



WATERFRONTToronto

Waterfront Design Review Panel Minutes of Meeting #170

Wednesday, Oct. 23rd, 2024

Meeting held in-person hybrid at Waterfront Toronto

Present

Paul Bedford, Chair
Betsy Williamson, Vice Chair
Gina Ford
Pat Hanson
David Leinster
Janna Levitt
Nina-Marie Lister
Fadi Masoud
Pina Petricone
Brigitte Shim
Kevin Stelzer

Regrets

Matthew Hickey
Emily Mueller De Celis
Eric Turcotte

Chris Glaisek, Waterfront Toronto
Emilia Floro, City of Toronto

Recording Secretary
Leon Lai

Overview of Review Agenda

The Chair opened the meeting by providing an overview of the agenda, which included reviews of:

1. 280 Commissioners Street – Stage 1: Issues Identification
 2. 685 Lake Shore Boulevard East – Stage 1: Issues Identification
 3. 115 Saulters Street – Stage 1: Issues Identification
 4. 120 Bouchette Street – Stage 1: Issues Identification
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GENERAL BUSINESS

The Chair asked if there were any conflicts of interest for disclosure. No conflict was declared.

The Chair then asked Chris Glaisek, Chief Planning and Design Officer, Waterfront Toronto, to give an update on last month's projects.

Design Review Panel Report Back:

Leon Lai, Design Review Panel Manager with Waterfront Toronto, noted the Consensus Comments for July 2024 McCleary District Precinct Plan – Stage 2: Preliminary Draft Plan review have been circulated with the team. The team is working on wind analysis and Indigenous Engagement, and the project is tentatively scheduled to return for final Stage 3 review in February 2025.

Waterfront Toronto Updates:

Mr. Lai noted the construction work continues at PLFP Playground: shotcrete work is complete and sand will be brought in. The columns are the base for new shade structures which will be installed when the park opens. Mr. Lai noted wetland work continues and pointed to the view of a new wetland between Commissioners Street and Lake Shore Boulevard East.

Mr. Lai noted Pina Mallozzi, Senior VP of Design with Waterfront Toronto and two members of the AAC, Roman Romanov, and Chris Stigas, formed a panel at the Evergreen Conference to speak on accessibility in the public realm, creating better spaces for all. Waterfront Toronto is working towards an update to the Waterfront Accessibility Design Guidelines based on comments from the AAC and is expected to bring this to the WDRP early next year.

Chair's remarks:

The Chair concluded the General Business segment and motioned to go into the project review sessions.

PROJECT REVIEWS

1.0 280 Commissioners – Stage 1: Issues Identification

<i>Project ID #:</i>	1143
<i>Project Type:</i>	Building
<i>Review Stage:</i>	Issues Identification
<i>Review Round:</i>	One
<i>Location:</i>	McCleary District
<i>Proponent:</i>	Tepfam Holdings
<i>Architect/ Designer:</i>	HPAI MHBC
<i>Presenter(s):</i>	David Pontarini, Partner, HPAI David McKay, Partner, MHBC
<i>Delegation:</i>	Ken Lee, HPAI Jonathan But, HPAI Greg Costa, MHBC Shadi Adab, MHBC Adrian Phillips, City of Toronto Julie Bogdanowicz, City of Toronto Nasim Adab, City of Toronto Steve Barber, City of Toronto Colin Wolfe, City of Toronto Josh Hilburt, Waterfront Toronto



1.1 Introduction to the Issues

Colin Wolfe, Senior Community Planner with City of Toronto, began the introduction by recapping the Precinct Plan development process. Mr. Wolfe noted the site context, vision of the land use mix of residential and PIC uses, two phases of work, and the anticipated timeline. Mr. Wolfe noted the private and public blocks, key context elements on housing, reconciliation, open space, and transit. Mr. Wolfe noted the fixed elements that the Precinct Plan team has accepted, and flexible elements that are being studied, as well as additional considerations. Mr. Wolfe noted the Indigenous Engagement Strategy, due diligence on infrastructure and technical elements, the draft demonstration plan, public realm directions, and overall precinct planning key issues: tower separation, PIC use contributions, floorplate sizes, wind and pedestrian comfort, hydro corridor, servicing, EA streets and timing, and transit implementation. Mr. Wolfe recapped the consensus comments from July 2024 WDRP and areas for Panel consideration.

Steven Barber, Senior Community Planner with City of Toronto, introduced 280 Commissioners Street by noting the OPA application background, program split, and existing site context. Mr. Barber noted the project is here for Stage 1: Issues Identification review, and Julie Bogdanowicz, Senior Urban Designer with City of Toronto, noted the areas for Panel consideration: tower separation and massing, tower height, tower locations, at-grade uses, shadowing on public realm, and servicing and curb cuts.

1.2 Project Presentation

David McKay, Partner with MHBC, introduced the project by noting the project team, context, Precinct Plan public space framework, mobility framework, land use framework, streets, and adjacent development proposals. David Pontarini, Partner with HPAI, provided an overview of the architectural design, noted the site plan, PIC uses, ground floor strategy, podium programs, tower separation, and the proposed materiality. Mr. Pontarini noted the ground floor elevations, streetscape and landscape elements, building sections, height transition, and the sustainability objectives.

1.3 Panel Questions

One Panel member asked if the building across on Commissioners Street is still in operation. Mr. McKay noted it is an operational film studio and the site has approval for a 30-storey hotel.

Another Panel member noted the functional requirements of a large format hardware store is very different than the requirements of a film studio, and asked if the team has more information on the use. Mr. McKay noted the project is only at Official Plan Amendment stage and does not have more information on the tenancy of the space, if it is the case for a hardware store then the retail along Commissioners would support that use – the team would like to provide a range of options to inform the district plan while being flexible to meet market demand.

One Panel asked for the rationale behind the site servicing strategy and why Saulter is not used. Mr. McKay responded that if services are provided off Saulter Street, then truck turning would have to be internalized eliminating the PIC use in the middle. With the future parkette to the east, access will be limited. The team would like to design the street as a woonerf and felt this is better than servicing off Saulter.

Another Panel member asked the team to explain how the ground floor plan fits and supports the Precinct Plan. Mr. McKay noted the ground floor deviates on retail along the New Street because the team felt that the street would better support residential instead of retail; the rest of the ground floor tries to balance buildings needs with PIC use as part of the precinct objectives.

One Panel asked if PIC designates actual film studio use or other programs. Mr. Wolfe noted that the PIC definition is broad including uses such as sound stage, data centre, and hardware stores; self-storage warehouse is excluded.

Another Panel member asked if the team looked at other urban studio precedents. Mr. McKay noted the team looked at local examples such as Dundas West station with work-live buildings.

One Panel member asked if the ground floor can be a more flexible mixed-use zone instead of splitting up and compartmentalized – is it a OPA requirement to separate the uses or is there an “overlay” zoning available? Mr. McKay noted the zoning is mixed with industrial and residential. Mr. Wolfe noted an activation study can be done.

Another Panel member asked if Indigenous engagement is being completed for each site or precinct-wide. Ms. Bogdanowicz noted consultation is being completed by the broader Precinct Plan team. The Panel member asked for the status of McCleary Park and the waste transfer station. Mr. Wolfe noted the transfer station is part of the Phase 2 EA, Port Lands Planning Framework envisions the operation being moved and the building becoming something else. The Panel member asked how the base structure support the long-term flexibility of the PIC area. Mr. McKay noted infrastructure that supports light industrial use needs will be provided and it is another layer that the team will study.

1.4 Panel Comments

One Panel member commented that the project can help lead the conversation in creating a unique district. The question of a finer scale ground floor has been under discussion recently so the consistent ring of program around the core use was surprising. The Panel member recommended keeping the woonerf fully pedestrianized, move all servicing to Commissioners Street and keep vehicles at the perimeter. The Panel member does not support the retail and spill-out uses along Commissioners, instead the PIC use should flow into this area. The Panel member emphasized that the City should not provide approval for this application until the Precinct Plan is approved by the Panel and the City.

Another Panel member encouraged a more flexibly zoned ground floor, less compartmentalized, that would permit more innovative integration of PIC use.

One Panel member supported disintegrating zoning separation and reintegrating the different but related uses. The Panel member recommended the team to study industrial and residential zoned buildings and let the woonerf help make Commissioners Street unique.

Another Panel felt that typically a Home Depot along a street isn't desired, but here there is opportunity for something unique, asked the team to open the site by not having a consistent ring of program such as townhouses, instead let landscape in and increase porosity. The Panel member asked the team to demonstrate how the green streets connect the project to the greater context and provide an improved strategy for retail to ensure success.

One Panel asked the team to identify an opportunity to integrate the landscape strategy, the big idea of extending the river with the building and develop the public realm plan by coming up with a landscape approach.

Another Panel member encouraged the team to stitch the building with the context and did not support the corner retail with a parkette immediately adjacent. Instead of shrink-wrapping the PIC use, the Panel member recommended making each lobby respond to the site in a unique way.

One Panel member encouraged the search for a new typology where PIC is meaningfully integrated into the building, not just in the centre – also a more granular

scale is important along with pedestrian connections. The Panel member encouraged the team to study the scale of the PIC use, rethink traditional tower-podium relationship to permit more innovative PIC integration, and how PIC use can animate the street.

Another Panel member commented that Indigenous engagement needs to be more robust and should address how water impacts the sites. It is important for McCleary Park and the waste transfer station be integrated in the precinct public realm strategy so developments can be supportive. The Panel encouraged a new typology with PIC use, consider not wrapping the podium in residential, don't force traditional edge programs on the podium and let it be free on delivering flexibility and innovation.

One Panel member felt a big idea is needed – a strong concept that can ignite what the public realm can offer, consider the use of technology or art. The landscape should be very specific even if the building is “generic” to be flexible. The Panel member recommended a fully pedestrianized northern segment of the woonerf and create a safe connection to the park.

1.5 Consensus Comments

General

- Ensure the project supports and contributes to the McCleary District Precinct Plan. City of Toronto is encouraged not to approve the development before the completion of the Precinct Plan.
- The project is an opportunity of a lifetime to set a development precedent in a new precinct, encouraged the team to continue to explore different building typologies. The mix of uses and innovative planning of the project should draw the rest of Toronto to the new precinct.
- Continue to develop precedent studies of other successful neighborhoods with a mix of uses including light industrial and residential.
- Strong encouragement for all four of the adjacent private development teams in this precinct to work together to ensure the first building designs will positively contribute to the precinct long-term.
- Develop a more meaningful and robust Indigenous engagement process.

Building

- Supported the 40m tower separation distance.
- Encouraged the team to develop a more unique building massing and move away from the typical tower and podium typology.
- Find opportunities to ‘break up’ the podium massing to better respond to the different street frontages, consider:
 - bringing landscape into the podium to improve the public realm
 - not wrapping the podium in residential uses on the new east-west street
 - breaking down the consistent scale of the perimeter to something more granular
 - introducing pedestrian porosity and connections through the block

- Provide more information and a scale study on the hardware retail program to ensure fit and feasibility, i.e. is it a home depot or a home hardware in terms of scale? Does loading work with the adjacent ground floor programs?
- Concerned that retail along Commissioners Street will not be successful.

Public Realm

- Continue to develop a public realm strategy that relates to the “blue green” street, such as a more robust strategy on water management.
- Ensure the northern half of the proposed woonerf is fully pedestrianized and restrict vehicular movement to the southern half only to provide a safe connection to the future parkette – let the woonerf define a unique character for the project.
- Ensure the four site corners respond to each frontage.

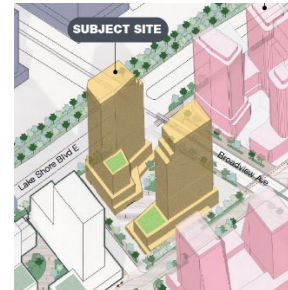
1.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support

No vote was taken as the project was reviewed at Stage 1: Issues Identification.

Mr. McKay thanked the Panel for the comments, asked the City to provide direction on servicing off Commissioners as it was previously deemed as not possible. Mr. Pontarini noted the team is experienced in designing buildings that co-use community centre and will do a lot of studying to create a new framework.

2.0 685 Lake Shore Boulevard East – Stage 1: Issues Identification

<i>Project ID #:</i>	1144
<i>Project Type:</i>	Building
<i>Review Stage:</i>	Issues Identification
<i>Review Round:</i>	One
<i>Location:</i>	McCleary District
<i>Proponent:</i>	Slate, Carly Communities
<i>Architect/ Designer:</i>	BDP Quadrangle Bousfields Inc.
<i>Presenter(s):</i>	Sami Kazemi, Principal, BDP Quadrangle Mike Bissett, Partner, Bousfields Inc.
<i>Delegation:</i>	Veronica Jarvis, Slate Hilary Spriggs, Carly Communities Adrian Phillips, City of Toronto Julie Bogdanowicz, City of Toronto Nasim Adab, City of Toronto Steve Barber, City of Toronto Colin Wolfe, City of Toronto Josh Hilburt, Waterfront Toronto



2.1 Introduction to the Issues

Steven Barber, Senior Community Planner with City of Toronto, introduced 685 Lake Shore Boulevard East by noting the OPA application background, program split, and existing site context. Mr. Barber noted the project is here for Stage 1: Issues

Identification review, and Julie Bogdanowics, Senior Urban Designer with City of Toronto, noted the areas for Panel consideration: proposed height and floor plate size, shadowing on the multi-use trail, ground floor animation, and a strong pedestrian public realm.

2.2 Project Presentation

Sami Kazemi, Principal with BDP Quadrangle, introduced the project by noting the project background, development process, team members, site context, and adjacent development context. Mr. Kazemi noted the project lost 30% of its area after giving part of the site over for the Broadview Ave. extension, the project provides 3m stepbacks, average floor plate above 20th floor is 850m, and there are PIC uses proposed on the second floor of the podium. Mr. Kazemi noted the massing concept, ground floor and landscape strategy, and overall height transition from East Harbour to the water.

2.3 Panel Questions

One Panel member asked for the timing of the Broadview extension and alignment of Villiers Street in the Precinct Plan. Ms. Bogdanowicz noted Broadview extension will happen likely in 10 years, hard to say as the area is in the process of an EA, and Villiers Street is shown as straight in the Precinct Plan. Mike Bissett, Partner with Bousfields, noted the team will ensure the new alignment of Villiers will be safe – the property is reduced in size from the Broadview extension, and it already includes the north sidewalk.

Another Panel member noted the midblock connection is vehicular and asked how it works for pedestrians. Mr. Kazemi noted the eastern part of the connection is fully pedestrian and west is shared, it is a local connection that residents will be aware of and use. The Panel member asked how the building supports PIC use. Mr. Kazemi noted the podium is designed to accommodate light industrial to commercial offices, if heavy industrial PIC use is expected then the design will change.

One Panel member asked how water is considered in the landscape design. Tim McCormick, Associate Director with IBI Group, responded that there are opportunities for permeability. The Panel member asked for the rationale for a pair of towers. Mr. Kazemi noted it is the result of meeting tower separation distance.

Another Panel member asked if 40m tower separation is zoning requirement, if the north tower is pushed as far north as it can be to allow for Villiers Street alignment, and if loading and service can be provided off Saulters Street rather than mid-block connection. Mr. Kazemi noted a benefit analysis can be completed and the team is trying to internalize all services in one curb cut.

One Panel member asked if the mediation can be paused. Hilary Spriggs, Vice President of Development with Carly Communities, noted some of the building design is confidential and the team might not be able to fully answer some of your questions.

Another Panel member asked for the City's preference on unit size and types, and noted that 40m separation will heavily dictate massing. Nasim Adab, Urban Design Manager with City of Toronto, responded that unit types are being studied. Emilia Floro, Director of Urban Design, noted the City encourages more amenities.

One Panel member asked if pedestrians could cross Villiers Street at Broadview Ave. Ms. Bogdanowicz noted transit blocks cars from crossing and the jog is what the application is proposing, not the Precinct Plan.

Another Panel asked for the relationship between retail and outdoor areas. Mr. Kazemi noted that is being studied, the team would like the outdoor space to be potentially retail amenity.

2.4 Panel Comments

One Panel member commented that the midblock connection is not helping to benefit the Precinct Plan and the greater neighborhood but works to service your buildings, encouraged to shift the buildings' mass to Broadview Ave. to reinforce the street frontage, and focus on making the midblock connection fully pedestrian to support the network of public realm. The Panel member suggested that if Villiers Street is a fully pedestrian street, then the misalignment would be less of an issue.

Another Panel member appreciated the concept inspiration but encouraged the landscape to work with the context in a more meaningful way – the area has high water table, and the landscape design should help capture water and promote biodiversity, it is an interconnected system and each site should contribute.

One Panel member noted the blue-green infrastructure in the precinct that work with the park are very function and the project should leverage these. The Panel member felt that the midblock connection should be pedestrianized and should not be ambiguous.

Another Panel member noted the misalignment of Villiers Street looks like a mistake and suggested that it be corrected. The Panel member encouraged the relocation of building services away from the midblock connection, i.e. move them to off Saulter Street if supported by the City. Another option is to keep services off Saulter and let it be a great pedestrian street – a trade-off that should be thoroughly studied.

One Panel member appreciated the site and district analysis, asked the team to show a diagram of all the loading and vehicular turning needs because it would reveal that most of the midblock connection will be for vehicles. The Panel member encouraged the team to study how to further differentiate vehicle from pedestrian realm.

Another Panel member appreciated the midblock connection gesture but felt that it is diminished by the service functions. The Panel member is concerned that the street misalignment looks like a mistake and encouraged for more studies of the constraints.

One Panel member noted the importance of meaningful Indigenous engagement and felt that the site is challenging as it has no backside, similar to other waterfront sites.

Villiers Street is also a very important street, from the Don ending at McCleary – it should be recognized and the terminus must be very intentional. The Panel member commented that all private development blocks should support the key precinct streets and asked the team to clarify the servicing needs as there seems to be several conflicting functions all located in a small area.

Another Panel member appreciated the concept and felt that the concept is not expressed in the landscape design – further develop both ecological and landscape design potentials. The Panel member questioned whether the retail in the shaded midblock connection should be discouraged and instead focus on Broadview Ave.

One Panel member asked the team to provide more perspective views to help understand the impact of the proposed street alignment.

Another Panel member felt the project is too dense and noted that in Toronto some of the most interesting moments are where the street grid is interrupted, however it should be designed very intentionally.

One Panel member agreed that misalignment can create pleasant public realm moments, such as off Queens Street West however Saulter isn't quite Queen Street, and encouraged the City to consider Villiers Street as a primary retail street.

Emilia Floro, Director of Urban Design with City of Toronto, noted that applicants are at a disadvantage because the City's precinct vision is not fully complete, so the developments are not able to follow clear guidelines in trying to support the plan.

2.5 Consensus Comments

General

- Ensure the project supports and contributes to the McCleary District Precinct Plan. City of Toronto is encouraged not to approve the development before the completion of the Precinct Plan.
- Encouraged the team to find ways to align and bridge the gap between the design and the Precinct Plan. Ensure the design supports the first principles of the Precinct Plan, consider the street network and pedestrian connections.
- The misalignment of Villiers Street feels unintentional, either straighten the alignment or demonstrate a clear rationale for the new alignment and how it will impact the rest of the precinct, i.e. an intentional terminus where the jog occurs.
- Strong encouragement for all four of the adjacent private development teams in the precinct to work together to ensure the first building designs will positively contribute to the precinct long-term.
- Develop a more meaningful and robust Indigenous engagement process.

Precinct Plan

- Consider fully pedestrianizing Villiers Street, a move that can work with the misaligned right-of-way.

Public Realm

- Appreciated the metaphor of the valley. Ensure the proposed public realm and landscape have functioning water infrastructure that will contribute to the site's ecosystem in a meaningful way, i.e. a performative, regenerative landscape.
- While a midblock connection as a gesture is appreciated, having it be shared with vehicular traffic is not supported as it does not create a pedestrian connection that benefits the neighbourhood. The midblock connection should prioritize pedestrian safety and movement over accommodating building functions like parking and services, consider moving the parking ramp out of the midblock connection, such as off Saulters Street.
- Ensure the Lake Shore Boulevard East street design supports the Lake Shore East Public Realm plan.

Building

- Broadview is a wide right-of-way and there is support for retail along this elevation, however concerned retail spilling into the midblock connection will not be successful.
- Overall, more study is needed to ensure retail success and support of the Precinct Plan.
- Concerned with the neighborhood's liveability due to the high level of density proposed, continue to study the density and ensure high liveability can be delivered.

2.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support

No vote was taken for a Stage 1: Issues Identification review.

Mr. Bissett thanked the Panel for comments and appreciated the suggestion of fully pedestrianizing Villiers Street.

3.0 115 Saulters St – Stage 1: Issues Identification

<i>Project ID #:</i>	1145
<i>Project Type:</i>	Building
<i>Review Stage:</i>	Issues Identification
<i>Review Round:</i>	One
<i>Location:</i>	McCleary District
<i>Proponent:</i>	CastlePoint Numa
<i>Architect/ Designer:</i>	COBE
<i>Presenter(s):</i>	Joseph Haberl, Architect, COBE
<i>Delegation:</i>	Thomas Krarup, COBE Sanjam Raisuada, Castlepoint Numa Jeff Brenner, Castlepoint Numa Andy Friedman, Castlepoint Numa Adrian Phillips, City of Toronto Julie Bogdanowicz, City of Toronto Nasim Adab, City of Toronto



Steve Barber, City of Toronto
Colin Wolfe, City of Toronto
Josh Hilburt, Waterfront Toronto

3.1 Introduction to the Issues

Steven Barber, Senior Community Planner with City of Toronto, introduced 115 Saulter Street by noting the OPA application background, program split, existing site context and future Precinct Plan context. Mr. Barber noted the project is here for Stage 1: Issues Identification review, and Julie Bogdanowicz, Senior Urban Designer with City of Toronto, noted the areas for Panel consideration: setback of the towers with respect to the views to the waste transfer station, shadowing on McCleary Park, site access in relation to Villiers Street, and at-grade uses and animation.

3.2 Project Presentation

Joseph Haberl, Architect with COBE, introduced the project by noting the team, experience with the film industry, strategic objectives, and site context of the Port Lands. Mr. Haberl noted the existing heritage landmark of the Commissioners Incinerator and Stack, massing design drivers, iterations, massing envelope, and the concept of “The Smokestacks”. Mr. Haberl noted key views, program mix, PIC use at the centre of the podium, and preliminary drawings include plans, sections, and elevations.

3.3 Panel Questions

One Panel member asked how the strict zoning envelope for the project supports the ethos of the precinct plan, public realm, and help connect people. Mr. Haberl noted the towers are set back to create an enlarged public realm; PIC use takes over the core of the podium so there are opportunities for animation at the perimeter. The Panel member felt Broadview has too much negative space and wondered if the parcel east of the site can be developed. Mr. Haberl is unsure what the corner site will become. Ms. Bogdanowicz noted it is public land and a swap would allow it to be developed.

Another Panel member asked if there is any interest in providing porosity towards the parkette side from Broadview Ave. and erode the ground floor parti, and asked how a green-blue street is different from a service street. Mr. Haberl noted diagrams that show potential strategies in how the lobby frontages engage with Broadview Ave., that Villiers Street is a green-blue street per the Precinct Plan but the team sees it more as a service street.

One Panel member asked if any climate factors help determine the shape of the towers. Mr. Haberl noted the massing primarily focuses on responding to the view to the stack.

Another Panel member noted the compact tower configuration and asked how the towers enhance energy performance. Mr. Haberl responded that at this stage the team is looking at massing, orientation, floor plate. Thomas Krarup, Director with COBE, noted that the Life Cycle Analysis shows that avoiding transfer plates and unnecessary

envelope articulation are beneficial – essentially a very simple massing that can adapt over time. The Panel member asked what flexibility the towers provide. Mr. Krarup responded that the floor plates can accommodate larger units.

One Panel member noted each project has a different servicing strategy, asked how this project contributes to the Broadview Ave. extension, which urban design principles are most important and how the design relates to the industrial heritage of the site. Ms. Floro noted that the City is studying all four sites together in terms of servicing and can share findings later. Mr. Haberl noted materiality in addition to the sloping towers will help respond to the industrial heritage.

Another Panel member asked for the approach to public realm and open space. Mr. Haberl noted corner public spaces are quite new and the team will refer to the PLPF and Precinct Plan.

3.4 Panel Comments

One Panel member asked the team to continue to develop the massing, did not support the curb cut off Villiers Street as it may become a pedestrian focused street. The Panel member supported the PIC use but encouraged the team to find opportunities to integrate midblock pedestrian connections. The Panel member asked the team to consider pushing the building right up to Broadview Ave. and absorb the open space inside the block. Finally, focus on making the building more unique by developing a new innovative typology of residential and PIC use.

Another Panel member asked the team to provide a larger site plan that shows the four projects' servicing strategies in relation to the great precinct plan. The Panel member recommended the team to lead with landscape and help the project support the Precinct Plan.

One Panel member encouraged the team to study how to have both midblock connection and PIC use, i.e. tower on top of the black box – strive for innovation and create a unique typology for Toronto.

Another Panel member appreciated the presentation and asked the team to introduce new and exciting ideas for the PIC use in a residential building, consider how the tower might land without a podium, indoor and outdoor spaces that cut through the site, hybrid spaces that are experimental PIC spaces, etc. The Panel member felt that the angled facades should somehow be in the service of thermal comfort and climate mitigation.

One Panel member felt that the project is missing integration with the public realm plan, consider moving loading off Villiers Street, and find ways to break up the massing to create opportunities for increasing comfort in the public realm.

Another Panel member commented that the project feels very internalized and has not responded well to the site edges. The Panel member felt that each frontage has unique character that should be embraced by the design.

One Panel member appreciated the strong graphics of the presentation, noted project of this scale requires a more integrated framework on embodied carbon as the real challenge is how to design these towers with future adaptability in mind. The Panel member commended the team's commitment to TGS Tier 1 and encouraged to plan the HVAC system to allow for future flexibility. The Panel member recommended a heat pump system with ambient loop, topped up by gas-fire system – consider these early thoughts on getting heat pump into the building.

Another Panel member supported the parti of both towers hitting ground directly, however felt that the public realm does not yet have an equally strong concept. The colonnade, canopy, are all “decal”, continue to develop a formal parti that is reconciled with the precinct public realm plan. The Panel member felt the current public realm feels undifferentiated and there is no discernment between the four streets and corners.

One Panel member suggested the project to complete meaningful Indigenous engagement and ensure the design is connected to water. The Panel member asked the team to consider how Broadview Ave. can be reinforced, work with the City and other proponents to futureproof the projects and develop a new industrial building type.

Another Panel member recommended the team to think creatively on the landscape and public realm, develop strategies that consider the ecological functions of the ground plane.

3.5 Consensus Comments

General

- Ensure the project supports and contributes to the McCleary District Precinct Plan. City of Toronto is encouraged not to approve the development before the completion of the Precinct Plan.
- Strong encouragement for all four of the adjacent private development teams in the precinct to work together to ensure the first building designs will positively contribute to the precinct long-term.
- Develop a more meaningful and robust Indigenous engagement process.

Building

- Villiers Street has the potential to be a more pedestrian street, loading and services should be relocated away from Villiers Street.
- Work with the Precinct Plan to develop a unique response to the Broadview Street frontage, i.e. a land swap to push the building right up to the Broadview and introduce a pedestrian connection through the main site.
- Encouraged to innovate and develop a new building typology that more seamlessly integrates the PIC/ light industrial uses with the rest of the building while celebrating the industrial heritage of this area.
- Ensure long-term success for the building by futureproofing the building with a flexible design that can accommodate both PIC and non-PIC uses.

Public Realm

- Corner parkettes don't seem to be a meaningful public realm strategy, develop a stronger public realm vision that will help stitch the project with the rest of the site.
- The proposed public realm feels undifferentiated between the four sides, consider a public realm parti and concept that is well integrated with the towers and podium.

2.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support

No vote was taken for a Stage 1: Issues Identification review.

Mr. Krarup thanked the Panel for the great comments, noted it is early stage for the project and the comments are heard.

4.0 120 Bouchette

Project ID #: 1146
Project Type: Building
Review Stage: Issues Identification
Review Round: One
Location: McCleary District
Proponent: Development Collective
Architect/ Designer: Code Studio
Turner Fletcher
MBTW Group



Presenter(s): Rene Biberstein, Associate Principal, Code Studio
Russell Fleischer, Principal, Turner Fleischer
Gus Maurano, Senior Associate, MBTW Group
Delegation: Graig Uens, Batory Urban Planning & Project Management
Shwaan Hutton, Development Collective
Kim Beckman, Development Collective
Adrian Phillips, City of Toronto
Julie Bogdanowicz, City of Toronto
Nasim Adab, City of Toronto
Steve Barber, City of Toronto
Colin Wolfe, City of Toronto
Josh Hilburt, Waterfront Toronto

4.1 Introduction to the Issues

Steven Barber, Senior Community Planner with City of Toronto, introduced 120 Bouchette Street by noting the OPA application background, program split, and existing site context. Mr. Barber noted the project is here for Stage 1: Issues Identification review, and Julie Bogdanowicz, Senior Urban Designer with City of Toronto, noted the areas for Panel consideration: the less than 40m tower separation, negligible setbacks from podium to towers, shadowing on multi-use trail, site access off Villiers Street, and the proposed privatization of Villiers Street.

4.2 Project Presentation

Rene Biberstein, Associate Principal with Code Studio, introduced the design by noting the team, site dimensions, block context, the proposed Bouchette realignment, height transition from Easter Harbour towards the water, and tower separation distances. Mr. Fleischer, Principal with Turner Fleischer, provided an overview of the architectural design, project statistics, noted the sections, building materiality, and programs in the podium. Gus Maurano, Senior Associate with MBTW Group, noted the landscape concept plan, circulation, pavement finishes, interim and ultimate landscape animation strategies, and sustainability objectives.

4.3 Panel Questions

One Panel member asked why the team has challenged the 40m tower separation distance. Mr. Biberstein responded that 25m is an appropriate City standard and a greater distance would limit development potential for both private and public sites, especially with the proximity to transit. The floor plate is kept at 750m as a result. Nasim Adab, Urban Design Manager with City of Toronto, noted that 40m is included in the Port Lands Planning Framework which considers the quality of light and character of the neighborhood, and the Port Lands is not downtown core so a greater distance should be respected. The Panel member asked if there are views from the park. Mr. Fleischer noted the tower facing east drops in height with live-work units and amenities facing the park.

Another Panel member asked how long the interim condition would last and if the team has studied other configurations with two towers that can achieve the same density. Mr. Maurano noted as long as it is required the interim public realm will remain. Graig Uens, Director of Planning with Batory Urban Planning & Project Management, commented that the team is open to trying different things but 25m is the belief now.

One Panel member asked if other ways of accessing the site has been explored. Mr. Uens noted internalizing loading and servicing comes with other constraints and the team is open to ways of reducing curb cuts.

Another Panel member asked for clarification on the midblock connection and if it is an oxymoron to call circulation space landscape. Mr. Maurano noted the public realm allows for two-way movements.

One Panel member asked if Villiers Street extension is statutory. Mr. Biberstein responded that Villiers Street extension is not a statutory street in the Secondary Plan. Another Panel member asked for the approach for tree planting and urban forestry as there seems to be some trees in the midblock connection but not elsewhere. Mr. Maurano noted the team is responding to City guidelines on trees.

4.4 Panel Comments

One Panel member recommended the City does not approve any of the applications until the Precinct Plan work is complete as all the designs are premature. The Panel member felt that three towers don't fit for the site because the design requires the

privatization of Villiers Street to work, which is not supported. Taking Villiers Street private is misconstruing the objectives of the Precinct Plan and the Panel member does not support the 25m tower separation – these moves do not support the creation of a unique neighbourhood. The Panel member noted the proposed midblock connection is not a pedestrian connection and does not connect to McCleary Park, it is a POPS on the west with a service entrance.

Another Panel member commended the use of a temporary landscape and encouraged the team to consider the long-term use of the site and respond to the massive asset that is McCleary Park, consider amplifying the connection to the park. Instead of building new temporary, consider reuse, think about it as succeeding and changing, and engaging with the park – use the landscape and public realm to tie the project with McCleary Park.

One Panel member noted there are many unique ecological conditions on the site, a temporary landscape that adds to it as a performative blue-green landscape is important. The Panel member asked the team to provide iterations of different configurations, demonstrate why this proposed massing is most preferred and create the right quality of space.

Another Panel member noted that the project has a responsibility of knitting park with the new major Broadview Ave., felt unconvinced by the attitude of the building facing the park and that live-work units seem to privatize the street. The Panel member is concerned about the lightless quality of the units given the low tower separation distance and asked the team to consider a finer grain massing that will create a community with higher livability.

One Panel member felt it is possible to have three towers on the site, but it is important to develop the right configuration. Currently, Building A takes away any light into the podium, the podium is too continuous creating a dark void, consider shifting the massing and opening up the podium to allow a sky view towards the park. The midblock connection is far too vehicular focused, it does not achieve the primary objective of a pedestrian connection. The Panel member recommended to reduce the floor plate to a minimum and open up the podium massing. Lastly, the Panel member noted the other proposals have two towers with 20 more floors and felt that 1600 units here is way too high.

Another Panel member recommended energy modelling be completed to verify the potential advantages of simultaneous heating and cooling. Noting the carbon intensity cap for TGS Tier 1, the Panel member suggested the team develop a more comprehensive plan to addressing operational energy demand.

One Panel member noted the key challenge is vehicular circulation and suggested that Villiers Street not be privatized for vehicular circulation and instead keep it as pedestrian only. The Panel member recommended a full study on the project's integration with various adjacent public realm plans and frontages. The Panel member felt that embedding the river landscape is very important and somehow it needs to be reflected.

Another Panel member is concerned with the lack of discussion on Indigenous engagement. The Panel member commented that the midblock connection going east-west needs to be robust because it is a key component, and whatever happens with Villiers Street needs to be conceptualized with the greater Precinct Plan – more importantly all four private developments should be presented in their respective context and see how all four sites and their densities add up. The Panel member felt the proposed density should warrant a higher commitment for affordable housing and is not supportive by the team’s argument. This site is most unique of the four because it is an important threshold, however the project felt like an island, very inward looking with heavy self-shadowing – there is a big responsibility here to develop a better design.

One Panel member felt a principled landscape strategy is missing from the design and encouraged the team to define a stronger emphasis on green infrastructure.

4.5 Consensus Comments

General

- Ensure the project supports and contributes to the McCleary District Precinct Plan. City of Toronto is encouraged not to approve the development before the completion of the Precinct Plan.
- The site is uniquely located fronting on four very different streets, continue to explore how the building and the ground floor can relate to the four frontages.
- Strong encouragement for all four of the adjacent private development teams in the precinct to work together to ensure the first building designs will positively contribute to the precinct long-term.
- Develop a more meaningful and robust Indigenous engagement process.

Building

- The proposed massing of three towers is not supported because of the reduced tower separation distances.
- The towers and undifferentiated podium create a very dark interior and public realm. The team is encouraged to explore other massing strategies that can allow more light and views through the podium and courtyard.
- Provide iterations and demonstrate why the revised massing is preferred at the next review.

Public Realm

- Encouraged the team to find ways to relocate the vehicular access and loading needs out of the midblock connection to create a true midblock connection that promotes pedestrian movement.
- Villiers Street is an important connection from the Don to McCleary Park, the team is strongly encouraged to move the private vehicular movement outside of the street, and promote a more pedestrian public realm.
- Consider a landscape strategy that responds to McCleary Park, i.e. pioneering species specific to the Port Lands.

2.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support

No vote was taken for a Stage 1: Issues Identification review.

Shwaan Hutton, Development Director with Development Collective, thanked the Panel and noted that the team is thinking about which frontage can be “sacrificed” for services and that there are examples on the waterfront with service access via Lake Shore Boulevard.

CLOSING

There being no further business, the Chair then adjourned the public session of the meeting.

These Meeting Minutes are formally adopted and approved by Panel on November 27th, 2024.

These Meeting Minutes have been signed by Paul Bedford, Waterfront Design Review Panel Chair, Emilia Floro, City of Toronto Urban Design Director, and Chris Glaisek, Waterfront Toronto Chief Planning and Design Officer. Waterfront Toronto has on record a copy of this document with their DocuSign signatures.