



**WATERFRONT**Toronto

## **Waterfront Design Review Panel Minutes of Meeting #91 Wednesday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

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### **Present:**

Bruce Kuwabara, Chair  
Paul Bedford, Vice Chair  
George Baird  
Peter Busby  
Claude Cormier  
Pat Hanson  
Chris Reed  
Brigitte Shim  
Betsy Williamson  
Jane Wolff

### **Designees and Guests:**

Christopher Glaisek  
Harold Madi

### **Regrets:**

Don Schmitt

### **Recording Secretary:**

Rei Tasaka  
Tristan Simpson

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### **WELCOME**

The Chair opened the meeting by introducing a new Panel member, Chris Reed, Principal at Stoss Landscape Urbanism. The Chair then provided an overview of the agenda before moving to the General Business portion of the meeting.

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### **GENERAL BUSINESS**

Will Fleissig, Waterfront Toronto's CEO, mentioned to the Panel that he, Bruce Kuwabara, Paul Bedford, and Chris Glaisek met to discuss the evolution of the waterfront as a demonstration of new building technologies, affordable housing and sustainability. Mr. Fleissig reinforced the major opportunity we have to showcase new building technologies, especially on parcels of land that are owned by Waterfront Toronto. Mr. Fleissig explained to the Panel the potential for them to be involved in the planning process from the outset and throughout.

Mr. Glaisek congratulated Pat Hanson for receiving an honorable mention in the 4<sup>th</sup> arcVision Prize for women in architecture. Mr. Glaisek mentioned what a great addition Chris Reed will be to the Panel. He also noted that a call for submissions will be sent out for two available positions on the Panel including a Planner and a Sustainability Expert. Mr. Kuwabara noted that there are a lot of young people with critical talent who would like to be involved in the Panel.

The Chair then asked if there were any conflicts of interest to declare. No conflicts of interest were identified.

The Chair then invited Mr. Glaisek, Vice President of Planning and Design with Waterfront Toronto, to provide a report on project progress.

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## REPORT FROM THE V.P. OF PLANNING AND DESIGN

Mr. Glaisek provided an update on project progress:

On March 31, 2016, City Council approved staff and PWIC's recommendation for Hybrid Alternative Design Three, as the Preferred Design for the Gardiner East Environmental Assessment on March 31, 2016. The project team is now completing the Environmental Study Report which will be filed for public comment in late April 2016. Mr. Bedford added that the vote at Council was 36 to 5 in favour of Hybrid 3.

The city is preparing a consolidated paving specification plan for "special streets and sidewalks city-wide. The purpose of this plan is to establish a palette of approved pavers within the City's list of approved pavers for public streets, including the waterfront. Waterfront Toronto is providing its specifications and hoping to see the pavers we have used get added to the list. This plan will also guide private developers who are required to provide public realm improvements as part of their development application.

The Acting Chair then moved to the project reviews portion of the meeting.

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## PROJECT REVIEWS

### **I.0 R5 Development Block - Bayside**

*ID#: 1072*

*Project Type: Building*

*Location: Bayside*

*Proponent: Hines and Tridel*

*Architect/Designer: 3XN Architects*

*Review Stage: Design Concept*

*Review Round: One*

*Presenter(s): Audun Opdal, 3XN, Kim Neilson, 3XN*

*Delegation: Bruno Giancola, Tridel; Michael Gross, Hines; Salvatore Cavarretta, Tridel; Michael Pirochhi, Tridel*

### **I.1 Introduction to the Issues**

Mr. Glaisek introduced the project by noting that this is the R5 Development Block's first time at Design Review Panel, as part of the Bayside development. Three other projects of the Bayside development, including Aqualina (R1/R2), Aquavista (R3/R4) and Aitken Place Park have all previously been reviewed by the Panel. Mr. Glaisek then proceeded to explain a number of items for the Panel to consider, including:

- Whether the location and daylight exposure of the child care space is appropriate
- If exceeding zoning envelope and height of adjacent building (Aquavista) by 4 meters is acceptable
- If the townhouse units appropriate for possible live-work units to animate east side of Aitken Place Park
- Viability of the planted private terraces
- Preliminary material palette suggestions

### **I.2 Project Presentation**

Mr. Nielson began by noting that the concept of the building design comes from bringing a “cottage” environment to the waterfront. Mr. Nielson explained that the design team visited the Toronto Islands to understand the impact this building would have on the Toronto skyline. The intention of the building is to be a great addition the waterfront and surrounding areas.

Mr. Opdal explained the design of the building, noting that the whole master plan is based on stepping down to the water. The west portion steps up every one storey, where the south portion steps up every two storeys. The stepping down of the building provides ample sun exposure on Aitken Place Park. Mr. Opdal explained that level 13 and down are the residential units with terraces and level 7 is the shared indoor and outdoor amenity space. Retail will be located on the ground floor, wrapping around the corner to animate the space. The residential facades are all slightly angled towards the water with generous outdoor terraces. The daycare is located on the mezzanine level, which has a covered outdoor play area. The overall ambition of the project is to create the scale of a family home, on the ground floor while up in the building.

### **1.3 Panel Questions**

One of the Panel members enquired about the unit mix for the proposed development. Mr. Opdal of 3XN replied that there are 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units. The 3-bedroom units are approximately 2,000 sq.ft therefore quite large. The Panel member also asked regarding terrace use and management. Mr. Giancola of Tridel noted that the terraces would be managed both by owners and the condominium, including watering the plants and controlling what can be planted.

Another Panel member commended the designs of the 3XN as always inventive, and noted that, with GXN (an internal division of 3XN with applied architectural research in green materials and building technologies) it can bring a rigorous approach to green design. The Panel member noted that the project looks similar to the Bjarke Ingels Group’s (BIG) design on King Street West and given that both are residential projects from Danish firms, wondered what the designers’ attitude towards the stepped section was. 3XN referenced Habitat’ 67 by Moshe Safdie as the device that was used for the concept. The desire is to create a similar feeling to the stacked homes with intimacy and a “homey” feeling.

One of the Panel members asked for clarification on servicing. Mr. Opdal explained that there is an entrance to the parking on the north-east corner and a loading bay along Edge Water Drive. The Panel member also asked whether the daycare is open on the top level. Mr. Opdal noted that it is a covered outdoor play space with north and east sides open to air, but built floors above it.

Another Panel member asked about the physical relationships along the street and sidewalks. Mr. Opdal noted that on the west side, there is an overhang along the park. There are also two entrances at each corner, which are double height, and the retail area which is 5 metres. The façade will not only be glass but a combination of materials. Kanadario Lane will be a pedestrian-friendly area and with retail along the water’s edge. It will activate the area during the day time, and the residents will bring activity during the night time. The Panel member also asked what the soil depths and widths are for the terrace planting. Mr. Opdal explained that at the moment they cannot plant trees however, the planters will allow plants to reach up to 1.5m height. The Panel member asked how much insulation is provided for the planters, noting that coldness can penetrate the roots because the plant boxes are elevated.

One of the Panel members asked whether there were alternative schemes to distribute height. The member also asked to clarify the ground floor public realm of the townhouse and how there will be differentiation of public versus private. The design team noted that they explored many

iterations for massing and height distribution. They have opened up the southwest corner and also created a system of the “stepping” with the west side stepping every floor and the east portion stepping every two floors that work together to reach a “peak”, where the mechanical unit is forced out of the corner, stepping at the very top.

Another Panel member asked if there is any vehicular traffic on Kanadario Lane and whether Edge Water Drive connects to Merchants’ Wharf? The proponent noted that Kanadario Lane will have vehicular traffic and Edge Water Drive connects to Merchants’ Wharf. The Panel member then asked what the depth of the units are. Mr. Opdal noted that the units are 10 metres deep.

#### **1.4 Panel Comments**

The Chair asked the Panel for their comments.

One Panel member felt that this is a promising scheme and is sufficiently different from Bjarke Ingels Group’s (BIG) design on King Street West in that it does not sit on a separate base and is a “full” building. The Panel member questioned the viability of the location of the daycare outdoor space. They also noted that the feasibility of planting is a critical issue, and mentioned a development on Avenue Road and its challenges particularly stemming from residents’ rights to choose and maintain their own planting. A system controlled by the condo corporation would solve this problem.

Another Panel member raised concern about the south-east corner as it steps up in height. The principle for waterfront development was to have the lowest built form at the water’s edge, with heights stepping up away from the water. Another Panel member noted that this scheme has created a better condition than what Aquavista has created for the blocks to the north of it.

Another Panel member praised the natural, integrated way of thinking about being by the lake with terraces. They wondered if there could be a passageway from front to back. The Panel member noted that the “planting attitude” may conflict with the natural desire to look out to the water. The definition of the “edge” then becomes essential.

Another Panel member shared the concern regarding maintenance of the proposed terraces. They felt that the height looks out of scale. The Panel member also noted that they did not see an analysis of what part of the massing exceeds and doesn’t exceed the current zoning. They felt worried about the proposed townhouse condition and noted that there needs to be privacy for those units provided by stoops. They shared concerns over the daycare location and noted that the open-air portion is right above the garage entrances. The Panel member felt that the sustainability and public amenity principles for “Waterfront 2.0” need to be explained.

Another Panel member felt that the proposal is outstanding. There are few projects in Toronto that address outdoor space and indoor space using architecture to frame and provide privacy for the units. The Panel member noted that there are issues of transitioning from indoor to outdoor but is confident that the design team can resolve it. The Panel member encouraged the design team to be cognisant of the cultural experience in North America of what is private versus public.

Another Panel member was excited about the potential of the project. They felt that the aspect of outdoor living, and how the landscape shapes it, is compelling. They appreciated the legibility of the units through aggregation and also appreciated what it does for R6’s views to the lake. The Panel member felt that the technicality of the landscape needs to be addressed further. They suggested that in addition to a diagram that shows as-of-right and proposed massing, the detail of the shadows must be carefully studied as it may impact the proposed design.

Another Panel member commended the team on the dynamic quality of the proposal. The imagery of the aggregated units as larger topography is a good concept. The Panel member noted that there could be exploration of the balance in reading the subtlety of the horizontal and vertical elements, whether it is a topographic vision or more about the alignment. The Panel member noted that they were in conversation with Hines Italia on the Bosco's Verticale and the landscape maintenance was key to the execution of the project. They stressed that a landscape architect should be part of the team as a design partner, which is fundamental to the long-term success. The team should figure out how it would work in winter conditions through the use of glass partitions to block wind, or other measures. The Panel member felt that the daycare configuration was not ideal. They felt that there is a missed opportunity in its visual connection at-grade and wondered if the loading area could be reduced to allow this.

Another Panel member suggested that increasing the number of three-bedroom units, which are perfect for families. The Panel member noted that while the "village" idea where the open space in front of units in the mountains are very open, the approach to living in Toronto is more "private".

Another Panel member appreciated the thoughtfulness of the process of the scheme. They noted that Toronto's condo boom has left families out. The proposed scheme provides a generous and believable units with gardens, which is great, and that should be leveraged to create family housing. The Panel member agreed the issue of planting and management will be a challenge. They felt that the housing facing the park is a nice interface, however it is important to develop the street sections.

The Chair noted that this has been one of the most rigorous conversations on a residential development in the waterfront. There is a huge amount of opportunity to learn from Copenhagen and it is exciting. They felt that the overall massing is a good move because it has given afternoon light into R6 block and the building mass on the east side will determine the relationship to morning light. The Chair felt that the scheme brings forward many fundamental questions such as the understanding of the "home", affordability for families to live in larger spaces, and sustainable standards in Toronto for large-scale development going forward. He noted that Tridel is a leader of bringing high standards in both design excellence and sustainable design in the waterfront.

### **1.5 Summary of the Panel's Key Issues**

The Chair then summarized the comments by the Panel noting that there is a lot of fascination and interest in the project:

- Daycare space has issues regarding location, outdoor space, access at grade, visibility, etc., and should be clarified and resolved;
- Terraced landscaping and planting should be further developed to show a convincing way forward for design, management and maintenance; and
- Consider the value being absorbed by mainly on the water's side - explore conditions along each interface including Aitken Place Park and Kanadario Lane, Edge Water's Drive and Waterfront Promenade.

### **1.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support**

The Chair then asked for a vote of Support, Conditional Support or Non-support for the project. The Panel voted Conditional Support of the project.

## **CLOSING**

There being no further business, the Vice Chair then adjourned the meeting.