



GBL Architects Inc.
ATT: Joey Stevens
#140 - 2034 West 11th Avenue
Vancouver, BC
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September 4, 2013

Re: Landscape Design Rationale for Development Permit Submission

The Hotel Gordon is in a key location that will strengthen connectivity between the waterfront and the civic precinct along Museum Way. The Hotel's proximity across Gordon Street from the Convention Centre, across Cameron Street from the proposed Casino and future residential development, and adjacency to Piper's Park places the development in a strategic location that will enable these key components of Nanaimo's civic precinct to be connected. The design of a highly animated and engaging streetscape/hotel interface is critical in achieving the desired connectivity within the public realm. The proposed landscape interventions focus on extending the civic precinct character across Gordon Street and Cameron Road by incorporating the Civic Centre material palette. At the same time, the proposed public realm plan establishes a new waterfront character precinct and material palette along Museum Way that will become the first phase of a future streetscape and public realm implementation strategy for the waterfront. The public realm also identifies a new potential for Cameron Road as a narrowed mews or laneway that establishes a pedestrian friendly linkage to Piper's Park.

The landscape design parti celebrates the historical context of the hotel site as once part of the Commercial Inlet that existed prior to the development of the lower downtown area from the 1860's through to 1960. This inlet preceded the development of the civic precinct and was incrementally filled in for industrial use. The original alignment of the Commercial Inlet followed Museum Way and then hooked southeast along Gordon Street. The historical importance of this waterfront edge becomes an interpretive opportunity to celebrate along the Gordon Street and Museum Way frontages in the form of a continuous "water edge" that surrounds the perimeter of the hotel. The water's edge is expressed along the gentle slope of Museum Way towards the waterfront as a series of low water terraces within a lush landscaped boulevard and interspersed with low seating 'decks'. The lower pool of the water feature appears to pass across the sidewalk culminating in a reflection pool surrounding the eastern 'prow' of the hotel as if had been a ship moored in the inlet. The flow of water suggests the receding tides that would have been evident in the Commercial Inlet. The upper reaches of the water feature extend along the foot of the building facade along Gordon Street and Cameron Road as an in-ground reflecting pool creating an intimate inside/outside relationship with the interior of the hotel.



A mid block plaza between the hotel and the rock face of Piper's Park creates an impromptu resting point along the Museum Way pedestrian route. The plaza is defined with the water feature adjacent to the eastern prow of the hotel on the west and the foot of the Piper's park rock outcropping on the east. An archipelago of timber seating decks are informally arranged within the plaza to allow for meandering pedestrian movements through. Low in-wall lighting within the adjacent boulevard planters, cove lighting beneath the seating decks and directed lighting onto the rock face create a safe and ambient experience at night within the plaza and along Museum Way.

The planting scheme within the street boulevard incorporates the palette of trees, shrubs and groundcover species characteristic of the civic precinct planting palette, specifically Pin Oaks along Gordon Street and Museum Way to match the existing adjacencies. Boulevard planting includes boxwood, dwarf barberry, and perennials that provide the urban character and structure within the boulevards. Planting at the street bump-outs are contained within stone planters to match the facing side of Gordon Street and mews through the Convention Centre building. Medium sized multi-stemmed trees create a soft shaded canopy within the commercial interactive zone along Museum Way and alongside an outdoor dining patio zone fronting Gordon Street and Cameron Road.

An elevated walkway system connects the hotel with the Convention Centre to the west and Piper's Park to the east. The Piper's Park connector is an open air structure characterized with concrete unit paving and parapet planters on each side of the bridge connection. The fourth floor pool deck is characterized with an expansive timber deck with fire pit, hot tub and outdoor lounge seating. The parapet along the south building face becomes an extruded planter providing a green edge to the outdoor pool terrace that can be appreciated both from pool site and from the street.

Sincerely,
PWL Partnership Landscape Architects Inc

Derek Lee BCSLA, CSLA
Principal