

NEW WESTMINSTER DESIGN PANEL

Tuesday, April 27, 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:

Adel Bellemlih	- Applicant, 108 – 118 Royal Avenue and 74 – 82 First Street
Dylan Chernoff	- Durante Kreuk Ltd
Peter Hildebrand	- Iredale Architecture
Nathan Stolarz	- Chris Dikeakos Architecture
Daryl Tyacke	- ETA Landscape Architecture

STAFF:

Karen Campbell	- Planner
Athena von Hausen	- Planner
Heather Corbett	- Committee Clerk

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

1.0 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

1.1 Adoption of the Agenda of April 27, 2021

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the agenda of the April 27, 2021 New Westminster Design Panel (NWDP) meeting be adopted as circulated.

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 February 23, 2021

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the minutes of the February 23, 2021 New Westminster Design Panel meeting be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED.

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

3.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION

4.0 DESIGN REVIEWS

5.1 108 – 118 Royal Avenue and 74 – 82 First Street

Athena Von Hausen, Planner, reviewed the April 27, 2021 staff report regarding a proposed Heritage Revitalization Agreement (HRA) and Development Permit application at 108-118 Royal Avenue and 74-82 First Street to allow the development of a six to eight storey multi-unit residential building and, to relocate, restore and legally protect the 1890 house (Woods House) on site, and relocate the 1930 Henderson House off site.

Ms. Von Hausen also noted the proposed development of a Multi-Use Pathway (MUP) that would be located adjacent to the development, and reviewed the questions that the Design Panel was asked to consider in relation to the proposal.

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

- If the application is successful, the heritage house would be stratified and contain two units; and,
- The proposed increase in density is in line with the Official Community Plan (OCP) designation for the site.

Peter Hildebrand, Iredale Architecture, Daryl Tyacke, ETA Landscape Architecture, and Adel Bellemlih, Applicant, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the application, highlighting the following information:

- Site plan, context images, design rationale and precedent images showing the design and materiality of the proposed buildings;
- Elevations and renderings, showing setbacks and entrances of the buildings from all directions, and in relation to the heritage house and MUP;
- Shadow studies showing the shadows of the six-storey building
- Landscape plans of all landscaped levels of the buildings, including precedent images of the materials;

- An off-site landscape plan of all pathways and landscape plans for the MUP and patios; and,
- Images of the existing heritage houses on First Street, and the proposed location of the Wood House, creating a “heritage cluster”.

In response to questions from the Panel, Ms. Von Hausen, Mr. Bellemlih, Mr. Hildebrand and Mr. Tyacke provided the following information:

- There is no play area for children planned within the development as there is a school playground approximately 300 feet from the proposed site, at Qayqayt elementary school;
- A traffic study completed for the proposal concluded that the existing local traffic infrastructure would be compatible with the proposal’s transportation needs;
- Access to the building’s parking would be at the rear of the building, off Windsor Street, and therefore quite discrete;
- The soil depth of the roof amenity planters is planned as 2.5 feet;
- The City’s Engineering Services department’s recommendation was that the MUP should be maintained by the strata; therefore, any potential irrigation required for the MUP would be maintained by the strata;
- The green wall on the side of the Royal 1 building would be composed of planting on top of steel cables going up the building;
- Suitable plants would be used on the green wall to ensure that it is successful;
- The heritage house would be situated 15 feet from the property line;
- Multiple designs have been examined to manage the slope of the MUP, which is intended for both cyclists and pedestrians;
- What appears as stairs in the drawing on the MUP are rumble strips; and,
- The roof deck has been limited in size due to code limitations, in order to reduce the need for a second exit, and to be cognizant of the noise on the wood frame structure.

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 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;*
- *transitions to the existing neighbouring single-family dwellings to the south;*
- *impact on privacy and overlook from decks and south/west façade;*
- *appropriateness of the articulation and materiality of the development*

- *does the materiality of the building help to reinforce New Westminster as a historic place; and*
 - *overall design of the parkade entry.*
- Given the OCP designation and that Royal Avenue is a key corridor, the massing is well handled, and the density is supportable;
 - The increase in density works well with the multi-unit buildings located to the West on Royal Avenue;
 - The transition from the heritage house to the multi-unit building is suitable and the house does not appear engulfed;
 - The position of the heritage building on the site works well, and enhances the neighbourhood, particularly with the cluster of heritage houses at the base of First Street; and,
 - At the east elevation, the deck element could be replicated and brought to the entry of the building.

Question 2: Comments from the panel would be appreciated on how successful the proposal is at integrating the heritage house, especially in regards to:

- *Does the current design provide an appropriate buffer and massing transition between the heritage house and the residential mid-rise building;*
 - *Does the current design highlight and respect the heritage building; and*
 - *Are the design elements (character) of the new mid-rise building compatible with and respectful of the heritage house's character.*
- The heritage house is located very close to the podium-level of the mid-rise residential building. More space could be included between the heritage house and the building.

Question 3: 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 on First Street; and*
 - *activation of adjacent streets and public spaces.*
- The streetscapes of Royal Avenue and Windsor Street work well;
 - On the south side next to the heritage home, consider use of the red brick in that location, as it would complement the heritage home;
 - The slope of the MUP has challenges and may need further consideration;
 - The zigzags on the MUP would likely be an issue for cyclists and accessibility, and may be avoided or cut through by pedestrians; and,
 - If maintenance of the MUP is to be the responsibility of the strata, consider the use of drought tolerant planting, so it is not overly arduous for the strata.
 - The east elevation along First Street uses a 'Y' element in the building entry. Can this element be replicated in other areas of the building entrances for the project?

Question 4: 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 loading area and interface with the lane could be softened with the additions of trellises.

Question 5: 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; and*
- *the selection of hard and soft landscaping materials, including input on the planting species selected.*
- Appreciation was shown for the provision of multi-level outdoor amenity spaces;
- On First Street, it may be better to choose more standard height street trees than Japanese maples;
- The soil volumes indicated for the planters may not be sufficient for the intended trees, and it may be more appropriate to plant shrubs in planters with less than seven cubic metres;
- Where agriculture plots are planned on the rooftop, it would be recommended to provide compost bins, planter tables, and storage areas to help residents better use the plots;
- The roof amenity may be too small given the number of intended residents, and it may be appropriate to design for a larger space from the beginning;
- If the rooftop amenity space is increased, there may be methods to avoid the construction of a second exit, such as posting an occupancy limit; and,
- It may be beneficial to include a small space for toddlers or preschool age children to play rather than relying on the elementary school playground.
- Streetscape quality along the MUP could be improved to better integrate the residential units into the pathway design.

Question 6: Comments are appreciated from the panel in regards to the building shadow impacts on adjacent properties.

- No impacts to adjacent properties were identified with the shadow study, particularly given the urban setting.

Question 7: Comments from the panel regarding the proposed materials, texture of the materials, material colours, and the material detailing would be appreciated.

- Appreciation was shown for the restrained language, palette and material choices of the building, and the use of material in conjunction with the heritage building;

- It would be important to resolve the issue within the drawings of two different railings at the entry corner;
- The textures of the materials, particularly the grey in the middle, could be further developed;
- The language of the vertical wood elements could be extended or mirrored between both buildings; and,
- Appreciation was shown for the use of brick, in terms of its placement at the edges of the buildings, and it could be used even more.

The Panel provided the following general comments about the proposal:

- Appreciation was shown for the project and its design in general;
- The mix and size of the proposed units and family-friendly layouts were appreciated by the Panel, particularly with proximity to the elementary school;
- Consideration of a larger indoor amenity space may be appropriate, as the proposed space seems small for the number of proposed units;
- The parking space seems reasonable for the building, especially in terms of storage;
- If the strata will be responsible for maintaining the heritage home, ensure that the costs are considered and clearly disclosed in agreements; and,
- Appreciation was shown for the quality of the drawings package.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the New Westminster Design Panel support the Heritage Revitalization Agreement and Development Permit applications for 108 – 118 Royal Avenue and 74-82 First 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.

5.2 230 Keary Street – Proposed 30 Storey Mixed-Use Development

Karen Campbell, Planner, reviewed the April 27, 2021 staff report detailing a Development Permit application for the development of a 30 storey mixed-use development in the Brewery District, at 230 Keary Street, noting several unique features, such as the sloping site, the transit arrival plaza, and the potential brew-pub retail space to reflect the history of the site.

Ms. Campbell noted that universal accessibility would be very important on the site and reviewed the policy context and questions that the Design Panel was asked to consider in relation to the proposal.

Nathan Stolarz, Chris Dikeakos Architecture and Dylan Chernoff, Durante Kreuk Ltd., provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the application, highlighting the following information:

- Vision, design goals and urban context for the proposal;
- The design rationale of the massing and evolution of the building;
- Site analysis, program, sections, context images, and precedent images showing the design and materiality of the proposed building within the context of the slope on Keary Street and the surrounding neighbourhood and Brewery District Master Plan; and,
- Landscape plans and images for each level and amenity space within the proposed building.

In response to questions from the Panel, Mr. Stolarz and Mr. Chernoff provided the following information:

- The material at the lower part of the podium is proposed as basalt stone, and the above two floors would be metal panel;
- The planters on the upper levels of the building are proposed at a height of 2'6", which would allow the trees to root laterally, and have been successful in other buildings within the Brewery District;
- The treatment on the wall by the long staircase is still to be determined in conjunction with the transit plaza and the totality of the public realm; however, some ideas include a big mural with a homage to the former use of the site or higher quality material;
- The height of the proposed water feature is due to the length of the parking ramp and would act as a backdrop to the transit plaza, with noticeable water-based acoustics, and lights;
- The amenity space on Level Three would be for residential occupants only;
- The parkade exhaust is proposed to the east of the office entry, as noted by the squares on the drawing;
- The location of the railings on the terrace areas is currently designated on the outside; however it is yet to be determined and would depend on architectural expression;
- The number of two and three bedroom family units would make up 10% of the total units of the project;
- The two strategies that have been used to provide shading include enlarged balconies to add solar shading on the south side of the building, which is consistent throughout the Brewery District, and metal panelling on the east side;
- An energy model analysis has not yet been completed for the tower; and,
- The materials that have been proposed to meet the design guidelines include the basalt stone, metal panelling, wood soffits, and industrial steel colouring.

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

Question 1: The design guidelines (page 33) state that developments within the Brewery District should encourage an architectural character that develops the

identity and authenticity of the site while providing a memorable experience of this historic neighbourhood, and that also reflects the industrial heritage of the site.

Staff seeks input from the NWDP in regards to the overall architectural expression of the proposal and if the architectural expression, overall design and material selection of the proposal successfully contribute to the unique character, and identity of the site.

- The proposed residential tower and the internal nature of the balconies continue the sleek look already present in the rest of the Brewery District;
- The drawing package and materiality could use more refinement and description in terms of how they reference the Brewery District design guidelines; and,
- A subtle sprinkling of colour or variety of materials could be added to the residential expression, but overall it is well-resolved.

Question 2: Staff seeks input from the NWDP on how successfully the building and podium form relates to the surrounding context and site. In particular does the proposed 'tiered' podium expression:

- *create an appropriately scaled 'streetwall' expression in relation to the overall context and adjacent Building 7?*
- *successfully frame the Arrival Plaza?*
- Appreciation was given for the expression of the proposed office podium, in that it appears high quality and provides contrast to the residential tower above;
- The expression of the tiered podium is successful; however, the tower may need further refinement;
- The office podium has clear references to the historical context and deals with the topography of the site successfully;
- The heritage elements proposed in the plaza are important as character-defining elements; and,
- The overall expression of the building creates successful recessed spaces and provides a suitable dialogue with the transit plaza.

Question 3: Staff seeks input from the NWDP how successful the proposed design is at creating an active architectural expression and an inviting street frontage along Keary Street and towards E Columbia Street.

- The design of the residential entry is inviting; however, for a building of this scale, it could be grander.

Question 4: The guidelines state that "(g)round-level materials should be tactile and of a human scale". Staff seeks input from the NWDP on how successful the proposal is at providing a tactile and engaging experience at the pedestrian level.

- The architectural expression has a clean look and includes a great choice of materials, with elements of warmth within the wood soffits and the softscaping at the pedestrian level;
- The variation of materials for the two entrances (wood for residential, steel for commercial) works very well;
- The wood materials could be introduced more in the massing and used to help direct pedestrian traffic to the entrances; and,
- The basalt is a nice material, but consideration could be given to a material with more detail at the pedestrian level.

Question 5: Staff seeks input from the NWDP the overall quality of the proposed public realm and how well the building design interfaces with the adjacent plaza (shown in drawing L.101 in 'Appendix A').

- Appreciation was given for the setbacks and terraced greenspaces on different levels within the building, especially those facing the river, and it was suggested that the form could be echoed on Keary to add interest when looking at the building from the heights of neighbouring buildings;
- The plaza as proposed looks to be a welcoming space and works well with the topography;
- The 28 foot water feature above the parkade and the stairs are strong elements of the proposed plaza, and will provide a dramatic landscape and pedestrian experience; and,
- Exploration into the addition of more light could be beneficial to the plaza in terms of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) and security measures.

Question 6: Staff seeks input from the NWDP about the selection of hard and soft landscaping materials, including input on the planting species selected (shown in drawing L.200 in 'Appendix A').

- Consider creating a clearer design within the hardscaping so that the entrance to the ramp is noticeable to pedestrians;
- The planting in the upper planters on the north side would be in shadow, so a better selection of shade plants could be considered;
- Given the proposed density of the residential building, there may be too few urban agriculture plots, which may cause a lottery, and it would be advisable to provide more plots or remove them entirely;
- Consider the addition of more programming within the amenity areas, such as a small play area; and,
- The proposed dog run is suitable and will likely be appreciated by the future residents.

The Panel provided the following general comments about the proposal:

- Appreciation was shown for the project in general, including its design, amenity package, scale and unit make-up; and,
- More three bedroom units would be of greater benefit to the community.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the New Westminster Design Panel support the Development Permit application for 230 Keary 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 5:17 p.m.

Certified Correct,

Bryce Gauthier
Chair

Heather Corbett
Committee Clerk