

**CITY OF VICTORIA  
HERITAGE ADVISORY PANEL  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 25, 2021**

**Present:** Aaron Usatch  
Avery Bonner  
Doug Campbell  
Graham Walker  
Helen Edwards  
Jim Kerr  
Kirby Delaney  
Pamela Madoff, Chair  
Shari Khadem  
Steve Barber

**Regrets:**

**Guests:** Chris Reiter  
Elliott Magill  
Ken Mariash  
Jennifer Kay  
June O'Gorman  
Jessie Underhill  
Maryam Alirezaei ju  
Patrick Sheaffer  
Patrick Cotter  
Peter de Hoog  
Philip Evans  
Stuart Chan  
Ken Johnson  
Marilyn Palmer  
Geoff Young (Councillor)

**Staff:** John O'Reilly, Senior Heritage Planner  
Michael Angrove, Senior Planner  
Alison Meyer, Assistant Director  
Justine Wendland, Heritage Secretary

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The Chair called the meeting to order at noon.

**1. Adoption of the Agenda**

**Moved:** Helen Edwards

**Seconded:** Jim Kerr

**Carried:** (unanimous)

**2. Rezoning Application No. 00729 and Official Community Plan Amendment for 355 Catherine Street, 45 Saghali Road, 251-259 Esquimalt Road & 200-210 Kimta Road**

John provided a brief overview and then the Applicant provided a presentation.

### Panel Questions and Comments

The Panel asked the following questions of clarification:

- Are there any shadow studies for 4 and 5 around Roundhouse?
  - Yes, and they were included in the rezoning submission. Criteria was established for shading and maximizing daylight hours for the Turntable Plaza and Victoria West Skatepark.
- Has the financial analysis report been submitted to the City?
  - It is currently still in development and not yet submitted to the city. The draft is expected in the next few weeks.
- The panel indicated that the proposal appears directed by the Financial Analysis which is not yet complete. Cont. to provide panel feedback?
  - The Panel is not required to support a project based on the financial analysis, so the review should continue. Think about whether the guidelines and what is shown on the plans and drawings are consistent with the Standards and Guidelines and what they would direct this development to look like in the Panel's interpretation.
- Are the Design and Conservation guidelines are being referred to in the proposal?
  - Yes, the panel is to refer to aspects that do not comply with the national standard.

Staff are looking for commentary from the Heritage Advisory Panel (HAPL) with regard to:

1. The scale, form and massing of new buildings and the potential impact of the proposed tall buildings on the historic landscape of the railway building which are guided by sections 1, 6, and 7 of the Design Guidelines.
  - The towers 4 & 5 appear to overwhelm the space by the heritage buildings with the large high-density towers by the lower scale heritage buildings.
  - This project seems to have a different scale than surrounding areas, and contrasts greatly with the heritage buildings. The massing of the new proposed buildings, the height and density seems out of character from the surrounding community.
  - There's wording in guidelines about general massing. Tall buildings should be placed at the east and west. However, this is one half of a 20-acre site, which includes the towers to the east. Towers four and five are in the heart of the site, and therefore in the wrong place. The towers to the west (one, two and three) make more sense. Piling up so much density next to the Roundhouse and Back Shop however, doesn't make sense. It's overbuilt there. Podium scale building below Tower five and the DA2 one seem to be more compatible, but four and five are the most challenging.
  - Applicant has kept building footprints very narrow. The trade off between tall and narrow, and spread-out towers provides more open space on the ground level, but unsupportive of widening the lower portion of the buildings to reduce the height as it will reduce the public-space on the ground level.
2. Whether sections 6 and 7 of the Design Guidelines provide an adequate level of guidance to new buildings in order to achieve compatibility with the historic buildings.
3. The scale, character and architectural expression of podium buildings adjacent to heritage buildings and flanking the Turntable Plaza.

- The proposal should be rewritten to be more consistent with the *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. On page 35, the design guideline is unnecessarily rigid. Guideline 6 -Massing and Scale has merit in using a podium expression, recognition of carving out positive space between buildings, height becomes focal issue.
4. The proposed phasing of rehabilitation shown on pages H-6, H-7, and H-8 of the Development Data Summary, which envisions the majority of rental development occurring in three initial phases, would see the Car Shop and Stores Building rehabilitated prior to the Roundhouse (connected to the East Development Phase) and construction of Turntable Plaza, which would occur in Development Phase 2.
    - The Roundhouse building appears to be the last building to be rehabilitated. This is disappointing to the panel that more is not planned to restore all of the heritage buildings given the timeframe for the proposal. The panel would like to see the rehabilitation of the heritage buildings prioritized.
  5. The form, scale and massing of hypothetical additions to the Car Shop, shown on page 14 of the Design Guidelines, page 17, 19, 20 of the HAPL Presentation and page A-13 of the Conservation Strategy document.
    - The panel was unsupportive of alterations that involved cutting through the heritage buildings roof. The additions are not compatible with the historical character of the building and should be removed. The rhythm and pattern of the original windows, such as the additions obscure those important character defining element. This was raised with the previous application in 2008 that additions like these were not acceptable.
  6. Whether sections 6 and 7 of the Design Guidelines provide an adequate level of guidance to new buildings to achieve compatibility with the historic buildings.
  7. The advisability of directing that new buildings “do not re-create or duplicate historic elements or materials found in existing buildings”, which is recommended in guideline 1.7 of the Design Guidelines.
    - The guidelines should be rewritten to be more consistent with the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, without getting into any level of detail.
    - Guideline 1.7 on page 35 of the Urban Design Guidelines is not supported as it is unnecessarily rigid and does not seem to encourage a contextual approach
    - the podium heights are very tall. Victoria generally has never seen podiums more than three or four-storeys at the at the highest, so six-storeys is a very different scale and may in itself be a bit too much for this site relative to the historic buildings
  8. The supportability of altering or reconstructing the Back Shop to measure two-storeys in height to facilitate greater visibility from Esquimalt Road, a better interface with Sitkum Road, and to accommodate at-grade parking. This approach is shown conceptually on pages 16, 18, 26, 27 and 30 of the HAPL Presentation document, and is enabled by guidelines under District C: Back Shop District, found in the Conservation Strategy on page A-26.

- The panel was opposed to moving the Back Shop building from where it is currently located. Raising a brick building without damaging the structure would be challenging. The proposal does not meet the historical preservation in the *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.
- The panel suggested that the road could be lowered and that would be preferable to disrupting the spatial relationship that the Back Shop has to the roundhouse site

9. Conceptual Alterations to the Car Shop

- The panel felt that the additions were not compatible with the character-defining elements of the Car Shop and should be removed.
- The panel noted that one of the distinguishing features of the building is the rhythm and pattern of the windows along the side elevations, and the additions would obscure it.

10. The design of the base of tower 4, which attempts to reveal as much of the Roundhouse as possible, and whether this design intent is sufficiently captured under the Conservation Strategy guidelines for the Back Shop District.

- Underground parking is proposed beneath tower four and the back shop, which lead to the idea of raising the Back Shop.
- Tower four is the most intrusive of all the tall buildings and the panel felt that it should be removed

11. Any other commentary identified by HAPL.

- Some panel members noted the inclusion of a significant amount of housing as a positive measure that responds to the tremendous growth in the city although others believed it was not the domain of the heritage panel to consider other factors unrelated to heritage
- A panel member suggested that the height of the buildings was not as much of a concern as the placement in relation to the heritage buildings
- The design guidelines should have been developed before the rezoning in a collaborative process with the advisory panels, and then the development should have been designed to follow them
- The applicant requested an opportunity to address the panel and correct misunderstandings, however the panel responded that procedure did not allow for a second opportunity to present further information

**Motion:**

**Moved:** Steve Barber

**Seconded:** Avery Bonner

That the Heritage Advisory Panel recommend to Council that Rezoning Application No. 00729 and Official Community Plan Amendment for 355 Catherine Street, 45 Saghalié Road, 251-259 Esquimalt Road & 200-210 Kimta Road does not sufficiently meet the applicable design guidelines and polices and should be declined and that the key areas that should be revised include:

1. As proposed, the scale, form, and massing of the new buildings overwhelm the historic landscape of the railway buildings. The proposal is not consistent with the

- applicant's design guidelines, which state in section 1 that new buildings should integrate with the Roundhouse complex, serving as a backdrop to the existing structures.
2. The Conservation Strategy and Urban Design Guidelines should be re-written to be more reflective of the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.
  3. Guideline 1.7 on page 35 of the Urban Design Guidelines is not supported.
  4. While podium heights of six-storeys may be appropriate at the extremities of the site, the scale, character and architectural expression of podium buildings should step down as they are closer in proximity to heritage buildings.
  5. The rehabilitation of heritage buildings should be expedited and completed as part of the initial phase of development.
  6. The proposed additions to the Car Shop should be removed for the following reasons:
    - a. The additions obscure windows, which are character-defining elements of the building (Standard 11)
    - b. The imitative gable forms of the additions and the wrapping of the corners of the Car Shop obscures and negatively impacts the form of the heritage building (Standard 11)
    - c. The proposed additions cut into the roof and are not reversible (Standard 12)
    - d. The additions detract from the architecture of the building.
  7. Altering or reconstructing the Back Shop is not supported, and contravenes the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, which states: “do not move, replace or substantially alter its intact or repairable character defining elements and do not move a part of an historic place if its current location is a character-defining element (Standard 1); conserve heritage value by an approach calling for minimal intervention (Standard 3); and find a use for an historic place that requires minimal or no change to its character-defining elements (Standard 5)”.
  8. The size and location of Tower four obscures the Roundhouse and high-density construction is not suitable in this location. Tower five overwhelms the scale of the Roundhouse and is too close to the heritage building. The majority of density should be constrained to the west side of the site.

**Carried unanimously**

### **3. Adjournment**

*Motion to adjourn: Avery Bonner      Seconded: Aaron Usatch      Adjournment: (Unanimous)*

*Adjourned at 2:06 pm*