



WATERFRONTToronto

**Waterfront Design Review Panel
Minutes of Meeting #59
Wednesday, June 13th, 2012**

Present:

Bruce Kuwabara, Chair
George Baird
Paul Bedford
Don Schmitt
Jane Wolf
Betsy Williamson

Regrets:

Brigitte Shim
Claude Cormier

Designees and Guests:

Christopher Glaisek
Robert Freedman

Recording Secretary:

JD Reeves

WELCOME

The Chair welcomed the Panel and provided an overview of the agenda, before moving to General Business.

GENERAL BUSINESS

The Chair asked if any Panel member would like to move to adopt the minutes from May 9th 2012. One Panel member moved to adopt the minutes with one addition to Item 1 (panel requested that the office tower be presented with same level of detail as the condo towers). The minutes were unanimously adopted with the amendment.

The Chair then asked the Panel if there were any conflicts of interest to declare. Claude Cormier phoned into the meeting and declared a conflict with the 10 York Street development because he's currently working for Tridel on other projects. Bridget Shim is on the board of Build Toronto so she also recused herself from the review of the 10 York Street development.

There being no other comments, the Chair then invited Mr. Glaisek to give his report.

REPORT FROM THE VP PLANNING AND DESIGN

Christopher Glaisek, Waterfront Toronto's Vice President for Planning and Design, provided an update on the following projects:

West Donlands:

- River City phase one construction is going well. Designs for phases two and three are ongoing.
- The TCHC block on River Street is under construction
- Pan Para/Pan American Games Athletes' Village detailed design of the buildings continues to progress with "Early Works"; (below-grade infrastructure) currently under construction.
- Don River Park "dry" side complete and construction on the "wet" side expected to start soon. The park will not open this year due to access issues during construction on adjacent areas but, this will allow the plantings to get established before the park opens

Union Station Second Platform

- Construction is ongoing.

The Chair then asked about the status Transit Implementation Study for East Bayfront. Mr. Glaisek explained that various options including surface LRT and dedicated bus routes are being studied to find an implementable interim solution for East Bayfront.

Another Panel member asked about the timing of the study. Mr. Glaisek stated that it was a little unclear and depended on the preferred options, its impacts on the EA, and its constructability.

With no more questions, the Chair then proceeded to the project review portion of the agenda.

PROJECT REVIEWS

1.0 Private Development Application: 10 York Street (120 Harbour)

ID#: 1048

Project Type: Buildings/Structures

Location: 10 York Street

Proponent: Tridel/Build Toronto

Architect/Designer: Wallman Architects

Review Stage: Conceptual Design

Review Round: Two

Presenter(s): Rudy Wallman, Wallman Architects

Delegation: Steve Daniels, Tridel

1.1 Introduction to the Issues

Chris Glaisek introduced the project on behalf of James Parakh, Urban Designer with the City of Toronto, who could not attend the meeting. Mr. Glaisek reminded the panel that this was the third presentation of concept design following two votes of non-support. A subcommittee meeting was held following the April WDRP presentation where a new model was presented and enthusiastically received.

Mr. Glaisek stated that the city is seeking the panel's advice on two items:

1. Which of the two York Street podium façade options is preferred?
2. Comments on the tower's revised design.

Mr. Glaisek then reviewed the summary recommendations from the April WDRP meeting:

- 1) Support for the changes to parking and setback from York Street
- 2) Create a sense of “arrival” to the waterfront within the public realm
- 3) Simplify the elevations
- 4) Provide views of all four elevations and perspectives from York Street at the next presentation
- 5) Podium
 - a. Consider the transparency at the corners
 - b. Study the durability of the metal panels at grade
- 6) Tower
 - a. The form and proportions still need to be studied
- 7) Top
 - a. Still needs development

The Chair then commented that both the architect and the developer found some of the panel’s previous comments confusing so a second subcommittee was convened to provide clarity. He explained that while they support the proposed height their concerns were primarily about the form; specifically, that the form of the podium and tower should reflect the unique triangular site. The Chair encouraged the group to continue the design dialog and believes it will produce a positive outcome.

1.2 Project Presentation

Rudy Wallman, Principal with Wallman Architects, presented the project’s evolution since the last presentation in April 2012. Mr. Wallman noted that the recent subcommittee meeting was helpful.

1.3 Panel Questions

The Chair then asked the Panel for questions of clarification only.

One Panel member asked the architect to clarify the materiality of the solid portions of the podium’s façade; if they can be perforated to be semi-opaque. The Panel member also asked the architect to explain the “box motif” on the tower. Mr. Wallman explained that the floor plates on the podium come out to engage the solid elements. The box motif grew out of an idea that the structural walls come outside to meet the windows.

Another Panel member asked about the “big idea” behind the building’s design? Mr. Wallman explained that it was previously a “northern lights” concept however, now it is more like a “flat iron” building in that the triangular shape reflects the site.

Another Panel member asked the architect to clarify the uses on the east side of the ground floor. Mr. Wallman answered that it is mainly lobby space connecting York Street and the back entry/driveway with retail a space anchoring the south-east corner.

Another Panel member asked what a pedestrian would view along the Lakeshore Boulevard (north faced). Mr. Wallman answered that most pedestrian traffic would be along Harbour Street and that Lakeshore Boulevard treatment is still being developed but he didn’t see the need for a generous pedestrian walkway on that frontage.

Another Panel member asked for the rationale behind the two York Street treatments of the podium (Options A/B). Mr. Wallman explained that Option B was an attempt to do something more dramatic where the building would cantilever over the sidewalk and offer some protection from the elements.

The Chair then asked how critical the office space is to the overall pro forma of the building. Mr. Wallman answered that he thinks there is some financial advantage to having it however; it is not a large part of the pro forma.

1.4 Panel Comments

The Chair then opened the meeting to Panel comments.

One Panel member stated that they appreciated the work done since the last presentation and voted strongly for the Option A version of the York Street podium. The Panel member felt there was enough drama in the flat iron concept so it is not necessary to add the additional feature.

Another Panel member agreed that Option A is the better option because it respects the corridor down York Street and also agrees the extra drama of Option B isn't necessary. Regarding the landscape, the Panel member asked for additional trees along the streets. The Panel member also felt the black and white geometric motif on the tower to be too busy.

A third Panel member stated that they appreciate the improvements made since the last presentation and that the approach from the west on the Gardiner would be particularly striking. Like the other Panel members, the Panel member preferred Option A for the podium treatment on York Street. The Panel member continued that the solid parts of the podium façade appear heavy and encouraged the architects to provide a little transparency to give a sense of depth. The panel member agreed that the north and south sides of the tower could be made less busy and that the motif was competing with the strong form of the building.

A fourth Panel member was happy with the progress made to date and said it speaks to the importance of the design review process. The Panel member supported the higher height of the podium but didn't have a preference for Options A or B. They felt the design had earned the height of the tower however, like others, felt that the "box" motif isn't necessary and would prefer to see a less busy treatment.

A fifth panel member agreed that Option A is preferred over Option B and that the tower façade was too busy.

The Chair thanked the architects for engaging in the design review process and congratulated them for responding very well. The Chair felt that the office space was an avoidable part of the development and suggested that, at night, it would look dead compared to the rest of the building. The Chair encouraged the team to consider deleting the office component and adding a cultural component, public art, or an amenity space. The Chair stated that the building is much "smoother" and that he is supportive of project. The Chair agreed that Option A is the preferred York street solution and encouraged the architect and developer to continue their good progress. The Chair also agreed with other panellists that the north and south sides of the tower should be simplified and encouraged the designers to review the treatment of the solid portion of the podium façade.

1.5 Summary of the Panel's Key Issues

The Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- 1) Option A is the preferred York Street podium treatment
- 2) Simplify the façade on the north and south sides of the tower
- 3) Further develop the treatment of the solid portions of the podium façade
- 4) Consider adding more street trees

1.6 Proponents Response

Chris Glaisek thanked the panel for their input and the architects and developers for listening to the panel's comments. Mr. Glaisek then asked them to comment on the process.

Steve Daniels of Tridel stated that the process has been very helpful for the design, function and the zoning application. He stated that they've been happy with the process.

Mr. Wallman thanked the Panel for their feedback.

1.7 Vote of Support/Non-Support

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

The Panel unanimously voted to support the building.

CLOSING

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