



## MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held at City Hall in Conference Room A  
and Electronically (Hybrid),  
141 West 14<sup>th</sup> Street, North Vancouver, BC on Tuesday, March 21, 2023

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<b><u>Members Present</u></b>	<b><u>Guests</u></b>
O. Bibby Sgt. K. Bracewell R. Greene D. Jacobson J. Levine L. McKenna D. Samaridis C. Toyota  Councillor S. Shahriari	Richard Wittstock, Domus Homes Group Adam Van Est, Stuart Howard Architects Neil Robertson, Stuart Howard Architects Caelen Griffiths, PMG Landscape Architects  Spencer Griffin, WSP Canada Inc. Brendan Wilson, Colliers Project Leaders Dragana Perusinovic, Kasian Architecture Robert Ferhsau, WSP Landscape Architecture *
<b><u>Absent</u></b>	<i>*participated electronically</i>
A. Llanos M. Rahbar	
<b><u>Staff Present</u></b>	
H. Dang, Planner 1 M. Menzel, Planner 2 T. Huckell, Committee Clerk-Secretary	

The meeting was called to order at 5:31pm.

A round of introductions was completed and a welcome extended to the Panel's new members.

### 1. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting held on January 18, 2023 were approved as circulated.

### 2. **STAFF UPDATE**

Nil.

### 3. **ANNUAL ORIENTATION AND ELECTION FOR CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

M Menzel presented an Annual Orientation to the Panel.

T. Huckell presided over the Election for Chair and Vice Chair.

It was moved and seconded:

THAT Ana Maria Llanos be elected *in absentia* as Chair of the Advisory Design Panel for the term ending January 31, 2024.

**Carried Unanimously**

It was moved and seconded:

THAT Jordan Levine be elected as Vice Chair of the Advisory Design Panel for the term ending January 31, 2024.

**Carried Unanimously**

#### **4. 1612 St. Georges Avenue (Rezoning Application)**

*The Delegation for 1612 St. Georges Avenue joined the meeting at 6:02pm.*

The City has received a rezoning application for the property located at 1612 St. Georges Avenue. The application proposes a 6-storey rental apartment building consisting of 76 total units, two levels of underground parking, and a central courtyard amenity area fronting onto St. Georges Avenue.

N. Robertson presented the following highlights regarding the rezoning application for 1612 St. Georges Avenue:

- The surrounding site is primarily multi-family projects, and some townhouses. The applicant challenged us to think about how we could approach secure rentals. We were also interested in exploring how to incorporate the City of North Vancouver's active design guidelines into the project.
- As a corner site, there is good exposure to the south, with a steep grade change between the northeast and southwest corners of approximately 3 metres. That dictated the location of the parkade.
- There is a significant coniferous tree in the corner that we want to retain and respect.
- All units are double fronting, with access to natural light and air ventilation.
- Remained cognizant of the importance of including both communal and private outdoor spaces; each unit has a private outdoor space that faces away from the public central area.
- Stairs are located at the outer portion of the courtyard, to maintain visual connectivity.
- A 6-storey mass in this location could potentially appear too bulky; worked with articulation, fenestration, and materiality such that the building never presents as more than a 4-storey element.
- Oriented the courtyard to the west, allowing as much solar penetration into the common area in the afternoon as possible.
- All ground level units have a connection to the street.
- Have worked with the landscapers to create a multi-user centric space, with opportunities to play and repose. Hard edges have been softened as much as possible.
- In response to the City's request to explore public art, we are proposing 3 main options: using the elevator core, having a free flowing sculptural component, or a

central courtyard sculpture (the latter would be the most conventional choice). Considering art that can be used as something children can play on, not just a static item.

- Retaining the cedar tree on the main corner of East 16<sup>th</sup> and St. Georges. It anchors the corner from a landscape point of view. Proposing three additional new street trees along East 16<sup>th</sup> Street.

Members asked the following notable questions:

- As a first responder, where is the wayfinding? Police typically want to find the lobby. **A:** The annunciator panel is at the front.
- Are the mailboxes outside in the open courtyard? **A:** Yes.
- Is there a different numbering system for the ground floor units? **A:** Not entirely sure how the City would deal with it. Other municipalities want you to number off the street. All could be accessed off the central space.
- Curious about the street level units; they look like they have stairs up to a patio area. Would that be fenced off? **A:** Our intent is actually to leave as open as possible. Could install a small gate, but we try to avoid fences if not needed.
- Appreciate eyes on the central open space, but sometimes powerful winds blow debris. In addition over time, such exterior access points become places to informally store things. Is there any sort of a barrier on each of the levels for debris, in addition to those installed for safety? **A:** One of our recent developments with a similar design includes rules that you can't store things outside. Would expect something similar here.
- What types of plants are you proposing for the landscape in the central core? **A:** Our proposal relies heavily on the forest floor approach. Light is a principal concern. Using broadleaf evergreens and ferns, with a mix of native and non-native species.
- For the screen that you are proposing to use to cover/shield, did you consider using any types of vines or plant material to soften that edge? **A:** We hadn't discussed but it is a possibility. Worry about maintenance issues; softness can quickly become enclosure if not carefully tended.
- Has the project gone through a code review? Concerned about the orientation of the parkade off the lane. The large overhang reduces the amount of daylight coming in, and there could be sound and exhaust concerns for the three units facing that ramp. **A:** There could be some alternative solutions; we'll have to consider.
- You've got detail around the windows that is essentially acting as a shadow box. Is that intended to provide shading? **A:** That, and playing with articulation a little bit.
- Are the stairwells fully enclosed? Concerns about easy access by non-residents. **A:** We haven't gone into the minutiae of accessibility with the client; assume bottom door would have some key or fob access.
- You mentioned screening as a design / art. Would that be on the stairwell covers? **A:** Possibly; we are coming up against budget constraints. We do like the idea of perforation.
- Have the colours been established? **A:** We have materials in mind but haven't precluded any possibilities. Client would value the input of this panel.
- Will the roof be accessible, as a common area? **A:** Not at this time. We did discuss but the issue is that if we do a rooftop amenity area, we have to contend with a different section of the building code.
- Do you have a water retention plan / design for the dry season? **A:** Yes, we also chose our plant lists along resiliency lines.

- Can you comment on the proximity of the tree (and its roots) to the parkade space? **A:** We have an arborist's report. The parkade setback follows the requirements of the tree protection zone and the roots are not populating under an existing building.
- Can you comment on the shading this building may impose on neighbouring buildings / lots? **A:** On three sides, we don't have much. The property to the north is separated by a City lane as well. However, there is no doubt that a 6-storey building will create some shading.
- Have you decided where the mid-market units will be? **A:** No, that would be a question for the developer at a later stage.
- What are the massing concepts you explored for this site, and why did you go with this one? **A:** We played with massing down to the lane; our client really liked the central courtyard hub idea. Seemed to be the most successful option of the 4-5 different schemes we developed.
- Has Engineering commented on the access to parking? Realize you are fighting the grade. Have you addressed visibility, particularly at the point where you turn left onto St. Georges? You might need to be a bit more aggressive there. **A:** We haven't quite reached that level of design detail. Would expect some convex mirrors.
- Is there a minimum distance from the corner to where parking starts? **A:** Standard is 15 feet. That and the minimum sidewalk width will be assessed alongside our engineering review.
- Where is the water meter vault? You will need to make sure there is space for bypass. **A:** Not finally located, but water entry is at the southeast corner.
- How will the garbage pick up be arranged? Will need to ensure lane is not blocked during pickup. **A:** At the northeast corner. Turning radii not finalized yet.
- Is all the parking on one storey? **A:** Yes, over 1.5 levels.
- Do you know the approximate dimensions of the length and width of the studios on the east side? **A:** Approximately 35 feet long and 15 feet wide.
- On the south side, approximately how tall is the stepping, and what is the material? **A:** Maximum 2 feet; probably a concrete retaining wall.

Members presented the following notable comments:

- You've got a confusing and vulnerable building; on a bright day wayfinding would not be difficult, but first responders tend to arrive in the dark. You'll need very clear wayfinding and entry. Ensure you have clear lines of sight and minimize places for people to conceal themselves. Will need robust lighting at all times.
- Mailboxes are vulnerable. One of the biggest problems in North Vancouver is theft from mailboxes. Bike lockers are also a significant concern; ensure that you have extremely well constructed exit and entrances.
- Happy to see something new, generally speaking, on this street. Believe there is a lot of opportunity in this area to refresh this street and this design begins that process.
- Like the courtyard; believe it will be appreciated from a resident's perspective.
- Encourage you to take further advantage of the opportunity to intensify some of the plant material on the stairwell locations; it's another way to green that street.
- Like the idea of public art on the elevator walls.
- In the central courtyard, consider opportunities for capturing the water that will fall.
- Echo previous comments re: wayfinding and access; there is no clear indication of where the main entry is into the courtyard.
- Consider the nighttime lighting of the courtyard, especially since all units have their bedrooms facing the courtyard. You want to light the courtyard for occupants, but not with a full glare.

- Also consider acoustics; you're essentially creating a well with lots of hard surfaces on the wall.
- With respect to the parkade ramp, think there is a bit of a livability issue with those near units. Believe there will be some concern with exhaust, noise, and light.
- Encourage you to consider going back to see if you can reorient the parkade ramp, perpendicular to the lane.
- Wonder about the material for the exit stairwell; think it works well to have an exterior corridor, especially since this climate will allow it, but visually it hinders the sightline. Consider glass, if within budget.
- Appreciate the innovative communal aspect of the courtyard, recognize it can be expensive.
- If there is public art on the parkade ramp facing the lane, it will be less accessible; consider placing it on a different edge.
- With so much effort being made to save the tree, consider ways to allow people to get physically closer to it.
- In terms of access, the CPTED issues are real; one thing this building does differently, is you haven't created walls / fences / barriers. If you do a double-loaded building, you'll create little gates / walls to delineate private patios. Consider no walls in front of the courtyard.
- The boxes around the windows are expensive; consider only doing on the north and east, where shading is less critical.
- Similarly on the east side, where the studios are, the walls as designed show some very thick privacy screens. Wonder about light quality there after 10am and if there is a way to make them more livable.
- Concerned about graffiti on the wall in the lane; perhaps if you activate some public art there, and have it illuminated adequately, it might prevent some tagging.
- Having some kind of illumination along the pathway would make it more obvious that it's an entry.
- Appreciate that there is bike storage, but would be hesitant to park my bike there unless it was quite bright.
- Wonder if there is a way to green the screens around the stairwell.
- Feel the shade will be a bit overwhelming on the east side, especially in the late fall and winter.

It was moved and seconded:

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 1612 St. Georges Avenue and recommends approval subject to addressing the following issues to the satisfaction of the Development Planner:

- review siting to address functional concerns that the building is "too close" to the property line;
- review of landscaping adjacent to the eastern boundary;
- further design development to address access issues, security, main entrance identification and wayfinding in regards to the courtyard and to individual units;
- consider alternative location for parkade access, as well as treatments to activate the lane, including the exploration / consideration of public art;
- further design development of the north facing units adjacent to the parkade to ensure livability, with consideration of building code implications;
- address concerns regarding visibility and careful attention to lighting into the courtyard;

- further design development to enhance architectural elements along the east façade of the building;
- consideration of streetscape design to address safety concerns (i.e. sidewalk configuration, corner bulges, and street lighting, parking and corner sightlines);
- consideration of removal of the existing cherry trees on St. Georges Avenue, and replacement with new trees within the boulevard;
- development of sustainability elements, including that stormwater be directed to use on site, particularly towards the landscaped areas; and
- reconsideration of the screening element of the stairwell and elevator, to increase activation of the stairs and potential inclusion of green landscape elements;

AND THAT the Panel wishes to thank the applicant for their presentation.

**Carried**

K. Bracewell, J. Levine, and D. Samaridis are recorded as voting in opposition to the motion.

*The Delegation for 1612 St. Georges Avenue left the meeting at 8:12pm.*

## **5. 630 Brooksbank Avenue (Rezoning Application)**

*The Delegation for 630 Brooksbank Avenue joined the meeting at 8:14pm.*

The City has received a rezoning application for 630 Brooksbank Avenue. The application proposes a three storey industrial building for BC Hydro's North Vancouver Operations Facility, complete with vehicle bays, offices, a works yard, and underground parking.

The application was originally presented to the Advisory Design Panel on September 21, 2022. At that time the Panel did not recommend approval pending the resolution of a number of issues. The applicant has provided a detailed response to the comments made by the Panel in their resubmission, including updated architectural and landscaping drawings.

S. Griffin presented the following highlights regarding the rezoning application for 630 Brooksbank Avenue:

- A key constraint of this project is to maintain operations on site as we redevelop. Intention is to demolish the yard buildings on the eastern portion of the site and build a new facility on the Lynnmouth frontage. Once constructed we will shift occupancy from the existing building to the new facility, to allow for demolition and construction of the new works yard on the Brooksbank frontage.
- Excited to return to the Panel. Heard your feedback and are returning with what we believe are some compelling advancements.
- Have created a rain garden system and reframed the entryway, adding a richness with decorative pavers. Have included a more diverse palette of trees and plantings.
- Proposing additional landscape treatments on the north and south sides to compensate for unhealthy trees that will be removed. Retaining three large existing trees on the Brooksbank frontage.
- Proposing a canvas along Brooksbank for a public art installation. BC Hydro will work with their indigenous relations group to procure.

- Have maximized screening with the exception of the Fortis infrastructure in the middle. Have worked to delineate the industrial vs the commercial components. This didn't allow for a lot of opportunities for glazing, so we incorporated at the entrances.
- The brick base visually supports the top two floors, which are the administrative floors. The main entrance serves both customers and staff.
- Circulation has been designed in support of operational safety and security.
- Have added a staff rooftop amenity space and a small patio area on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor roof.
- This is meant to be a post-disaster building; would support the entire Sea to Sky corridor, up to Squamish, which there is another support station. This is a critical facility for BC Hydro in this region.

The delegation presented an animated fly-over video for the Panel.

Members asked the following notable questions:

- Is the permeable paving just opposite the blue building? **A:** The parking area is not; just the landscaping, rain garden. The intent is that the parking lot, through a curb cut, is designed to drain into the first rain garden.
- Could you elaborate on the neighbours of this property? Think it's an interesting mix around this building and could shed some light on your design. **A:** There is a self-storage company to the south. Film studio to the west on the other side of Brooksbank Avenue; daycare and a small commercial centre to the north including the Montessori Daycare; and North Shore Winter Club to the east.
- Based on the proximity of your neighbours to the south and north, you have proposed some green screening plant materials. Is that backed by fencing, i.e. an additional buffer? **A:** At the building faces, it is only the planting that is providing the screening. Fencing and planting on Brooksbank. The secured part of the yard, on the west half of the site, is fenced in.
- Will the fire department require access to your parking lot to turn around? **A:** We have done turning analysis with the CNV specifications for their largest fire truck. Their response point on Lynnmouth Avenue will allow them to maneuver, but they will have to back out.
- How high is the wall at the parkade entrance? **A:** Almost to the height of the first storey. It is a brick veneer surface that matches the landscape wall.
- Curious about the Brooksbank side, where art is proposed. What is the process? **A:** there is an RFP process that we run through the BC Hydro indigenous relations group. We engage with the Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish nations. We work with them to best understand how they wish to be engaged / represented in the process. After the RFP process, the artist(s) and public art are chosen.
- Wondering why there are no windows on the offices on the north face? **A:** That side is primarily an exit stair and elevator. The breakout room on Level 1 gets natural light.
- Is the window shading on the east ornamental? Not shown on the west? **A:** They do function as solar shading. We chose to place them on the east and south only. But if additional studies show them as necessary on the west, we would introduce them there as well.
- Pertaining to the RFP for public art – would it go to the public art committee? **A:** Yes. There will be some flexibility on how we treat that component of the project.
- Was there any feedback regarding planting additional trees? **A:** We are trying to save as many trees as possible. Typically, the more trees the better, from a landscape architecture perspective. Also think the landscape can form a powerful part of the public art component.

- The lots in this area are enormous. Is Planning aware of any policy documents or guidelines that suggest a pathway network in this area? **A:** We have had an inquiry from the property to the north; would be looking at some sort of connectivity. Also important to note this is right on the boundary of the District of North Vancouver. Ultimately the nearby Heywood Street to the west becomes the Spirit Trail. Any connections have the potential to become quite pedestrianized.
- What is the lifespan of a post-disaster building such as this? **A:** We build for 75 years.
- With a lifespan of 75 years, what kind of strategies are you using to address the net zero requirement? **A:** The target of 75 years is for the infrastructure. We would typically plan for things like envelope and HVAC upgrades on a more regular basis, such as 25-30 years. At that point in the future, things would be brought up to the standards current at that time. Current design meets Step Code 2 (e.g. triple glazed window, insulation on roof).

Members presented the following notable comments:

- Appreciate the design work. Understand for a building like this that might be more important than appearance, but it still looks good.
- Consider extending the landscape off Lynnmouth further south; could be an opportunity to add one more planted tree on that boulevard before you hit the driveway access.
- Think the parkade entrance wall would benefit from some colour.
- Think you've done a good job on the use of the site, especially with the constraints; think urbanistically and functionally, it works well.
- A challenging site. The phasing of the development, in order to maintain operations, constrains you somewhat and seems like it's forcing you to put the public side of the building on the back side of the property. That will force you to really be responsible for what happens on Brooksbank. You have a massive public art opportunity there. Hope the RFP is inspiring.
- Strongly recommend you to green the roofs. Employees will be seeing it every day, in addition to the 16 storey residential building right behind the property, who will be looking down at it.
- The use of a diesel generator is upsetting. Think BC Hydro should use battery, or solar, or a combination of clean sources of power. See if you could potentially address some further sustainability with geothermal heating.
- Feel you could place a lot more trees on the Brooksbank side; would like to see a lot more shaded areas.
- Concern that the driveway cuts right through a long swath of the pedestrian path.

It was moved and seconded:

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 630 Brooksbank Avenue and recommends approval subject to addressing the following issues to the satisfaction of the Development Planner:

- further design development of the Brooksbank Avenue frontage to improve the landscape interface and maximize the opportunity for public art;
- ensure good integration of the landscape with the final public art installation;
- further design development to ensure better utility of the roof spaces, by considering the possibility of green elements, such as solar panels, a green roof, and/or plantings;

- reviewing the vehicular access to the parkade and short-term parking area to improve pedestrian safety; and
- further design development to allow softening of the walls on either side of the parkade ramp;

AND THAT the Panel wishes to thank the applicant for their presentation;

**Carried Unanimously**

**6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next regular meeting is scheduled for April 18, 2023.

**7. ADJOURN**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:26pm.

*“Certified Correct by the Acting Chair”*

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M. Menzel, Staff Liaison, Acting Chair