storey animation to the street. One Panel member stated that London drugs windows are notoriously opaque and asked the applicant to ensure that the windows are transparent and do not end up covered up.

One Panel member stated that because this is such an important corner, as a pilot project, the City should consider allowing the design team to work all the way to the corner and not be sited by the Engineering Department. Another Panel member stressed the importance of considering weather protection for people as they move from the buses to the RAV station.

There was a general consensus that the proposed streetscape is well handled and that the landscape is well integrated. It was suggested by a Panel member to consider planting at the curb where there isn't parking or bus stops; such as the use of boxwood hedge on Denman Street.

**Applicant's Response:** Mr. Busby thanked the Panel for their strong support and said that he has been given some great ideas.