



**WATERFRONT**Toronto

**Waterfront Design Review Panel  
Notes of Meeting #83  
Wednesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

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**Present:**

Paul Bedford, Acting Chair  
Pat Hanson  
Claude Cormier  
George Baird  
Christopher Glaisek

**Designees and Guests:**

James Parakh

**Regrets:**

Don Schmitt  
Bruce Kuwabara, Chair  
Brigitte Shim  
Jane Wolff  
Betsy Williamson  
Harold Madi

**Recording Secretaries:**

Tristan Simpson  
Halija Mazlomyar

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**WELCOME**

Paul Bedford opened the meeting noting that he would be acting as chair in the absence of Bruce Kuwabara. The acting chair then provided an overview of the agenda before moving to the General Business portion of the meeting.

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**GENERAL BUSINESS**

The Acting Chair noted that with less than seven Panel members present, the Panel did not have a quorum. The Acting Chair stated that the meeting would proceed nonetheless to allow the proponents to have feedback from the Panel, but would not be formal minutes from the meeting, just notes.

The Acting Chair then stated that without quorum, the minutes of the June meeting could not be formally adopted and would wait until the following meeting for adoption.

The Acting Chair then asked if there were any conflicts of interest to declare. Mr. Cormier stated that he was doing work for the developer client, Castlepoint Numa and was in conflict for the FedEx facility. No other conflicts were declared.

The Acting Chair then provided the Panel with a description of the June City Council presentation regarding the Gardiner Expressway and Lake Shore Boulevard East Reconfiguration Environmental Assessment and Integrated Urban Design Study. The Acting Chair noted his disappointment with the vote in favour of the Hybrid option by two votes. He noted that staff is to report back in September on hybrid design alternatives and the feasibility of tunnelling the Gardiner. It was noted that the intent is to explore the idea of moving the ramps north in order to free up the land along the water's edge.

One of the Panel members asked what lessons he learned throughout the process. The Acting Chair noted the importance of educating councillors the on subject matter.

The Chair then invited Christopher Glaisek, Vice President of Planning and Design for 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 a summary of project progress.

### *Queens Quay Revitalization*

- Queens Quay is completed, some deficiency work is still underway.
- The opening event was very well attended and successful
- Waterfront Toronto has received both positive and constructive feedback from the public

### *Public Art, West Don Lands*

- Installation is complete 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 (*The Water Guardians* by Jennifer Marman and Daniel Borins)
  - Mill Street (*Peeled Pavement*, by Jill Anholt)
- Fabrication is progressing well on Block 4, the *Garden of Future Follies* by Hadley + Maxwell, which should be completed by Spring 2016

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## **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: Three*

*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

Christopher Glaisek, Vice President of Planning and Design 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. Mr. Glaisek stated that this is their third time at Design Review Panel receiving votes of Conditional Support at the last two meetings. The proponents have worked very hard over the past month to address the Panel's comments including exploring the use of solar panels, exploring the design of the fence with an artist and pushing the urban quality of the project.

A number of Panel Members noted their absence at the last meeting and asked for better background on the project. The proponents then offered to review the previous presentation and provide context around the project before diving into the most recent updates.

### 1.2 Project Presentation

Elsa Fancello, Development Manager with Castlepoint Numa, introduced the project team. Glenn Piotrowski, Senior Principal with Glenn Piotrowski Architect, then gave a summary of the presentation from June 10, 2015. The overview included an explanation for relocating FedEx to this particular site which was due to the current location (on Lake Shore Blvd) having a better potential use and that "City Stations" are selected based on the "just in time" delivery model. Mr. Piotrowski then presented the Site Plan and building plan.

Following the June 2015 presentation, Mr. Piotrowski continued to present the most recent updates outlining the responses to Panel comments and updates, since the last meeting, to the site plan.

Mr. Piotrowski stated that they are going to be solar ready for the entire roof. He also emphasized the layout of the site having a strong and efficient functionality due to the adjacencies of each defined activity within the building.

Ms. Fancello added that they are allocating a budget for an artistic fencing element. A design competition would be held to award an artist to design the fence.

Mr. Piotrowski then invited Kay Laidlaw from Ferris and Associates to provide an update on the landscaping. Mrs. Laidlaw then discussed the park like space proposed for the corner of Commissioners and Bouchette. This corner space will have additional walkways and a linear bench to create a public offering and help FedEx improve their relationship to the public realm.

Ms. Fancello provided clarity on the development stating that it is an "as of right" industrial building that is an interim use with an intended 35 year lifespan. Following the interim use, the proponent has higher future aspirations for the site that would complement the precinct plans in the area.

### 1.3 Panel Questions

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

One Panel member asked about the allocation of a budget to launch a design competition for the fence and why a design competition would be necessary. Ms. Fancello replied that they want to engage the larger community and explore innovative fencing designs. They were also communicating with the artist in charge of the fence treatment in the West Don Lands and were very impressed with that particular fence design.

Another Panel member asked whether or not it was possible to shift the office over and move the employee parking down. Mr. Piotrowski replied that there is a specific number of employee parking spaces required. By moving the office, efficiencies and adjacencies of the building's functionalities are compromised.

Another panel member suggested shifting the entire building to the corner of the site which would open up more right-of-way to with the future green function of Logan Avenue (green north-south connection to the water). Mr. Piotrowski replied that pushing everything over means losing footprint for staff parking. Simply moving some of the staff parking to the revenue vehicles parking area is not possible since it is a secure area.

One Panel member asked the proponent which FedEx facility is the most stunning urban example and whether or not the proposed building will be an example to set the bar on industrial urban facilities. Mr. Piotrowski replied stating that his firm won "the best industrial building award" for the airport facility at Pearson Airport.

Another panel member asked if there is a corporate standard for the building design. Mr. Piotrowski stated that FedEx only has internal standards. Massing and material choice is left up to the architect noting that the budgets are a relatively tight.

#### 1.4 Panel Comments

The Acting Chair then asked the Panel for their comments.

One panel member stated that they hope the trees will be able to grow very large, but worried that the trees might block the FedEx logo at the building entrance. He suggested spacing the trees in this area to prevent blocking the logo. He also stated that he would prefer the money allocated for the artistic fence treatment to be spent on increasing and improving the glass façade, and adding more glazing to the garage doors along Commissioners.

Another panel member stated that the neutrality and corporateness of the building is underwhelming. The panel member agreed with the previous panel member's comment that the glazing and transparency along Commissioners Street is the big opportunity for the building. It was noted that the team should explore the possibility of transforming the parking spaces on the northwest corner, into an entry plaza.

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

The Acting Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- Explore the use of more glazing/transparency along the front of the building (Commissioners Street) including more glass in the garage doors
- Reorienting the layout of the building to give it more urban context including shifting the building further to the corner or including a larger plaza space at the corner.

#### 1.6 Proponents Response

Ms. Fancello and Mr. Piotrowski 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 support with provisions to have conversations with Waterfront Toronto on their designs.

## **2.0 300 Commissioners Street**

*ID#: 1062*

*Project Type: Buildings/Structure*

*Location: Commissioners between Saulter and Bouchette*

*Proponent: Waterfront Toronto*

*Architect/Designer: Quadrangle*

*Review Stage: One*

*Review Round: Concept Design/Context Analysis*

*Presenter(s): Marco Vander Maas, Quadrangle Architects, Paul Marcella, Terraplan Landscape Architects, Blair Martin, Belleterre Real Estate Partners Ltd.*

*Delegation:*

### 2.1 Introduction to the Issues

Mr. Glaisek introduced the project as a private development application for a self-storage facility. The site plan application was submitted to the City of Toronto in March 2015. This is the first time this project has come to Design Review Panel.

### 2.2 Project Presentation

Marco Vander Maas, Design Director and Senior Associate with Quadrangle Architects introduced the project stating that the concept of a storage facility has always fit into the film studio precinct and there is a city wide need for this use. This particular facility is meant to be attractive, with plenty of street related animated space. Mr. Vander Maas stated that he is aware of the context and elements surrounding the site, and sees this as an opportunity to reimagine a typical storage facility. The use of the facility would be storage with the future potential for lofts. Mr. Vander Maas drew attention to the articulated skin of the building which is the most iconic feature of the building.

Mr. Vander Maas then introduced Paul Marcella, of Terraplan Landscape Architects, to give a brief overview of the landscaping. Mr. Marcella listed the sustainable features of the project including the extensive green roof, changing the asphalt colour to reflect the sun and the use of native versus invasive plant species. He also described the textured concrete near the entrance to the building which would mimic the articulated skin of the building.

### 2.3 Panel Questions

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

One of the Panel members asked about the building phasing and what the timing would be between the first and second phase of the project. The proponent replied that it would be approximately 2-3 years noting that the blank wall to the west would be covered by the second

phase of the project. The Panel member then asked if there's an opportunity to put temporary glazing on the blank wall until the second phase is complete and the proponent stated that he would look into it.

Another Panel member asked how big the building is. The proponent replied stating that it is comparable to a standard office floorplate.

Another Panel member asked for clarification on the proposed corner art piece. The proponent replied that the building is essentially a blank canvas so this corner space could be used as an artist display with the opportunity for interchangeable art works and displays. The adjacency of the park makes this an opportune location for an artistic display.

One of the Panel members asked how fixed the angle of the new Broadview Street alignment is. Cassidy Ritz, Senior Planner for the City of Toronto gave a brief explanation regarding the potential Broadview realignment and the future impacts it may have on the proponent's site.

Another Panel member asked how many stories the building will be. The proponent replied that it would be five storeys. He explained that this number suited their business Pro Forma as it takes a while to occupy a building with this particular use.

#### 2.4 Panel Comments

The Acting Chair then asked the Panel for their comments.

One of the Panel members stated that the information circulated in the binders from the proponents was not clear. The Panel member felt that the building is too decorative and borders on being cute. He recommends turning the work into a bold piece of architecture to avoid being deemed "cute". He also commented that the landscaping is too predictable, particularly the building entrance mimicking the pattern of the articulated building façade.

Another Panel member commended the client for giving up floor area for a decorative façade but stressed that the design of the building is missing a strong concept. The Panel member also emphasized that the proponent should ensure the coloured windows on the façade provide a function and not be merely decorative, as there was a concern they would be eliminated when budget constraints become an issue.

One of the Panel members also applauded the client for the urban idea of the building as storage facilities typically have a monolithic presence. However, the Panel member did raise concerns regarding the long term upkeep of the building, particularly the LED lighting. He recommended that the proponent combine the service corridor with the rest of the corridors for ease and efficiency.

#### 1.9 Summary of the Panel's Key Issues

The Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- Overall a refreshing and positive concept that could set the bar higher for storage facilities
- Refine initial concepts further (fewer windows, functionality of the corridors)
- Blank wall treatment, could be a potentially undesirable situation
- Landscape could be more unique

- Would be helpful to bring some precedents of industrial facilities to the next meeting

#### 1.10 Proponents Response

Mr. Vander Maas and Mr. Marcella thanked the Panel for their comments.

#### 1.11 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 conditional support of the project providing these recommendations are integrated into the plan presented today.

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### **CLOSING**

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