

NEW WESTMINSTER DESIGN PANEL

Tuesday January 22, 2013 - 3:00 p.m.
Committee Room No. 2

MINUTES

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mark Vance - Chair, AIBC Representative
Keith Ross - BC Society of Landscape Architects
Richard Vallee - AIBC Representative
Steve Wong - BC Society of Landscape Architects
Paul Goodwin - AIBC Representative

REGRETS:

Jay Hiscox - AIBC Representative
Tom Morton - Development Industry Representative (UDI)

STAFF:

Jim Hurst - Development Planner
Michael Watson - Planning Technician
Kelly Sims - Committee Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm.

1.0 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

3:00 pm

No Items.

2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of December 11, 2012

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Minutes of the New Westminster Design Panel meeting held on December 11, 2012 be adopted, as amended:

THAT 'bear berry' be replaced with 'Berberis' and,

THAT the motion for 4.2 be replaced with 'the comments' from 'some of the comments'

CARRIED.

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

3.0 DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEWS

No Items.

4.0 DESIGN REVIEWS

3:05 pm

4.1 180 East Columbia Street

DPS00029
DVP00553

Applications for a Development Permit and a Development Variance Permit have been received in order to allow a 27,047 square foot, two storey building in the next phase of the Brewery District Development. Jim Hurst, Development Planner, informed the Panel that the applicant proposes to construct a building on Parcel 2B for the Health Services Association, addressed as 180 East Columbia Street located at the south triangular corner of the site.

Mr. Hurst updated the Panel on the context of the site. The site is bounded by Brunette Avenue, East Columbia Street, and an interior laneway named Nelson's Crescent. The land use to the north is the commercial/ medical building constructed in Phase 1 of the Brewery District. To the east will be the first residential building on the Brewery District site. To the west across East Columbia Street are commercial buildings with single detached residential houses behind the commercial buildings. Mr. Hurst also advised the Panel that the site is designated as part of a Commercial and Mixed Use Development Permit Area which provides design guidelines.

Mr. Hurst, outlined points from of the design the Panel was asked to consider:

- The corner of the site where Brunette Avenue and East Columbia Street meet is described as a passive landscape, although it is an entrance to point to the Brewery District and New Westminster. In response, the City has asked the applicant to consider this corner as an entry point and to mark the corner and identify the City and the project;
- One of loading stalls is assessed at 1.4 spaces under the Zoning Bylaw, but a proposal for 1 loading stall is referred to in the design;
- Defining the entrance of the building –as it is currently not clear in the renderings;
- Integrate the bus stop and shelter into the project – will be an actively used bus stop as it is in close proximity to a skytrain station;
- The appropriateness of what appears to be a void located on Brunette Avenue between this project and a future residential project.

The Applicant, Richard Henriquez, Architect, gave further background regarding the proposal to develop a two storeys building in the next phase of the Brewery District Development. The applicant informed the Panel that in the original design of the building a pub was proposed as part of a mix of retail-commercial businesses. However, after failure to secure leases for the building it was sold to Health Services Association for office space.

The applicant responded to the points noted by the Planning Department. The building works with the overall architectural form of the area, and could still be adapted to support retail and amenity space around it. The entrance is located at the south end of the building where the design of the building is emphasized and with signage and canopy of trees leading to the entrance it will be easily visible. Consideration has not been given to the idea of integrating the bus stop into the design, but will as the project develops. The first phase of the building puts it at one height, however it has been designed for two and when this occurs it will look more prominent. The void noted, is located in a space that has a roof deck that gets pushed out over it with planters which will provide a floor garden; this will allow the deck to transition out but won't be accessible by the office building. There is an "L-shaped" bench that should be shown in the landscape drawing, additional furniture will be considered. One loading space is proposed as it is an office building and ample loading space is not required.

Mr. Henriquez, also advised the Panel that there are two courtyards made out of two different materials, one brick and another made out of a material that will support loading and unloading – together these courtyards allow for connection to the street and are considered the pedestrian zones. It was also noted that a hedge will be planted along the perimeter of the site for rain water gardens, which will allow water retention on the site.

Discussion ensued and the following points were made by the Panel:

- The lines on the site plan make it challenging to differentiate between the different grades– it was noted that one line reflects the hedge which follows the different grades of the site, which will allow the rain gardens to fill up with water and pool into each other;
- The flow of pedestrian traffic in and around the site was very low, because of the intersection at which the site abuts and lack of pedestrian crossings and safety concerns;
- To make the intersection more pedestrian friendly it would have to be completely reconfigured, however, the street falls under Provincial jurisdiction - a traffic study with all levels of government should be investigated to determine how the intersection in front of the site could be reconfigured;
- Although the corner may not be built at the pedestrian scale there should be site lines to the road;
- The design should focus more attention on the courtyards as these pedestrian areas could support the rationale for retail;
- The design plans need to reflect the bus stop and should integrate it into the design;
- The building's low profile makes it less prominent compared to what was proposed in the original design of the building;
- The corner under consideration is the entrance to the City, the Brewery District and Saperton there should be greater emphasis in defining the corner and giving it some 'punch', this could be done by introducing a public art piece, or more signage etc. – incorporating something that would 'brand' the area;

- The corner cannot be taken to full density because of the intensity of the intersection, therefore the corner doesn't need to be emphasised;
- With a proposed second floor office space there should be weather protection around the exterior of the building and on the first floor;
- A study should also be conducted around incorporating more walkways and bicycle paths into the project to encourage greater pedestrian use of the site and off Columbia Street;
- The project generally supports the development permit objectives of the site and the loading stalls have been handled thoughtfully.

The Panels general direction regarding the proposal for 180 East Columbia Street is that the design should give greater emphasis to the corner of the building where Brunette Avenue and East Columbia Street meet. It was noted by many members of the Panel that the corner marks the entrance to many significant places in New Westminster and therefore greater consideration should be brought to it as an identifying element for the Brewery District development and the Sapperton neighbourhood.

It was noted by Richard Henriquez, Architect, that the design meets most of the design guidelines in the Development Permit Area, and that because the project was being designed by a third party that it is difficult to meet the competing objectives of different stakeholders.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Applications for a Development Permit and a Development Variance Permit be received for information, and be brought back for further consideration subject to the comments made from the New West Design Panel Meeting dated - January 22, 2013.

CARRIED.

Steve Wong did not support the motion.

4.2 260 Salter Street (Bernie Decosse, Architects)

**REZ00069
DVP00556
DPQ0006**

Applications have been received for rezoning, a development permit and a development variance permit to allow construction of 111 residential units in two four storey buildings at 260 Salter Street. Jim Hurst, Development Planner, advised the Panel on the site context and design consideration of the proposal. Mr Hurst noted that the site is located in the Port Royal development and is designated (RL/RM/RH) Residential - Mixed Density. It was also noted that the site was zoned in the 1970s as part of the Port Royal (Queensborough) Development Permit area, and is subject to a development cap. In response to further densification of the site, staffs are assessing the zoning of area for Council's consideration and are working with the applicants.

Jim Hurst, Development Planner, advised the Panel on the architect's design renderings of the site and noted that the perimeter of the site is outlined with a dash-line. This dash-line marks the high-water line setbacks along the river and is the development perimeter which all development in the zoning must conform to. In response to the constraints of the site, the proposal outlines that the buildings will front the street, making it important to consider how the orientation of buildings will provide "eyes on the street" towards the perimeter trail indicated in the site design.

Mr. Hurst asked the Panel to consider the amount of side yards set backs proposed for the building west of the subject site under review. Mr. Hurst informed the Panel that to the west of the site there is a rezoning proposal by the same owners of 260 Salter Street, to construct a lower density condo development. Mr. Hurst articulated that both sites need to be considered and that the setbacks should be wide enough to allow for permeability and view corridors between the two developments.

Discussion ensued and the Panel made note of the following considerations:

- The Planning Department manages the high-water line (dash line) setbacks through an existing covenant that restricts development below 4.2 metres from the flood line;
- That the park space shown in the perimeter walkway is owned by the City through a park dedication and will eventually feature benches;
- The multifamily buildings are consistent with other designs in the area and the proposed parking spaces will elevate the buildings above the high water line as the underground parking are built to the flood plan;
- The buildings are all multifamily and the buildings are built above parking garages.

David Mobley - Landscape Architect (Aragon)

David Mobley, Landscape Architect, (Aragon) gave a general background to the Committee regarding the design plans for 260 Salter Street. Mr. Mobley informed the Panel that the proposal to construct a 111 unit residential building will have a total of a 176 parking spaces (175 are required). It was noted that parking access will be provided off the existing cul-de-sac adjacent to the site, and that the orientation of the buildings have been set with respect to the constraints of the site - a 15 metre side yard setbacks from the adjacent property line. Further details were discussed which included: pedestrian access – given at the 'knuckle' of each building, the number of units each building would hold (63 and 42) and the majority of unit types (mostly three and two bedroom units).

Mr. Mobley gave further details regarding the style of the buildings, and proposed colours and materials used. The buildings are in keeping with the orientation of other buildings running along Salter Street and will be located along the edge and will be facing south. The materials used on the facade and in the construction of the building are characteristic of brick and veneer base and will maintain the three storey expression with a lighter third level. The exterior of the buildings will be differentiated by the loft spaces, balconies and the layers of the different materials used on the levels of the building.

The Panel was further advised on the landscape designs of the two buildings. It was noted that the “L-shape” of the buildings will allow for ample outdoor space and the addition of two court yards. The buildings will be handicap accessible with two ramps to be located at the entrance of both buildings. Each building will feature lawn and shrub planting to help differentiate between the units and will feature defined garden areas and outdoor spaces to provide privacy; walkways throughout the site will be made out of concrete. The primary gathering place will be the central courtyard which will provide a large amount of open space and will feature a pergola, raised walkways, benches, seat planters, and a childrens play area. The central courtyard will be connected to the urban trail system located adjacent to the site. A rainwater feature will be established on the site by collecting rainwater off the roofs of both buildings. The water will be collected in a cladded river-rock stream that will simulate river pool when it is filled with water.

The Panel queried over the presentation and the following points were noted:

- Residents of the developments and the public are connected to the river trail from to the main courtyard with a trail, however the public is discouraged from entering the site with the implementation of a gate access, but are technically permitted inside –
- The existing cult-de-sac was integrated into the landscape plans;
- Consideration should be given to shifting the entire project east and allowing a wider setback on the west, as the development appears to be too close in proximity to where the future neighbouring development will, this would also allow for better alignment to with existing streets;
- The courtyard on the south side should be opened up more for viewpoints and to provide a connection to the river;
- The idea for a dry river-rock stream that is filled with water from underneath the walkway with gravity is considered a good design feature;
- Consideration for use of colours that ‘pop’;
- The proposal for an informal childrens play area provides options for spontaneous types of play and will not detract from the design of the buildings, and is consistent with other developments nearby;
- Further consideration should be given to adding handicap accessible ramps directly into the courtyards, as it remains only residents would have handicap accessibility through the buildings and into the court yard.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Applications received for a rezoning, and development permit and a development variance permit be supported, subject to the comments made from the New West Design Panel Meeting dated - January 22, 2013.

CARRIED.

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

5.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION

No items.

6.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No items

7.0 NEW BUSINESS

No items.

8.0 CORRESPONDENCE

No items.

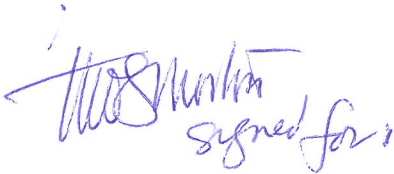
9.0 NEXT MEETING

February 26, 2013 at 3:00 pm in Committee Room No. 2.

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:04 pm.

ON MOTION,



Mark Vance
Chair

Certified Correct,



Kelly Sims
Committee Clerk