



WATERFRONTToronto

**Waterfront Design Review Panel
Minutes of Meeting #72
Wednesday, March 12th, 2014**

Present:

Paul Bedford, Acting Chair
Claude Cormier
Gerry Faubert
Pat Hanson
Don Schmitt

Regrets:

Bruce Kuwabara
George Baird
Brigitte Shim
Betsy Williamson
Jane Wolff

Designees and Guests:

Christopher Glaisek
Harold Madi

Recording Secretaries:

Margaret Goodfellow
Tracy Watt

WELCOME

Paul Bedford opened the meeting by welcoming everyone, noting that Bruce Kuwabara was unable to attend and asked him to chair the meeting. The Acting Chair then welcomed Harold Madi, Director of Urban Design at the City of Toronto, noting that Mr. Madi will be the City's new representative on the Panel.

GENERAL BUSINESS

The Acting Chair provided an overview of the agenda and asked if any Panel member would like to move to adopt the minutes from the January 2014 meeting. One Panel member moved to adopt the minutes, and the minutes were unanimously adopted.

The Acting Chair then asked the Panel if they had any conflicts of interest to declare. Pat Hanson declared that she had a conflict with the first project on the agenda, the Storm Water Quality Facility, and would not be participating in the review.

The Acting Chair stated that Executive Council voted (4-1) to defer the decision on the future of the Gardiner Expressway until February 2015, noting that this would allow for additional time to review the various options.

The Acting Chair then noted that on March 25th, 2014, the Executive Committee will be debating the future of the Island Airport. The Acting Chair stated that City Staff have put together a detailed report on the exact requirements for lighting, runway and road requirements needed for this expansion. The Acting Chair noted that the WT Board has submitted a letter outlining their questions and concerns on the proposal. The Acting Chair also noted that the general public seems to be supporting the expansion, but are not fully aware of all the implications.

The Acting Chair then invited Christopher Glaisek, Waterfront Toronto's Vice President of Planning and Design, to provide his report.

REPORT FROM THE V.P. OF PLANNING AND DESIGN

Mr. Glaisek provided a summary of project progress.

Pan/Para Pan Am Games Athletes' Village

- Work along Cherry Street is progressing well with the new streetcar tracks and lighting being installed.

River City Phase II

- The Phase II development block (the white building) is moving along quite quickly.

Queens Quay Revitalization

- Granite pavers are being installed along Queens Quay.
- The extremely cold weather has necessitated special ground warmers and warming tents for the installation of the granite pavers.
- The North end side walk should be completed by the summer / fall 2014.

Gardiner Expressway East & Lake Shore Boulevard Reconfiguration EA & Urban Design Study

- Mr. Glaisek presented the results of the EA.

One Panel member asked when people would be able to use and enjoy the new promenade along Queens Quay Boulevard. Mr. Glaisek stated the work on both the North and South sides of the street will be complete for the Pan/Para Pan American games in summer 2015.

The Acting Chair then moved to the first project review.

PROJECT REVIEWS

1.0 Storm Water Quality Facility

ID#: 1036

Project Type: Buildings/Structures

Proponent: Waterfront Toronto

Location: North of Lake Shore Boulevard, East of Cherry Street

Architect/Designer: gh3

Review Stage: Design Development

Review Round: Four

Presenter(s): Bernard Jin, gh3

Delegation: Pat Hanson, gh3; Peter Langon, RVAnderson

1.1 Introduction to the Issues

Brenda Webster, Planning and Design Project Manager with Waterfront Toronto, introduced the project noting that since the project was last reviewed in 2011, the program had expanded. Ms. Webster stated that in addition servicing the West Don Lands, the new facility will also be treating water from the East Bayfront and North Keating precincts.

1.2 Project Presentation

Bernard Jin, Senior Associate with gh3, presented the project, noting that there is inherent beauty and sculpture in the infrastructure. Mr. Jin reminded the Panel of the original design, and the modifications that have been made to adapt to the increased programmatic requirements. Mr. Jin presented the landscaping, materiality, details and how the infrastructure components work.

1.3 Panel Questions

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

One Panel member asked what the public access was to the site and building. Mr. Jin stated that the site is completely open to the public, noting that members of the public could come right up to the building, but not inside. Another panel member wondered if there were any security concerns. Mr. Jin stated that the design of the building is intended to exhibit the infrastructure to the public.

Another Panel member asked if there was an interpretive strategy, wondering how the public will know what this building is. Mr. Jin stated that the team had not yet considered this, but noted that it was something to think about. Another Panel member noted that there was no sign at the R.C. Harris Filtration plant, noting that the public still knows what it is. Another Panel member urged the design team to consider it, so that it is not an afterthought by the City.

Another Panel member asked if the same stone was being used for the plaza and the building. Mr. Jin replied that it would be the same stone, noting that the design team was currently looking at either granite or Owen Sound limestone. Another Panel member asked if there were any other landscaping elements. Ms. Hanson replied that it is a hardscape, but are considering hydro-seeding the surrounding site outside of the project site.

Another Panel member asked how trucks and maintenance vehicles were being accommodated on site. Mr. Jin replied showed the parking area to the Panel members noting that vehicles would enter from Lake Shore Boulevard. Mr. Jin added that the paving would be designed to accommodate the anticipated loads.

Another Panel member asked if this building had been costed yet. Mr. Jin replied that it had been, noting that it is currently within the budget.

1.4 Panel Comments

The Acting Chair then asked the Panel for their comments.

Several Panel members commended the team for the bold and beautiful project, and Waterfront Toronto for investing in public infrastructure. Several Panel members felt that it is important to tell the story of this infrastructure – where the water came from and where it will go. One Panel member felt that the signage could be really modest and discreet. Another Panel member felt that signage might not be necessary, citing the example of the R.C. Harris Filtration Plant.

One Panel member felt that the design needed to be dropped into a context map - both current and future. Another Panel member asked the team to consider what it would be like with or without the Gardiner Expressway.

Another Panel member urged the team to make the sure that stone worked from a budget perspective, noting that another alternative would not work. Another Panel member preferred granite to limestone, feeling that it was more robust when it comes to water.

Another Panel member felt that too many holes should not be punched into the building, adding that it should be kept as simple and clean as possible.

Another Panel member felt it was important to keep the metal doors.

1.5 Summary of the Panel’s Key Issues

The Acting Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- 1) Retain the purity and simplicity in all the details.
- 2) Don’t let the stone be value engineered out.
- 3) The Interpretive element will be important, figure out a way to tell the story.
- 4) The project will have to work for the current and future context.

1.6 Proponents Response

Mr. Jin thanked the Panel for their feedback.

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 unanimously in Support of the Detailed Design of the project.

2.0 Urban Park and Waterfront Trail at Ontario Place

ID#: 1052

Project Type: Park/Public Realm

Location: 955 Lake Shore Boulevard West

Proponent: Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS)

Architect/Designer: LANDinc and West 8 in joint venture

Review Stage: Schematic/Design Development

Review Round: Two

Presenter(s): Adriaan Geuze, West 8; Walter Kehm, LANDinc

Delegation:; Patrick Morello, LANDinc; Myles Mackenzie, LANDinc; Serge Chukseev, Infrastructure Ontario; Ainsley Davidson, Infrastructure Ontario; Sandeep Persaud, MTCS; Alena Grunwald, MTCS

2.1 Introduction to the Issues

Margaret Goodfellow, Planning and Design Project Manager with Waterfront Toronto introduced the project. Ms. Goodfellow reminded the Panel that the project received a vote of support for the Conceptual design, noting that it is now being presented at the 50% Design Development phase. Ms. Goodfellow added that this fast-tracked project will be returning to the Panel at the 100% Design Development phase, and will be open for the Pan Para Pan American Games in July 2015.

Ms. Goodfellow stated that the Panel's key issues at the last presentation were concerns over the uncertainties surrounding the "programmed space", trail safety, and a desire to see connections strengthened to the water, the Martin Goodman Trail, and broader transit network.

2.2 Project Presentation

Adriaan Geuze, Principal of West 8, presented the project, reminding the Panel that at its essence, the Park and Trail explores the theme of where the land meets the water. Mr. Geuze then reminded the Panel of the elements of the Conceptual design, such as the upper and lower park and the Mobius loop, rocky beach, summit and romantic garden, noting that the plant species will be native. Mr. Geuze explained the detail to which they were currently studying the topography, lighting, paving and planting materials. Mr. Geuze then introduced Walter Kehm, Senior Partner with LANDinc, to present the work on First Nations commemoration that has become an important element of the park.

1.3 Panel Questions

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

One Panel member asked about how this park is intended to be used in all seasons. Mr. Geuze stated that all seasons are being embraced, noting that the park will be open and accessible at all times. Mr. Geuze added that programming will be a very important element to drawing people down here all year round.

Another Panel member asked if it was intended that the moccasin designs are etched into the walls of the ravine. Mr. Geuze answered that that was the intention, adding that the team is still working through the details of the design and fabrication.

Another Panel member requested clarification on how granite was being used throughout the project. Mr. Geuze stated that there are three types of rocks being used through the project including; 1) the shoreline protection (rip-rap) and rocky beach, 2) the granite for the scramble/bluffs, the ravine and the exposed edges of the programmed space and , 3) the granite paving on this esplanade.

Another Panel member asked what entity would be responsible for maintaining the park once completed. Mr. Geuze answered that it would be the Province of Ontario.

2.4 Panel Comments

The Acting Chair then asked the Panel for their comments.

Several Panel members praised the team for the incredible work produced to date in such a quick period of time. One Panel member stated that they were excited by the conceptual strength of the project. Another Panel member felt that the team had discovered the full potential of the site, adding that there are moments of intimate and open space. Another Panel member agreed,

noting that as the second iteration of Ontario Place, the bar is being set high for how the rest of the site will evolve.

Several Panel members expressed concern that this project is being rushed to meet the deadline of being open for the Pan/Para Pan American games. One Panel member felt that there was a lot of complexity to delivering this park and the issues are being studied at a micro level, adding that they were confident that it could be delivered by this team.

Another Panel member felt that that a robust maintenance program should be included as part of the design and specifications for the park and trail.

One Panel member expressed discomfort with the expression of the moccasins, feeling that there was something about the super-graphic of the moccasin that required further consideration and study. Another Panel member disagreed, stating that they had no problem with the representation. Other Panel members were excited by the interpretive elements of this design.

Another Panel member felt that the programmed space was a very powerful form, adding that they were even comfortable even if it were to be shut down at certain times of the year.

Another Panel member urged the team to remain authentic to natural materials and remove concrete elements. Another Panel member agreed feeling that they were “super charging” the coastline with an enhanced landscape, urging the team to do that in an honest way.

One Panel member wondered if there could be an opportunity to inject special moments into the forest, potentially planting a flowering magnolia or rhododendron into the forest. One Panel member felt that the trees along the entrance allee did not need to be equally spaced. Another Panel member noted that the marker trees were a very interesting element.

Another Panel member urged the team to make sure there were informal connections between the upper and lower parks.

Another Panel member felt that the proximity to the Island Airport will make it an entirely different place if the airport expands.

2.5 Summary of the Panel’s Key Issues

The Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- 1) Retain the purity and simplicity in all the details.
- 2) Impressive work to date, keep up the great work.
- 3) Keep the material palette natural as possible and keep the essence of Ontario.
- 4) Story of the first nations is very important – needs to be communicated as delicately as possible.
- 5) Continue to study the ways in which the moccasin identifier is represented and constructed.
- 6) Continue to think about how you make sure this park is delivered right within the tight timeframe.
- 7) Keep in mind that the airport expansion could be approved that will have an impact on this park.

2.6 Proponents Response

Mr. Geuze and Mr. Kemp thanked the Panel for their feedback.

2.7 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 unanimously in Support of the project.

3.0 EBF Development R3/R4 Bayside

ID#: 1053

Project Type: Buildings/Structures

Location: EBF Development: R3/R4 Bayside

Proponent: Hines/Tridel

Architect/Designer: Architectonica

Review Stage: Conceptual Design

Review Round: One

Presenter(s): Bernardo Fort-Brescia, Architectonica

Delegation:

3.1 Introduction to the Issues

Christopher Glaisek, Waterfront Toronto's Vice President of Planning and Design, introduced the project. Mr. Glaisek noted that Hines/Tridel have selected Arquitectonica to design the second mixed use development in Bayside. Mr. Glaisek stated that blocks R3 and R4 will host a Pilot Project of 80 Units of Affordable Rental Housing – the first ever in Toronto.

3.2 Project Presentation

Bernardo Fort-Brescia, Principal of Arquitectonica, presented the project, noting its location adjacent to Aqualina and the future Aiken Place Park. Mr. Fort-Brescia stated that volume and sun light studies have been incorporated into the plan, adding that the movement of the façade is very important to ensuring that there is adequate sunlight for all the units. Mr. Fort-Brescia stated that along the waterfront will be small stores, with the loading bays located along Service Street. Mr. Fort-Brescia stated that they will be seeking 5m in extra height at the corners (above the 5m allowed for mechanical), noting that this was a result of the redistribution of the GFA of this square block to allow daylight penetration into all the units.

3.3 Panel Questions

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

One Panel member asked if this project will meet the same sustainability targets as Aqualina. Mr. Fort-Brescia stated that it will.

Another Panel member asked what the process would be for the increased height requested. Mr. Fort-Brescia stated that they would be seeking a Minor Variance as the zoning is already in place.

One Panel member asked what the origin of the bump out was. Mr. Fort-Brescia answered that he thought it originated in the zoning, adding that there could also have been climactic considerations as it provides sheltered outdoor space.

Another Panel member asked if the team had considered alternate loading, such as below grade loading to decrease the service doors on the street. Mr. Fort-Brescia replied that the team did investigate many options but the lengths of the ramps for the trucks were prohibitively long.

Another Panel member asked if there were trees along Service Street. Mr. Fort-Brescia stated that there were trees, acknowledging that they had not been drawn in plan.

3.4 Panel Comments

The Acting Chair then asked the Panel for their comments.

One Panel member urged the team to consider how the “bump out” piece of the building terminates the view corridor from Queens Quay.

Another Panel member felt that the design could be more expressive at the transition zones.

One Panel member felt that the overall form of the building was expressive and could be successful on the market. Another Panel member agreed that they supported the massing, adding that the project is not successful at the ground floor.

Another Panel member stated that they were comfortable with the height penetration as proposed, feeling that they understood the rationale.

Another Panel member felt that the team could turn the necessary circumstance of having loading doors into an asset, adding that they could be made of any number of materials that could elevate their stature. Other Panel members agreed, feeling that this expanse of space needed attention, and had to be better.

Another Panel member felt uncomfortable with the fact that the affordable rental occupants have to use a separate entrance from the market unit occupants.

Another Panel member felt that the retail units along the southern edge needed more consideration about how it would work in relationship to the grocery store mid-block and café on the west side. Other Panel members agreed that the retail needed more work.

Another Panel member urged the team to really consider the context and set the tone for the block. Another Panel member agreed, feeling that this building did not have a relationship to Aqualina at this point.

Another Panel member stated that work needed to be done on the plans, feeling that the inside was not yet as successful or as edited at the outside. Another Panel member felt that the East and West Facades were not as interesting as the south façade.

3.5 Summary of the Panel’s Key Issues

The Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- 1) The retail component needs more work, articulate it carefully

- 2) Study what will the “bump out” look like from Queens Quay, and how it responds to the park, the pathways, the waterfront and queens quay. Does it have a unique expression or identity?
- 3) Affordable housing/market units relationship. How do you not make them feel like “haves” and not “have-nots”?
- 4) Design a great solution to the loading docks on service street.
- 5) Consider the contextual relationship to the neighbouring buildings in tone and form.
- 6) Illustrate the West 8 water’s edge promenade in the renderings.

3.6 Proponents Response

Mr. Fort-Brescia thanked the Panel for their feedback.

3.7 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 Support of the Conceptual Design of the project.

CLOSING

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