

May 30, 2006

JURY REPORT

FOR TORONTO CENTRAL WATERFRONT DESIGN COMPETITION

Jury Members:

Claude Cormier, Claude Cormier Architectes Paysagistes

Lise Anne Couture, Asymptote Architecture

Atom Egoyan, Ego Film Arts

Ken Greenberg, Greenberg Consultants

Bruce Mau, Bruce Mau Design

Brigitte Shim, Shim-Sutcliffe Architects and Associate Professor, al&d
Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design, University of Toronto. (Chair)

1.0 OVERVIEW

2.0 JURY COMMENTS – DESIGN SUBMISSION

3.0 JURY RECOMMENDATIONS – WINNING SCHEME

4.0 JURY RECOMMENDATIONS - IMPLEMENTATION

May 30, 2006

JURY REPORT FOR TORONTO CENTRAL WATERFRONT DESIGN COMPETITION

The five member jury observed the public forum and presentations by the five international competitors held at BCE place on May 15, 2006 in person or by video. Each jury member received a copy of the submissions prepared by the five proponent teams. On Wednesday May 24 and Thursday May 25, all jury members met in Toronto to deliberate and select a winning scheme.

The jury listened carefully to comments from Vicki Barron, a spokesperson for the Central Waterfront Stake holder's Advisory Committee, representing twelve different organizations with extensive leadership in the Toronto community; the City of Toronto Staff Stakeholders Committee representing the Waterfront Secretariat, Transportation, Community Planning, Parks, Heritage; and the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation Technical Team. The jury was provided with a synopsis of the public comment cards made available at the numerous competition exhibition venues located all across the Greater Toronto area and the Toronto Star's very popular on-line polling. The jury carefully reviewed the five design proposals, examined the physical models and exhibition at BCE place, and spent time walking the waterfront site from end to end.

The members of the jury for the Toronto Central Waterfront Design Competition are pleased to share the results of their deliberations with you.

1.0 OVERVIEW

Each and every member of the jury has a long standing commitment to the City of Toronto and the greater Toronto region. The majority of jury members live and work in Toronto and practice locally and internationally. The entire jury was committed to making a final recommendation that is bold and visionary and also able to be realized in the near future.

Each jury member brought different points of view to the table and the entire group worked very well together. The jury report reflects the unanimous opinion of five varied individuals. All of the opinions expressed in this report are shared by each and every jury member.

The jury read The Toronto Central Waterfront Design Competition Brief and understood that the number one goal was the creation of *A Comprehensive Concept Design for Continuous Water's Edge and Queens Quay Boulevard from End to End*. The jury agreed with this seemingly simple goal. The second goal articulated in the competition brief was *Specific Design Proposals for each of the Eight Heads of Slips*. The brief goes on to describe the heads of slips as a current 'pinch points' and suggests that the area where the slip heads meet Queens Quay Boulevard should be widened, expanded and transformed. The jury also agrees with the second goal outlined in the competition brief.

All of the five design teams produced a remarkable amount of exemplary work responding to the broad design challenge outlined in the competition brief. Many innovative ideas for the Toronto Central Waterfront were explored during an intense six week competition period. Five multi-disciplinary teams made up of designers from many countries around the world who worked with significant Toronto architects and urban designers to produce five insights into the future of Toronto's Central Waterfront. Each and every one of the five stellar multi-disciplinary teams should be commended and congratulated for their enormous efforts and design talent.

The Jury recognized the wonderful opportunity that an international waterfront competition provides for the City of Toronto and the greater region to learn about best practices from other parts of the world and the creative approaches proposed for a more efficient and effective use of urban space for all of our citizens.

All of the international design teams showed proposals that recognize the importance of making Queens Quay Boulevard a more pedestrian friendly and accessible street. The jury noted that four of the five design teams showed a reduction in the number of travel lanes for cars, buses and commercial vehicles and an increase in the area available for tree planting, pedestrians, bicycles and in-line skaters. The jury agreed with the majority of competition entries that showed a recalibrated Queens Quay Boulevard creating a new balance between automobiles, public transportation, pedestrians and cyclists.

The jury recognizes that an active and vital Toronto Inner Harbour is a major resource and asset to our waterfront. Many of the competitors chose to occupy the space of the Toronto Inner Harbour with weather markers, distinctive piers, floating maple leaf boardwalk islands, naturalized islands and more.

The jury felt that the strength of the Toronto Harbour is its on-going use as both a commercial waterway and a major recreational amenity for pleasure crafts. The harbour's rich marine activities must be maintained and supported to ensure a relevant for the future of the Toronto Harbour.

The jury felt strongly that any new major obstructions and/or protrusions into the Toronto Harbour were problematic. The City of Toronto Staff Stakeholders Committee provided the jury with an understanding of the extensive approval process needed for any new elements protruding permanently into the Toronto Harbour and its negative impact on the ability to provide immediate action in realizing a new Toronto Central Waterfront.

The jury recognized that the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation (TWRC) has done a good job in organizing an international design competition for Toronto's Central Waterfront with exemplary design participants from around the world sharing innovative design proposals with the citizens of Toronto. The TWRC's deep commitment to citizen participation and on-going stakeholder consultation was appreciated by the jury.

2.0 JURY COMMENTS – DESIGN SUBMISSIONS

WASAW. Stan Allen Architect, WW – Sarah Whiting and Ron Witte and the WASAW Brain Trust including Carlos Arnaiz, R. Lozano-Hemmer, D. Allin, A. Shorris, Front Inc, R.E. Somol, Matthews Nielsen, J. Thompson, A. Manning, J. Gomez-Ibanez, J. May, R. Peiser, S. Kwinter, Buro Happold, T. Gower, D. Lopez-Perez, C. Lee, Bioengineering, Arup, C. Kubisch, L. Wyman, S. Bocking, J. Rosenberg, Atelier 10, J. Cheon.

The jury appreciated the WASAW team's *Island Urbanism: Loops and Lilies* design proposal's bold and audacious vision for the Toronto Waterfront. WASAW's scheme clearly demonstrates the importance of bringing unique and diverse activities to Toronto's Central Waterfront. In their design scheme, the heads of slips are occupied with elegant glass pavilions acting as cultural buoys.

The jury was concerned that the buildings housing their cultural buoys programmes built at the heads of slips would create a barrier between the city and the water's edge. This design proposal was reliant on intense programming from a vast array of cultural entities and may be difficult to implement and maintain year round in our climatic zone. A new vision for continuous water's edge was not evident in this design submission.

TOD WILLIAMS BILLIE TSIEN ARCHITECTS, MARTINEZ LAPENA – TORRES ARQUITECTOS. Cohos Evamy, ERA Architects, The Planning Partnership, Earth Tech, Shoreplan Engineering, Sustainable Edge Ltd, Sweeny Sterling Finlayson, Tarandus.

The jury applauded the Tod Williams Billie Tsien / Martinez Lapena – Torres Arquitectos' team's urban vision of Queens Quay Boulevard with repeated transit nodes at the head of slips that contain transit hubs, newspaper stands, public washrooms, bike rentals etc. This team's proposal for grouping these urban amenities under large urban canopies that can also harvest solar energy addressed sustainability in an innovative and creative manner.

The jury felt that the new floating island proposed by this scheme would interfere with many current navigation routes and would visually separate the city from the water's edge. This design team's proposal for a new land mass would place a new layer of building and a new naturalized island between the citizens of Toronto and the Toronto Harbour and the Toronto Islands which the jury felt would detract from the waterfront experience.

The jury appreciated the way this scheme conceived of Queens Quay Boulevard as a green spine heavily planted with trees and benefiting from wider pedestrian and bicycle areas. This design proposal reinforced the current water's edge promenade and did not reflect on alternative ways to create continuity along this edge.

FOSTER and PARTNERS. Zeidler Partnership, Atelier Drieseitl.

The jury felt that the Foster team recognized the importance of strong north-south connections between the city and the waterfront. This team's design proposal was the only one that developed major piers punctuated by iconic and visually elegant markers containing commercial enterprises jutting into the Toronto Harbour. The jury was concerned about commercial entities occupying such a prominent and public location in the inner harbor. The jury felt that the Foster scheme's new teardrop-like interventions would interfere with the existing nautical shipping routes and recreation boating that currently takes place in our harbour.

This scheme proposed a greening of the TTC tracks on Queens Quay Boulevard which the jury appreciated. The biotope proposed at Portland Street slip is an innovative way to address sustainability in the central waterfront and further exploration into these types of technologies along our waterfront and throughout our city is needed.

PORT. Snohetta, Sasaki, nArchitects, Weisz + Yoes, H3, Balmori, Lobko, Halcrow

The jury felt the PORT scheme produced a range of innovative, elegant and sensitive solutions to specific conditions along Toronto's central waterfront.

The jury appreciated and applauded the inventive and creative response to our climatic zone and in particular, new ways of celebrating the winter season. The jury especially appreciated this design team's delightful proposals for the Spadina Slip, Peter Slip and Rees Street Slip proposals.

While the jury recognized this team's weather masts as an extension of the north-south link from city to water, they felt that they do not acknowledge the current intense patterns of shipping and boat use in Toronto's Inner Harbor.

This scheme's Boardwalk proposal for Queens Quay Boulevard proposed a wooden pedestrian boardwalk to the south of a relocated streetcar and bike lane and car traffic to the north. Relocating the streetcar tracks along Queens Quay is essential for this team to realize their vision for a new reinvented Queens Quay Boulevard.

The jury recognized the PORT scheme as the runner up in this design competition and while its individual interventions were strong and provocative the submission lacked the overall bold vision of a continuous waterfront that the competition brief articulated so clearly.

3.0 JURY RECOMMENDATION – WINNING SCHEME

WEST 8. DuToit Allsopp Hillier, Schollen & Company, Diamond + Schmitt Architects, Arup, Halsall Associates, David Dennis Design

The jury for the Toronto Central Waterfront Design Competition unanimously recommends West 8 as the winning design team.

The jury appreciated West 8's bold and unified design concept proposing the creation of a continuous water's edge and a re-conceptualized pedestrian and bicycle friendly Queens Quay Boulevard **and their insistence on a generous civic scale for both.** This team proposed a clear, simple and strong idea that can be implemented in the near future to create much needed public access to Toronto's Central Waterfront for the citizens of the Toronto area.

The West 8 scheme addressed the competition brief's number one goal by proposing the creation of a continuous 18 metre wide water's edge promenade made up of a generous wooden boardwalk, granite pavers, a double row of native trees and series of new bridges across the ends of the slips. The jury appreciated the designer's interest in building with enduring materials and a simple yet consistent palette. The jury felt that this design concept could provide an excellent blueprint for future city building in other areas of Toronto's waterfront.

The jury supported and applauded the idea of a series of new bridges providing much needed east-west continuity, but the jury also discussed the important role the bridges should also played in framing open views of the water in the north-south direction, particularly at Spadina Avenue. The jury felt that the West 8 team needs to be given the latitude to explore innovative ways of opening or manning selected bridges to accommodate existing uses along our central waterfront.

West 8's scheme addressed the competition brief's number two goal of alleviating the current pinch points at the heads of slips while simultaneously creating a continuous public promenade along the south side of Queens Quay Boulevard. Their proposal was the only one of the five competition schemes that chose to keep the streetcar lines in its existing location while also creating a generous pedestrian promenade parallel to a new portion of the Martin Goodman Trail, an allée of trees to the south, one lane of west and east bound automobile traffic, and some parallel parking spots to the north, where space permits. This practicality has enormous advantages. Many technical details need to be resolved to make this work, but the Jury believes that by choosing not to move the streetcar tracks along Queens Quay Boulevard, the West 8 team put forward a scheme that could be implemented immediately.

Despite its great clarity, the Jury observed upon closer examination that in the West 8 proposal many existing features of Toronto's Central Waterfront are altered. The jury felt that there are some significant existing elements along Toronto's Central Waterfront such as the existing Music Garden, Harbourfront skating rink, HTO Park (now under construction) and other selected moments along our current waterfront that reflect the collective efforts of many citizens in our city at large.

The jury felt strongly that these existing elements must be maintained and included in a vital new continuous water's edge promenade and Queens Quay Boulevard. The jury felt it was imperative that the West 8 team work in consultation with the designers of the existing public elements to ensure that the interface between the continuous water's edge promenade and specific existing moments is handled in a respectful and sensitive manner.

The jury appreciated West 8's proposal to provide floating seasonal pontoons that would create small moorings perpendicular to the continuous water's edge promenade and ensure flexibility as the Toronto Central Waterfront evolves. The jury felt that during the warm weather these short wooden fingers would contribute to the vitality of Toronto's Inner Harbor. During the winter months, these floating pontoons would be store elsewhere and remounted the following season.

By contrast with the great power of these basic components, however, the jury felt that many other elements proposed by this design team were kitschy and unconvincing including the Maple Leaf Boardwalk Island, Simcoe on a Stick and Chinese Dragons and they detracted from the strengths of their design submission. The jury felt that the resources for the implementation of the project must focus on the two key goals and not get sidetracked on other less convincing areas.

West 8 proposed a new pedestrian link from the CN Tower to the central waterfront and a new public park at the base of the CN Tower. The jury felt this idea was worthy of further exploration but it is beyond the scope of this design competition and should not deter from the primary competition goal.

4.0 JURY RECOMMENDATIONS - IMPLEMENTATION

The jury was emphatic that this design team be given the mandate to focus on the two key elements of their scheme - a continuous waters edge promenade from Portland Slip to Rees Slip and a re-conceptualized Queens Quay Boulevard from Spadina Street to York Street. Swift and focused implementation of these two designated areas will ensure that the citizens of Toronto see immediate action.

By completing these two key elements on Queens Quay and the water's edge which run in parallel, and which build on work which is already complete or underway, the Jury believes that it will be possible to use the West 8 approach to create a significant stretch of the Central Waterfront from Bathurst to York which feels relatively complete and welcoming. After years of delays and a patchwork of efforts, the realization of the winning scheme would make a positive contribution to the evolution of the Toronto Central Waterfront and the Jury strongly recommends that the TWRC make every effort to use its resources to reach this goal.

Understanding the great desire for early action, the Jury recognized the potential of an interim project to fully explore the potential of their design proposition. The jury recommends that West 8 be hired by the TWRC to immediately enter into an interim phase of design which would explore the closure of the south side of Queens Quay during the summer of 2006 to create an initial version of the team's ultimate concept.

There are many precedents showing the value and benefits of interim conditions such as the Paris Plage transforming lower quais of the Seine into urban beaches; the City of Toronto's closing of Kensington Market or Church Street for city wide activities; New York City's creation of temporary bike paths along the east side of the Hudson River and even the 1970's Harbourfront Passage which carved public access through a former industrial area now known as the Toronto Central Waterfront.

The jury felt very strong that this early action would create an energetic and vital interim condition that would capture the public imagination and enable Torontonians to truly reclaim our waterfront today.