

Urban Design Review Panel Comments

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| Date | March 31, 2021 | |
| Time | 3:00 | |
| Panel Members | Present Chris Hardwicke (Co-Chair) Michael Sydenham Jack Vanstone Noorullah Hussain Zada | Distribution Chad Russill (Chair) Ben Bailey Anna Lawrence Jeff Lyness Gary Mundy Glen Pardoe Beverly Sandalack Katherine Robinson |
| Advisor | David Down, Chief Urban Designer | |
| Application number | DP2021-0970 | |
| Municipal address | 2027 81 St SW | |
| Community | Springbank Hill | |
| Project description | New: Multi-Residential Development | |
| Review | first | |
| File Manager | Johnson Kwan | |
| City Wide Urban Design | Sonny Tomic | |
| Applicant | S2 | |

*Based on the applicant's response to the Panel's comments, the Chief Urban Designer will determine if further review will include the Panel or be completed internally only by City Wide Urban Design.

Summary

The single-phase multifamily project fronts the 19th Avenue livable street, between 81st and 85th Street SW. The proposed development addresses 2 significant challenges. The grade differential of approximately 8.0m across the site and overland drainage right-of-way along to south property line to the benefit of an adjacent owner. Overall, the 4-storey building scale, massing and rooflines respond to the site and are architecturally contextual within the community.

The development has an unusual access with parkade access directly at the main entry and visitor parking areas located at prominent locations on the site. Edge conditions constrained by grade and the storm water requirements will benefit from further design intervention on the public realm and amenity space. The central roundabout area is identified as having the majority of available space for amenity. At minimum, a reduction of visual impacts of parkade entry, waste and recycling and loading is recommended for further consideration.

| Urban Design Element | |
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| Creativity <i>Encourage innovation; model best practices</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall project approach as it relates to original ideas or innovation | |
| UDRP Commentary | The project has a unit mix that should provide for good diversity and market opportunity in the area. Overall, the project responds to a complex site within the context of approved and pending approved projects in the area. |
| Applicant Response | Noted |

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| Context Optimize built form with respect to mass and spacing of buildings, placement on site, response to adjacent uses, heights and densities <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 | Given the complexity and nature of the site, more detail on massing and illustrating the development within the context of adjacent planned sites would be beneficial. Building massing overall is suitable for the site. In response to materials palette, stone cladding 'hanging' in the air and the white panels are suggested for further consideration by the applicant to improve visual strength of the façade. |
| Applicant Response | <i>The building palette, including the use of the dark grey and white stucco, has been used strategically to accentuate the articulation of the façade. The use of stone on the corner elements up to the third level has been incorporated to highlight the edges of the building, especially since the building itself does sit well below the 19 Avenue alignment along the north. Maintaining the stone elements at grade only would hide the use of material from street-level. Every effort has been made to tie the materiality and the use of the palette into the overall concept – including striking a balance between light and dark, with the warmth of the wood tone while integrating into the landscape buffer to the edges at grade.</i> |
| Animation Incorporate active uses; pay attention to details; add colour, wit and fun <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 | The grades, associated retaining walls and drainage swale limit pedestrian access and circulation around the building. The panel is supportive of conversations with Parks to review opportunities for connection and amenity in the adjacent park lands. While the lands should remain public, the applicant is encouraged to engage with Parks on adjacent opportunities to the extent practical. Further consideration of the treatment of exposed parkade walls is suggested. |
| Applicant Response | <i>There are some significant challenges with connecting to the west side of the site – specifically related to the extensive grade changes along the edge but also in an effort to protect the public and residents alike from unsafe conditions (i.e. steep edges, swales and storm water collection/flow areas). Comments related to the treatment of exposed walls are taken under advisement – durable materials will come down to grade with a landscape buffer to help blend the edges and minimize their impact.</i> |
| Human Scale Defines street edges, ensures height and mass respect context; pay attention to scale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Massing contribution to public realm at grade | |
| UDRP Commentary | The main entrance lacks clear visual cues and is obscured partially by landscaping. More attention to a deeper, more substantial or otherwise more prominent entrance is recommended. |
| Applicant Response | <i>The building entrance has been well articulated with a port-cochere and use of materials to enhance and identify it's location. The landscape design has been revised to create a more inviting environment and to maintain an openness and connection between the front door and the rest of the site.</i> |
| Integration The conjunction of land-use, built form, landscaping and public realm design <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 | More amenity development in the roundabout area would improve the project significantly. The 3 visitor parking stalls along the north street boundary limit the amount of street amenity space. Further relaxation of parking requirements or reconfiguration of parking is supported and suggested in favour of amenity. Treatment of the parkade entrance in an architecturally interesting manner is recommended given prominent location on the site relative to the entrance. The waste and recycling and loading stalls predominate the available space in the roundabout. Further design reconciliation is suggested. Regarding the livable street, it is not clear how this development specifically integrates into that concept. |
| Applicant Response | <i>The area bordering 19 Avenue has been modified based on comments received. In addition, waste & recycling location has been modified and moderate level landscaping provided to help to buffer. This area is high traffic and as such presents</i> |

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| | some safety challenges – as such any changes in this area have been carefully considered. |
| Connectivity Achieve visual and functional connections between buildings and places; ensure connection to existing and future networks. <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 | Pedestrian connections exist to 19 th Avenue but are not prominent. Consideration of varied paving or shared use of the carriageway through flat curbs, woonerf style applications that provide for emergency access when needed a stronger pedestrian presence are encouraged. Consider extending NE walkway to the street, and reducing the east-west on-site walkway immediately parallel the on-street walk in favour of additional streetscape. |
| Applicant Response | There are significant challenges on the site related to grade that inhibit some of the comments regarding more direct pedestrian connections. Ultimately, we have strived to maintain accessible points of access, while also being limited by some exiting requirements (as per building codes and protection of exits). |
| Accessibility Ensure clear and simple access for all types of users <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrier free design • Entry definition, legibility, and natural wayfinding | |
| UDRP Commentary | Site and building are generally accessible. |
| Applicant Response | Noted |
| Diversity Promote designs accommodating a broad range of users and uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail street variety, at-grade areas, transparency into spaces • Corner treatments and project porosity | |
| UDRP Commentary | Unit mix is considered good and should appeal to a variety of market participants. |
| Applicant Response | Noted |
| Flexibility Develop planning and building concepts which allow adaptation to future uses, new technologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project approach relating to market and/or context changes | |
| UDRP Commentary | N/A |
| Applicant Response | Noted |
| Safety Achieve a sense of comfort and create places that provide security at all times <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and security • Night time design | |
| UDRP Commentary | The south and west boundary conditions lack clear visibility from adjacent units. Consider or demonstrate how these areas are safe and have visibility and general CPTED principles applied. |
| Applicant Response | These areas of steeply graded, with significant retaining and planting. Generally speaking, units do have visibility to these areas, albeit from above. Access to any of the areas in question from the exterior is extremely restricted. |
| Orientation Provide clear and consistent directional clues for urban navigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance natural views and vistas | |
| UDRP Commentary | The building facades and rooflines are oriented logically and functionally to create a multi-frontage look- especially the roof pitches. The main pedestrian site access is minimized and insignificant in scale relative to the overall size and scale of the vehicle and primary fire entrance. |
| Applicant Response | The building entrance has been well articulated with a port-cochere and use of materials to enhance and identify it's location. Unfortunately the vehicle access area is of a size and nature that is required for a development of this size – it is not possible to minimize its scale much further than what is provided and still meet general access requirements (fire, waste & recycling). We have modified access requirements with Transportation to confirm that safety and access requirements are successfully met. |

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| Sustainability <i>Be aware of lifecycle costs; incorporate sustainable practices and materials</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site/solar orientation and passive heating/cooling • Material selection and sustainable products | |
| UDRP Commentary | |
| Applicant Response | Noted |
| Durability <i>Incorporate long-lasting materials and details that will provide a legacy rather than a liability</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of low maintenance materials and/or sustainable products • Project detailed to avoid maintenance issues | |
| UDRP Commentary | Materiality of finishes are generally considered durable in the long term. |
| Applicant Response | Noted |