



NEW WESTMINSTER DESIGN PANEL

**Tuesday, September 25, 2018, 3:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, City Hall**

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chris Block	- Architectural Institute of BC Representative
Derek Newby	- Architectural Institute of BC Representative
David Roppel	- Development Industry Representative
Sarah Siegel	- BC Society of Landscape Architects
Joey Stevens	- Architectural Institute of BC Representative
Craig West	- Vice-Chair, Architectural Institute of BC Representative

REGRETS:

Meredith Mitchell	- Chair, BC Society of Landscape Architects
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GUESTS:

Phoenix Chan	- van der Zalm + Associates Inc.
Travis Martin	- van der Zalm + Associates Inc.
Doug Massey	- Arcus Consulting Ltd
Jeff Mok	- IBI Group

STAFF:

Mike Watson	- Planner
Heather Corbett	- Committee Clerk

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

1.0 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of July 24, 2018

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT page 4, Question 3, Bullet 3 of the July 24, 2018 New Westminster Design Panel minutes be amended to read “Consider a reduction in the number of plant species in order to respect the minimalist style of the existing landscape;”; and

THAT the July 24, 2018 minutes of the New Westminster Design Panel be adopted, as amended.

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

Procedural Note: Sarah Siegel recused herself due to a conflict of interest with Item 4.1

4.1 810 Agnes Street

**SDP00216
REZ00155**

Mike Watson, Planner, summarized the staff report dated September 25, 2018, regarding the proposal for a 222 unit residential tower at 810 Agnes Street, which would include an underground parking lot, and private amenity space. Additional density has been proposed on this site in exchange for the design and construction of city-owned park space adjacent to the site, and the provision of a public amenity area within the building.

Mr. Watson noted that this project was first reviewed by the Design Panel at the July 24, 2018 meeting and this submission focuses on responses to the panel’s comments. He also requested that the Panel address two additional staff questions noted in the agenda package, regarding the revised parkade entryway, and the building’s conclusion and integration of the elevator and mechanical penthouse.

Jeff Mok, IBI Group, and Sarah Siegel, Hapa Collective, provided a PowerPoint presentation covering the revisions made to the project in response to the Panel’s comments, including the following:

- The design now reflects the 50/50 solid to glass ratio;
- Simplified the rooftop of the building by setting back the handrail;
- Proposed changes to metal panel soffit detail and framed elements;
- Adjustments to the materials palette, including:
 - Use of darker spandrel;

- Introduction of orange spandrel;
- Introduction of white metal panel on framing elements at grade;
- Wood accent trims at doors and iron black brick at base of building;
- Design development of entrances, which takes cues from the industrial nature of the area and repeats at Victoria Street entrance;
- Blackie Street entrance area made more spacious;
- Bike workshop will have equipment provided, such as air compressors and maintenance racks, to ensure it is a well-used space;
- Introduction of more brick to give building more solidity;
- Reconfiguration of loading sequence on Victoria Street to ensure that loading area and parkade is zoned off from pedestrian surfaces
- Comments made in response to the landscaping include the following:
 - Flatter grade areas and resting spaces added up the Blackie Street hill to create a feeling of entrance;
 - Mid-level walkway along townhouse edge and sloped planting added to reduce appearance of Victoria Street wall;
 - Entrance to the park has been re-located further down the hill and a 5% walkway/slope has been added ;
 - Doors have been added to the amenity space to address Victoria Street; and,
 - The type and amount of screening for the park is still to be determined.

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

- The soffit material would be metal, and edges would be in concrete consistently throughout the building until the second floor, where the panels would be white;
- The horizontal metal frame structure at the top of the tower would likely be supported by steel columns attached to the rooftop on an angle;
- Insulation would be added to the existing (typical) insulation on the spandrel, as determined by the energy model;
- The Blackie Street bike shop windows would be slotted windows;
- The landscaping on Blackie Street is proposed as lawn, therefore it would not obscure the building;
- It may be possible to shift the ramp into the park on Victoria Street so that it does not terminate at the garage entrance, however the grades are challenging;
- All white walls on the building are proposed as painted concrete, but on the inside face of the boxes, the wall is proposed as metal panel;
- The only changes that have been made to the roof programming is the removal of the ping pong table and the addition of urban agriculture boxes;
- Planting would be proposed at the edge of the roof once the guard rail is pushed to the back of the parapet; and,
- The planting would be on the outside of the guard rail, and accessible for maintenance.

Discussion ensued and the Panel noted the following comments in relation to each of the Staff questions asked in the September 25, 2018 report:

Staff would appreciate comments from the panel on design of proposed development as well as how the application has responded to the comments from the panel.

- The few changes that have been made to the project are significant aesthetic improvements which address the Panel's previous comments;
- The townhouses proposed for the lane would likely be a difficult place to live;
- The reduction in the perceived mass of walls on Victoria Street are valuable changes, which would help with the public realm; and,
- Consider carrying the metal wall panelling into the balcony boxes rather than painting the concrete in orange.

Comments from the Panel would be appreciated in regards to:

1. *How the pedestrian park access area can be distinguished from the vehicular travel lane off of Victoria Street; and*
2. *How the entry to the park can provide more visual cues to signal the area as an entrance way to a public park;*

- Appreciation was noted for the Victoria and Agnes Street frontages through the use levelling of landscaping and terracing;
- The addition of another step at the 4-5 foot level may be appropriate;
- Appreciation was noted for the addition of the ramp into the park;
- Consider improving the angle of the ramp in order to resolve its adjacency to the parking garage; and,
- As Victoria Street is quite narrow, it may be useful to demarcate the pedestrian area through the use of a colour change in the stonework.

Comments from the panel on the building conclusion and the integration of the mechanical penthouse into the building design would be appreciated.

- Consider further subtlety and integration of the orange penthouse box into the building through the use of framing or colour.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the New Westminster Design Panel support the project as presented with consideration of the following conditions:

- *Develop the park ramp conclusion at the parking garage;*
- *Develop the top of the tower;*
- *Review material use, i.e. use of orange for box at top*

CARRIED.

David Roppel voted in opposition to the motion.

Procedural Note: Sarah Siegel returned to the Panel.

Mike Watson, summarized the staff report dated September 25, 2018, regarding the proposal for a Heritage Revitalization Agreement application and an Official Community Plan Amendment application to allow the development of a child care facility of 114 child care spaces, and the restoration and heritage protection of the West End Methodist Church building, built in 1911. The new building would replace the church annex, and would also include a residential suite for a caretaker, and retail space.

Mr. Watson gave some neighbourhood context and also discussed the questions that the Design Panel was asked to comment on.

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

- Parking accessed at the rear of the building would be for staff use only;
- It is intended that a recessed bay on Sixth Avenue would be re-purposed to allow for drop-offs to occur, in order to minimize traffic in the lane; and,
- As Twelfth Street was largely developed in the 1920s and early 1930s, there is historical precedence for Art Deco buildings on the street, therefore the design guidelines ask for new buildings to refer to a modern interpretation of Art Deco in their design.

Doug Massey, Arcus Consulting Ltd., provided the Panel with information about the proposed building, covering the following information:

- Description of the site conditions, including slope, and self-imposed setbacks;
- Description of the church, of which Donald Luxton & Associates has conducted a heritage conservation report, and the proponents' commitment to the City to retain the inside and outside characteristics;
- Description of the current annex building, which is in great disrepair;
- Details of the transportation study, prepared by Opus Consulting, and accepted by the City, which indicates projected traffic at the daycare and parking spaces;
- Scope of work and programming of all levels and outdoor spaces;
- Confirmation that the design has been submitted to Fraser Health Community Care Licensing and has received preliminary acceptance;
- Material selection, including the use of EIFS to create the proposed Art Deco details and shapes; and,
- Architectural details proposed to ensure that the Church tower remains visible.

Phoenix Chan and Travis Martin, van der Zalm + Associates Inc., provided the Panel with information about the proposed landscaping, covering the following information:

- Details of the existing church yard, where the existing trees would be maintained, and which would become enclosed, with a slide added;
- Details of the front landscaping, which would tie together with the central plaza, and provide ramp access to the church, along with the addition of a bike rack and planting around the building face;
- Details of the existing fencing to be mimicked;
- Details of the top floor play spaces, which were designed based on Fraser Health requirements, including elements for active and creative play, such as:
 - Variation of materials and patterns;
 - Turf area;
 - Sand and water play areas;
 - Planters for trees, bushes and possible urban gardening;
 - Seating areas; and,
 - Chalkboards.

In response to questions from the Panel, Mr. Massey, Ms. Chan, and Mr. Martin provided the following information:

- The proposed operator of the daycare has two other centres in the region;
- The four-storey building to the west is a residential building, and there are no concerns of overlook onto the daycare;
- The first floor of the existing residential building would be covered, with the windows of all other floors exposed;
- The materials to be used on the first floor roof are not known yet;
- The typical sill height proposed is two feet;
- The space between the west wall of the proposed daycare and the existing building would be blocked at the front of the building, however a closure would be put in place at the rear of the building;
- No trellis is currently proposed over the parkade on the west side of the building;
- The balcony space on the fourth floor would be maximized, and would not be impacted by the spires on the front of the building;
- There is a five foot minimum height required for the guard rail on the roof;
- The green space between the lane and the proposed building is currently sod, and would be off site;
- Due to the slope of the site, the single-family residences to the North would be looking at the rear middle of the building;
- The route for moving children from the proposed building to the outdoor green space would be along the front sidewalk, in accordance with the required ratio of children to adults;
- There has been no feedback from Fraser Health about the amount of sunlight available on the roof;

- The ramp from the daycare to the church basement is in place currently to provide accessibility, and runs parallel to the sidewalk; and,
- Stroller parking for parents would be located in the lobby.

Discussion ensued and the Panel noted the following comments in relation to each of the Staff questions asked in the September 25, 2018 report:

Question 1: Comments from the panel in regards to how the setbacks and massing respond to the surrounding context would be appreciated.

- It is difficult to assess and comment on the surrounding context of the building without detailed information, such as sections and elevation drawings;
- Further detail and documentation about the context of the proposed building in relation to the single family residences at the rear, and the residential building to the west would be useful;
- The drawings do not give sufficient details of the views and outlook from the Hunter Heights building on the west wall of the proposed building; and,
- Further detail about the retail context and the street edge would be useful.

Question 2: Comments from the panel on how the new building responds to the asymmetrical massing and the strong vertical element on the church would be appreciated.

- The panel expressed concern about the competition between the proposed elevator tower and the heritage church tower;
- Consider a different type, size or location of the proposed tower, as the massing is greater than that of the church;
- It would be important to maintain the prominence of the church, which could be achieved by lowering the height of the proposed elevator tower or shifting its location;
- Consider the proposed fin elements in the context of the streetscape and hierarchy of elements, as they may be too prominent and compete with the church; and,
- Appreciation was shown for the setback of the daycare entrance in acknowledgement of the church tower.

Question 3: Comments from the panel on the success of the project in interpreting Art Deco design, rather than replication, in a modern building would be appreciated.

- The panel expressed concern with the Art Deco design of the proposed building, noting the following comments:
 - The design has exceeded the requirements of the design guidelines;
 - A more subtle and contemporary approach, with a “tip of the hat” to Art Deco, rather than mimicry, should be considered;

- The Art Deco approach is in conflict with the Arts & Crafts heritage building next door and needs further reconciliation;
- Consider greater transition of the Art Deco into the neighbourhood;
- The Art Deco design does not succeed in portraying that the building would be a daycare;
- A more light-hearted interpretation of the Art Deco, in a modern vein and to reflect the building's use, may provide a more appropriate design for this building;
- The use of modern materials, with more glazing, may help to interpret the design guidelines further;
- Reconsider the fins in the context of the neighbouring church; and,
- The addition of some Art Deco precedence in the design guidelines may have been useful to the proponent.

The Design Panel made other general comments about the project, as follows:

- Appreciation was shown for the use of the building, the proposed provision of daycare, and the building's location;
- Appreciation was shown for the inclusion of retail frontage in the project;
- Appreciation was shown for the incorporation of a Heritage Revitalization Agreement in this project;
- The proposed colour palette is successful in that it is not too bold, and compliments the church;
- The parking considerations seem appropriate, however consideration to proper signage to deter jaywalking and U-turns in front of the property would be appropriate;
- The busy drop off time period before 9am may be a potential traffic and parking concern, in that the daycare is not on the first floor of the building, and parents would need time to go upstairs;
- Further consideration for parents' stroller parking may appropriate;
- The following comments were made on landscaping elements of the proposal:
 - Consider making the area between the church and daycare more inviting and spacious, as this may be an area where people congregate before or after a service;
 - Consider the addition of awnings over the sidewalk outside the retail units, to provide some cover to all patrons of the building;
 - Consider a more generous playground on the east yard of the Church, with more equipment;
 - The natural elements of the play areas could be enhanced to encourage more connection with nature and greater value, i.e. more plants and trees for shade, and a greater amount of play equipment;
 - The Olympic Village rooftop play area (in Vancouver) is a good example if looking for precedence;
 - Consider fruit trees on site and a greater amount of trees along the sidewalk;

- Further examine the ramp and whether a railing is needed for the slope;
- Consider a greater amount of shade structures on the rooftop, as there are significant amounts of sun;
- In terms of the drawing package, it would have been helpful to include further documentation, including sections, elevations and Art Deco precedence in the area; and,
- In the drawings package, the scaling and elevations that were provided were difficult to read, and did not include elevation figures.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the New Westminster Design Panel request the applicant to continue to work with the City's Development Services department and resubmit with consideration of the comments.

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, October 23, 2018, in Council Chambers.

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the meeting was adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Certified Correct,

ORIGINAL SIGNED
Craig West
Chair

ORIGINAL SIGNED
Heather Corbett
Committee Clerk