



WATERFRONTToronto

Waterfront Design Review Panel Minutes of Meeting #172

Wednesday, November 27, 2024

Meeting held in-person hybrid at Waterfront Toronto

Present

Paul Bedford, Chair
Betsy Williamson, Vice Chair
Gina Ford
Pat Hanson
David Leinster
Janna Levitt
Nina-Marie Lister
Emily Mueller De Celis
Fadi Masoud
Pina Petricone
Brigitte Shim
Kevin Stelzer
Eric Turcotte

Regrets

Matthew Hickey

Representatives

Chris Glaisek, Waterfront Toronto

Recording Secretary

Leon Lai

Overview of Review Agenda

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

1. Waterfront East LRT 2A Yonge Slip – Stage 2: Schematic Design
 2. 10 Lower Spadina – Stage 1: Issues Identification
-

GENERAL BUSINESS

The Chair asked if there were any conflicts of interest for disclosure. Janna Levitt declared a conflict for **10 Lower Spadina** and recused herself for the review.

The Chair then asked Waterfront Toronto to give an update on last month's projects.

Design Review Panel Report Back:

Leon Lai, Design Review Panel Manager with Waterfront Toronto, noted that today will be Gina Ford's last meeting as a Panel member and thanked her for her services. The Chair noted that Gina served on the WDRP since March 2022, reviewed over thirty-five design items, and thanked her for helping shape the future of the Toronto waterfront.

Mr. Lai noted that City Council has approved the settlement offer for **685 Lake Shore Boulevard East** and the terms were made public on Nov. 22nd, 2024. Mr. Lai noted that the Consensus Comments for **280 Commissioners Street, 115 Saulters Street, 120 Bouchette Street**, have been shared with the proponents. Mr. Lai noted that **190 Cherry Street** has filed a SPA resubmission and is working with City staff to address comments.

Mr. Lai noted that **WELRT 2B Queens Quay Extension** has completed the WDRP with a vote of Full Support at last month's Stage 3: Detailed Design review and will continue to advance the design. Mr. Lai noted that **Keating Channel Pedestrian Bridge** will advance to Design Development given their Full Support vote last month at Stage 2: Schematic Design, and Waterfront Toronto has issued an RFP for design-assist, and noted that the Design Development phase is expected to complete in Spring 2025.

Waterfront Toronto Updates:

Mr. Lai noted that the three orders of government through Waterfront Toronto reached a major milestone for Port Lands Flood Protection with the north plug removal, making the completion of the new Don River.

Chair's remarks:

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

PROJECT REVIEWS

1.0 Waterfront East LRT 2A Yonge Slip – Stage 2: Schematic Design

<i>Project ID #:</i>	1122
<i>Project Type:</i>	Public Realm
<i>Review Stage:</i>	Schematic Design
<i>Review Round:</i>	Two



<i>Location:</i>	Lower Yonge
<i>Proponent:</i>	Waterfront Toronto
<i>Architect/ Designer:</i>	DTAH + West 8 + WSP
<i>Presenter(s):</i>	Shelley Long, Project Lead, West 8 Adriaan Geuze, Principal, West 8
<i>Delegation:</i>	Yvonne Lam, DTAH Ayako Kitta, DTAH Donna Bridgeman-Rossi, West 8 Margot Shafran, Waterfront Toronto Pina Mallozzi, Waterfront Toronto Patrick Meredith-Karam, Waterfront Toronto Katya Zappitelli, Waterfront Toronto Sarah Chapin, Waterfront Toronto Jackie Tam, City of Toronto Gail Rodrigues, City of Toronto David O'Hara, City of Toronto

1.1 Introduction to the Issues

Margot Shafran, Design Project Manager with Waterfront Toronto, introduced the Waterfront East LRT project and site context, noting that Yonge Slip Lakefill is within the Segment 2 work, the work is being managed by City of Toronto (Transit Expansion) in partnership with Waterfront Toronto and the TTC; Waterfront Toronto is managing project design for Segment 2 and 3, and TTC is managing Segment 1. Ms. Shafran summarized the focus of Segment 1: Underground Union Station and Portal, Segment 2: Queens Quay East Reconstruction and Extension, and Segment 3: Cherry Connection North and Villiers Connection South and Loop. Ms. Shafran noted the location context, existing uses, relationship to future transit and traffic reconfiguration, lake fill requirement, hotel and ferry terminal access, existing marine transportation inventory, and that it is an important node for the Marine Transport Network. Ms. Shafran noted adjacent project context including Jack Layton Ferry Terminal, Yonge Slip Park, work to date on the lake filing, stakeholder feedback, and recapped the previous WDRP comments.

Ms. Shafran noted the areas for Panel consideration including program requirements, creating a meaningful experience for different users, connection between WaveDeck and marine activity, and whether the design is cohesive and well-integrated with the broader waterfront revitalization efforts.

1.2 Project Presentation

Shelley Long, Project Lead with West 8, began the presentation by noting the existing site analysis including the water taxi experience, demand for water transportation, existing commemorative qualities, and recapped the original masterplan intent. Ms. Long noted the five design principles including minimize impacts of driveway relocation on public realm, create a framework for a water taxi marine hub, facilitate access to the water with focus on pedestrian comfort, celebrate the street connection to the water with an urban green foot, and develop a WaveDeck identity born from site context and programs. Ms. Long noted the design vision and programs: views of the

water and sightlines, arrival experience through landscaped thresholds, celebrating the connection to the water, access to the floating dock and marine transport, water taxi queue, shade structure concept for waiting and seating, the framed view of the arrival, and that Yonge Slip is part of the WaveDecks of the waterfront.

1.3 Panel Questions

One Panel member asked why the water taxis are moved to the north where they interface with the public realm. Ms. Long noted that the vision of the WaveDeck is to provide access to the water, so the intention is to bring taxis as close to the arrival network as possible. Adriaan Geuze, Principal with West 8, responded that right now when you wait for taxis you are standing in a back-of-house area of the slip, the team is interested in changing that condition so that the WaveDeck can be the destination regardless of whether you are waiting for the taxi or not, and move the back-of-house area elsewhere. The Panel member asked if the vendors will migrate their elements such as advertising, tables, etc., to the front-of-house area. Ms. Long noted this will have to be managed by the client team. Mr. Geuze felt that the waiting area should be kept neutral, open, and public.

Another Panel member asked if the bus layby will block access to the WaveDeck. Ms. Long noted the unimpeded sightline to the slip is being considered as coming from the east side due to the dock on the west side, so in this context the bus layby does not block the view. The Panel member asked for the safety considerations for the waiting area and if there is the same risk of falling from the waiting zone. Ms. Long noted guardrail is provided for the more official boarding zone.

One Panel member asked for more information on the CSO and how will the aquatic habitat design work as a “wet foot” in the water. Ms. Long noted the CSO will exit on the east side of the slip, thus a no pile zone, and the aquatic habitat design will be provided at the next review. The Panel member asked if boats could plug in at the dock for charging. Mr. Glaisek noted the team will consider that. Mr. Geuze felt that many cities have unique singular styles of water taxis, as Toronto’s waterfront evolve it is worth speculating on this existential question.

Another Panel member asked for more information on green and blue infrastructure management, the attitude for vehicular streets and curb cut design. Ms. Long noted that wherever possible, open planters are supplemented with silva cells, creating a network of green infrastructure. There is also a barrier curb for safety and clarify of delineation; the layby has rolled curb.

One Panel member asked for the structure material. Ms. Long noted it is a concrete structure finished in wood. Mr. Geuze noted it is worth considering steel for the deck so it can support a green roof at the pavilion in timber.

Another Panel member noted the vehicular access route currently shows the road crossing over the promenade, and asked why it is designed more like a street than a driveway. Ms. Long noted that based on traffic numbers, the team felt it is better to treat it as a delineated street. Ms. Geuze noted the route is required for ferry servicing needs.

One Panel asked if there are other options for turning so the truck does not have to drive onto the WaveDeck. Mr. Geuze noted the team will explore this.

Another Panel member asked if the traffic numbers capture the peak times for events and seasonal fluctuations, as well as a future where 1 Yonge is complete. The Panel member asked if the team can provide a larger context capturing 1 Yonge public space and the future Yonge slip park. Mr. Glaisek noted ideally the slip would be signed with the park at the same time but there is no funding to develop the park, so it is hard for Waterfront Toronto to think about it as a design exercise and put a proposition forward. Mr. Glaisek agreed that additional context can be added. Emilia Floro, Director of Urban Design with City of Toronto asked the team to include property lines to help indicate private and public areas. The Panel member commented that it is important to speculate on the adjacent conditions to fully design the slip.

One Panel member appreciated the slide that helps contextualize the design of this WaveDeck with the others, and asked the team to provide tools to help assess the volume of people and traffic that will have an impact on the project, for example how does this WaveDeck compare with the others in terms of surface area.

1.4 Panel Comments

One Panel member appreciated the complex project and site. The Panel member felt the design reads as a solution for traffic but not a celebration of the foot of Yonge Street, asked the team to consider whether the park adjacent or the slip will provide space for celebration. The Panel member suggested developing a different design of the shade structure, using either an iconography very similar to the WaveDeck or something completely different that looks “planted” on the WaveDeck. The Panel member felt concerned the public space would be lined with commercial uses, and management of these areas will be important to keep vendors at bay. Furthermore, consider maximizing the pedestrianization of the area to accommodate a huge volume of people.

Another Panel member appreciated the compelling presentation, felt excited about the opportunity to hybridize transit so it is functional and beautiful and welcoming – the team is capable of hybridizing that even more. The Panel member felt the railing that separates the waiting area is not a good solution. The Panel member asked the team to consider docking on the east and drop off at the north, consider winter comfort, as well as lighting and safety throughout the year.

One Panel member supported the shading structure, the concept of the “wet foot”, and is excited to see the aquatic design as fish habitat will improve the quality of the experience. The Panel member suggested to not focus on summer privilege, shift away from the cottage country inspiration, and move towards a sacred history and relationship with water, emphasize a different, carbon neutral, green, taxi culture that can support our overall climate positive goal. The Panel member remarked that since the street is so long, the name should reflect that idea, i.e. “Long Street”.

Another Panel member appreciated the feminization of all the elements in the design, noted that the WaveDecks are a system that shape themselves to the site constraints, and encouraged the team to be bold and further develop the WaveDeck design to have it touch water by becoming the gangways.

One Panel member appreciated the “Lake to Lake” concept of Yonge Street and the exuberance in the design proposal. The Panel member sympathized with the challenge of vehicular movement and pedestrian safety, asked the team to consider the solution at Union Station which splits pedestrian from the utility areas. The Panel member asked the team to consider having the pedestrian promenade continue and thus breaking up the driving pavement, to further encourage cars to slow down.

Another Panel member felt the view from Yonge Street is critical and that the shade structure currently is blocking it, consider its location carefully as it should help frame the view. The Panel member felt that the structure feels like an afterthought, encouraged the team to better integrate it into the design. The Panel member suggested a space without any water taxi so people can touch the water.

One Panel member noted that commercialization of the public realm will likely happen, encouraged the team to consider a larger floating dock to contain all the lower deck infrastructure and equipment, or a central kiosk that is managed to help protect the public realm, and ensure the WaveDeck is kept open.

Another Panel member felt the layby can be designed differently to accommodate pickup as most people are willing to walk elsewhere to meet their taxis. The Panel member appreciated the structure being part of the WaveDeck language and wondered if the sedum roof can be further developed. The Panel member asked the team to consider the Indigeneity layer in the Quayside Public Realm and see how that can be integrated into the design.

One Panel member felt the WEP should be further developed to help protect the WaveDeck so it can help alleviate the pressures from the Westin Harbour Castle back-of-house functions, and be coordinated to work with the adjacent future park. The Panel member asked the team to consider flipping the waiting with the watching area so the terminal point of Yonge will be a space for viewing.

Another Panel member felt that the celebration aspect is missing from the design and encouraged the team to extend the system of the WaveDeck to the rest of the project, i.e. render the road as landscape, treat the various bands of movement as one space, leverage the WaveDeck to help manage both people waiting and sitting as one area. The Panel member did not believe that mercantile presence will conflict with the design, in fact it will make the space unique. The Panel member supported moving away from cottage country imagery and focus on a more natural reference such as a grove of trees.

One Panel member appreciated the clarity in the presentation, asked the team to provide statistics on pedestrian movement traffic to better understand the flow of people. The Panel member underscored the impact of public realm continuity to ensure smoothness of experience, consider the east side of Yonge street, temporary

activation programs – something to help signal that the parking lot will become a public realm. The Panel member recommended the team hire an architect to design the shade structure as it is an important conversation, consider the location carefully and how it frames the view to the water, the architectural language, and its role in the public realm. The Panel member suggested meaningful Indigenous consultation, dig deep in the history of the site and create a design that is joyous and meaningful.

Another Panel member felt that given the importance of the site, the WaveDeck typology should evolve, and suggested an upper and lower WaveDeck where the topography helps bring people down to the water gradually. The same language can morph into a big floating dock – this way all the programs can flow and be more expansive. The Panel member asked if the WaveDeck structural logic can be maintained as a linear system and not two-way – it is very important to keep the structural and geometric order as the WaveDeck typology evolves.

1.5 Consensus Comments

General

- Appreciated the quality of the presentation.
- The site is one of the most important sites in the waterfront and a culmination of all of the previous WaveDecks, the design has to both respond to complex site conditions while creating a very special place.
- The Panel questioned whether this is the best we can do in celebrating the foot of Yonge Street and felt that more could be done.
- Plan for very high pedestrian traffic, utilize traffic data that considers future density of the immediate context.
- Consider the future Yonge Street Park in the long-term vision of the slip and ensure the two will work together to celebrate Yonge Street.
- Provide more information on the aquatic habitat conditions of the design at the next review.
- Consider the important Indigenous history and importance of Yonge Street – connecting Lake Ontario and Lake Simcoe – in the design.

Design

- Continue to develop the design further to maximize pedestrian public realm and minimize vehicular intrusion and make this a special celebration.
- Consider prioritizing pedestrian movement for the entire slip and have vehicles as secondary, create clean indication that vehicles will have to slow down to move through.
- Consider an “upper” and “lower” WaveDeck strategy where the floating dock feel part of the language of the WaveDeck.
- Consider year-round use and seasonality in both the design and material selections.
- Some Panel members felt it is important for the WaveDeck to not be cluttered with water taxi related infrastructure like advertising and kiosks, and recommended strong signage regulation to protect the public nature of the WaveDeck.

- Some Panel members felt the railing is not necessary, instead toe-rail may be sufficient based on other slips.
- The bus/ taxi layby inhibits pedestrian movement, consider its need and if it can be relocated and replaced for more landscaping.

1.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support

The Panel voted Conditional Support.

Ms. Long thanked the Panel for the comments and noted the team will work on addressing them in the next phase of work. Mr. Geuze thanked the Panel for their thoughtful commentary.

2.0 10 Lower Spadina – Stage 1: Issues Identification

<i>Project ID #:</i>	1148
<i>Project Type:</i>	Building
<i>Review Stage:</i>	Issues Identification
<i>Review Round:</i>	One
<i>Location:</i>	Central Waterfront
<i>Proponent:</i>	Arkfield
<i>Architect/ Designer:</i>	BDP Quadrangle Studio TLA
<i>Presenter(s):</i>	Kenneth Brooks, Senior Associate, BDP Quadrangle Matthew Bernstein, Partner, Studio TLA
<i>Delegation:</i>	Les Klein, BDP Quadrangle Maryam Alavi, BDP Quadrangle Ahmad Noghabaei, BDP Quadrangle Kiarashi Kiai, Arkfield Development Michael Goldberg, Goldberg Group Adam Layton, Goldberg Group Kaari Kitawi, City of Toronto Benjamin Waters, City of Toronto Nasim Adab, City of Toronto Willie Macrae, City of Toronto Corey Bialek, Waterfront Toronto Josh Hilburt, Waterfront Toronto Rei Tasaka, Waterfront Toronto



2.1 Introduction to the Issues

Benjamin Waters, Community Planner with City of Toronto, introduced that the project has submitted for both Zoning By-Law Amendment and Site Plan Application to redevelop the site, the project program, and planning and zoning context. Kaari Kitawi, Urban Designer with City of Toronto, noted the existing conditions of the site and adjacent built form, showed a preliminary height comparison of the proposed with the adjacent buildings on Queens Quay West, and the built form comments from City staff. Ms. Kitawi noted the adjacent public realm projects including Under Gardiner Public Realm, The Bentway, and that the project is here for WDRP Stage 1: Issues

Identification. Ms. Kitawi summarized the areas for Panel consideration: appropriateness of proposed height and massing in the neighbourhood context, the enhancement of the public realm through this proposal, adequacy of building setbacks and stepbacks, the building design as a “gateway” to the waterfront, and finally whether the colonnade is the right approach at-grade.

2.2 Project Presentation

Ken Brooks, Senior Associate with BDP Quadrangle, began the presentation by noting the team, the site context, transit connections, major streets, and the skyline. Mr. Brooks noted the site is not just another site, it is at the intersection of the city and the harbour, as well as a connective green edge linking The Bentway to the waterfront. Mr. Brooks noted the design of the tower, building plans and ground floor services and loading access. Mr. Brooks noted the 10m setback from the north to preserve opportunity for a tower on the adjacent site.

Matthew Bernstein, Partner with Studio TLA, presented the landscape design by noting the goals of sustainability and creating meaningful and appropriate spaces, wind mitigation, heavy vegetated edges, and wind screens to extend outdoor uses into shoulder seasons. Mr. Bernstein noted the ground floor public realm plan and rooftop landscape strategy, that there is underground service infrastructure along Queens Quay which prevent trees from being planted. Mr. Brooks concluded by noting the exterior building concept design, art integration opportunities, and sustainability strategies.

2.3 Panel Questions

One Panel member asked for the ownership of the site to the north. Willie Macrae, Community Planning Manager with City of Toronto, responded that it is owned by the City and there are no plans for the site. The Panel member asked if the team is eliminating one lane on the west side of Spadina. Mr. Brooks noted Spadina is not being changed and the layby on the west is existing.

Another Panel member asked for more information on climate resilience and low carbon emissions measures. Mr. Brooks responded that the building has emergency power, water, areas of refuge, a “Neighbourhood Nest” also known as a space for fostering community resilience in multi-unit residential communities, and the team is looking at low carbon concrete as an opportunity. The Panel member asked if the balconies are thermally broken. Mr. Brooks noted that a prefabricated balcony system can provide that separation.

One Panel member asked if the team has confirmed with Billy Bishop Airport on the tower height. Mr. Brooks noted it is not an issue.

Another Panel member asked if there are shadow studies on the tower height and the shadow impact on the public realm. Mr. Brooks noted there is a shadow study which demonstrates mostly affecting the Gardiner Expressway and little to no effect on the public realm north of the site.

One Panel member asked for the floor plate size. Mr. Brooks noted the lower floors are 700m² and towards the top they are 800m² – the average in the middle section being around 750m².

Another Panel member asked if the team considered locating the tower closer to the northern property line and instead placing the roof gardens facing Queens Quay to provide southern exposure and be protected from wind and noise the Gardiner. Mr. Brooks responded that the tower is located in its current configuration to preserve the tower development potential of the adjacent site.

2.4 Panel Comments

One Panel member did not agree with a building of this height at the site and felt the design does not create a “gateway” that suits the waterfront. The Panel member recommended eliminating the arcade, pulling the building north, bringing the rooftop landscape to the ground and working together with the existing public realm. The Panel member suggested to make the tower shorter and design large, luxurious, units that face the water.

Another Panel member noted the site is one of the most important gateways at the waterfront, recommended a smaller building that responds to the south side including Queens Quay and the water. The Panel member asked the team to consider water management and how the site can help recover biodiversity, tap into the great framework that is already on the waterfront. The Panel member noted that it is odd the playground is the same size as the pet area and suggested a different landscape and public realm strategy entirely.

One Panel member noted the site is very important and felt the project has a lot of potential to deliver something great that would connect to the waterfront ecologically, restoratively, and symbolically. There are small hints of this potential but further development is needed.

Another Panel member recommended less motif gestures that represents water visually, instead explore strategies that are truly performative. The Panel member supported the previous comments on smaller building and bringing more public realm along Queens Quay.

One Panel member felt that intuitively the massing should start high on the north and cascade down towards the water, and this would be a beautiful model of a waterfront development. The Panel member appreciated the idea of integrating Indigenous art. The Panel member suggested to re-examine the role of colonnade as they often feel pinched and shaded. The Panel member asked the team to provide a strategy that would green Queens Quay and make it beautiful throughout the year.

Another Panel member appreciated the design presentation package but felt that the development is not currently at the right scale for the size of the lot. Noting that there is no stepback, little building articulation, the project would set a bad precedent for that segment of Queens Quay. The Panel member asked the team to provide a block

context analysis in terms of height, and commented that if somehow this site can be combined with the north then it would open new potentials in massing.

One Panel member felt the design is not iconic and did not support the tower height. The Panel member felt the project looks typical with a common landscape strategy that would be anywhere in the city, and commented that this site should support instead a low to mid-rise building.

Another Panel member asked the team to consider the transition from Queens Quay West to Spadina, connect the public realm to the future Bentway Islands, and thus creating a transformational project and experience. Furthermore, the corner of the site needs a stronger connection with the building. The Panel member did not support the arcade. The Panel member recommended stepping back the building to provide a more generous public realm, and consider reducing the setback to the north to allow the building massing to shift north and better respond to the waterfront context.

One Panel member noted the site is important and has the potential to ignite adjacent areas. The Panel member felt the tower is neutral in its design and does not positively impact the view corridor or skyline, the tower would also be better if it is a lower mid-rise building. The Panel member noted the actual sidewalk clearance is not 6.7m when half of it is under the arcade and did not support the colonnade strategy along Queens Quay. The Panel member encouraged the team to develop a stronger landscape and public realm concept.

Another Panel member asked the team to take cues from the building immediately west of the site in terms of both massing and scape, felt the tower is too tall in its proposed location, and protect and respect the Spadina view corridor to the water. The Panel member noted that the ground floor is predominantly loading and building services and encouraged relocating those programs elsewhere to free up space for more active programs.

2.5 Consensus Comments

General

- Appreciated the detailed presentation of the project.
- The Panel felt the building is too large for the size of the site – the project is out of scale.
- Continue to develop the architectural expression of the building as the current design is not sufficiently iconic nor creates a special “gateway” to the waterfront.
- The design lacks contextual specificity, consider step-backs and building articulation to better respond to the unique setting.
- For a tower of this size, considering incorporating affordable housing.
- Supported the suggestion of expanding the site with the northern lot to achieve a massing strategy beyond what is possible with the current size.
- Some Panel members felt the Billy Bishop flight path might be a concern and should be considered in the tower massing.

- Strong emphasis on climate-resilience, consider strategies such as reducing thermal bridging, emergency power and refuge, low-carbon materials, and overall landscape performance.

Ground Floor

- King's Landing arcade has not been successful, not recommended to extend this condition at this site.
- Continue to develop the corner condition because the current strategy of eroding the corner is not supported.
- Consider pushing the building back to create an opportunity for more public realm along Queens Quay
- Consider further "greening" Queens Quay with street trees.
- It is important for the project and its public realm strategy to demonstrate a connection to the greater public realm, both existing and future, as well as water.
- Loading and services at-grade should be further minimized to permit more space for programs that improve public realm activation; concerned with retail depths, continue to refine.

2.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support

No vote was taken as the project was reviewed at Stage 1: Issues Identification

Les Klein, Principal with BDP Quadrangle, thanked the Panel for the comments and noted that the team will continue to have discussions internally and reflect on the comments.

CLOSING

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

These Meeting Minutes were formally adopted and approved by the Panel on January 29, 2025.

These Meeting Minutes have been signed by Paul Bedford, Waterfront Design Review Panel Chair, and Chris Glaisek, Waterfront Toronto Chief Planning and Design Officer. Waterfront Toronto has on record a copy of this document with their DocuSign signatures.