



WATERFRONTToronto

Waterfront Design Review Panel

Minutes of Meeting #158

Wednesday, November 30th, 2022

Meeting held in-person, hybrid

Present

Waterfront Toronto Design Review Panel

Paul Bedford, Chair
Betsy Williamson, Vice Chair
George Baird
Gina Ford
Pat Hanson
Janna Levitt
Fadi Masoud
Emily Mueller De Celis
Kevin Stelzer
Eric Turcotte

Regrets

Matthew Hickey
David Leinster
Nina-Marie Lister
Jeff Ranson
Brigitte Shim

Representatives

Chris Glaisek, Waterfront Toronto
Emilia Floro, City of Toronto

Recording Secretary

Leon Lai

WELCOME

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

1. Destination Playground – Schematic Design
 2. Destination Playground Pavilion and Dining Terrace – Schematic Design
 3. Rees Street Park – Schematic Design
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GENERAL BUSINESS

The Chair asked the Panel to adopt the meeting minutes from last month. The minutes were adopted.

The Chair asked if there were any conflicts of interest for disclosure. Emily Mueller De Celis declared conflicts of interest for **Destination Playground**, and **Destination Playground Pavilion and Dining Terrace**, and recused herself from the review. Janna Levitt declared conflicts of interest for **Destination Playground**, and **Destination Playground Pavilion and Dining Terrace**, and recused herself from 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.

Design Review Panel Updates:

Mr. Glaisek began by noting the consensus comments for **King/ Queen Triangle Public Art** have been circulated with the proponent team and they are working with TRCA and the City on an arborist report to advance the planting plan. Waterfront Toronto (WT) is discussing with City Transportation on including the walls and possible funding source for scope expansion, Mr. Glaisek noted the project is scheduled to return for Schematic Design in January 2023.

Waterfront Toronto Updates:

Mr. Glaisek provided a construction update on **York Street Park**: the granite cobble installation around pond edge is in progress, K9 turf has been installed in dog area, and the trellis installation is in progress. Mr. Glaisek noted the inaugural **2022 Waterfront DRP Awards** took place on Oct. 26th, 2022, ten awards were announced, and over forty nominated and winning proponent team members attended the ceremony. In the following day, WT issued a press release announcing the awards, and the full list of winners and nominees are published on the WT homepage.

Leon Lai, Manager of the Waterfront Design Review Panel, concluded by reviewing the draft WDRP agendas for January and February 2023.

Chair's remarks:

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

PROJECT REVIEWS

1.0 Destination Playground – Schematic Design

<i>Project ID #:</i>	1135
<i>Project Type:</i>	Public Realm
<i>Review Stage:</i>	Schematic Design
<i>Review Round:</i>	Two (Round one done in-camera)
<i>Location:</i>	Port Lands
<i>Proponent:</i>	Waterfront Toronto
<i>Architect/ Designer:</i>	MVVA, LGA, Monstrum, APE Studio, Earthscape & Wholetrees
<i>Presenter(s):</i>	Herb Sweeney, Principal, MVVA
<i>Delegation:</i>	Drew Adams, Associate, LGA Marc Kramer, City of Toronto Lori Ellis, City of Toronto David O'Hara, City of Toronto Tristan Simpson, Waterfront Toronto Pina Mallozzi, Waterfront Toronto Corey Bialek, Waterfront Toronto Kristal Tanunagara, Waterfront Toronto Josh Hilburt, Waterfront Toronto

1.1 Introduction to the Issues

Pina Mallozzi, Senior Vice President, Design, with Waterfront Toronto introduced the project by noting the existing site context of Port Lands Flood Protection (PLFP) with an aerial photo and the full buildout context where Destination Playground is situated. Ms. Mallozzi noted the Destination Playground is unfunded, it is anticipated to be delivered through philanthropic funding and the project is scalable based on the success of the fundraising initiative. The Playground was previously reviewed by the Panel in April 2022 in-camera due to ongoing procurement negotiations with the play design manufacturers, Ms. Mallozzi noted the team is completing 30% schematic design and a phased implementation strategy to support the fundraising efforts. Ms. Mallozzi noted Gathering Place, Tulsa Oklahoma, as a precedent for the design, noted the cohesive play experience, best in class access to play, integrate nature and play, and design for user experience.

Ms. Mallozzi noted MVVA is the landscape lead designer, LGA is the pavilion architect, Monstrum, APE Studio, Earthscape & Wholetrees are the team for the play equipment. Ms. Mallozzi noted the Playground is expected to finish construction in October 2026 with a Fall 2026 opening. Ms. Mallozzi noted the consensus comments from April 2020 and the areas for Panel consideration: reconfiguration of garden rooms and integration of increased landscape elements, addition of garden rooms including contemplation garden, swing garden and sunrise garden, integration of pavilion, conceptual expansion including River Valley Park North, and the introduction of topographical variation throughout the playground. Ms. Mallozzi then introduced Herb Sweeney, Principal with MVVA, to present the design.

1.2 Project Presentation

Mr. Sweeney began the introduction by noting the project feedback from April 2020 and the overall advancement in the site plan today. Mr. Sweeney recapped the design vision for Destination Playground, the PLFP Parks systems including stormwater, waste service, planting zones, and public art. Mr. Sweeney noted the PLFP Indigenous design approach and consultation process, and the project's alignment with WT's sustainability principles. Mr. Sweeney summarized the strategies to advance play design including providing a variety of play value and character in a series of garden rooms, increasing the forest frame to embed play in nature, integrating play into park circulation, and creating inclusive spaces for play. There is a range of landscape experience in the Playgrounds, immersed within the natural environment, and Mr. Sweeney noted the site sections through play areas.

Mr. Sweeney noted the increased circulation opportunities are integrated with the larger park, and the various playgrounds create an inclusive play experience. Mr. Sweeney noted the Northern Play Area include the Toronto Towers, the Central Play Area including Pavilion, the Southern Play Area including Harbour Master Marina, and the Swing Garden. Mr. Sweeney noted the team is interested in creating comfortable spaces, construction with high quality craftsmanship using natural materials, opportunities for AODA play, dynamic play spaces, nature based play, sensory play, imaginative play, and garden walks.

1.3 Panel Questions

One Panel member asked for more information on the project's scalability based on funding. Ms. Mallozzi noted depending on the funding, individual rooms could be built starting at the northern or southern play areas and build incrementally from there. The central area, which includes the pavilion, would not be the first phase but likely the second to provide services.

Another Panel member asked if the animal-like play structures in the River Valley Park North area are the same family as Destination Playground. Mr. Sweeney noted the play equipment manufacturer is the same; there is a snowy owl in River Valley North that relates to the moose and bear – it will feel like one family. The Panel member asked if the main crosswalk between the two play areas is at Cherry Street. Mr. Sweeney noted Cherry Street has a crosswalk but the main connection is the park path that goes under the Cherry Street bridge. The Panel member asked if the park is all-season. Mr. Sweeney noted it can be used year-round and will depend on how the City maintains and provides access.

Another Panel member asked about parking. Mr. Sweeney noted the park is served by transit and there will be parking in the buildings. Ms. Mallozzi noted that parking studies have been completed as part of the Port Lands Flood Protection based on 1.5 million visitors per year, and identified a need of 300 parking spaces. WT is proposing an interim surface parking lot at the southwestern development block, and the parking will be provided by the new development when it is constructed. The Panel member asked for more information on the play areas in River Valley Park North, and Mr. Glaisek agreed that the team will present the playgrounds in full at the next DRP.

One Panel member asked if the higher level of maintenance required has been considered. Mr. Sweeny noted that discussions have started with Parks Forestry & Recreation (PFR). Mr. Glaisek added that PFR recognizes the higher maintenance demand, and they are interested in maintaining it. David O'Hara, Manager with Parks Forestry & Recreation, noted the Destination Playground is very different than Jamie Bell in High Park or other playgrounds, and staff are exploring an operational model for the park and a model to work with Indigenous partners. The Panel member asked for more clarification on the thickening of bounding edges of the playground, if they are discreetly fenced or rely on plant material to do the work. Mr. Sweeney noted there will be a mix of trails and planting to steer children from wandering off, such as the low rail in Brooklyn Bridge Park. Mr. Sweeney noted in his experience people generally take great pride in the stewardship at Brooklyn Bridge Park.

Another Panel member asked if the playground will return to the DRP with more detail. Mr. Sweeney noted the team is advancing the details and will return for Detailed Design review.

One Panel member asked how the team is building in seasonality in the design. Mr. Sweeney noted both operation and design will address seasonality. On the landscape, planting is used to extend shoulder seasons and the playground is intended to look different in different seasons.

Another Panel member noted a high percentage of soft landscape and asked if the stormwater management is all infiltration through gravity. Within the PLFP park system, Mr. Sweeney noted there are area catch basins at hardscape areas, localized interior drainage, and the water will go either to the wetland at Canoe Cove or to Polson Slip.

The Chair then asked the Panel members for comments.

1.4 Panel Comments

One Panel member commended the beautiful and masterful design, appreciated the accessibility approach and integration of nature play. The Panel member asked the team to consider infrastructure for parents that are integrated with the playgrounds to provide a full-day itinerary. The Panel member encouraged the team to build in flexibility in the design process to allow for the implementation of adaptive learning should the project be phased.

Another Panel member asked the team to consider nature play areas that can be accessed throughout the year with a "minimum-maximum" strategy, such as a mini-gate that controls access if an area is closed due to ice and snow. It is important to build in these elements to support management of operations instead of adding them later. The Panel member noted the lighting strategy is missing and should be provided, and consider other amenities such as heated washrooms, warming hut, and other elements that will make the playground great year round.

One Panel member felt that the amount of playground visible along Commissioners and Trinity might overwhelm the feeling of nature on Villier’s Island, consider balance of play and nature in the arrival experience and visibility of the elements.

Another Panel member congratulated the team for integrating the Pavilion into the playground. The Panel member felt significant progress has been made on the iconography of the project and suggested further refinements to allow the nature-theme elements to remain naturalistic while making the iconographic elements, such as the animals and towers, to be even less “cartoony.” The Panel member felt the iconography of the swings are a perfect example of a good balance of abstraction and kinetics. The Panel member suggested that fireboat playground have an actual boat or other authentic artifacts from the harbour. These moves would strengthen the visual language of the entire ensemble.

One Panel member noted the two play areas need to feel cohesive, and asked the team to provide more information on the lighting strategy to allow children to play in the evening. The Panel member felt the project is moving in a good direction.

Another Panel member asked the team to create a snow management strategy that specifies areas for snow collection to enable winter play. The Panel member encouraged the team to take leadership in winter play thinking, such as an alternate plan to use the playground if some of the areas are closed. The Panel member felt teens and adults have to be accommodated with programs such as adult fitness adjacent to playgrounds to create a complete experience for families. At the Cherry Street crossing, the Panel suggested to raise the crosswalk on a table-top to emphasize the crossing and slow down traffic.

One Panel member asked the team to provide a detailed, innovative, and naturalized, stormwater management plan at the next review, to understand the major infiltration network and integration of hard and soft drainage areas.

1.5 Consensus Comments

General

- Appreciated the direction of the project.
- Consider the full-day experience for entire families, such as playgrounds for children and teens, and spaces for adults and parents.
- Should the project be phased, implement a strategy for adaptive learning so the initial playgrounds can be a learning opportunity for subsequent areas.
- Provide a summary on River Park North playground as project context.
- Ensure there is a strong perimeter of nature along the frontages of Cherry and Commissioners to ensure the character of the park remains natural and not dominated by the playgrounds.

Landscape and Winter Uses

- Provide a lighting strategy for the playground.
- Provide more information on the stormwater management plan.

- Ensure the playground is designed for year-round use and consider the impact of winter and snow:
 - Built-in elements that provide PFR flexibility in year-round operation, i.e. gates between playgrounds to avoid temporary caution tape.
 - Areas for snow collection during winter months that still allow the playground to function.
 - Explore the possibility of snow melt areas and heat lamps to support winter use.

Access

- Further consider the Cherry Street crossing to ensure a safe connection between the Destination Playground and River Park North, i.e. elevate the crossing to prioritize pedestrians, emphasize the crossing visually, or provide signals to slow vehicles down at the intersection.
- Crowds and access remain a concern, provide more information on public transportation access, interim and ultimate parking strategies, and crowd management.

Play Equipment

- Appreciated the updated play equipment design, some Panel members felt that more authentic objects could be included in some areas.

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

Mr. Sweeney noted the team shares many of the comments and is encouraged to bring the project back for Detailed Design review.

1.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support

The Panel voted unanimously Full Support for the project.

2.0 Destination Playground Pavilion and Dining Terrace – Schematic Design

<i>Project ID #:</i>	1131
<i>Project Type:</i>	Building
<i>Review Stage:</i>	Schematic Design
<i>Review Round:</i>	Two
<i>Location:</i>	Port Lands
<i>Proponent:</i>	Waterfront Toronto
<i>Architect/ Designer:</i>	LGA and MVVA
<i>Presenter(s):</i>	Drew Adams, Associate, LGA
<i>Delegation:</i>	Herb Sweeney, Principal, MVVA Marc Kramer, City of Toronto Lori Ellis, City of Toronto David O’Hara, City of Toronto Tristan Simpson, Waterfront Toronto Pina Mallozzi, Waterfront Toronto Corey Bialek, Waterfront Toronto

Kristal Tanunagara, Waterfront Toronto
Josh Hilburt, Waterfront Toronto

2.1 Introduction to the Issues

Leon Lai, Design Review Panel Manager with Waterfront Toronto, introduced the project by noting the location of the Pavilion and Dining Terrace within the greater site context of Port Lands Flood Protection (PLFP). Mr. Lai noted the Pavilion and Dining Terrace are currently unfunded and anticipated to be delivered through philanthropic funding, and the pavilion programs were identified through workshops with Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) staff in responding to park user and staff needs. The Dining Terrace is an extension of the pavilion and will allow for year-round activation.

Mr. Lai reviewed the project timeline, identified the lead designers LGA for the pavilion and MVVA for the landscape, and noted the project is here for Stage 2: Schematic Design review. Mr. Lai recapped the May 2022 Issues Identification consensus comments and noted the areas for Panel consideration: the revised building parti and massing in response to site and programmatic requirements, relationship between interior and exterior, and the integration of rooftop and terrace in the overall experience of the pavilion. Mr. Lai introduced Drew Adams, Associate with LGA, to present the design.

2.2 Project Presentation

Mr. Adams began by summarizing the design aspirations, site context, and the floor plan previously presented at Issues Identification. Mr. Adams noted the revised plan for the Pavilion and Dining Terrace, the program relationship, servicing and back-of-house circulation, and the roof plan with seating area. Mr. Adams noted the massing diagram with views to Canoe Cove, sections of the site and building with sustainable design features and low-carbon material palette to reduce embodied carbon of the construction.

Mr. Adams noted the in-progress canopy design and its relationship to solar performance of the building, renderings of the building exterior in context from Trinity Street and the southwest entrance to the Dining Terrace. Mr. Adams noted that the tables will be stored in winter months, and the terrace will have fire pit and winter kiosks.

2.3 Panel Questions

One Panel member asked for clarification on the circulation between restaurant interior and the roof seating, and if the roof is serviced. Mr. Adams noted there is no direct link, the roof is a complimentary public seating area to the restaurant. The Panel member asked the team to elaborate on the PFR room's function. Mr. Adams noted the intent is a multi-use space for PFR to run their programs with a dedicated entrance and exit, the team is studying the room's relationship with the info desk and building in flexibility in its use at different times of the day. The Panel member asked for the user base of the washrooms and if they are shared between building and park users. Mr.

Adams commented that the middle washrooms are shared by all users and there are dedicated washrooms on either side for restaurant and playground goers. The Panel member asked if the windows will be the size shown. Mr. Adams noted the glass will have to be broken down, but clear glazing will be maintained.

Another Panel member asked if the team could measure the solar impact of trees. Mr. Adams noted that can be considered.

One Panel member asked for the height of the highest point of the building and if the building will use renewable energy. Mr. Adams noted the team can identify the exact elevation at the roof and that the building uses electricity.

Another Panel member asked if the washrooms on the west elevation are winterized. Mr. Adams responded the intent is to winterize those stalls.

One Panel member asked if the Dining Terrace will be licensed, the design appears insufficiently structured to be licenced for service of alcohol. Mr. Adams responded the team is looking at controlling access and will advance this with the food service consultants.

Another Panel member asked for the materiality of the roof railing. Mr. Adams noted it is a metal picket railing, the intent is to develop a reciprocity with the materials and colors of the park. The Panel member asked if the restaurant operator has been selected. Ms. Mallozzi noted market sounding has been started, the intent is to engage with operators to learn their needs.

One Panel member commended the use of low carbon materials in the construction, asked if the project intends to reach passive house level of performance, and the levels of EUI and TEDI for the building. Mr. Adams noted the team has not completed an energy model exercise. The Panel member asked the team to complete a preliminary energy model at the earliest opportunity and more information on the mechanical system for the building. Mr. Adams noted the system will be air source heat pump and ERV, the building does not use gas, and a geothermal system might not be financially feasible. The Panel member asked if on-site renewables and a zero-carbon certification have been considered. Mr. Adams noted the team will explore all options at the next phase and look into potential certification. Ms. Mallozzi commented that the project is required to meet Waterfront Toronto's Green Building Requirements.

The Chair then asked the Panel members for comments.

2.4 Panel Comments

One Panel member appreciated the evolved scheme, the simplicity of the volume, and new location of the restaurant. The Panel member asked the team to continue to investigate the operations of the restaurant and how it can be integrated with the PFR room. If the roof is a part of the restaurant, it requires a direct connection. The Dining Terrace and the PFR room are not speaking to each other yet despite their proximity, consider leveraging landscape to help integrate the overall experience. The Panel

member asked the team to consider the window details early to ensure the exterior concept is successfully implemented.

Another Panel member asked the team to ensure the Pavilion and restaurant feel public so all visitors will feel welcome in using the facilities.

One Panel commended the beautiful design and the resolution of the Dining Terrace in relation to the restaurant. The Panel member felt the southern corner with the PFR room feels uncomfortable for occupants given the extensive glazing and exposure of the room, and the exterior is not well resolved in meeting the ground, consider bringing some planting to the corner at both roof and grade to help anchor the corner.

Another Panel member noted the soffit is an important part of the architectural identity of the building and asked the team to strengthen its design. Noting the canopy studies, the Panel member asked the team to articulate the canopy form and explore deepening the canopy at the south end. The Panel member appreciated the picket language of the roof railing but suggested to shift the line of railing further back to reduce its visibility from grade level. The Panel member also cautioned that the glass might be triple glazed with a dark tint which will make the timber structure difficult to see from the outside. The Panel member expressed interest in the possibility of seeing the moose on the roof and asked the team to explore that relationship.

One Panel member felt the proportion of the spaces, including the size of the kitchen, are improved in the new massing. The Panel member felt the building is still lacking a strong enough architectural identity, and a shallow canopy high off the ground might not work well for rain protection and passive shading for the interior. Furthermore, energy and air tightness calculations should be done early if PassiveHouse is an objective. The Panel member does not support the floor to ceiling glass approach to the façade and encouraged the team to look at infill with more timber expressed on the exterior, which will also help to reduce the budget on glazing units. The Panel member appreciated the separation of eating areas but noted some areas will have to be fenced for service, it is important to ensure the Dining Terrace has a public presence. The Panel member commented that side elevations showing the washrooms should be provided for review.

Another Panel member is not against the moose being seen and asked the team to continue to explore that relationship. The Panel member felt the roof terrace is not serviceable because it is an open area, thus it should be made clear that the roof is not part of the restaurant and will not receive service or alcohol. The Panel member noted the PFR space is too exposed, the users will be distracted by the building surroundings, and suggested the space be further developed to provide more control for the occupants and a stronger sense of interiority. The Panel member felt the central washrooms are too remote from the main entrance, consider a more straightforward route.

One Panel member encouraged the team to advance the design in a way that supports low carbon mechanical systems. The Panel member noted zero-carbon version 3 certification is flexible and will provide allowance if on-site renewable energy is integrated. The Panel member noted there is high heat loss through the floor to ceiling

glass, consider leveraging solar heat gain in winter months, such as some raised seating at the perimeter to act as heat storage. The Panel member suggested the use of rammed earth to reduce embodied carbon of the building, and consider the thickness of timber structures at the canopy and the façade when advancing the envelope details because the window to wall ratio will likely be reduced. The Panel member also noted that any structural timber members at the line of exterior envelope will have to be thermally isolated, further changing the appearance of the glass façade.

2.5 Consensus Comments

General

- Appreciated the direction of the revised massing and program layout.
- Further clarify the relationship between the roof and restaurant from a service perspective. Some supported the roof as a public area with seating and tables and unserved.
- Ensure the restaurant and Dining Terrace, while served, remain welcoming to the public.
- Further explore the relationship between the “big moose” play equipment, its location and visibility with respect to the Pavilion.
- Continue to explore ways to procure high quality operator for the restaurant.

Architecture

- Strengthen the architectural identity of the building and optimize the façade to support interior uses and sustainability objectives.
- At the PFR room, provide more information on the uses of the space and consider reducing the window to wall ratio to better support the functionality and performance.
- Further develop the roof and railing relationship to ensure legibility of the canopy, consider setting the roof railing farther back to lessen its visibility from the first floor, or further project the canopy.
- Provide all building elevations at the next review.

Sustainability

- Appreciated the low embodied carbon construction strategy.
- At present stage, the design does not provide sufficient information to suggest the building will meet Green Building Requirements and other low operational carbon objectives, complete energy and airtightness modelling at the earliest opportunity to inform the project as the design advances.

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

Mr. Adams thanked the Panel for their comments, noted that the team is aware of the issues raised around glazing and the building corner and will continue to advance these details in the next round.

1.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support

The Panel voted unanimously Conditional Support for the project.

3.0 Rees Street Park – Schematic Design

<i>Project ID #:</i>	1092A
<i>Project Type:</i>	Public Realm
<i>Review Stage:</i>	Schematic Design
<i>Review Round:</i>	Two
<i>Location:</i>	Central Waterfront
<i>Proponent:</i>	Waterfront Toronto
<i>Architect/ Designer:</i>	wHY, Brook McIlroy, Phyto Studio
<i>Presenter(s):</i>	Mark Thomann, Design Director, wHY Kira Appelhans, Senior Landscape Designer, wHY Claudia West, Principal, Phyto Studio
<i>Delegation:</i>	Amanda Coen, wHY Lori Ellis, City of Toronto Lara Herald, City of Toronto David O’Hara, City of Toronto Marc Kramer, City of Toronto Adam Novack, Waterfront Toronto Netami Stuart, Waterfront Toronto Pina Mallozzi, Waterfront Toronto Corey Bialek, Waterfront Toronto Kristal Tanunagara, Waterfront Toronto Josh Hilburt, Waterfront Toronto

3.1 Introduction to the Issues

Adam Novack, Project Manager with Waterfront Toronto, introduced the project by noting the project background, project scope priorities, and that WT is working with PFR to update the project budget which is currently partially unfunded and pending approval. Mr. Novack noted the Rees Street Park site context, the east-west passageway connection to adjacent development of 350 Queens Quay West, and key views.

Ms. Novack noted the anticipated project schedule and that the design is here for Stage 2: Schematic Design review. Mr. Novack noted the consensus comments from Sept. 2022 Issues Identification review and the areas for Panel consideration: revised design in response to screening the Gardener structure, the reconfigured layout of programs and landscape elements, views and access at the site, and the revised planting strategy for a year-round experience. Mr. Novack then introduced Mark Thomann, Design Director with wHY, and Kira Appelhans, Senior Landscape Designer with wHY, to present the design.

3.2 Project Presentation

Ms. Appelhans began the presentation by noting the site context, the original competition design vision, and the site plan presented in Stage 1: Issues Identification. Ms. Appelhans recapped the key design and programmatic considerations, and noted the ridge form is the main element to screen the Gardiner structure and trees on the ridge will help with the screening. Ms. Appelhans noted the sections illustrating the evolution of the ridge design, the revised site plan, and the programmatic elements in the park. Rees Street Park is an opportunity to be a cultural destination on the waterfront year-round.

Ms. Appelhans noted the stormwater shaft location and lawn to minimize impact to the park, grading approach, and ridge geometry and details. Lighting, fences, and overall materiality were also described. Ms. Appelhans then introduced Claudia West, Principal with Phyto Studio to present the planting strategy.

Ms. West noted the project applies to the site the distilled unique vegetation typologies from the Scarborough Bluffs. Ms. West summarized the vegetation strategies: proactive planting solutions, uniting the site with planting, creating evocative tree canopy, and strategic placement of shrub clusters. Ms Appelhans noted the sustainability objectives, the play areas, off leash area, and the Rees Plaza on the east side of the site.

3.3 Panel Questions

One Panel member asked for the rationale of the basketball court program. Mr. Novack responded that the program was first envisioned as an interim use for the site that celebrates the Raptors' championship win.

Another Panel member asked for the frequency of the shaft maintenance that requires crane setup and the status on Indigenous community involvement. Mr. Novack noted Waterfront Toronto has reached out to the Indigenous community but there has been no involvement. Mr. Novack noted access to the shaft hatch with pick-up truck might occur annually.

Another Panel member asked for clarification on bicycle parking on site. Ms. Appelhans responded there is currently bike parking along Queens Quay, and the design includes more parking along Lake Shore.

One Panel member noted that the ridge along Lake Shore at the competition phase was longer and parallel to the Gardiner, and asked if the ridge now has been reduced to about one third the length of the site. Ms. Appelhans responded that the ridge has been revised to that new length.

Another Panel member asked for more information on the large door on the north elevation of the ridge. Ms. Appelhans responded that is the garage door and the entrance to the washrooms are on the east elevation facing the plaza.

One Panel member asked for clarification on the northern extent of the property line and if the plant species are local to the Scarborough bluffs ecosystem. Ms. Appelhans noted the northern property line has a setback for Gardiner maintenance. Ms. West

responded that the team will specify other plant species to fill the functional gaps to create a full plant palette.

Another Panel member asked for the vegetation maintenance strategy, especially against dogs and kids on edge plantings. Ms. West noted some of the plant species have higher tolerance for salt and pollution and the first foot of the planting bed will receive special treatment than the rest to ensure the edges are robust.

The Chair then asked the Panel members for comments.

3.4 Panel Comments

One Panel member appreciated the concept of the Scarborough Bluffs as a displaced landscape at the waterfront, however, is concerned with the implementation of the concept successfully with the current, more abstracted, version of the design. The Panel member noted while the ridge has been eroded to allow for more porosity through the site, the leftover ridge creates a diagrammatic dichotomy between the lawn and the rest of the park. The Panel member noted that the programs and planting strategy fragment the site into many zones, and the vertical layering concept is missing. The Panel member suggested more gradual transition of scale from Queens Quay to the north side of the site is needed, explore other strategies of play, such as nature play, to allow the play areas and equipment to better relate with the rest of the park. The Panel member noted the lawn feels like a residual space as the raised topography due to the shaft makes the area difficult for large gatherings, lacking an overall experiential quality to the space, and asked if the lawn is a necessary program. The Panel member felt that the water narrative is also residual in the design.

Another Panel member noted the site is challenging and the revised design has made real improvements, however the legible gestures are fragmented. The Panel member noted while the ridge is now strongly supported by vegetation and planting, it is less legible than the previous iteration. The Panel member recommended to connect the lawn with the ridge, remove the circulation path, celebrate the interface between the lawn and the ridge, i.e. allow people to sit on the sloped areas. This will also increase the size of the plaza for events and uses throughout the year, and the presence as a gathering space. Also, consider strategies to put more emphasis on the strong narrative elements and simplify the western elements to ensure the lawn and ridge stand out.

One Panel member appreciated the layered landscape concept, holistic planting, and maintenance strategy. The Panel member noted the challenge is locating the large, flat, programs against the Gardiner structure, and asked the team to reconsider program configurations to ensure a continuous path experience instead of a series of loops. The Panel member recommended continuing the language of the path up the ridge, such as the railing and path details, and furniture designs. Overall, the Panel felt there should be more development on the notion of Bluffs as an integral part of the design and consider removing some programs.

Another Panel member noted that the concepts of ridge and Bluffs have given way to a constructed landscape with some topography, and asked the team to look at Governor

Island park scramble as a good precedent that does not have an overwhelming sense of concrete. Overall, the Panel member felt that the ridge is no longer a background to a foreground, it is now more ambiguous in a series of scattered programs, and thus less strong than the previous design.

One Panel member felt the circulation should be reconsidered carefully, such that the plaza becomes a place and a termination point for John Street Cultural Corridor. Specifically, the Panel member did not support the bathroom and other service entrances directly facing the plaza, the concrete panelling on the ridge faces, or the unresolved openings into the site. The Panel member recommended a softer green edge along Lake Shore with seating and questioned whether the sloped hill is long enough for tobogganing. Lastly, the Panel member commented that the quality of the renders should be improved in clearly showing the edges of the site.

Another Panel member suggested to change the concept of the project because the ridge and Bluffs are not sufficiently represented in the current scheme. The Panel member recommended the team to revise the location of the washrooms so they are not situated at the highest point of the ridge.

One Panel member appreciated the masking of the Gardiner structure through the design, the use of forest to hedge the ridge, the programs, and the general disposition of elements. However, the ridge idea and the path moving through the park are lost. The Panel member asked the team to shift the narrative to capture the strongest parts of the revised design, and move away from the ridge concept and instead focus on a forest on a hill as the unifying idea. The Panel member did not favour the basketball court having the Gardiner as backdrop, consider flipping it to the inside of the park which provides an opportunity to green the Lake Shore frontage and rethink the play area. The Panel member suggested a green wall, or a mural, on the elevation of the ridge to discourage graffiti, and was concerned about the location of the garage and washrooms at the ridge peak facing the plaza. The Panel member felt the current project parti is unclear as it is sitting between ridge and Bluffs, and suggested more clarity on the concept at the next review.

Another Panel member suggested to move the washroom off axis of circulation path, provide more landscape layers on the sloped surfaces, and felt that reducing the ridge along Lake Shore is a good direction for the project. The Panel member recommended removing the path between ridge and lawn so the two can be more connected and increase the size of the plaza for events – small adjustments like those are needed for this project to succeed. While the residential projects on either side of the site are built backing onto Lake Shore, other buildings along Lower York Street with animated frontages at Lake Shore have shown a different strategy, indicating that reducing the ridge and opening to Lake Shore is the right move that should be further developed.

3.5 Consensus Comments

- Appreciated the detailed presentation and detailed planting strategy.

- Appreciated the activated approach and programming along Lake Shore frontage.
- Chair acknowledged there was conflicting views on the ridge and it would be hard to capture them in the summary.
- Panel is seeking more clarity and conviction on the project concept and the “big picture” idea in the organization of elements. The project should return for Schematic Design review with a more cohesive approach.
- The ridge/bluff no longer feels like a unifying concept at present given the reduced amount of ridge, thus clarification of the conceptual approach is needed.
- Some felt that the original ridge concept remains compelling and supported the analogy be further advanced. Others felt that the ridge is no longer strongly represented in the current iteration, enough so that the narrative should be rethought.
- The concept of a meandering experience up the ridge through the park is diluted by an overall more fragmented experience with park elements separated into many different zones.
- Planting strategy reinforces a zone-like experience, consider blending the various planting zones and articulate the layered quality of the ridge.
- Plaza feels disconnected and lacks a strong sense of place, consider reconfiguring the shape of the plaza to feel less like circulation and more like a place. Reconfigure the washrooms so it is less visually dominant from the plaza.
- Consider more use of stone and less concrete in emphasizing the qualities of the bluffs.

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

Mr. Thomann noted the Panel comments address the core challenge of the project, the ridge has evolved from a “wall” to something new with considerations for green, views, and dialogue with the rest of the park.

1.6 [Vote of Support/Non-Support](#)

The Panel voted Non-Support (six Non-Support and three Conditional Support votes) 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.

These Meeting Minutes are formally adopted and approved by Panel on January 25th, 2023.

Signed--

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Paul Bedford, Waterfront Design Review Panel Chair

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Emilia Floro, City of Toronto Urban Design Director

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Chris Glaisek, Waterfront Toronto Chief Planning and Design Officer