

NEW WESTMINSTER DESIGN PANEL

Tuesday, January 26, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.
Meeting held electronically under Ministerial Order No. M192

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Taichi Azegami | - Architectural Institute of BC (AIBC) Representative |
| Achim Charisius | - Architectural Institute of BC (AIBC) Representative |
| Fabian Leitner | - Urban Development Institute (UDI) Representative |
| Mark Thompson | - Architectural Institute of BC (AIBC) Representative |
| Mary Wong | - BC Society of Landscape Architects (BCSLA) Representative |

REGRETS:

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Geoff Lawlor | - Architectural Institute of BC (AIBC) Representative |
| Sarah Siegel | - BC Society of Landscape Architects (BCSLA) Representative |

GUESTS:

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Mackenzie Biggar | - QuadReal Property Group |
| Hugh Forster | - Applicant, Aboriginal Land Trust Society |
| Derek Lee | - PWL Partnership Landscape Architects |
| Jocelle Smith | - ETA Landscape Architecture |
| Tyler Thomson | - Bunt and Associates Engineering Ltd. |
| Daryl Tyacke | - ETA Landscape Architecture |
| Greg Voute | - RLA Architects Inc. |

STAFF:

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Lynn Roxburgh | - Senior Policy Planner |
| 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 Virtual Meeting Introductions

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

2.0 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

2.1 Adoption of the Agenda of January 26, 2021

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the agenda of the January 26, 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 December 8, 2020

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the minutes of the December 8, 2020 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

Lynn Roxburgh, Senior Policy Planner, introduced Athena von Hausen as a new Planner in the Development Services Department.

5.0 DESIGN REVIEWS

5.1 823 – 841 Sixth Street – Development Permit, Rezoning and Official Community Plan for Proposed Affordable Housing Project

Lynn Roxburgh, Senior Policy Planner, reviewed the January 26, 2021 staff report detailing the application for an Official Community Plan (OCP), rezoning and Development Permit, submitted on behalf of the Aboriginal Land Trust Society (ALT), for a six storey affordable housing apartment building with 96 units, and an adjacent Multi-Use Pathway (MUP).

Ms. Roxburgh noted that the proposal exceeds the requirements of the City's Family Friendly Housing Policy and the project affordability is set to meet BC Housing's Community Housing Fund, and reviewed the questions that the Design Panel was asked to consider.

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

- The single-family homes across the lane from the proposal would be entitled to build laneway houses to a maximum of 10% of the property density, and would be subject to an approval process from City staff;
- Laneway houses would be permitted to be two storeys in height, with massing centred on the property; and,
- Staff are proposing a four metre wide multi-use pathway (MUP) to allow for passing, but are looking for further feedback from the Panel on accommodating a safe path within the allocated space.

Greg Voute, RLA Architects Inc., and Jocelle Smith, ETA Landscape Architects, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the application, highlighting the following information:

- Site location and plan, including a lane that runs North towards Fifth Street, which allow the site to be accessible from sides;
- Building massing, designed to be stepped down at both ends for thoughtful transition into the adjacent neighbourhood;
- Colour scheme and materiality; and,
- Landscape design, including site specific features, native trees, landscaping features, seating areas, planting, and details and precedent images for the MUP.

Procedural Note: Due to a lost connection to the external video feed, the applicant's presentation was paused from 3:15 to 3:26 p.m.

In response to questions from the Panel, Hugh Forster, Applicant, Ms. Smith and Ms. Roxburgh provided the following information:

- The indigenous art shown in the project drawings was selected through an RFP process for a similar building being constructed in Colwood, BC. It is likely that the same art piece would be used on the proposed building;
- It is likely that the indigenous artwork would also be used on benches and gates throughout the landscape design; and,
- The City intends to explore an appropriate design for how the MUP would transition into Sixth Street; however, this is still under consideration between the applicant and the City's transportation department.

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:

- *the six storey street wall expression;*
- *approaches to breaking-up the massing of the street wall; and*
- *the transition to the neighbouring properties, including and across the lane.*

- Overall, the project is successful, and the type of housing, massing and density are appropriate for the location given nearby transit and amenities;
- Given the context of Sixth Street, the proposal's setback from the street and from adjacent property lines is well-handled and poses no issue in terms of scale;
- The shadow impacts in summer, and the impacts on neighbours, could be further explored, as they may extend beyond the laneway;
- The proposed stepping down in massing from six storeys to four helps to provide transition to adjacent properties;
- The retention of existing mature trees is a big benefit and will help provide appropriate transition to adjacent properties;
- More articulation and verticality of the rear façade could help the transition to neighbouring properties;
- Consider carrying the eaves from the fourth level datum more strongly into the six-storey mass
- The opportunity for future laneway houses in rear-facing properties would provide further transition;
- The proposed reduction in parking is supportable, given the housing use, transit orientation and nearby amenities; and,
- Appreciation was shown for the materiality and attention given to indigenous art and oversized pillars to express identity;

Question 2: Comments from the panel would be appreciated on the ground orientation of the base of the building

- The orientation of the ground-floor units is successful and a supportable configuration;
- It was suggested to further strengthen the articulation of the patios at ground-level to provide more ground orientation, i.e. through the use of dividers, gates, and landscaping; and,
- There may be opportunity to have a more substantial element such as an amenity building at the lane in order to mimic the laneway house scale at the rear of the property.

Question 3: Comments from the panel would be appreciated on design of the landscape and shared outdoor amenity space, especially in regards to:

- *integration of the different outdoor areas;*
 - *relationship between the building and the outdoor amenity spaces; and*
 - *how the grade change is negotiated*
- The proposed landscaping is successful;
 - The use of terracing and native species planting lends a good interface given the height and character of the building and will be welcoming; and,
 - Re-consider the use of planters at the rear for vegetable gardens, as these would likely be in constant shade.

Comments from the panel are appreciated on the quality, usability and design of the multi-use public pathway (MUP).

- It would be important to consider the development of the multi-use pathway (MUP) with future developments to the West;
- Consideration could be given to the location of the planters above the parking in order to incorporate them with the MUP;
- The transition to Sixth Street and the resulting expression of the MUP at the intersection will be important given the proposed tightness between the building and the sidewalk;
- It may be successful to re-orient the ground-floor patios at the Northwest of the building so that they address the MUP, and provide a more public-oriented façade; and,
- It would be important to ensure that the MUP allows for the introduction of bicycles along Sixth Street, for example with mid-block crossings, and letdowns at the corners.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the New Westminster Design Panel support the application, with consideration given to the feedback provided.

CARRIED.

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

5.2 97 Braid Street – Application Background Presentation and Master Plan Rezoning Submission

Procedural Note: At 3:58 p.m., Mark Thompson declared a conflict of interest on Item 5.2 as he is the Architect of Record. Mr. Thompson inquired whether any panellists had objections to him presenting the project to the Design Panel, and none were declared.

Mike Watson, Senior Planner, summarized the staff report dated January 26, 2021, regarding the proposed Design Guidelines for a complete, mixed-use, sustainable and transit-oriented master-planned community, referred to as "Sapperton Green".

Mr. Watson noted that the Design Guidelines would apply to the property as a whole and would contribute to consistency and neighbourhood cohesiveness. The Design Panel members were asked to provide comments about the guidelines and principles.

Mark Thompson, MCMP Architects, Derek Lee, PWL Landscape Architects, and Mackenzie Biggar, QuadReal Property Group, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the application, highlighting the following information:

- Project details, including site context and surrounding neighbourhoods;
- Vision and goals for the project, including elements of vibrancy, urbanity, history, sustainability, and integration into the community and natural surroundings;

- Review of the project's precincts that respond to context: Hume Park, Braid Station and Neighbourhood heart, and each precinct's general guidelines, including character sketches, images and typologies;
- Landscape guidelines, including images and landscaping features within each precinct, including the greenway system, intersecting points with green linkages, and two regional greenways intersecting at the site;
- General Lot Guidelines, including phasing, parcelization and land uses;
- Massing and siting within the entire project, including guidelines for setbacks and separation, massing and siting maximums, and landscaping guidelines
- Character of the project, including colour palettes, proposed activities at grade, public/private interface, and desired materials;
- Wayfinding and signage principles; and,
- Strategies for green infrastructure and ecological network, and incorporation of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.

Procedural Note: Mark Thompson left the meeting at 4:44 pm.

In response to questions from the Panel, Mr. Lee, Mr. Watson, and Mackenzie Biggar, QuadReal Property Group, provided the following information:

- The Brunette River has a large influence on the design of the development, which is demonstrated through the breezeways and linkages to the Greenway, and building setbacks which allow for verdant landscapes to be developed and provide transition into the ground-oriented units;
- The North-South Greenway would provide a shared path for pedestrians and cyclists, and is proposed to connect into the existing bi-directional greenway on Rousseau Street;
- The City's current energy performance requirements are at Step Code 3, unless there is a low carbon energy system in place, such as the district energy program, which may be in place for this project; and,
- The Design Guidelines do not currently include loading and parking access locations, except at a high level such as lobby entrances; however this would be worth further consideration; and,
- The proposed Design Guidelines for Sapperton Green will have influence on the street design and would be considered in comparison to existing City street guidelines and requirements; however, this is still under development with other City departments.

The Design Panel members made the following comments about the proposal:

- The applicant was commended for the well thought out, robust, content of the Sapperton Green Design Guidelines, as they appear to cover most elements that would need to be considered by future developers, and it is clear that some comments from the Panel's review in December 2020 have already been incorporated;

- For clarity, and if the precincts are to remain as over-arching elements, it may be helpful to re-organize the document so that the Design Guidelines are represented under each precinct;
- The typical block diagram that has been incorporated into the Design Guidelines is useful and could be helpful for future design;
- In terms of style, it would be useful to include more background on the history of the site so that the call for industrial elements would be better articulated;
- It would be important to include mention of the streetscape and the connections to the surrounding neighbourhoods within the Design Guidelines;
- Increased mention of the strong influence of the Brunette River on the Master Plan could be reinforced in the Guidelines and increasing the strength of connection to the River should be considered;
- Tower density near the river is still dense to provide for adequate solar access, and any opportunity to create more gaps may help with the pedestrian experience along the Brunette Greenway;
- It would be important to include as many details about projected energy targets and requirements as possible in the Design Guidelines so that the market will understand goals early on;
- It would be important to have parking and loading access in the public realm diagrams identified early on; and,
- Any opportunities that arise for expanding the public and open greenspaces would be beneficial for the project.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the New Westminster Design Panel support the Sapperton Green Design Guidelines as proposed, with consideration given to the feedback provided, and for the applicant to continue to work in conjunction with City staff.

CARRIED.

(Mark Thompson absent for the vote due to Conflict of Interest)

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, February 23, 2021, via electronic meeting.

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

Fabian Leitner, Chair, thanked City staff and the outgoing panel members for their involvement in the Design Panel.

ON MOTION, the meeting was adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

Certified Correct,

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Fabian Leitner
Chair

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Heather Corbett
Committee Clerk