



**WATERFRONT**Toronto

**Waterfront Design Review Panel  
Minutes of Meeting #85  
Wednesday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

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**Present:**

Bruce Kuwabara, Chair  
Paul Bedford  
Claude Cormier  
George Baird  
Betsy Williamson  
Jane Wolff

**Regrets:**

Pat Hanson  
Don Schmitt  
Harold Madi  
Brigitte Shim  
Peter Busby

**Designees and Guests:**

Christopher Glaisek

**Recording Secretaries:**

Tristan Simpson  
Halija Mazlomyar

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**WELCOME**

Bruce Kuwabara opened the meeting noting that the proponents scheduled to present first on the Agenda would be late and therefore the presentations would be delayed unless the subsequent proponents arrived early to present. In the meantime, the minutes would be reviewed.

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**GENERAL BUSINESS**

The Chair asked the Panel if they had any comments or feedback on the minutes from the September 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. Paul Bedford noted that the date on the minutes circulated via email was incorrect. Mr. Bedford also noted that one of his points made regarding the OMB hearing in December did not make the minutes and should be revised accordingly.

Mr. Glaisek then asked Mr. Bedford and the Panel for their thoughts on how the last meeting went with the guest City Panel members. Mr. Bedford summarized a few key takeaways from the Lower Yonge Precinct Plan and the One Yonge Project reviews to update members that were unable to attend the last meeting. These key points included:

- Arguments for keeping the park location as is versus re-locating it further east.
- Importance of north-south connections, especially to neighbourhoods such as the St. Lawrence.
- Resolving the Toronto Star building and the density of the south block.

- Consolidating the servicing underground and removing the service entries from Harbour Street.
- Inadequate support facilities including transit and community services.
- the Panel voted in Non-support given the many issues.

One of the Panel members expressed that inviting additional members resulted in a very lengthy and exhaustive meeting. Another Panel member noted that although the City Panel was not part of the vote, they would have likely voted in Non-support of the project, as the Waterfront Panel did. Mr. Glaisek explained that a decision as to whether another joint Panel be held for the One Yonge Project needs to be made as the project will be returning to the Design Review Panel on November 18<sup>th</sup>. The Panel agreed that this would be acceptable however, more time on the Agenda should be allocated for this project. Another Panel member suggested that the proponents provide the Panel with an idea of what to expect in advance of the meeting to avoid redundancy.

Although no conflicts of interest were formally declared at the start of the meeting, Claude Cormier later noted a conflict of interest as he is part of the River City Phase Four design team.

The Chair then invited Mr. Glaisek, Vice President of Planning and Design with Waterfront Toronto, to provide a report on project progress.

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

Mr. Glaisek presented the Panel a video of the Queens Quay opening in June.

The Chair then moved to the project reviews portion of the meeting.

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## **PROJECT REVIEWS**

### **1.0 River City Phase Four**

*ID#: 1067*

*Project Type: Building*

*Location: West Don Lands*

*Proponent: Urban Capital*

*Architect/Designer: Saucier + Perrotte Architectes*

*Review Stage: Concept Design*

*Review Round: One*

*Presenter(s): Gilles Saucier, Claude Cormier*

*Delegation: David Wex*

#### **1.1 Introduction to the Issues**

Mr. Glaisek introduced the project noting that this was their first time attending Design Review Panel.

#### **1.2 Project Presentation**

Gilles Saucier of Saucier + Perrotte Architectes began the presentation by stating that this is the fourth phase of the River City plan. Mr. Saucier explained that the uniqueness of the site inspired the design. The team has looked at how the structure will not only create continuity at the ground

plane but also how to create a structure that will reveal itself outside. Mr. Saucier explained that the team has chosen to use smoked glass for the façade as it was used in previous phases of the River City project.

Claude Cormier of Claude Cormier + Associés then explained the landscape features of the site. Mr. Cormier began by noting that the site is quite small and that they are working with all the other elements and previous building phases. He also explained the small confetti-like pavement markers scattered on the ground that add connectivity and continuity with the other surrounding sites. Mr. Cormier explained that ideally the small café on the ground floor will draw people to the area.

In terms of sustainability, Mr. Cormier explained that the team will be drawing from Phase 2 and 3 successes. They will also be pursuing LEED Gold and if it's possible to achieve more, they will.

### 1.3 Panel Questions

One of the Panel members asked about the material use and what the conceptual idea is behind the steel and concrete underside pieces. Mr. Saucier responded that they plan on casting the concrete on an angle. The detail between the concrete and stainless steel has to be seamless. Mr. Saucier also noted that they will be paying close attention to the concrete slab on the upper floors as it will be visible when you look up. He also expressed that they would be very meticulous with the casting itself so that it doesn't feel like the underside of something.

Another Panel member asked about the yellow colour shown on the ground floor. Mr. Cormier replied that they weren't necessarily thinking of using green or yellow but something that evokes light or natural environments.

One of the Panel members asked about the rationale behind locating the restaurant on the second floor rather than the first. Mr. Saucier replied that putting the restaurant on the second floor provides an interesting view to the highway which is a significant characteristic of the edgy industrial site. Placing the restaurant on the second floor also reduces the building footprint at grade as the restaurant will be approximately 4,000 square feet.

Another Panel member asked whether the effects of wind would be a problem on the site. Mr. Saucier replied that the shape of the building is irregular enough to disperse the wind, however they will be undertaking further wind studies.

One of the Panel members asked about the thinking behind the stairs. Mr. Saucier replied that it's supposed to make people feel that everything is emerging from the ground. It's supposed to create layering of functionality, a structural gesture.

One of the Panel members asked if the concrete slab will be heat traced. Mr. Saucier replied that they had not thought of this yet, however, it will be considered.

### 1.4 Panel Comments

The Chair then asked the Panel for their comments.

One of the Panel members expressed that the building was more quiet than expected. Since the plan revolves around the execution of the concrete, the Panel member recommended paying great attention to the quality of the concrete on the underside.

Another Panel member felt that the building was unique and responds to the shape of the site. The area is a tough industrial area and the design responds to those conditions. The Panel member also liked how the building has components that tie into the surrounding fabric such as Underpass Park and the rest of the city. The Panel member raised that the building must work year round and wind and ice conditions will be factors to consider.

One of the Panel members expressed a dislike for the stairs stating that they need to be more integrated as it looks like the stairs were transported from somewhere else and inserted into the building, not an organic part of it.

Another Panel member was appreciative of the team's thinking behind the whole evolution of River City and how it connects to the surrounding fabric of the site. The Panel member suggested the possibility of a lighting strategy on the underside.

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

The Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- Lots of questions raised about the treatment of the underside of the soffits, and reconsideration of the surface
- Winter conditions need to be taken into consideration
- Clarification of the lower part of the building as a super-structure and its relationship to what is above.
- The fundamentals for architecture are there, but it needs to be moved to absolute clarity.
- Recommends that the proponents bring a model of the building to the next DRP

### 1.6 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 and asked that they bring a model of the building to the next meeting and provide more clarity on the lower part of the building.

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## **2.0 Waterfront Innovation Centre**

*ID#:*

*Project Type:* Building

*Location:* East Bayfront

*Proponent:* Menkes

*Architect/Designer:* Sweeny & Co Architects, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

*Review Stage:* Concept Design

*Review Round:* One

*Presenter(s):* Dermot Sweeny, Gregg Warren

*Delegation:*

### 2.1 Introduction to the Issues

Mr. Glaisek introduced the project noting that this was their first time attending Design Review Panel. The project is in the Schematic Design Phase and is being developed by Menkes with Sweeny and Co Architects. Mr. Glaisek stated that the project is situated within Dockside, directly north of Corus Quay and Sugar Beach. Mr. Glaisek informed the Panel that the design of the stairs is under review as it encroaches on Sugar Beach.

### 2.2 Project Presentation

Mr. Glaisek then introduced Dermot Sweeny, President of Sweeny & Co. Architects to give the presentation. Mr. Sweeny began the presentation by stating that this is a Waterfront Toronto sponsored project combining Block 1 and 2 to create a multi-tenant complex that is cutting edge. Mr. Sweeny explained that the project team had to look at ways to make the building attractive while also taking the current and future surrounding developments into consideration.

Mr. Sweeny noted that while the building floorplate is large, it is not very tall which reduces shadow impacts and effects on the public realm. Mr. Sweeny explained there are three different components of the building: the Nexus is the connector, the Exchange is the collision space, and the Hive is the adaptable high performance workspace. Retail animates the public realm and promotes pedestrian engagement at the ground level.

Mr. Sweeny then introduced Greg Warren, Senior Project Manager with Janet Rosenberg & Studio to present the landscape portion of the project. Mr. Warren stated that the landscape of this project is about integration with Queens Quay, Dockside Drive, and Sugar Beach. Aspects from all three surrounding projects will be incorporated into the design. The use of Queens Quay granite and maple leaf motif will be extended to the face of the building rather than introducing a new regime.

### 2.3 Panel Questions

One of the Panel members asked if the windows would be operable. Mr. Dermot replied that it is under consideration but they need to get a better handle on the energy use.

### 2.4 Panel Comments

The Acting Chair then asked the Panel for their comments.

One of the Panel members was worried about the “atrium bridge” and how large it is. If its main job is bridging, maybe there is another option that won’t occupy as much space. The panel member expressed that the idea of the theatrical stair was too much, but also not enough at the same time. It should be simplified in its geometry and relationship to its elements and therefore needs further thinking.

Another Panel member noted that the building resembled the Ryerson Student Centre building with the cut backs and V shaped columns. The Panel member felt that there was a confusion of identity with what’s happening on Yonge Street and this area. The identity of the building needs to be unique. The Panel member also felt that there was a lack of coordination with what’s happening on the north and south side of the street, stating that there needs to be more transparency and north south connections to engage the public realm. The Panel member was very supportive of the green initiative and ground floor retail.

A number of Panel members agreed with the above comments noting that it is unclear what the building represents. The Panel members also agreed that the bridge portion of the building needs to be studied further. There was a Panel consensus that there is an opportunity to push the envelope much further, it’s an Innovation Centre and should be the most Innovative building in Toronto.

### 2.5 Summary of the Panel’s Key Issues

The Acting Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- Transparency and porosity at the pedestrian scale
- The atrium design needs to be re-thought

- The identity of the building needs to be unique

#### 2.6 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 Non-Support on the project

#### **CLOSING**

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

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