



Waterfront Design Review Panel Minutes of Meeting #6 Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Present:

Bruce Kuwabara, Chair
Tania Bortolotto
Peter Halsall
Greg Smallenberg
George Baird
Charles Waldheim

Regrets:

Anne McIlroy
Renee Daoust
Paul Bedford
Don Schmitt
Janet Rosenberg
Peter Clewes
Siamak Hariri

Designees and Guests:

John Campbell
Robert Freedman
Christopher Glaisek

Recording Secretary:

Pina Mallozzi

WELCOME

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming the Panel and noting some recent concerns expressed about design review. These have come from a few different people, who perceive the panel to be adding hurdles and increasing implementation time. The Chair clarified that the value of design is that it serves as an impetus for improved design which is a goal shared by many. He reiterated the need for a score sheet to track the positive impacts of the Panel and cited the West Don Lands Precinct Plan and Marilyn Bell Park as examples of projects made better by the process.

REPORT FROM THE CEO

John Campbell, the Corporation's President and CEO, began by summarizing progress made during the past month.

- In the West Don Lands, roads were closed and are anticipated to remain closed for four years throughout construction. A kick-off event in the West Don Lands has been scheduled for March 27, 2006 at which the first building will be cleared.
- World Expo Bid organizers have released 12 Request for Proposals for a package of studies of the Portlands area as the primary site. City Council will decide whether or not to pursue the Bid in May.
- In the East Bayfront, the developer proposal call is anticipated for fall 2006 with the zoning change going to City Council at the September meeting. The challenge remains the uncertainty around land availability until completion of the MOU with TEDCO.
- The Western Beaches Watercourse is near completion and the Corporation is in the process of improving adjacent facilities for marine users.

- The Corporation is conducting a Marketing and Branding RFP for developing a comprehensive outreach program. The Corporation seeks to engage the City-at-large in the waterfront revitalization process. He stressed the important role of Panel members as ambassadors of the waterfront.

Mr. Campbell then provided a presentation of the Intelligent Community and Ground Floor Animation Strategies.

- The Creative City Framework includes five Pillars. The Corporation has focused on the “Quality of Place” Pillar and Mr. Campbell suggested that the Corporation is looking to be more inclusive of the other four pillars: 1) Cultural Framework, 2) Intelligent Community, 3) Sustainable Development and 4) Housing.
- The Corporation has begun developing a strategy for creating intelligent infrastructure to support a broad spectrum of leading-edge information and communications technology where commercial activities blend with lifestyle and workplace. This infrastructure would encourage communities that focus on “e” learning, business, health, entertainment and community.
- Mr. Campbell then introduced the Corporation’s parallel process of developing a Ground Floor Animation Strategy for the East Bayfront. The objective of this study is to develop a strategy for the creation of an animated, public waterfront with non-residential uses at-grade along key frontages. This would likely be achieved by single-entity control of ground floor spaces to ensure they are coordinated throughout the precinct. The process would be phased, clustered and flexible and would consist of the following land uses:
 - i. Community commercial, including neighbourhood services such as banks, hardware stores, pharmacies, home fashion, bookstores and other community services.
 - ii. Urban mixed use, including destination restaurants and cafes, shops and boutiques, galleries and show rooms and public event spaces to accommodate an active arts and events program.
 - iii. Public engagement uses, which will offer uses of public service and interest that could include a variety of marine uses, community interactive uses, variety of public institutional uses, programmed venue, parks and cafes, etc.

The Chair then thanked Mr. Campbell for his presentation and opened up the meeting for questions or comments from the Panel.

One Panel member asked with respect to the World Expo Bid if any substantive planning has happened yet noting that Expo Bids tend to speed up development processes but need a vision from the beginning for eventual reintegration into the city. Mr. Campbell stated that he sits on the City World Expo Committee and is watching its development closely. He reiterated the Corporation’s position that infrastructure planning for the World Expo Bid should reflect the planning framework the Corporation has completed thus far.

Another Panel member asked if the Ground Floor Animation Strategy will propose a cross-subsidization to ensure the right mix. It was stressed that establishing this amenity may take a while and that this cost should be incorporated into the Pro-forma for the East Bayfront much like the Distillery District and 410 Richmond Street. Mr. Campbell explained that he has had the opportunity to look at those precedents and understands that cross-subsidy will likely be needed. He mentioned that while in Berlin he noticed the importance of planning for “edgy”

land uses particularly artists because providing space for such users is the basis for future sustainable artists.

One Panel member suggested that an “edgy” land use for the East Bayfront may be Civic Society Organizations which set up ad-hoc groups to pursue generally citizen based agenda that are not being addressed. Mr. Campbell confirmed that there is anticipated to be venue space which could support these types of organizations. Another Panel member suggested that the volume of the space should reflect the desired land use explaining that two-storey spaces would welcome such uses as galleries.

The Panel agreed that Toronto is generally under-serviced on great ground floor space. One Panel member suggested that the corners are the most important nodes for activation and that specific studies should be done for the corners in the East Bayfront. Mr. Campbell explained that the Corporation would be releasing an RFI for the ground floor study and is working with the City to develop flexible zoning and taxing policy. There was a thought that cultural amenities may count as amenity space in condominium development. One Panel member suggested that consolidated amenities for all developments may result in a signature amenity facility, for example a great work out space could exist over the water.

The Chair then asked the Vice President Planning and Design to give the project report.

VP PLANNING AND DESIGN REPORT

The Vice President Planning and Design gave a brief update on project progress over the past month.

Central Waterfront

- 38 responses from approximately 120 firms from nearly 20 countries were received for the Corporation’s Central Waterfront Innovative Design Competition. The selection committee and jury met and the announcement of a short-list of teams should be made this week.
- The Vice President Planning and Design is confident that there will be five great teams working on this project.

Don River Park

- Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA) was in Toronto and presented a preliminary design to TWRC and City Staff. MVVA will present a schematic design at next month’s Panel meeting.

East of Parliament

- A consultant will be selected to complete an EA for the Queens Quay Boulevard extension and Precinct Plan for the lands east of Parliament Street. This study will be an extension of the existing East Bayfront Precinct Plan as originally envisioned.

Lake Ontario Park

- The Corporation is in the process of finalizing contract negotiations with the selected design team. It is anticipated that the selected team will attend next month’s Panel meeting to make an introductory presentation.

Martin Goodman Trail

- The Marilyn Bell Park segment of the trail went out for construction tender. The Panel’s feedback resulted in several substantive improvements to the design, including:
 - The elimination of the raised planters.

- The replacement of TREX composite decking with Ipe wood decking.
- The installation of permanent lighting infrastructure and temporary lighting that could be replaced upon completion of the Central Waterfront Design Competition.
- The elimination of the ledge rock seating, and the installation of temporary benches that can be replaced upon completion of the Central Waterfront Design Competition.

GENERAL BUSINESS

The Chair then asked panel to review the minutes.

One Panel member noted that Ken Greenberg had mentioned that in a recent convention of fire department chiefs in Las Vegas there was a decision to corroborate the use of bigger fire trucks. It was stated that if a paradigm shift towards smaller streets was to happen there would need to be a program to educate fire chiefs of precedence, for example in Europe where existing smaller streets require smaller fire trucks. Another Panel member commented that a video by a fire chief in Portland, Oregon explains the potential of smaller fire truck use in urban areas.

The Chair commented that last month's minutes demonstrated the Panel's passion to take on road width issue but noted that the Panel needed to decide whether or not it is timely to explore this further. A Panel member noted that places like Granville Island which negate all rules and regulations are the precedents for of great public places that should be aimed for.

PROJECT REVIEWS

1.0 Green Building Specifications

ID#: 1009

Project Type: Study

Location: West Don Lands

Proponent: Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation

Architect/Designer: Halsall Associates Limited

Review Round: N/A (For Information Only)

Delegation: N/A

1.1 Introduction to the Issues

Christopher Glaisek, Vice President of Planning and Design, introduced the presentation by noting that the Corporation has made a strong commitment to the environment and sustainability as one of its primary goals, and the Green Building Specifications is one of several initiatives related to the environment. Although this presentation is for information only, the main issues of which the advice of the Panel is sought include:

- Feedback on the content and/or meaningful ways to aid the implementation the specifications based on their extensive experience.
- Viability of these specifications as mandatory criteria for development
- Viability of these specifications as a means by which the Panel will evaluate proposals.

1.2 Project Presentation

Mr. Halsall gave a presentation which began with an introduction to the global issues that make sustainability important: increasing consumption rates, higher surface temperatures as a result of global warming, and costs of catastrophe which are direct results of these and other factors. He highlighted the increase in cities developing sustainability standards worldwide with distinct regional trends for their implementation approach. It was explained that generally North American cities are leaning towards the LEED standard.

Mr. Halsall then explained the four principles that the Corporation has developed including:

- Provide first-in incentives for developers;
- Provide mechanisms that result in above-market building performance levels;
- Implement a compliance process that supports green building processes during design and construction; and
- Obtain developer feedback about concerns and business case drivers.

He then explained the mandatory performance requirements as outlined in the Corporation's Green Building Specifications, which included:

- Integrated design process
- Experienced team
- District energy
- LEED Gold certification
- Fresh air and heat recovery, Energy Star Appliances and Suite meters
- Long term flexibility
- Green roofs and
- Biodiesel

1.3 Panel Comments

One Panel member commented that Green roofs have a life-cycle, and in Vancouver many are now at a point where retrofitting has become necessary. Another Panel member mentioned green walls as a potentially more cost-effective solution that could become more popular than green roofs. There was general consensus that the on-going maintenance costs and techniques should be studied as this moves forward.

There was a general concern over the potential impact on aesthetics of the energy performance standard. For example, the 40% reduction in energy costs can probably only be achieved by eliminated floor-to-ceiling glass curtain walls, which could have a negative impact on building aesthetics and marketability. Mr. Halsall noted that this is a target which may push developers to be creative with energy efficient solutions, or be selective with the use of floor-to-ceiling glazing depending on the building face. One Panel member noted that European models of development are more energy efficient and it may be an advantage to have a European architect design the first building.

Mr. Halsall suggested that the challenge was in changing people's perceptions and shifting the market away from glass and towards green buildings, as was done by Tridel with their Element project. The challenge is determining how much to push the market. This will require developers to creatively market projects but also the Corporation to take on community-wide marketing as a LEED gold community. The Panel suggested this be a topic for the visioning session.

One Panel member asked about the capacity of design professionals in the GTA to support developers to perform to such standards. Mr. Halsall noted that developers are changing their practice and engaging such professionals but that where there is a capacity constraint is in professionals who integrate thinking about sustainability and design.

One Panel member noted that the City is grappling with similar issues as they develop a city-wide green building standard. Some resistance exists to using LEED as the standard to follow, and it was suggested that some modifications, such as district-wide credits be incorporated.

Several Panel members agreed that the visioning session should include a discussion of green roofs and green walls, the need for parking garages and one idea that buildings should be designed for a 500-year time horizon.

1.4 Summary of Panel's Key Issues

N/A

2.0 Marine Use Strategy

ID#: 1005

Project Type: Study

Location: Inner Harbour, Outer Harbour, Beaches

Proponent: Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation

Architect/Designer: Monteith Brown Planning Consultants

Review Round: N/A (For Information Only)

Delegation: N/A

2.1 Introduction to the Issues

Mr. Glaisek introduced the project noting that this project was recently concluded. It represented a process of bringing together stakeholders to develop a framework or strategy for how projects should address water side and marine uses. This Marine Use Strategy will be integral to the implementation of many projects, such as the Central Waterfront water's edge and heads of slips.

2.2 Project Presentation

Oliver Jerschow, a member of the program management team with Urban Strategies, provided a detailed presentation of the study which focused on the area between Humber Bay and Ashbridges Bay, including the Inner Harbour, Outer Harbour and Port Lands. The stakeholder consultation program was outlined and the resultant strategy report and resource guide were explained. Mr. Jerschow then summarized the report into five visions and briefly explained each:

- i. Recognizing and expanding an exceptional resource
- ii. Embracing integrated and sustainable planning on the waterfront
- iii. Promoting an active, diverse and accessible waterfront
- iv. Planning marine districts through revitalization
- v. Implementing the strategy through steady investment

2.3 Panel Comments

The Panel complimented the thoroughness of the document and noted it would be an excellent resource for students. One Panel member asked if the framework plan for the Inner Harbour would support port uses and therefore continued dredging. Shipping would be continued in some areas and that dredging was needed for boat traffic and maintaining water quality.

2.4 Summary of Panel's Key Issues
N/A

3.0 Central Waterfront Innovative Design Competition

ID#: 1007

Project Type: Park/Public Realm Design

Location: Water's Edge & Queens Quay Boulevard from Parliament Street to Stadium Road

Proponent: Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation

Architect/Designer: N/A

Review Round: N/A (for information only)

Delegation: N/A

3.1 Introduction to the Issues

Mr. Glaisek introduced the project, noting that the Corporation had decided to hold a design competition for this component of the waterfront to ensure a comprehensive approach is taken to this important asset. The main issues on which the advice of the Panel was sought include:

- Contents of the Competition Brief to guide the process and return a product that is useful and implementable.

3.2 Project Presentation

Mr. Glaisek distributed three handouts to be integrated into the Competition Brief Document that is to direct the five short-listed design teams, including:

- Site Boundaries and Land Use: These maps attempted to be specific on actual site area because of the scale of the project.
- Stakeholder Committee Memo: Community stakeholders took the initiative to walk the site and noted some of the important opportunities and constraints they perceived. The Corporation plans to include them as part of the package to the design teams.
- Opportunities and Constraints: This highlights site opportunities and constraints on a very detailed level and cross-references them to City Standards/Guidelines that will need to be met in the implementation process.

3.3 Panel Comments

One Panel member suggested that it is important to be precise about the exact boundaries to be looked at by the design teams to ensure the best design outcomes. It was also suggested that particularly complex areas, such as the Red Path lands, the Island Ferry Terminal and East Bayfront should be removed from the scope and noted as special zones given the uncertainties regarding these sites.

Several Panel members asked for clarification on the budget. Mr. Glaisek explained that the \$15 million budget is for construction of the Heads of Slips component of the project. The larger vision for the water's edge and Queens Quay Boulevard will require additional funding for implementation, but will create a unified concept design that is integrated with the Heads of Slips.

One Panel member suggested that maybe the design of the fixtures and character be taken out of the project and the streets south from the Gardiner Expressway get added to the scope. Another Panel member noted that it would be odd for the Jarvis head of slip to be built before the rest of the precinct and added that it may be helpful to overlay the precinct plan into the study area map and ask teams to work from the parameters of the plan.

Another Panel member asked about the Martin Goodman Trail and the Corporation's policy on bike lands and trails. Mr. Glaisek explained that the bike lane provided on Queens Quay is expected to accommodate fast moving bikes while the water's edge would accommodate a slower paced recreational use. One Panel member asked if segregation of different users was required and noted the Amsterdam example where bikes were allowed everywhere with no major collisions. It was clarified that the City has a policy that only bikes with small wheels are permitted on the sidewalk.

One Panel member noted that DIPS was a policy strictly for residential streets. The city representative noted that he would refer Mr. Glaisek to the appropriate source for street guidelines and policies that would apply to Queens Quay Boulevard and other streets on the site.

The Panel asked about the jury composition and Mr. Glaisek explained that it consisted of two architects, one landscape architect, one graphic designer, one film maker and one urban planner.

3.4 Summary of Panel's Key Issues

N/A

CLOSING

There being no further comments, the Chair suggested a short break prior to an in-camera session regarding the visioning session and the policy and procedures document.
