



WATERFRONTToronto

Waterfront Design Review Panel Minutes of Meeting #25 Wednesday, April 9, 2008

Present:

Bruce Kuwabara, Chair
George Baird
Paul Bedford
Tania Bortolotto
Renee Daoust
Peter Halsall
Janet Rosenberg

Regrets:

Peter Clewes
Siamak Hariri
Anne McIlroy
Don Schmitt
Greg Smalenberg
Charles Waldheim

Designees and Guests:

John Campbell
Robert Freedman
Christopher Glaisek

Recording Secretary:

Margaret Goodfellow

WELCOME

The Chair welcomed the Panel, noting that quorum was met and that the Panel could formally vote on adopting the Design Review Panel By-laws Protocols and Procedures. He provided an overview of the agenda and then invited John Campbell to provide his report.

REPORT FROM THE CEO

John Campbell, Waterfront Toronto's President and CEO, began by reminding the Panel that Waterfront Toronto had shortlisted five developer teams for the first development in District Three in the West Don Lands. Waterfront Toronto is currently in contract negotiations with the preferred developer partner. If all goes well, the developer partner will be announced by the end of April, 2008.

Mr. Campbell then announced that on March 14, 2008, Waterfront Toronto issued two Requests for Qualifications (RFQ's) to an international audience at the MIPIM Real Estate conference in France, for two development sites, with the objective of short-listing development teams who will then be asked to respond to detailed Requests for Proposals (RFP's). The development opportunities in East Bayfront comprise two parcels of land – known as Parkside, North of Queens Quay, and Bayside, South of Queens Quay - together totaling 5.6 hectares (13.9 acres). The investment value of the development is approximately \$1 billion, for an innovative residential and commercial/mixed-use development totaling some 225,000 sq m (2.4 million sq ft).

Mr. Campbell then announced that an “Intelligent Communities Initiative” RFP has been released for the design, build and ongoing operation of an open-access ultra broadband communications infrastructure with services and content, adding that the proposals are due by May 9th, 2008.

Mr. Campbell concluded by stating that Waterfront Toronto is working with TEDCO to incorporate the recommendations of the Design Review Panel on Project Symphony, in order to release the second transfer of three million dollars.

The Chair asked if there were any questions or comments.

One Panel member asked if the land in East Bayfront will be held or sold. Mr. Campbell answered that the City of Toronto owns the land, and has allowed the land to be sold for residential development, but will maintain a long-term lease on commercial development.

The Chair then invited Christopher Glaisek to provide his report.

REPORT FROM THE VP PLANNING AND DESIGN

Christopher Glaisek, Waterfront Toronto’s Vice President for Planning and Design, provided a summary of project progress over the past month.

Lower Don Lands

- A preferred alternative for the Don Mouth Naturalization Environmental Assessment (EA) was unveiled at a public meeting on March 29th, 2008. The preferred alternative was based on the winning design scheme for the Lower Don Lands by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA), which passed the EA criteria better than the other alternatives proposed, and was very favourably received by the public.

Regional Sports Complex

- Recent geotechnical investigations have found that bedrock is seventy-five feet below grade at the site proposed for the four pad hockey arena, adding approximately six million dollars to the budget. Waterfront Toronto is now considering a private public partnership model to complete this project.

Queens Quay Environmental Assessment

- The Environmental Assessment is proceeding for the Queens Quay Revitalization. There are currently urban design considerations that need to be worked out including the location of the portal for the streetcar. There is an option to bring the portal onto Bay Street which would alleviate some potential impacts to the design of Queens Quay, but it is technically more challenging.

Lake Ontario Park

- June is the target date to complete a final master plan, but there are still challenges to overcome in regards to gaining consensus with some of the Stakeholders.

Jarvis Slip Public Space

- Work has begun on “Sugar Beach”, the winning scheme by Claude Cormier Landscape Architects for the Jarvis Slip Public Space. The conceptual design will be presented to the Design Review Panel in June.

District Energy

- Steven Holl Architects have been selected to design a District Energy Centre in the West Don Lands, working locally with Bortolotto Design Architects.

Canada Square

- A feasibility study is being completed for Canada Square in collaboration with Harbourfront Centre. Bill Boyle has asked that the team present the alternatives to the Design Review Panel to gain their input and start the public dialogue about the future of that space.

Spadina Head of Slip

- The steel structure is in place along with all with the fish habitat. Although this past winter has slowed construction, the opening is still scheduled for June 20th.

Mr. Glaisek then delivered a PowerPoint presentation showing a year-by-year overview of the build-out of Waterfront Toronto project over the next five years.

The Chair then asked if there were any questions or comments.

One Panel member wondered if there would be an opportunity for a central marketing centre, (similar to the red “info box” in Berlin during the reconstruction of Potsdamer Platz), that could help promote what Waterfront Toronto is accomplishing, as well as being a place where developers could market their projects. Mr. Glaisek stated that Waterfront Toronto had been considering such a vehicle, but that there was concern that developers would be hesitant to participate. One Panel member felt that creativity in the public realm creates value in the private realm, adding that if developers don’t understand that, then they should not be developing with Waterfront Toronto. Another Panel member wondered if this could be an opportunity for a secondary marketing centre for developers. Another Panel member noted that the marketing “brand” really is the waterfront, including the head of slips, the bridges, and the parks, adding that that is powerful marketing material for the condos.

Another Panel member felt that consulting only with local stakeholders for Lake Ontario Park has impeded the consultation process, adding that as a regional park, participants from a larger area should be consulted to gain the appropriate perspective. Mr. Glaisek agreed that Waterfront Toronto is not just building a local asset, but potentially a national asset, adding that spreading the message at the appropriate time is crucial to getting positive support. Mr. Campbell noted that this issue has been addressed at the Board level, adding that Waterfront Toronto is trying to promote a vision, not cater to special interest groups.

GENERAL BUSINESS

The Chair thanked Mr. Campbell and Mr. Glaisek for their reports, adding that it was great to finally see the anticipated timing of the build-out along the waterfront.

The Chair then began the General Business item on the agenda, he noted that an RFP for private funding opportunities, including naming rights, had been released by Waterfront Toronto and that there had been intense scrutiny by the media, and cautioned that the potential backlash by the public could be significant if this is not handled properly. Mr. Campbell acknowledged that this RFP has garnered a lot of attention, noting that a more appropriate name for the RFP would have been “Sponsorship and Philanthropic Strategy”. Mr. Campbell added that only City Council has

the power to name the public realm, and that the intention of the strategy is to review a broad range of options to help mitigate the funding gap between what Waterfront Toronto has been mandated to build and what Waterfront Toronto can afford to build. Mr. Campbell also noted that Waterfront Toronto is not only looking for funding strategies for capital, but also for the ongoing operations and maintenance obligations that will effect the long term legacy of waterfront projects. One Panel member noted that the University of Toronto's fundraising campaign allowed buildings to be named after people, not corporations. Another Panel member agreed that Waterfront Toronto had to be careful about how the public realm is named, adding that sponsorship does not necessarily have to mean naming.

The Chair then stated that the Panel should be pro-active in the political arena to help strengthen the profile of design in waterfront revitalization. One Panel member suggested that an outline of issues should be compiled for Panel members to help Waterfront Toronto move forward with innovative design projects that are being challenged because they do not conform to traditional city standards. Mr. Glaisek noted that getting the Design Review Panel's input during the Environmental Assessment (EA) process could also help design become a more important component of the process, as it is not currently part of the EA mechanism.

The Chair then moved to adopt the revised Design Review Panel By-Laws, Protocols and Procedures, noting that comments from Panel members had been incorporated into the document. The By-Laws, Protocols and Procedures were then adopted unanimously by the Panel.

The Chair asked the Panel if there were any questions or comments on last month's meeting minutes. There being none, the Chair moved to adopt February's minutes. The minutes were then adopted. The Chair then noted that the minutes for November 2007, December 2007, and January 2008 were adopted via email as the Panel had not had time to adopt them during previous meetings.

PROJECT REVIEWS

1.0 Cherry Street

ID#: 1025

Project Type: Park/Public Realm Design

Location: Cherry Street from King Street to the rail corridor

Architect/Designer: The Planning Partnership with Sweeny Sterling Finlayson & Co. and Philips Farevaag Smallemberg

Review Round: One, Information Session

Presenter(s): Brent Raymond, du Toit Allsopp Hillier (DTAH); David Leinster, The Planning Partnership (TPP); Mark Sterling, Sweeny Sterling Finlayson & Co. (&Co).

Delegation: Mike Tocher, TPP

1.1 Introduction to the Issues

Carla Guerra, Planning and Design Project Manager for Waterfront Toronto, introduced the project, noting that the first part of the presentation would be a review of the Cherry Street Environmental Assessment (EA) results, followed by some initial thoughts on the conceptual design for Cherry Street, and the implications of the EA on the blocks in District Two. Ms. Guerrera emphasized what a unique process this was, integrating an intensive community design charette which was not legislatively mandated, but pivotal in moving this project forward.

1.2 Project Presentation

Brent Raymond, DTAH's Project Manager for the Cherry Street EA, reviewed the EA process including the greater emphasis on the urban design component, and their desire to keep the street bed as narrow as possible. Mr. Raymond then outlined the preferred scenario which will see the street car right-of-way running along the east side of Cherry Street, with two travel lanes, bike lanes and intermittent options for on-street parking.

David Leinster, Principal with The Planning Partnership, presented the initial design direction for Cherry Street, citing precedents from around the world from which they are drawing inspiration. Mark Sterling, Principal with Sweeny Sterling Finlayson & Co., then outlined the implications that the streetcar alignment will have on the block pattern in District Two, noting that the shifts in built form have still maintained the expected development yields.

1.3 Panel Questions

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

One Panel member asked how the street car would resolve itself at King Street. Mr. Raymond answered that it would merge into the centre median at the signalized intersection of King and Cherry, adding that at the rail corridor there would be a turn-around loop, with the intention that the street car would one day be extended south and service the Port Lands.

Another Panel member asked what the expected frequency of service would be. Mr. Raymond answered that the TTC would be best able to answer that, adding that his impression was that the TTC intended to run every other King Street car down Cherry Street.

One Panel member wondered if "Street G" was intended for drop offs. Mr. Sterling answered that that was the intention, as well as for servicing. Another Panel member felt that there was surplus depth on the blocks that could be utilized to separate the servicing and drop off functions within the building a bit better. Another Panel member felt that there was an uncertainty in the design whether "Street G" was a street or a lane. Another Panel member agreed that the character of the street needed to be further defined.

Another Panel member asked what the intended use was for the designated heritage buildings. Mr. Glaisek answered that it was always envisioned that there would be creative employment uses in those buildings, noting that Waterfront Toronto needs to study that further.

1.4 Panel Comments

The Chair then opened the meeting to Panel comments.

One Panel member noted that when the St. Clair street car line was developed, one of the things that provided relief from the new centre median were the setbacks of the buildings in one section, which allowed the street to be framed by green space. Another Panel member cautioned that on Cherry Street, the notion of a larger setback should be balanced by the community's desire for a smaller right of way. Another Panel member cited the Montparnasse neighbourhood in Paris where the tramway, taxis and bicycles share the same width of road allowing for a narrower pavement width.

Another Panel member felt that the revised street grid in District Two is currently not clear. Another Panel member agreed, feeling that there are too many “one-off” conditions in the street typologies. One Panel member suggested re-examining the blocks at the end of “Street E”.

Several Panel members felt that “Street G” should continue east all the way through to Bayview Avenue, possibly in the form of a “porte cochère”, or passageway through the building, adding that this may also help to highlight the heritage buildings.

1.5 Summary of the Panel’s Key Issues

The Chair thanked Mr. Raymond for participating in the information session, noting that the integration of urban design into the EA process is a paradigm shift and that this review will provide insight into the review of Cherry Street by the Design Review Panel moving forward.

The Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- i. Refine the number and type of street typologies within the West Don Lands
- ii. Study the terminus of “Street G”
- iii. Sharpen the nature and character of “Street G”
- iv. Better integrate the heritage buildings into the overall plan, including considerations of what their future use will be.

1.6 Proponents Response

Mr. Raymond, Mr. Leinster and Mr. Sterling thanked the Panel for their feedback.

1.7 Vote of Support/Non Support: N/A

2.0 Martin Goodman Trail

ID#: 1003

Project Type: Park/Public Realm Design

Location: Linear trail running south of Lakeshore Boulevard from Exhibition Place to Coronation Park.

Proponent: Waterfront Toronto

Architect/Designer: Janet Rosenberg Associates Landscape Architects (JRALA) with Office for Urbanism and BA Group.

Review Round: One

Presenter(s): Janet Rosenberg, JRALA; Antonio Gomez-Palacio, Office for Urbanism

Delegation: Wayne Swanton, JRALA; Vicki Barron, Waterfront Regeneration Trust; Keith Brown, Ontario Place.

2.1 Introduction to the Issues

Tony Medeiros, Planning and Design Project Manager for Waterfront Toronto, reviewed the history of the project and the current section of trail being designed, noting that this section of the trail lies somewhere between the urban treatment of the trail at the Central Waterfront and the more pastoral nature of Marilyn Bell Park.

The main issues on which the advice of the Panel was sought included:

- Feedback on the conceptual design and master plan.

2.2 Project Presentation

Antonio Gomez-Palacio, Principal with Office for Urbanism, introduced the project team and described the context, consultation process, and outlined the issues that were identified. Janet

Rosenberg, Principal with Janet Rosenberg Associates Landscape Architects, then outlined the landscape master plan, describing planting strategies, identifying opportunities for additional park land, materiality, and the reclaiming of roadway for the trail and new plantings.

2.3 Panel Questions

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

One Panel member asked what the materiality was of the trail surface. Ms. Rosenberg answered that it is currently tinted asphalt.

Another Panel member wondered if there was an opportunity to remove the Pizza Pizza signage on the pedestrian bridge over Lake Shore Boulevard. Keith Brown, Director of Operations for Ontario Place, answered that Ontario Place is currently in the process of renewing its 35 year old infrastructure and needs the revenue that advertisement and sponsorship brings in. Mr. Brown added that the ultimate plan is to green and update the entire site, and hopefully one day not need to rely on this source of income.

Another Panel member wondered what the nature of the trail users were, noting that the renderings made it appear as more of a commuter trail than for recreation. Ms. Rosenberg answered that by and large, the trail does accommodate commuters coming from the west on weekday mornings and late afternoon but that during the weekends the trail accommodates more recreational users, adding that in general safety and conflicting user groups is an issue that they have begun to address with the increased trail width. Vicki Barron, Director of Administration and Regeneration Initiatives for the Waterfront Regeneration Trust-Waterfront Trail, added that the link is currently extremely important for pedestrians, as there is no other option for navigating through that part of the site. Ms. Rosenberg agreed, but added that ultimately it is hoped that there will be a water's edge boardwalk for pedestrians. The Panel member agreed and urged the design team to consider looking into further differentiation between the user groups.

One Panel member wondered about the maintenance implications in the design. Ms. Rosenberg stated that operations and maintenance in the park is of great concern, adding that they have been in communication with the Parks Department and are looking at planting strategies that will require less maintenance and be more sustainable in the long run.

Another Panel member asked what drove the curving of the trail at the east. Mr. Gomez-Palacio answered that the trail alignment at this end was driven by the desire to create a north entrance to the Inukshuk Park, as well as accommodate grand stands during the Indy race without moving to close the trail.

One Panel member asked what the lighting strategy was, and if there were plans for any fountains. Ms. Rosenberg answered that they have suggested lighting for the trail that they hope will be further integrated into Ontario Place, adding that there are currently no plans for fountains in their budget.

2.4 Panel Comments

The Chair then opened the meeting to Panel comments.

One Panel member congratulated the team on the greening strategy, noting that the new green spaces have created "book ends" to this section of trail and Ontario Place. The Panel member also congratulated Ontario Place for seeing the benefits in reducing the number of parking spaces

on the site in order to improve cycling safety and greening. Another Panel member felt that the trail alignment and park design strengthened and anchored the Inukshuk Monument in the park.

Another Panel member felt the utilization of Remembrance drive for the new bike trail should not result in the loss of identity given to this stretch, and that the idea of “remembrance” should be referenced somehow in the design.

One Panel member stated that sustainability should be further considered including re-thinking the use of asphalt paving, and possibly incorporating permeable parking surfaces.

2.5 Summary of Panel’s Key Issues

The Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- v. The Panel supports the project moving to Design Development.
- vi. Consider further separation of user groups
- vii. Preserve the symbolic linkages to Remembrance Drive and Coronation Park.
- viii. Study opportunities to bring a greater level of sustainability into the project including re-thinking the use of asphalt, and considering permeable paving.

2.6 Proponent’s Response

Mr. Gomez-Palacio and Ms. Rosenberg thanked the Panel for their comments.

2.7 Vote of Support/Non Support

The Panel voted unanimously in favour of the project proceeding to Design Development.

CLOSING

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