



WATERFRONTToronto

**Waterfront Design Review Panel
Notes* of Meeting #36
Wednesday, July 8th, 2009**

Present:

Bruce Kuwabara, Chair
Paul Bedford
George Baird
Siamak Hariri
Anne McIlroy
Greg Smallenberg

Regrets:

Tania Bortolotto
Peter Clewes
Renee Daoust
Peter Halsall
Janet Rosenberg
Don Schmitt
Charles Waldheim

Designees and Guests:

Christopher Glaisek
Robert Freedman

Recording Secretary:

Margaret Goodfellow

WELCOME

The Chair welcomed the Panel and provided an overview of the agenda. He noted that as a quorum had not been achieved for this meeting, no formal voting would take place, but feedback would still be provided to proponents. 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.

Simcoe WaveDeck

- The Simcoe WaveDeck opened to critical acclaim on Friday, June 12th.

Martin Goodman Trail (Ontario Place)

- As the trail nears completion, it is evident that the linkages have been improved, while maintaining the materiality and language of the trail.
- Final tests of the thermosplast maple leaf patterning are being completed and will be installed on site once approved.

Water's Edge Promenade

- A mock-up of the Water's Edge Promenade is being completed in the East Bayfront. Colours, lighting and methods of construction are all being tested on site in preparation for the tender package.

The Chair asked the Panel if there were any questions or comments. There being none, the Chair then thanked Mr. Glaisek for his report.

GENERAL BUSINESS

The Chair asked the Panel if there were any conflicts of interest to declare. Ms. McIlroy stated that she was conflicted on the Tommy Thompson Park project.

The Chair noted that as there was no quorum, June's minutes would have to be formally adopted at September's meeting.

The Chair then invited to Panel to board the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) bus for the site tour of Tommy Thompson Park. At the conclusion of the bus tour, the Chair opened the Project Review portion of the meeting.

PROJECT REVIEWS

1.0 Tommy Thompson Park Structures

ID#: 1027

Project Type: Buildings/Structures

Location: Leslie street south of Unwin Avenue

Proponent: Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA)

Architect/Designer: Montgomery Sisam Architects (MSA)

Review Stage: Conceptual Design

Review Round: Four

Presenter(s): Ralph Toninger, TRCA; Santiago Kunzle, MSA; Robert Davies, MSA

Delegation:

1.1 Introduction to the Issues

A bus tour of Tommy Thomson Park for Panel members was arranged by the TRCA to familiarize them with the specific qualities of the park. Lead by Ralph Toninger, Project Manager for TRCA, the bus tour included stops at each of the four sites of the shelters proposed. This included the park Entrance Way, The Staff Booth & Interpretive Area, The Environmental Shelter & Lookout, and the Ecological Research and Bird Banding Station. At each of the sites, Panel members were oriented and provided with a description of the existing and proposed elements. At the conclusion of the bus tour, Panel members returned to Waterfront Toronto for the project presentation.

Christopher Glaisek introduced the project noting that this is the fourth time it has come before the Panel. Mr. Glaisek stated that the program had been clarified with TRCA, noting that the "Entrance Way" element had been added to address the Panel's earlier programmatic concerns.

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

- the disposition of the built form

1.2 Project Presentation

Robert Davies, Partner with MSA, introduced the project team, adding that the TRCA is committed to the Lake Ontario Park (LOP) Master Plan and that the projects proposed are four of the many 'outposts' envisioned in that plan. Mr. Davies provided an overview of the structures, adding that it was their intention to lend an intimate scale of experience within the expanse of Lake Ontario Park. Mr. Davies noted that the structures were influenced by their sites and programmatic requirements, adding that they vary in their degree of enclosure and exposure. Santiago Kunzle, Partner with MSA then presented specific features of each structure's program, materiality and relationship to the landscape.

1.3 Panel Questions

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

One Panel member wondered why the Staff Booth was elevated on a plinth. Mr. Kunzle stated that staff needs a vantage point to control access to the site.

Another Panel member enquired about the structure of the roofs. Mr. Davies stated that most of the buildings will have a light steel structure roof clad in metal and wood, adding that the Environmental Shelter will be poured-in-place concrete as it is planned to be occupied as a promontory.

Another Panel member asked how long the Port Authority booth will occupy the site. Mr. Toninger stated that the booth will be there for the remainder of the Port Authority's lease.

One Panel member asked the team to speak to the distinctive philosophy, expression and materiality of each of the structures. Mr. Kunzle stated that each of the structures has been designed to integrate with the natural features of the site. Mr. Davis stated that the plan of each structure correlates to movement within the landscape, adding that the roofs are in tune with the horizontality of the landscape and the materials selected are tough and robust to match the rugged landscape.

1.4 Panel Comments

The Chair then opened the meeting to Panel comments, noting that as there was no quorum no formal voting would take place, though they will provide feedback to the proponents.

One Panel member stated that they were comfortable with the overall proposition. Another Panel member agreed, feeling that this scheme was an improvement. Other Panel members agreed that the project had come a long way.

Another Panel member felt that the connection between the structures should be made even more explicit through their material palette and standardization of the tectonics (architectural expression of the form).

One Panel member felt that a level of repair to the site needed to be undertaken around the structures to allow the landscape to encroach and make the structures more embedded.

Another Panel member wondered if there was another approach to the design of the parking lot, feeling that it was too rigid and not consistent with the organic nature of the site.

Another Panel member questioned the need to raise the entire platform of the staff booth. Another Panel member felt that the Staff Booth was not in keeping with the incredible natural environment, feeling that it was a bit cold for its natural setting. Another Panel member felt that the enclosed piece of the roof may be too large, urging the team to study the proportion further.

Another Panel member noted that the Bird Banding Station seemed very different than the other structures. Another Panel member felt that the four buildings should read as more of a set than they currently do. Other Panel member agreed.

One Panel member felt that the flat roof may not be the way to go, wondering if there was another architectural approach to keep more in the spirit of this park. Another Panel member disagreed; feeling that the ground plane should be left what it is, with the flat roofs acting hovering above and providing shelter. Another Panel member felt that the roofs could be set at a datum and float off the structures throughout the site, adding that the height should be mocked up and studied. Another Panel member wondered if there was an opportunity for green roofs on the structures. Another Panel member felt that the proportion of the roof was too thin.

Another Panel member felt that the railing along the roof of the Environmental structure was not successful.

Another Panel member felt that using Cor-Ten steel, shaped into minimal forms was strong, adding that “there is no nature without artifice”. Another Panel member urged the team to reduce visual clutter as much as possible.

1.5 Summary of the Panel’s Key Issues

The Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- 1) Support for the Conceptual Design of the project
- 2) Support for the Cor-Ten panels
- 3) Strengthen the standardization of the vocabulary of the four structures

1.6 Proponents Response

Mr. Kunzle, Mr. Davies and Mr. Toningler thanked the Panel for their feedback.

1.7 Vote of Support/Non-Support

N/A

2.0 East Bayfront Public Realm: Water’s Edge Promenade and Parliament WaveDeck

ID#: 1021

Project Type: Public Realm

Location: Water’s Edge from Jarvis Street to Parliament Street

Proponent: Waterfront Toronto

Architect/Designer: West 8 + DTAH

Review Stage: Conceptual Design

Review Round: One

Presenter(s): Adrian Geuze, West 8 + DTAH

Delegation: Adam Nicklin, West 8 + DTAH; Mark Ryan, West 8 + DTAH

2.1 Introduction to the Issues

Antonio Medeiros, Planning and Design Project Manager introduced the project noting that this is the first time it has come before the Panel. Mr. Medeiros stated that the project was in the schematic design phase, and attempts to integrate storm water management infrastructure with pedestrian amenity.

2.2 Project Presentation

Adrian Geuze, Principal with West 8, began the presentation by stating that their goal is to create a playful waterfront destination, while providing a unified and distinctive look to Toronto's Waterfront. Mr. Geuze provided an overview of the elements of the Central Waterfront Master Plan including the Water's Edge Promenade and its evolution since the Koetter Kim East Bayfront Precinct Plan of 2005. Mr. Geuze then presented the integrated storm water management system that runs between Sherbourne Park, the boardwalk and Parliament Street slip. Mr. Geuze concluded by presenting the conceptual design of the Parliament WaveDeck.

2.3 Panel Questions

One Panel member asked if the cut-outs in the Parliament WaveDeck were openings to the water. Mr. Geuze stated that they were open to expose the water to sunlight as part of the purification process. Mr. Geuze added that the boardwalk bends up to form railings around the openings.

Another Panel member asked what the principle behind the positioning of the finger piers was. Mr. Glaisek stated that they are aligned with the ends of the streets, adding that their precise locations have not been fixed. Mr. Geuze stated that they would like to add even more finger piers if budget allows.

2.4 Panel Comments

Several Panel members commended the team for their great work. One Panel member stated that West 8 + DTAH continue to set a high standard for work on the waterfront. Another Panel member felt that the more complex the work becomes, the clearer the overall vision is.

One Panel member stated that the sculptural qualities of the spaces on the Parliament WaveDeck were very appealing. Another Panel member stated that they supported the organic landscape. Another Panel member stated that views to the water from Queens Quay Boulevard should be maintained.

Another Panel member felt that having a mix of fixed and floating piers is great, noting that Canadians take their docks out in the winter.

One Panel member urged the team to make sure the edges of the openings were engaging but not dangerous.

Another Panel member stated that they loved the rotating deck chairs, as long as they are easy to rotate.

Another Panel member felt that the rhythm of the trees should have some occasional variation.

One Panel member stated that it was great that Simcoe Slip was completed as there would be a lot more sceptics about the form if a successful example had not already been completed.

Another Panel commended the team and Waterfront Toronto for integrating the storm water management into these innovative public spaces.

2.5 Summary of the Panel's Key Issues

The Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- I) Support for the direction of the project

2.6 Proponents Response

Mr. Geuze thanked the Panel for their feedback.

2.7 Vote of Support/Non-Support

N/A

CLOSING

With no further business, the Chair then adjourned the meeting.

DRAFT