

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** September 10, 2008

**TIME:** 4.00 pm

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

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:  
John Wall, Chair  
Tom Bunting  
Maurice Pez  
Douglas Watts  
Bill Harrison  
Mark Ostry  
Albert Bicol  
Walter Francl  
Richard Henry  
Gerry Eckford  
David Godin

**REGRETS:** Martin Nielsen

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

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ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	1650 Quebec Street
2.	215 West 2 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue
3.	1155 Hornby Street

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**BUSINESS MEETING**

Chair Wall 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: 1650 Quebec Street  
DE: Rezoning  
Description: To construct a 16-storey residential building on the western portion of the site and an 8-storey mixed-use building on the eastern portion of the site.  
  
Zoning: M2 + FC1 to CD-1  
Application Status: RZ  
Architect: Neale Staniszakis Doll Adams Architects  
Owner: Bosa Properties  
Review: First  
Delegation: Tom Staniszakis, Neale Staniszakis Doll Adams Architects  
Richard Henry, Richard Henry Architects  
Rob Barnes, Perry & Associates  
Hermann Nuessler, Bosa Properties  
  
Staff: Dale Morgan/Thor Kuhlmann

**EVALUATION: SUPPORT (9-0)**

- **Introduction:** Thor Kuhlman, Planner, introduced the proposal for a rezoning noting the site is zoned M2 Industrial and has a portion of it on the north side zoned FC1 which is a commercial/residential mix. The applicant is proposing mixed-used residential with 188 units and three at grade CRUs along Main Street. They are targeting a density of 3.5 FSR which is consistent with the ODP. The City is in negotiations with the land owner to sell to them portions of the land that are located both to their south and north. The overall height will be consistent with the ODP Amendments to area 3C that will be going to Council for approval in September.

Dale Morgan, Development Planner, described the proposal noting there will be 15-storeys building along Quebec Street with an amenity penthouse. There are two storey ground-oriented townhouses planned and an 8-storey mid-rise building along Main Street. Mr. Morgan noted the rail spur line that will become a lane and described the surrounding developments. The general form of development adheres to the City's anticipated revised massing for SEFC sub-area 3C. The material expression has not been defined although the applicant suggested it will be a combination of brick, glass and painted concrete. In terms of sustainability, the applicant are meeting the expectations for SEFC Green Building Strategy and will be LEED™ Silver equivalent. Also proposed is urban agriculture on the roof tops, solar shading on the south-west elevations, energy and water efficient fixtures, and the project will also be connected to the NEU. In terms of public realm, there will be upgrades to the three street frontages and along the pedestrian oriented lane. There will be street furniture, a visual connection mid-block that links the street with the lane and underground parking. A common amenity and pool are proposed on the roof of the tower and a children's play area within view of the ground floor amenity.

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

1. **Massing:** Does the massing meet the objectives of the proposed revisions to the SEFC ODP for area 3C? Does it relate well to its new neighbourhood across the new lane? Should the townhouses be more integrated with the tower massing along the south lane elevation and tighter to the land edge?
2. **Materiality:** What material expression would the Panel suggest?
3. **Sustainability:** Comments are requested on the response to sustainability, solar orientation and how these concerns are addressed.
4. **Liveability:** Comments are requested on proposed unit configuration in particular unit "C".

Mr. Morgan took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Richard Henry, Architect, emphasized that the proposal was at the rezoning stage but have gone into a bit more detail than normally provided. Mr. Henry said it was important for them to get on with the project because of the turn down in the market and allows them to put together some preliminary costing and plan their marketing strategy. They looked at the two building having different architectural expressions: one having the playfulness of SEFC with the building on Main Street being more conservative. Mr. Henry noted that there is a historical overlay on the site referred to as the 'rail-yard precinct'. There is an old rail spur on the site which will be developed with the City, the rail spur will be reinstated and then rededicated back to the City as a public space. It is also their intention to reestablish the historical overlay on Main Street with street furniture and lighting. Mr. Henry described the architectural elements of the proposal noting the CRUs on Main Street with residential above. The Main Street building will have more of a live/work layout with internal offices that can be locked off from the corridor without having to go into the unit. The tower has more of a mix with townhouses and family units. Regarding the site planning, Mr. Henry noted that there is a history of creating pedestrian access through the sites in SEFC. However, because of CPTED issues, that has not been achieved thought out SEFC but he said he thought they could achieve that on their site. There was a creek originally on the site that will be replicated in the landscaping. A large board room and amenity space by the play area is planned with a large roof top amenity that will be shared by the two developments. Parking access for both buildings will be across from the loading bay of the building opposite. The lane has been enlarged with a public space which will have great sun exposure. Mr. Henry described the materials noting the tower will be glassier with north and north-west exposures while the Main Street building will have a more heritage expression with a lot of brick.

Tom Staniszki, Architect, described the unit mix and the type of purchasers they will be targeting. The units in the building on Quebec Street will be between 1,000 and 1,400 square feet and are designed to accommodate families. Playgrounds and activities areas are also planned. There is an opportunity for office based units in the Main Street building and some of the units will have a separate entrance to the office area. Mr. Staniszki noted that the sustainable measures comply with the City of Vancouver's sustainable requirements and the EcoDensity Charter. He added that they will be pursuing a LEED™ Silver equivalent. He noted that the suite heating will be attached to the NEU and supplemented with solar heating. Other sustainable strategies include suite metering of energy, potable water will be used for irrigation, green roofs and urban agriculture and low-flow plumbing fixtures.

Rob Barnes, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans for the proposal noting that the old shoreline will inform some of the shapes. As well, some of the edge treatments will pick up a bit of the rail yard context. There will be a transition from public space to private space along the lane, a planted barrier on both streets, raised patios on

the townhouses with planted screening, a water element in the corner entrance on Quebec Street with some seating edges and hard landscape. Main Street will be more urban.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**

- The tower needs a strong passive design strategy for the south and west facades;
- Design development to the tower massing to breakdown the massiveness of the south façade and to improve the integration of the townhouse base with the tower form;
- Considering moving the play area more into the mews to provide more sun access; and
- Consider adding height to the tower on Quebec Street and reducing the tower floor plate.

- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the project.

The Panel supported the massing and thought it would fit well within the existing South East False Creek ODP. Some of the panel thought the south elevation of the tower had a lot of bulk and suggested breaking down that massing. Most of the Panel said they would support the building on Quebec Street having more height, perhaps only an extra storey that would help the skyline and building form along the street and make the tower plate smaller and more workable.

One Panel member suggested stretching the townhouses a little further and making to make the tower thinner. However, most the Panel discouraged the applicant from pulling the townhouses out to the lane in order to keep the open space.

The Panel thought the corner entry on Quebec Street was going in the right direction. One Panel member thought the elevator penthouse needed some work. A couple of Panel members would like to see the massing on the tower have more resolution on how it integrates with the townhouse base. Most of the Panel did not have any concerns with Unit C but suggested it have as much glass as possible in order to get more light into the suite.

The Panel thought it was too early to review the materiality but thought the applicant was on the right path. They liked that the brick treatment on the Main Street building would be different from the more modern look on the Quebec Street building.

The Panel struggled with having public access through the site noting that there could be some CPTED and security issues. The main reason for the mid block connection was to make SEFC very permeable and to try and get people from the areas south of the creek to the water. One Panel member suggested adding gates at either end that could be locked at night.

The Panel thought the outdoor play area on the north corner of the site was in a dark zone and encouraged the applicant to look for opportunities to move it into the mews where there would be more light and connection. A Panel member suggested that when the residents weren't using the corner amenity space, it could be made available to community groups.

Regarding sustainability, the Panel would like to see more emphasis on a strong passive design strategy for the tower. A couple of Panel members thought the south façade on the tower had the least response and thought it looked flat and plain. One Panel member noted that since the west elevation was slightly north-west that the tower could be improved by cranking it more to the north. Another Panel member suggested that the

overhangs on the north side weren't necessary but that the west side could use some vertical shading.

The Panel supported the landscape plans however some of the Panel was not convinced that a large pool and cabana was the right idea for the roof top amenity although they liked the urban agriculture.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Henry said he appreciated the Panel's comments and that they will be coming back to the Panel at the development permit stage.

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2. Address:	215 West 2 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue
DE:	412368
Description:	Social and Supportive Housing
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Rezoning
Architect:	DYS Architecture
Owner:	City of Vancouver
Review:	First
Delegation:	Dane Jansen, DYS Architecture Gerry Eckford, Eckford & Associates Raymond Kwong, BC Housing
Staff:	Dale Morgan

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

- **Introduction:** Dale Morgan, Development Planner introduced the proposal for a 147 unit non-market residential building for social and supportive housing. Mr. Morgan noted that the rezoning and development permit for the application was being processed concurrently.

The site is located at the corner of Cook Street and West 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue in the Southeast False Creek precinct in the 1B "works yard" sub area. To the immediate north across the lane there is a recent development enquiry and to the west of the neighbouring site there is a recent DE approval for a residential development. The height is proposed at 125 feet and is within the recommended maximum. The proposal is for a 6 storey and 11 storey structure that functions as two independent buildings with separate entrances and social needs programs.

Mr. Morgan described the massing noting there will be some stepping of the upper massing of the lower building to improve sun access into the garden area. The proposed materials include two colours of brick with clear and spandrel glass, aluminum frames, painted concrete and four different metal cladding systems. The applicant will be pursuing LEED™ Gold.

The unit size is between 325 and 362 square feet and will contain both a kitchen and bathroom with thirteen of the units sized for universal access. A common amenity will be located on the rooftop of the lower building and as well there is a courtyard planned at the back of the building off the lane.

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

1. Density: The SEFC ODP sets a density of 3.5 FSR that may be increased for social objectives such as non-market housing. Is a density of 4.45 FSR, supportable for this site?
2. Massing: Is the massing well handled? Does it meet the objectives of the proposed revisions to the 3C area?
3. Sustainability: Comments are requested on the response to sustainability, solar orientation and how the building expression addresses these concerns.
4. Expression & Materiality: Is the expression and material palette well resolved?

Mr. Morgan took questions from the Panel.

- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Dane Jansen, Architect, further described the proposal. He described their sustainable strategies and noted that when they did their research on using solar tubes it was decided they would use darker evacuated tubes to get

the efficiency increased. They are also trying to be 50% green with the surfaces in the proposal. The number of units and the tower massing are defined through the notion of capping the tower at 11-storeys. The Catherine Sanford Housing Society will manage the building and are going to consolidate their offices at ground level in the 6-storey building. Mr. Jansen noted that they have not completed their energy model. He added they are going to be doing heat recovery and have improved the envelope and are looking at an R value of around R21. Mr. Jansen further described the sustainable strategy.

Gerry Eckford, Landscape Architect, described the landscape treatment noting along East 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Cook Street they are following the neighbourhood guidelines. He described how the rain water will be captured and used as a water element on the site. As there are two user groups for the site, there will be a separation using both a planters and an extension of the arbour element which makes up the curved form within the building. The raised seating area has a metal roof. Mr. Eckford noted that the theme of the 'warehouse district' will be reflected with the use of more robust and textured materials. Urban agriculture is reflected with the use of fruit trees, edible landscape and the arbour will use grapes as the planting.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Further clarification of the design rationale for the exterior cladding materials and their detailing strategy;
  - Consider refining the exterior cladding strategies by reducing the number of materials or reducing number of material transitions; and
  - Consider safety issues with the location of the solar panels above the roof top amenity space.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal.

The Panel liked the project and had no concerns with the density, with very strong support for the massing strategy. The Panel again noted that the exceptional building massing was not found in market housing and commended the architect for his design. One Panel member liked the interesting window wall relationships and was surprised that it was targeting a 40% window to wall ratio. One Panel member encouraged the applicant to look at the design of the rotunda as it was half in and half out of the building.

The Panel was concerned with the execution of the materials although they liked the playfulness of the materials but thought that at the same time the applicant should be mindful of how the details come together. They suggested that the success of the project was going to be all about the exterior details are resolved. One Panel member encouraged the applicant to look at the materials list as there are twenty-four items on it and not all of them maybe needed. It was noted that on the south façade there are little slivers of material lining up to each other and that can be done poorly or it can be done very well. A couple of Panel members thought the building design was a little over exuberant and had some concern about the detailing costs. They suggested that the applicant may find through design development that a little editing actually improved the overall design.

The Panel liked the sustainable strategies and thought they were very well thought through and actually legible and showed the spirit of SEFC. Most of the Panel liked the waterfall solar panels and thought they would bring attention to the building. The Panel was happy to hear that there will be funding in place for the solar panel. A couple of Panel members stressed that the durability issues have to be taken into consideration so that the solar panels age well. Another panel member noted that having the solar panels over the

common outdoor amenity space could create a safety issue and that the panels need a safe zone around them in case of breakage. One Panel member suggested the solar panels could have been integrated into the side of the building as part of the architecture. Another Panel member noted that the proposal was a good example of how sustainability can be ingrained into the architecture and not as an afterthought. He noted that there was some redundancy on the north and east façade with respect to exterior sun shades that will offer no shading benefits and could be a cost saving if they are removed from the design.

The Panel thought the applicant had done a fabulous job with the landscaping. There are a lot of outdoor rooms that are useable and thoughtful. They also liked the cascading elements of the water and thought both the residents and neighbours would get a lot of enjoyment out of the element.

- **Applicant's Response:** Mr. Jansen said he appreciated the Panel's comments and that he also appreciated all the help from Dale Morgan, Development Planner.



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3. Address:	1155 Hornby Street
DE:	412314
Description:	To construct an 18-storey residential tower and townhouse development and rehabilitation of the existing heritage Façade of the Murray Hotel
Zoning:	DD
Application Status:	Complete
Architect:	Henriquez & Partners Architects
Owner:	Kenstone Properties
Review:	First
Delegation:	Richard Henriquez, Henriquez & Partners Architects Bruce Hemstock, PWL Partnership
Staff:	Anita Molaro

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**EVALUATION: SUPPORT (9-0)**

- **Introduction:** Anita Molaro, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a 18-storey building with a 3-storey podium. The proposal includes the retention of the Murray Building (Heritage 'B' Listed) which will contain 108 SRA units. The site is located in the Downtown South Guideline in the sub area called Burrard/Granville.

Ms. Molaro described the context for the site and described the surrounding buildings noting the building to the south called London Place, a 15-storey commercial building that was converted to residential from the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor up in 1994.

The proposal is seeking a 10% heritage density for the upgrading of the façade on the Murray Hotel. The site is affected by a view cone (Charleson Seawall to the Lions) and limits the total height including the mechanical appurtenances to 185.5 feet. Ms. Molaro described the proposed size for the buildings noting the floor plate in the tower will be approximately 7,140 square feet which is over the guideline recommendation of 5,70 for a site of this frontage and the maximum recommended 6500 sq. ft . Ms. Molaro asked for the Panel's advice on the floor plate size. With respect to tower separation, the proposal achieves a tower separation of 71.5 feet whereas the guidelines call for a minimum of 80 feet. Staff acknowledge that achieving the guideline minimum of 80 feet between the proposed building and the London Place will be difficult as well as meeting the guideline for new buildings adjacent to light wells. The light well on the Murray Hotel side is to have a 17.0 foot separation which is close to meeting the guidelines.

With respect to the tower separation, staff are willing to consider something less on the basis of heritage preservation but also on achieving a high degree of liveability in terms of privacy interface between the units whose sole outlook is directly across to the London Place and vice versa. Other guideline setback criteria call for the tower placement to be 6 foot front yard setback as well as 30 foot rear yard setback for buildings over 35 feet in height. Again, staff acknowledge a rear yard setback is something to consider but still want to achieve a high degree of liveability for those units, particularly at the lower lane levels and its interface with future developments across the lane. In addition, the guidelines call for a lane treatment with a 10 foot landscape setback.

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

1. Overall building massing and distribution of the density on the site
  - a) Tower dimensions, tower floor plate, rear and front yard setbacks and tower separation;

- b) Neighbourliness of the proposed building related to tower massing and unit orientation with existing and future neighbours on existing units (London Place - Murray Hotel);
  - c) Streetscape response including street definition;
  - d) Is there an opportunity for better distribution of massing re: tower.
2. Liveability of proposed units
    - a) Through townhouse units facing into the underside of the tower;
    - b) Along the lane (future context).
  3. Viability of the covered landscaped open space
    - a) at tower entry;
    - b) extension of rear courtyard under the tower.
  4. Other items
    - a) Streetscape interface with Murray Hotel (Heritage 'B');
    - b) Materials proposed for the development.
  5. Sustainability
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** Richard Henriquez, Architect, further described the proposal stating that their primary concern was saving the Murray Hotel which is a listed heritage building with valuable affordable housing units. Mr. Henriquez added that they had designed a companion piece for the Murray Hotel. He noted that there are restrictions on the site because of the view cone and the guidelines and are bounded by a brick-clad concrete office and residential building to the south. The building maintains an urban street edge on Hornby Street while providing semi-private spaces for the townhouses. The Murray Hotel façade is mirrored through brick, steel and glass screens at the base of the tower.

Bruce Hemstock, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans noting the planted courtyard in the space between the two buildings. The space between the proposal and the Murray Hotel has been created for a sense of separation with a green screen. It will be a shade garden and will come under the building and out to meet the sidewalk. All the roof decks will have plantings on them with groupings of bamboo.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
  - Consider attention to CPTED issues;
  - Further consideration should be given to the landscaping especially in the lane and the north courtyard;
  - Consider improving oblique views from units facing the London Place building; and
  - Consideration for more sustainable measures.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the proposal and commended the applicant team for a finely crafted piece of architecture on a challenging urban infill site.

The Panel supported the building massing and density as they thought there were no other options with the restrictions on the site and gave a simple form to the project. They also supported the floor plate size and the separation between the adjoining building (London Place). The Panel thought the street response was clever and liked the way the fins on the townhouse units matched the set back of the Murray Hotel. One Panel member noted that diversity was needed in the residential projects in the downtown and commended the

architect for designing something different than the usual tower with townhouses at the base. The Panel thought the setbacks worked on the site with several Panel members suggested the tower could go higher.

The Panel agreed that saving the Murray Hotel was enough of a benefit to the City that the relaxations to the tower separation guidelines were warranted. One Panel member cautioned the applicant against using similar coloured brick to the Murray Hotel as it needed to look different from the heritage. The Panel supported the streetscape interface with Murray hotel and thought it was well handled. Most of the Panel liked the light well and the landscaped area between the tower and the Murray Hotel. One Panel member suggested adding some lighting on the hotel to make an interesting element at night as part of the experience of looking out and entering through that area.

Regarding liveability, they Panel thought it was well done even though there were a couple of odd unit layouts but they felt they were an opportunity to offer some affordable housing. Overall they thought the units were well designed. One Panel member suggested changing the layout of the kitchen in the through units to add more light into the back of the suite. One Panel member was somewhat concerned with the townhouses under the tower that have bedrooms with little light access. However other panel members were not concerned by the shadowing of the townhouse units by the tower overhang.

The Panel liked the void space under the tower as it extended the courtyard. They also liked that the streetwall expression of the Murray Hotel had been extended to the base of the tower and had added a lot of visual interest to the building by re-interpreting the traditional masonry expression. A couple of Panel members thought the lane way could be enhanced and encouraged the applicant to revisit the wall and make sure it isn't a palette for street art. They suggested pulling the wall back and dressing it up as the lane is a bit harsh in terms of treatment and overlook.

The Panel thought the proposed materials were right and would give an overall elegance to the project.

A couple of Panel members thought the landscaping was on the right track, but needed more work and suggested simplifying the landscaping to make it more urban, more crisp and as well make sure the planting don't get too high and reduce light into the units. A couple of Panel members were concerned with that the interior and exterior amenity spaces are at opposite ends of the building. They noted that the space needs to attract people to come and use it.

Regarding sustainability, the Panel thought the site helped with passive design and that the amount of glazing that is exposed will be minimal. They suggested looking at the design to see where passive design can be improved and to take the sustainable features to a higher level. One Panel member noted that the long façade faces south-west and will receive a lot of solar gain. Another Panel member suggested that further subtle articulation to the south west façade could improve oblique views, light access and thermal performance.

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

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.