



NEW WESTMINSTER DESIGN PANEL

Tuesday, June 25, 2019, 3:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, City Hall

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Joey Stevens	- Chair, Architectural Institute of BC Representative
Geoff Lawlor	- Architectural Institute of BC Representative
Fabian Leitner	- Development Industry Representative
Derek Newby	- Alternate Chair, Architectural Institute of BC Representative
Mary Wong	- BC Society of Landscape Architects

REGRETS:

Sarah Siegel	- BC Society of Landscape Architects
Mark Thompson	- Architectural Institute of BC Representative

GUESTS:

Paul Fast	- HCMA Architecture + Design
Chris Phillips	- PFS Studio

STAFF:

Karen Campbell	- Planner
Heather Corbett	- Committee Clerk

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

1.0 HOUSEKEEPING

2.0 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

There were no additions.

3.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

3.1 Adoption of the Minutes of April 23, 2019

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the minutes of the April 23, 2019 New Westminster Design Panel meeting be adopted.

CARRIED.

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

4.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION

There were no items.

5.0 DESIGN REVIEWS

5.1 65 East Sixth Ave

PF007073

Karen Campbell, Planner, summarized the staff report dated June 25, 2019, regarding the proposal to build a new aquatics and community centre at 65 East Sixth Avenue, noting the following details:

- Consultation with the public has been used throughout the process to inform the design and massing of the building, and the facility and site design is continually evolving in response; and,
- A development permit is not required for this site; however, given the importance and scale of the project, Council directed staff to undertake a design review process.

Ms. Campbell reviewed the site location, project description, design objectives, and desired features and intentions for the building, and outlined the questions for the Design Panel to comment on.

Paul Fast, HCMA Architecture + Design, provided a presentation covering the following information regarding the project:

- Site location in broader context of the City;
- Historical context of the Glenbrook ravine and its connection to the project;
- Site constraints, scale of project, and solar orientation of the site;
- Shadow analysis, which helped to locate the playgrounds;
- Site plan, including existing buildings, pedestrian and vehicular access points, and fire hall needs;
- Building program, including childcare, gymnasiums, multi-purpose rooms, lobby, pool and fitness areas;
- Floor plans of each level, and roof forms, designed to maximize light into the facility;
- Elevation drawings and views from each side of the building;
- Exterior and interior materials and glazing concepts;
- Colour palette, which is primarily natural but will also feature an enhancement, such as brass, to represent the building as a jewel within the City;
- Images and views of the indoor areas, including lighting and glazing strategies for the natatorium, and views to the outdoor spaces;
- Environmental and social sustainability targets, including LEED, zero carbon certification and Rick Hansen accessibility certification;

Chris Phillips, PFS Studio, provided the following information regarding the landscaping for the project:

- The importance of recalling the ravine in the landscape design as a unique component of the neighbourhood and the site's history;
- Details of active transportation routes;
- Landscape site plan and programming for all outdoor spaces, including:
 - Childcare and play spaces, intended to be natural in design and material usage;
 - Plaza space outside lobby, designed for circulation and gathering, with weather protection, seating and potential event space;
 - Open lawns, community terrace, outdoor fitness area, and youth zone;
- Details of parking stalls and vehicular circulation on the site;
- Stormwater management plan for the site, including parking swales and roofline;
- Materials and inspiration images, including wood, play elements, natural play features, raingarden and planting; and,
- Lighting plan and safety elements, providing a strong CPTED response.

In response to questions from the Panel, Mr. Fast and Mr. Phillips provided the following information:

- The firehall would be served by three roads, including the front bays on Sixth Avenue, an entrance off McBride Avenue, and from the new aquatic centre's multi-use path when needed;
- Drop-off zones would be available in both parking lots, or parents could park and use the boulevard to accompany children into the building; and,
- A seating area for observing lessons would be located adjacent to the leisure pool.

Discussion ensued and the Panel noted the following comments in relation to each of the Staff questions asked in the June 25, 2019 staff report:

Question 1) Comments from the panel are appreciated on the following:

i. Is the importance of the lobby space successfully reflected in the architectural expression of the facility?

- The lobby is successful and an appropriate structure to tie the building together, particularly when viewed from different angles; and,
- The amount of light drawn in to the lobby by the angle and lift of the roof and glazing is very successful and would likely help to direct focus towards the staircase.

ii. Are the entry expressions (at the North and South lobby) successful from a 'wayfinding' perspective?

- The full wall of glazing successfully stands out as a point of entry;

- The site organization reinforces the building entrance;
- As the entry to the building is glazing, it may benefit from more emphasis, colour or articulation; however, enhanced signage may not be necessary;
- The south entrance appears more formal than the north;
- The play areas at the north entrance would likely serve as a visual stimulant for drawing people in;
- The location of the loading dock at the north entrance could create a sense that the entrance is to be used as a utility or loading entrance, which could be problematic;
- The public spaces on both sides of the building provide for a friendly approach to the lobby.

Question 2) Comments from the panel are appreciated on the following:

i. Do the proposed building form and site design adequately address that the building has multiple fronts?

- The multiple fronts of the building address isolation on the site; and,
- The breaking up of the site into small components is successful.

Question 3) Comments from the panel on the material selection, texture of the materials, material colours and the material detailing are appreciated.

- The proposed palette is suitable to reflect the natural surroundings and ravine and will provide a timelessness to the site;
- The proposed materials are elegant, thoughtful, restrained and confident, and should age nicely; and,
- The proposed brass accents would provide a rich and warm feeling in the common areas – consider allowing people to touch them on a daily basis.

Question 4) Comments from the panel on the quality of the open space proposed are appreciated.

- The public gathering areas are not as significant on the site as compared to the parking and building areas; however they are successful, diverse and applicable to a variety of ages;
- The undulations of the surface within the play spaces are clever and whimsical;
- Regarding the north plaza, the Panel noted the following:
 - Consider making the space more eventful;
 - Consider the height of the wall behind the basketball court in order to protect the loading lane in behind;
 - The space may be used less, and appear sparse, in winter – consider welcoming materials and more greenery, or a shade garden, to provide additional warmth;
- The south plaza leading to the ravine is a powerful space, however it may not receive as much activity as the other outdoor spaces;

- The community terrace of the pool deck may be susceptible to neglect if not used frequently – ensure that its purpose is meaningful; and,
- Consider older demographics and multi-generational programs for use of the outdoor spaces.

The Panel made the following general comments about the proposal:

- The overall design is impressive and to be commended;
- The articulations and angle of the building help to break up the building and maximize the site to allow for play areas;
- The orientation of the building towards a solar approach is strategic; however the amount of glazing may make attaining the desired energy models difficult, and necessitate consideration of cooling strategies;
- The interest in a zero carbon program is commendable;
- The staging of the construction appears to be well-managed through the design;
- The parking appears considerate and reflective of the needs of the building; and;
- The meaningful approach to ecology and the choice of recognizable and local planting choices is commendable.

Mr. Fast noted appreciation for the Panel’s comments, particularly in terms of the lobby glazing, the north plaza and its proximity to the loading area, and the notes regarding demarcation of the north plaza to have more presence.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the New Westminster Design Panel support the application.

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

Tuesday, July 23, 2019, in Council Chambers.

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the meeting was adjourned at 4:12 p.m.

Certified Correct,

Original Signed
Joey Stevens
Chair

Original Signed
Heather Corbett
Committee Clerk