



NEW WESTMINSTER DESIGN PANEL

Tuesday, October 23, 2018, 3:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, City Hall

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Meredith Mitchell	- Chair, BC Society of Landscape Architects
Chris Block	- Architectural Institute of BC Representative
Derek Newby	- Architectural Institute of BC 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:

David Roppel	- Development Industry Representative
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GUESTS:

Karla Castellanos	- KCC Architecture and Design Ltd
Mary Chan	- PMG Landscape Architects
Denitsa Dimitrova	- PMG Landscape Architect
Thomas Grimwood	- Grimwood Architecture + Urban Design
Peter Huggins	- Burrowes Huggins Architects
Duff Marrs	- Burrowes Huggins Architects
Xuedong Zhao	- Zhao XD Architect Ltd.

STAFF:

Hardev Gill	- Planning Technician
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

Emilie Adin introduced herself as the Director of Development Services and thanked the committee for their service to the NWDP.

2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of September 25, 2018

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the September 25, 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

4.1 837 - 841 Twelfth Street

DPT00023

Mike Watson, Planner, summarized the staff report dated October 23, 2018, regarding the proposal for a six-storey wood-frame multiple unit residential building at 837 - 841 Twelfth Street. The proposed building would consist of 31 residential units and would be built as an energy efficient building to BC Energy Step Code Level 4.

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 rationale for additional density in this project comes from the provision of Step Code Level 4 in the building; and,
- The main entrance of the building would likely be on Dublin Street.

Xuedong Zhao, Zhao XD Architect Ltd. and Denitsa Dimitrova, PMG Landscape Architect, provided the Panel with the following information regarding the project:

- The concept of the building being the first six storey in the neighbourhood, and the design aiming to break the building down visually, following the City's guidelines;
- The energy savings of the proposed Step 4 building;
- The design principles used on the project;
- Landscaping details, including:
 - An outdoor amenity area with activities for different age groups;
 - Children's play space;
 - Seating areas within the streetscape;

- Townhouse patios;
- Two bike racks; and,
- Fencing.

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

- The entries to the townhouses are proposed for the second floor so that they can be accessed by the elevator and from the underground parking;
- The code implications of the project, including the scissor stairs, were examined by a code consultant;
- The easy-trim system would be used for all panel joints;
- The slate on the ground floor is a veneer that would be used for the rain screen;
- The townhouses are two storey units;
- There is an arborist on the project, and it is proposed to retain the two existing trees on the property, with a protection fence surrounding them;
- The existing trees on the property are sumac, red maple and fruiting cherry;
- The soffit material is proposed as aluminum or vinyl, in a neutral colour such as beige;
- The open parking area would include lighting and security cameras in order to address CPTED issues;
- Updates have been made to the design in regards to insulation and airtightness in order to achieve Step Code 4 requirements;
- The grading and elevation of the parking ramp are tight, however the proportions should be acceptable for car access;
- The edge of the parking slab goes to the property line therefore there would be no space for planting in front; and,
- The columns in the parking area are wing-style in order to support the visual elements above.

Discussion ensued and the Panel noted the following comments in relation to each of the Staff questions asked in the October 23, 2018 report:

Question 1: Comments from the panel regarding the interface of the building with the surrounding streets would be appreciated.

- Expression and acknowledgement of the townhouses and their activation with the street could be much stronger along Twelfth Street;
- Consider further integration and activation of the Twelfth Street patios into the townhouses and possibly enlarging the patios;
- The frontage of the townhouses could be more generous given the scale of street;
- Consider further activation or buffering of the exposed parking area and laneway;
- The buffering of Dublin Street with the children's play area is successful;

- The lifting and positioning of the townhouses behind screening works successfully;
- Review the orientation of the seating proposed on the Northwest corner of the development for privacy, because it currently would look into the building;
- The recessed design of the entrance on Dublin Street does not give a sense of entry or appear well demarcated;
- Consider making the Dublin Street entrance more prominent, particularly if the property would have a Dublin Street address; and,
- Reconsider the use of a sunken lobby door, as it could provide a hiding space and a CPTED issue.

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.

- Concern was expressed about the proposed 6-storey height of the building beside the single storey dwellings;
- While the proposed building's proximity to the neighbouring single-family homes has been addressed through articulation and stepping, it still appears out of proportion, and has an impact on the adjacent properties;
- The solar diagrams included in the package indicate a heavy loss of daylight and significant impact on the adjacent single family back yards due to the building's height and massing;
- Consider investigation into how to reduce the building's height, massing and shadow impact;
- The blocky nature of the design exacerbates the overall massing of the building;
- Explore softening the edges of the building in order to temper the massing;
- Some design choices artificially increase the height and massing, such as the blocky nature of the design and the framing elements;
- More analysis on the Step Code 4 impacts would have been a useful addition, e.g. the window to solid ratios;
- Watch for overlook from the balconies onto the single family properties;
- The addition of street trees may help with the building's transition into the neighbourhood; and,
- The design does not appear to recall the Art Deco character as referenced in the Design Guidelines.

Question 3: Comments from the panel regarding the proposed materials, proposed texture of the materials and the material detailing would be appreciated.

- The slate finish alongside the glazing tends to make the building appear like it has a retail use;
- Consider the use of trim around the windows and more detailing to help enliven the slate;

- Brick veneer, wood or masonry may be better suited to the intent of the design guidelines than slate;
- Some simplification of the colour striping may help to tone down the look and feel of the building;
- Consider a reduction in the use of hardy panel, or the use of a material that would break it up, such as metal;
- Consider the panel joints and how they would impact the look of the building;
- Suggest that more resolution and rationale be applied to how the beige and red colours are used on the building;
- Reconsider the use of the orange/red colour in the top of the tower, as it makes the corner appear more prominent;
- Further consideration should be given to how the colours line up with the windows and panel joints; and,
- A simpler colour design may help with the building's transition into the neighbourhood.

Question 4: Comments from the panel regarding the building and landscaping interface on the lane (south) side of the property would be appreciated.

- The Panel emphasized the importance of CPTED principles on the lane and the need to ensure that plenty of light and surveillance would be present;
- The loading at the lane appears as though it may be difficult or tight to maneuver;
- It may be worthwhile to remove the shrubs hiding the PMT so as not to provide a hiding spot/CPTED issue;
- Reconsider the bike rack located near the recycling area, as it would be hidden from view and a prime location for theft; and,
- More detailed drawings and elevations may have been helpful to evaluate the adjacent buildings and the impact of the loading area.

Question 5: Comments from the panel regarding the open space proposed by the applicant would be appreciated.

- The amenity space seems appropriate given the size of the building;
- The side amenity area may be very shady, therefore consideration of a rooftop patio may be valuable;
- The amenity area may not be the best location for outdoor dining due to the shadiness of the space;
- It may be worthwhile to consider a trellis to separate the amenity area from the parking area;
- Consider the inclusion of a window in the elevator lobby to create more eyes on the open space area;
- Appreciation was shown for the placement of the children's' play space, in that it is adjacent to the porch and would have a nice relationship to the neighbouring houses;

- A re-location of the dog relief area may be useful;
- The proposed wing columns in the open space are notable, however they may provide hiding spaces and CPTED issues;
- Consider the inclusion of more planting along the walkway separating the building from the neighbouring property, as grasses provide little buffer;
- Consider the use of different paving patterns in the open spaces; and,
- Consider the incorporation of an interior amenity space, even if a small room.

The proponents made some further comments regarding the future make-up of the neighbourhood and the aim to balance the height of this proposal with the future development of the area.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the project return for review by the New Westminster Design Panel, taking into consideration the comments provided.

CARRIED.

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

4.2 41 Duncan Street (Child Care)

DP000751

Hardev Gill, Planning Technician, summarized the staff report dated October 23, 2018, regarding the proposal for the shell of a commercial two-storey building on a future city-owned lot. The proposed building would be used for childcare of 37 children, operated by a non-profit organization. The proposed floor space ratio is 0.55, with site coverage of 34.66%, including two designated playground areas, at the North and Southeast of the property. The development requires six off-street parking spaces, three of which would be on the subject site and three on the townhouse site which would be accessible for child care use from 6am to 7pm on weekdays.

Mr. Gill provided further information on the proposed site context within the surrounding neighbourhoods, and the location within the townhouse complex. He also noted that the building would be constructed to meet floodplain requirements and will be seeking Council exemption from LEED. Lastly, Mr. Gill reviewed the questions that the Design Panel was asked to consider.

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

- The Panel is being asked to comment on both the interior and exterior of the building;
- The entire site was previously re-zoned for housing and daycare, and Anthem Properties contributed a lot to the City for the daycare's use;
- Anthem Properties is responsible for building the structure; and,
- The accurate geodetic point is 4.2, which will be reflected on the new drawings; and,

- The drop-off area for the daycare along Furness Street is still under review by the City's Transportation division but would be finalized before consideration by Council.

Peter Huggins and Duff Marrs, Burrowes Huggins Architects, and Mary Chan, PMG Landscape Architects, provided a PowerPoint presentation including the following information:

- The building has been designed to accommodate licensing requirements for two groups of children, including stipulations in regards to both indoor and outdoor spaces per child;
- Form of building derived for larger group on top floor and smaller group on bottom floor, with both levels of space able to operate independently of each other;
- Building designed to address frontages, including the gateway into the townhouse complex and from the river;
- Playgrounds providing least impact on surrounding buildings;
- Pick-up and Drop off areas on Furness Street;
- East-facing entry with visual connections to both playgrounds;
- Daycare operator may want to look at some changes, however the shell of the building would accommodate licensing requirements;
- Layouts and floor space;
- Cross sections of the building;
- Elevation details of entrances, roof and materials within the setting;
- Details of materials, such as wood, cladding and glazing;
- Landscaping designed to blend in with Riverwalk complex;
- Street trees included to tie in with street edge;
- Landscape buffer of 4.5m provided to increase separation of the neighbouring duplex from the daycare;
- Details of planting, which compliments with adjacent properties;
- Selection of play pieces, although these would likely be selected by final operator;
- Play spaces secured with 6ft high aluminum fence;
- Surface detailing of parking spaces; and,
- Details of lighting at front and side of buildings to accommodate CPTED.

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

- The implications of the higher geodetic point is that a retaining wall may be added bordering the south playground;
- In order to gain the additional geodetic height, the entire building would be raised;
- The southeast corner of the duplex to the west of the proposed building would be screened from the parking stalls by planting;

- The transformer currently proposed by the front entrance needs to be in the proposed location, and moving it would be up to the City's Electrical Department;
- The fence proposed around the playgrounds would be metal picket;
- It is intended that the exterior canopy on the second floor would be used, however as licensing regulations are complex in terms of outside space and guard rails, it would likely be used for a staff break area;
- The soffit materials would be a tongue and groove wood product;
- The roof material would be an SBS roofing system; and,
- The provision of only one exit in the proposed building is compliant with the BC Building Code.

Discussion ensued and the Panel noted the following comments in relation to the staff request for general comments from the NWDP in regards to the overall design of the proposed development:

- The project was commended as a handsome, modest and distinct building which indicates its use as different from the surrounding townhouses;
- The building itself is well-composed in that the proportions and scaling fit well with the townhouse development;
- The massing, colour and material of the building are all successful;
- The package was clear, easy to understand and well-presented;
- Appreciation was shown for the forethought in incorporating the licensing requirements into the building design;
- Seeing as this is a City-owned building, it is disappointing not to see a LEED building;
- If not LEED, the building should be built at a higher Step Code than proposed;
- In terms of materials, the tactile wood along the playground and on the ground floor where children would play is appropriate and a nice addition;
- It may be appropriate to add some degree of security on the second level where the elevator opens out, but this may be addressed at the tenant fit-out stage;
- The addition of some exterior space on the second floor provide additional space that is lost by accommodating the LPT at the front of the building;
- Resolution is needed of the drop off/pickup zones and parking spaces available, especially with the lack of sidewalks in the area; and,
- As the daycare would likely be used by local residents, there may be a significant amount of walking to the daycare, therefore the need for sidewalks and/or a pedestrian crossing would be important.

Comments in regards to landscaping:

- No issues with the setbacks, as they are appropriate given the siting and the building fits in with the townhouse development;

- Consider replacing the low shrubs with taller, more evergreen planting as a buffer around the play area, at the street corner;
- The north facing playground is a good location for a playground and would have a nice outlook, however it would likely receive a significant amount of sunlight – the drawing package could have better shading analysis to analyze this;
- Consider alternatives to the picket fencing so that it may be possible to see out to the water;
- Consider adding some soft planting with verticality, such as a vine to soften the look of the six foot fence at the entry;
- The location of the LPT at the main entry may create a CPTED issue, therefore consider re-locating the LPT, or screen it with plant material, such as a yew hedge,
- If planting will line the pedestrian path side, consider planting which would provide shade;

The Panel noted that they were content for the project to move forward in the Planning department's processes, but that it could return to Design Panel at the discretion of Planning staff.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the New Westminster Design Panel support the project subject to discussion with planning staff on the following items:

- *Flood level datum;*
- *Clarification regarding pick-up and drop-off and parking along Furness Street; and,*
- *Location of Low-Profile Transformer (LPT).*

CARRIED.

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

4.3 800 Boyd Street (Mini Storage)

DPQ00167

Hardev Gill, Planning Technician, summarized the staff report dated October 23, 2018, regarding the proposal for the construction of a new mini-storage building, including landscaping improvements, at 800 Boyd Street, and noted that this project had already been reviewed by the NWDP on March 27, 2018 and July 24, 2018. Mr. Gill asked the Panel to make comments on the application, taking into consideration the original questions posed and how the applicant had addressed the Panel's previous comments.

Karla Castellanos, KCC Architecture and Design Ltd., noted that the Panel's previous comments had been taken into consideration, and made the following comments:

- The tower would be the first development on the block, so there is no comparison to be made to the project in terms of precedent;

- The revisions to the proposal include:
 - Reduction in tower height by 7 feet;
 - Revised width to 14 foot 6 inches;
 - Change in materiality;
 - Deleted caretaker unit;
- The reasoning behind the proponent's desire for the tower is as follows:
 - It is a response to the two rules of business strategy for storage facilities: visibility and location;
 - The tower would be a landmark in the Queensborough retail area, which has seen a recent decrease in popularity, evidenced by high vacancy rates in Queensborough Landing;
 - One of the main purposes of the tower is to be seen from the bridge, and from altitude;
 - There are other tower precedents for the use of marketing in Queensborough, such as Starlight Casino and the Toyota dealership currently being built; and,
- The landscaping remains largely the same as in March, with the addition of a pedestrian crossover of Boyd Street, which would require some steps.

In response to questions from the Panel, Ms. Castellanos provided the following information:

- The removal of the Caretaker suite was taken out a programming decision;
- With the exception of the tower, the roof will be a tilt-up construction;
- The signage application is a separate entity, which is under City review; and,
- There would be signs facing Boyd Street and the Queensborough bridge.

Discussion ensued and the Panel noted the following comments in relation to the staff request for feedback on how the applicant has responded to the NWDP's previous comments in regards to the redesign of the tower.

- Given the client's preference for the tower, the design changes are an improvement, as it fits better with the scale of the neighbourhood
- The reduced tower is much more in proportion with the building;
- Consider revisiting how framing and soffits are treated;
- The caretaker suite removal has made the arch expression cleaner; and,
- The proposed pathway is a good addition as people may park across the street from the storage company and it may encourage the City to improve the street frontage.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the New Westminster Design Panel support the project as presented.

CARRIED.

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

Procedural Note: Meredith Mitchell recused herself due to a conflict of interest with Item 4.4. Craig West assumed the Chair.

4.4 34 South Dyke Road

DPQ00178

Hardev Gill, Planning Technician, summarized the staff report dated October 25, 2018, regarding the proposal for a sixteen unit ground-oriented townhouse development organized into two separate buildings in Queensborough.

Mr. Gill reviewed the details of the proposal, including the location, site context, lot conditions and separations, re-zoning requirements, and policy context of the proposal, and noted the questions that the Design Panel was asked to consider.

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

- The pier that is included in the drawings is part of the foreshore lot and used by the operating marina;
- The intention is to extend the pedestrian boardwalk to the eastern property line and make improvements to the waterline; and,
- As part of the development, the property would be divided into three separate areas: Lot 1 (the development); Lot 2 (dedicated to the City) and Lot 3 (water lot).

Thomas Grimwood, Grimwood Architecture + Design, and Meredith Mitchell, M2 Landscape Architecture, provided a PowerPoint presentation including the following information:

- The proposal is the third phase of an overall development and has been designed to be consistent with the first two phases;
- Drawings and elevations in context of the other developments;
- Context photos and aerial view of the site, showing interior drive aisle;
- View and image of South Dyke road;
- Grading and stepping diagrams;
- Diagram of roof decks and private outdoor spaces;
- Project data and requested variances;
- Floor plans of unit types;
- Details of materials and precedent images showing context and marine feel;
- Landscaping details; and,
- Design of pathways and patio space taking into consideration the public right-of-way.

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

- Fire access would be provided from South Dyke Road;
- Garbage pickup would occur along Tony lane, similar to the other two phases;
- The landscape treatment of the north side of the north units would be open concept grass, with no fencing;
- The fencing between the roof spaces is proposed as 5 foot cedar partition fencing;
- The interconnection between roof fences is required to provide for detritus clearance from decking;
- The covered roof areas are four foot wide;
- The intent with the hardy panels is to show the painted reveal and conceal the fastener;
- Inside the right-of-way, paths and plantings are permitted;
- A retaining wall would not be allowed within the right-of-way;
- The marina will not be publicly accessible, but the owner will be made aware of public security;
- The north side of the building would be facing another development; and,
- The long term plan for the public path to the right of development is currently under review by the City.

Discussion ensued and the Panel noted the following comments in relation to each of the Staff questions asked in the October 23, 2018 report:

Question 1: Staff seeks input from the NWDP in regards to how this proposal addresses the streetscape along South Dyke Road in regards to providing a safe and attractive development and connectivity between the public and private realm. Also how the project responds to the waterfront exposure.

- Appreciation was shown for the comprehensive drawing package, in particular the aerial views;
- Appreciation was shown for the clean, contemporary approach to the project design and material selection;
- The proposed development makes sense within its context, and with a nod to the maritime environment;
- The landscape design provides a simple, modern and practical approach to the environment and the constraints of the land use;
- The stepping of the building and townhouse arrangement works well and provides a considered cadence to the façade;
- Regarding the open area at the north side of the building: rather than lawn, other options for the space could include paving, planted ferns, or storage areas;
- The backside of the building would likely be a great rec area for children;

- The south facing lawn addresses the street well, and will provide a nice view for future residents;
- Appreciation was expressed for the tree sizes and placement along the dyke;
- Consider the use of a different tree from dogwood on the dyke, as the winds can be strong enough to cause damage; and,
- Continuity of the pedestrian path from the east would be excellent.

Question 2: Staff seeks input from the NWDP in regards to the design elements of the proposed rooftop decks i.e. wind impact, durability of materials, and maintenance.

- The rooftop decks are nicely proportioned, and benefit from the proposed covered area and the resulting protection of the access door;
- Consider replacing the cementitious wood-like material; and
- Consider the use of some rooftop screening to eliminate the view to and from adjacent buildings.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the New Westminster Design Panel support the project as presented.

CARRIED.

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

Procedural Note: Meredith returned to the Panel and resumed Chair.

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, November 27, 2018, in Council Chambers.

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the meeting was adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

Certified Correct,

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Meredith Mitchell
Chair

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Heather Corbett
Committee Clerk