

Meeting Minutes

UBC DEVELOPMENT PERMIT BOARD (DP BOARD)

Date: October 9, 2019
Time: 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm
Place: Wesbrook Community Centre, Room 114 (3335 Webber Lane)

Members in Attendance:

John Metras	Vice-Chair - Member of UBC Administration
Jason Adle	UBC Vancouver Student
Andre Gravelle	General UBC Academic Community
Michael White	Ex-Officio - Associate Vice-President, Campus + Community Planning
Kyle Bruce	UBC Resident

Regrets:

Bryce Rositch	Chair
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Presenters:

Liam Davis	ZGF Architects
Ashleigh Fischer	ZGF Architects
Jason MacDougall	Perry and Associates Landscape Architecture
Sean Ang	UBC Properties Trust
Tom Beeby	UBC Properties Trust

Staff:

Grant Miller	Director of Planning, Development Services, Campus + Community Planning
Karen Russell	Manager, Development Services, Campus + Community Planning
Paul Cloutier	(Recorder) Planning Assistant, Development Services, Campus + Community Planning

1. **Call to Order by the Chair and Approval of the Agenda**

The Vice-Chair brings the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

The Agenda is approved as circulated.

2. **Approval of Minutes of the July 17, 2019 Board Meeting**

There was a correction to the Minutes of the spelling of the name Jason Adle.

Minutes to be reviewed by Members with further corrections sent to Karen Russell.

Approval of minutes postponed until next meeting.

3. **Development Permit Applications**

3.1. DP19027: BCR8 'Evolve' Faculty/Staff Rental

Development Services introduced the site and project. The project was evaluated against planning documents and found compliant with the majority of policies, except for three requested variances:

- i) An increase in the street wall height from 5-storeys to 6-storeys, at the recommendation of the Advisory Urban Design Panel to help achieve Passive House design;
- ii) Various projections into the 2.5 m front yard setbacks from balconies, window shadings, and the primary entrance awning; and
- iii) Reduction in the minimum number of both visitor and accessible parking stalls from 11 to 7.

The applicant design team presented building layout and amenities, Passive House design strategy, and landscape design and site accessibility. The project will be extensively energy metered and utilize rooftop solar photovoltaic panels. The project has received a grant from Natural Resources Canada to test net-zero feasibility.

At 5:25 PM Board Member Michael White excused himself, providing notes to the Vice-Chair.

An error was identified in the staff report which stated the project is to be connected to the Wesbrook Place District Energy system. The project will not be connected.

Questions and Comments from the Board

- To clarify, there will be a separated pedestrian/cyclist pathway to the parkade? And will there be accommodations for bike share on site?

The pathway will be separate. Also, the design team is working with Campus and Community Planning to provide bike share in a portion of Class II bicycle stalls.

- Will airtightness of the envelope have any health impacts on residents?

The building envelope is airtight, but the windows are operable and the air circulated by the heat recovery ventilator is filtered. There will also be a tenant education piece with UBC Properties so people can understand and be comfortable in the space.

- Taking on Passive House and providing guest/amenity spaces are appreciated. Why was solar PV chosen for the roof rather than a green roof or amenity space? Curious as to why solar PV was chosen? A grant was mentioned.

A green roof was not prioritized as these can be very expensive and require lots of maintenance. As a firm we wanted to pursue net-zero and see how close we can get by generating all energy on-site. The grant is for Passive House or net-zero and we wanted to compare and see how close we can get to true net-zero. Vancouver has slightly better solar energy generation potential than Munich, which is the number one solar user. PV panels have come a long way and can generate even on overcast days. Scenarios with shading from future adjacent buildings have been taken into account.

When the numbers were run, the PV panels were not that much more of an additional cost.

- The research aspect is agreeable but is it good economic sense for a housing project? It seems like an expensive way to provide housing.

Green amenity space is already provided on the southeast side of the site at ground level. It was not believed it would add any more benefit having additional amenity space on the roof. There is also an ambition to achieve green credentials.

- Could you please comment on the cost aspect? The understanding is that the grant will be covering the incremental cost, so there is not an impact on the tenants of this project in terms of rent.

Correct, the grant is provided to cover those costs. The ambition is that the PV cells will at the very least provide enough energy to power the amenity and communal spaces of the building, so these costs are not passed on to the tenants. Hopefully this will result in lower rent.

- Would it be likely solar PV would be used if it were not for the grant?

It is doubtful. However, the panels were not as expensive as initially thought. A lot of data will be collected for this building on energy usage and see how it performs. It will be considered for future projects and inform decisions.

- And the future shading of buildings in proximity have been taken into your modeling considerations?

Yes, that is correct.

- A question about some of the allowances: Typically exceptions for setbacks are for awkward building sites. On the Wesbrook Mall side there is a request for 1 – 2 m. This is a significant encroachment into the public realm.

Development Services: Variances for setbacks are not an uncommon request, but it is correct that this is probably the largest. It has been determined that this would not interfere with use of the public space.

The only items encroaching are the balcony spaces, which are solid elements, but there was a desire to provide a typically sized space and setting the balconies back into the envelope was not an option.

- Was there any comment from the AUDP in terms of the impact on the street?

Development Services: The AUDP encouraged the applicant to embrace the design parameters that Passive House drives. After two visits to the Panel, the design changed from greater articulation to a more simplified form. The approach was quite apparent to the AUDP and supported.

- Another question about storeys. 6 storeys are permitted?

Development Services: A 5-storey street wall is a requirement, but the building can be 6 storeys with a step back. A 6-storey street wall is a variance to the neighbourhood plan.

Originally the design had a change in material at the 6th storey without a setback, but AUDP recommended this change in material be removed and to go for the variance.

- There seems to be an enthusiasm for Passive House design seen in the exceptions. If this is a future direction for buildings, should this not be expressed in policy rather than being accounted for in the design panel process? Also, parking often relies on proximate street parking, but as other buildings get built, this parking comes under stress. This may not be a sufficient rationale in the future.

- Are there no electric vehicle charging stations?

Only the mandatory REAP requirement of having 50% of stalls with a level 2 outlet are provided.

- Some newer buildings have a bike washing station in the parkade and with the number of people riding bikes, 1.5 bike stalls per unit may not be enough. It would be great to start including space for trailers as well. Is courtyard stepping or sloping? Family buildings with at-grade floor units tend to use the patios as a primary entrance.

There are both. It is accessible, but there are steps where grade picks up by the play area. Everything is flush or sloping less than 2% with the steps being secondary access. There is stroller access from Gray Ave and Wesbrook Mall.

- With wood frame, are the balconies using SIPs [Structurally Insulated Panels]?

No, the balconies will be spanning two cantilevered TJI joists [engineered wood I-joists]. These will be wrapped in insulation to avoid thermal bridging.

- Are the vertical sunshades attached? Will the envelope be behind?

For the fixed sunshades the envelope will be behind. The units will be fabricated and attached to blocking, but it will need to be evaluated with contractors.

- The windows appear small. Is the bottom vision glass or spandrel?

The unit is 3'x7' with the top and bottom panels both being vision glass, and the top being tilt and turn. They will be Passive House certified windows which only come in certain sizes. The horizontal mullion will be at guard rail height.

- The reduction of accessible parking is concerning. Staff should consider this going forward. Are there any accessible suites?

No, typically suites are retrofitted for tenants if there is a need.

- Is there battery storage?

No, but there is net metering with BC Hydro. The project is connected to the grid so if the project over-generates it goes to the grid. It seems unlikely the project will over-generate.

- Is there mechanical cooling for the building?

There is no dedicated individual air conditioning for the units, but there is a central mechanical system tempering the air.

- *Comments provided by Board Member Michael White, read by the Vice-Chair:* The Member appreciates the amenities requested by University Faculty and Staff Tenants Association that are provided and recommends taking the opportunity to promote this project and research.

With no additional questions or comments from the Board, the Vice-Chair motioned for approval of the recommendation to the Director of Planning, Development Services to issue Development Permit DP19027, as follows:

With the inclusion of the conditions:

- 1. That SC2A.5 (a and b) of the *Development Handbook* be relaxed for this development to permit reductions in minimum setback requirements for the front (west) and side (north) yards at various locations on each level for balcony, window shading, and entrance canopy projections; and**
- 2. That Section 7.5 of the *Development Handbook* be relaxed for this development to reduce the required number of visitor parking stalls from 11 to 7 and accessible parking stalls from 11 to 7.**
- 3. That Section SC2A.6 Other Regulations of the *Development Handbook* be varied for this development to allow a 6-storey street wall on Gray Avenue and Wesbrook Mall instead of the 5-storey street wall required in the *Wesbrook Neighbourhood Plan, Plan P-10*.**

The Board, with a vote of 4-0, APPROVED the recommendation as amended to the Director of Planning, Development Services to issue Development Permit DP19027.

4. Information Items

None

5. Other Business

With no such business, the Chair moved to adjourn the meeting.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:03 pm.

Minutes prepared by Paul Cloutier, Planning Assistant, Development Services