



WATERFRONTToronto

Waterfront Design Review Panel Minutes of Meeting #51 Wednesday, September 14th, 2011

Present:

Paul Bedford, Acting Chair
Peter Clewes
Claude Cormier
Brigitte Shim
Betsy Williamson
Jane Wolff

Regrets:

Bruce Kuwabara
George Baird
Peter Busby
Greg Smallenberg

Recording Secretary:

Melissa Horwood

Designees and Guests:

Christopher Glaisek
Robert Freedman

WELCOME

Paul Bedford, Acting Chair, welcomed the Panel, noting that Bruce Kuwabara has asked him to act as Chair for the month of September.

The Acting Chair then provided an overview of the agenda and 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.

Sherbourne Park

- North side open and the water system is now working and is treating lake water.

Don River Park

- Marsh is currently under construction with some habitat installed. The pavilion is almost done and the splash pad is being installed

Underpass Park

- Under construction and much of the concrete finish work has been installed. The sculpture for climbing is being installed.

Union Station Second Platform

- Under way to increase capacity of current platforms.

George Brown College

- Building has been topped up and there is still one more year until completion.

York Quay Revitalization, Phase II

- The walls of the parking garage are almost complete and they will be pouring floors soon

Stormwater Quality Facility

- The tunnel boring machine has commenced work.

Mimico Park

- Being completed

Port Union Phase II

- Being completed

Mr. Glaisek also stated that Waterfront Toronto has been able to rework the Long Term Plan to have full funding for Queens Quay, from Spadina Avenue to Bay Street. Mr. Glaisek stated that this has been approved by the Waterfront Toronto Board of Directors and will go to City of Toronto Council in October for approval as part of the annual budget review. Mr. Glaisek stated that if the budget is approved, utility relocation will commence Fall 2011 and build out will start in Spring 2012. Mr. Glaisek stated that it will be a three year build out with one real season of disruption followed by minor interruption of over the other seasons.

GENERAL BUSINESS

The Acting Chair then asked if there were any conflicts of interest to declare. Peter Clewes declared a conflict of interest on the East Bayfront Development Proposal for Bayside, Phase I.

The Acting Chair then moved to adopt the minutes from June 2011. The minutes were adopted.

The Acting Chair informed the Design Review Panel that at the recent City of Toronto Council Executive Committee deputations regarding the issue of the Portlands, he gave a deputation along with images. The Acting Chair stated that there is a real lack of knowledge of what is happening on the waterfront and lack of understanding about the history of the waterfront and that other people believe they have a better plan for the waterfront and can make it happen faster.

One Panel member asked if there was anything that the Design Review Panel could do. Mr. Glaisek stated that Waterfront Toronto has no issue with individuals going out and stating their opinion, but it should not come from the Panel as a whole.

One Panel member stated that wherever there can be more awareness one must keep on telling the story over and over again. The Panel member stated that there is a timeliness to this vote that is very key and it would be unfortunate to throw away all of the hard work that has already been done for the project.

Another Panel member stated that there is a complete lack of understanding about all that has been accomplished on the waterfront to date. The Panel member stated that lack of information can lead to people developing a different agenda.

The Acting Chair stated that the will of City Council is supreme and there must be a vote before anything can happen.

There being no other comments, the Chair moved to the Project Review portion of the meeting.

PROJECT REVIEWS

1.0 East Bayfront Development Proposal: Bayside Phase I

ID#: 1040

Project Type: Building/Structures

Location: Bounded by Sherbourne Common, Bonnycastle Road, Queens Quay and Lake Ontario.

Proponent: Hines

Architect/Designer: Arquitectonica

Review Stage: Concept Design

Review Round: Round One

Presenter(s): Bernardo Fort-Brescia, Arquitectonica

1.1 Introduction to the Issues

Andrew Gray, Vice President of Development for East Bayfront, introduced the project, noting that the project is at concept design. Mr. Gray stated that this is the first building within the 12 acre Bayside district and that they are in the process of starting the formal subdivision process with a draft plan anticipated for approval in early 2012. Mr. Gray stated that the most western block will not be impacted due to the existing Bonnycastle Road Right of Way as well as the existing Sherbourne Common. Mr. Gray stated that through a Request for Proposal, Waterfront Toronto and the City of Toronto are looking for certain attributes to come from the plan, particularly ground floor animation along Bonnycastle Road, a connection between Sherbourne Common and the proposed community, and a winter garden. Mr. Gray stated that Hines ran a design competition and Arquitectonica was awarded the bid.

1.2 Project Presentation

Bernardo Fort-Brescia, Founding Partner at Arquitectonica, introduced the project. The Presentation focused on the connections between Sherbourne Common and the Bayside district, the large lantern-like tower and the amenity space of the condo. As well, Mr. Fort-Brescia presented a solution to the location of an underground parking garage.

1.3 Panel Questions

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

One Panel member asked for clarification on Hines role within the context of this project. Hines is the developer for Bayside.

Another Panel member asked how the location of the crossing between the community and Sherbourne Common works. Mr. Fort-Brescia stated that the crossing is intended to take you closer to the center of gravity of Sherbourne Common. The Panel member then asked if the

design was within the zoning by-law for that area. Mr. Fort-Brescia stated that they are not within the zoning by-law and that they are proposing the height to move up by one story.

One Panel member asked if the area underneath the elevated portion of the tower would contain a core room. Mr. Fort-Brescia stated that there will be a resident's lounge, bar, terrace, and a porch located under the elevated portion of the tower, along with second community room that looks down that way.

Another Panel member asked how high the elevated portion of the tower was, where the stilts are. Mr. Fort-Brescia stated that they do not yet have an exact number, but it would be approximately five meters, possibly more. Mr. Fort-Brescia stated that it is actually two levels and that the drawings show a conservative calculation. The Panel member then asked what the facing distance was between the forty meter waterfront tower and the base of the building and if there are any windows facing each other. Mr. Fort-Brescia stated that the distance is thirteen meters and that there will likely be a secondary bedroom window facing a den. Mr. Fort-Brescia noted that there will not be any primary rooms looking in the direction of other windows.

One Panel member asked for a rationale for the location of passage between the community and Sherbourne Common. Mr. Fort-Brescia stated that due to the location of the fire stairs, elevators, and setback line, the current location of the passage makes the most sense. Mr. Fort-Brescia also stated that the passage will provide a direct line of sight to the pavilion as well as provide direct access to retailers from the street.

One Panel member asked if there was any discussion about switching the Winter Garden and entrance to ramp and loading. Mr. Fort-Brescia stated that it was contemplated but then the primary access would be separated for about 80% of the apartments.

One Panel member asked if there was a warming area in Sherbourne Common. Mr. Glaisek stated that there is a café component to the pavilion, allowing users to take advantage of the warmth.

1.4 Panel Comments

The Acting Chair then opened the meeting to Panel comments.

One Panel member thought that the presentation was very clear and that the project was presented in a way that used the right amount of words. Another Panel member thought that it was a good project that is headed in the right direction.

Several Panel members expressed concern about the location of the service entry at termination of the East-West street, feeling that should be a place for continuity with the public realm. One Panel member stated that it feels almost like a street that becomes a parking garage.

One Panel members felt that the retail facade along the water's edge could benefit from a different treatment.

One Panel member felt that the Winter Garden should be pushed right through the building at the East-West street, reinforcing the sculptural element of building.

One Panel member stated that the concept of stacking and the resulting shape in the elevation seems to be unclear. The Panel member felt as though the volumetric nature of the building takes

away from the bigger idea. The Panel member also felt as though the elevation on the south end is not dynamic, stating that it is very strong on the lower part, but gets weaker as you get higher.

One Panel member thought that the strategy is right in the logic of the units and retail but the final sculpting needs to be reworked.

One Panel member felt that because the building will be the first in an entirely new precinct, it will set the tone for future buildings in the area.

One Panel member felt that there was confusion with regards to the massing in the language of the building and that there are too many materials.

One Panel member stated that condos are constantly going over the height restrictions along the waterfront and the Panel member had fears about repeating what happened along the west of Toronto.

One Panel member felt that there were concerns about microclimate issues in the amenity space due to large floor plate and proposed 5 meter height.

One Panel member stated that there was a lot of discussion in previous Design Review Panel meetings with the Parkside project as it pertained to retail along the west face of the building and its interface with the park. The Panel member felt that the implication of what happens and the continuity of the public realm is an important consideration in how to proceed, noting that all the public realm pieces are being linked to create a network.

One Panel member stated that there are strong negative issues with taller building along the waterfront and that if the tower is going to be a “lantern” then it needs to be a light material that is different than all other materials used on the building.

One Panel member stated that there is a missed opportunity if there is no pedestrian east-west continuation from Sherbourne Common to Parliament Street.

One Panel member felt that the amenity deck was an area of concern and that studies should be done on the size of the space, the vertical height and the lighting conditions throughout the year.

1.5 Summary of the Panel’s Key Issues

The Acting Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- 1) Reconsider the location of the parking entry to de-emphasize its presence
- 2) Emphasize a stronger connected public realm by considering relocating the winter garden
- 3) Reconsider the size and public accessibility of the passage from Sherbourne Common
- 4) Re-evaluate the materiality of tower element along the waterfront
- 5) Further develop the upper portion of the building

1.6 Proponents Response

Mr. Fort-Brescia thanked the Panel for their feedback.

1.7 Vote of Support/Non-Support

The Acting Chair then asked that Panel for a vote of support, conditional support or non-support for the project. The Panel voted in conditional support of the project to move on to the next stage.

2.0 East Bayfront Public Realm: Bayside Waters Edge Promenade

ID#: 1041

Project Type: Public Realm

Location: South along the water's edge, between Sherbourne Common and Parliament Street

Proponent: Waterfront Toronto

Architect/Designer: West 8

Review Stage: Design Development

Review Round: Round One

Presenter(s): Marc Ryan, West 8; Adam Nicklin, DTAH

2.1 Introduction to the Issues

Andrew Gray, Vice President of Development for East Bayfront, introduced the project, noting that the project is at design development. Mr. Gray stated that, in partnership with Hines, West 8 is looking at the space along the water's edge and the relationship with the proposed Bayside development. Mr. Gray stated that the project is at the Design Review Panel for input, but not a formal approval.

2.2 Project Presentation

Marc Ryan, Landscape Architect with West 8, and Adam Nicklin, partner with DTAH, presented the project to the Panel. Mr. Ryan showed the evolution of the design, making reference to the existing work West 8 has completed along the Toronto waterfront.

2.3 Panel Questions

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

One Panel member asked why, if the road along the waterfront is optional, it has to comply with City of Toronto standards. Mr. Glaisek stated that there is intent to make the road public to allow for municipal servicing and snow removal.

One Panel member stated that as soon as a six inch curb is introduced, it shows people that one area is for cars and another area is for pedestrians and asked if there were other options available. Mr. Ryan stated that they are looking into a two inch canted curb with the same detail that is in Dockside.

Another Panel member stated that in Quebec City, there is a street with no curbs and bollards are moved seasonally and asked if the design team has explored this option. Mr. Nicklin stated that they have discussed the option and it is a possibility.

One Panel member asked if two-way traffic was necessary. Mr. Ryan stated that it is preferable and that retailers prefer the option.

2.4 Panel Comments

The Acting Chair then opened the meeting to Panel comments.

One Panel member suggested not allowing parking along the waterfront road. Another Panel member liked parking along the road.

One Panel member stated that Baldwin Street in Toronto is a good precedent for this street, as there is a constant flow of people and few cars use the area because of the high pedestrian flow. The Panel member also stated that on Baldwin Street, there is an eight meter street with a full curb and that people are not discouraged from crossing the block. The Panel member felt that if the street is made narrower it becomes less flexible.

One Panel member felt that the proposal makes sense. The Panel member stated that the area in front of the Corus building is too large and will never feel comfortable to pedestrians and that the proposed design for Bayside eliminates that feeling.

One Panel member questioned the use of Paleotech next to granite pavers, as it always just looks like concrete pavers. A few Panel members suggested having one continuous material.

One Panel member stated that they were in favour of the traffic and the parking due to the density it brings to the quality of movement and the layering.

One Panel member stated that the idea of making Bonneycastle Road a really great retail street is wonderful.

One Panel member suggested that there must be a reinforcement of the idea that one retail chain cannot come and take over the entire area, splitting up the spaces to look like different little restaurants.

One Panel member felt that Aiken Square would be better as a neighbourhood square, a more intimate space. The Panel member felt that the space has too large of a gap towards the waterfront to remain intimate and neighbourhood focused.

2.5 Summary of the Panel's Key Issues

The Acting Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- 1) Re-evaluate on-street parking and two way movement along the waterfront street
- 2) Blur the paving treatments
- 3) Create shallow curbs
- 4) Fill in the gap at Aiken Square
- 5) Maintain a continuity of retail

2.6 Proponents Response

Mr. Ryan thanked the Panel for their feedback.

2.7 Vote of Support/Non-Support

There was no vote held as this presentation was an information session.

3.0 West Don Lands Development Proposal: River Square Neighbourhood Phase II

ID#: 1042

Project Type: Building/Structures

Location: Area bounded by King Street, River Street, Eastern Avenue and Don River Park

Proponent: Urban Capital Property Group

Architect/Designer: Saucier + Perrotte Architectes with ZAS Architects

Review Stage: Concept Design

Review Round: Round One

Presenter(s): André Perrotte and Gilles Saucier, Saucier + Perrotte Architectes; Paul Stevens, ZAS Architects

3.1 Introduction to the Issues

Derek Goring, Director of Development at Waterfront Toronto, introduced the project, noting that Phase I has already been presented to the Design Review Panel and that design work for Phase II is further along because Phase I and II were presented to the City of Toronto as a single site plan application.

3.2 Project Presentation

Gilles Saucier, Principal at Saucier + Perrotte Architectes, presented the project to the Panel.

3.3 Panel Questions

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

One Panel member asked for clarification on the material for the balconies. Mr. Saucier stated that Saucier + Perrotte Architectes have used architectural concrete successfully in the past. Mr. Saucier also stated that the railing for the balconies will likely be glass, noting that they would like to use a soft opaque glass or an aluminium panel with a coating of very bright or reflective paint. Mr. Saucier also stated that they will count on reflectivity, noting that a painted concrete would be very inappropriate.

One Panel member asked for clarification on the south side parking garage elevation. Mr. Saucier stated that they are planning on continuing poured form concrete around the base with vegetation growing on top of it.

One Panel member stated that in the presentation there was talk about permeability. The Panel member stated that at grade there is no permeability but asked if there was a visual permeability higher up. Mr. Saucier stated that yes, there was a visual permeability higher up. The Panel member then asked if one could see the pool from outside. Mr. Saucier stated that the pool was too high to see from the outside.

One Panel member asked if the townhouses only have windows in the front. Mr. Saucier confirmed that the townhouses only have windows in the front.

One Panel member asked if there was a connection between Don River Park and the building. Mr. Perrotte stated that all of the sidewalk and street between Don River Park and the building is part of the public realm.

3.4 Panel Comments

The Acting Chair then opened the meeting to Panel comments.

One Panel member stated that it reminded them of the 75 Portland project and the Panel member felt as though that project suffers from the idea of concrete in residential construction.

One Panel member felt that the project is very beautiful but that sometimes residential construction suffers from good ideas and poor execution due to budget constraints, and warned the architects to be careful not to overshoot themselves and not be able to deliver. Another Panel member stated that due to the visibility of the project, the execution of the details is very important and that this project will become a gateway image of the entire precinct.

One Panel member stated that they loved the juxtaposition of black and white in the project.

One Panel member felt as though the project was very strong with clear intentions. The Panel member also felt positively that there is a clear distinction between Phase I and Phase II. Another Panel member stated they appreciated the overall project and another Panel member stated that they strongly support the project.

One Panel member liked the raised townhouses, noting that it gives a sense of privacy along the park.

One Panel member felt the pool should be white, and not blue, to better harmonize with the landscape and colour palette of the buildings.

One Panel member felt that the strength of the project lies within the pulling forwards and back, the plasticity of the design. The Panel member also stated they trust the details will be finished well.

One Panel member felt as though the focus of the Design Review Panel should be about the relationship of the project to the public realm, and that it was not emphasized enough in this presentation.

Many Panel members felt that the development of the south woonerf needed to be shown, especially in relation to Underpass Park. One Panel member also felt as though the design needs to be mindful of not privatizing the woonerfs.

One Panel member stated that the city is very much in the day and age of stacked box design and that in some areas of the design of the building, it reads as a flat panel on one end with a few boxes coming forward. The Panel member felt that it is too typical looking and that the design can be taken one step further to be more complex.

One Panel member liked that the design picks up on the industrial history of the area of the city.

Another Panel member stated that for the next presentation of the project, they would like to see more images of the sectional relationships between the north and south woonerfs.

3.5 Summary of the Panel's Key Issues

The Acting Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- 1) Pay attention to the details and materials and make sure they can be delivered beautifully
- 2) Be as bold and complex as possible, especially in the treatment of the building ends

- 3) Develop more elevations
- 4) Evaluate the relationship of the building to the park and woonerfs

3.6 Proponents Response

Mr. Perrotte and Mr. Saucier thanked the Panel for their feedback.

3.7 Vote of Support/Non-Support

The Acting Chair then asked the Panel for a note of support, non-support or conditional support for the project. The Panel voted in Support of the project.

CLOSING

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

DRAFT