

**MINUTES OF THE  
ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL MEETING  
HELD WEDNESDAY APRIL 28, 2021**

**1. THE CHAIR CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 12:00 PM**

**Present:** Marilyn Palmer (Chair), Devon Skinner, Sean Partlow, Joseph Kardum, Brad Forth, Matty Jardine, Pamela Madoff, Ben Smith

**Absent:** Ruth Dollinger

**Staff Present:** Charlotte Wain – Senior Planner. Urban Design  
Alena Hickman – ADP Secretary

**2. MINUTES**

**Minutes from the Meeting held March 24, 2021.**

**Motion:**

It was moved by Pamela Madoff seconded by Joseph Kardum, that the minutes from the meeting held February 24, 2021 be approved as amended.

**Carried Unanimously**

**3. COMMUNITY PLANNING PRESENTATION**

**3.1 Presentation by City staff of the draft Downtown Core Area Plan Design Guidelines for the purpose of receiving feedback from ADP.**

Robert Batallas and Joaquin Karakas provided the Panel with a brief presentation of the draft Downtown Core Area Plan Design Guidelines.

The Panel asked the following questions and discussed:

- Is it possible to make the form and density studies available to the panel?
  - Yes, we can share the dialog study.
- Is the City contemplating a separate exercise of considering Design Guidelines for public areas and how do we ensure quality of public spaces between buildings?
  - Guidelines are focused on building design and how they relate to public spaces and each other to create high quality memorable spaces and improve human scale of city. Guidelines do not address public realm, rather included in Downtown Public Realm Plan from

2017. The DCAP guidelines have consideration for common outdoor spaces and POPS.

- Agreed, that we look at buildings for reference to height but need to look at human scale and how buildings interface. It would be nice to look at those things in more depth. There are problems with mid-block connections. Yaletown has some very unique mid-block passages and connections. Makes for a more pleasant community and an interesting city. The experience of public spaces and interfaces is a huge importance.
- Victoria has a history of a secret thread, alternate routes off the main sidewalks in which you can navigate throughout the City. The guidelines will focus on the public experience.
- A project from Lowe Hammond Rowe that created some exciting outdoor spaces. Building inflected along street and created a nice plaza space. (Crosstown affordable housing project on Douglas Street)
- Think the guidelines are good. We realize they are a helpful tool for ADP and architects.
- Desire for precedent images that show positive examples and that provide inspiration. Including projects outside of Victoria. When diagrams or examples are shown, those things are helpful for providing guidance and inspiration.
- Looking at the Olympic Village and False Creek Design Guidelines and coming from the development industry it is nice having visual images to support new development. We need to keep in mind the financial side of these projects i.e. cost of timber up 250% over last two years. Financial viability is a key consideration or buildings will not be constructed. It is a big challenge moving forward on the development side of things.
- We do look at these documents, they drive a lot of our work upfront. Architects do not understand the developers' side of things and there is such limited access to the developers pro formas. We need to make sure buildings work and are financeable. Therefore, we do not understand the cost of fully developing. Everything we ask for in design guidelines reduced FSR and floor space and impacts economics. No one will build buildings if they do not make sense financially. All this needs to be tied to additional incentives such as density bonus.
- The guidelines are not prescriptive but give examples and need to be used for inspiration. Need to develop a culture at ADP where consideration is also given to public realm, then we can avoid cookie cutter design solutions.
- Too often architects are competing for attention with no consideration for public realm.

**Motion:**

It was moved by Pamela Madoff, seconded by Joseph Kardum that the Advisory Design Panel have seen the report for information and note that the final Design Guidelines will be brought forth to ADP at a later date.

## **5. ADJOURNMENT**

The Advisory Design Panel meeting of April 28, 2021 was adjourned at 1:20 pm.

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Marilyn Palmer, Chair