



**WATERFRONT**Toronto

**Waterfront Design Review Panel  
Minutes of Meeting #94  
Wednesday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

---

**Present:**

Bruce Kuwabara, Chair  
Paul Bedford, Vice Chair  
George Baird  
Pat Hanson  
Chris Reed

**Regrets:**

Peter Busby  
Don Schmitt  
Claude Cormier  
Betsy Williamson  
Jane Wolff  
Brigitte Shim

**Designees and Guests:**

Pina Mallozzi

**Recording Secretary:**

Tristan Simpson

---

**WELCOME**

The Chair opened the meeting by providing an overview of the agenda before moving to the General Business portion of the meeting.

---

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

The Chair requested the Panel members to adopt the minutes from the July meeting. The minutes were adopted.

The Chair then asked if there were any conflicts of interest to declare. No conflicts of interest were identified.

The Chair raised the subject of the Panel members convening outside of the Design Review Panel meetings. Will Fleissig, President and CEO of Waterfront Toronto, responded that there will be a meeting held before the end of the year to discuss a number of topics including Waterfront Toronto Strategic Visioning Going Forward Initiative, the future role of the Panel members and the need to have them involved earlier in the planning process, and new ways of thinking about city building, such as Villiers Island. Mr. Fleissig noted that when DRP first started, it was all about reviewing site plans and public realm. It then evolved into reviewing parks and public realm. DRP today, is

seeing more buildings coming in for review. At the moment, the projects are one-offs, so it would be helpful to see the cumulative effect of all these projects.

The Chair noted that Denmark has a national policy on city building. They have managed to lower energy consumption significantly. Mr. Bedford added that the frame of reference for sustainability is evolving rapidly. What comes after LEED Platinum?

The Chair then invited Pina Mallozzi, Director of Design with Waterfront Toronto to provide a report on project progress.

---

## **REPORT FROM THE V.P. OF PLANNING AND DESIGN**

Ms. Mallozzi noted that on September 25, as part of Art Spin's In/Future festival, Waterfront Toronto hosted the Future Cities Talks. The event challenged urbanists, culture-makers, advocates and citizens to reconsider what it means to be a "City-Builder" through the eyes of its inspiring participating speakers, each of whom presented a Big Idea for the future of growing and densifying urban communities. Approximately 500 members of the public attended the event with speakers that included; Eb Zeidler, Vass Bednar, Karen Carter, Susan Blight, and Katerina Cizek.

Ms. Mallozzi then explained that on September 14, the three levels of government announced that they will contribute approximately \$65 million towards protecting the Port Lands from severe flooding. The project will create new land around the current Essroc Quay through lakefilling. This will stabilize the area shoreline under flood conditions and enable the shift of the Cherry Street Bridge required for Flood Protection. The project, while part of the proposed scope of work for the larger Port Lands Flood Protection and Enabling Infrastructure project is a self-contained and stand-alone project that can be advanced independently of the larger scope of work. Ms. Mallozzi noted that Waterfront Toronto will be releasing the Port Lands Flood Protection and Enabling Infrastructure Due Diligence Report on October 20, which will provide a more comprehensive plan for the flood protection required to develop the Port Lands.

---

## **PROJECT REVIEWS**

### **River City Phase Four**

*ID#: 1067*

*Project Type: Building*

*Location: West Don Lands*

*Proponent: Urban Capital*

*Architect/Designer: Saucier Perrotte*

*Review Stage: Schematic Design*

*Review Round: Two*

*Presenter(s): Gilles Saucier,*

*Delegation: David Wex, Urban Capital, Paul Stevens, ZAS Architects*

## **1.1 Introduction to the Issues**

Scott Loudon, Development Manager with Waterfront Toronto, introduced the project noting that this is the project's second time presenting to the Design Review Panel. Mr. Loudon summarized the Panel's comments from the October 2015 meeting which included; clarification on the lower part of the building as a super-structure and its relationship to what is above, winter conditions need to be considered, the treatment of the underside of the soffits, and reconsideration of the surface.

Mr. Loudon updated the Panel on the design of the project noting that Urban Capital has recently submitted a minor variance application to the Committee of Adjustment. The variances include a request to increase the height from 36 meters to 44.7 meters, which is required to support the structural design in providing open space at grade, as well as a few minor variances such as minor setback relief above 27 meters, minor setback relief from the rear lot line, and an increased mechanical penthouse roof area and size. Mr. Loudon stated that Waterfront Toronto is in support of the above listed variances and feel they maintain the intent and purpose of the Block Plan and Zoning By-law.

Mr. Loudon proceeded to raise a number of issues for the Panel to consider, including: whether the arrangement of columns has improved the treatment of the underside of the soffits/ground plane and the view approaching from River Street or from Corktown Common, with regard to materials, colour and details, is the landscape treatment an appropriate response to the adjacent open spaces (Lawren Harris Square and Underpass Park)?, and whether the relationship of at-grade retail to publicly accessible open space is appropriate.

## **1.2 Project Presentation**

Mr. Loudon then introduced Gilles Saucier, Principal at Saucier + Perrotte Architectes, to give the presentation. Mr. Saucier began by noting that some adjustments have been made regarding the stacking of the building, particularly at the ground plane and there has been a lot of development at the ground level. Mr. Saucier noted that a new element of the project, is understanding Underpass Park and the need to connect the building to it. Mr. Saucier walked the Panel members through the evolution of the building shape, which is inspired by the shape of the site itself. At the last meeting, the idea of very thin columns was presented, however, questions were raised about the continuity with the vertical limit of the building. Mr. Saucier began to explain what has changed since the last meeting, noting that there was a small surface of shops at grade. The team decided to increase the size of this space to create an ensemble of commercial space and to ensure continuity and fluidity with Lawren Harris Square and River City Phase Three. Mr. Saucier noted that the columns have now changed orientation to face Lawren Harris Square. Only four columns remain on the exterior, while the remainder of columns are on the interior. Mr. Saucier explained that the staircase, made out of glass, will work as a lantern projecting light from the ground. The soffit ceiling is angled which will allow the light to bounce and play within the space.

Mr. Saucier noted that the landscape design is still a work in progress, however, Greg Smallenberg has reviewed what the team is proposing and is pleased with it. Mr. Saucier

emphasized the building location, which is sandwiched between Lawren Harris Square and River City Phase Three, underlining the need to make the material palette continuous throughout all three projects. The material choice includes using a darker paver and potentially using embedded lighting on the ground (as seen on slide 38).

Mr. Saucier introduced Anna Kazmierska, Sustainability Manager with MMM, to present the sustainability portion of the presentation. Ms. Kasmierska explained that in order to achieve the sustainability goals, the same practices from the previous project phases were applied. Ms. Kazmierska noted that meetings with the design team and owner have been held to discuss the sustainability approach. The team is registered under LEED and are targeting 65 points, five points above the required target. Ms. Kasmierska explained that the upper level roof will be designed to accommodate a superimposed dead load of an intensive green roof. The green roof coverage will represent 50% of the ground floor area for all roof areas.

### **1.3 Panel Questions**

The Chair then asked the Panel for questions.

One of the Panel members asked about the cistern. Ms. Kazmierska replied that the cistern would be captured through area drains.

Another Panel member asked if there was a plan that shows the underground parking. Mr. Saucier replied that the underground parking extends beyond the right-of-way.

One of the Panel members asked about the retail on the ground floor and who the team is looking to attract. David Wex, Founder of Urban Capital, replied that the team has not put together a retail strategy, however, they are looking into a restaurant or other social uses.

Another Panel member asked if there are any grocery stores planned for the area. Mr. Wex noted that there will be a grocery store for Phase One as it is 4,500 square feet. The Panel member noted that there is an opportunity for a bar for Phase Three given the length of the space. Mr. Wex replied that Phase Three needs to be built and the Canary District needs to be more lived in, in order to attract interest.

Another Panel member asked about the critical mass once all of the phases are lived in. Mr. Wex replied that it will be approximately 1000 residents, which speaks to the absolute need for retail space.

### **1.4 Panel Comments**

The Chair asked the Panel for their comments.

One of the Panel members suggested that existing residents of the area should share their thoughts on what's missing in terms of retail. The Panel member noted that Lawren Harris Square is begging for life and implored the team to be bold and experimental.

Another Panel member commended the team on the presentation, however, remains sceptical about the retail component. The Panel member noted that curation is key to successful retail, however, you can only achieve so much with curation.

One of the Panel members asked the team to clarify whether the balconies are continuous. Mr. Saucier replied that they are all continuous. The Panel member told the team that their buildings are some of the best in Toronto. The Panel member was also pleased with the unit sizes and the amount of three bedroom units available. The Panel member also noted the opportunity for synergy, and knitting the hard and soft surfaces between the building and the park. The Panel member did caution the team that the idea of stitching two elements gets lost when you have a street crossing through.

Another Panel member noted that the lifting of the ground plane is very elegant. The Panel member asked for clarification on the massing in relation to surrounding buildings. Mr. Saucier directed the Panel to slide 26, which shows the building elevation in relation to surrounding buildings. The Panel member also suggested light and inexpensive programming in Lawren Harris Square in order to test out ideas for restaurants and retail.

One of the Panel members noted that the team has calibrated the heights of the space above the Gardiner Expressway which allows the development of the building height. The Panel member noted that the height shouldn't be too low that it's perceived at scale with the traffic on the highway.

One of the Panel members noticed a difference in one of the renderings in the slide deck versus the binder and noted that the rendering in the binder was more dynamic and bold. The Panel member also asked about the rationale of the concrete plinth. The proponent replied that they are not building a sheer wall, so this is a transfer beam.

Another Panel member noted the lack of greenery on the ground plane. Mr. Saucier noted that the trees shown in the plan drawing are existing trees. The Panel member suggested adding more densely planted trees to the existing ones.

One of the Panel members noted that the lighting of the stair is very beautiful.

Another Panel member asked if the balcony balustrade was all glass. Mr. Saucier replied that they are looking to create a continuous line of balconies with some opaque surfaces allowing the viewer to see the difference in changing colours.

Mr. Fleissig asked the Panel for their thoughts on the colour of the façade. The Chair replied that this building is very refreshing and believes that the team is finishing off the final phase on a high note, which is rare with multiple phase buildings.

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

The Chair then summarized the comments by the Panel.

- There is an inconsistency with details in some of the renderings;
- The landscape portion needs to be developed further; and
- Extend the context so the Panel can see the building elevation in relation to the surrounding context.

## **I.6 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 Support of the project.

---