

MINUTES OF THE ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL MEETING HELD ON July 10th, 2025 AT THE DISTRICT OF NORTH VANCOUVER

ATTENDING: Mr. Koosha Kheradmandnia
Mr. David Park
Mr. John Gilmour
Sgt. Kevin Bracewell
Mr. Joshua Bernsen
Ms. Emily Blair
Mr. Tieg Martin
Ms. Mahnaz Mohamadloo
Ms. Farnaz Sharifi
Mr. Stuart Rothnie

REGRETS: Mr. Robert Greene

STAFF: Ms. Tamsin Guppy (Staff Liaison), Development Planner
Mr. Alfonso Tejada, Urban Design Planner
Ms. Mina Sami, Planning Assistant

APPLICANT: Karen Smith (Applicant)
Karen Smith (Architect, AIBC engage Architecture)
Ching-Te Earl Peng (IA, AIBC engage Architecture)
Dylan Chernoff (Landscape Architect, Durante Kreuk Ltd)

1. PANEL WELCOME AND DINNER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Mr. John Gilmour, ADP vice chair, who then took attendance.

2. ADMINISTRATION

The minutes of the Advisory Design Panel meeting on June 12, 2025, were reviewed and amended. A motion was made by Tieg Martin, seconded by Koosha Kheradmandnia, and carried, to adopt the amended minutes of the Advisory Design Panel meeting of June 12, 2025. The minutes will be amended as per Panelists' comments and Ms. Tash Cheong will sign on behalf of Mr. Stuart Rothnie.

3. NEW BUSINESS

- a.) **1553-1595 Hunter St & 489 Marie Park PI – Detailed Rezoning and OCP Amendment Development Application for Proposes two six-storey market rental multi-family apartment buildings. A total of 201 units are proposed across the two buildings with a mix of studios (49 units) one bedrooms (75 units), two bedrooms (65 units), and three bedrooms (12 units). The project**

includes 87 parking spaces in a single level underground parking garage accessed from the west via a future north-south commercial lane and from Hunter Street for the East Building.

Staff Introduction:

Ms. Tamsin Guppy, Development Planner, introduced the project with an overview of the existing site context and surrounding area in relation to the proposal. She then outlined the general policy framework and the development context within the Lynn Creek Town Center. Her presentation concluded with a detailed description of the site, a summary of the planning proposal, and an outline of the expectations for the built form guidelines for the project.

Staff sought input from the Panel on the following:

- How does the presence or absence of street character on Hunter Street, particularly in front of the buildings, enhance or detract from the overall streetscape?
- How does the use of different materials help differentiate the two buildings and contribute to the overall character of each one?
- How does the size of the indoor amenity space in the western building affect its functionality, particularly in terms of layout and its relationship to adjacent uses?

The Panelists were invited to ask any clarifying questions.

- Panelists requested additional information on the following topics: road and green spine dedication requirements and the District's rationale for them, height limitations for the development adjacent to the reserve lands, and the applicability of the height prescriptions outlined in the Lynn Creek Implementation Plan. Staff responded to these questions accordingly.

Applicant Presentation:

The Architect, Ching-Te Earl Peng, highlighted the design objectives of the project and provided a general overview, including the site context, site circulation and access, massing, design rationale, exterior façade materials, and other relevant details.

Dylan Chernoff, Landscape Architect, then presented the landscape strategy, highlighting the landscaping plan, street trees, public realm design, green spine feature, site lighting, and the indoor and outdoor amenity spaces within the courtyard.

The Panelists were invited to ask any clarifying questions.

- Panelists inquired about the elevated grade of the west building and the retaining wall. The applicant explained that both features were required to meet flood plain regulations.
- A panelist asked whether any elevator overruns are expected. The applicant confirmed that elevator overruns are planned.
- A panelist requested clarification regarding the discrepancy between the number of trees listed in the planting list and those shown on the site plan. Another question was also asked regarding the types of the off-site trees. The applicant did not provide a response at this time.

- A panelist asked about the unlabeled areas on the ground floor of the west building. The applicant explained that these spaces are mechanical and electrical rooms, as well as a bike maintenance room.
- A panelist asked for clarification on the location of the parkade ventilation. The applicant did not have a response at this time given that level of detail was not required at this time.
- A panelist asked whether the buildings would have separate ownership and if they will be managed by separate teams. The applicant did not have a response at this time.
- A panelist asked which BC Building Code accessibility requirements to have been applied to the project. The applicant responded that, as this is an in-stream project, accessibility requirements are grandfathered, and they are adhering to District's requirements. However, the project will likely follow BCBC 2024 for most other aspects.
- A panelist requested information on the width of the internal corridors on each floor. The applicant responded that the width is 1.4 meter.
- A panelist asked for details about the balconies, including materials and railing design. The applicant responded that they would feature metal, glass etc.
- Panelists asked why the parking entrance for the east building is located on Hunter Street instead of Orwell Street. The applicant and staff clarified that it was based on the District's requirements. However, the panelists expressed a preference for the access to be from Orwell Street.
- A panelist requested clarification regarding the garbage staging area, the height of the garbage room, and access to the garbage room from the parkade. The applicant reviewed the staging area again.
- A panelist asked about the indoor and outdoor amenities and the intended programming for these spaces. The applicant said that the amenity space is intended to function as a social hub where residents, particularly those in smaller units, can gather and use it much like an internet café. The programming will be flexible and responsive to residents' interests, combining both business-oriented and lounge-style features to support a mix of work and social activities.

A panelist inquired whether furnishings are planned along Hunter Street, both within the public realm and around the building entrances. The applicant responded that there are a few bike racks along Hunter Street; however, the main focus is on enhancing the Greenway. No benches are proposed along Hunter Street.
- A panelist asked if any of the enhanced suites, which are currently all one-bedroom, could be two- or three-bedroom units. The applicant did not have an answer at this time.
- A panelist asked whether automated doors are proposed for all communal spaces including bike room, laundry, etc. The applicant confirmed that they'll use automated doors.
- A panelist requested clarification on the access paths or marked pathways from accessible parking stalls to the elevators.
- A panelist asked if there is a zero-step (level) transition for access to the decks from the accessible suites. The applicant noted that while wood-frame units won't have a zero-step transition, access will be provided via ramps.

- A panelist asked whether the underground parking is secured by a single door or if there are separate doors for visitor and resident parking. The applicant noted that there are two doors—one for accessing visitor parking and another for resident parking.
- A panelist asked whether the green spine is accessible to the public. Staff confirmed that the green spine is open to public.
- A panelist asked about the lighting treatment on the south side of the building, particularly around the edge of the parking area. The applicant confirmed that step lights and stair pop-ups are proposed, with detailed design to be finalized once the electrical engineer is on board.
- A panelist asked what the building efficiency percentage is after accounting for the bike storage on each floor (i.e., the rentable square footage divided by the total buildable area). The applicant did not have an answer at this time.
- A panelist asked what the current market rate per square foot is for wood-frame apartments in this area without parking. The applicant noted the development may attract university students. They noted that with car share options in the area, access to bikes, and proximity to Phibbs Exchange, many residents find they don't need a car.
- A panelist asked, with the reduced parking, what is the hard construction cost per square foot? The applicant noted that construction costs are high and that it is a tight project financially.
- A panelist asked where the closest playground or family area is located relative to the site and whether it is within walking distance. Staff confirmed that Marie Place Park is the closest park.

Urban Design Presentation:

Mr. Alfonso Tejada presented to the Panel and sought input on the following:

- Garbage staging area for the building on the west side.
- The two buildings use different materials but appear visually compatible in scale. Feedback is needed on whether the colour and materiality of the west building are appropriate for the intended character of the proposed development.
- The floor plan of the west building includes an amenity space with a convoluted shape, which may require further explanation regarding its layout and usability.

Mr. Alfonso Tejada invited the Panel for further comments.

Summary of Panel Commentary and Consensus Items:

The Vice Chair thanked staff and the applicant team for their presentations and invited comments from the Panel.

Summary of Panel Commentary:

- Panelists noted that the project generally functions well and highlighted the inclusion of rental accommodation as an important component. They felt the design integrates well with surrounding developments, particularly in terms of road and green spine dedication, which contributes to an enhanced public realm. Overall, they expressed support for the concept, noting that the massing and placement have been thoughtfully considered.

- Panelists generally agreed that access to the east building from Orwell Street is preferable to access from Hunter Street. One panelist noted that access from Hunter conflicts with both the building's entry and the pedestrian experience along the street. They also recommended exploring the potential for a parking tunnel beneath the green spine to connect the two parking areas, as it could offer a more efficient solution. Another panelist recommended a single parkade and shared entrance for both buildings. While panelists supported staff's decision as reasonable, they requested that the possibility of Hunter Street access be revisited.
- Panelists generally agreed that the design of the indoor amenity spaces, particularly in the west building, is not well handled and that the spaces appear undersized. However, the south-facing location was considered appropriate. It was suggested that the amenity spaces require proper programming, with consideration given to both indoor and outdoor uses. One panelist noted that the bike rack near the amenity room door, which opens onto the courtyard, is poorly located and may interfere with circulation between indoor and outdoor areas. Another panelist recommended converting one of the studio units in the west building into amenity space to create a more functional area. It was also noted that placing the laundry room adjacent to the amenity space could create noise issues, and it may be better relocated to the current bike room.
- Panelists noted that having a bike room on each floor is generally a good idea; however, it presents operational challenges. For example, the elevator size may not be adequate for transporting bikes along with other passengers unless at least one larger elevator is provided. Additionally, weather conditions could create further difficulties, such as wet or muddy bikes leading to mess and maintenance issues in shared indoor areas.
- Panelists generally suggested that the lobbies could be more prominent and better defined. One panelist noted that the adjacency of the east building's lobby to the parkade is problematic.
- Panelists noted that simply changing the colour of the building façade does not provide sufficient differentiation or identity; incorporating more distinct detailing would be more effective. They also observed that the colour of the east building appears outdated and recommended using warmer materials, such as wood tones, to enhance its appearance.
- A panelist noted that the direct unit connections to Hunter Street create a successful and animated streetscape. They recommended extending the green spine's landscaping to the edge and corner of Hunter Street to better draw people into the green spine. Another panelist suggested adding benches near the lobbies to support a more active public realm. It was also noted that the bike racks next to the building entrance is cramped and problematic.
- A panelist suggested that early design considerations should carefully account for the location and space requirements of mechanical equipment, such as the elevator control room and parking ventilation systems.

- A panelist requested that a planting and landscape plan, including a planting list for both on-site and off-site areas, be included in the future submission. Another panelist noted that only two tree species are currently in the planting palette and recommended adding more variety to enhance biodiversity.
- A panelist noted that the location of the garbage staging areas, particularly for the west building, is odd, as it is situated near residential unit windows. A buffer is suggested between the windows and the staging areas.
- A panelist suggested that converting the stairway on the south side of the west building to a single line could create more space to relocate the garbage staging area, providing a green buffer between the staging area and the building.
- A panelist noted that there are insufficient emergency exit stairs from the visitor parking area.
- A panelist recommended that the relationship between the units and the green areas, including the public green spine running through the middle of the site, should be carefully considered in the landscape treatment.
- A panelist noted the appearance of the balcony edge beneath the large archway component on the Hunter Street elevation. They suggested that the design could benefit from more relief or variation in the balcony detailing. Introducing a secondary element in front of the glass could help break up the massing and add visual interest and dynamism.
- A panelist noted that the building on the west appears to have express joints that are very gridded, unlike the building on the east. They encouraged the removal of this rigid grid pattern, as the consistent horizontal and vertical joints between the windows are less successful on the west side compared to the east.
- A panelist noted that the east landscape courtyard is handled much more successfully. The amenity space appears more appropriate and has direct access to the courtyard. However, once residential units begin to interact with that space, an internal conflict arises between private and semi-private uses. This conflict is particularly evident in the west building, where the units and the amenity area seem to compete for use of the outdoor space.
- A panelist recommended that there be at least one parking per unit as the shortage of stalls will affect the neighbour's street.
- A panelist noted that unit layouts are really tiny, especially bedroom and living area. They suggested that District ask for furniture layout and see if they are functional.
- A panelist noted that the dedication to bike rooms is appreciated. However, accessible bikes are larger and more challenging to accommodate. They recommended that bike

rooms include power outlets to support e-bikes, which can pose fire risks if not properly managed.

- A panelist noted that accessible suites are better designed with showers rather than bathtubs and should include zero-transition entryways.
- A panelist suggested that including an evacuation emergency chair for accessible units will provide a means of emergency egress if a fire prevents elevator use.
- A panelist noted that in the enhanced accessible suites, the transfer space adjacent to the toilets is nearly non-existent, with a sink positioned right beside it. This raises concerns about how individuals using wheelchairs or with mobility challenges will be able to maneuver effectively.
- A panelist noted that the building must be easily identifiable by first responders at any time of day. Clear numbering and other distinguishing features can help make each building stand out.
- A panelist noted that vulnerable points include parking areas and exterior doors, emphasizing the need for robust locks and adequate lighting, especially for stairs leading to the underground parking. Since stair exits from parking lots are vulnerable areas, it's crucial to ensure strong lighting, particularly at the southeast corners where the stairs descend to the underground parkade.
- A panelist noted concerns about the concrete retaining wall and its impact on the streetscape, recommending consideration of more interesting material finishes, such as brick, for the retaining wall.

Summary of Panel Consensus Items:

- **Building Parking and Access:** With the exception of one ADP member, the Panel suggests access to the east building should be prioritized from Orwell Street rather than Hunter Street.
- **Building Facade and Material Articulation:** Enhance building identity with distinct architectural detailing and warmer materials like wood tones, especially on the east building. Soften or remove rigid grid patterns from express joints on the west building for better cohesion. Add relief or secondary elements to balcony edges on Hunter Street to break up massing and increase visual interest. Replace or upgrade the concrete retaining wall with attractive materials such as brick to improve the streetscape. Make lobbies more prominent and clearly defined.
- **Indoor and Outdoor Amenity Spaces:** Increase the size of indoor amenity spaces, particularly in the west building, by converting one or more studio units into amenity space to enhance usability. Additionally, improve the programming of these indoor spaces. Ensure better circulation between indoor and outdoor amenity areas by relocating or redesigning features such as bike racks near amenity entrances. Address

conflicts between private residential units and semi-private outdoor amenity spaces through careful design.

- **Streetscape, Green Spine, and Landscaping:** Extend green spine landscaping to edges and corners of Hunter Street to better activate the public realm. Add benches near building lobbies to encourage social interaction and a vibrant streetscape. Expand the planting palette to include a greater variety of tree species to enhance biodiversity. Relocate or buffer garbage staging areas away from residential windows, possibly by reconfiguring nearby stairways to allow space for green buffers.
- **Safety and Security:** Enhance security by installing robust locks and ensuring adequate lighting, especially around vulnerable areas like parking lots and stairwells leading to underground parking. Increase the number of emergency exit stairs from visitor parking to improve egress safety. Make buildings easily identifiable for first responders with clear numbering and distinctive features.
- **Accessibility Improvements:** Include power outlets in bike rooms to accommodate e-bike charging and address fire safety risks. Design accessible suites with showers instead of bathtubs and provide zero-transition entries. Ensure sufficient transfer space adjacent to toilets for wheelchair maneuvering. Provide emergency evacuation chairs in accessible units to facilitate safe evacuation if elevators cannot be used.

The Vice Chair then invited the Panel to compose a motion:

MOVED by Tieg Martin, and **SECONDED** by David Park:

THAT the ADP has reviewed the proposal and **recommends APPROVAL of the project SUBJECT to addressing to the satisfaction of staff** the items noted by the Panel in its review of the project.

CARRIED

None opposed.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

5. NEXT MEETING

The next ADP will be on August 14th, 2025

as amended, signed on behalf of chair


Chair (*Staff Liaison*)

Sept 17 2025
Date