



Waterfront Design Review Panel Minutes of Meeting #12 Wednesday, January 10, 2007

Present:

Bruce Kuwabara, Chair
Paul Bedford
Renee Daoust
Siamak Hariri
Peter Halsall
Janet Rosenberg
Greg Smalenberg
Charles Waldheim

Regrets:

George Baird
Tania Bortolotto
Peter Clewes
Anne McIlroy
Don Schmitt

Designees and Guests:

John Campbell

Robert Freedman
Christopher Glaisek

Recording Secretary:

Pina Mallozzi

WELCOME

The Chair greeted the Panel by wishing everyone a Happy New Year. He then invited John Campbell to give his first report of 2007.

REPORT FROM THE CEO

John Campbell, the Corporation's President and CEO, began by thanking the Panel members for their work in 2006 and expressing his optimism for the coming year. He stated that while the public often says nothing is happening, much of the groundwork has been laid for shovels to go in the ground in 2007.

Mr. Campbell stated that nowhere was that more apparent than the Corporation's Annual General Meeting on November 15, 2006. He thanked Panel member Charles Waldheim for coordinating the design symposium component of the meeting, which helped draw over 400 people to and showcased four of the best designers in the world working on the Corporation's projects.

Mr. Campbell explained that the Corporation is in the midst of transferring project management responsibilities from the Program Manager consultant team to in-house staff, and is targeting the end of March for the new structure to be in place. At the same time, the Corporation is moving to a Vendor of Record model for ongoing professional services.

In the West Don Lands, Mr. Campbell explained that the developer proposal call is not out yet, as the Corporation is trying to ensure that there is sufficient certainty in all areas of

the project. Outstanding issues include the strategy for dealing with excavated soils and the resolution of technical problems with the design of the flood protection landform caused by compressible solids and the low-level interceptor sewer. The size of the offering in the first developer proposal call has been increased from about 350 units to 750 units, not including the affordable housing to be developed by Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC).

In East Bayfront, the Corporation has assumed control of the south side of Queens Quay Boulevard through the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the city. However, that document also gives the Toronto Economic Development Corporation (TEDCO) the option of completing a deal for Project Symphony on the east side of Jarvis slip. If it goes through, the proposed building massing will require changes to the precinct plan, including minor height increases and modified setbacks. Regardless, the Corporation intends to move quickly to construct Sherbourne Park, and notice has been issued to tenants on the site and an RFP released for park design services.

Sustainability remains an important focus throughout. Mr. Campbell explained that a District Energy business plan will go to the Corporation's Board of Director's at next week's meeting, and staff will also continue exploring vacuum waste and recommendations for intelligent communities.

The Long-Term Business Plan is being reviewed, to essentially prepare a revised version of the Fung Task Force report, which set the agenda nearly five years ago and needs to be revisited to determine what the current waterfront revitalization priorities are. As an example, Mr. Campbell cited the Central Waterfront Public Realm, which was not part of the long-term plan but is now a major priority that needs to be added.

The Federal sunset provision is a critical challenge facing the Corporation, as it stipulates that all waterfront projects receiving federal money must be completed by March 2008. The Corporation is seeking a 3-year extension, which is probably the maximum that can be granted. This may require a revision of the implementation timelines that have been set out so as to prioritize spending the federal funds first.

Mr. Campbell noted that the recent cabinet shuffle in Ottawa may have some short-term impact on the Corporation's activities, as the waterfront file is assigned to a minister not a ministry. Therefore, Minister John Bair's move to the Ministry of the Environment will necessitate getting his new staff familiar with the program and projects.

The Lake Ontario Park design process continues to move along with enthusiastic support from many of the stakeholders. One concern that has been raised, however, is the potential development of the TEDCO-controlled properties south of Unwin Avenue at the corner of Cherry Street. Based on strong feedback from many sides, the Corporation is suggesting that the boundary of Lake Ontario Park be redrawn to include all lands south of Unwin Avenue. This conflicts with the city's official Waterfront Secondary Plan – which the Corporation has up to now strictly followed – and would require an Official Plan Amendment. Senior staff members are having discussions with the Board on this issue, and the Corporation may recommend that the city seek to modify the Waterfront Secondary Plan for the purposes of expanding Lake Ontario Park.

The Chair then asked the Panel if they had any questions or comments for Mr. Campbell.

One Panel member praised the outstanding success of the Annual General Meeting and in particular the park design symposium component. It was felt that there have been only a couple of other moments in design history in Toronto that were that good, especially the combination of drawing established stakeholders for the business component of the meeting as well as the younger design professionals for the design component.

Another Panel member expressed their support for expanding the boundary of Lake Ontario Park to encompass all the land south of Unwin Avenue. They felt that this is the way planning should work, and that the Waterfront Secondary Plan should be treated as a broad framework that needs to be flexible in some places.

REPORT FROM THE VP PLANNING AND DESIGN

Christopher Glaisek, the Corporation's Vice President for Planning and Design, gave a brief update on project progress over the past month.

Lake Ontario Park

- The design for Lake Ontario Park, despite some past concerns, has become more widely supported. One concern at this point is the viability of the dunescape landscape typology. The Corporation has asked the Field Operations design team to research this further.
- Mr. Glaisek invited the Panel members to the Lake Ontario Park public meeting scheduled for January 17, 2007 at 6:00pm.

Lower Don Lands

- The Request for Qualifications for the Lower Don Lands Innovative Design Competition was issued on December 14, 2007. The RFQ will close on January 24, 2007, and there have already been over 200 downloads.

Central Waterfront

- TWRC is working to complete the contract with West 8+DTAH, however, the Contribution Agreement from the governments has yet to be approved and until such point the Corporation will be unable to enter into contract with the design team.

Requests for Proposals have been issued for Sherbourne Park and the public realm for the West Don Lands. Mr. Glaisek asked the Panel for input on how to integrate engineering and municipal servicing into the design process for the public realm for West Don Lands and East Bayfront. Mr. Glaisek noted that the Corporation is considering issuing an additional RFP for the public realm in East Bayfront.

Mr. Glaisek explained that the transition from the Program Manager to in-house project management is underway. The Planning and Design department is looking to grow by adding five or six new staff. Mr. Glaisek introduced Brenda Webster, the first new Project Manager.

GENERAL BUSINESS

The Chair then asked the Panel for any comments or corrections to the minutes. With no corrections noted, the minutes were approved.

The Chair then noted that the development of selection criteria for the Developer Proposal Calls for the West Don Lands and East Bayfront is of interest to the Panel and that

excellence in design is a key factor for the success of the Panel in evaluating projects. Mr. Kuwabara noted that his objective as Chair of the Design Review Panel is to see the implementation of exemplary architecture and landscape on the city's waterfront.

Mr. Campbell noted that the Corporation is committed to excellence and is therefore preparing to first issue an RFQ for developers and will only short-list teams where design excellence is apparent. One Panel member suggested that a submission requirement be the demonstration of one good built urbanistic project. Mr. Glaisek noted that eight major criteria for the developer proposal call have been developed, one being evidence of urban design and architectural excellence. Another Panel member suggested that design excellence not be referred to as a criteria but rather as a prerequisite to success.

One Panel member expressed a belief that the great designers working on park projects on the waterfront combined with the Corporation's commitment to investment in the public realm is becoming a Toronto Park Renaissance. It was noted that this is a very good thing, and that the international design community has eyes on Toronto but that the missed opportunity is that the public at-large is still not fully engaged in these great initiatives underway.

The Chair noted that one Panel member had suggested that there is a problem with the standards for the public realm being determined by the City's policy and suggested that a group approach the Mayor with some suggestions for improvements. One Panel member suggested that the Panel start by determining what parameters make a great public realm and then deducing some recommendations from this exercise. It was also suggested that the Panel compile precedents and imagery of great streets and provide annotations on what makes the street great. Another Panel member suggested that when the group meets with the Mayor the presentation should not be based on problems but rather solutions. It was recommended that the Corporation prepare a mock-up of a segment of a great street to help capture the imagination.

One Panel member suggested that the media might be useful in making this a public issue. It was suggested that two street sections get published and Torontonians be asked to vote.

Mr. Freedman noted that senior city staff are very knowledgeable about how to create great urban environments but that when it comes to determining the right-of-way cross section the decisions are often driven by concerns over transportation and emergency services. One Panel member recommended that Toronto consider obtaining smaller fire trucks as large trucks may not be required to service lower density community areas, such as townhouses. It was noted that the current emergency services standards are based on very specific requirements of insurance companies, which would have to be understood.

It was agreed that the Corporation would provide some resources to research some of the alternatives. It was suggested that this come back to the Panel at a future meeting.

One Panel member raised concerns with the composition of juries and selection committees for the Corporation's RFQ/RFPs. It was recommended that the jury for a RFQ/RFP be published in the call as designers often want to know this information before deciding to invest in preparing a proposal.

PROJECT REVIEWS

1.0 Leslie Street Greening

ID#: 1004

Project Type: Park/Public Realm Design

Location: Leslie Street, south of Lakeshore Avenue, north of Unwin Avenue

Proponent: Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation

Architect/Designer: Envision Group

Review Round: Two

Presenter(s): Eha Naylor, Envision

Delegation: Christina Pilz, Envision

1.1 Introduction to the Issues

Mr. Glaisek introduced the project, noting that this is the second time the project is coming to the Panel and that the goal of the project is to provide a quick enhancement to Leslie Street in advance of its complete reconstruction in five to ten years. It was recommended that the Panel acknowledge the budget and time limitations of the project. The main issues on which the advice of the Panel was sought include:

- The delineation between what will be permanent, what will be temporary and the relationship between those two components;
- The proposed consolidation of the three driveways into the Public Works Yard;
- The proposed decreasing of the road right-of-way width;
- The simplification of the landscape scheme.

1.2 Project Presentation

Eha Naylor, Principal with Envision, provided an overview of the objectives, principles, and challenges with the Leslie Street greening initiative. She explained the recommendations from the last Panel meeting and demonstrated how the current concept addressed the feedback received, highlighting the permanence of the plantings and the trail configuration, and the potential for future changes to the sidewalks and curbs.

1.3 Panel Comments

The Chair then asked the Panel for comments.

The Panel asked if Phase 1 of Leslie Street has been completed. It was noted that construction was recently completed, along the segment from Lakeshore to Commissioners Streets.

The Panel asked how many access points to the works yard would be preferred by the design team. It was noted that the team would prefer to have one consolidated access point at a signalized intersection in order to maximum safety for cyclists by reducing points of conflict with trucks exiting and entering the site.

One Panel member asked who the main users of the road are. It was noted that the road is heavily used for heavy industrial employment. It was suggested that the proposed 9.3/10.5 meter width seems somewhat wide for a two lane road and it was recommended that Leslie Street might be a good case study for the exploration on great streets. One Panel member suggested that a two lane street should be no more than seven meters. Rather than adding the extra width to public realm, it was suggested that a lane of onstreet

parking be provided as a buffer between the bike path and the road. It was noted that a parking lot currently exists at Leslie Street and Unwin for recreational users.

Another Panel member thanked the team for their attention to the comments from the Panel and proposed the Panel support the recommendations of the team and not stand in the way of the project proceeding, noting the value of getting the trail in, even if in a simple configuration at this point. Another Panel member was concerned that the trail may be compromised in this design proposal. It was noted that although the trail was far superior than the existing condition the cyclists would be biking along side the trucks servicing the industrial users. This is expected to change over time as the Port Lands evolves.

One Panel member stressed the importance of the trees reading as a line. Ms. Naylor noted that while the trees will have a consistent form, they are proposing several different species. The Panel recommended more consistency in the tree planting, noting that other cities allow one type of tree per street but different types on each street in order to avoid monocultures. It was also recommended that trees be planted closer together and one Panel member suggested six meters on centre as a spacing alternative.

Ms. Naylor noted that the team has been working with the City of Toronto Urban Forestry department and that they have not been able to reach an agreement on that. One Panel member offered to meet with Ms. Naylor to discuss the City's street tree strategies.

1.4 Summary of Panel's Key Issues

The Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- i. Support the narrowing of the street and the consolidation of the work's yard driveways;
- ii. Recommend a single tree type spaced tighter together;
- iii. Ensure on-going maintenance in order to preserve sustainability of the trees once planted;

1.5 Proponent's Response

Ms. Naylor thanked the Panel for its feedback.

2.0 East Bayfront Business Plan and Ground Floor Animation Strategy

ID#: 1015

Project Type: Master Plan

Location: Area bounded by Lower Jarvis and Parliament Streets south of Lakeshore Boulevard

Proponent: Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation

Architect/Designer: n/a

Review Round: for information only

Presenter(s): John Campbell

Delegation: n/a

2.1 Introduction to the Issues

Mr. Glaisek introduced the project, noting that the Panel had requested additional information on the Corporation's ground floor strategy and that Mr. Campbell would provide an overview of the Corporation's East Bayfront Business Plan and Ground Floor Animation Strategy.

2.2 Project Presentation

Mr. Campbell, the Corporation's President and CEO, then provided a summary of the Business Plan for the East Bayfront which was prepared as a requirement of the MOU between the Corporation and the City as a precondition of the Corporation being given the role of master developer of the site. Mr. Campbell explained the challenges that come with trying to accommodate a mix of commercial, residential, employment and tourism based uses. He provided an overview of the objectives and then explained the phasing for the development of the site.

Mr. Campbell provided a detailed explanation of the employment goals and the link between them and the creation of a cultural ground floor that responds to the Corporation's goals for new media as a driver for the community. Mr. Campbell then explained that the Corporation intends to maintain all the ground floor in the East Bayfront and issue an RFP for its management as a single entity. It was noted that subsidies may be provided at the front end to ensure an interesting mix that overtime it is intended to become more sustainable. Mr. Campbell concluded by explaining the financial assumptions in the business plan.

2.3 Panel Comments

The Chair then asked the Panel for comments.

One Panel member asked how the phasing for the East Bayfront is expected to roll out. Mr. Campbell explained that Phase One will include the sites south of Queens Quay between Jarvis Street and Sherbourne Park, including one site which is being prepared by TEDCO. It was noted that the Corporation will likely retain two developers in Phase one, one for the residential and one for the employment uses.

Another Panel member suggested that other cities have led with building the water's edge and asked whether any delays in development would preclude the building of the water's edge. Mr. Campbell expressed concerns with building the water's edge before the new buildings because of construction impacts on the sea wall. The Panel asked whether the West 8 plan would be superimposed onto the Precinct Plan. Mr. Campbell noted that yes this was the goal but that there are some challenges to resolve in that process.

One Panel member asked the status of the TEDCO development proposal for Jarvis Slip. Mr. Campbell noted that the design for the building is currently being developed. The Panel asked if the proposal was in keeping with the Precinct Plan. It was noted that the design does not adhere to the diagonal along Jarvis Slip and that the proposal is considering raising heights by one or two floors. The Panel raised concerns that this could become a precedent for other development parcels. Mr. Campbell shared this concern noting, however, that the design team will have to present to the Panel at a future meeting.

2.4 Summary of Panel's Key Issues

N/A

2.5 Proponent's Response

N/A

3.0 Lower Don Lands

ID#: 1008

Project Type: Master Plan and Park/Public Realm Design

Location: Area bounded by Parliament Street, the Don Roadway, the CN Rail Corridor Commissioners Street as well as the Don Greenway

Proponent: Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation

Architect/Designer: n/a

Review Round: for information only

Presenter(s): Christopher Glaisek

Delegation: Pina Mallozzi

3.1 Introduction to the Issues

Mr. Glaisek introduced the project explaining that the Corporation has issued a Request for Qualifications for a two-stage competition which is intended to combine and integrate the following three projects in order to develop a solution for the river as an amenity for the city at-large:

1. Don Mouth Naturalization and Port Lands Flood Protection
2. East of Parliament Master Plan/Queens Quay Extension
3. Waterfront East Transit

Mr. Glaisek noted that the Request for Qualifications, included in the Panel's binders, outlines the objectives which were presented to the Panel at a previous meeting. The main issues on which the advice of the Panel was sought include:

- the development of a detailed scope for the competition brief;
- jury composition.

3.2 Project Presentation

N/A

3.3 Panel Comments

The Chair then asked the Panel for comments.

One Panel member asked if the Lower Don Lands Competition will reflect the model used for the Central Waterfront competition. Mr. Glaisek responded that it would, but that there is a difference in the final commission which in this case is integration into three distinct planning and design processes, two of which are already underway.

Another Panel member noted that there seems to be a lot of excitement amongst the landscape architecture community. The Panel recommended that having the Jury in place as soon as possible will be helpful to potential competitors. One Panel member suggested that the jury should include an international component. Another Panel member disagreed noting that the passion which the last jury had for the city was integral to the outcome of the competition.

The Chair asked the Panel who they would recommend as potential jury members, asking if there was one particular person that has done a project of this complexity before. One Panel member suggested Michel Desvigne or Peter Latz have completed similar projects. Mr. Glaisek asked the Panel what they thought about Michael Hough as a Jury member. It was noted that he would be very knowledgeable but there was a concern about including people who have been historically deeply invested in the project. Mr. Glaisek asked if the Panel could suggest an ecological or hydrological engineer.

One Panel member suggested that both George Hargreaves and Michael Van Valkenburgh have completed projects at this scale and suggested that John Todd, who is based in

Cape Cod is also doing very interesting ecological planning. Another Panel member suggested involving Adriaan Geuze on the Jury. Other Panel members expressed concern that this could send a message that this competition is about attracting celebrity designers. Mr. Glaisek asked the Panel their thoughts on including David Suzuki as a jury member. It was felt that while he is certainly an important figure in ecological awareness, he is unlikely to be available.

The Panel suggested David Cronenberg or Brigitte Shim. Mr. Glaisek noted that he was thinking of Ed Burtynsky. Another Panel member suggested Walter Koolash or someone from Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin as potential engineers. The Panel agreed that the Chair needed to have a landscape focus. One Panel member suggested Julie Bargmann, however another Panel member felt that she should compete, not jury the competition.

It was also suggested by the Panel that a City Parks Department representative attend all future Panel meetings.

It was suggested by one Panel member that the Competition Brief should focus on the ecological function of the corridor in addition to the river itself and it was recommended that all teams that are short-listed have deep ecological understanding. Another Panel member suggested explaining in detail the environmental assessment process in order to be sure that international competitors understood the terms of the final commission. One Panel member noted that although the final commission may be to work on the environmental assessment teams the goal of the competition is to “untie the knot” that the Lower Don Lands site represents.

3.4 Summary of Panel’s Key Issues

N/A

3.5 Proponent’s Response

Mr. Glaisek thanked the Panel for its input.

The Chair then announced he had to leave, and appointed Paul Bedford as acting Chair.

4.0 Don River Park

ID#: 1006

Project Type: Park/Public Realm Design

Location: Area bounded by the Don River, CN Rail yards, Bayview Avenue, and King Street

Proponent: Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation

Architect/Designer: Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates

Review Round: fifth

Presenter(s): Michael Van Valkenburgh

Delegation: Emily Mueller De Celis, Melanie Hare, Laurie Payne

4.1 Introduction to the Issues

Mr. Glaisek introduced the project, noting the intention for this to be the final Panel presentation on Don River Park, as this represents 60% design development completion, the remaining 40% to be completed in 2-3 weeks. It was noted that the MVVA team will return to the Panel with more design work for the park pavilion and Bayview and River Streets. It was noted that the project has gained strong support from the agencies and the

community, and the feedback of the Panel thus far has been very positive. The Panel's support for moving into implementation of the park design.

4.2 Project Presentation

Mr. Van Valkenburgh, Principal with Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, provided the Panel with a review of the design. He then explained in more detail some of the concerns that arose in the design process and provided the Panel with a summary of the resolutions. He explained of the park design's approach to ecology, plantings, sustainability, programming, urban connections and public art integration. He then provided an overview of the design for River Square. Mr. Van Valkenburgh concluded by walking the Panel through the 60% Design Development drawings for final review.

4.3 Panel Comments

The Acting Chair then asked the Panel for comments.

One Panel member suggested that when preparing the plan for tender, a pre-designated, independent source for tree species be used to guarantee the trees are ready at the appropriate time. It was noted that this may not work under the Corporation's procurement policies. Instead, it was recommended that the Corporation pre-qualify a nursery and remove the provision of plant material from the landscape tender.

Another Panel member asked about the sustainability of new trees in Toronto. Mr. Van Valkenburgh suggested that the soil scientist on their team believes that the failure of trees in Toronto is in the quality of the soil. It was noted that the Corporation has contracted a soil scientist to pre-qualify soils for the flood protection landform and that the design team has provided them with the specifications for the park's soils as well.

One Panel member suggested that one of the unused sites on the waterfront be used for soil creation. It was recommended that soil farming could have enormous cost savings and would contribute to sustainability because it would decrease the need for trucking of soils to the site. Another Panel member asked whether the City of Toronto has a recycling program for organics. Melanie Hare noted that the Corporation is working with the City of Toronto to determine whether any opportunities exist within the organics program.

Another Panel member asked whether the design team will prepare the maintenance specifications for the park. Mr. Van Valkenburgh explained that Leslie Coates from the Parks Department has determined a way for the gardener from the music garden to be assigned as the head gardener for Don River Park. The design team has already met with him and is developing a partnership with him to ensure he is an advocate for the park design. Ms. Hare noted that the design team will be preparing maintenance specifications for the park as part of their contract.

One Panel member felt that in the designs for the public realm on Bayview and River Streets the trees should not be located on the inside of the sidewalk but rather should line the edge of the street. Mr. Van Valkenburgh explained that trees do much better at a distance from the street. The Panel agreed that they would much prefer to see the trees on the road side as a buffer between pedestrians and cars. They suggested that trees be placed along the road but set back enough to protect them from salt spray and vehicular damage. Mr. Van Valkenburgh suggested that the team return to the next Panel meeting with some alternatives as part of the overall streetscape design work.

Another Panel member commented on the need for more inventive European furnishings in the public realm and more creativity in the specifications of children's play equipment. Mr. Van Valkenburgh noted that the play equipment in the park, although mostly catalogue, is from a German supplier, and will be largely natural woods rather than bright coloured plastics.

One Panel member asked about the status of the skating rink, Mr. Van Valkenburgh noted that it had been dropped from the design, as there will be another skating rink built nearby.

4.4 Summary of Panel's Key Issues

The Acting Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- i. Strong consensus on providing a double row of trees that borders the sidewalk;
- ii. Six meter spacing for street trees that borders the sidewalk;
- iii. Emphasis on ensuring soil specifications that promote tree growth.

The Acting Chair complimented Michael Van Valkenburgh and his team noting that it was a pleasure to see this project evolve and thanking him for all the work that has been done to get this point.

4.5 Proponent's Response

Mr. Van Valkenburgh thanked the Panel for their input, noting that this project has been very enjoyable for him as well.

CLOSING

The Acting Chair then adjourned the meeting.