



NEW WESTMINSTER DESIGN PANEL

Tuesday, November 27, 2018, 3:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, City Hall

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Meredith Mitchell	- Chair, BC Society of Landscape Architects
Derek Newby	- Architectural Institute of BC Representative
David Roppel	- Development Industry Representative (arrived at 4:00 p.m.)
Sarah Siegel	- BC Society of Landscape Architects
Joey Stevens	- Architectural Institute of BC Representative
Craig West	- Vice-Chair, Architectural Institute of BC Representative

REGRETS:

Chris Block	- Architectural Institute of BC Representative
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GUESTS:

Bruce Ramsay	- Ramsay Worden Architects
Alyssa Semczyszyn	- Jonathan Losee Ltd
Gwill Symons	- Cornerstone Architecture
Yong Xu Yu	- Point Landscape Studio

STAFF:

Rupinder Basi	- Senior Development Planner
Mike Watson	- Planner
Heather Corbett	- Committee Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

1.0 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

1.1 Additions to the Agenda

2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of October 23, 2018

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the October 23, 2018 minutes of the New Westminster Design Panel be adopted.

CARRIED.

All members of the Panel present voted in favour of the motion.

3.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION

There were no items.

4.0 DESIGN REVIEWS

4.1 811-819 Twelfth Street

**DPT000762
HER00684**

Mike Watson, Planner, summarized the staff report dated November 27, 2018, regarding the proposal for a Heritage Revitalization Agreement and Development Permit for the development of a six-storey, 48 unit residential building at 811 - 819 Twelfth Street and 1124 Edinburgh Street. In exchange, the applicant would agree to long-term legal protection of the 1911 William Wray House through a Heritage Designation Bylaw. The proposed development has been proposed to be built to Passive House standards.

Mr. Watson reviewed the details of the proposal, including the location, zoning and site context of the property within the OCP designation of the area, and noted the questions that the Design Panel was asked to consider.

In response to questions from the Panel, Mr. Watson provided the following information:

- The proposed development would meet and exceed the City's Family-Friendly housing requirements; and,
- Street improvements for the proposal are still under discussion.

Gwill Symons, Cornerstone Architecture, provided the Panel with the following information regarding the project:

- The concept of the building, tying together the preservation of heritage with the development of new housing, and passive house methods;
- Viewpoints of access onto the property;
- Breakdown of units and outdoor spaces, with a central walkway down the centre;
- Details of the heritage house, and its relocation and restoration;

- Details of the proposed infill townhouse with suite;
- Materials proposed;
- Stepping and massing techniques used to provide privacy and reduce overshadowing on neighbouring properties;
- The porch on the heritage house, which would be corrected to reflect the original porch; and,
- Shading devices and insulation grades proposed to meet Passive House requirements.

Yong Xu Yu, Point Landscape Studio, provided the Panel with the following information regarding the landscaping:

- Tree and plant selections, all low-maintenance;
- Landscape details by level, including details of tree retention and removal;
- Paving details and retaining wall by level;
- Landscaping planned near the entrance to development;
- Landscaping planned within the central area and walkway; and,
- Details of the stairs, planting boxes and seating areas planned for the central courtyard.

In response to questions from the Panel, Mr. Symons and Mr. Yu provided the following information:

- The outside stairs provide the only way to access the two-bedroom apartment units;
- The total amount of parking spaces account for the parking required by the infill building and heritage house;
- The heritage house residents would access parking through the interior pathway, stairs and elevator;
- The tree in the middle of the courtyard would be contained in a cast in place container; and,
- It is the applicant's intention to certify the Passive House development.

Discussion ensued and the Panel noted the following comments in relation to each of the Staff questions asked in the November 27, 2018 report:

Question 1: Comments from the Panel regarding the interface of the building with the surrounding streets would be appreciated, including the treatment of townhouse front entrances along Twelfth Street.

- Given the amount of space available in the parkade, consider lowering the Twelfth Street townhouses to follow the angle of the streetscape, so that the level change is not as abrupt;
- On Twelfth Street, stepping could be used to reduce the height of the retaining walls;

- The Edinburgh Street lobby and frontage could be given more prominence, perhaps through the use of canopy or weather protection;
- Where the townhouses face Edinburgh Street, the patios on the street side may be more successful if planting is used in place of lawns, as grass may not endure the North aspect;
- Appreciation was noted for the lane frontage, in that it would be beneficial to the neighbours;
- The Katsura tree that has been suggested may be more successful if moved closer to the street.

Question 2: Comments from the Panel in regards the transition of the proposed development to the lower density residential building forms in the adjacent neighbourhood would be appreciated.

- The proposed massing and stepping of the building is successful in helping with reduction of overlook and the transition into the neighbourhood, and merits the variances requested; and,
- Appreciation was shown for the use of the infill housing and heritage house as additional transition into the neighbourhood.

Question 3: Comments from the Panel regarding the overall character of the building, regarding the fit of the building into a neighbourhood transitioning from commercial mixed use to residential, and regarding the material chosen, all in light of a building designed to Passive House standard, would be appreciated.

- Appreciation was noted for the character of the building in regards to looking residential, with note that the choice of brick would be positive to the community and lends a sense of substantiality;
- A note was made to consider the application of the striping of materials on the Edinburgh elevation further.

Question 4: Comments from the Panel regarding the open space proposed by the applicant would be appreciated, particularly in the rear.

- The Panel noted that an increase in outdoor, communal amenity space would be beneficial to the proposed development;
- The programming of the amenity space could be reconsidered to ensure greater usability;
- Reconsideration of the stairway could provide more communal space to the development, although this may necessitate a reconsideration of some of the entrances;
- It would be beneficial to allocate the suites within the courtyard as an indoor amenity space;
- Communal interaction could be increased through a reconsideration of the central travel pathways and the addition of more program space for children;
- Review the placement of outdoor patios, as some overlook into bedrooms;

- Consider allocating the Level 1 parking to the heritage and infill houses in order to overcome the confusing pathway to be taken for parking access;
- Appreciation was shown for the retention of the existing trees, given the grading of the site; and,
- Ensure that the soil depth within the central planter would be adequate for the planned Cherry tree that is intended for the space.

The Panel made the following general comments in regards to the application:

- The proposal presents a modern development that is also sentimental to heritage, and well-considered in terms of the transition to the surrounding neighbourhood;
- The leadership demonstrated for Passive House is to be commended;
- Appreciation was shown for the document package, other than the shadow study, which was difficult to read.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the NWDP support the project as presented, taking into consideration the comments provided.

CARRIED.

All members of the Panel present voted in favour of the motion.

4.2 310 Salter Street (Port Royal Phase B)

**DP000760
DVP00653**

Rupinder Basi, Senior Development Planner, summarized the staff report dated November 27, 2018, regarding the proposal for an 87 unit, multiple residential development with three building blocks configured around a central courtyard proposed for 310 Salter Street in Port Royal.

Mr. Basi reviewed the details of the proposal, including the different housing types, exterior hallway feature, unique building materials, location, and site context of the property within the neighbouring developments, and noted the questions that the Design Panel was asked to consider.

Bruce Ramsay, Ramsay Worden Architects, provided a PowerPoint presentation covering the following information:

- The site location and legacy, including historical photographs of the area, natural surroundings and past industrial uses;
- The Port Royal context, in terms of housing types and buildings that have been built or are under construction;
- The Cross Laminated Timber (CLT) construction method proposed for the building;
- Site context, siting and location, with connections and views to the river;
- Provision of walkway to the east of the project and an internal courtyard;

- Design of units, all double-fronting to optimize light and ventilation, with opportunities to expose the wood;
- Details of the residential units, including unit types;
- Illustrative views of elevations, courtyard and outdoor circulation walkways;
- Variances proposed, including relaxations similar to other projects in Port Royal, with buildings situated closer to walkways to provide better CPTED, and elevation drawings to demonstrate height variances proposed;
- Sectional views of courtyard and exterior walkways;
- Colour and materials for each elevation; and,
- Illustration of interiors, indicating the exposure of CLT walls and ceilings.

Alyssa Semczyszyn, Jonathan Losee Ltd, provided a PowerPoint presentation covering the following information about the landscaping:

- The stoops, or front patios, created by the walkways aim to tie together community living;
- The communal pathways look to reflect the most commonly used paths through the outdoor space;
- Details on the children's play areas, gravel path and creek;
- Palette of materials drawn from Port Royal;
- Selection of trees which enable views out into the green;
- Details on community garden plots and amenities;
- Connections to south pathway;
- Community amenity spaces in the public realm; and,
- Photos of material inspirations.

In response to questions from the Panel, Mr. Ramsay and Ms. Semczyszyn provided the following information:

- The bridge at the south end would likely be CLT, and would act as an exit for units on Level 4;
- The angled nature of Block C is aimed at creating space within the courtyard, and also in orienting views from the building out and down to the riverfront;
- The CLT would be visible on the exterior within the soffits;
- In terms of an energy model, there is no requirement from the City, however the project would likely achieve Step 2 or Step 3;
- The public shelter at the end of the walkway would be a simple pavilion, with a CLT panelled roof;
- The exit stairs out of the parking lot would be enclosed and weather protected; and,
- There is currently no accessible path planned from the courtyard to the river walkway.

Discussion ensued and the Panel noted the following comments in relation to the questions asked:

1) Staff seeks input from the NWDP in regards to the project design and building materials/colour palette of the proposed development and how it addresses QCP DPA guidelines.

- Much appreciation was shown for the thoughtful and innovative design of the project in terms of the following aspects:
 - Variety of housing types, in terms of livability for the future residents;
 - Simple, open and successful unit layouts;
 - Cross ventilation, light, and access to the outdoors;
 - Varied elevations and mix of unit types;
 - Timeless colour palette that would blend with the community;
 - Choice of CLT materials, offering a unique and ground-breaking building for the region; and,
- The angle of Block C is a generous element, which gives space to neighbouring buildings, provides privacy to the courtyard and allows for views.

2) Staff seeks input from the NWDP in regards to how the project interfaces with the Queensborough Perimeter Trail and responds to the Salter Street streetscape context.

- The proposed development would add to the completion of Salter Street;
- The proposed development interfaces well with the Queensborough Perimeter Trail; and,
- The gardens would make positive additions at the South of the courtyard.

3) Staff seeks input from the New Westminster Design Panel in regards to the proposed height and setback relaxations, particularly how the design fits within the surrounding built context in regards to height transition and building separation.

- The proposed height of the buildings responds well to the surrounding height context; and,
- The proposed variances and setbacks are easily justifiable in terms of the building's form, character and diversity of housing, and what it offers back to the community.

4) Staff seeks input from the NWDP in regards to the proposed exterior walkways and staircases from a design, weather protection and resident privacy perspective. Also how the walkways relate to the outdoor common courtyard in regards to providing overlook and encouraging social interaction.

- The exterior walkways and South bridgeway are thoughtful and innovative, in that they provide bridges and entry porches to the units;
- The proposed exterior walkaways would provide ventilation and good views for CPTED and livability; and,
- The activation provided by the walkways to the courtyard would be positive and create interaction for the residents.

5) Staff seeks input from the NWDP in regards to the proposed courtyard, community garden, public shelter, and other on-site and off-site landscaping features proposed as part of the project.

- General appreciation was shown for the generously designed courtyard, along with its layout and pathways;
- The addition of an accessible access path to the public trail would be very successful, as the family-friendly unit mix may necessitate accessibility by strollers;
- Consider CPTED issues in reference to the exit stairs from the parkade;
- Consider replacing the vertical screen around the amenity space at the front of the building, as it may feel closed off to the streetscape;
- The public shelter is a convenient addition for the public, however it may need further consideration in terms of being an ideal location idea for nuisance, which may be mitigated through lighting;
- Consider the addition of increased play space for children – whether a playground or larger lawn – as it would likely be highly used;
- The dry streambed is a nice addition, which could perhaps incorporate stormwater management and some stepping stones for extra interest;
- Consider some planting at the South property line to soften the edge and transition into the perimeter trail;
- Consider adding accessibility to the community gardens;
- Consider a more central location for the barbeques as, while optimal for views, it may be a long distance away from the North bank of residences;
- Ensure that privacy and separation are considered for the southeast unit, as this area may see much activity;
- The interior amenity space (at the north of the building) could benefit from an exterior balcony or patio, and this would also help with CPTED for the parking; and,
- Consider the re-location of the bike racks near the lobby, as they are currently obstructing access to the ramp.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the New Westminster Design Panel support the project with the proposed variances and the addition of accessible access to the waterfront trail.

CARRIED.

All members of the Panel present voted in favour of the motion.

5.0 NEW BUSINESS

There were no items.

6.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There were no items.

7.0 CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items.

8.0 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the New Westminster Design Panel will take place on Tuesday, December 11, 2018, in Committee Room #2.

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Certified Correct,

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Meredith Mitchell
Chair

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Heather Corbett
Committee Clerk