

Urban Design Review Panel Comments

Date	August 24, 2022	
Time	2:00	
Panel Members	Present Rick Gendron Jadwiga Kroman Gary Mundy Beverly Sandalack Noorullah Hussain Zada	Distribution Chad Russill (Chair) Jeff Lyness Kathy Oberg Glen Pardoe Katherine Robinson Jack Vanstone
Advisor	Dawn Clarke, Urban Designer	
Application number	DP2022-05308	
Municipal address	613 9A St NW	
Community	Sunnyside	
Project description	Multi-residential development	
Review	first	
File Manager	Dwayne Drobot	
City Wide Urban Design	Sonny Tomic for Xia Zhang	
Applicant	Minto Architecture	

*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 development is a six-storey wood-frame multi residential building with a single level of underground parking. The site is located in the community of Sunnyside; 613 to 621 9A ST NW, and is approximately half a block north of the Sunnyside LRT station. The site is bordered by a laneway to the west, the Bow to Bluff linear park to the east, and existing multi-family residential units to the north and south. The main access, and addressing, for the site will be off the public lane, with building servicing located off of the public lane as well. An additional building entry has been provided on the east side of the building, accommodating pedestrian access from the linear park. An amenity space for residents has been provided at the southeast corner of the site, visually integrating with the landscape of the linear park.

The Panel is generally supportive of the application and appreciates the Applicant's positioning of the amenity space adjacent to the Bow to Bluff linear park. Additionally, the Panel understands that the direct control district allows for a building of up to 8 stories, and a density of 5.0 FAR; and appreciates that the applicant is building 3.75 FAR and a 6 storey structure. The six storey building scale integrates more appropriately into the fabric of the neighbourhood. The Panel noted that since the laneway will be the primary entrance to the site, the Applicant is encouraged to introduce opportunities and amenities that can activate this space.

Applicant Response

[DP2022-05308 – Applicant response current to 2023-06](#)

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's distinct architectural style will make it a landmark within the neighbourhood. The visual acknowledgement and integration of the adjacent Bow to Bluff linear park is appreciated. As this is the first development in the lane in 25 years or more, it should establish a new way of addressing and activating it, and act as an instigator and precedent for continued redevelopment of other sites accessed off the lane. The applicant should investigate opportunities to make ground floor feel more like a street front than a lane front, instigating future change on adjacent sites, and contributing to the creation of a lane-accessed pocket community that is relatively unique in the Hillhurst Sunnyside Community.
Applicant Response	<p>Minto would be more open to this request if it were redeveloping the entire block, but this project represents less than 25% of the east lane frontage within a highly fragmented parcel fabric (some of the multifamily buildings to the north are condominiums). If the City's desire is to establish a 7.0m linear corridor along this service lane (which unfortunately needs to be maintain function for deliveries, waste collection, vehicle and emergency access), full redevelopment under the ARP will take decades and the 6.0m lane condition will endure for long enough that it should be accepted as an urban condition in perpetuity.</p> <p>Minto has committed to repaving part of the lane, proposed naming the lane, orienting the primary building entrance to the lane, and addressing off of this lane. In response to feedback, the proposal has now added Class 2 bicycle stalls to the lane frontage and removed 1 parking stall.</p> <p>Update after DTR2: Mobility and the Applicant have resolved lane clearances to mutual satisfaction.</p>
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?
Public Realm	Are human scaled elements and details included to enhance street character?
	Are public spaces well edged and framed by structures and/or landscaping?
UDRP Commentary	Does the design include detail which will enhance street character and encourage use of the public realm?
UDRP Commentary	The scale of the building is appropriate to the neighbourhood context. The Applicant is encouraged to explore more opportunities to enhance the street character along the laneway side of the building, especially since the main entry to the building is located along that facade.
Applicant Response	This has been addressed through enhanced entrance articulation and developed materiality.
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 amenity space in the southeast corner visually borrows from the adjacent Bow to Bluff linear pathway to appear as a larger space. Recognizing this is a private amenity space, the Panel recommends exploring design options that would facilitate more of a visual connection with the adjacent pathway. The integration of lighting elements in this amenity space was appreciated by the Panel. The building entry on the laneway side is a gateway and requires activation elements. The second floor amenity space and associated landscape requires more definition and clarity of purpose. The pedestrian pathways around the building appear to be quite narrow; the Panel was concerned this will impact effective circulation at the ground level.
Applicant Response	Please see revised landscape drawings that maintain visual and physical connections with the Bow to Bluff while clearly delineating private space.
Legibility 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.	
Site	Does the project provide a permeable, fine-grained and functional urban structure of blocks and streets?
	Does the project provide legible, accessible, continuous walking and cycling connections within the site that connect to adjacent systems and destinations?
	Does the proposed network consider future expansion into surrounding areas?
	Are large parking areas designed with clear, safe, direct pedestrian connections?
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 laneway side of the building is intended to function as the main entry and street address, as described by the Applicant. The Panel recommends additional consideration of this elevation in order to activate the lane at the pedestrian level. The building entry signage is quite subtle; it requires further articulation to be more prominent and clearly understood as a wayfinding element, for example through the use of colour or material. Consider shifting the east entry from the Bow to Bluff linear pathway slightly south to align with the ground floor amenity space to give the entry more prominence.
Applicant Response	Addressed. Entrances have been accentuated with arches and the current colour palette speaks to the architectural intent. Refer to updated DP drawings.
Vibrancy Ensure that new developments are configured and designed to animate streets and public spaces with varied sizes and types of grade-oriented uses.	
Site	Will the building placement and orientation together with the arrangement and variety of uses activate the adjacent streets and public spaces?
	Will the project contribute to creating greater economic, employment and/or residential diversity in the neighbourhood?
Architecture	Does the building articulation, materials and details contribute to the vibrancy of the streets and public spaces?
	Is there a variety of residential and/or commercial unit types and sizes?
Public Realm	Do outdoor spaces provide varied experiences and accommodate people with diverse abilities?
UDRP Commentary	The Panel recommends improvements to the laneway building access in order to activate the pedestrian realm; the lane will function as a street and needs to be treated as such. The

	subtle colour palette employed may make the building appear visually 'cold', which may be an issue in the winter months. The Panel suggested incorporation of warmer/more colourful accents to the building façade, particularly the signage, to mitigate this impact.
Applicant Response	Addressed. Entrances have been accentuated with arches and the current colour palette speaks to the architectural intent.
Resilience 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.	
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 Panel appreciated the Applicant's goal of aspiring to LEED Gold certification for the building and exploring integration of resilient initiatives such as a higher performing building envelope, integration of electric vehicle charging stations, and integration of rainwater harvesting strategies.
Applicant Response	Noted, thank you.