

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** September 8, 2010

**TIME:** 4.00 pm

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

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:  
Bruce Haden (Chair)  
Robert Barnes  
Jeff Corbett  
Jane Durante  
David Godin  
Jim Huffman  
Oliver Lang  
Vladimir Mikler  
Alan Storey

**REGRETS:**  
James Cheng  
Steve McFarlane  
Maurice Pez  
Scott Romses

**RECORDING  
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

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### ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1. 6311 Cambie Street

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**BUSINESS MEETING**

Chair Haden 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: 6311 Cambie Street  
 DE: Rezoning  
 Description: To develop a 6-storey building containing 4 commercial units on Cambie Street with 56 residential units over two levels of underground parking. Two separate houses containing secondary suites are located at the lane. The proposed density is 2.90 floor space ratio (FSR) and the proposed maximum height is 70 feet.  
 Zoning: RT-1 to CD-1  
 Application Status: Rezoning  
 Review: First  
 Owner: Cedar Development Corp  
 Architect: GBL Architects Inc.  
 Delegation: Andrew Emmerson, GBL Architects Inc.  
 Gerry Eckford, Eckford & Associates Landscape Architects  
 Henry Tom, Cedar Development Corp  
 Staff: Grant Miller and Sailen Black

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

- **Introduction:** Grant Miller, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal for a rezoning on a site at the corner of Cambie Street and West 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The site is currently developed with two duplexes built in the early 1960s. The proposal is to develop a 6-storey building containing four commercial units on Cambie Street with 51 residential units over two levels of underground parking. Two separate houses containing secondary suites are located at the lane. The proposed density is 2.90 FSR and the proposed maximum height is 70 feet.

The site falls within the Oakridge Langara Policy Statement area and most recently is subject to the Cambie Corridor Interim Rezoning Policy area. In the Oakridge Langara Policy Statement, the site was part of a reserve sub area which supported up zoning once rapid transit technology was introduced. Recently, the Cambie Corridor Planning process identified specific sites, including 6311 Cambie Street, along arterials where staff would support applications while the corridor plan was being completed. Under the interim rezoning policy, mixed-use development up to 6-storeys with retail/office at grade, employment space over the ground floor and residential above could be considered.

At the early stage of development, the short term viability of commercial space is a concern. The potential for residential use at grade in a built form which could accommodate future commercial use is being considered by staff. While live/work might provide a solution, there is currently a moratorium on approval of live/work space in new CD-1 zones due to administrative concerns.

There is a public right-of-way from Ash Street to the lane secured through a recent townhouse rezoning which aligns with the centre of the site. One of the general urban design goals emerging from the Cambie Corridor process is to activate the lanes with residential addresses and connectivity. This is supported with the inclusion of two laneway oriented houses with lock-off suites.

Sailen Black, Development Planner, noted that not only is it an interesting site because of its position but also in terms of the potential to open an east-west route through the site. Mr. Black described the context for the area noting that there are duplexes to the south of the site and low density homes along Cambie Street. There is a dedicated right-of-way west of the lane that is intended to permit pedestrian traffic from Ash Street to the lane. This site is an opportunity to continue that connection to Cambie Street and the 49<sup>th</sup> Avenue Transit Station. The proposed linkage, offset from the existing dedication, would expand the open space beside a four foot wide utility right-of-way on the subject site to include a loading bay and pedestrian pathway from Cambie Street to the lane. Surface treatment is then proposed on the lane to create a visual connection to the existing path to the south and west. The project proposes an active lane frontage with two lane houses with lock-off suites, for a total of four units. There will also be some open space and landscaping facing onto the lane. The proposed building is six storeys, with either commercial or residential uses on the ground floor facing Cambie Street. On the other side of a double loaded corridor, residential units are planned facing the west. Above there are five levels of residential. Mr. Black described some of the architectural plans for the building noting the setback at the first two levels.

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

- Overall landscaping and the architectural design.
- Legibility and amenity for the public provided by the proposed alignment of the pedestrian right-of-way, and the design of the pedestrian path.
- Design of the north and south ends of the building, including the balance of solids and glazing where the building faces the interior property lines, and their relationship to both existing and future buildings on the other side of the line

Mr. Miller and Mr. Black took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Andrew Emmerson, Architect, further described the proposal noting the main driving factor was the existing sewage and pedestrian rights-of-way. The idea of having an eight foot set back on both the north and south side presented them with a number of options. It gave them the opportunity for some natural daylighting into the pedestrian right-of-way as well as some two bedrooms units on the corner. The ground floor will have oversized eighteen foot floor to ceiling flex units on the front with loft units on the back to maximize the daylight intake from the south and west. The units on the second tier are more conventional with one and two bedroom units and the third tier will have larger penthouse suites.

Gerry Eckford, Landscape Architect, noted that the importance of the pedestrian corridor and was something they have taken into consider and have tried to animate it in a way that is clearly legible and also will have some elements that clearly identify the space. They are planning on doing something more graphic on the laneway and out onto the sidewalk. The focus at the entry will be a water feature that will bounce some light into the pedestrian corridor. In the central courtyard the two lane houses will have green roof elements as well as patios. Given that the courtyard is narrow, the treatment will be fairly simple and a double row of trees is planned for the Cambie Street frontage.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Enhance design continuity of the pedestrian pathway by engaging the lane with attention to the importance of creating a precedent for excellent lane design throughout the Cambie Corridor.

- Recommend LEED™ Gold registry
  - Design development to building and landscape to address possible present and future uses of the flex units and consequent effect on streetscape effect and architectural quality.
  - Design development to allow the west facing ground level main block units enhanced access to the ground floor outdoor common space.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal as well as the design for the building and felt it met the policy for the Cambie Corridor.

The Panel had some concerns with the legibility of the right-of-way noting that unless it goes all the way through it wouldn't be used by the people who live in the area. They noted that it could be a pleasant experience if handled properly. One Panel member hoped the city didn't start treating the lane like a street as that would defeat the potential character for the area.

The Panel was some what confused regarding the flex units on the ground floor especially since the applicant suggested they could be residential or commercial units. Several Panel members thought the amenity treatment should go along part of the lane to make for a clearer connection. A couple of Panel members noted that having two bedroom units was good for the layout of the building although there could be some overlook issues if the future adjacent building doesn't do the same thing. Most of the Panel liked the way the south end and north facades were treated with the off set and windows

Being that it is effectively a walk-up building some Panel members encouraged the applicant to provide sufficient circulation and an enhanced stairway.

The Panel supported the landscaping plans and thought the pedestrian right-of-way was a good idea and could be more interesting with further development. One Panel member suggested using screens for added privacy rather than glass boxes to the roof for the lane way houses. They liked the different patterns in the private areas but thought there should be more access from the larger building's suites to the lawn. One Panel member suggested moving the water feature closer to Cambie Street for acoustic reasons.

Regarding sustainability, several Panel members were disappointed with the description of the sustainability indicatives. They thought the south façade would need window overhangs to reduce solar gain until a larger structure was built on the adjacent property. Some of the Panel members thought it was important to consider future plans of the City in implementing a District Energy System. The Panel encouraged the applicant to apply for LEED™ Gold registry.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Emmerson thanked the Panel for their comments.

#### Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 5:17 p.m.