

TWO MORE PROJECTS AT PANEL

Vancouver's urban design panel supported two other projects last week, both residential.

[155 East 37th](#)

The plan for the first building to be constructed on the Little Mountain site received unanimous support from Vancouver's urban design panel last week.

A five-storey social-housing development aimed at seniors is to be built at the southeast edge of the Little Mountain site at 37th near Main. It will contain 53 dwelling units.

"It's going to be at what is the neighbourhood heart," city planner **Pat. St. Michel** said.

Building architect **Gair Williamson**, who told the panel he has been working closely with project architect **James Cheng**, said the building will have distinct quadrants and transitional edges, with "almost-rowhouse" bays along 37th.

"The building has four different facades, four different massings, all responding to the elements of the master plan," he said.

Although the building will be social housing, he added, it has been designed with dignity and will be integrated with the rest of the site.

"So it's non-market housing, but it looks just as nice," he said.

Although Williamson said the main entry will be on the north side of the building, panel members were concerned that there was not one on 37th, on the south side. They noted that, before and during construction of the rest of the site, 37th would appear to be the natural entry point.

Panel member **Norman Shearing** also noted that because this is the site's first building, its residents will be living in a construction zone for a long time.

Council decided last year that this building should proceed before the rest of the site to speed up the development of social housing at Little Mountain, which had previously been developed with a series of family-oriented low-rise social housing units, built in the 1950s.

All but one of those were demolished in 2009, and Ingrid Steenhuisen, who still lives in that building, told *NRU* this was the first time the Little Mountain tenants had seen the plan for the building.

Steenhuisen, who uses a cane, said she agreed with the comments about the entry point and added that she'd like to see an elevator at the 37th end to make it less circuitous for tenants to get to the street.



Tenant Ingrid Steenhuisen with model of Little Mountain site

NRU PHOTO

Although the 15-acre site will go through an overall rezoning, St. Michel said the application for this building is under current RM-3A (multi-family) zoning.

"As this is still a large site, the density isn't an issue, but the height will have to be considered by the development permit board," St. Michel said.

The building plan goes to the board March 25.

[3427 Porter](#)

The panel also supported **Gateway Architecture Inc.**'s application for two buildings with 10 townhouses.

"We're transitioning from C-2 [commercial zoning] to single-family and duplex zoning," city planner **Marie Linehan** said of the slightly sloping site.

Architect **Michael Cox** told the panel that the site near Trout Lake, which angles off Victoria Drive, was a difficult one and he staggered the buildings to open up the courtyard.

"We feel we've achieved quite livable units," he said, adding that each will have a roof deck. "Urban ag has been used on some aspects of the landscaping."

The project, for **Boffo Properties**, will have six units in the front building and four in the rear.

Most panel members said they thought the project was well-conceived although some said they thought the materials were slightly sombre.

"This is a cleverly conceived project with a courtyard that you wouldn't expect to see in a C-2 zone," panel chair **Gregory Borowski** said.

"There's a lot to like about this project — the challenge of fitting in all this on a very [difficult] site is very significant," panel member **Darryl Condon** said. "I think we're going to see more of these types of development."

Shearing added: "To fit this much density into a site like this is a job well done." [nru](#)