

NEW WESTMINSTER DESIGN PANEL
MINUTES

Tuesday, January 11, 2022, 3:00 p.m.
Meeting held electronically and open to public attendance
Council Chamber, City Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT

Bryce Gauthier	BC Society of Landscape Architects (BCSLA) Representative
Brad Howard	Urban Development Institute (UDI) Representative
Caroline Inglis	Architectural Institute of BC (AIBC) Representative
Micole Wu	BC Society of Landscape Architects (BCSLA) Representative

ABSENT

Taichi Azegami	Architectural Institute of BC (AIBC) Representative
Achim Charisius	Architectural Institute of BC (AIBC) Representative
Narjes Miri	Architectural Institute of BC (AIBC) Representative

GUESTS

Patricia Campbell	PMG Landscape
Rob Ciccozzi	Ciccozzi Architecture
Thomas Grimwood	Grimwood Architecture
Daryl Oishi	PMG Landscape
Kyle Shury	Platform Properties
Lion Urrego	Ciccozzi Architecture
Aidan Walsh	Ciccozzi Architecture
Richard Wittstock	Domus Homes

STAFF

Athena Von Hausen	Planner
Wendee Lang	Planning Analyst
Nicole Ludwig	Assistant City Clerk
Katie Stobbart	Committee Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Bryce Gauthier, BC Society of Landscape Architects (BCSLA) Representative, opened the meeting at 3:26 p.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsundered land of the Halkomelem-speaking peoples. He acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. He recognized that, as a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the agenda of the January 11, 2022 New Westminster Design Panel meeting be adopted with the addition of Correspondence before Reports and Presentations.

Carried.

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1 Minutes of the April 27, 2021 NWDP Meeting

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the minutes of the April 27, 2021 New Westminster Design Panel meeting be adopted as circulated.

Carried.

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

Procedural Note: The Panel took a five-minute recess, returning to the meeting at 3:35 p.m.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

One piece of correspondence from Kal Bains was received for information.

5. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

5.1 300 Duncan Street

Athena Von Hausen, Planner, reviewed the January 11, 2022 staff report regarding a proposed Development Permit and Development Variance Permit at 300 Duncan Street to allow for 147 Townhouse units to be

constructed with a variance to the building separation requirements of the RT-3A zone, and a total of 15 commercial retail units located at-grade along Mercer Street as required by the CD-64 zone.

Richard Wittstock, Domus Homes, provided a presentation entitled “Queensborough Eastern Neighbourhood Node – 300 Duncan Street”. Patricia Campbell, PMG Landscape, provided an overview of the landscape portion of the project.

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

- Individual steps or stoops were considered along Duncan Road, but ultimately it was determined that it would have a negative impact on front yards;
- The overall green amenity space is about double what is required—the requirement is 10% of the gross residential area;
- The intent is for the pathway and play area to be used and maintained by the strata, not the public. Whether it needs fencing is still to be determined;
- All the pavement in the roadway is comprised of pavers; and
- The neighbouring property at 335 Blackley Street still needs to go through the rezoning process, but staff will consider its connections to this site.

In response to staff questions, the Panel provided the following comments:

- Panel members liked the street activation, particularly along Mercer Street;
- Consider more landscaping on the concrete curve;
- The development is successful in responding to the pedestrian scale, especially considering the issue with the flooding;
- The amount of much-needed, family-oriented housing this project provides will be of great benefit to the Queensborough community;
- Privacy has been addressed at the Blackley Street property line, but for the Mercer Street property line it seems less resolved;
- The commercial units on Mercer Street need to be as easily accessible to customers as possible (at grade, no steps);
- The applicant has done well to balance building separation with the permitted density;

- Would like to see more variety in colour among the homes in this development, and perhaps a subtle use of complementary colour in specific locations, to enhance the character of the homes;
- Advised caution with using vinyl siding so it does not look like the dominant material, hardie recommended instead;
- Mariner theme not communicated in current design;
- Pedestrian entrance mid-block to the site from Blackley Street could have more prominence;
- Provide information on how the units interface with the Stanley Street greenway;
- The space between buildings 24 and 25 do not appear to be very useable—ensure outdoor spaces are functional and not an afterthought;
- More thought into the privacy and separation between the site and 342 Mercer Street needs to be considered;
- Transition along Duncan Street needs to be better integrated with tiered planters/hedging. Provide sections through this area of the site for review; and
- Hydro substation could be relocated to improve access from east side of the site.

The Panel provided the following additional comments about the proposal:

- Panel members like the connection that meanders through the site;
- Suggest considering all-ages play or recreation areas, not just for younger children;
- A landscape buffer along Duncan and adjacent to the public sidewalk, as well as along the retail frontage, would help reduce the visual impact of the retaining wall there;
- There are two play areas—it would be good to see other pocket parks through this development;
- There is only one entry to the play area between buildings eight and nine, so it is not very visible—suggest adding another entry to the east side;
- Suggest extending the hatching along the six-foot fence that encloses the adjacent property on the northeast corner to screen the fence;
- It might be worthwhile to consider removing a few townhouse units strategically to have a better green arterial system / more useable green spaces and improve site porosity;

- Would like to see more street trees;
- The triangles on either end could be more active spaces with enhanced programming. For example there could be room on the commercial side for benches or a food truck, places where people could sit and enjoy a coffee; and
- Would like to see more consideration of how people would access the street from the internal area.

MOVED AND SECONDED

That the NWDP consider a motion of support requesting revisions to the project, in particular working with staff to address concerns related to the quantity and character of the shared and public amenity space on the site.

Carried.

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

5.2 337 and 339 Keary Street – Rezoning Application and Development Permit for 9-unit Infill Townhouse Development

Procedural Note: Bryce Gauthier, BC Society of Landscape Architects (BCSLA) Representative, declared a conflict of interest and was not present for the discussion on this item. Caroline Inglis, Architectural Institute of BC (AIBC) Representative, assumed the role of Chair during his absence.

Procedural Note: There was no quorum for the discussion on this item.

Wendee Lang, Planning Analyst, reviewed the January 11, 2022 staff report and provided a presentation regarding a proposed rezoning application and Development Permit for a nine-unit infill Townhouse development.

Thomas Grimwood, Grimwood Architecture, provided a presentation entitled Keary Townhomes. Mr. Gauthier presented on the landscape portion but was not present for the ensuing discussion.

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

- Tree number four will be retained;

- Artificial turf will likely be used in the dog relief area, with a drain; and
- A child with mobility issues should be able to access the playground. By keeping the slope under 5% it will also be wheelchair accessible.

The Panel provided the following comments in discussion about the proposal:

- The city needs more of these kinds of housing projects—good architecture and materials, and a great family-oriented development within five minutes of the Skytrain and all one's daily needs;
- Natural wood and brick are good quality materials, and the hardy board is a good complement to these. Recommend having an envelope consultant on board to ensure the materials are applied durably;
- Would prefer to have a lounge space as opposed to a dog relief area;
- Appreciate the effort to protect as many trees as possible, making it part of the design of the project;
- At the front, the turf area goes right to the edge of the building—recommend another row of planting or shrubs;
- The location of the agriculture plot could be reconsidered for an area with more sun, and/or use shade-tolerant plants;
- Would like to see the wood material brought through in other aspects of the design like landscaping or architectural features;
- Consider adding a third colour to soften the gradient between the two different colours of paving stones; and
- Make sure there is a barrier-free path in the corner where the fire pit is located.

The Committee expressed its general support for the project to proceed.

Procedural Note: Mr. Gauthier returned following the discussion to Chair the remainder of the meeting.

6. **STANDING REPORTS AND UPDATES**

There were no items.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

There were no items.

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8. END OF MEETING

ON MOTION, the meeting was adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

9. UPCOMING MEETINGS

The remaining scheduled meetings for 2022, which take place at 3:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted, are as follows:

- February 22
- March 28
- April 25
- May 30
- June 27
- August 29
- September 19
- November 28
- December 12

Certified Correct,

Bryce Gauthier
Chair

Katie Stobbart
Committee Clerk