



WATERFRONTToronto

**Waterfront Design Review Panel
Minutes of Meeting #82
Wednesday, June 10th, 2015**

Present:

Bruce Kuwabara, Chair
Betsy Williamson, Acting Chair
Brigitte Shim
Jane Wolff
Gerry Faubert
Claude Cormier

Regrets:

Paul Bedford
Pat Hanson
Don Schmitt
Christopher Glaisek
Harold Madi

Designees and Guests:

James Parakh

Recording Secretaries:

Margaret Goodfellow
Alicia Persaud

WELCOME

Bruce Kuwabara opened the meeting noting that Christopher Glaisek, Waterfront Toronto's Vice President for Planning and Design, and Paul Bedford were unable to attend the meeting as they were at City Hall for the Council debate of the Gardiner Expressway. The Chair then provided an overview of the agenda before moving to the General Business portion of the meeting.

GENERAL BUSINESS

The Chair stated that this was Gerry Faubert's last meeting with the Waterfront Design Review Panel, noting that he was taking on a challenging new role as Regional Director of Integral in Los Angeles. The Chair and Panel then thanked Mr. Faubert for all of his work in advocating for sustainability and design excellence on waterfront projects.

The Chair then noted that there were three months of minutes to adopt from March, April and May 2015. The minutes were adopted with one typo being pointed out in the May minutes.

The Chair then asked if there were any Conflicts of Interest to declare. The Chair noted that he was in conflict for the first presentation as he was doing work elsewhere for the same developer client. Mr. Cormier stated that he was also doing work for the same developer client and recused himself from the participating in the review as well. No other conflicts were declared.

The Chair concluded by conveying his sadness at the tragic passing of the Roger du Toit, architect, landscape architect and founding partner of DTAH. The Chair noted that a memorial was currently being planned by DTAH for his professional colleagues.

The Chair then invited Margaret Goodfellow, Planning and Design Project Manager with Waterfront Toronto, to provide the report on project progress on behalf of Mr. Glaisek.

REPORT FROM THE V.P. OF PLANNING AND DESIGN

Ms. Goodfellow provided a summary of project progress.

Queens Quay Revitalization

- Showing “before (2008) and after (2015)” photographs of the site at Simcoe Slip illuminates the quantity and quality of public space gained along the waterfront.
- June 19th will be the official opening of Queens Quay in conjunction with the Redpath Waterfront Festival.

Public Art, West Don Lands

- Installation is progressing well on the Public Artworks at;
 - Sumach and Eastern (*Site Specific* by Scott Eunson and Marianne Lovink),
 - Front Street Block 15 (*Untitled (Toronto Lamp Posts)* by Tadashi Kawamata),
 - Front Street Block 16 (*Water Guardians* by Jennifer Marman and Daniel Borins)
- Fabrication is progressing well on Block 4, the *Garden of Future Follies* by Hadley + Maxwell, which should be completed by Spring 2016

The Chair then moved to the project reviews portion of the meeting, inviting Betsy Williamson to act as Chair for the first item.

PROJECT REVIEWS

1.0 Private Development Proposal: Fed Ex Courier Facility, 475 & 495 Commissioners Street

ID#: 1061

Project Type: Buildings/Structures

Location: Commissioners between Bouchette and Logan Avenue

Proponent: Tribal-Castlepoint- Kerbel Inc.).

Architect/Designer: Glenn Piotrowski Architect

Review Stage: Design Development (SPA Application)

Review Round: Two

Presenter(s): Elsa Fancello, Castlepoint Numa; Glenn Piotrowski, Glenn Piotrowski Architect; Kay Laidlaw, Ferris and Associates

Delegation: Doug Tam, FedEx Canada; Paul Ferris, Ferris and Associates; Rob Cameron, Tribal Partners (Tribal-Castlepoint- Kerbel Inc.); Adam Kerbel, Kerbel Group (Tribal-Castlepoint- Kerbel Inc.); Alfredo Romano, Castlepoint Numa (Tribal-Castlepoint- Kerbel Inc.).

1.1 Introduction to the Issues

Margaret Goodfellow, Planning and Design Project Manager with Waterfront Toronto, introduced the project, reminding the Panel that this is a private development that Toronto City Planning has referred to the Waterfront Design Review Panel. Ms. Goodfellow stated that the last presentation to the Design Review Panel was May 13th, 2015 where the project received a vote of Conditional Support. The proponents have worked very hard over the past month to address the Panel's comments including; Reducing parking and increasing landscaping, Increasing the size of the graphic FedEx signage, Increasing the glazing of the garage doors, Introduction of a vegetated green roof, Revisiting the fence design and ensuring that trees will not have to be ripped up for the future alignment of Commissioners.

1.2 Project Presentation

Elsa Fancello, Development Manager with Castlepoint Numa, introduced the project team. Glenn Piotrowski, Senior Principal with Glenn Piotrowski Architect, then presented the project outlining the responses to Panel comments and updates to the site plan and elevations. Kay Laidlaw, Landscape Architect with Ferris and Associates presented the landscape plan including the additional landscaping, addition of a green roof element, removal of one row of trees along Commissioners Street and increased bicycle parking.

1.3 Panel Questions

The Acting Chair then asked the Panel if there were any questions of clarification.

One Panel member asked if the team had looked at the possibility of putting street at the east end of the site. Ms. Fancello stated that they are protecting for the opportunity to extend Logan street south, noting that there is currently a Transportation Servicing Environmental Assessment (EA) underway and are working with City staff as this is developed and as the future Commissioners Street is confirmed. Mr. Piotrowski added that they have left more space at the East end of the site to allow for the future extension of Logan. Mr. Piotrowski stated that for security reasons, FedEx does not want to give outside access to the rest of their site, so the Commissioners entry will always be necessary for outside deliveries.

Another Panel member asked if the team had looked at using permeable paving in the driveway. Mr. Piotrowski stated that they had investigated the possibility, but ultimately ruled it out because of the high water table and frost heave. Mr. Piotrowski added that they are using a combination of concrete, light and heavy duty asphalt across the site.

Another Panel member asked where the shift to using a chain link fence came from. Ms. Fancello answered that they are in the early days of looking at the fencing, noting that it has only been four weeks since they were in front of the Panel last. Alfredo Romano, President of Castlepoint Numa, added that they are meeting with design firms and artists and are working to develop the narrative.

One Panel member asked what the sustainability strategies were for this site. Ms. Fancello stated that though they are not seeking LEED Certification, they are meeting the City of Toronto Tier 1 Green Standard, planting trees, increasing landscaping and bicycle parking, accommodating for future charging stations and have added a vegetated green roof.

Another Panel member asked if FedEx was a tenant or owner. Mr. Romano stated that FedEx will be a tenant.

Another Panel member asked if there had been any consideration of using solar panels, feeling that this building typology is built for solar. Mr. Romano replied that as developers, they look for every opportunity for solar as a matter of practice. Mr. Romano added that for this site, they are looking at it subject to the operational needs of FedEx, and are designing the structure to accommodate this at a later date if it proves feasible.

Another Panel member asked if the team had considered reorienting the office component to hug the corner of the site. Mr. Piotrowski answered that they explored this as part of their initial studies, noting that there are numerous inter-relationships and dependencies between the office and warehouse programs. Mr. Piotrowski added that ultimately, they moved the public entrance as close to Commissioners Street as possible while still maintaining the inter-relationships and dependencies.

1.4 Panel Comments

The Acting Chair then asked the Panel for their comments.

Several Panel members stated their appreciation for the work that had been done to accommodate the Panel's comments. One Panel member stated that they found it reassuring to understand that conversations are continuing with the City about the future of the area.

Another Panel member stated that the fence is the biggest open question for the site now.

Another Panel member felt that that this project should contribute as positively to the area as the Pinewood Studios do, noting that they project an urbanity for the future of this area.

One Panel member urged the developers to work with artists as opposed to fence makers to develop ideas for this fence.

Another Panel member felt that it was very important for Logan Avenue to extend South of Commissioners Street.

Another Panel member stated that at the last meeting, they talked about every piece contributing and making the street better, feeling that they had anticipated more investigation and interrogation into the "edge condition" and understanding the continuity of Commissioners Street.

Another Panel member felt that shrubs and grass were really suburban, feeling that you don't have to make it "pretty" and the response could be more urban and gritty. The Panel member felt that the budget for shrubs and grass should be put into the fence instead. Another Panel member agreed, feeling that the approach belongs closer to the airport than downtown. One Panel member noted that on a suburban site, the building can float on that site a bit more, noting that on an urban site, you are more constrained and really have to focus on making the corner. Another Panel member felt that functional planning was driving the Site Plan.

Another Panel member felt that the green roof budget should be put into solar panels. Another Panel member agreed, feeling that 20 years from now the waterfront will be solar. The Panel member stated that there are third party operators that will front-end the capital costs.

One Panel member felt that the “box-like” reading of the building should be pushed, but discouraged the shifting of the box at the East End. The Panel member felt that the idea of looking like a “FedEx” box was good.

Another Panel member urged the team to push sustainability, adding that 35 years is a long time and the windows won’t even last that long.

Another Panel member stated that the team should look at the public artwork at Sumach and Eastern which touches on elements of the site’s historic and industrial past.

1.5 Summary of the Panel’s Key Issues

The Acting Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- Explore the potential for use of Solar Panels
- Explore the design of the fence with an artist, pushing the urban quality

1.6 Proponents Response

Ms. Fancello, Mr. Piotrowski and Mr. Romano thanked the Panel for their comments.

1.7 Vote of Support/Non-Support

The Acting Chair then asked for a vote of support, conditional support or non-support for the project.

The Panel voted in Conditional Support of the project.

2.0 Aitken Place Park

ID#: 1060

Project Type: Park/Public Realm

Location: East of Aquavista between Edgewater Drive and Merchants Wharf

Proponent: Waterfront Toronto

Architect/Designer: Tom Balsley

Review Stage: Two

Review Round: Schematic Design

Presenter(s): Scott Torrance; Scott Torrance Landscape Architect, Tom Balsley; Thomas Balsley Associates

Delegation: Svetlana Lavrentieva, Scott Torrance Landscape Architect

2.1 Introduction to the Issues

Andrew Tenyenhuis, Planning and Design Project Manager with Waterfront Toronto, introduced the project and design team. Mr. Tenyenhuis stated that the project was last presented in April 2015, receiving a vote of Support for the conceptual or pre-schematic design of the park. The Panel comments included requests to maximize the comfort level in the cooler seasons, study the use or quantity of engineered concrete retaining walls, and drawing out what the “big idea” is of the park.

2.2 Project Presentation

Scott Torrance, Principal with Scott Torrance Landscape Architects, introduced the team noting that since the last presentation to the Design Review Panel, the project team had met with the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) and received lots of feedback via online public consultation. Tom Balsley, Principal with Thomas Balsley Associates then presented the main

features of the park including the knoll, the shelter, and the dog run, as well as the seating typology, the seasonal experiences and materiality.

2.3 Panel Questions

The Chair then asked the Panel if there were any questions of clarification.

One Panel member asked whether or not the heritage component was a requirement. Mr. Balsley answered that they heard a desire for heritage interpretation through public and Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) feedback.

Another Panel member asked where the cistern was. Mr. Balsley stated that it was located in the mound.

Another Panel member asked what the plan was for public art. Mr. Tenyenhuis answered that Public Art will be incorporated into the design, adding that those discussions has just begun.

One Panel member wondered why a concrete slab was preferred to pebbles in the dog run. Mr. Balsley stated that concrete surfaces are easier to keep clean and can be hosed down easier than pebbles.

Another Panel member asked what the primary purpose was for the pavilion. Mr. Balsley replied that the primary purpose is to provide a comfortable place to enjoy the view, adding that it is not intended to be a shelter from the rain. Mr. Torrance added that it was also intended to be viewed from the lake.

Another Panel member asked what the material was that runs underneath the pavilion. Mr. Balsley stated that it is currently stone, adding that it could also be a cor-ten gabion wall.

2.4 Panel Comments

The Chair then asked the Panel for their comments.

One Panel member felt that this is going to be a really nice neighbourhood place. Another Panel member felt that that that soul is starting to emerge from the project, feeling that there could be a little bit of room for editing. Another Panel member agreed, feeling that the big gestures make sense, adding that editing the form will help the reading of the exuberant gestures. The Panel member felt that the edges of the park should be regularized, with the eccentricities occurring inside. Another Panel member disagreed, feeling that the frame is the building, not the park proper and that the paving needs to be continuous. Another Panel member felt that the design was somewhere between a park and a square.

Another Panel member felt that attention should be paid to the underside of the Pavilion where it overhangs the dog run.

Another Panel member stated that they liked idea of heritage interpretation, but did not want people to misinterpret where the shoreline actually was. Another Panel member felt that the heritage interpretation should take a form in elevation instead of plan and could note that this is where the water was. Another Panel member felt that the map/artwork that is not quite the right one.

Another Panel member felt that there did not need to be a roof on the Pavilion.

One Panel member stated that they liked the contrast of the flowering trees next to the steel pavilion.

One Panel member wondered if the pavilion could be a conceptual art piece, feeling that the design team should engage an artist to work on this. The Panel member felt that this art piece should have a conceptual roll in the overall ensemble, including its reading from the streetscape and needs to have a gravitas.

Another Panel member felt that it is a misnomer to think that trees block retail, feeling that there should be more trees instead of less.

Another Panel member felt the tree spacing has to reference the trees of the streetscape all around. Another Panel member wondered if there could be trees planted on the south side of the Edgewater Drive that could provide some shade for the dog run.

One Panel member felt that cor-ten steel would not make a great walking surface, adding that as a blade fence it is great. Another Panel member agreed, feeling that cor-ten, is not something you want to touch. The Panel felt that there needed an element of sensuality to the piece, wondering if the outside could be one material and the inside another material. Another Panel member felt that there should be one “system” of core-ten that makes all the connections.

Another Panel member felt there needed to be a secondary access point to the knoll that could provide an alternate experience from having to walk all the way back down to the bottom. Another Panel member agreed, feeling that people could feel trapped without a secondary exit. The Panel member felt that there should also be an alternate exit from the dog run.

One Panel member stated that they would like to see the view from the top of the knoll out to the water.

One Panel member wondered if the “urban porch” could project beyond the front elevation of the adjacent buildings, feeling that this could make a stronger connection with the rest of the “system” including the water’s edge promenade.

2.5 Summary of the Panel’s Key Issues

The Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- Plant more trees along the edge of the park, not less. The tree spacing should also be consistent north and south of Edgewater Street.
- Provide alternate connections to the slope and dog run
- Study alternate means of interpreting the history of the site and ways of including public art
- Develop a lighting plan

2.6 Proponents Response

Mr. Torrance and Mr. Balsley thanked the Panel for their comments.

2.7 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 in Support of the project.

CLOSING

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