



**WATERFRONT**Toronto

**Waterfront Design Review Panel**

**Minutes of Meeting #150**

Wednesday, Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022

Meeting held Virtually

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**Present**

Paul Bedford, Chair  
Betsy Williamson, Vice Chair  
George Baird  
Peter Busby  
Pat Hanson  
Matthew Hickey  
Janna Levitt  
Fadi Masoud  
Brigitte Shim  
Kevin Stelzer  
Eric Turcotte

**Regrets**

Nina-Marie Lister  
Jeff Ranson

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**Representatives**

Chris Glaisek, Waterfront Toronto  
Emilia Floro, City of Toronto

**Recording Secretary**

Leon Lai

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**WELCOME**

The Chair opened the meeting by providing an overview of the agenda, which included reviews of:

1. Waterfront East LRT Area 2B Cherry North – Schematic Design
  2. 200 Queens Quay West – Schematic Design
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**GENERAL BUSINESS**

The Chair asked the Panel to adopt the minutes from the Jan. 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting. The minutes were adopted. The Chair asked if there were any conflicts of interest. Eric Turcotte declared conflict of interest for **200 Queens Quay West** and recused himself for the review.

The Chair then asked Christopher Glaisek, Chief Planning and Design Officer with Waterfront Toronto, to give an update on last month's projects.

Waterfront Toronto Updates:

Mr. Glaisek began by noting that the Board of Directors passed a resolution inviting Quayside Impact Limited Partnership, an alliance between Dream and Great Gulf, to negotiate a Project Agreement with Waterfront Toronto for **Quayside**. Mr. Glaisek noted the master plan, the RFP stage building designs including the Western Curve, Timber House, The Overstory, the urban farm at the top of Timber House, and the Community Forest. Mr. Glaisek noted the project will appear in front of the WDRP.

Design Review Panel Updates:

Leon Lai, Manager of the Design Review Panel with Waterfront Toronto, reported back on last month's project. Mr. Lai noted that **PIC Core Urban Design Guidelines** (UDG) is working to address the Consensus Comments from Jan. 2022 Draft Plan review. At the next review, the team will provide information on the UDG will work with other planning vehicles, as well as an update on the project's Indigenous engagement strategies. Tentatively, the project is scheduled to return in April. Mr. Lai concluded by noting the draft agenda for March 2022 DRP.

Chair's remarks:

The Chair concluded the General Business segment and motioned to go into the project review sessions.

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**PROJECT REVIEWS**

**1.0 Waterfront East LRT Area 2B Cherry North – Schematic Design**

*Project ID #:* 1125  
*Project Type:* Public Realm  
*Review Stage:* Schematic Design  
*Review Round:* Two (Cherry North only)  
*Location:* East Bayfront, Keating Channel, Port Lands  
*Proponent:* Waterfront Toronto  
*Architect/ Designer:* Public Work, Stantec  
*Presenter(s):* Adam Nicklin, Principal, Public Work  
*Delegation:* Marc Ryan, Public Work  
Luke van Tol, Public Work  
Kenneth Poon, Stantec  
David Sauve, Stantec  
Nigel Tahair, City of Toronto  
Sonja Vangjeli, Waterfront Toronto  
Pina Mallozzi, Waterfront Toronto  
Corey Bialek, Waterfront Toronto

Josh Hilburt, Waterfront Toronto  
Kristal Tanunagara, Waterfront Toronto

## **1.1 Introduction to the Issues**

Sonja Vangjeli, Project Manager, with Waterfront Toronto, began the introduction by noting the preliminary design and engineering segments of Waterfront East LRT, project background, scopes of work of Area 2B, and the anticipated project timeline. Ms. Vangjeli noted the Cherry North Transit Underpass Feasibility Study options and site context including 3C master plan, West Don Lands Block 20, Stormwater Management Facility, and the Pedestrian & Cycling Connectivity Study. Ms. Vangjeli noted that the project is here for Schematic Design, completing the Area 2B section review. Ms. Vangjeli summarized the June 2021 Issues Identification Consensus Comments, and the areas for Panel consideration today: Cherry Street enhancement to the streetscape, Tank House Lane pedestrian crossing, reconfiguration of bike lanes, vision of the wetland, and the ecological performance. Ms. Vangjeli then introduced Adam Nicklin, Principal with Public Work, to continue the presentation.

## **1.2 Project Presentation**

Mr. Nicklin began the presentation with an update on the Cherry streetscape, responsive street palette, full and hybrid green track options. Mr. Nicklin noted the June 2021 DRP design, the portal alignment, and proposed option of additional new LRT and pedestrian portal east of existing bridge. Mr. Nicklin noted the proposed district circulation connecting series of paved public plazas. Mr. Nicklin noted the site is one of the lowest points in the city, the presence of ground water, and an opportunity to create capacity for water collection here. Furthermore, high groundwater level can create anaerobic soil conditions that affect tree health.

Mr. Nicklin noted the history of the site, the landscape of marsh that preceded the city, and the intent to celebrate and reveal water that has always been at the site. Mr. Nicklin noted urban marsh precedents and the Cherry Marsh concept which will connect the Indigenous Hub landscape at Block 10, with the Sediment Park and the River. Mr. Nicklin presented the views of the Cherry Marsh, plant species, seasonal uses, and the integration of the Signal Tower into the design. Mr. Nicklin noted the Marsh is a contemporary take on a traditionally built landscape, marrying the regional locale with the river. It is also a performance landscape that does not simply rely on infrastructure such as catch basins and pipes while operationally assisting the transit project.

## **1.3 Panel Questions**

The Chair then asked the Panel for questions of clarification.

One Panel member asked for more clarification on the project's elevations and their impact on the pedestrian experience. Mr. Nicklin noted the TTC track is coplanar with the plaza, the retaining wall is meant to help funnel pedestrians to the crossing instead of the tracks. The TTC tracks begin to descend closer to the underpass.

Another Panel member asked for the percentage of accessible surface versus marsh land and if it is possible to walk up the upsloping planting area. Mr. Nicklin noted that the plaza is accessible for gatherings for about 55% of the area, the team is considering this in the context of all other open spaces in the Distillery District. The Panel member asked if this is a city park and who will provide maintenance. Mr. Nicklin noted it is not definitive yet, all options are being explored depending on the final design maintenance needs.

Another Panel member asked for more information on the median and crossing at Tank House Lane and if the team proposes to expand that connection. Mr. Nicklin noted they will add more spaces for bikes, the team is interested in a mixed-use street with more space for pedestrians, cyclists, and ideally a crossing at Tank House Lane.

One Panel member asked if the tower is still accessible. Mr. Nicklin noted that is an open question, the team recognizes it is a landmark in the marsh, and it is very exciting to imagine it being accessible in the end.

Another Panel member asked for clarification on the marsh water quality and the system for water management. Mr. Nicklin noted the water comes from a few places, located from the TTC rights-of-way, pedestrian area – the need is quantity of water and the ability of the area to absorb water without overflowing the TTC line. In terms of water filtration quality, the stormwater management facility is state of the art, everything that comes out will be processed, the challenge here is quantity of buffer.

One Panel member asked if the marsh is dug out. Mr. Nicklin noted it can be designed in a naturalized condition, there would be an angled wall with terrain proposed. The Panel member asked if the water goes into the marsh, cleaned, and mechanically connected to the larger stormwater system. Mr. Nicklin noted all water goes into the facility, some of it will go into the water table – if it is high then the marsh will have less capacity to absorb.

Another Panel asked if the proposed “Prospect Deck” will help in absorbing water when there is a high intake. Mr. Nicklin noted the low area can take water but where high will remain high. The Panel member asked if there is a concern with standing water. Mr. Nicklin noted there will be passive circulation. The Panel member asked for more information on the railing design. Mr. Nicklin noted there are deeper and shallower areas, railing requirements will be determined, the team is considering a lean rail so it is part of the experience.

#### **1.4 Panel Comments**

One Panel member appreciated the investigative work, the Cherry Marsh concept is very convincing. The Panel member would like to know the impact of upkeep and maintenance, and noted it is important to ensure it will have an urban civic plaza quality with wetland capacity and not feel like a leftover space. Consider accessible areas versus wetland throughout the year, the most travelled path – it is a challenging typology.

Another Panel member is supportive of the marsh concept and expressed that it is a mistake to extend the deck so far into Tank House Lane. The “bio planter” feels too far away from the marsh to be considered a part of the project. It is interesting to conceive the boardwalk as a veneer of brick into the marshland, transforming it into an urban plaza. Suggestion to move away from wood or Corten steel for the boardwalk and bring back brick over the marsh. Ensure winter maintenance is robust for this project.

One Panel member agreed that the water-based arguments are persuasive and was struck by the logic of the proposal. It is important to ensure that the urban features work in a Toronto urban context.

Another Panel member felt the project concept was clever, pioneering, and noted Corten steel is not supported because it is a toxic metal which pollutes the water table.

One Panel member felt the project is a brilliant proposal. Like the transformation of the Port Lands, this will serve as an urban reminder of what was here before in a slightly different way. The Panel member noted the retaining wall element is underdeveloped and attention to the midblock crossing cannot be understated.

Another Panel member felt the project is complimentary to the site, noted the TTC trackside bioswale can be better integrated, and that the landscape should be designed in a way that does not require handrail, integrate the barrier so the thresholds feel more natural. The Panel member suggested the boardwalk be designed as a circuit, not just getting from A to B, provide an opportunity for meander. The retaining wall should be improved with planting and integrated with the design. Texture of the streetcar tracks should feel well integrated. Lastly, the Panel member cautioned that the plaza should not feel like a theme park, it should be performative but also recognize its true nature.

One Panel member is excited for the green track pilot project because it is a fundamental change for the City, it is important to share the studies with the public and neighbourhood. The Panel member felt the landscape should show the technological system as well as the natural. Consider the opportunities of designing a hard and soft landscape that would encourage habitat such as urban pollination species and birds. The “bio planter” creates a pinch point at Tank House Lane, it does not support retail, and asked the team to reconsider whether the planter is integral to the performative landscape.

Another Panel member appreciated the presentation and noted the management of the marsh cannot be understated. All programs should support the idea of an urban marsh. There is a great deal of handrail requirements for water depth over 600mm because it is considered a potentially dangerous condition, it is important to consider those details now. The Panel member appreciated that the team is designing this as a real marsh while responding to the City’s requirements.

One Panel member noted the exciting project and that it is a testament to understand what was here before in a place.

Another Panel member asked the team to specify low carbon concrete as there are huge carbon savings for the project.

### **1.5 Consensus Comments**

The Chair then summarized the Panel comments on which there was full agreement.

#### **General**

- Strong support for the Cherry Marsh concept.
- Commended the research in making the case for the marsh.
- Appreciated the unique “urban sponge” design vision.
- Appreciated the project’s conceptual links to the Ashbridge’s marsh and the site’s Indigenous history.
- The pedestrian crossing on Cherry Street is very important and should be prioritized to handle the volume of people crossing Tank House Lane.

#### **Design**

- The low retaining wall adjacent to the plaza is unresolved, consider alternatives to better integrate with the public realm.
- The additional planter in Tank House Lane is not necessary and it is recommended to be removed to avoid creating a barrier to the pedestrian flow.
- The Cherry Street Switching Tower is a great heritage asset, consider making it fully accessible to the public.
- Strong support for the implementation of green tracks, consider implementing the treatment north of the rail corridor to the Cherry Marsh Plaza because it would become a stunning visual statement for the City.
- Consider urban habitat in the design of the marsh landscape.
- Consider maintenance strategies.
  
- Explore the feasibility of a brick boardwalk to strongly tie the project with Tank House Lane and create a natural extension of the Distillery District language.
- Explore the requirements for handrails on the boardwalk.
- Encourage specifying low carbon concrete mix for the construction of the project.

The Chair then asked if the proponent would like to provide a brief response.

Mr. Nicklin appreciated the Panel taking the time to understand the design changes and looked forward to returning.

### **1.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support**

The Panel voted unanimous Conditional Support for the project.

## 2.0 200 Queens Quay West – Schematic Design

*Project ID #:* 1120  
*Project Type:* Building  
*Review Stage:* Schematic Design  
*Review Round:* Two  
*Location:* Central Waterfront  
*Proponent:* DiamondCorp; Lifetime Development  
*Architect/ Designer:* Wallman Architects; DTAH;  
*Presenter(s):* Kelly O’Hanlon, Director of Development, Diamondcorp  
 Rudy Wallman, Principal, Wallman Architects  
 James Roche, Partner, DTAH  
 Michael Wong, Energy Analyst, EQ Building Performance  
*Delegation:* Claudia Sanchez, BA Group  
 Brian Brown, Lifetime Developments  
 Renee Gomes, Diamondcorp  
 Anthonio De Franco, Urban Strategies  
 Marc Kramer, City of Toronto  
 Susan Mcalpine, City of Toronto  
 Eddy Lam, City of Toronto  
 Josh Hilburt, Waterfront Toronto  
 Kristal Tanunagara, Waterfront Toronto  
 Corey Bialek, Waterfront Toronto

### 2.1 Introduction to the Issues

Leon Lai, Manager of the Design Review Panel, with Waterfront Toronto, introduced the project and noted the site context, adjacent developments, and the project background. The previous design includes two towers and a 12-storey base podium; the revised design is one tower with a 5-storey podium. Mr. Lai introduced Susan Mcalpine, Senior Community Planner with City of Toronto, to present the policy context. Ms. Mcalpine noted the City of Toronto Official Plan, Central Waterfront Secondary Plan, and Zoning. Mr. Lai continued the existing photos of the site, and the project is here for Schematic Design review. Mr. Lai summarized the Jan. 2021 Issues Identification Consensus Comments and noted the areas for Panel consideration: the revised ground floor design including the proposed park, revised design for access and loading, building and podium exterior expression, and the sustainability strategies. Mr. Lai then introduced Kelly O’Hanlon, Director of Development with Diamondcorp, to continue the presentation.

### 2.2 Project Presentation

Ms. O’Hanlon noted the proponent team, design team, and ongoing City and community input period for the project. Rudy Wallman, Principal of Wallman Architects, noted the existing conditions of the site and the design objectives including city building initiatives. Mr. Wallman noted the revised building design: height, massing, typical floor plans, and key project statistics. The ground floor has been revised with access from Harbour Street. Mr. Wallman noted the updated sections and podium

elevations. Ms. O'Hanlon noted the updated shadow study and introduced James Roche, Partner with DTAH, to present the landscape design.

Mr. Roche noted the site's enhanced connectivity with the proposed park, existing site considerations, and the revised site plan as compared with the previous design. Mr. Roche noted the landscape detail which will be further developed working with City Parks. Michael Wong, Senior Energy Analyst with EQ Building Performance, summarized the sustainability strategies, energy targets, and the impact of the tower design on energy use.

### **2.3 Panel Questions**

The Chair then asked the Panel for questions of clarification.

One Panel member asked for the ownership of the rental units. Ms. O'Hanlon noted the team is still working with the City on the details now.

Another Panel member asked for clarification on the 1000m<sup>2</sup> floor plate with respect to the City of Toronto's guidelines on typical tall building floor plate size. Mr. Wallman responded that the tall building guidelines recommend 750m<sup>2</sup> floor plates, the team understands that the 1000m<sup>2</sup> floor plates proposed is an appropriate trade-off for the overall improvements in the project which includes reduction in height and overall GFA. Ms. Mcalpine noted that the City considers this a balancing move while considering the floor plates of adjacent towers to the site which are around 900m<sup>2</sup>.

One Panel member asked for the anticipated EUI and TEDI. Mr. Wong noted it is in the range of 150-160, a 7 to 15 percent reduction, and 55 – 60 range for TEDI - these are based on external studies which can be confirmed with more development.

Another Panel member asked if the rooftop landscapes will have urban agriculture programming. Ms. O'Hanlon noted they will be accessible terraces; details will be determined through Site Plan Application. Mr. Wallman noted there is space for that and situated for good sunlight exposure, this is an interesting concept to keep in mind. Mr. Roche noted this will depend on the management model for the areas.

### **2.4 Panel Comments**

One Panel member appreciated the clear and simple presentation. The Panel member supported the consolidation of the POPS on the west side of the site. The Panel member commented that the lobby stretches far along the Harbour St. frontage, noted that the street is already very harsh with fast cars and bikes, and it is important to consider other ways to activate that frontage. Consider a resilient tough material, such as stone, to anchor the podium building down at the base, and maximize the number of street trees to improve the public realm.

Another Panel member felt the long lobby can be improved, consider reducing the length of the lobby and replace with other programs. The Panel member asked the team to minimize thermal bridging at the balconies and consider reducing the number of balconies in the project due to high winds in the waterfront area.



One Panel member suggested eliminating balconies from the fortieth floor and upward due to the high winds, and it will also improve the sustainability performance of the building. The Panel member noted the climate is very brutal in this area and congratulated the team for a great design integrating all loading and parking access.

Another Panel noted that given the large size of the tower, there will be many hours during the year where the building will require simultaneous heating and cooling. It is suggested to utilize an inter building hydronic thermal loop system, that can draw the heat out of units/ building that are in cooling, and recover that heat into the hot water loop, providing carbon savings allowing the system to turn down the natural gas boiler.

One Panel member appreciated the exciting progress on the design and felt that the park connects the project with the waterfront.

## **2.5 Consensus Comments**

The Chair then summarized the Panel comments on which there was full agreement.

### **General**

- Appreciated all the positive revisions that have addressed Panel concerns.
- Strong overall support for the revised massing and building design.
- Request City staff provide more information to better contextualize the proposed large floor plate size at the next review.

### **Building**

- Harbour Street is not well activated due to fast moving vehicular and cycling traffic. Consider reducing the lobby area and introducing some small retail units to improve ground level animation.
- Maximize opportunities for street trees along Harbour and Lower Simcoe Street.
- Consider comfort for the balconies on the higher floors due to wind.

### **Sustainability**

- Strong recommendation to provide thermally broken balconies.
- Suggestion to draw heat out of units that are in cooling, and recover that heat into the hot water loop, providing carbon savings.

The Chair then asked if the proponent would like to provide a brief response.

Mr. Wallman noted he is happy to continue to develop the project and appreciated the Panel's feedback.

## **2.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support**

The Panel voted unanimous Conditional Support for the project.

## **CLOSING**

There being no further business, the Chair then adjourned the public session of the meeting after a vote to go into a brief in-camera session.

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These Meeting Minutes are formally adopted and approved by Panel on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022.

Signed--

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Paul Bedford, Waterfront Design Review Panel Chair

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Emilia Floro, City of Toronto Urban Design Direction

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Chris Glaisek, Waterfront Toronto Chief Planning and Design Officer