

Urban Design Review Panel Comments

Date	August 18, 2021	
Time	1:00	
Panel Members	Present Gary Mundy (acting chair) Anna Lawrence Glen Pardoe Noorullah Hussain Zada	Distribution Chad Russill (Chair) Chris Hardwicke (Co-Chair) Ben Bailey Katherine Robinson Beverly Sandalack Doug Little Jeff Lyness Jack Vanstone
Advisor	David Down, Chief Urban Designer	
Application number	DP2021-5030	
Municipal address	108, 114, 118, 120 9A St NE	
Community	Bridgeland / Riverside	
Project description	New: Dwelling Unit	
Review	First	
File Manager	Brandon Silver	
City Wide Urban Design	Jihad Bitar	
Applicant	BCW Architects	

*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 proposed Bridgeland/Riverside Multi-Family Development is a 4-storey apartment building on the southeast corner of 1 Ave and 9A ST NE. The building has 56 units with a mix of studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom products. The parkade is entirely below grade, with access off the adjacent lane on the east side of the site. The site is within a +/- 6 minute walk of the Bridgeland-Memorial LRT Station. The focus of the site is a public art occupiable sculpture called "Comfy" on the northwest corner of the site, with the building entry proper is on the west façade, located about mid-block. The panel appreciates and commends the developer and design team for the inclusion of thoughtful and engaging art within the public realm.

The panel generally supports the project as a solid contribution to the neighborhood. The building is appropriate in size and materiality for the area. Commentary by the panel therefore revolves around more detailed elements rather than concerns about the development in general. These comments include concerns about the durability of the sculpture finishes, vehicular access down the parkade ramp (the corner appears too sharp), the lack of street trees along the Avenue, and a lack of presence of entry from the street.

Urban Design Element	
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 applicant is commended for the inclusion of publicly accessible art on the northwest corner of the site. The applicant is encouraged to investigate opportunities of associating the main building entry with the sculpture on the corner by shifting the entry to the north. Combining these spaces and extending the paving west to the curb would create a plaza-like entry on the corner with sufficient room for additional bike parking and possible additional outdoor seating. The panel understands there will be some grade to be made up between the entry and the elevator, but feels that the benefit of the corner focus could outweigh the drawback of some minor interior ramping on a sloped site.
Applicant Response	
Context <i>Optimize built form with respect to mass and spacing of buildings, placement on site, response to adjacent uses, heights and densities</i>	
<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	The main floor appears somewhat squat, and would benefit from some additional height while improving the building's street presence at grade. The continuous planter in the setback along the south property line creates a nice edge for the adjacent dwelling, but may not work well with future development of the site to the south. The panel would like to see some of the required planting relocated to 1 Avenue in the form of street trees that continues the alignment created by developments to the west.
Applicant Response	
Animation <i>Incorporate active uses; pay attention to details; add colour, wit and fun</i>	
<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 artwork makes a great contribution to the public realm, and the applicant is encouraged opportunities to bring the main building entry to the corner.
Applicant Response	
Human Scale <i>Defines street edges, ensures height and mass respect context; pay attention to scale</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Massing contribution to public realm at grade 	
UDRP Commentary	The artwork makes a great contribution to the public realm, and the applicant is encouraged opportunities to bring the main building entry to the corner. In addition, the main floor would benefit from some additional height in its' contribution to the feel of the building at grade.
Applicant Response	
Integration <i>The conjunction of land-use, built form, landscaping and public realm design</i>	
<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	The applicant is meeting the required tree count through the south planter only. The panel would like to see a row of street trees along 1 Avenue in alignment with the trees to the west. In addition, the applicant should investigate eliminating the planted boulevard along 1 Ave to maintain the wide pedestrian realm also established by the development to the west. The panel encourages the file manager to allow the applicant to extend the paving of the entry to the west curb to improve the sense of entry and provide a larger outdoor amenity at grade.
Applicant Response	
Connectivity <i>Achieve visual and functional connections between buildings and places; ensure connection to existing and future networks.</i>	
<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	Entry is hard to find in plan and on street. As above, the applicant is encouraged to investigate opportunities of associating the main building entry with the sculpture on the corner by shifting the entry to the north. The parkade ramp appears to have too sharp a corner - main floor amenity space on the lane will likely be smaller when the parkade ramp is adjusted.

Applicant Response	
Accessibility <i>Ensure clear and simple access for all types of users</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrier free design • Entry definition, legibility, and natural wayfinding 	
UDRP Commentary	There appears to be accessibility issues – the panel notes that 7% grade is steeper than is allowed by the City's Access Design Standards. The applicant should target 5% as a maximum slope where possible.
Applicant Response	
Diversity <i>Promote designs accommodating a broad range of users and uses</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail street variety, at-grade areas, transparency into spaces • Corner treatments and project porosity 	
UDRP Commentary	The panel appreciates the diversity in unit sizes, and encourages the applicant to investigate the potential of live-work units on the main floor walk-ups.
Applicant Response	
Flexibility <i>Develop planning and building concepts which allow adaptation to future uses, new technologies</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project approach relating to market and/or context changes 	
UDRP Commentary	The low main floor and lack of live-work opportunities hamper the future adaptability of this development.
Applicant Response	
Safety <i>Achieve a sense of comfort and create places that provide security at all times</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and security • Night time design 	
UDRP Commentary	The ground floor units facing south, and the southeast 2-bedroom unit will likely have safety issues due to their concealed nature, overlooking issues, and adjacency to the waste and recycling facilities. The applicant is encouraged to investigate methods of mitigating or even eliminating these issues through the introduction of fencing, relocation of window, and even relocation of the mollucks if necessary.
Applicant Response	
Orientation <i>Provide clear and consistent directional clues for urban navigation</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance natural views and vistas 	
UDRP Commentary	The building entry is hard to find – the applicant is encouraged to relocate the entry to the corner to increase its street presence and readability. The Amenity Space overlooks loading area, which will likely have a negative impact on its use.
Applicant Response	
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	The applicant is encouraged to investigate opportunities for this project to make more meaningful sustainable contributions.
Applicant Response	
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	The materials generally appear durable, but the panel is concerned about the durability of the "Comfy" sculpture finish material.
Applicant Response	