

Urban Design Review Panel Comments

Date	October 16, 2019	
Time	2:00	
Panel Members	Present Chad Russill (Chair) Gary Mundy Ryan Agrey Jack Vanstone Glen Pardoe	Distribution Chris Hardwicke (Co-Chair) Terry Klassen Ben Bailey Colin Friesen Michael Sydenham Beverly Sandalack
Advisor	David Down, Chief Urban Designer	
Application number	DP2019-4791	
Municipal address	2188 85 Street SW	
Community	Springbank Hill	
Project description	New: Multi-Residential Development, Retail and Consumer Service, Restaurant: Licenced - Medium (1 building)	
Review	first	
File Manager	Joseph Yun	
City Wide Urban Design	Chris Guliniao	
Applicant	Slokker Canada West	

Summary

The project covers the mixed-use project (MUI) located in the northwest corner of the Aspen Springs development in the larger Spring Bank Hill area. The site presents challenging topography with a roughly 30-foot elevation change down from the road. The site will experience pedestrian and multi-modal (bikes, scooters, etc.) traffic with nearby pathway systems, grocery store and LRT station. The overall design of the site and building fails to respond effectively to the unique topography causing significant accessibility issues.

The panel recommends the applicant further review:

- The project response to the site restrictions, primarily focusing on improving the integration of the building with the topography.
- Improvement of the (currently poor) connections to the surrounding site and a limited pedestrian experience to the south façade only. Enhance the pedestrian experience by rethinking the spaces surrounding the building including the landscape design, amenity spaces and accessibility. It is suggested that a high-quality pedestrian realm is justified and should be provided along 19th Avenue.
- More contextually appropriate building design at the NW corner, as this is a prominent interface that should be given more animation to address the high visibility.

Urban Design Element	
<p>Creativity <i>Encourage innovation; model best practices</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall project approach as it relates to original ideas or innovation 	
UDRP Commentary	The development exercises conventional approaches to a unique site. With grading challenges, this creates poor transitions from the site to the building. The NW corner is highly visible, and the building requires greater significance at this intersection. The west façade of the building does not relate to the residential scale and pattern established by the adjacent townhomes.
Applicant Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less conventional approaches to this unique site have been embraced: Transitions from the site to the building have been improved; especially from the public streets: 85TH Street and 19TH Avenue SW. Greater significance to the highly visible NW corner has been achieved by the introduction of a significant open space amenity area. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer also to 'Human Scale' below
<p>Context <i>Optimize built form with respect to mass and spacing of buildings, placement on site, response to adjacent uses, heights and densities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Massing relationship to context, distribution on site, and orientation to street edges Shade impact on public realm and adjacent sites 	
UDRP Commentary	<p>The building is located appropriately for its scale on the busier intersection. The stucco finish, however, does not fit within the west coast language that the other materials reference.</p> <p>No shading concerns are identified by the Panel.</p>
Applicant Response	<p>The building is located appropriately, and should act as a visual gateway leading into 19TH Avenue SW.</p> <p>Please disregard references to 'west coast' made inappropriately by the Owner.</p>
<p>Human Scale <i>Defines street edges, ensures height and mass respect context; pay attention to scale</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Massing contribution to public realm at grade 	
UDRP Commentary	The pedestrian experience is secondary to the vehicle with weak connections to the building entrances and surrounding site. The building sides that face the roadways do not respond to the grading of the site and have limited interaction with the pedestrian realm. It is recommended to consider the human experience in these areas for both the building user and passer-by.
Applicant Response	<p>The following are some of the proposed improvements to the building and the site, that are intended to enhance the pedestrian realm: to increase the pedestrian connections between the public sidewalks and the building frontages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A large landscaped Outdoor Amenity Area is proposed at the corner of 19TH Avenue SW and 85TH Street SW. This outdoor amenity area will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recess into the ground to allow direct access to-from the three major proposed CRUs on the main floor of the building. Provide full-height storefront glazing on this prominent northwest building corner; allowing full view into the interior of the proposed retail spaces. Be constructed of both hard and soft landscape elements; as well as provide some associated outdoor furniture. Provide barrier-free access through a feature ramp along the eastern edge. Provide an attractive, curved feature stair at the most visible and prominent pedestrian intersection of 85TH Street SW and 19TH Avenue SW. Direct pedestrian access to the main floor entrances of CRU-3 and CRU-4 and CRU-5, is proposed from 19TH Avenue SW, or 85TH Street SW; though this new outdoor amenity area

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Additional, and larger, full-height storefront glazing is proposed on all three CRUs that now open up into the new open space amenity area ○ New double-glazed swing entrance doors are proposed for each CRU ○ New entrance canopies and signs are proposed over the new CRU entrances • Direct pedestrian access to the main floor entrance of CRU-6: potential Restaurant, is proposed from 19TH Avenue SW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New double-glazed swing entrance doors are proposed for each CRU-6 ○ A new entrance canopy and sign is proposed over the Restaurant's new 19TH Avenue SW entrance ○ Significant additional glazing is proposed to the east elevation of CRU-6: Restaurant, allowing pedestrian views into the proposed restaurant space. • For the total of six CRUs proposed on the main floor of this building, new direct pedestrian connections to building entrances are proposed for four of the six CRUs from the Public Street side of this development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In terms of building area, these four new proposed pedestrian connections provide direct access from the two public streets to approximately 85% of the commercial-retail area on the main floor.
<p>Integration <i>The conjunction of land-use, built form, landscaping and public realm design</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking entrances and at-grade parking areas are concealed • Weather protection at entrances and solar exposure for outdoor public areas • Winter city response 	
UDRP Commentary	Further site and landscape development are recommended that promotes an enjoyable pedestrian experience. There does not appear to be site furniture or seating in any immediate outdoor spaces. Further development of integrating the landscape elements with the north and west side of the building is recommended.
Applicant Response	The new and large open space amenity proposed for the prominent NW corner offers enhanced landscape development: including hard and soft landscape; feature curved stair; site furniture; barrier-free ramp; and the like. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer also to 'Human Scale' above
<p>Connectivity <i>Achieve visual and functional connections between buildings and places; ensure connection to existing and future networks.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian first design, walkability, pathways through site • Connections to LRT stations, regional pathways and cycle paths • Pedestrian pathway materials extend across driveways and lanes 	
UDRP Commentary	Challenging site grades create poor pedestrian connections to the building entrances and surrounding site. The Panel understands the slope complexities of the site, however the presented interface along the north and west edges is completely disconnected from the street. While the solution may <u>not</u> be to simply create entries to the commercial uses along this edge, improved connectivity is required for a more positive result on this edge. Further thought is recommended to better integrate the building with the site and create clear connections for a high-quality pedestrian realm along 19 th .
Applicant Response	Albeit challenging site grades: newly proposed strong pedestrian connections have been added to newly proposed large building entrances along the north and west edges of the site: along the street edges. This better integration of the building with the site will create clear connections for a high-quality pedestrian realm along 19 TH Avenue SW. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer also to 'Human Scale' above. <p>Pedestrian First Design: The proposed development revisions do now address, and do now activate the street edges (85th Street and 19th Avenue SW).</p>

	<p>The proposed new slope adaptive design now enables over 85% of the total commercial-retail area along the street edges (85th Street and 19th Avenue SW) to be directly accessed at grade.</p> <p>The proposed new slope adaptive design now provides a higher degree of street animation by allowing direct pedestrian views into over 65% of the commercial-retail facade along the street edges (85th Street and 19th Avenue SW).</p> <p>Connections to LRT Stations, Regional Pathways, Municipal Reserves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed new pedestrian walkway added to the extreme eastern site boundary provides a comfortable connection to-and-from 19TH Avenue SW encouraging pedestrian movement to-and from the environmental open space area and the newly proposed Regional Pathway/green corridor. • An existing Regional Path lies on the western edge (85TH Street SW): readily accessible from this property: just across 85TH Street SW. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 85TH Street SW to 17TH Avenue SW leads directly to the LRT station
<p>Animation <i>Incorporate active uses; pay attention to details; add colour, wit and fun</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building form contributes to an active pedestrian realm • Residential units provided at-grade • Elevations are interesting and enhance the streetscape 	
UDRP Commentary	<p>The building does have a mix of material and massing, although only one side is shown to have an active pedestrian realm. The CRU units and proposed restaurant will provide a diversity and energy to the site. It is recommended to continue the landscaped elements along the edge of 85th Street SW to the MUI.</p>
Applicant Response	<p>It is now proposed that all sides of the building have an active pedestrian realm. The CRU units and proposed restaurant will provide a diversity and energy to the site.</p>
<p>Accessibility <i>Ensure clear and simple access for all types of users</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrier free design • Entry definition, legibility, and natural wayfinding 	
UDRP Commentary	<p>There are significant access challenges to the building on all sides. Access to the building for both the residential and CRU should be more democratic for wheelchairs and other multi-modal options (bikes, scooters, etc). While it is understood that accessibility is a challenge for the site, improvement throughout appears to still be a viable consideration.</p>
Applicant Response	<p>Barrier-Free Design:</p> <p>To address the challenging topography of the site, the Applicant has sited the Orion building's main floor (commercial-retail entrances) to match grade at the extreme SW corner of the building/site: and the Orion building's residential entrance floor level to match grade at the extreme NE corner of the building/site.</p> <p>This proposed siting of the building allows direct barrier-free access to the commercial-retail entrances on the main floor, as well as, direct barrier-free access to the residential entrance on the lower floor.</p>
<p>Diversity <i>Promote designs accommodating a broad range of users and uses</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail street variety, at-grade areas, transparency into spaces • Corner treatments and project porosity 	
UDRP Commentary	<p>The proposed at-grade retail is commendable.</p> <p>The residential portion of the building proposes very limited product type, more specifically all (48) being one-bedroom units, limiting the diversity of residents.</p>
Applicant Response	<p>Retail Street Variety:</p> <p>Transparency into Spaces:</p>

	<p>The Applicant proposes to create an entire wall of glazing on the east elevation of CRU-6: Potential Restaurant. Refer to detail 2: East Elevation; on drawing A3.0: Elevations.</p> <p>This additional glazing will help to activate the pedestrian realm along from 19TH Avenue SW: allowing views directly into the restaurant, while walking/cycling/driving west along 19TH Avenue SW, toward 85TH Street SW.</p> <p>Corner Treatment: Based on the existing, surrounding buildings, we believe that our proposed Orion Building offers significant and sufficient building height and mass to form one side of the visual gateway that is envisioned to lead into 19TH Avenue SW. Although we do not believe that additional 'verticality' is required at this corner, we are proposing to add considerable visual articulation and street animation to this corner, around the ground plane. At this corner, and along 19TH Avenue SW, we have added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant open space amenity area; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete with: hard and soft landscape; street furniture; feature stair; barrier-free ramp; and the like • Substantial storefront glazing; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Floor-to-ceiling glass; clear glazing to allow direct views into these proposed CRUs. • Several at-grade storefront entrances; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allowing access to over 85% of the main floor CRU areas. <p>Residential Variety: The product type proposed by the Owner, albeit 'limited' within this building, fits well into the larger overall product types that are being proposed for this new 'Aspen Spring' area as a whole.</p> <p>The product type proposed by the Owner is a direct result of in-depth market analysis; resulting in surprising numerous 'commitments to purchase' at their Discovery Centre.</p>
<p>Flexibility <i>Develop planning and building concepts which allow adaptation to future uses, new technologies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project approach relating to market and/or context changes 	
UDRP Commentary	The tenant options may be limited due to limited accessibility and visibility. Further thought is recommended on how the future public transportation options may reduce the parking requirements – and what this space can be used for in the future.
Applicant Response	By virtue of the structural large span column and beams, the main floor is flexible, and adaptable. The proposed residential suites are generally smaller in floor area than in the past: relating to current, and future market trends and context change. Albeit less adaptable in design, as parking space is reduced in the future, resident amenity and storage spaces can be increased in the parking structure.
<p>Safety <i>Achieve a sense of comfort and create places that provide security at all times</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and security • Night time design 	
UDRP Commentary	A site lighting strategy was not clearly shown. It is appreciated that 'blind spots' within the site were kept to a minimum.
Applicant Response	Site lighting is intended to promote safety and security by ensuring that 'blind spots' within the site are kept to a minimum.
<p>Orientation <i>Provide clear and consistent directional clues for urban navigation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance natural views and vistas 	

UDRP Commentary	Orientation of the higher density building, in comparison to the rest of the parcel, is appropriate though admittedly does not capitalize on the views to the MR.
Applicant Response	While maintaining the appropriate orientation for this higher density building at the NW corner of the parcel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As many of the primary 'living room'/'balcony' views as possible have been oriented to capitalize on the views of the MR • The Residential Amenity Area on the Main floor orients toward the MR • The substantial exterior deck off the proposed Restaurant; orients toward the MR
<p>Sustainability <i>Be aware of lifecycle costs; incorporate sustainable practices and materials</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site/solar orientation and passive heating/cooling • Material selection and sustainable products 	
UDRP Commentary	The applicant did not present or include sustainability aspects during the presentation.
Applicant Response	A few of the sustainable aspects proposed for this development include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site orientation: Building mass and height is used to block predominant northerly and westerly winds at principle building entrances: both residential, and commercial-retail. • Solar orientation: Albeit a parking lot, the south facing open space, provides a significant outdoor amenity space that helps to physically and visually 'connect' this development with the proposed multi-phased townhome development located directly to the south of this site: that can be enjoyed and shared by both developments. • The Owner is keen to use low maintenance materials and/or sustainable products, as well as, to incorporate details that avoid maintenance issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Refer also to 'Proposed Cladding Materials', attached. • Applicant is committed to the continued exploration of the use of Low Impact Development (LID) for this development. Through design development, and construction drawings; with our Landscape Architect, we will explore in more detail better ways to deal with our site drainage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Our specified use of low water irrigation will contribute positively to our LID goals.
<p>Durability <i>Incorporate long-lasting materials and details that will provide a legacy rather than a liability</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of low maintenance materials and/or sustainable products • Project detailed to avoid maintenance issues 	
UDRP Commentary	Durability meets the Panel's expectations based on the material description in the material presented, which note vented rainscreen technology for all stucco walls.
Applicant Response	The Owner is keen to use low maintenance materials and/or sustainable products, as well as, to incorporate details that avoid maintenance issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer also to 'Proposed Cladding Materials', attached.