



WATERFRONTToronto

Waterfront Design Review Panel

Minutes of Meeting #145

Wednesday, July 21st, 2021

Meeting held Virtually

Present

Paul Bedford, Chair
Betsy Williamson, Vice Chair
George Baird
Peter Busby
Pat Hanson
Nina-Marie Lister
Fadi Masoud
Jeff Ranson
Brigitte Shim
Kevin Stelzer
Eric Turcotte

Regrets

Janna Levitt
Matthew Hickey
Claude Cormier

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. West Don Lands Block 5 Re kai Centre – Detailed Design
 2. Legacy Art Project – Issues Identification
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GENERAL BUSINESS

The Chair asked the Panel to adopt the minutes from the June 23rd, 2021 meeting. The minutes were adopted.

The Chair asked if there were any conflicts of interest. No conflict of interest was declared.

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

Update on last month's projects:

Mr. Glaisek began by noting the **Queens Quay East 2B** proponent team is continuing the design work on Queens Quay East and refine the green infrastructure design. The team is coordinating the alignments of the Cherry St. north connection to finalize 10% design and the project is expected to return to DRP for Schematic Design in Q3/Q4 2021. Mr. Glaisek noted the consensus comments have been circulated to the **BQNP Eireann Quay Plaza** proponent team, a design workshop is being scheduled in the coming weeks to refine the design and discuss issues raised by the Panel.

Mr. Glaisek noted the **Quayside** RFQ has closed and Waterfront Toronto is preparing to announce the shortlist soon to begin the RFP stage. There is a good cross section of developers from Canada and abroad and a mix of design firms.

One Panel member asked if there are other resources on **Port Lands Flood Protection (PLFP)** archive and database that can be shared with schools, or further development on the digital archiving in film format in addition to photos. Mr. Glaisek responded that we can provide an update at the next meeting and maybe students can do site tours.

Another Panel member asked for any plans on returning to in-person meetings. Mr. Glaisek noted there is no update, however we are able to start doing site tours and we will look into a PLFP tour for the Panel – Leon will schedule a time to coincide with a waterfront boat tour.

Other Waterfront Toronto Update:

Mr. Glaisek noted East Bayfront **Aquabella** has begun occupancy on the first few levels and the construction of the cladding is being completed on the upper levels. Mr. Glaisek noted **Aqualuna** began excavation and the work on the Water's Edge Promenade between Aquabella and Parliament Slip also started. Mr. Glaisek noted the **East Bayfront Boardwalk and In-water Pipe** has started construction, the team is working on the marine scope to install the piers and steel king piles. The boardwalk scope has been postponed due to budget constraints.

Mr. Glaisek provided an upcoming draft project agenda for September 2021 DRP.

Chair's remarks:

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

PROJECT REVIEWS

1.0 West Don Lands Block 5 Re kai Centre – Detailed Design

<i>Project ID #:</i>	1091A
<i>Project Type:</i>	Building
<i>Review Stage:</i>	Detailed Design
<i>Review Round:</i>	Three
<i>Location:</i>	West Don Lands
<i>Proponent:</i>	Rekai Centres
<i>Architect/ Designer:</i>	Montgomery Sisam Architects
<i>Presenter(s):</i>	Robert Davies, Director and Principal, Montgomery Sisam Architects Sue Graham-Nutter, CEO, Rekai Centres
<i>Delegation:</i>	Dustin Hooper, Montgomery Sisam Elie Newman, Board of Director, Rekai Centres Afaf Zaheer, Rekai Centres Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Caitlin Allan, Bousfields David Sit, City of Toronto Michael Wolfe, Waterfront Toronto Leslie Gash, Waterfront Toronto Aaron Barter, Waterfront Toronto

1.1 Introduction to the Issues

Michael Wolfe, Senior Development Manager with Waterfront Toronto, began the introduction by recapping that Rekai Centres is a non-profit charitable corporation that owns and operates two long-term care homes in Toronto. The project was previously reviewed at WDRP in September 2020 and November 2017. In January 2020, Rekai Centres closed on the land with Infrastructure Ontario. Mr. Wolfe recapped the project scope and the timeline with target construction start at Q2 2022. Mr. Wolfe noted the existing site context and introduced David Sit, Community Planning Manager with City of Toronto, to present the zoning context.

Mr. Sit noted the existing zoning context and the intent to get a Minister's Zoning Order (MZO) for this site. Mr. Sit noted the City is continuing to process the SPA while expecting the MZO to arrive at some point in the future. Mr. Sit noted the planning team is preparing to issue comments to the application.

Mr. Wolfe noted the project is here for Stage 3: Detailed Design review and provided a recap of the September 2020 Schematic Design consensus comments. Mr. Wolfe note the areas for Panel consideration: the revised façade designs and cladding materials, wall section and envelope details, revised ground floor design, animation along Cherry Street, landscape strategy, outdoor microclimates, and the implementation of sustainability strategies. Mr. Wolfe then introduced Sue Graham-Nutter, CEO of Rekai Centres, and Bob Davis, Director and Principal with Montgomery Sisam Architects, to continue the design presentation.

1.2 Project Presentation

Ms. Graham-Nutter noted Peter Reikai sends his regrets as he is not able to attend today, and introduced Elie Newman, member of the Reikai Board of Directors. Ms. Graham-Nutter noted that Reikai is the only long-term care in Downtown (south of Bloor St.), the current waitlist is five thousand people and growing quickly. Dialysis had a waitlist of thirty-eight a year ago and has grown to forty-six today – Reikai is built for fifty-four. Ms. Graham-Nutter noted the key innovations: negative pressure isolation room for infectious diseases and cooperating with St. Michaels and George Brown. The team is in discussions with the Housing Ministry's office with respect to a Minister's Zoning Order as it is in our interest to complete construction as soon as possible, hopefully earlier than 2025.

Bob Davies, Director and Principal with Montgomery Sisam Architects began the design presentation by summarizing the key changes, site context, and recapped the design strategy. Mr. Davies noted the innovative strategies, ground floor plan, upper level plans, landscape design on the upper terraces, and the key sections. Mr. Davies noted the development on the north and south elevations, ground floor façade finishes, and the key wall sections from typical unit envelop to the ground floor bench along Cherry Street. Mr. Davies noted the public realm design with renderings of the ground floor along Cherry Street and the south façade.

Mr. Davies noted the sustainability strategies including angled precast frames for passive shading, thermally broken precast panels, insulated terraces, and an inverted roof assembly with green roof. Mr. Davies noted the unit suite details, material palette, and the primary mechanical space located in the middle of the building to free up the roof space for amenities. Mr. Davies concluded that the team is half-way through contract documents so there is still more to be resolved.

1.3 Panel Questions

The Chair then asked the Panel for questions of clarification.

One Panel member asked if there is an opportunity to take the dark bronze finish into the interior design. Mr. Davies responded that the dry-wall is painted in a charcoal color but can be replaced with a warmer, bronze, color. The team will study whether this can be adjusted to be complimentary or too overwhelmingly bronze.

Another Panel member asked if the finished ground floor is lower than the street grade and if the bench areas in the hallway are niches outside the width of the corridor. Mr. Davies responded that the finished ground floor is lower than street grade and the bench areas are widened at the north and south ends of the corridor, part of the continuous loop strategy.

One Panel member asked for clarification on the canopy issue with street trees and Urban Forestry. Mr. Davies noted that Urban Forestry indicated that the extent of the canopy might interfere with the drip line and impact the health of the street trees.

Another Panel member asked for the level of the floor with the outdoor microclimate zones. Mr. Davies responded that it is the 8th floor and the design follows bird friendly guidelines.

One Panel member asked by how much is the canopy overhanging over the sidewalk. Mr. Davies noted it is around 1m. The Panel member noted the rear lane is a shared easement with the Honda dealership site and asked if there is any idea of the future use of the lane in serving the needs of both sides. Ms. Graham-Nutter responded that the lane is in an area that belongs to Rekai with vehicular and pedestrian access for the dealership, they cannot park or station vehicles there. There are no current plans to develop the Honda site but Rekai's team is looking at realistic needs for drop-offs as vehicles might need to be parked there temporarily. The Panel member asked for why the MZO is needed for the site. Ms. Graham-Nutter responded it is mainly to speed up the approval process as there is a long waitlist and surgical backlog for long-term care facilities – a sped up process is a big interest of the team. Mr. Sit noted timing is front and centre and the City is working swiftly on processing the Site Plan Application.

Another Panel member asked if the team investigated solar PVs or solar wall that would allow the preheating of makeup air. Mr. Davies responded that the team looked at PVs but not trombe walls or solar walls.

One Panel member noted Tier 2 energy compliance is laudable, and asked if the team considered any strategy for distributed ventilation as it is a large and tall building. Mr. Davies noted there are budgetary challenges. Ms. Graham-Nutter noted when Rekai was hit with the first wave of COVID, there was no guidebook to navigate through this, the team is building negative pressure rooms because it is important to create a zone to cohort people.

1.4 Panel Comments

One Panel member appreciated the team for addressing the main design issues of the project and noted the project will be a great addition to the West Don Lands area.

Another Panel member commended that the project is already impressive, and the refinements made it better. The Panel member commended the team for persevering through the long development process and noted that it is important to keep the design of the ground floor canopy on Cherry Street as it serves both functional and formal purposes.

One Panel member commended the design, noting it is well detailed and will become a great project for Toronto.

Another Panel member noted the building will make a positive contribution to this stretch of Cherry Street, the side that pedestrians use to get to the Distillery, and cannot wait to see the project completed. The Panel member noted the animation on the east façade is critical, appreciated the descriptions of the team's proposal. The building should take part in the public streetscape, appreciated the forward thinking of the west façade to futureproof the development next door. The Panel member noted

the building type is challenging with many regulations and congratulated the team for the innovation.

One Panel member noted the demand for long-term care will only increase as population ages, appreciated the addition of George Brown program so seniors can meet students. The Panel member asked the team to ensure that the pre-cast panels are good quality and durable, so they are elegant for a long time. The canopy is essential for the safety of the residents and a determinate of the activeness of Cherry Street, the Panel member asked Urban Forestry to consider giving exemptions for other species of street trees that are taller and skinner, encouraged further negotiations between the two sides.

Another Panel member thanked the team for a contemplative presentation that mirror the intent and passion of the building. The Panel member appreciated the opportunity for the landscape to be as important as the building due to its limited area. The Panel member noted the healing qualities of biophilic design, appreciated an edible landscape, and encouraged the team to create intimate micro-climates. The Panel member reference the Singapore Khoo Teck Puat Hospital as an example of using biophilic as healing at tiny scales – lead with landscape in small spaces. The Panel member noted this is a moment to engage Urban Forestry to identify trees that will work with the design of the canopy and hopefully set a new precedent for that condition.

One Panel member commended the excellent presentation and noted the design is progressing nicely. The Panel member appreciated how the west façade sets up the context for the future western development and maximizes the opportunity for a good relationship. The Panel member felt the canopy on Cherry Street should be celebrated, consider adding more trees in the public realm, i.e. north and west frontages, and adding some colors and playfulness to the ground floor to brighten the space, i.e. more art.

Another Panel member appreciated the wonderful project as it is a great addition to the neighbourhood. The Panel member noted the building is meant to last and the design should anticipate the 2030 carbon neutral goals and encouraged the team to provide a transition plan that will be required in the future. In terms of make-up-air, the Panel member noted there is an opportunity for solar wall, which typically have high rate of return, as the team looks ahead to the challenges in ten to twenty years.

1.5 Consensus Comments

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

General

- Strong support for the project - a great addition to the West Don Lands neighbourhood while setting a new standard for Long Term Care buildings.
- Having been in planning and approval stage for over 10 years, the Panel commended the team for their perseverance.
- Appreciated the design for not only taking into consideration the requirements and needs of the residents, but also the employees and greater community.

- It is important to provide opportunities for the residents to meet and share their many life years of experience, ensure the programming and operations are designed to maximize conversations and exchanges.

Building

- The Cherry Street streetscape is very important for residents to sit and experience life, the Panel strongly supported the design and placement of the ground floor canopy despite the potential conflict with street trees. Work with Urban Forestry to ensure the full potential of the canopy can be realized.
- Strong support for the bench design along with the Cherry St. frontage.
- Consider making the ground floor and other common areas more playful, such as opportunities to introduce more colors and/or artwork into the material finishes.
- Ensure the pre-cast facades are sensitively treated and that the cladding is high quality and durable.
- Suggestion there be a great bar included in the common areas as a social focal point.

Landscape

- Ensure the landscaping along Cherry St. and Front St. are maximized.
- Ensure the ground floor frontage towards the west is sensitively futureproofed for the adjacent Honda dealership site which will likely be developed in the future, i.e. provide more trees to improve the drop-off and loading experience.
- Strong support for the outdoor amenity areas, ensure the landscaping is designed to be to be experienced and viewed, consider edible plantings and creating microclimates for the residents to enjoy.
- Ensure the landscape and species will encourage bird life on the terraces.

Sustainability

- Consider the adaptability of the building in the future to meet carbon zero, provide a plan in anticipation for that transition now.

1.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support

The Panel voted unanimously Full Support for the project.

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

Mr. Davies thanked the Panel and noted the team worked hard for the residents and Sue and Elie. It is great to receive an endorsement from colleagues whom we respect. The team agrees with the canopy comments. Mr. Sit added that City Planning will have a conversation with forestry as we are facing this issue across the city when the public realm is not wide enough. Ms. Graham-Nutter thanked Waterfront Toronto and the DRP, it has been a long but inspirational process, and appreciated the team for believing in Re kai. Elie Newman, member of the Re kai Board of Directors, thanked Montgomery Sisam for their work.

Mr. Glaisek noted Meg Davies with Waterfront Toronto deserves thanks as well for supporting the project since day one.

2.0 Legacy Art Project – Issues Identification

Project ID #: 1127
Project Type: Public Realm
Review Stage: Issues Identification
Review Round: One
Location: Central Waterfront
Proponent: Legacy Art Project Toronto
Architect/ Designer: Jon Sasaki
DTAH
Art + Public UnLtd
Presenter(s): Jon Sasaki, Lead Artist
Rebecca Carbin, Principal, Art + Public UnLtd
James Roche, Partner, DTAH
Delegation: Craig Jarvis, Legacy Art Project
Judy Jarvis, Legacy Art Project
Chloe Catan, Waterfront Toronto
Adam Novack, Waterfront Toronto
Aaron Barter, Waterfront Toronto
Josh Hilburt, Waterfront Toronto
Marc Kramer, City of Toronto
David O’Hara, City of Toronto
Catherine Machado, City of Toronto

2.1 Introduction to the Issues

Chris Glaisek, Chief Planning and Design Officer with Waterfront Toronto, began the introduction by noting that Waterfront Toronto is delighted to be asked to implement this project, the site has been sitting there in-between the wetland and music garden for some time. Mr. Glaisek noted the landscape idea of the trail is integral to the art design and would like to ask the Panel to ensure the landscape reinforces the art and helps to create a great public space.

Mr. Glaisek noted the project background, design team led by artist Jon Sasaki, and Waterfront Toronto’s role as the delivery agent like The Bentway; Waterfront Toronto is not the proponent but will manage the construction. Mr. Glaisek noted the site context, Queens Quay granite is planned to extend past this site, the area is a busy stretch for cycling and a destination for pedestrians. South of the site is the Harbourfront Walk built in the 70s, Waterfront Toronto hopes to rebuild this in the future. The north side of the lawn is the site for the project. Mr. Glaisek noted the project is here for Issues Identification, but the idea is already selected through an earlier competition phase – not dissimilar to York Street Park when the project came to DRP after competition. Mr. Glaisek noted the areas for Panel consideration: landscape relationship with various site edges and interfaces, signage strategy, tree and plan species selection, ecological opportunities, and the carbon footprint for the project. Mr. Glaisek then introduced Rebecca Carbin, Principal with Art + Public UnLtd, to continue the design presentation.

2.2 Project Presentation

Ms. Carbin began by noting it is nice to see the Panel again and has enjoyed working with Chloe Catan, Public Art Manager with Waterfront Toronto. Ms. Carbin introduced the design team including Jon Sasaki as the lead artist, and James Roche, Partner with DTAH. Ms. Carbin noted that Legacy Art Project is citizen funded.

Mr. Sasaki presented the concept of the art project, noted he took great inspirations thinking about the lessons of Terry's examples and ideas that can be presented experientially as landscape architecture. Mr. Sasaki noted footage and images of Terry running along the rock cut and felt compelled to design an experience that convey the idea of someone who would not give up in the face of obstacles. Mr. Roche noted the landscape approach was developed in the spirit of the project in mind: the visitor reflects based on where you are in the path, then overcomes the obstacles. There are different stopping points to understand and appreciate the point on the journey and allow moments of reflection before proceeding. There are undulating ground planes that help frame the experience.

Mr. Roche noted the project site context and the use of recycled materials, specifically the off cuts for the granite sculptures. Mr. Sasaki noted the granite convey an eternal quality - beautiful black surface with articulations that animate the stone – the team is excited by the subliminal positive message in the granite. Once the visitors reach the end of the pathway, Terry's silhouette will appear between the granite pieces. Mr. Sasaki noted that the team has a collaborative relationship with the Fox family and a life size statue of a young Terry Fox will be placed at the start of the pathway to allow visitors to connect with him on a personal level.

2.3 Panel Questions

The Chair then asked the Panel for questions of clarification.

One Panel member asked if the team can provide clarification on the integration of the three hedge elements and if they will be curated and maintained. Mr. Sasaki noted the hedges are direct translations from the diagram and the design will evolve in the future taking into consideration of safety. The space between the stone and hedge can be tweaked to achieve a landscape screening element, Mr. Sasaki noted the screening elements are not meant to compete with the stones and the team will investigate the right amount of planting, also whether it can be achieved with subtle landforms.

Another Panel member asked if the team anticipates a concrete foundation for the stone sculptures. Mr. Roche responded caissons are anticipated but a geotechnical report will be completed to determine the soil condition.

One Panel member asked for the width of the opening at Queens Quay sidewalk. Mr. Roche noted that dimension is being determined, Jon is exploring the placement of the bronze figure, currently the width is around 2.5 to 3m but it can be expanded – the work must balance out in cost at the end.

2.4 Panel Comments

One Panel member appreciated the poetic presentation and noted the project is a great addition to the waterfront. The Panel member asked if the entry points from Music Garden and Queens Quay are intended to be more pronounced and present, the Queens Quay opening seems narrow and suggested the edges of the wall can slope down and fan out, or the edges bevel down, to make the entrance more inviting. The Panel member asked the team to consider seasonality and recommended lighting that can help animate the space in the winter. The project is a great opportunity to draw people down to the waterfront with the sculptures, the Panel member encouraged the team to consider year-round attraction potential with both visual and circulatory elements.

Another Panel member appreciated the project as an important addition to the public realm, commended the thoughtfully presented, beautiful, and serene presentation. The concept of meandering through the obstacle reads clearly and the Panel member noted the landscape can be an extension of the meander, consider permeability, porosity, species selection, layering, textural qualities, sculpting the vegetation, in the design of the landscape to echo the path and art. The Panel member noted the project is a small but critical space, also consider biodiversity, pollination, stormwater soft surfaces, and explore ways to work with the different community groups.

One Panel member appreciated the concept of the journey and perseverance. The Panel member felt the journey is about discovery, revealing elements that are not immediately obvious from the outside – the moments of reveal are important as the project relies on visual subtleties to be successful. The Panel member encouraged the team to avoid decorative landscape design, consider fully integrating the landscape with the art to help move the visitors' eyes. The retaining wall opening at Queens Quay requires further development. The Panel member felt the project has strong potentials and is excited to see the schematic design update.

Another Panel member noted the project is exciting and will change the experience of this part of the waterfront. The Panel member asked the team to consider how the landscape will be integrated with the art, and noted it is important to understand all the different points of entries and connections. The sculpture and seating can be further developed. The Panel member asked the team to provide a drawing that shows the space under the tree canopy and further explore the landscape experiences on either side of the path. The Panel member suggested the lawn side to be simplified and provide more sketches from different vantage points to fully understand the qualities of these spaces.

One Panel appreciated the concept scheme and subtleties. The Panel member noted the wildness of the landscape during Terry's run is impressive and suggested the landscape design be wilder to represent the challenges Terry faced in his journey – tough like Terry.

Another Panel member noted the Queens Quay entry should be carefully refined as the existing park grade is high. Consider rounding the corners where the path meets the side walls, or a jagged turn.

One Panel member commended the team for the use of recycled granite and noted community involvement through long term maintenance is a great opportunity for the project.

Another Panel member recommended the use of low carbon concrete, to significantly reduce the embodied carbon in the construction of this project.

One Panel member appreciated the collaboration between artist and landscape architect, excited to see the path and landscape developed. The Panel member noted the gathering spaces between the various objects provide tension to the experience and asked the team to develop those spaces carefully considering questions of what is in-between, moments of interruption, the curated versus wild elements. The Panel member asked the team to further develop the tree layout, consider clusters of trees, instead of linear configuration that re-iterates the adjacent trees, to act as interruptions and obstacles.

2.5 Consensus Comments

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

General

- Appreciated the concept of the journey of discovery, message of hope, and working through obstacles in life.
- The Panel is hopeful that the project will capture the passion of Terry Fox and pass it onto future generations.
- The geography during Terry's run is an important element, consider emphasizing a wilder landscape design in the overall concept to reflect the terrain he ran through.
- Ensure the notion of meandering and facing obstacles is very strong throughout the experience of the project.

Landscape

- Provide more images, perspectives, and diagrammatic studies for composing the different elements that are being explored at the next review.
- Ensure the Queens Quay entrance is very welcoming and draws in many visitors, consider a more visual and public facing entrance, i.e. wider opening, landscape framing, etc.
- Consider seasonality to ensure the project is activated in winter months, provide this information at the next review.
- Suggestion to engage the community to look after the work and ensure there is a long-term maintenance plan.
- The moment where Terry's silhouette comes together for the visitor is very important, consider articulating that moment through the landscape design to ensure it is celebrated and well signified to the public.
- Various suggestions on plant species selection:
 - Avoid decorative grasses
 - Consider rougher/ wilder/ more resilient plant palette
 - Consider local and native species

- Consider utilizing low carbon concrete for the foundations to substantially improve the carbon footprint of the project.

2.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support

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

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

Mr. Roche thanked the Panel for the helpful comments, the team is looking forward to developing options on topography and plantings, the suggestions are helpful in finding the right balance.

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.