MINUTES OF THE
ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL MEETING
HELD WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 28, 2022

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

Present: Devon Skinner (Chair)
Ben Smith
David Berry
Tamara Bonnemaison
Sean Partlow
Matty Jardine
Will King
Colin Harper
Peter Johannknecht
Pamela Madoff

Staff Present: Miko Betanzo – Senior Planner, Urban Design
Rob Bateman – Senior Planner
Patrick Carroll – Senior Planner
Manasvini – Planner
Katie Lauriston – Administrative Assistant

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion:

It was moved by Ben Smith, seconded by Peter Johannknecht, that the agenda for the September 28, 2022 meeting be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

3. MINUTES

Motion:

It was moved by Pamela Madoff, seconded by Ben Smith, that the minutes from the meeting held June 22, 2022 be approved as presented.

Carried Unanimously

Tamara Bonnemaison recused herself at 12:10pm from the Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00191 for 205 Quebec Street, 507 Montreal Street and 210-224 Kingston Street.

4. APPLICATIONS

3.1 Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00191 for 205 Quebec Street, 507 Montreal Street and 210-224 Kingston Street

The proposal is for a new mixed-use development consisting of a three-storey podium with a 17-storey tower above located at the corner of Quebec Street and Montreal Street and three-storey townhouses fronting Kingston Street.

Applicant meeting attendees:

Erica Sangster – DAU Studio
Scott Murdoch – Murdoch de Greeff Landscape Architects
Greg Gillespie – Mike Geric Construction
Niall Paltiel – Mike Geric Construction

Rob Bateman provided the Panel with a brief introduction of the application and the areas that Council is seeking advice on, including the following:

- the height and massing of the project in relation to the adjacent and nearby existing and anticipated built form
- the tower and podium setbacks along the east property line
- the townhouse setbacks along the north and south property lines
- any other aspects of the proposal on which the ADP chooses to comment.

Erica Sangster provided the Panel with a detailed presentation of the site and context of the proposal, and Scott Murdoch provided the Panel with details of the proposed landscape plan.

The Panel asked the following questions of clarification:

- Will the pedestrian spaces be permanently open to pedestrians? If so, how will the daycare space remain secure?
    - Several layers of entry are proposed, with natural, logical transition points or restricted hours – particularly with the daycare
    - The intent is for a public realm experience, without free-flowing access. Security will be paramount with the daycare.
- What is the rationale for the 17-storey height, and why not 14, or even 20 storeys?
    - Different massing options were tested to examine shadow and view impacts to the surrounding sites
    - Testing indicated that 17 stories achieved the best balance: proportionally there was enough podium to support a larger tower, while also reducing the tower's footprint
    - A wider tower was considered, however it cast shadows to the east, particularly in the evenings
    - Overall, the 17-storey height was reached by making sure the tower is attractive, doesn't negatively affect the neighbouring sites, and fits in with its surroundings.
- Is the proposed density required to make the project viable? Could it be brought down to 14 or 12 storeys, for instance?
    - Currently there are only 102 homes within the tower, not including the town homes. Reducing the density would flatten out the site and reduces the public realm experience, in particular for that courtyard and daycare space
    - The proposed density is situated to best interface with neighbouring properties, and the view from the harbour and massing worked in terms of transition to surrounding areas

    - Studying the proposal found that this footprint and location was what had the most impact on shadows and views, more so than the height or density.
- The letter to Council states that the application "delivers upon and exceeds on public realm objectives and climate leadership" – can you speak to this?
    - The applicants have worked collaboratively with the City on the public realm and raingardens to meet the City's public realm guidelines, including material specifications and the addition of signalized pedestrian crosswalks
    - The building frontage is designed to fit with the green character of James Bay, but with a more urban approach
    - While it can't lay claim to ambitious sustainability energy performance at this time, it will be a high performing energy building and not a blocky tower
    - The landscaped green roofs and raingardens surpass City requirements
    - While there is a lot of parking on the site, there are also many transportation demand management (TDM) measures with parking shared between the daycare and visitors
    - An All Ages and Abilities (AAA) cycling network surrounds property
    - A resilient landscape plan is proposed, which includes plating above bylaw requirements
- Was it considered to have some of the density in the podium instead of the tower?
    - Yes, but it was found that keeping the podium lower and aligning with surrounding buildings worked better. Shadow studies also showed that a podium closer to east property line starts to cast summer shadows across the block
    - It is important to ensure that the podium has enough horizontality to have a bigger footprint, in order to look balanced
- The OCP calls for adjacent buildings of three to six stories – was this taken into consideration?
    - Yes, this was considered
    - The ground floor feels right along the street fronts, and creates a nice step down from the three-story podium to the two-story townhouses
    - Across Kingston Street will be two stories going forward, so we were looking at gradient between urban residential and traditional residential areas
    - Considered potential redevelopment of adjacent sites. The three-storey podium with tower does not preclude a well-designed six-story building next door.
- Regarding the east podium setbacks, is there room to move the tower next door to give more space to the transition?
    - There's not much setback on Montreal Street to make sure it's a meaningful step. The height is currently visible at the corner, but once you move along Montreal Street heading to the daycare, we want the 3-storeys to be very strong so it's important for the tower to be pulled back
    - Limited condition where we're at 6m transition to the corner, steps back steadily from that to the north.

Panel members discussed:

- Acknowledgment that a three-storey podium reduces shadows, as compared to towers
- Creative approach to minimizing shadowing on the south side adjacent townhomes

- Appreciation for the massing from the street level. Two storeys on the corner doesn't seem out of place
- Great fit for James Bay. The round windows and corner windows add to a stunning pedestrian experience. Artful dance trying to make the project work.
- Appreciate proposal – currently reads as very pedestrian, human scale because it's so close to the property line
- Do not share the same concern with staff about the setbacks on east to lower podium. The height is out of context. Need to consider uniqueness of James Bay including buildings up to 12 storeys – higher than what the policies are allowing
- Is there enough merit to amend the OCP? Economics are not enough. Beautiful design. Creative approach. But, is 17 storeys appropriate in this location?
- Lovely interaction between public and private realm
- Height needs to be carefully considered - there is opportunity to have the same unit yield within the podium itself while reducing the height to avoid the need to amend the OCP
- With the height of the tower, it doesn't look evenly weighted to the ground enough
- Compelling presentation and great design
- Shadow studies – need to consider other times of day and the effects on buildings on Montreal Street
- Looking at the overall picture of the city – there aren't many buildings in the area that are 15+ stories. This is the tallest of all the other buildings in the area. It is a well-designed building, but are we changing our city to accommodate it?
- We need to look beyond the design approach. The "jewellery" makes it very enticing. Different elements have been manipulated to make it very appealing
- The ADP plays a role in the development of the city – not development of sites in isolation
- Most important – why do we have planning policies? To have some prediction on what we are creating. The city has designated particular areas for height and density and others for different characters
- Concerns for height and massing being inconstant with the broad objectives of the OCP – if we go against this, we go against all the planning that surrounds each of the sites as well
- If the same care and attention was brought to responding to the policies, it would be beneficial to the city and neighbourhood and development team
- Great pieces that make the application feel like James Bay, great materiality, designs
- Opportunity to transfer some of the height down to the podium to make something more contextually appropriate. Could be justified with the pre-existing larger 10-12 storey buildings surrounding
- Covered walkways, daycare is sorely needed, walkability and café amenity space-best in class design
- The height is the primary issue. The height is allowing for the slenderness of the tower. But haven't heard and seen enough to support need for 17 storeys in this location for this type of use
- Meets design guidelines and policies except for the OCP. Setbacks to the east are respectful to those properties. This will be a change but that's part of the nature of developing a parking lot
- Looking at urban height diagram provided, there are taller buildings scattered across the city that aren't surrounded by other taller buildings. Is it okay to have a tall building surrounded by smaller buildings?

- How does the design work on its own? Works great on its own, 2-3 story podium is the best way to go. Having a hard time judging if the podium could be made larger and tower shorter. If the building were lowered by 3 or 4 storeys, it wouldn't make much of a difference
- Rationale for the density? Economic and financial question – could lower the tower a couple storeys and maybe could be better – not sure how it affects pro forma – but simultaneously I like the proportions of the tower as-is.

Motion:

It was moved by David Barry, that the Advisory Design Panel recommend to Council that the Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00191 for 205 Quebec Street, 507 Montreal Street and 210-224 Kingston Street be approved as presented.

Failed due to no seconder.

- Clearly a well-designed building
- This project has looked at all the others for rationale for height, next building will use this one as rationale
- Don't believe the OCP was incorrect here – it was correct, and this building is not the only one that could be there.

Motion:

It was moved by Ben Smith, seconded by Matty Jardine that the Advisory Design Panel recommend to Council that the Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00191 for 205 Quebec Street, 507 Montreal Street and 210-224 Kingston Street be approved with the following changes.

- With a consideration to reduce the height of the tower.

For: Devon Skinner, Ben Smith, David Berry, Sean Partlow, Matty Jardine, Will King, Colin Harper, Peter Johannknecht

Opposed: Pamela Madoff

Carried 9:1

Tamara Bonnemaison returned to the meeting at 1:27pm

5.2 Development Permit Application No. 000615 for 1555 Hillside Avenue

The proposal is for a one-storey retail commercial building that requires a Development Permit Application.

Applicant meeting attendees:

Fariba Gharaei – Urban Design Group Architects
Niki Sharoodi – Urban Design Group Architects
Pat Campbell – PMG Landscape Architects
Justin Pollard – Owner

Patrick Carroll provided the Panel with a brief introduction of the application and the areas that Council is seeking advice on, including the following:

- consistency of the proposal with the OCP vison to realize the Hillside Mall Town Centre as a more complete town centre
- adequacy of on-site landscaping
- any other aspects of the proposal on which the ADP chooses to comment.

Fariba Gharaei provided the Panel with a detailed presentation of the site and context of the proposal, and Pat Campbell provided a brief description of the landscape plan.

The Panel asked the following questions of clarification:

- Is there an application to rezone the property?
    - No, a development permit application with no variances
- Will it go to Council?
    - Yes, it will need to go to council due to the DPA area that it is in.

Panel members discussed:

- Asked to comment on objectives of neighbourhood plan – but the proposal is under-utilizing what the plan is for – can we comment on that? If there are no variances and it's not maximizing to the OCP
- As a DP application, the options are limited. We don't have the ability to request that they build up
- Potential to site or building improvements
- Street improvements or landscaping in general – this was the rationale to move to the committee for comment
- This is an example of why the zoning should be closer to the OCP than what it is
- No power to compel the applicants
- Due to the lack of better options, the ADP approves as presented
- Lack of alignment with zoning and OCP
- Panel's ability to comment on meeting intent of DPA.

Motion:

The ADP feels that the OCP and zoning should better align to prevent similar low-density proposals from coming forward.

It was moved by Devon Skinner, seconded by Ben Smith, that the Advisory Design Panel recommend to Council that Development Permit Application No. 000615 for 1555 Hillside Avenue be approved as presented.

Withdrawn

- Need to create a liveable environment – does this create any kind of town centre for the environment? Does not serve neighbourhood well although it serves the owner of the lot well
- Not our job to ensure the design meets the needs of the owner – we need to ensure it meets needs of neighbourhood
- Needs more human-scaled design,
- We are being asked to comment on form and character
- Opportunity to integrate ecologically sensitive
- Landscape based stormwater management in the design
- Need to recognize that this is a commercial street & commercial use
- Purpose-built building with corporate branding
- Concern for future use of building
- Need to consider material that is more integrated to the context; less driven by the brand of the tenant
- Buildings to the east demonstrate car-centric commercial space, while still allowing people to be outside as they venture to the stores
- Parking at the back – need for more than a traffic lane to better address people to create a sense of space, even just to connect to the parking at the front
- Opportunity to emphasize that this is for people – a more human-centric design.

Motion:

It was moved by Devon Skinner, seconded by Peter Johannknecht that the Advisory Design Panel recommend to Council that Development Permit Application No. 000615 for 1555 Hillside Avenue be approved with the following changes:

- Consideration for a stormwater management system
- Improvement of pedestrian experience from the parking area to the entrance on the hillside frontage
- Further consideration to the colour palette

Carried Unanimously

Peter Johannknecht and Tamara Bonnemaison recused themselves at 3:05 pm for the following application.

5.2 Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00212 for 1039 & 1043 Meares Street

The proposal is to construct a six-storey residential building with a total of approximately 50 strata units including a live-work unit on the ground floor.

Applicant meeting attendees:

Greg Damant – Cascadia Architects
Scott Murdoch – Murdoch de Greeff Inc
Dave Jawl – Jawl Residential

Manasvini provided the Panel with a brief introduction of the Application and the areas that Council is seeking advice on, including the following:

- street relationship
- building massing and transition to neighbouring properties
- any other aspects of the proposal on which the ADP chooses to comment.

Greg Damant & David Jawl provided the Panel with a detailed presentation of the site and context of the proposal, and Scott Murdoch provided a detailed description of the landscape plans.

The Panel asked the following questions of clarification:

- what is the degree of transparency / opacity from the parking area and lobby area to the public realm?
    - There is a floor to ceiling picketed gate that wraps in as a fence on the west side of the project. There's a visual scrim that fills that opening and creates a boundary
    - The landscaping should completely hide
- Pickets – how dominant will the vehicles be to the street compared to the rest of the façade of the building?
    - The overall proportion of the entry gate to the front of the building is minimal. Of about 31m frontage, only about 5m is the driveway entrance. Predominantly the building takes up the frontage
- Live-work portion of the project – is there going to be artist space, retail? How much public involvement is expected?
    - It's a unit that can simultaneously be used to live and work. It could be an artist, someone with a small consulting practice, massage therapist, accountant, designer… it would give someone opportunity for a work space that is more affordable as they wouldn't need both a residential and commercial space
- Not a commercial scale – does the live-work space intended to be commercial looking
    - Didn't want to have an over-height ground floor or classic commercial frontage; we wanted a more modern, mid-century composition
        - It is a residential unit, so no compromise to doing that
- There aren't windows on the side of the live-work space – what is the privacy from the sidewalk?
    - There is a concrete garden wall and gate as a mediating factor, as well as landscape buffer, to help maintain a sense of privacy and separation from the street
    - We would want operable windows on the ground floor, facing east.

Panel members discussed:

- Appreciation for the building
- Lack of setbacks on upper storeys of building
- The use of the façade and use of balconies successfully create a strong composition
- Very fitting with the neighbourhood context

- The rooftop terrace creates a sense of a step back
- Transition to other buildings – location of building on site makes sense and the rooftop terraces make a sensitive transition to the other buildings
- Great job addressing massing and setbacks
- Unique detail for the glazing – nearly public art without it being required
- The building is well in keeping with city plans and expectations
- Integration of art into the building – where it's integrated and not just added on. This is something we've asked for a very long time. Hopefully this shows how art can be integrated in an architectural way rather than just.

Motion:

It was moved by Will King, seconded by Matty Jardine, that the Advisory Design Panel recommend to Council that Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00212 for 1039 & 1043 Meares Street be approved as presented.

Carried Unanimously

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn: Devon Skinner (Chair) Seconded by Matty Jardine

The Advisory Design Panel meeting of September 28, 2022 was adjourned at 2:53 pm.

Devon Skinner, Chair