

Urban Design Review Panel Comments

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Date	May 18, 2022	
Time	1:00	
Panel Members	Present Jeff Lyness (Co-Chair) Kathy Oberg Glen Pardoe Katherine Robinson Jack Vanstone	Distribution Chad Russill (Chair) Rick Gendron Jadwiga Kroman Gary Mundy Beverly Sandalack Noorullah Hussain Zada
Advisor	David Down, Chief Urban Designer	
Application number	LOC2022-0086/PE2022-00399	
Municipal address	1001 3 Av NW	
Community	Sunnyside	
Project description	Land Use Amendment to accommodate DC	
Review	First	
File Manager	Heloisa Ceccato Mendes	
City Wide Urban Design	Dawn Clarke for Chad Oberg	
Applicant	O2 Planning and Design	

*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 proposal for a purpose-built residential rental, specifically designed for emerging population of knowledge workers, is generally well conceived, appropriately scaled and suitably finished for the intended purpose and the location in the community. Adjacencies to the C-Train, public amenity and within the urban fabric of Kensington support the variances to parking, increased height and bonus densities requested as part of this application.

Minor enhancements to the overall building with respect to the parkade stairwell will improve the proposal. With respect to urban design along 3rd Avenue, contemplation of final suitability of large corner residential units are suggested. Consideration of CRUs to extend the commercial streetscape further to the west is noteworthy and a valuable study to complete.

The project requires a land use redesignation from M-C2 to M-U1 to accomplish the current proposal. This is supported and considered appropriate. The applicant provided an overall assessment of HSCA contribution and indicates their intent to fund and construct the amenity in the community. This is commendable and generally supported. However, the density differential resulting from the land use redesignation adjusts the permissible FAR from 2.5 FAR in M-C2 to 9.0 FAR in M-U1 is of significant benefit to the application. When evaluating the calculations for HSCA, the community benefit value is low given the requested density bonus requested. The panel supports the ask, but recommends that the HSCA contribution be revisited and negotiated to more suitably reflect the density of the proposed land use. Consideration of the benefit contribution number can be considered during ARP revisions.

Applicant Response

(September 15, 2022)

LOC022-0086
UDRP Comments

05/18/2022

Urban Design Element	
Place Recognize and enhance the unique and emerging identity of a place by responding to surrounding context, local policy, and community objectives through the contribution of innovative architecture and public realm.	
Site	Does the site planning show innovation in addressing site constraints and challenges?
	Does the design respect existing topography, landscape, and archaeology?
	Does the site design accommodate people of all abilities?
Architecture	Is the project visually interesting and unique?
	Does the architecture respond to landmark and gateway opportunities presented by the site?
	Does the design reflect any distinctive social, cultural or historical aspects of the site and community?
Public Realm	Does the project contribute to the creation of a high quality, connected public realm?
UDRP Commentary	The building facades are well articulated and suitably finished to provide a strong sense of place and achieves the goal of being a landmark building in the neighbourhood. Consider design interventions on the parkade stairwell that are comparable in architectural interest and detail to other areas of the building.
Applicant Response	We appreciate the comments and will look to how we can modify the NW parkade stair as design progresses to provide a similar level of interest to other parts of the building.
Scale Ensure appropriate transitions between building masses and adjacent places and spaces; define street and open space edges and bring human scale through articulation, materials, details and landscaping.	
Site	Does the arrangement of buildings and spaces on the site address street edges well?
	Is the scale and placement of buildings and structures appropriate for the street and public space size and type?
	Are large service and surface parking areas modulated and screened by structures and landscaping?
Architecture	Are design strategies employed to reduce the impact of building height and bulk?
	Are street walls well defined and of appropriate height to street width and type?
	Are human scaled elements and details included to enhance street character?
Public Realm	Are public spaces well edged and framed by structures and/or landscaping?
	Does the design include detail which will enhance street character and encourage use of the public realm?
UDRP Commentary	The identification and presentation of scale using building to the south is a clever interpretation of massing and figure ground study in the elevation. Architectural detailing of the balconies enhances the overall scale, detail and massing. The bonus density suggested and requested is considered suitable for the site and community and is supported. Setbacks and landscape treatment should be reviewed in the context of proximity of residential units to the higher volume of pedestrian traffic along 3 rd Avenue from the C-Train to the community.
Applicant Response	We appreciate the comments and as the project moves forward, we will work with our consultant team including landscape architecture to design the ground plane, entry and landscape treatments more holistically with the context and the building.
Amenity Ensure that public sidewalks and gathering spaces are generously proportioned, comfortable, safe, fully accessible, and framed by permeable facades which allow for activation throughout the year.	
Site	Are equitable, inviting access and varied movement options provided for all ages and abilities?
	Does the design work with sun orientation and seasonal climate variation?
	Does the site plan safely accommodate all travel modes?
	Are service and utility requirements located appropriately to lessen visual impact?
Architecture	Does the building(s) meet or exceed expectations for universal access design?
	Does the architecture create a pleasant street edge which feels safe to users?
Public Realm	Does the public realm design prioritize pedestrians and cyclists over vehicle access?
	Is the public realm visually interesting, comfortable, and safe during all seasons?
	Are the public spaces designed for people of all abilities and ages?
	Do the public spaces meet or exceed expectations for universal access design?
UDRP Commentary	The outdoor amenity at the ground plane is largely in support of streetscape and considered positive. Opportunities presented in the neighbourhood from the Bow to Bluff and other community parks provide adequate amenity in close proximity. The proposal indicated a rooftop amenity. The detailing of this space will benefit from detailing that creates a lively amenity for residents. Reduction of car parking and enhancement of bicycle parking capacity

	and amenity is positive given the location, stated goals for the project, proximity to transit and location in the community. Consider scooter and bikeshare drop locations in the final resolution. With respect to the HSCA calculations and contributions, the panel recognizes that contributions are based on the current policy and land use. The current contribution when compared to the bonus density ask is disproportionate. A review of policy and suitable contribution is recommended in conjunction with the City. It is appreciated that the applicant prefers to fund and build the amenity. However, items such as murals on the building or related items on-site are not recommended. Consideration of the community benefit of meaningful and necessary HSCA contributions offsite and proximal to the site are preferred to on-site benefits. On-site works should be considered part of the design and cost of this project proposal.
Applicant Response	<p>We appreciate the comments and look forward to designing great shared amenity spaces in the project as we move into the next stages of design after land use. The rooftop amenity space will be an important part of the resident experience.</p> <p>The community benefit contribution remains an ongoing topic of discussion to provide the highest value project which creates a tangible benefit for the residents of Hillhurst-Sunnyside. The 3rd Avenue streetscape project has been identified by O2 and the applicant as an appropriate project that was previously promised to the community and requires funding to complete. Future discussions are required to confirm the ultimate community benefit project and location.</p>
Legibility <i>Create logical, permeable networks of streets and pathways that connect within and between neighbourhoods and public places; design well-defined community and building entrances with distinctive, memorable attributes.</i>	
Site	<p>Does the project provide a permeable, fine-grained and functional urban structure of blocks and streets?</p> <p>Does the project provide legible, accessible, continuous walking and cycling connections within the site that connect to adjacent systems and destinations?</p> <p>Does the proposed network consider future expansion into surrounding areas?</p> <p>Are large parking areas designed with clear, safe, direct pedestrian connections?</p>
Architecture	Are buildings designed with clearly marked and differentiated entries to facilitate wayfinding?
Public Realm	Are the public routes and spaces configured to facilitate easy and safe navigation with clear paths and appropriately placed wayfinding elements?
UDRP Commentary	The townhome units and street-fronting architectural form and the 2-storey corner unit are understood generally. The panel suggests that consideration of CRUs may benefit the project and fits within the M-U1 land use.
Applicant Response	Commercial uses along 3 Avenue NW were considered during early design. There are site constraints that make it difficult to accommodate commercial uses - primarily, the site size and property line dimension along the lane. Locating all the services – transformer, parkade access ramp, loading stall lay-by, W&R room and exiting – along the lane is restrictive with only residential uses; the internal circulation and spaces required by layering in separated commercial and residential streams of waste management makes the retail spaces along 3 Avenue not viable. The project team used the townhome scale to echo the scale of development along 3 Avenue and would be open to a Live/Work concept in these at-grade units as well.
Vibrancy <i>Ensure that new developments are configured and designed to animate streets and public spaces with varied sizes and types of grade-oriented uses.</i>	
Site	<p>Will the building placement and orientation together with the arrangement and variety of uses activate the adjacent streets and public spaces?</p> <p>Will the project contribute to creating greater economic, employment and/or residential diversity in the neighbourhood?</p>
Architecture	<p>Does the building articulation, materials and details contribute to the vibrancy of the streets and public spaces?</p> <p>Is there a variety of residential and/or commercial unit types and sizes?</p>
Public Realm	Do outdoor spaces provide varied experiences and accommodate people with diverse abilities?
UDRP Commentary	The architectural response to 3 rd Ave with higher traffic volumes versus the 9A Street approach of lowered podium is a positive move. Glazing and orientation of units places eyes on the street and lane. Density and pedestrian forward design provides strong activation on the street. Consider setbacks and landscape treatment as visual screen from street into the residential unit.

Applicant Response	We appreciate this comment and will continue to develop and improve the interface with both 9A street, and 3 Avenue as we move into the next stages of design and our consultant team includes landscape architecture.
Resilience <i>Ensure that projects provide opportunities, through their site layout, spatial configuration, materials, and sustainable design features for responsible operation and continuous adaptation to change over time.</i>	
Site	Is the project designed to respond to change (economic, social, demographic or other) over time?
	Does the plan meet/exceed climate resilience/sustainable design expectations?
	Are active travel modes prioritized, and active lifestyle choices encouraged?
Architecture	Does the building show indication of sustainable design practices and materials?
	Is a range of uses accommodated; does the design anticipate future change?
	Is the building designed to endure over time with reasonable maintenance?
Public Realm	Are public spaces adaptable for multiple uses over short and medium term?
	Does the public realm design respond to climate resilience / sustainability expectations?
UDRP Commentary	The overall use as a purpose-built rental in this location is supported. Architectural finishes and materials are appropriate and generally durable, timeless materials that are consistent with local architecture and urban design. Transit and pedestrian orientation is positive and supported by the near-zero parking provision in the building. It is understood that improvements along 3 rd Avenue are deigned and funded by the City at this time. Integration of site plan of this project with the approved design is encouraged for seamless public realm.
Applicant Response	We appreciate this comment and look forward to advancing the design considering the nearby urban realm improvements. Administration has confirmed the 3 rd Avenue Streetscape project no longer has funding to complete the project. Therefore, future discussions with Administration will be required to discuss the potential for the applicant to fund and construct the 3 rd Avenue Streetscape project as a built improvement project which provides direct community benefit to the Hillhurst-Sunnyside community.