

Urban Design Review Panel Comments (PE2018-00310)

Date:	March 28, 2018
Time:	2:45 pm
Panel Members:	Present: Janice Liebe Chris Hardwicke Glen Pardoe Robert Leblond Terry Klassen Absent: Chad Russill (chair) Bruce Nelligan Gary Mundy Jack Vanstone Yogeshwar Navagrah Eric Toker
Advisor:	David Down, Chief Urban Designer
Application number:	PE2018-00310
Municipal address:	1018 McDougall Rd NE
Community:	Bridgeland/Riverside
Project description:	Radius II – mixed use development first
Review:	
File Manager:	Christine Leung
City Wide Urban Design:	Lothar Wiwijorra
Applicant:	Casola Koppe
Architect:	Casola Koppe
Owner:	
Ranking:	Endorse with comment

Summary

The proposed project is a mixed-use midrise project that is comprised of two towers joined by a low podium. The Panel expressed support for the general urban strategy of the project including breaking the mass into two towers to provide a variegated elevation rather than a single slab. Recognizing that the project has no “back” as it is surrounded by parks or public streets on all sides the Panel supports the attempt to activate all frontages with commercial uses or live-work townhouses at grade. The Panel’s comments and concerns focused primarily on the challenges of providing active uses given the steep grades and the treatment of the servicing area. The landscape design is yet to be fully developed. In particular the boulevard condition in front of the retail units is currently shown as a grass boulevard typical of residential frontage. Opportunities to incorporate LID, resolution of universal accessibility and the specific detail of the stepped terraces and proposed retaining walls should be explored in future explorations. Similarly, the landscape in front of the townhouses is undeveloped showing only a simple walkway to the front door. Patio space, public/private separation and separation between units should be explored. The patio/playground courtyard on the north side of the project presents public/private interface issues and is also undeveloped. The edge condition along the blank wall to the south of the bike parking room does not show design mitigations to screen or articulate the blank wall. Finally, the applicant noted that the current design of the tower facades with a full building screen in front of deep balconies will likely change due to energy considerations and that future submissions may be different in aesthetic. For these reasons and others noted below the Panel endorses the project with comment.

Missing or incomplete information provided:

The applicant did not provide all the information required for a UDRP submission. Streetscape elevations, materials board, a written urban design response, and lighting design were missing. Although landscape drawings for at grade, patio levels and rooftop were provided they did not provide sufficient detail for evaluation. Some of the renderings in the document were not labelled as precedent images and thus did not represent the design. The applicant is asked to obtain the requirements from the assigned planner and to provide all missing information at the next meeting.

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Applicant Response

July 3, 2018

The proposed mixed-use development has been submitted for development permit and is currently showing that it will provide 347 residential units and approximately 9000 s.f. of commercial space to the site.

The proposed commercial retail frontage along 9th Street SE and western end of McDougall Road SE is a fundamentally important urban design element and is critical to the community, given that it can potentially provide the biggest public realm contribution to the immediate area. The shops cafes and restaurants will provide much needed pedestrian activation of this important location. The 9th Street frontage will consist of a conventional 3 zone public streetscape:

1. On site (setback area) uses such as outdoor seating, dining and merchandising. This area will be defined by a contrasting paving pattern and bordered in some areas by moveable fencing and landscaped planters (where licensed patios will be anticipated).
2. The main pedestrian path (uninterrupted city sidewalk).
3. Boulevard strip between city sidewalk and street curb. This area will provide space for public benches, trees, street and sidewalk lighting, waste and recycling receptacles and bicycle parking. This area will ensure that the city sidewalk remains unobstructed and supported at the same time.

The McDougall Road SE edge will start at its western end with the last portion of commercial frontage (it is anticipated that this will provide the greatest opportunity for a restaurant or pub patio given its solar exposure and potential to activate the 9 Street / McDougall Road SE corner. Moving eastward along McDougall Road SE, the parkade entrance, loading and waste/recycling and transformer will be contained to as small a frontage as possible to minimize its impact on the street. Landscape type screening will be relied upon to minimize its visual impact from the street. Beyond these important building service entry points the podium transitions to a grade oriented residential frontage that will incorporate private outdoor garden entrances defined by landscape and low fencing to effectively define the public/private edge. This type of interface will continue for the majority of the podium perimeter being interrupted only by the south tower lobby entrance that will have a large extending canopy highlighting its location from the street. The 9A Street edge, which has 2 residential addresses, will negotiate the steep grade change from McDougall to St. Matthew Square. Large landscaped planters will be employed to create the appropriate screening of the P1 foundation and help to make the grade transition along this challenging edge.

The St. Matthew Square edge will be lined with more street oriented residential entries that will then turn into the site to create the north courtyard which will provide access to the internal units of the podium. This courtyard will be treated as a semi-private garden that provides access to the residential units.

The north tower portion of the podium will provide access to the enlarged amenity lobby (labeled as the "We Work" lobby) that is envisioned as an opportunity for the residents of the site and surrounding community to have "as needed" collaborative office/meeting space available in a "hotel lobby" type setting. Spaces can be booked and paid for on demand with E-technology similar to that used for car sharing programs. The street entrance for this space will be entered from the St. Matthew Square / 9th Street corner. The north lobby private residential lobby entrance will be provided from a front stair off of 9th Street.

Casola Kopp Architects Ltd.

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Urban Vitality			
	Topic	Best Practice	Ranking
1	Retail street diversity	Retail streets encourage pedestrians along sidewalk with a mix and diversity of smaller retail uses. Retail wraps corners of streets. Space for patios and cafe seating is provided.	Support
UDRP Commentary			
The project achieves retail street diversity by supplying retail units along the principal façade.			
Applicant Response			
Greater development of the challenging grade and expression of the intended use of the retail streetscape space has been presented in the plans and images put forward.			
2	Retail street transparency, porosity	Retail street maximizes glazing - 70% and more. Maintains view into and out of retail, avoids display-only windows.	Support
UDRP Commentary			
The project appears to maximize glazing in the façade of the retail units.			
Applicant Response			
Two storey tall transparent glazing dominates the retail frontage along 9th Street SE to maximize the visual connection from within the retail units looking out to the street and allows the best sight lines possible into the commercial units from the street.			
3	Pedestrian-first design	Sidewalks are continuous on all relevant edges. Materials span driveway entries and parking access points. No drop offs or lay-bys in the pedestrian realm. Street furnishings support the pedestrian experience.	Further review recommended
UDRP Commentary			
The project meets the goals of pedestrian-first design although street furnishings are not shown on the plans.			
Applicant response			
Further development of the streetscape defines 3 different zones within this critical frontage. The first 3m strip (setback area) of the property will be reserved for: CRU and residential lobby entry points, flexible outdoor seating and tables, moveable planters and low decorative fencing, potential outdoor merchandising or spill out of retail shop wares, and planters to negotiate sharp grade changes. The next zone will of course be the 2.0m wide city sidewalk which will remain uninterrupted and will be supported by 3rd zone: the boulevard strip between the street curb and sidewalk which will contain trees, public bench seating, bicycle parking, lamp standards, bollard lighting, waste/recycling receptacles.			
4	Entry definition / legibility	Entry points are clear and legible	Further review recommended
UDRP Commentary			
The documentation does not depict the entry points in either elevation or rendering.			
Applicant Response			
Entry points to each CRU, residential lobby, and grade oriented unit are now confirmed and represented on the site plan, landscape plan, and elevations.			
5	Residential multi-level units at grade	Inclusion of two or three storey units are encouraged, particularly at street level. Private outdoor patios with access to the sidewalk are ideal. Patios are large enough to permit furnishing and active use.	Further review recommended
UDRP Commentary			
Residential units are provided at grade. Private outdoor patios are not shown in the plans as the landscape design is undeveloped.			
Applicant Response			
Further development of the grade oriented residential unit interface expresses the well-defined private outdoor garden entry points for each unit.			

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6	At grade parking	At grade parking is concealed behind building frontages along public streets.	NA
UDRP Commentary			
Parking is supplied underground.			
Applicant Response			
		All of the parking (commercial/visitor/residential) is contained within the common parkade. Retail customers will be able to park on the first level of the parkade only and access the street front through a dedicated entrance beside the parkade driveway.	
7	Parking entrances	Ramps are concealed as much as possible. Entrances to parking are located in discrete locations. Driveways to garage entries are minimized, place pedestrian environment and safety first.	Support with comment.
UDRP Commentary			
Parking ramps are concealed and minimized. The effect of the blank wall along the bike storage façade should be mitigated.			
Applicant Response			
		The parkade entrance has been recessed and located at a transitional point between commercial frontage and residential grade oriented units.	
8	Other		
Applicant Response			
Urban Connectivity Provide visual and functional connectivity between buildings and places, ensure connection to existing and future networks. Promote walkability, cycle networks, transit use, pedestrian-first environments.			
Topic	Best Practice		Ranking
9	LRT station connections	Supports LRT use via legible, dedicated pedestrian pathways to stations with direct routes. Avoids desire lines / shortcircuiting through parking areas.	NA
UDRP Commentary			
NA			
Applicant Response			
		Proposed development will increase ridership of LRT. Development seeks to provide 0.65 stalls per residential unit and promote alternative modes of transport (car sharing, cycling, walking, transit)	
10	Regional pathway connections	Supports LRT use via legible, dedicated pedestrian pathways to stations with direct routes. Avoids desire lines / shortcircuiting through parking areas.	NA
UDRP Commentary			
NA			
Applicant Response			
		Proposed development will activated existing pedestrian connections making them more desirable to use.	
11	Cycle path connections	Supports cycling via intentional, safe urban design connections to pathway systems and ease of access to bicycle storage at grade.	NA
UDRP Commentary			
NA			
Applicant Response			
		Proposed development will attempt to provide at least one class one stall per unit within the first level of the building to promote cycling as an alternative mode of transport.	
12	Walkability - connection to adjacent neighbourhoods	Extend existing and provide continuous pedestrian pathways. Extend pedestrian pathway materials across driveways and lanes to emphasize pedestrian use.	NA

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	/ districts / key urban features		
	UDRP Commentary		
	NA		
	Applicant Response		
	Proposed development will activate existing pedestrian connections making them more desirable to use.		
13	Pathways through site	Provide pathways through the site along desire lines to connect amenities within and beyond the site boundaries.	NA
	UDRP Commentary		
	NA		
	Applicant Response		
	Proposed development will activate existing pedestrian connections making them more desirable to use.		
14	Open space networks and park systems	Connects and extends existing systems and patterns.	NA
	UDRP Commentary		
	NA		
	Applicant Response		
	Proposed development will activate and support adjacent existing open spaces and parks to promote their use.		
15	Views and vistas	Designed to enhance views to natural areas and urban landmarks.	Support
	UDRP Commentary		
	The project massing and orientation appears to maximize views.		
	Applicant Response		
	Proposed towers are offset in an attempt to maximize views to south and west towards, skyline and mountains.		
16	Vehicular interface		NA
	UDRP Commentary		
	NA		
	Applicant Response		
	Although all of the required parking will be in the building, the 9th Street SE edge will provide some short term on street parallel parking which is already currently in place.		
17	Other		
	Applicant Response		
	Contextual Response Optimize built form with respect to mass, spacing and placement on site in consideration to adjacent uses, heights and densities		
Topic	Best Practice	Ranking	
18	Massing relationship to context	Relationship to adjacent properties is sympathetic	Support
	UDRP Commentary		
	Massing is sympathetic and improves on previous responses in the surrounding development.		
	Applicant Response		
	Two tower concept breaks up what would otherwise be a solid 8 to 10 storey full block massing.		
19	Massing impacts on sun shade	Sun shade impacts minimized on public realm and adjacent sites	Further review recommended
	UDRP Commentary		
	No shadow studies were included in the package.		
	Applicant Response		

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	Shadow studies have been included with the development permit application. Shadows cast will mostly affect the St. Matthew's park to the north east of the site. Ultimately, the surface area of shadow of the two tower massing will be close to the area of shadow cast by an uninterrupted solid 10 storey block massing.		
20	Massing orientation to street edges	Building form relates / is oriented to the streets on which it fronts.	Support
UDRP Commentary			
The project is successful in relating built-form to the surrounding streets.			
Applicant Response			
Proposed building engages the street edges at all possible opportunities.			
21	Massing distribution on site		Support
UDRP Commentary			
The massing is sensitively distributed on the site and breaks down built-form bulk into two distinct and complimentary towers.			
Applicant Response			
Two tower concept breaks up what would otherwise be a solid 8 to 10 storey full block massing.			
22	Massing contribution to public realm at grade	Building form contributes to a comfortable pedestrian realm at grade	Further review recommended
UDRP Commentary			
Although the towers do not step back from the street they have minimal street lengths and are joined by a one-story podium that minimizes the effect of a continuous slab alternative. The current resolution of the south west corner could use further study to create a more human scale at street level. The west retail face is flat to the street providing no cover or relief for pedestrians from the elements or cover at entry points.			
Applicant Response			
Entry points to residential tower lobbies have been provided large canopies to define these important locations and provide some cover for pedestrians. Outdoor seating, and dining areas will most likely incorporate free-standing trellis/pergola structures, and retractable umbrellas to provide some measure of solar cover during high exposure times of the year and day.			
23	Other		
Applicant Response			
Safety and Diversity Promote design that accommodates the broadest range of users and uses. Achieve a sense of comfort and security at all times.			
Topic	Best Practice		Ranking
24	Safety and security	CPTED principles are to be employed - good overlook, appropriate lighting, good view lines, glazing in lobbies and entrances.	Support with comment
UDRP Commentary			
The north courtyard might present some view line issues.			
Applicant Response			
The north courtyard is now essentially a semi-private landscaped courtyard that will provide access to the half dozen residential units that front it. These units will provide the necessary passive visual surveillance of the area to make it a safe place to inhabit.			
25	Pedestrian level comfort - wind	Incorporate strategies to block wind, particularly prevailing wind and downdrafts. Test assumptions and responses via Pedestrian Level Wind Analysis. Particular attention to winter conditions.	Further review recommended
UDRP Commentary			
No wind analysis or mitigation strategy was presented.			

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	Applicant Response		
	Landscaping will be utilized to mitigate and anticipated high wind areas.		
26	Pedestrian level comfort - snow	Incorporate strategies to prevent snow drifting. Test assumptions and responses via Snow Drifting Analysis. Particular attention to winter conditions.	Further review recommended
	UDRP Commentary No snow drifting analysis or mitigation strategy was presented.		
	Applicant Response Streetscape frontage will be sufficiently flat, smooth and uninterrupted to allow for efficient snow removal by shovel or motorized brush. Snow storage will be provided by the boulevard between the sidewalk and street curb.		
27	Weather protection	Weather protection is encouraged at principal entrances. Continuous weather protection is encouraged along retail / mixed used frontages.	Further review recommended
	UDRP Commentary Not enough information in the package to comment.		
	Applicant Response Entry points to residential tower lobbies have been provided large canopies to define these important locations and provide some cover for pedestrians.		
28	Night time design		Further review recommended
	UDRP Commentary No lighting designs were included in the package.		
	Applicant Response Lighting and landscape plans have been provided to show lighting types and quantities at the perimeter of the site and at the outdoor amenity space on the podium roof. A mix of bollard and building mounted down lighting will be utilized to provide a comfortable lighting level while avoiding and offsite spillage to neighbouring residences.		
29	Barrier free design	Site access to be equal for able and disabled individuals. Provide sloped surfaces 5% grade or less vs ramps.	Further review recommended
	UDRP Commentary <i>Slopes were not indicated but grades along the east and west of the project might present accessibility challenges. More information required to assess.</i>		
	Applicant Response Special attention has been given to resolve grades along the 9th Street frontage to ensure all commercial and residential lobby entry points are barrier free and useable for outdoor seating and dining.		
30	Winter city	Maximize exposure to sunshine for public areas through orientation, massing. Design public realm that supports winter activity.	Further review recommended
	UDRP Commentary No shadow studies were presented.		
	Applicant Response Shadow studies have been included with the development permit application. The west and south faces of the commercial podium will provide the greatest opportunities for warm sunshine to make outdoor use desirable.		
31	Other		
	Applicant Response		
	Service / Utility Design Promote design that accommodates service uses in functional and unobtrusive manner. Place service uses away from and out of sight of pedestrian areas where possible. Screening elements to be substantive and sympathetic to the building architecture.		

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Topic	Commentary	Ranking
32 (specify)	N/A	TBD
Applicant Response	The parkade access driveway area attempts to consolidate the main service and utility functions of the development. The transformer, loading zone, waste and recycling all define a point of transition from the commercial retail frontage of 9th and McDougall and the street oriented residential entrances further east along McDougall. Other than these important elements, it is anticipated that there will be no other intrusive or unsightly building services that will interrupt the streetscape.	