

URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

DATE: December 14, 2016

TIME: 3:00 pm

PLACE: Town Hall Meeting Room, Vancouver City Hall

PRESENT: Neal Lamontagne
Stefan Aepli
Veronica Gillies (excused from item #3)
Ken Larsson
Muneesh Sharma
Roger Hughes
David Jerke
Russell Acton
Meghan Cree-Smith
Kim Smith
Karen Spoelstra
Meredith Anderson

REGRETS: James Cheng

**RECORDING
SECRETARY:** Camilla Lade

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING

1. 3868-3898 Rupert Street & 3304-3308 E 22nd Avenue
2. 5110 Cambie Street
3. 4138 Cambie Street

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Roger Hughes called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. After a brief business meeting the panel considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. Address: 3868-3898 Rupert Street & 3304-3308 E 22nd Avenue
 DE: RZ-2016-00004
 Description: The proposal is for a six-storey mixed-use building with commercial at grade and residential above (98 secured market rental units), over two levels of underground parking (137 vehicle spaces and 150 bicycle spaces), with a building height of 21m (68 ft.), and a floor space ratio (FSR) of 3.16. This application is being considered under the Affordable Housing Choices Interim Rezoning Policy.
 Zoning: C-1 to CD-1
 Application Status: Rezoning Application
 Review: Second
 Architect: GBL Architects (Amela Brudar)
 Owner: Hanbu Enterprises Ltd.
 Delegation: Amela Brudar, GBL Architects
 Charlotte Mackintosh, GBL Architects
 Peter Kreuk, Durante Kreuk
 Staff: Rachel Harrison & Danielle Wiley

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (12-0)

- **Introduction:** Rachel Harrison, Rezoning Planner, introduced the project as a proposal for a six-storey mixed use building with commercial on the ground floor and 98 rental units above. 34% of the units are two and three bedroom units. The application is coming under the Affordable Housing Choices interim rezoning policy, which allows for the site to be considered for a maximum of six storeys. Height is subject to urban design performance and a degree of community support. The affordable housing choices policy states that a maximum of two applications are allowed on the same two blocks

The site currently holds a one-storey commercial building, with a grocery store and surface parking. The site is 260 ft. wide and 112 ft. deep. Sites across the street are zoned C-1, and mostly comprise small one and two-storey retail buildings. There is newer three-storey mixed used building under existing zoning on the south-west corner of the intersection. Across the street to the north is Renfrew Elementary school. The rest of the surrounding neighbourhood is zoned RS-1.

Danielle Wiley, Development Planner, noted that the site spans a full block from East 22nd Ave to East 23rd Ave.

This is a second appearance at the Panel (first appearance was Aug 10th). The new density is 3.16 FSR (compared to a 3.61, reduction of +-13000 sq. ft.).

The form of development is as follows:

- A commercial podium with one “anchor” (Chong Market); and six small retail spaces, which are anticipated to be leased by existing businesses on site;
- Slab stepped along Rupert accommodate grade change (+-12ft);
- Five storeys of market residential units above;

- The 6th storey is pulled back substantially at the north side to reduce height on Rupert Street 5th and 6th storeys have 8 ft. setbacks for a remainder of street frontages;
- At the rear (east), stepped form to reduce impacts on single-family dwelling neighbours;
- Setbacks create opportunities for green spaces: amenity at podium level on the east side and on 5th storey roof on the north side;
- The parkade entry, loading and servicing is off the lane, which flanks single-family dwellings.

Previous Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:

- The height/density of six storeys (and 3.6 FSR) is too tall/dense for the single-family dwelling context;
- In regards to the interface to single-family dwellings, better massing transition required. A bar building was suggested;
- The lane interface has an unneighbourly wall. Servicing should be contained in the building;
- The residential entry expression located on East 20th is not visible or logical. It is a missed opportunity to locate the entry at the "break" in the massing on Rupert Street.
- Regarding the outdoor spaces (private and public), it is "illogical" that shared amenity terrace and private terrace are "equal" bookends/wings on the buildings;
- The public realm on Rupert Street is a missed opportunity for a more animated, fine-grained streetscape, perhaps with niches for cafes, etc.;
- In regards to design quality, the architecture needs to be exceptional to "earn" such a significant increase in height and density in a low-scale neighbourhood.

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

1. Please comment on whether the applicant has successfully resolved the following areas of concern, which COV staff identified at the first appearance at the Panel (Aug 10, 2016):
 - a. Appropriateness of the overall massing, height and density within its site context (i.e. "local" shopping node in single family neighbourhood).
 - b. Architectural expression of the building elevation on Rupert Street.
 - c. Appropriateness of the massing of the upper storeys on the east side of the development, as an interface to single family properties;
 - d. Site planning and architectural expression on the lane (i.e. podium level);
 - e. Identity and expression of the residential entry. Note it was located on East 23rd Ave in the original proposal.
 2. In addition, please comment on the architectural detailing and materials, to assist the applicant in preparing a DP application.
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant designed the building as two distinct volumes (one third/two thirds) in order to break up the length of the building frontage. The 6th storey is cut back at the north end of the building to mitigate shadowing on the school grounds. The north volume is in lighter brick, and the upper two floors are setback in a lighter coloured Hardie panel. The north end of the commercial podium, where the grocer is located, is designed with more glazing at the store front.

On the south end of the building, there is a four-storey streetwall rendered in lighter colour brick. The storefront along the public realm has a setback of 5 ft. to provide outdoor seating to animate the street. The residential entry design is located at the break between the two volumes on Rupert Street. The upper floors of the six-storey “south building” are set back 8 ft. To further differentiate the two “volumes” of the building, there is an overhang on the south end of the building.

The massing is terraced at the east side, to mitigate impacts on single-family properties across the lane. Parking and commercial servicing face the lane, and a larger setback is provided. Where possible, there is planting and vine walls, with a larger 4 ft. setback on the lane.

The proposed materials are brick and Hardie panel. There are colour accents proposed on the balconies. The amenities are a children’s play area on the 2nd floor, and, on the upper 5th floor, an indoor amenity space and roof patio. Urban agriculture is planned on the roof, which is intended to be a quieter, passive use area.

- **Panel’s Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - The panel thought that the architectural expression on Rupert Street requires refinement. Specifically the L-shaped roof overhang on the south end of the building makes the building appear more massive. The break between the two parts of the building should be strengthened;
 - The concrete wall along the lane elevation should be broken up or stepped down to create an environment along the lane that would not just be the ‘back’ of the building;
 - The residential entry should be more strongly expressed (possibly by deleting the balconies in the “break”, or reducing their depth); the panel also recommended stairs should be added to the residential lobby.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the massing height and density of the proposal. The panel noted it was however a ‘C2 response in an RS area’ and could have different ways to break down the massing and express the architecture. There could be a quirkier approach to the project. The building should be more ‘unique’ than the average building in the C2 zone. The non-symmetrical break in the massing was welcomed by the panel, but could be strengthened.

The panel welcomed the simple language of the architecture. A panel member suggested that the massing could be simpler. There could be more vertical expression on Rupert Street, with a finer grain. The massing impacts on the single family area to the east are improved.

The panel supported the amenity space location and size. The landscaping on the east side is very important for separating the building from the single family homes and neighbours. The concrete wall can appear ‘massive’, according to one panel member, so landscaping is critical. One panel member mentioned the painted white concrete at the bus shelter should be changed possibly to brick.

There could be something more unique at the entry. The balconies could be pulled back, or doors to the lobby could be pulled back to create more space on the street. The L shape beside the entry is not necessary as an architectural element to make the entry work. There could be a place for gathering at the entry or something for bike culture along Rupert Street.

The brick materials were supported by the panel, especially because they weather well. Perhaps how the materials are used could set the building apart. The building size is supported by one panel member in order to create variety in the neighbourhood.

There was a concern about loading management by a panel member. It appears too tight for the area.

- **Applicant's Response:** The applicant really appreciated the comments and welcomed the good points made by the panel.

2. Address:	5110 Cambie Street
DE:	RZ-2016-00027
Description:	The proposal is for a six-storey residential building (12 dwelling units) over one level of underground parking (14 vehicle spaces and 18 bicycle spaces) with a maximum building height of 20.1 m (66 ft.) from grade and a floor space ratio (FSR) of 2.40. This application is being considered under the Cambie Corridor Plan.
Zoning:	RS-1 to CD-1
Application Status:	Rezoning Application
Review:	First
Architect:	Billard Architecture (Robert Billard)
Owner:	1063570 BC Ltd.
Delegation:	Robert Billard, Billard Architecture
Staff:	Fiona McDougall & Danielle Wiley

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (6-5)

- **Introduction:** Fiona McDougall, Rezoning Planner, introduced the project as composed of one single-family parcel at the southeast corner of Cambie Street and 35th Avenue. The site is presently zoned RS-1 and developed with a single-family house. The site is 7,900 sq. ft., and 62 ft. by 127 ft.

Across the lane, sites are zoned RS-1 and are included in Cambie Corridor Phase 3 planning. City staff has noted that CC3 policy planning is still underway and final direction for these sites has not been determined. The sites on Cambie north/south are zoned RS-1, but are included in Cambie Corridor Phase 2 and can be considered for rezonings up to six storeys. Two rezonings have been approved and one is under review on the block to the north, and three rezonings have been approved on the block opposite. These rezonings range between 2.40-2.60 FSR.

The proposal is for a six-storey market residential building with a total of 12 units set over one level of underground parking. The Cambie Corridor Plan seeks a “mini-park” at the corner of 35th and Cambie, consisting of a small softscape plaza creating a green connection between Cambie Street and Queen Elizabeth Park. Parking includes 14 residential stalls and 18 bicycle parking stalls. The building height is 66 ft.

An FSR of 2.4 is proposed. The proposal is being considered under the Cambie Corridor Plan, which anticipates six-storey residential buildings in this area with a suggested FSR range of 1.75-2.25.

Danielle Wiley, Development Planner, noted that the site is an “orphan” lot, as adjacent three lots have consolidated (no rezoning application at this time). Challenges of limited site width include:

- Parking ramp cuts into building massing;
- Limited lane frontage to develop an “animated lane”;
- Inefficient floorplate, and an “exposed” circulation core at the interior side elevation (this would normally be internalized);
- Difficult to “land” maximum density due to inherent inefficiency of a small site.

The proposed density is 2.4 FSR. The proposed range allotted in the Plan is 1.75-2.25.

The “parklet” located at the corner is required under the Public Realm Plan. The intent is to have a pleasant respite point that passersby (coming to and from Queen Elizabeth Park) would recognize as “public” but it is not meant to be an active park space.

Setbacks of 12 ft. are provided on both street frontages and a 4 ft. setback is provided at the lane. The interior side yard is 8 ft., which is the minimum allowed under the plan. The ground-floor includes two-storey ground-related “townhouse” units along both frontages, with at-grade patios extending to the property line. There is a double-height amenity room at the street corner, overlooking the parklet. Note there is no contiguous outdoor space; a common patio is provided on the roof. The upper levels include single-level flats on Levels 3 to 6 (2 apartments per level, except on the 6th.) 8 ft. setbacks are provided at Levels 5 and 6 on three sides of the building. A “partial” setback is achieved at interior property line, due to the location of the circulation core. Two roof decks are proposed: one shared; one private (for 6th storey unit).

The architectural expression is defined by “framed” balconies (resulting in long, relatively narrow outdoor spaces), and a bold colour palette (red, black and white).

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

1. Is the interface with the public realm successful? (Please consider the “parklet”, as well as the landscape/patios along Cambie St and W 35th Ave.)
 2. Is the lane environment, including parking access, successfully resolved?
 3. Is the building massing and elevation at the south PL (interior side yard) successfully resolved?
 4. Is the overall density and massing appropriate?
 5. Please comment on architectural expression and detailing, to assist the applicant in preparing a future DP application.
- **Applicant’s Introductory Comments:** The applicant said the units are intended as family housing, as all are three-bedroom units.

The intent of the parklet was to ‘engage the corner’ and create a gateway to Queen Elizabeth Park. The red colouring of the parklet and the building accents are a response to the bland palette in the area, and is meant to be striking and “Mondrian”.

There are significant setbacks to the massing, to “step down” towards the lane. The south-west corner has additional setbacks to accommodate the parkade entry. The outdoor amenity space is provided at roof level.

- **Panel’s Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - The parklet does not feel accessible to the public, and does not read as a “comfortable” space;
 - The lane elevation is monolithic and requires design development;
 - The massing and building elevation at the south property line are not neighbourly and require design development;
 - The expression and detailing of the building reads as “commercial” rather than residential, and is too aggressive;
 - The FSR is too high; a reduction in floor space would improve the massing;

- A clearer approach to sustainability is required (i.e. extent of glazing and thermal bridging, and location of shading devices, should be reconsidered).
- **Related Commentary:** Several panel members commented that the FSR has not been “earned”, and some recommended that the building would be improved if the FSR and massing were reduced. One member said that this FSR could be achievable on the site, with improvements to the massing and design. The panel welcomes the unique design approach to the building. But the sculptural quality of the design has not been integrated with the building’s program and function, and so remains a piece of art rather than architecture. Several panel members commented that the design requires sophisticated detailing as it moves forward to a DP application. Many commented that the architecture reads as an office or commercial building, and should be developed in a more residential style. Some panel members questioned the use of strong red accents, as this colour tends to fade over time, and a more muted/rust red would be less aggressive. There were too many “L”s according to a few panel members.

The design lacks a clear approach to sustainability, as it has extensive glazing and thermal bridging, and the solar shading does not wrap the corner to the west elevation. One panel member recommended exploring rainwater infrastructure.

The Panel noted that the parklet needs design development and the ramp should be reconfigured. They mused that the parklet could be like an art piece that contributes to the public realm. The raised patios along 35th are supported by the panel. They create a good separation between the public and private realms.

The parking ramp off the lane is a challenge but is supported. The panel suggested that perhaps parking access could be shared with the adjacent development to the south, so that the ramp could be removed.

- **Applicant’s Response:** The applicant thanked the panel and acknowledged that the design is a work in progress, and said that he will work towards a bold but more residential project.

3. Address:	4138 Cambie Street
DE:	RZ-2016-00023
Description:	The proposal is for a six-storey residential building and two-storey townhouses at the lane (22 residential units total) over one level of underground parking (25 vehicle spaces and 34 bicycle spaces) with a building height of 20.5 m (67 ft.) from grade and a floor space ratio (FSR) of 2.33. This application is being considered under the Cambie Corridor Plan.
Zoning:	RS-1 to CD-1
Application Status:	Rezoning Application
Review:	First
Architect:	Raymond Letkeman Architects (Jim Bussey)
Owner:	Yuk Ng
Delegation:	Jim Bussey, Raymond Letkeman Architects Peter Kreuk, Durante Kreuk Kevin Hussey, Pennyfarthing
Staff:	Fiona McDougall & Marie Linehan

EVALUATION: SUPPORT (9-0)

- **Introduction:** Fiona McDougall, Rezoning Planner, introduced the project as an application to rezone a single parcel located between West King Edward and 26th Avenues.

The site is zoned RS-1 and currently holds a single-family home. The site is approximately 11,100 square ft. (1,031 m²) in area, with a frontage of 75 ft. (22.5 m) along Cambie Street, and depth of 150 ft. (45.81 m).

The proposal is being considered under the Cambie Corridor Plan. The site is located within the Queen Elizabeth neighbourhood, which allows for consideration for up to six-storeys, with a suggested FSR range of 2.0-2.5. Typically sites that are deep enough should incorporate townhouses on the lane.

The surrounding context includes the King Edward Skytrain station to the northwest, and a number of approved Cambie Corridor rezonings surrounding the site. The site to the south has been rezoned for a six-storey residential building with townhouses on the lane with a FSR of 2.56. To the east, across the lane, the block facing West King Edward Avenue has been rezoned for Senior's Supportive Housing with a FSR of 2.27. The area across the lane to the southeast is included in the Cambie Corridor Phase 3 focus area. In this area, Phase 3 is proposing townhouse forms, but noting that Cambie Corridor Phase 3 planning is still underway and the final direction for this area has not been determined.

A height of 67 ft. (20.5 meters) and a floor space ratio of 2.33 are proposed for this site. Parking is accessed via the ramp provided by the development to the south and includes 25 car and 34 bicycle spaces underground. The proposal results in a remainder lot on the corner of West King Edward Avenue and Cambie Street.

Marie Linehan, Development Planner, continued the introduction and noted that the proposal is consistent with the Cambie Corridor built form guidelines which recommend a six-storey residential building with townhouses at the lane. The proposal meets the recommended step backs and the courtyard configuration aligns with the approved rezoning at the adjacent site to the south.

The townhouses provide a scale transition at the lane, and are also intended to activate the lane. It was noted that staff are currently working on the Cambie Corridor Public Realm Policy and lanes are to play a part to improve pedestrian connectivity in the neighbourhoods. In particular, staff will be considering design elements such as landscape nodes, benches, etc. in lanes around Skytrain stations to enliven the lanes and improve their quality as public spaces. Staff recognize that this is a small lot, but would appreciate the Panel's advice with regards to improvements to the lane interface moving forward.

A knock out panel will be required for this site for future access to the remainder lot at the corner. This will allow for a single ramp for all three developments on the block and improve the pedestrian quality of the lane. It will also facilitate redevelopment of the remainder lot noting it has a 74 ft. frontage.

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

1. Overall height, form, and density relative to the Cambie Corridor Plan, and the townhouse interface with the lane.
 2. Design and amount of indoor and outdoor amenity space on site.
- **Applicant's Introductory Comments:** The applicant introduced the project as being a 'kid brother' of the neighbouring building to the south by the same development team. The step backs are in accordance with the guidelines. The primary façade is brick, incorporating soldier course details for refinement.

The amenity room is located adjacent the elevator, and is intended as a meeting place. The amenity room can have a more public interface and open up to the side pathway. The side pathway is seen to give back to the neighbourhood in providing a link to the lane and the development at mid-block. The proposed ground floor units have amenity space with outdoor patios, and the upper units have access to the rooftop and green roof as private amenity space.

Planting strips are planned along the lane edge to make the lane units more comfortable. The intent is to encourage secondary use of the lane. The side pathway extends to the lane for firefighter access.

It was noted that planting strips could be used for seating nodes as well.

- **Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**
 - Design development was recommended to improve the amenity space.
 - The interface with the senior's housing building across the lane should be considered; options suggested included relocating the townhouses or design development to the townhouses.
- **Related Commentary:** The Panel supported the overall height, form and density and noted that it complied with the Cambie Corridor guidelines. The main building was seen to be modest, but handsome, and the townhouses were noted as having a more quirky expression. It was noted that the symmetrical design of the main building worked well due to its' small size. The panel members noted that small single lot developments are appreciated as they add texture and scale to the Cambie corridor.

Some members suggested relocating or ‘docking’ the townhouses to attach to the rear of the main building to avoid potential privacy and outlook impacts due to the institutional building across the lane. It was suggested that moving the townhomes would also open up opportunity for more meaningful outdoor amenity space. The courtyard was seen to be primarily circulation. Other members supported the courtyard configuration as meeting the guidelines, and bringing more livability to the lane. It was suggested the lane interface issues could be resolved through the design and layout of the townhouses, such as locating more service-oriented uses to the lane. A single narrower townhouse was also noted as an option.

The amenity space was noted as quite modest. For some members, it was felt that it may be a matter of quality and not quantity. It was suggested to provide more meaningful amenity space with design features, materiality and ‘moments’. One member suggested the amenity space could be shared with the neighbouring building. It was also noted that the setback zone at the lane could have more texture and refinement. It need not provide seating, and could be seen as a walking route and not a hangout space.

It was recommended to provide more brick wrapped around the sides, rather than cementitious panel. One panel member mentioned the townhouse roof form should be more rigorous. Another panel member thought the primary building entrance should be more pronounced and readable. One member suggested sky lighting of the ramp to bring daylight to the underground parking.

- **Applicant’s Response:** The applicant noted that proposal met the expectations of the Cambie plan with regards to townhouses at the lane and there may be negative impacts if the site was open to the lane, so they would prefer not to relocate the townhouses, attaching them to the principal building.

Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.