

## **NEW WESTMINSTER DESIGN PANEL**

**Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.**

**Meeting held electronically under Ministerial Order No. M192/2020 and the current Order of the Provincial Health Officer – *Gatherings and Events***

### **MINUTES**

#### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Taichi Azegami	- Architectural Institute of BC (AIBC) Representative
Achim Charisius	- Architectural Institute of BC (AIBC) Representative
Bryce Gauthier	- BC Society of Landscape Architects (BCSLA) Representative
Brad Howard	- Urban Development Institute (UDI) Representative
Caroline Inglis	- Architectural Institute of BC (AIBC) Representative
Narjes Miri	- Architectural Institute of BC (AIBC) Representative
Micole Wu	- BC Society of Landscape Architects (BCSLA) Representative

#### **GUESTS:**

Guel Climacosa	- Vivid Green Architecture Inc.
Denitsa Dimitrova	- PMG Landscape Architects
Rosa Salcido	- Vivid Green Architecture Inc.

#### **STAFF:**

Rupinder Basi	- Supervisor of Development Planning
Athena von Hausen	- Planner
Mike Watson	- Senior Planner
Carilyn Cook	- Committee Clerk
Heather Corbett	- Committee Clerk

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

### **1.0 HOUSEKEEPING**

#### **1.1 Committee Orientation**

Heather Corbett, Committee Clerk, welcomed Panel members to the meeting and briefly reviewed how to use the online meeting functions.

Rupinder Basi, Supervisor of Development Planning, discussed the City's policies and general procedures concerning New Westminster Design Panel (NWDP) project reviews.

## 1.2 Appointment of Chair and Alternate Chair to New Westminster Design Panel

Heather Corbett, Committee Clerk, requested nominations for Chair and Alternate Chair for the 2020/2021 term.

### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT Bryce Gauthier be appointed as Chair of the New Westminster Design Panel for the 2021/2022 term; and,*

*THAT Narjes Miri be appointed as the Alternate Chair of the New Westminster Design Panel for the 2021/2022 term.*

**CARRIED.**

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

## 2.0 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

### 2.1 Adoption of the Agenda of February 23, 2021

#### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the agenda of the February 23, 2021 New Westminster Design Panel (NWDP) meeting be adopted as circulated.*

**CARRIED.**

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

## 3.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

### 3.1 Adoption of the Minutes of January 26, 2021

#### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the minutes of the January 26, 2021 New Westminster Design Panel meeting be adopted as circulated.*

**CARRIED.**

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

## 4.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION

## 5.0 DESIGN REVIEWS

### 5.1 909, 911, 915 Twelfth Street – Proposed Five Storey, 40-Unit Residential Development

Athena Von Hausen, Development Planner, reviewed the February 23, 2021 staff report detailing the Rezoning and Development Permit applications for the properties at 909-915 Twelfth Street. The applications would facilitate the development of a five-storey building, consisting of 40 residential units and an overall density of 2.5 FSR.

Ms. Von Hausen also noted that an Official Community Plan amendment would be required to change the land use designation of a portion of a City-owned lane at the rear of the project, and reviewed the questions that the Design Panel was asked to consider in relation to the proposal.

Rosa Salcido, Vivid Green Architecture Inc. and Denitsa Dimitrova, PMG Landscape Architects, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the application, highlighting the following information:

- Site location, including existing businesses on the site, and details of the desired establishment of a commercial corridor on Twelfth Street;
- Details of the proposed project, including changes made to the height of the project in response to staff and neighbourhood feedback;
- Highlights and statistics of the proposal, including amenity spaces, public realm improvements, architectural style, family-friendly and adaptable housing units and proposed parking;
- Design drawings, floor plans and elevation drawings for the proposed development, including proposed materials, and shadow studies; and,
- Landscape plans for each level, including the retention of existing trees.

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

- The Step Code 4 energy model has not yet been completed for the application, as it is required at the Building Permit stage of the process;
- The location of the garbage area has been determined as a result of access from the lane;
- The floor of the proposed garbage room is sloped and contains a drain so that it can be washed;
- There is no confirmed plan in place for the maintenance of planting on the proposed private patios; however, this would likely be managed by the building's strata;
- The building is proposed as wood frame and concrete for the parkade level;
- The proposed material for the dog relief area is artificial turf with drainage, which is replaceable and washable, and water would be supplied close by;
- The ground level units are proposed as two-level townhomes, which would likely be addressed as unit numbers on Twelfth Street, whereas the remainder of the building would be addressed on London Street;
- The height of the planters facing Twelfth Street would be 1'6" beside the sidewalk and then rise up to 3ft;
- Because the upper level of the building is recessed, the rooftop amenity would likely overlook the outdoor spaces within the building more than the adjacent single family yards;
- Elevator access on P1 is behind the gate; therefore, visitors would need to use the ramp to get to grade level from the visitor parking on P1;

- Consideration has been given to moving the storage lockers to the parking level in order to increase the size of the amenity room; however, this would require an additional parking level, and the applicant would prefer to re-arrange the units beside the amenity room to create a larger space;
- The use of the amenity room has not been confirmed by the applicant;
- Due to the reduction in building height from six to five storeys, there would likely not be an opportunity to place an amenity space at the top of the building;
- There is a small area of covered outdoor space proposed near the stairs on the rooftop amenity, and any further covering would need to be reviewed for impacts on the building height;
- Although the renderings do not show this correctly, the intention is for the railings on the upper unit decks to be located on the outside so that there would be adequate plant maintenance; and,
- The horizontal cladding depicted in the elevations shown during the meeting present the correct direction of the cladding.

The Panel noted the following comments in relation to the staff questions asked in the above-noted staff report:

*Question 1) Comments from the panel would be appreciated on how successful the proposed massing is at fitting into the neighbourhood context, especially in regards to:*

- *does the proposed architectural style enhance the established art deco character of the existing neighbourhood?*
  - *appropriateness of the architectural expression,*
  - *overall massing and contextual fit,*
  - *location of ground-oriented units and interface with edges of site,*
  - *shadowing considerations to adjacent sites,*
  - *transitions to the existing neighbouring single-family dwellings to the east and south,*
  - *impact on privacy and overlook from proposed rooftop deck and east/south façade,*
  - *appropriateness of the articulation and materiality at the corner of London Street and Twelfth Street,*
  - *exposed parkade entry and impacts to adjacent single-dwelling*
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- Overall, the proposed massing and setbacks are suitable, particularly given neighbouring proposals in the area;
  - The upper level massing could be shifted to Twelfth Street to smooth over the transition to the adjacent single family housing to the east and south;
  - The horizontal transition from level three to four protrudes and could be moved back in line with white cladding, or have colour matching;
  - An increase in vertical articulation on the first two levels could be considered in order to create further transition of scale for the neighbouring properties;

- More articulation on the blank walls on the east side, adjacent to the garage, could be considered; and,
- If not needed structurally, the posts on the upper balconies could be removed.

*Question 2: Comments from the panel would be appreciated on the streetscape, especially in regards to:*

- *success of the development in responding to the pedestrian scale.*
  - *quality of visual interest at the pedestrian level at the building entrance and along the remaining portion of London Street.*
  - *adequacy of the ground-orientation for the residential unit on London Street to activate the street.*
  - *adequacy in addressing the ‘Great Street’ objectives of the Master Transportation Plan.*
- The corner where the building turns onto London Street could use more study, in that at least one of the units could be rotated to face London Street;
  - The corner units at London Street and Twelfth would benefit from being more developed, including adding more details around windows, enhancing the look of the corners, and enhancing the art deco character of the street;
  - Consider making the entrance of the building either the same height as the white block, or significantly different and prominent;
  - More attention could be given to the main building entry to ensure it stands out more; and,
  - The planters on Twelfth Street could integrate more pedestrian amenities, such as street furniture.
- *Question 3: Comments from the panel regarding the building and landscaping interface with the lane on the lane (south) side of the property would be appreciated*
    - The rear entry to the building may need further review for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) issues, such as inset parking stalls;
    - Consider changing the material at the entry to the parking ramp to provide awareness of traffic;
    - The openness of the southwest corner and garbage area may be improved with screening or by the addition of a 15% ramp; and,
    - Consider locating the garbage below grade, with regular servicing, to improve the area for adjacent properties.

*Question 4: Comments from the panel would be appreciated on the proposed open spaces, particularly:*

- *How successful the proposal is at using semi-private space to transition from private residential areas to public streets.*
- *Is the proposed rooftop amenity space designed appropriately to minimize overlook and maintain privacy between adjacent single-family dwellings?*

- *The selection of hard and soft landscaping materials, including input on the planting species selected.*
  - The proposed rooftop amenity space is successful; however the addition of a shading structure would be an improvement given rainy winters, if it works with the height of the building;
  - The programming ideas on the rooftop may be too numerous or unnecessary, such as the putting green and the yoga area;
  - It may be an improvement to consider different landscaping elements on the rooftop, such as built-in planters or flexible furniture to define the space;
  - It would be important to ensure that all rooftop elements are at least 42 inches back from the railings, or to add a lookout area rather than furniture (that could be climbed on);
  - The railing location on the patios and decks should be better defined so that access to planters would be convenient for maintenance;
  - Ensure that there are adequate utilities supplied to maintain the dog relief area; and,
  - It would be recommended to revisit the frontage planting on Twelfth Street to provide seasonal interest, with the boxwoods at the back, and flowering shrubs at the front.

*Question 4: Comments are appreciated from the panel in regards to the building shadow impacts on adjacent properties.*

- The four storey shadow study may be improved if the massing was transitioned to the Twelfth Street side of the building.

*Question 5: Comments from the panel regarding the proposed materials, texture of the materials, material colours, and the material detailing would be appreciated.*

- No specific comments were received.

The Panel provided the following general comments about the proposal:

- The mix of units and layouts were appreciated by the Panel;
- It would be helpful for improved contextual information and details of the proposal's siting within the neighbourhood to be included in the renderings;
- More information about the energy modelling would be important to inform the design process, streamline the detailing, and strengthen the project;
- The indoor amenity space on level two seems inadequate in terms of space and lack of windows;
- Making improvements to the indoor amenity space, or moving it to another location, would be beneficial to the proposal and add value to the building;
- Ensure that there is an adequate amount of space for parcel delivery requirements in the lobby, as this is particularly relevant now and in future; and,

- It would be recommended that the applicant confirm the location of the hydro PMT on the southeast corner.

**MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the New Westminster Design Panel support the application for 909, 911, 915 Twelfth Street and that staff work with the applicant in consideration of the feedback provided.*

**CARRIED.**

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

**6.0 NEW BUSINESS**

There were no items.

**7.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There were no items.

**8.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items.

**9.0 NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday, March 23, 2021, via electronic meeting.

**10.0 ADJOURNMENT**

**ON MOTION**, the meeting was adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

Certified Correct,

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ORIGINAL SIGNED

**Bryce Gauthier**  
**Chair**

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ORIGINAL SIGNED

**Heather Corbett**  
**Committee Clerk**