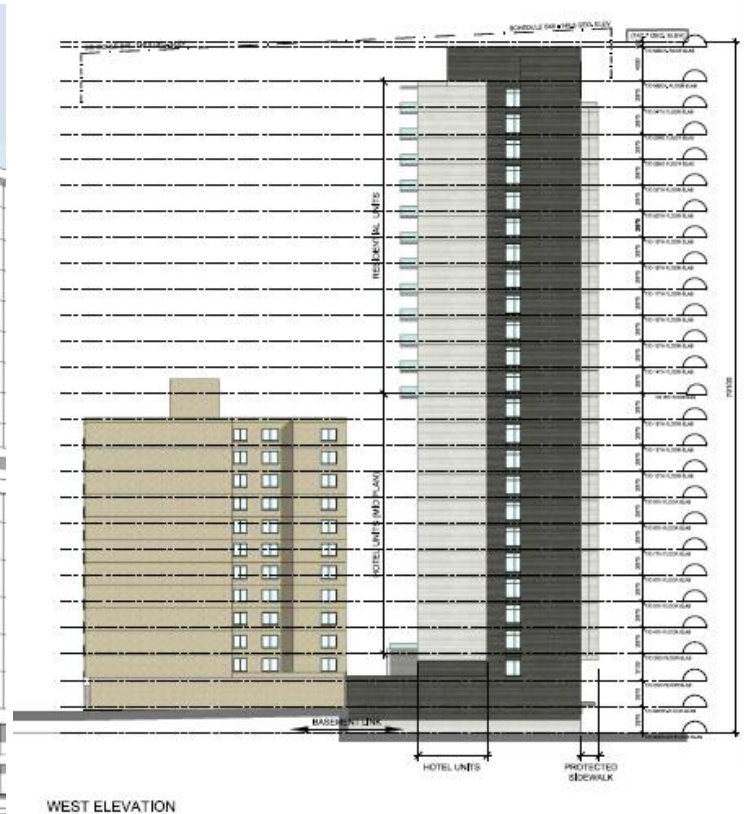


88 Albert Street & 81 Slater Street | Formal Review | Site Plan Control application to permit construction of a 25 floor residential building | rla / architecture; 88 Albert Street Holdings Inc.; Fotenn Planning + Design.



Summary

- The Panel supports residential development in this section of downtown as it is currently lacking in terms of activity during the evenings and weekends. Taking advantage of a remnant tight site, makes for an interesting proposal.
- The Panel recognizes some positive moves since the informal review, particularly with the relationship between the building and the public realm. These include the enhancements to the elevated ground floor / second floor, but the Panel suggests further enhancing the impacts on the public realm.

- The Panel is concerned with the way the building presses against its neighbours, both for the future residents of the proposed building, and for the building occupants in the adjacent towers to the east and west. This creates a challenging and undesirable precedent for development in the Central Business District.
- The conversion of several units to short-term rental units is helpful, but the Panel continues to be concerned with the very tight condition proposed at the rear of the building, as the future of the existing hotel is unclear, and the short term use is difficult to regulate.

Building Separation

- The Panel is concerned with the lack of building separation on the east, north and west sides of the building. The City's High-Rise Building Design Guidelines intend to prevent the development of tall buildings with a lack of sufficient separation, resulting in major quality of life issues. The Panel suggests that the intent of the guidelines can be achieved on this tight site by:
 - Changing from a streetwall canyon building form to a building with a tower sitting on a podium. This typology allows for windows on the sides of the building.
 - Lower the lighter coloured portion of the building down to the 12th floor. Retain the dark coloured portion of the tower above the 12th floor but maintain the 3.6-4m setback on the east side above the 12th floor. The same setback should then apply to the west side.
- The Panel is concerned with the quality of life issues created by the 7.5m setback at the rear, as this space will not allow light between the proposed building and the existing hotel.
 - A smaller footprint is recommended in order to achieve a larger rear setback.
 - In a scenario where the existing hotel is demolished and the site redeveloped with a 7.5m rear setback, it would still result in a very constrained relationship with only 15 meters between the two buildings between the two buildings.

- The conversion of the rear units to short term rental is acknowledged, however this use is difficult to regulate. The Panel continues to be concerned by this insufficient rear setback.
- One suggestion from a Panel member is to reconsider the project with the idea that 88 Albert and 81 Slater are treated as one lot, with appropriate setbacks applied that respond to the block context.
- Another idea brought forth by a Panel member is to negotiate a commitment (i.e. a limiting distance or air rights agreement) from the owner that prohibits development above 12 floors on the site of the existing hotel. This would ensure the fantastic views of the north facing suites above the 12th floor are preserved.

Architectural Expression

- The Panel suggests better detailing of the base to avoid a utilitarian character, providing a more elegant impact on the public realm. The adjacent federal building facing Elgin Street provides a good example.
- The Panel suggests eliminating the blank facades on the sides of the buildings by applying the suggestion above with respect to carving out side yard setbacks above the 12th floor. This breathing room will greatly improve the buildings relationship with the neighbouring towers.
- One suggestion from a Panel member is to apply the same approach used in the expression of the vertical plane above, to the base of the building.
- A Panel member has concerns that the current proposal may lead to difficulties ensuring that the mechanical roof stays under the maximum height restriction.

Public Realm and Functionality

- The Panel suggests that there could be more space between the retail entrances and the exterior access to the garbage room.

- Considering the short term rental units, the Panel suggests an additional elevator be installed, as these units typically function like hotel rooms, increasing the demand for elevators.