

Applicant Response to Urban Design Review Panel Comments

2023 October 03

Date	September 27, 2023	
Time	2:00	
Panel Members	Present Jeff Lyness (Co-chair) Noorullah Hussain Zada Raphael Neurohr Kathy Oberg Katherine Robinson Jack Vanstone	Distribution Chris Hardwicke (Chair) Rick Gendron Jadwiga Kroman Gary Mundy Glen Pardoe (conflict) Beverly Sandalack
Advisor	David Down, Chief Urban Designer	
Application number	DP2023-05567	
Municipal address	321 10 St NW	
Community	Beltline	
Project description	New: Dwelling Unit, Retail and Consumer Service (1 building), Sign – Class B	
Review	First	
File Manager	Courtney Stengel	
Urban Design	Jihad Bitar for Brandon Silver	
Applicant	NORR	

*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 Urban Design.

Summary

- This 9 storey mixed use project is located on 10th Street NW, between 2nd and 3rd Avenue and built up to the north and south property line. The FAR is maxed out with no wiggle room on height, resulting in a building that has a poorly articulated, blank north and south wall.
- It is our understanding, from the applicant's response to questions, that the maximum height and FAR was a result of negotiations with the community during the land use. It is unfortunate that good public realm and loss of windows north and south windows come at the expense of height. The panel would have supported more height in exchange for a slimmer tower with windows on all sides, a walkway to the rear, and better interface with the street (possible outdoor areas connected to the retail uses).
- It is the Panel's position that some grade related plan changes would improve the public interface:
 - o Consider revising the landscape design against the building face by breaking it up, or removing it all together.
 - o Relocate the principal entry from the north to the south away from the neighboring ramp.
 - o Create a more direct pedestrian connection in between 10 Street and the lane.

Applicant Response

- o The landscape design along the 10 Street walk has been revised to break up the landscape planters, and introduce some potential seating areas. See landscape plans.
- o Refer to landscape plans and site plan for additional improvements at laneway interface.

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 Project appears to be disconnected from the public realm with landscape that limits the spill-out effect of the commercial units. The blank north and south walls provide no articulation. The applicant is encouraged to simplify the architectural language on the upper floor levels as these floor levels appear to look heavy with dark balconies.
Applicant Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to revised landscape plans including proposed planter areas that are separated with potential seating areas. The North and South exterior walls do include articulation with abstract material pattern, that is to be further refined through detailed design. The Level 02 and 03 terraces include improvements with lighter and more translucent privacy walls between units. The privacy walls are proposed to include opaque glass to allow more light transmission deeper into the apartment unit terraces.
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 project seems to be clearly articulated; however, at the pedestrian level this project lacks human scale.
Applicant Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to revised landscape plans and site plan. Landscape planting areas have been divided into smaller planting areas and potential seating areas introduced between planters. Also, building lighting at the pedestrian sidewalk level is proposed to enhance the experience along the sidewalk. It is anticipated these improvements will enhance the pedestrian experience and finer grain scale along the 10 street sidewalk. The entrances into the commercial retail units and at the main residential entry include small canopy overhangs and articulation.
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 HC stalls and circulation do not work well and are not directly connected with the residential entry. The private amenities appear to not contribute to the public realm. The landscape design does not enhance the public realm.
Applicant Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A clearer and barrier free accessible pathway from the HC stalls through the secondary residential entrance to the lobby has been created. Refer to revised plans. ○ See revised landscape plans for proposed seating areas along the 10 street sidewalk. It is anticipated these further improvements along the sidewalk will enhance the pedestrian experience when compared to nearby developments. Also refer to landscape improvements at laneway including additional bike parking.
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 applicant is encouraged to provide walkway connections between the street and the lane and improve the commercial interface by reconsidering the landscaping strategy. Also, there should be a buffer between the neighboring vehicular ramp and the main residential entry and public realm.
Applicant Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An improved secondary resident entry including glazing and sidelight off the laneway is proposed. The resident circulation pathway through the building has been improved to provide a barrier free accessible connection through the building to the lane. Refer to amended plans. ○ The landscape design along 10 street sidewalk has been improved by integrating seating areas with the proposed planters. Refer to amended landscape plans. ○ The landscape design includes a planting buffer between the main resident entry and the existing vehicular ramp to the north of the site. Refer to amended landscape plans. ○ Circulation through building to lane is for residents only, not for the commercial uses.
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 building has the right ingredients; however, the commercial and residential entries need to be reconsidered in terms of articulation and location.
Applicant Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The main level retail includes 3 potential entries, and provisions for future tenant demising. Each entrance is articulated, defined and includes an overhead build out above each entrance with a unique metal panel finish. The flanking walls leading into the doorway are to be finished with a durable brick. The retail is further distinguished with storefront glazing, which is unique to the articulation of the retail

	<p>in this building. In addition, each entrance is barrier free accessible directly off the 10 street sidewalk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The main residential entrance is unique in both scale and material finish when compared to the commercial entries. The wood grain motif utilized at the entry point repeats on the outdoor spaces of the residential tower above creating a more cohesive articulation of space. This entrance has been setback further from the 10 street sidewalk than the commercial entries, thereby creating a small 'forecourt' condition including landscape planting details. This entrance also includes an improved canopy articulation above the entrance doors to provide additional coverage over the entrance. Refer to amended plans.
<p>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.</p>	
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	N/A
Applicant Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This development proposal seeks to introduce further residential / commercial mixed-use density, and urban living opportunities into the already vibrant Hillhurst neighbourhood. ○ The increased development density is planned to help support a citywide evolution towards more compact, less resource intensive urban form when compared to historical sprawl within the city. The building will help encourage and foster a greater sense of community by creating living conditions that support a broad mix of quality and affordable rental accommodations.