



**WATERFRONT**Toronto

## **Waterfront Design Review Panel Minutes of Meeting #43 Wednesday, May 12th, 2010**

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### **Present:**

Bruce Kuwabara, Chair  
George Baird  
Peter Clewes  
Claude Cormier  
Renee Daoust  
Siamak Hariri  
Anne McIlroy  
Janet Rosenberg  
Greg Smallenberg  
Brigitte Shim  
Betsy Williamson

### **Designees and Guests:**

John Campbell  
Christopher Glaisek  
Robert Freedman

### **Regrets:**

Paul Bedford

### **Recording Secretary:**

Margaret Goodfellow

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### **WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed the Panel, noting that an item had been added to the agenda to discuss the proposed Ice Hockey Facility in the Lower Don Lands. The Chair added that he, Christopher Glaisek, and John Campbell would be available after the discussion to answer questions from the media and public.

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### **GENERAL BUSINESS**

The Chair moved to adopt the minutes from March 2010. One Panel member stated that they did not recall a formal vote being called for Underpass Park, though the minutes reflected a vote had taken place. Another Panel member agreed. The Chair moved to have the minutes amended and adopt them at the next meeting.

The Chair asked the Panel if there were any conflicts of interest to declare. Greg Smallenberg declared a conflict with Underpass Park as design lead.

### **Ice Hockey Facility discussion:**

The Chair then presented an open letter to John Campbell, President and CEO of Waterfront Toronto, expressing the Panel's concern over the City of Toronto's decision to locate four ice hockey rinks and 400 surface parking spaces in the Lower Don Lands. The letter characterized the plan to create a sprawling, at-grade, four pad facility as shortsighted and in conflict with the vision to develop a vibrant civic community on the river's mouth and to create a crucial link to Lake Ontario Park.

The Chair noted that the more recent decision by the City to abandon further study of stacking the ice hockey facilities in a more urban form contradicts the preferred solution of the ice hockey facility design team and has precipitated the resignation of Ken Greenberg, a respected urban planner, from that team.

The Chair explained that the Waterfront Toronto Design Review Panel held a special meeting outside of its regularly scheduled meetings to address this issue and to reaffirm its commitment and support of the award winning Lower Don Plan and its urban design principles.

The Chair then read the letter, and invited each Panel member to comment. All members supported the idea of making ice hockey available somewhere on the waterfront, but felt that alternate forms or alternate sites should be investigated further. Several Panel members felt that large single use facilities are very hard to integrate them into neighbourhoods. One Panel member stated that the stacked option is preferable, but even it could have a sterilizing impact on the character of the surrounding context. Another Panel member reiterated the sentiment from the letter asking “are we building a suburb or a city?” Several Panel members felt that the design direction given to the design team by the City undermined the future value of the district proposed in the Lower Don Lands Plan, adding that all decisions in the area should be governed by this plan.

The Chair, Mr. Campbell, and Mr. Glaisek, then proceeded to take questions from the media and public. Following this, the Chair invited Mr. Glaisek to provide his report.

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## **REPORT FROM THE VP PLANNING AND DESIGN**

Christopher Glaisek, Waterfront Toronto’s Vice President for Planning and Design, provided a summary of project progress.

### *Water’s Edge Promenade*

- The promenade is being completed with silva-cells, trees, and mosaic pattern being installed.
- The promenade will be open for June 30<sup>th</sup>.

### *Sugar Beach*

- The granite is being laid, trees are being planted and the rock formations are almost complete.
- The park will be open for June 30<sup>th</sup>, with the formal ribbon cutting scheduled for August 9<sup>th</sup>.

### *Sherbourne Park*

- The pavilion frame has been erected, and the skating rink poured. The art pieces are continuing to be constructed on site.
- The formal ribbon cutting is scheduled for August 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### *Don River Park*

- The construction contracts for both the park and the pavilion have been awarded. Construction is to commence in June.

### *Lower Don Lands*

- In early July the Lower Don Lands Environmental Assessment and Planning documents will come before Council.

### *Queens Quay Revitalization Environmental Assessment*

- The Part II Order (bump-up request) was denied by the Ministry of the Environment. The Queens Quay Revitalization Environmental Assessment is now complete.

The Chair asked the Panel if there were any questions or comments. There being none, the Chair thanked Mr. Glaisek for his report and proceeded to the Project Review portion of the meeting.

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## **PROJECT REVIEWS**

### **1.0 Central Waterfront Public Realm: Queens Quay Boulevard**

*ID#: 1034*

*Project Type: Park/Public Realm Design*

*Location: Queens Quay from Spadina Avenue to Parliament Street*

*Proponent: Waterfront Toronto (WT)*

*Architect/Designer: West 8+DTAH*

*Review Stage: Schematic Design*

*Review Round: One*

*Presenter(s): Adriaan Geuze, West 8*

*Delegation: Marc Ryan, West 8*

#### **1.1 Introduction to the Issues**

Pina Mallozzi, Planning and Design Project Manager for Waterfront Toronto introduced the project noting that it had been shown at the conceptual level as part of the Central Waterfront Master Plan, and was now being reviewed at the Schematic Design phase on its own. Ms. Mallozzi noted that the Queens Quay Revitalization Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed in April 2010, with the “preferred alternative” being the Southside transit with expanded public realm. Ms. Mallozzi stated that WT is undertaking Schematic Design for the full length of Queens Quay (Spadina Avenue to Parliament Street) to ensure it is ready to build for when additional funding becomes available for this project, adding that the 800 metres which is funded, is expected to begin construction early in 2011.

#### **1.2 Project Presentation**

Adriaan Geuze, Partner with West 8, provided an overview of the elements of the project including; the South side walk/promenade, the Martin Goodman Trail, the TTC right of way & platforms, the road, the North side sidewalk, the tree planning strategy, materials, furnishing and way-finding.

#### **1.3 Panel Questions**

One Panel member wondered why the design strategy at the crossings had changed from the competition entry which had a much more graphic intersection than currently proposed. Mr. Geuze replied that the design had evolved to ensure that people entering the crossings are aware that they are entering into an area with mixed user groups.

Another Panel member wondered if the City of Toronto urban street furniture had to be used here, or if it did, could be more customized to this location. Mr. Glaisek replied that by

participating in the city-wide street furniture program, the costs are covered, adding that if it is custom designed then Waterfront Toronto must pay for it. Mr. Freedman added that maintenance of the street furniture is also covered in the contract, though it may be possible to have a discussion with Astral Media to see which if any elements could be customized.

Several Panel members wondered if there were materials other than grass that could be used within the TTC right of way to achieve the same sound attenuation and permeability. Mr. Geuze answered that technically there are other details that they could explore, adding that it could even be done in granite, but at a greater cost.

Another Panel member asked what the thinking was behind the choice of the red granite for the mosaic. Mr. Geuze answered that they feared that the gray toned granite would be cold and austere, noting that the design team preferred the texture, colour and warmth of the red Canadian granite.

Another Panel member wondered if the graphic identity along the Martin Goodman Trail coordinated with that recently designed for Ontario Place. Mr. Geuze replied that they did.

#### 1.4 Panel Comments

The Chair then opened the meeting to Panel comments.

Several Panel members commended the design team on the caliber of the presentation, and the level of attention paid to the details. Other Panel members congratulated the team on the successful completion of the Environmental Assessment. Several Panel members felt that it was vital to the success of the waterfront that Queens Quay is built out beyond the 800 metres currently funded.

Several Panel members felt that the team should investigate customizing the City's street furniture to the degree possible, noting that this is not as ideal as designing custom furniture for the area. Another Panel member disagreed, feeling that the custom pieces such as the lighting, mixed with the City's street furniture created a sense of continuity with the rest of the city.

One Panel member felt that signage needed to be controlled to avoid visual pollution of the design.

Another Panel member urged the team to ensure that the transit shelters will be large enough.

One Panel member felt that there were a lot of great features of the plan but felt that the north side sidewalk is "business as usual", adding that this is the interface where it signals that something else is happening in this area. Another Panel member agreed, feeling that the design should not revert to the status-quo. Another Panel member disagreed, feeling that they did not want to make Waterfront Toronto a hostage to challenging City policy and that the team should get on with designing this fantastic street. Another Panel member felt that trees should go on the north side as well.

Another Panel member felt that the Canadian red granite was an excellent choice, adding that it is a bold move that is very playful and very Canadian.

Another Panel member felt that the choice of grass was great, adding that it is an economical as well. Other Panel members expressed concern, wondering which agency would take ownership of maintaining it, and that the liberal use of salt in the winter by maintenance crews would destroy

the grass. Another Panel member felt that there were salt and drought tolerant sedums that could be investigated as alternatives.

Another Panel member questioned the selection of the London Plane tree, feeling that there are other trees more indigenous to the area that could reach the desired size. Other Panel members agreed. Another Panel member wondered if the 10.0 metre tree spacing proposed was the right dimension, feeling that it seemed quite far apart. Another Panel member agreed, feeling that the spacing should be no more than 9.0 metres apart.

#### 1.5 Summary of the Panel's Key Issues

The Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- 1) Explore the level of customization or use of the City's street furniture program
- 2) Study further the proposed spacing of the street trees
- 3) Study whether or not the London Plane is the most appropriate species.

#### 1.6 Proponents Response

Mr. Geuze thanked the Panel for their feedback.

#### 1.7 Vote of Support/Non-Support

The Chair then asked the Panel for a vote of support or non-support for the project. The Panel voted in Support of the project.

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## **2.0 Presentation on the Fatal Light Awareness Program (FLAP)**

### 2.1 Introduction to the Issues

Margaret Goodfellow, Planning and Design Project Manager for Waterfront Toronto introduced the presentation, noting that this is an information session to gain more specific insight into the objectives of FLAP and bird-friendly building practices, as part of Waterfront Toronto's ongoing commitment to sustainable design practices including the protection of urban wildlife.

### 2.2 Project Presentation

Michael Measure, Executive Director of FLAP, provided an overview of the organization and its efforts including rescue, rehabilitation, research and education, noting that each year up to 10 million birds collide with buildings. Mr. Measure presented building characteristics that are lethal to birds, dispelled bird collision deterrent myths, provided examples of what features do work to deter birds, and showed the integration of the FLAP guidelines into of the Toronto Green Building Standard.

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## **3.0 West Don Lands District Energy: Foundry Building**

*ID#: 1033*

*Project Type: Buildings/Structures*

*Location: 153 Eastern Avenue*

*Proponent: Waterfront Toronto*

*Architect/Designer: Kongats Architects*

*Review Stage: Conceptual Design*

*Review Round: One*

*Presenter(s): Alar Kongats, Kongats Architects*

*Delegation:*

### 3.1 Introduction to the Issues

Brenda Webster, Planning and Design Project Manager for Waterfront Toronto introduced the project noting that it is being presented at the Conceptual design phase. Ms. Webster stated that the Foundry Building will house Phase One of District Energy that will serve the TCHC/Daniels Development, River City and a portion of the Pan Am Athlete's Village. Ms. Webster added that Phase Two will be the Stephen Holl District Energy Centre at the south end of the West Don Lands Precinct as previously presented. Ms. Webster stated that the project budget, including public art, is \$12.0 million and is targeted to be complete in spring 2011.

### 3.2 Project Presentation

Alar Kongats, Principal with Kongats Architects, provided an overview of the project noting that they were tasked to "Design a celebration of technology and give expression to sustainable aspirations". Mr. Kongats stated that the building once housed the Dominion Wheel and Foundries Company Ltd. and would be restored to an industrial use. Mr. Kongats described the program, green roof strategy and ideas for incorporating colour and light.

### 3.3 Panel Questions

One Panel member asked if the colours of the machinery related with the actions of each object. Mr. Kongats replied that colour was used to allow for an enhanced understanding of the mechanics of the system.

Another Panel member asked how many employees would work at this facility. Mr. Kongats replied that there would be likely one employee.

Another Panel member asked if there was any other use for the glazed porthole besides viewing. Mr. Kongats replied that they are investigating other sensory experiences such as sound, lighting and colour as part of the experience.

Another Panel member wondered why this building in particular was being preserved. Mr. Glaisek answered that it is "Listed" on the City of Toronto's Inventory of Heritage Properties.

One Panel member enquired about the heights of the window sills. Mr. Kongats stated that they were located approximately at adult head height.

Another Panel member asked what the context was surrounding the building. Mr. Kongats replied that there was a future park planned at the south end, another heritage building to the east, a future road on the west and Eastern Avenue running along the north.

Another Panel member wondered if the glazed area could extend through the entire building. Mr. Kongats replied that there were certainly budget limitations as well as limitations imposed by the internal functioning the building.

### 3.4 Panel Comments

Several Panel members commented that this project is a very interesting proposition.

One Panel member noted that there are not many opportunities in the City for unexpected public art, wondering if the building itself could be more of an art piece and less of a building.

Another Panel member felt that not everything had to have an educational component to it. Another Panel member disagreed, feeling that people in the city are generally uneducated about how these systems work.

Another Panel member stated that the scale of the opening should be studied further. Another Panel member wondered how much of a draw this building would be, feeling that the aperture may not even need to be as big as it is. Another Panel member felt the aperture should penetrate the building. Another Panel member disagreed, feeling that it could be less literal and more mysterious and powerful. Another Panel member felt that a lens to view the system was a great idea, noting that the glazing at the R.C. Harris Filtration Plant had been restored and allows you to view the inside of the magnificent building again.

Another Panel member felt that there was always a general assumption that art had to be visual, and urged the team to use sound and visual art together.

One Panel member felt that the project could be either very loud or very quiet. Another Panel member proposed that it could just be a beautifully restored container, and lighting used to heighten the mystery and experience.

Another Panel member felt that it was unclear how the building connected to its current and proposed context.

Another Panel member wondered what the green roof was contributing to the project.

### 3.5 Summary of the Panel's Key Issues

The Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- 1) Show how the building links to the existing and proposed context and streetscape
- 2) Explore the enigmatic opportunities of colour and sound
- 3) Develop the strategy for public art integration

### 3.6 Proponents Response

Mr. Kongats thanked the Panel for their feedback.

### 3.7 Vote of Support/Non-Support

The Chair then asked the Panel for a vote of support or non-support for the project. The Panel voted in Support of the project.

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## **4.0 West Don Lands Public Realm: Underpass Park**

*ID#: 1031*

*Project Type: Park/Public Realm Design*

*Location: North of Eastern Avenue, running between St. Lawrence Street and River Street, beneath the Richmond/Adelaide overpass*

*Proponent: Waterfront Toronto*

*Architect/Designer: Phillips Farevaag Smallenberg (PFS) with The Planning Partnership (TPP) and Paul Raff Studio*

*Review Stage: Schematic Design for the Public Art*

*Review Round: Four*

*Presenter(s): Greg Smallenberg, Phillips Farevaag, Smallenberg (PFS) and Paul Raff, Paul Raff Studio*

*Delegation: Scott Barker, Paul Raff Studio*

#### 4.1 Introduction to the Issues

James Roche, Senior Planning and Design Project Manager for Waterfront Toronto introduced the project noting that this is the second time that the public art component was being presented, but the fourth time overall for the project. Mr. Roche reminded the Panel that West Don Lands Public Art Strategy outlines key locations identified for art within public realm, adding that Underpass Park was identified as a key location for an artwork “as a work of reconnection”. Mr. Roche stated that it is a federally funded park project, noting that the budget (including public art) is \$5.2 m and is targeted to be complete in spring 2011.

#### 4.2 Project Presentation

Greg Smallenberg, Partner with Phillips Farevaag Smallenberg, provided a brief overview of the project, responding to some of the comments raised at the previous meeting. Mr. Smallenberg stated that over 50% of the open space is treed, adding that they have maximized the quantity of planted areas. Paul Raff, Principal with Paul Raff Studio, then presented the art piece, noting that the preliminary concept of the public artwork component at the River Street Underpass is to use the optics of reflectivity in 3-dimensional space to create resonant connections through a kinetic collage of views - entitled “Mirage”.

#### 4.3 Panel Questions

One Panel member asked if the art piece conforms to the City of Toronto’s Bird-friendly Guidelines. Mr. Raff replied that it did.

Another Panel member wondered how the location for the art was determined. Mr. Raff stated that they chose an area that would be activated differently at different times, noting that this site will likely have a seasonal farmer’s market.

Another Panel member wondered what guided the motif or module of the mirror unit. Mr. Raff replied that it was derived from the marriage of the idea of “construction and particulate”, adding that it also fit within standard glazing stock as the most cost effective way to produce the panel.

Another Panel member asked if the panels needed to be drained. Mr. Raff stated that they did not as the piece is slightly sloped and has a drip edge.

One Panel member asked how the locations of the planted green areas were selected. Mr. Smallenberg stated that the plating areas were the areas that received the most water and the most light. The Panel member asked if light studies were completed on the site. Mr. Smallenberg stated that they had completed those studies and presented them earlier.

#### 4.4 Panel Comments

Several Panel members stated that this site could be a crucial case study, noting that the underpass areas are an issue across the City.

One Panel member felt that the art piece was a vast improvement and will enhance the perception of light in the underpass. Another Panel member stated that they liked the “mirage” idea but were not convinced by the siting, feeling that it would be reflecting mainly concrete.

One Panel member cautioned the team to be careful about maximizing the size of the Panel as the mirror could be prone to rippling. Several Panel members felt that the design of the module should be studied further.



Another Panel member wondered if it would be possible to see a mock-up of the piece.

Another Panel member felt that nesting birds may be attracted to this piece.

#### 4.5 Summary of the Panel's Key Issues

The Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- 1) Study the size and shape of the mirror module further
- 2) Protect against nesting birds

#### 4.6 Proponents Response

Mr. Smallenberg and Mr. Raff thanked the Panel for their feedback.

#### 4.7 Vote of Support/Non-Support

The Chair then asked the Panel for a vote of support or non-support for the project. The Panel voted in Support of the project.

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### **CLOSING**

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