

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER

**Meeting of the Advisory Design Panel  
Held at City Hall, 141 West 14th Street, North Vancouver, B.C.  
in Conference Room A on Wednesday, September 18th, 2013**

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**MINUTES**

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**Present:** B. Allen  
H. Besharat  
K. Bracewell, R.C.M.P  
B. Harrison  
J. Marshall  
M. Messer  
D. Siegrist  
Councillor Bell

**Staff:** E. Adin, Deputy Director, Community Development  
C. Perry, Supervisor, Engineering Services  
S. Kimm-Jones, Committee Clerk

**Guests:** **161 East Keith Road**  
Michael Katz, Katz Architecture Ltd.  
Janet Corne, Katz Architecture Ltd.  
Ken Larsson, Sharp & Diamond Landscape Architecture

**Harbourside Waterfront**  
Karen Marler, Hughes Condon Marler Architects  
Richard Henry, Richard Henry Architect  
Derek Lee, PWL Partnership Landscape Architects  
Lisa Lock, Concert Properties  
Farouk Babul, Concert Properties  
Jonathan Meads, Concert Properties  
David Reid, Golder and Associates  
Gwen Tang, Concert Properties

**Absent:** A. Epp  
Y. Khalighi  
M. Saii

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A quorum being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

## 1. Minutes of Meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held August 21st, 2013

It was regularly moved and seconded

**THAT** the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013 be adopted.

**Carried Unanimously**

## 2. Business Arising

There was a discussion on the proposed tour. It was agreed that staff would check attendance prior to the October meeting and the tour would start at 4 pm to finish at 5 pm. Bill Harrison has finalised the route.

**Action:** staff to check on City policy vis-a-vis the car pool vans.

## 3. Staff Update

E. Adin gave an overview of the projects and activities from the September 9<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.

**Action:** staff to send the waterfront survey link.

*J. Marshall joined the meeting at 5:50 p.m.*

## 4. 161 East Keith Road (Rezoning Application)

Staff provided background on the project which is a proposal to build a 17 storey residential building containing 58 strata units and 40 rental units, for a total of 98 one-bed and two-bed residential units. It is located in Victoria Park, an area which contributes a lot to the rental stock. It is oriented north south. The bonus will ensure the replacement of the existing units. 1.6 FSR is excluded as it is retained and secured by the City as rental in perpetuity.

Staff requested the Panel's comments on the proposed reduced tower separation between this and the adjacent building to the west, the boulevard landscaped area design and the uses found within, the division of space between the private and public realm, particularly on the north side of the building, and general CPTED considerations.

*Councillor Bell joined the meeting at 6:05 pm.*

Michael Katz, Michael Katz Architecture Ltd, presented the project to the Panel:

- The building has been moved to the back of the property. The main design issue was the separation of the building from the neighbour to the west.
- The plaza between the buildings has been kept open for the public.
- There is cross ventilation for all the tenants.
- The building will be a rental property with 58 units stratified for sale in the future.
- It is a very high quality building for a rental building because the owner will have to deal with future maintenance problems.
- All windows will be tripled-glazed.

- The lane will be treated as a pedestrian lane and will be landscaped.
- There is an exterior stairway.
- The community was very clear that the boulevard should be left as it is.
- Every three stories there will be large planter boxes with trailing vines on the exterior stairway.
- The building will have two entrances: one from the plaza at Keith Road with accessible access into a lower lobby from 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

Ken Larsson, Sharp & Diamond Landscape Architecture, described the landscape plan:

- The landscape design is stripped to simple, clean materials.
- The public boulevard has narrow pathways and awkward transitions. There will be minimal intrusion to open up the primary entry and sculpt pathways around the major trees in a simple circulation plan. The large conifers will be supplemented with smaller flowering shrubs and seating will be added.
- There will be an amenity terrace with an outdoor kitchen and fireplace.
- The sky gardens are composed of a stainless steel cable net system fastened to the underside of the parapets and will consist of a simple sedum scheme with a filigree of vines which will provide year round coverage.
- There will be a green roof but it will not be accessible by tenants.

Members then looked at the model.

**Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:**

- Question to staff: Are there any other towers that relax the building separation? **Staff:** It has been considered in new developments with more than one tower. I am unaware of other tower separation reductions. It has been done well in the City of Vancouver.
- Could the applicant vary the height with a rezoning? **Staff:** Not with rezoning; it would have to be an OCP amendment.
- Is there a view analysis? **A:** It will be done for the Town Hall meeting.
- There is no meeting room in the amenity space? **A:** There is a large space off 6<sup>th</sup> Street that could be used, but not a separate meeting room.
- How do you achieve the cross ventilation? How does it meet fire regulations? **A:** Tenants would have to open their doors. The building is very well treated from a fire point; there is a massive on-site water storage system.
- All the inside units are light locked and air locked. **A:** It can give flexibility, of the six units on each floor, only two have bedrooms like that.
- What are the green aspects of the building apart from the HVAC system? **A:** The green roof, the water collection system, triple glazing, a structural wood curtain wall.
- Why is the green roof not accessible? **A:** It is used for water retention. Access to the roof is problematic in a rental building.
- Is it retaining the Keith Road address? Emergency services have to be able to find it. **A:** We have been told that it will become a 6<sup>th</sup> Street address for emergency responders.
- The plaza will be public access through to the lane. What CPTED treatment is there as gradient and narrow pathways attract nuisances such as skateboarding? **A:** The existing trees will be limbed up; there will be no additional ground level planting of hedges or bushes, no places to hide. The existing path will have protective height railings which will be permeable. We might ask the municipality to supplement the pinch point with more light standards. We have tripled the width of the path to provide more visibility.

- Can the lockers and bike storage be accessed from the parking? Bike lockers need to be secure. **A:** Some lockers can be accessed from the parking, but the bike lockers cannot be accessed through the parking.
- Does the exit stair have glazing? **A:** It will be stainless steel mesh with vines growing on it. It is an exterior stair with glass rails.
- Have you looked into fire code issues? **A:** We have a fire code expert.
- Is there universal access to the upper terrace? **A:** Only if you are accessing from 6<sup>th</sup> Street.
- What kind of tenants are you expecting? **A:** It is a high quality building; the rents will not be low. It will be a mix. The Advisory Planning Commission asked for the creation of three bedroom units which we are looking into, but they will be very expensive to rent.
- Is the slab dropped to make the landscape flush with the paving? **A:** There is a shallow depth on the planters and gentle mounding.

**Comments of the Panel included but were not limited to:**

- We need to know how the building can fit in. There could be a more sensitive fit; it could flare and fit. I am not convinced that this is the solution. There are other opportunities to redistribute the mass. It is too much for the site. We need some examples of how the edge is being created at the lane; we need more information on how the building meets the ground.
- There are some technical challenges e.g. code issues around the stairs, which will change the look of the building.
- I fully support the landscape treatment. It needs to be more sensitive to the site and how it interfaces with the existing environment.
- The building address will need to be well known for emergency responders.
- CPTED needs to be used on the Keith plaza and laneway.
- You should explore more accessibility to the park, and from East Keith to the terrace for people with strollers and young children.
- I have concerns about the location of the outside amenity area; it will be very shaded due to its proximity to the neighbouring tower. The landscaped area to the north seems to be a depression; I am not sure of the feeling for people living on the lower level.
- The landscape plan needs more details. It is a good concept plan but there is not enough detail for review. Accessibility from one street to the other needs to be thought about.
- There is a good commitment to quality and rental. It is a clean form, the clarity of the architecture is commendable. I am concerned about the overlook of the neighbours. There needs to be architectural responses to alleviate the reduced separation. We need more contextual information. Some units are relying on the east face for light and air. There is an issue of sustainability; the west façade glazing will cause problems. Consider frontage on Keith Road; it is turning its shoulder to Keith. We need more information on the amenity space. It is a precedent-setting lane interface.
- I have some concerns about the vines; I have not seen many successful green walls.
- I like the massing, the two verticals, recesses and the modern vocabulary.
- Be sensitive about passive design responding to the environment.
- With regard to privacy issues, you have a responsibility to reduce the impact on the lower floors on the east side to the immediate neighbour. You can use operable privacy screens, fritted glass. Balconies can act as a privacy buffer.
- Operable privacy screens can help with solar shading on the west façade; heat absorption will be very demanding; you need sun shade devices on the east and west

façades. Soffits play a big role. I commend you for the amount of natural light to the core; it is delightful.

- There is information missing from the handout: we need furnished drawings on the floor plans and comparison to the neighbours for issues of overlook.
- I am not in favour of a green roof on this project; it is not accessible and will be very demanding for maintenance. There are no other towers looking down on the roof.
- Lighting for the exterior stairs needs careful consideration as it can be seen from bedrooms and the neighbours.
- The west façade needs a different treatment to the east façade.
- The bathrooms do not meet adaptable design guidelines.
- The project has some positive aspects. It has to set a sensitive precedent.
- I appreciate the quality of the project and contemporary vocabulary.
- The massing could be tweaked.
- Accessibility issues from East Keith to 6<sup>th</sup> Street should be fixed.
- There is huge responsibility on setting a precedent.

**Presenter's comments:**

- We are very interested in mitigating the western façade re privacy and light and will look into a complete screening system.

It was regularly moved and seconded

**THAT** the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 161 East Keith Road and requests the applicant to return and specifically address the following concerns:

- Establish why the 68 and half foot separation between the towers on the west side is the best or only option for development of the site;
- Resolve privacy and outlook issues that arise from the proposed tower separation;
- Further explore and justify the massing of the building;
- Resolve the accessibility issues into the building and from Victoria Park to 6<sup>th</sup> Street;
- Incorporate passive design elements for the east and west facades, clarifying the cross ventilation strategy and the operable windows;
- Mitigate solar gain on the east and west facades and further explore thermal loss;
- Provide a solution for lighting on the open stairwell that does not create spillover into the units and neighbouring buildings;
- Provide consideration to the soffits as the fifth elevation of the building;
- Ensure that all CPTED issues are fully addressed; and
- Provide further details on how the building meets the lane.

The Panel appreciates the quality of the presentation and supports the contemporary architectural vocabulary.

**Carried Unanimously**

## 5. Harbourside Waterfront (Design Revisions)

Staff provided background on the project which was previously reviewed at the February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 Design Panel meeting as well as in December 2012 and January 2013. In July 2013, Council endorsed a revised interim Flood Construction Level of 4.5 metres above sea level. This change has resulted in lowered street and floor elevations in the project, eliminating the need for the previously proposed two-tiered public space design. Our understanding is that the design can be adapted to move to 5.2 metres over time.

Staff asked for the Panel's comments on the amendments to the public realm from the change in the Flood Construction Level, the interface between buildings fronting the waterfront and the adjacent parks space to the south, and the updated interface between the park/plaza space and the shoreline, specifically at the foot of Fell Avenue.

Derek Lee, PWL Partnership Landscape Architects, presented the project changes to the Panel:

- The shoreline is being modified to mitigate wave action, storm surge. Pulling the deck structures back has reduced top of bank to 4.5 metres (from 5.4).
- The new design minimizes the projections of decking structures and the headland, and lessens the vertical profile at the top of bank.
- The design maintains the existing riprap conditions on the foreshore.
- Lower street elevations have a positive impact creating a more normalized sidewalk building interface. Adaptive measures will be used internally to mitigate sea level rise.
- The mews has been reduced to a 4.5 metre elevation
- The concrete band will be maintained at 5.2 metres to create a diking structure to adapt over time.
- All residential space starts at 5 metres.
- The design results in a more normalized urban interface between commercial mixed use and the street.
- There are acceptable break points in the concrete wall which would be dammed during storm warnings. The concrete wall will not be just a wall e.g. it will be boulders with pockets of planting in some places.
- The concrete wall could be integrated into the podium and will provide a separation between living space and the trail.
- The changes to the foreshore allow for an accessible route to the water e.g. a ramp.
- The sense of urban ecology along the foreshore and integrity of the plan has been maintained.

### **Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:**

- Given the importance of the Spirit Trail is there a technical reason why it cannot be elevated higher to avoid rebuilding it in the future? Could it be at 5.24 metres at the top of the concrete band? **A:** We want to minimize the impact of the street at one level and the broad dyke and wanted to keep it down so that the concrete wall is a discrete intervention. It is risk management; how often will an elevation of 4.5 metres be inundated? They are very rare occurrences e.g. one in five or eight years. We are trying to maintain good urban design and protect habitable space as events can be easily dealt with in the public realm.
- How are the comments from the previous ADP meetings taken into account? **A:** They will be dealt with planning staff; we are just addressing sea level rise today. The issues

will be addressed in the development permit. We have done a lot of modifications e.g. sense of place. The Development Permit Guidelines are 90% complete; the comments have been integrated and addressed.

- The massing of the buildings seems monotonous; will there be a more syncopated interesting community? **A:** The process has led us to this point; we started with considerably more variety in heights. We had to keep density which has ended up with more of a slab building. There will be a lot of variety in terms of building heights. The projects will come before the Design Panel.
- Lions Lane blocks views from the north. **A:** The intention of the angled form is to give a view from Fell Plaza. The public seems to like the complete mountain view from Fell Plaza.
- Will your design reflect sea level rise in 100 years? Think about it now. Will one of the roads funnel the water through as a last back up plan? **A:** We have tried to anticipate as best we can but what if we did it wrong?
- You should plan for the worst scenario e.g. New York are using streets as floodways. **A:** Perhaps using the courtyards. The idea of raising the front of the building and the shape of the run-up is important e.g. shallow slope. The whole front works as a breakwater. There is an issue of flooding that comes from the back.
- Will each parcel be the work of one architect? **A:** It may be a building by building architect not a phase by phase architect. This will get away from monotony.

**Comments of the Panel included but were not limited to:**

- With the constraints that you have you are working towards as much access to the beach. There are some missed opportunities; Green Shores, with the Stewardship Centre for British Columbia, could provide guidance on other ways the shoreline could be treated, not just riprap. Provide a different ambience and opportunity for people living along the waterfront.
- I find the massing a little monotonous. Could there be something more purposeful in designing the community centre space? It needs a little more development to create a significant public space. The hotel fronting the plaza may animate the space but that part of the hotel would have to be very public.
- I have concerns about site access; it needs more connectivity to North Vancouver.
- Do more in response to the neighbours in terms of graphics etc. for Harbourside Drive as I need to understand the nature of the street.
- I encourage you to look at alternatives from a fish habitat perspective; there is no cover for fish – what can you do to create fish habitat?
- The change of level has been well-handled. I am not convinced that the Spirit Trail needs to be temporary and can be flooded later so that the City has to spend money to make it work. Between the concrete band and the centre of the Spirit Trail is 0.7 metres. Take a more permanent approach in the event of a flood. I am not sure about the exact location of the concrete band. You are planning to allow for areas of sandbags but they are not expressed by design in the drawings.
- **Staff:** Point of clarification. There will be a one year park planning process that will follow the approval of the rezoning application. The location of the Spirit Trail has not been approved by staff.
- I am very supportive of what is being presented; do not forget about the global comments in the earlier ADP motions.

**Presenter's comments:**

- We appreciate the input. It is a long process with evolving development sites. There is a lot of opportunity for further design development.
- There is a general Engineering Department strategy for park development.
- We are hopeful that some of your concerns will be addressed in the parks planning and design process
- We do appreciate the comments about the variety of architecture and the necessity of that; it is being built into the development permit guidelines. As time progresses through the development program, technology, materiality will change. It is hard to illustrate at this point in time.

**Chair's Summary:**

- There is good support with where you are going; design development of the foreshore, Spirit Trail etc.
- Do not turn your back on your northern neighbours. Global issues need to be addressed and get feedback. View studies should be considered.
- Accessibility will be improved.

It was regularly moved and seconded

**THAT** the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the design revisions for Harbourside Waterfront and fully supports the revisions in terms of addressing flood management and sea level rise.

The Panel looks forward to further details at the parks planning and development stages including:

- Consideration of a permanent location for the Spirit Trail above future sea level;
- Diversity in building character, massing, height and design approaches;
- View studies looking towards the water from the Business Park and public streets (e.g. Harbourside Drive) as well as from Kings Mill Walk towards the mountains;
- To what extent Green Shores Guidelines have been considered as a sustainable approach to coastal design and development;
- Increased public access to the beach and foreshore while protecting and enhancing habitat;
- More detail regarding targets and actions to create fish habitat;
- Sea level rise future-proofing of public realm.

**Carried Unanimously**

**6. Other Business**

None.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Design Panel will be held on Wednesday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

Chair