

## **NEW WESTMINSTER DESIGN PANEL**

**Tuesday, September 26, 2017, 3:00 p.m.  
Council Chambers**

### **MINUTES**

#### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Chris Block	- Chair, Architectural Institute of BC Representative
Maria Fish	- BC Society of Landscape Architects
Rodney Maas	- Architectural Institute of BC Representative
Meredith Mitchell	- Vice Chair, BC Society of Landscape Architects
David Roppel	- Development Industry Representative

#### **REGRETS:**

Maranatha Coulas	- Architectural Institute of BC Representative
Craig West	- Architectural Institute of BC Representative

#### **GUESTS:**

Mary Chan-Yip	- PMG Landscape Architects
Denitsa Dimitrova	- PMG Landscape Architects
Paul Fenske	- Ekistics Architecture Inc.
John Saliken	- SUVA Architecture
David Too	- Abbarch Architecture
Tina Matthiesen	- SUVA Architecture

#### **STAFF:**

Mike Watson	- Planner
Jim Hurst	- Development Planner
Heather Corbett	- Committee Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m.

### **1.0 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

#### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the On-Table materials be accepted.*

**CARRIED.**

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

## **2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

### **2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

#### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the minutes of the July 25, 2017 New Westminster Design Panel meeting be approved.*

**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:** Meredith Mitchell recused herself due to a conflict of interest.

### **4.1 1050 Boyd Street – Toyota Dealership (Revised Submission)**

**DPQ00125**

Jim Hurst, Development Planner, summarized the report dated September 26, 2017, noting that the Panel was reviewing the revised submission for a Development Permit Application to construct a new Toyota car dealership building at 1050 Boyd Street.

David Too, Abbarch Architecture, provided a presentation summarizing the architectural design changes provided in response to the Design Panel's previous comments, which included the addition of more fenestration and glazing, and a change of materials to white Alucobond® in order to give all elevations more of a principal façade look, to break up the massing, to improve the pedestrian scale and to eliminate the verticality.

Mary Chan-Yip, PMG Landscape Architects, gave an overview of the landscaping changes to the project, which included the addition of an outdoor amenity area for the public and staff members at the corner intersection, including a new walking trail, seating opportunities and a rain garden, possibly with the inclusion of informative signage about rain gardens.

In response to questions from the Panel, Mr. Too and Ms. Chan-Yip provided the following information:

- There will be no fencing around the site;
- No additional screening for the roof top is planned as this would increase the massing of the building;

- The bus stop is situated further down on the highway on-ramp and it is not possible to move it; and,
- There may be an opportunity for a bus shelter at the stop if the location is suitable for the visibility of potential ads.

Mr. Hurst noted that a review had been conducted of what would be visible on the roof from the overpass and City staff did not press the Applicant on this matter.

Discussion ensued, and the Panel noted the following comments:

- Appreciation was expressed for exploring the Panel's comments with regards to the roof;
- The changes overall are positive and the site will likely have an open feeling with the landscaping and movements of cars and grasses;
- Appreciation was expressed for the design of the amenity space and the choice of trees and landscaping materials;
- The amenity space could be an opportunity for some kind of noise element, which could include an education component along with signage; and,
- The use of Alucobond® and the addition of windows were acknowledged, however it was noted that the northeast frontage still may not have the same level of articulation as the rest of the building.

**MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the Design Panel support the application as presented.*

**DEFEATED.**

David Roppell and Maria Fish voted in opposition of the motion.

**MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the Design Panel support the application with consideration of the comments to further articulate the NE corner elevation.*

**CARRIED.**

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

**4.2 408, 410, and 412 E. Columbia Street**

**REZ00137  
DPS00047**

Mike Watson, Planner, summarized the report dated September 26, 2017, regarding a Rezoning and Development Permit Application to allow a six-storey, mixed use development project with 60 secured market rental housing units, retail space at grade and office space on the second storey, at 408-412 East Columbia Street, with total FSR of 4.54.

Mr. Watson reviewed the background of the project and the questions that the Design Panel were asked to address, and highlighted the following:

- This development supports the City's IDEA Centre initiative; and,
- It is recognized that this applicant submitted their proposal before the implementation of the OCP, and its associated design guidelines, and they have been asked to address the design guidelines as much as possible.

John Saliken and Tina Matthiesen, SUVA Architecture, provided a presentation summarizing details of the development, as outlined in Appendix A in the agenda package, covering the project context and details, elevation drawings, floor plans, cross-sections, landscaping details, shadow studies and parking plans, noting the following:

- The development adheres to the required number of parking spaces with the provision of 47 stalls for residential, 13 for retail and 34 for commercial;
- The parking strategy includes accessible stalls; car share stalls, 74 bike stalls, and end-of-trip facilities;
- The elevation drawings demonstrate the high-end materials which will wrap around the building and continue at the back of the building;
- This building is the first of the "Great Street" intended for East Columbia in the Master Transportation Plan and OCP; and,
- The residential balconies have been designed with a mixture of opaque and clear glass in order to find a balance in providing privacy from the street up and clarity from within the building.

Denitsa Dimitrova, PMG Landscape Architects reviewed the landscape architecture for the development, including the rooftop amenity and the design for the rear lane.

In response to questions from the Panel, Mr. Saliken, Ms. Matthiesen and Ms. Dimitrova provided the following information:

- The bedroom windows are not located on exterior walls because the premise is to keep to a certain scale and size in order to achieve affordable market rental – the units proposed allow for one bedroom with lots of light;
- There are 12 adaptable units proposed in the plans – these include the three-bedroom units, the two-bedroom units and eight one-bedroom units;
- The canopy will likely be cantilevered steel with a roof membrane;
- It is not possible to extend the 1 metre canopy over the retail because of the property line, unless an easement with the Engineering Department can be negotiated;
- The office and residential spaces would share the elevator, which would have controlled access through the use of fobs;
- There will be a design-built irrigation system on the top of the building;
- Any areas used for trees will be mounded in order to allow for adequate soil volumes;

- The retaining wall will likely be made from Allan Block or similar;
- No acoustical studies have been conducted yet in terms of the mechanical equipment on the roof;
- The depth of the front balcony will be 42” plus the depth of the structure;
- The front of the balconies will be glass;
- The shading models portray the mechanical box and the stairs and roof overruns;
- The residential parking stalls would go to half-way on P3, and there would be a gate on P3, in order to include some secured stalls for office workers;
- The parking gate would be open during retail business hours and after-hours access would be via secure fob entry;
- The interior visitor stalls would be accessed via an intercom phone system after-hours and the visitor stalls on the lane would always be available;
- The Modo parking would be located on the lane and available 24/7 to both building occupants and to the community;
- Building height has been limited in consideration of the transition to single detached dwellings to the east.
- There have been updates to the drawings in terms of the materials – generally what is white is stucco and what is brown is wood panel; and,
- The side elevations were not included in this package.

Discussion ensued and the Panel noted the following comments in relation to each of the questions asked in the September 26, 2017 staff report:

*Question 1: Staff would like to obtain preliminary feedback from the NWDP in regards improving the relationship of the proposed building to East Columbia Street while at the same time ensuring a suitable setback for the upper levels of the building (above the second floor office level)*

- The setbacks are appropriate; and,
- The relationship to the streetfront is well planned, however a wider canopy extension for weather protection and to encourage use would be beneficial.

*Question 2: Staff seeks input from the NWDP in regards to the overall scale, massing, and proposed materials of this proposal and how the development can best fit with the size of the property and the surrounding neighbourhood context.*

- From the rear lane, the massing may be overbearing for the single family houses behind the development;
- It is recognized that the scale and massing is big in comparison to the rest of the block in its current context;
- The ground level commercial will add to the street and fits with the current context;
- It would be worthwhile to look at the edges of the materials to ensure maintenance of quality; and,

- In terms of materials, it may be worthwhile to look to the Brewery District for inspiration, as it has set the bar in the area with use of brick, metal panels and articulated concrete.

*Question 3: Staff seeks input from the NWDP in regards to how the ground-level commercial and second level office are defined so that they stand out from the upper levels of the proposed building.*

- The use of different materials or methods may help the office level stand out from the residential space above.

*Question 4: Staff seeks input from the NWDP in regards to proposed vertical and horizontal design elements and how these contribute to the overall design of the building. Staff also seeks input in regards to how the residential and office entry is defined from the rest of the building/commercial retail units at grade.*

- Appreciation was expressed for the use of the vertical black fin and the wood grain boxes; and,
- Varying the height of the ground floor and reflecting that at the top of the building may help to minimize the squareness of the mass and the sheer horizontality at the top of the building.

*Question 5: Staff seeks input from the NWDP in regards to the design of the rear elevation of the building*

- The rear elevation wall will be very blank and dark from the residential point of view, and may benefit from more articulation or softening with the use of vegetation; and,
- 3D views of the rear elevation would be helpful for visualization of how it would appear to the rear neighbours.

*Question 6: Staff seeks input from the NWDP in regards to the proposed rear setback of the building (at lower and upper levels)*

- The rear of the building should be set back as far as possible from the residential area.

*Question 7: Staff seeks input from the NWDP in regards to how the design of the building addresses privacy concerns (given that the building will be facing rear yards), and potential sun and shape impacts of the six storey form.*

- Privacy concerns have been addressed appropriately at the front elevation with opaque glass;
- The balconies overlooking the single-family residential properties are of concern, however, this is more of a policy issue; and,
- Clearer drawings are requested indicating the shadowing of the roof elements, and how these impact the light in the back yards of the rear neighbours.

*Question 8: Staff seeks input from the NWDP in regards to how this proposal addresses the streetscape along East Columbia Street (Great Street) in regards to providing a vibrant, animated, and pedestrian-oriented streetscape.*

- The proposed development will be an improvement to the street; and,
- The developer is encouraged to look at the design of the one metre canopy to ensure it provides sufficient cover over the sidewalk.

Further general comments were noted by the Design Panel:

- Appreciation was expressed for the general design of the building;
- The building may benefit from an interior amenity space;
- Separate elevators would provide increased security for the three building uses;
- Further clarity is requested on how the one bedroom units are considered accessible;
- The tree that is shown at the top of the building on the elevation drawing is not accurate, although a tree overhang may be a nice addition to the building;
- While a pleasant addition, the plants that are shown on the balconies of the rental units (on the elevation drawing) will not necessarily be present; however they do illustrate that plants could add a greening and softening effect to the front of the building;
- The proposed rooftop garden will be an excellent amenity, however the following comments were made:
  - The dog relief is an interesting addition, not typically seen on a roof;
  - Adequate drainage will be required to ensure dog waste drains directly into the building's sewage line;
  - A tool shed on the roof would be a welcome addition;
  - Ensure that mounding soil is shown in the drawings;
  - The walls may be used for leaning against and a different material which creates a softer edge would work well;
  - If a track is to be included, consider including subtle markers for users to keep count of laps;
- The blue oat grass proposed for the ground floor planting is not very durable – lavender could be a good replacement;
- The end-of-trip facilities will be useful, however it would be worth exploring how they could be more inviting, as they seem dark in their present location;
- Further clarity is requested on the stairs at the rear of the building, which lead up from the parking garage – if the intention is that they are open air they could be at risk for garbage accumulation and graffiti; and,
- Although there are many elements to include in this building, it would be interesting to see some breaking up of the visual mass.

**MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the Applicant resubmit with consideration of the Design Panel's comments.*

**CARRIED.**

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

**Procedural Notes:**

David Roppel recused himself due to a conflict of interest and left at 4:30 p.m.

Meredith Mitchell returned to the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

**4.3 41 and 175 Duncan Street: Official Community Plan Amendment and Rezoning to allow a 170 Unit Townhouse Development**

**OCP00020**

**REZ00136**

**DPQ00140**

Jim Hurst, Development Planner, summarized the report dated September 26, 2017, regarding an Official Community Plan Amendment and Rezoning to allow a 170 unit townhouse development at 41 and 175 Duncan Street.

Mr. Hurst reviewed the questions that the Design Panel were asked to address, as well as the proposed OCP and zoning amendments, explaining that one part of the site, which is currently designated as industrial, would be re-designated to residential, and another portion of the site would be re-designated for daycare use.

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

- The design for the daycare centre does not form part of this submission and will come forward at a future date.

Paul Fenske, Ekistics Architecture Inc. (on behalf of Anthem Properties) provided a presentation summarizing details of the development, as outlined in Appendix A in the agenda package, covering the site and architecture concepts, the proposed Queensborough OCP land use and zoning designation, illustrative concept plans, architectural precedent images and renderings of the proposed development.

Mary Chan-Yip, PMG Landscape Architects, outlined the landscape design, covering the site plan, pedestrian walkways, common areas, plant schedule, and the buffering green spaces along the site's edges.

Jim Hurst also discussed the railway activity in the area, stating that one train a week uses the railway line adjacent to the proposed development.

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

- A retaining wall at the edge of the train tracks on Duncan Street has been proposed, along with a pedestrian barrier;
- If trees are to be planted between the train tracks and the walkway on Duncan Street, their location would be determined by the City;
- On Furness St., the lawns would slope up towards the houses from the walkway, necessitating small retaining walls;
- The width of the planting bed between the industrial area and “The Yard” walkway is planned to be 3 metres;
- The eight-unit strip on Furness St. has no street trees proposed because the landscape strips between the driveways will not be sufficiently wide for planting;
- For buildings 26-29, the side would be comprised of fibre cement board with very limited openings in order to emphasize the use of public and common areas;
- The outdoor space in the majority of the units would be adjacent to the front door and the depth is planned as 13 feet;
- The walkways going through the main spine of the property would be 1.5 metres wide;
- The sidewalks are all planned at 1.5 metres wide in the development;
- The public walkways (Spur line, Western Walk, Riverfront walk) are planned at 3 metres wide;
- On the Northwest corner of the property, the riverfront townhomes have a private walkway to allow for visitors to approach the front door;
- The porches of the buildings on Duncan St. would lead to the front door and entrance;
- Garbage access to the units would be via the loop road, and picked up by the City’s Engineering Services department at each unit individually;
- There are 32 onsite visitor parking spaces distributed throughout the site;
- Post boxes are indicated by the dark red areas on the Circulation plan;
- The acoustical sound fence listed in the drawings at the Western edge is planned as a 2 metre concrete style fence;
- Only conceptual and general indoor-outdoor relationship plans have been provided to the Design Panel because floor plans for this development are not yet finalized;
- The end units of the mews townhomes will have secondary entrances into the garage off the porch;
- The material for the lookouts located by the dyke will be plank pavers, which are made from concrete, but are symbolic of wood decking and are sturdy enough for dyke maintenance vehicles and cyclists;
- The intent of the pavers at the central commons is that they will extend out into water;

- Ceanothus Sanguineus is a native species which grows to 3-5 ft. and would be planted at the shoreline; and,
- The strata council would be responsible for organizing the snow clearing for the development.

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

- There is a covenant registered whereby if the train crossing needs to be signalized, it will be at the expense of the applicant;
- An analysis of the view for the train engineer will need to be conducted, however if the train engineer believes that they need to whistle, they will; and,
- The majority of the whistles heard from this development will be from the Ewen Ave crossing.

Discussion ensued and the Panel noted the following comments in relation to each of the questions asked in the September 26, 2017 staff report:

*Question 1: The project has 170 units. Is there enough variation in the architectural presentation to ensure that the project is not monotonous?*

- There is sufficient variation of architecture, and it is in keeping with the architectural language of Queensborough;
- The architecture is attractive and has a simplicity of design, with nice variation and colours;
- On the Furness Street side, the second storey windows appear “monumental” and there will be a need to ensure that they mesh with the houses across the street; and,
- The ridgeline of the houses is continuous all the way across, but could be articulated further.

*Question 2: In a number of instances the proposed buildings do not achieve the separations identified in the RT-3 zone. Are the separations proposed sufficient to satisfy the intent of the bylaw?*

- The separations were not very clear in the drawings, but became clearer after discussion, and are acceptable;
- The porches work well and will be a good addition to keep “eyes on the street”;
- Site lines appear to be clear for CPTED purposes; and,
- Further information is requested to allow the Panel to comment on the setbacks and understand the entry to the buildings, including how the front entrances meet the end units within the mews.

*Question 3: The west end of the site is adjacent to an active industrial area. Are the setback, materials, orientation of the buildings and landscaping of the site sufficient to provide a meaningful buffer to the units adjacent to the industrial site?*

- The attenuation fence will be a necessity for the area adjacent to the industrial area, and further details are desired on the wall and the edge treatment adjacent to the industrial site;
- It was suggested to perhaps increase the 10 foot buffer to a wider area;
- It would be useful to see details and building plans along the buffer area to gain a better understanding of the orientation of the bedrooms facing the area;
- It would be worthwhile to examine the spacing of the trees by the buffer so that the species are alternated from the planting across the street; and,
- An increase in the buffer planting is suggested as it may not appear as wide in the winter time.

*Question 4: Does the project conform to the Development Permit Area Guidelines?*

- In general, the proposed development conforms with the Development Permit Area Guidelines;
- The guidelines specify no vinyl siding on buildings, and this type of siding is listed as a material in the plans for the development; and,
- Brick, wood and stone are recited as suggested materials in the guidelines, however these do not appear in the plans for the development.

Further general comments were noted by the Design Panel:

- It is positive to see the continued expansion of Queensborough with this project;
- Appreciation was expressed for the amount of trees planned for the site, however care should be taken to ensure there will be sufficient space for planting the trees down the mews, and soil volumes will be adequate for the amount of planting;
- Appreciation was expressed for the quantity and design of the common spaces and river outlooks;
- The internal pathway at the Northwest corner of the development could be reconsidered so that the front doors open to the public path;
- With the postal boxes situated in a public area, they may be subject to vandalism and it would be worth checking with Canada Post about their preferred location;
- Trees along the train track walkway would be an excellent addition, however a hedge may be more practical from the train operator's point of view;
- More details are desired on the historical context features that are mentioned in the plans for the commons;

- At the Duncan St. entrance, it appears that there are inconsistencies between the plans and the landscape drawings with reference to the stairs;
- The drawings were difficult to read due to the resolution; and,
- The landscape plans were not coordinated with architectural plans, in particular with reference to the placement of doors.

**MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the New Westminster Design Panel support the application and recommend the Applicant address the comments noted by the Panel for the next submission.*

**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**

- 8.1 The next meeting of the New Westminster Design Panel will take place on Tuesday October 24, 2017, in Council Chambers.

**9.0 ADJOURNMENT**

**ON MOTION**, the meeting was adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

Certified Correct,

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**Chris Block**  
Chair

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**Heather Corbett**  
Committee Clerk