



WATERFRONTToronto

Waterfront Design Review Panel Minutes of Meeting #87 Wednesday, December 9th, 2015

Present:

Paul Bedford
George Baird
Pat Hanson
Peter Busby
Brigitte Shim

Regrets:

Claude Cormier
Betsy Williamson
Jane Wolff
Bruce Kuwabara
Don Schmitt

Designees and Guests:

Christopher Glaisek
Harold Madi

Recording Secretaries:

Rei Tasaka
Halija Mazlomyar

WELCOME

Paul Bedford opened the meeting noting that he has been asked by Bruce Kuwabara to act as Chair in his absence. The Acting Chair then provided an overview of the agenda before moving to the General Business portion of the meeting.

GENERAL BUSINESS

The Acting Chair requested the Panel members to adopt the minutes from November. The minutes were adopted.

The Acting Chair then asked if there were any conflicts of interest to declare. No conflicts of interest were identified.

The Acting Chair noted that CEO John Campbell's retirement interview on Metro Morning (CBC) earlier in the morning was a great way to start the day. He noted that the Panel would like to say a few words to John at the end of today's meeting.

Mr. Bedford shared the news he read in the GTA section of the Toronto Star, that Ports Toronto has abandoned the Environmental Assessment for the introduction of jets to the Island Airport.

Mr. Bedford also updated the Panel on the Gardiner East EA and Urban Design study which is to be presented to the public next year in January, not in December.

Mr. Glaisek, Vice President of Planning and Design with Waterfront Toronto noted that there are proposed changes to the Design Review Panel By-law. He explained that one of the proposed

changes involves the redefinition of quorum - to be defined as 50% of current Panel members. Mr. Glaisek noted that the aim is to have the changes to the By-law reviewed and approved in January.

The Acting Chair then asked Mr. Glaisek, Vice President of Planning and Design with Waterfront Toronto, to provide a report on project progress.

REPORT FROM THE V.P. OF PLANNING AND DESIGN

Mr. Glaisek informed the Panel that the East Bayfront Public Art Master Plan was passed unanimously by the Toronto Public Art Commission and is being reviewed today by City Council. Mr. Glaisek noted that this is a great step towards achieving a high quality public realm through the commissioning of artworks and the collecting of art contributions.

The Acting Chair then moved to the project reviews portion of the meeting.

PROJECT REVIEWS

1.0 Jack Layton Ferry Terminal and Harbour Square Park

ID#: 1066

Project Type: Master Planning, Park Design and Building

Location: Central Waterfront

Proponent: Waterfront Toronto

Architect/Designer: KPMB, West 8 and Greenberg Consulting Inc.

Review Stage: Design Concept

Review Round: one

Presenter(s): Jelle Therry (West 8), Shirley Blumberg (KPMB), Ken Greenberg (GCI)

Delegation: Waterfront Toronto

1.1 Introduction to the Issues

Pina Mallozzi, Director, Design with Waterfront Toronto, introduced the project noting that this project was initially subject to an international design competition, which was won by the design team of KPMB Architects, West 8 and Greenberg Consulting. Since the announcement of the winning concept, the master plan has been refined based on the feedback received from the members of the Jury, Steering Advisory Committee, Technical Advisory Committee and the public.

Ms. Mallozzi explained that the project involves the redesign of the ferry terminal but also the Harbour Square Park, which re-imagines how people can better access the water's edge, including the space at the Foot of Yonge. The team is seeking feedback on the visibility of the park and ferry terminal from Bay Street and Queens Quay, logistics related to the ferry terminal access and modifications to the park design and the terminal building.

Ms. Mallozzi noted that the next steps for the project is to implement Phase I, which has less than one million dollars in budget. The ambition for Phase I is that it will provide momentum that will initiate more of the master plan to be implemented. The design team is also seeking feedback on the Phase I concept design today. Ms. Mallozzi then welcomed the design team to give the presentation.

1.2 Project Presentation

Ken Greenberg of Greenberg Consulting Inc., began the presentation by stating that the big idea that emerged, given the enormity of the constraints on the site, was the notion of fusion of architecture and landscape. The scheme provided the design team an interesting opportunity to “thread” all the elements of the waterfront, therefore, the site is seen as a “key stone” that will seamlessly connect all of the elements.

Mr. Greenberg noted that with the development of the M27 lands, Lower Yonge Precinct and Queens Quay East, this community will become one of the most populated places in the city. He also raised the issue of lack of funding for this project, stating the importance of receiving sufficient funding beyond Phase I.

Mr. Greenberg explained, the key connections of the site to provide continuity, but also allowing for special moments within. The master plan was refined to also improve visibility and presence along Bay Street, Yonge Street and Queens Quay East. He mentioned that recent discussions with stakeholders group has gathered momentum to demolish the existing passarelle that connects the Westin Harbour Castle and Harbour Square condominium therefore there is a potential for an increased presence and visibility of the park from Bay Street entrance.

Mr. Greenberg then welcomed Shirley Blumberg, Partner at KPMB, to speak to the terminal building design.

Ms. Blumberg walked through the modifications that were made to the winning scheme:

- a) The proposed terminal building did not allow enough capacity therefore it was “stretched” to the east to accommodate additional people and to allow better flow within the building. The terminal building is now visible from Yonge Slip.
- b) The water holes inside the terminal building were eliminated to extend space.
- c) Skylights were added to the roof to avoid dark spaces under the terminal.
- d) The existing Trillium dock along the west edge of the Yonge Slip, is to be removed and relocated by the proposed new ferry docks south of the terminal building.

Ms. Blumberg further described the roof of the terminal, which will have a pathway that is universally accessible from two points near the waiting area. Most of the green roof however, is not accessible due to its steep slope, therefore the pathways will have railings to prevent people from entering the areas on the green roof, except the play area at the top. She noted that it will be important to design a device to stop people from accessing the roof along the promenade edge where the roof slopes down.

Ms. Blumberg explained that the phasing of the project is complicated because ferry operations must be maintained throughout the implementation. The phasing included the removal of the Trillium dock to be relocated to the south where the new docks will be constructed. Ms. Blumberg mentioned that the design team is committed to restoring aquatic habitat during the construction of the new ferry terminal and docks.

Ms. Blumberg then showed a series of rendering images that showed views including approach from Bay Streets where the ships can be seen beyond the park and the promenade. She noted that some of the element of the plan are work-in-progress and few aspects including access is to be resolved through further discussions with Marine Security and Operations.

Jelle Therry, Landscape Architect with West 8, presented the park design by sharing his personal experience of visiting Harbour Square Park every day during his extended stay in Toronto while working on the Queens Quay Revitalization project. Mr. Therry commented that the park design

was to develop a landscape that created a “green foot” of the central waterfront. With this, the park was to be layered with programs and work with the topography that would provide views to all of the activities within and to the Lake Ontario and beyond.

Mr. Therry explained that the park design consists of two hills by building on the existing tunnel below and create a “wave” of hills, or a “valley”, that provide a place to play, to walk through, to display art, or simply hang out.

Mr. Therry explained along the access diagrams and park plans, that the park is fully accessible by pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles. He described drop-off locations for school children or weekend visitors, service truck access, EMS routes and underground parking, noting that the design team is currently discussing locations for parking.

Mr. Therry continued by explaining improvements to the tunnel entrance along Bay Street, where the width and the length of the tunnel were both reduced in order to minimize visual impact along Queens Quay East and Bay Street. He also mentioned that the potential removal of the existing passerelle and the proposed Phase I design which involves a pergola structure at the Bay Street entrance, will further announce the gateway into the park and to the ferry terminal.

Mr. Therry then described along a series of renderings and plans, the landscape features of the master plan including:

- a) Water’s edge promenade;
- b) Sundial Park
- c) Harbour Slip and bridge
- d) Café and pavilion
- e) Splash pads
- f) Play features; and
- g) Yonge Slip wavedeck and promenade.

Mr. Therry then described the general phasing of how the master plan would be implemented, noting that the promenade that begins from Bay Street down to the ferry terminal building will cost approximately 2.5 to 2.7 million. With the given budget for Phase I, he explained that it would be possible to build the first 30 to 40 metres of the promenade and a pergola structure that would mimic the terminal building to be built at the Bay Street entrance to park. The pergola structure would also act as signage and way-finding for the park and the ferry terminal.

Mr. Therry concluded the presentation by noting that the design team is still developing the Phase I design.

1.3 Panel Questions

One panel member asked whether the holding area is necessary. Ms. Blumberg replied that the size of the holding area relates to the size of the ferries as well the efficiency of ticketing. The current waiting area is based on holding approximately 3,000 people (the terminal building accommodates approximately 2,000 people). Ms. Blumberg noted that Waterfront Parks is in the process of putting out an RFP to commissioning new ferries that may hold larger vessels. Mr. Glaisek explained that in terms of security, it is under federal regulations to visually check people before they pass through the ticket check, therefore, a holding area is necessary in order to perform visual scanning.

Another Panel member asked about the volume of the cars coming to the ferry terminal and where they are coming from, and how the circulation works along the service area. Ms. Blumberg explained that cars will drive along the access lane, stop at the asphalt pad area to drop off items,

or park at the parking area. Service vehicles or cars going onto the ferry will go through the check point gate and onto the ferries. In terms of traffic, it is minimal.

Another Panel members asked if there was a second egress out of the terminal or whether you were forced to go to the west side of the terminal. Bruno Weber, project architect at KPMB, replied that ferry operations prefers to separate passengers from service car traffic zone.

A Panel member asked if the parking was for visitors or for service vehicles. Ms. Blumberg replied that it was necessary to provide 40 parking areas for employees that operate the ferries. The Panel Member then asked whether the service vehicle ferry to the island be relocated to allow this terminal to be only for passengers. They also asked whether the 40 people come to the terminal before TTC service hours or during TTC service hours.

A Panel member asked if the intent for the Yonge Street promenade is to become a publicly accessible pathway to the terminal. Ms. Blumberg replied that was the case. The Panel member also asked if the design team has tested views down Bay Street and Yonge Street to see if it is easy to find the ferry terminal. Ms. Blumberg replied that they are currently studying these views.

A Panel member asked whether there was an idea of a ferry transit hub where the terminal would play a larger role in the future and be expanded to accommodate water transit service. Mr. Therry noted that a chapter in the Central Waterfront Masterplan report speaks to the idea of using the lake as another mode of transit in the city.

A Panel member comments that the park today is appealing and whether the design team would be adding more to it. Mr. Therry replied that they will be adding more program to it.

A Panel member also asked if it is possible to have parallel parking along the access lane on the east side of the hotel. Mr. Therry replied that the space is too tight to have parallel parking. The Panel member also asked clarifications to the parking under the park. Mr. Therry explained how the car would enter from Queens Quay East entrance and drive through to the west side of the condominium building or, park in the underground stalls.

A Panel member asked if there has been any investigation for Federal funding for the project. Mr. Therry replied that the Councilor is interested in seeking more funding but this is still premature. The design team is working on an order-of-magnitude cost of the entire project to be completed by the New Year.

1.4 Panel Comments

The Acting Chair asked the Panel for their comments.

One Panel member commented that the presentation is very strong and wonderful, and that the clarity of connectivity in the plan is good. They noted that Yonge Street is an iconic feature in the city and that the link to Yonge slip is essential. They suggested that the Yonge wavedeck should be more assertive and have a celebratory aspect to it, with a stronger feature amongst the sequence of wavedecks across the waterfront. They supported the continuity of the language for the paving in the plan. The Panel member supported the rethinking of the southeast corner that would display a clear message that the area is publicly accessible, and suggested that perhaps the roof can be a connective east-west access feature.

Another Panel member concurred that it is a great project and that the visibility from Queens Quay East is interesting. They suggested that the infusion of the green, organic nature of the park should 'ooze' up to Queens Queen East as a signature message to the public, and to that end, the

park itself must be pushed to its limit in the greening, planting and the sloping to enhance the feeling of the place as a park. It was also suggested that the green roof of the terminal and park needs to be further pushed for continuity.

Another Panel member commended the proponents for a beautiful design and presentation. They advised that the east area should be clarified so that people can exit to the east via the Yonge slip walkway. The Panel member also advised that the parking should be limited to provide a bare “minimum” of required stalls. They also raised the concern of shading and suggested that the proponents consider shaded waiting areas outside the terminal building, for those waiting in line to enter. The Panel member noted that the undulating roof connection down to the promenade seems unresolved.

Another Panel member raised the concern of the level of activity in every corner of the park, which seems perhaps too ambitious and unrealistic, given that the ferry operations provide much activity on the site. They also felt dubious that the shed east of the Yonge slip would be reconstructed and that instead of the wavedeck, it may be better to have another pergola structure that would work as a pair with the proposed Bay entrance pergola as shown for the Phase I design.

1.5 Summary of the Panel’s Key Issues

The Acting Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel noting that he has heard very strong support:

- Treat Foot of Yonge as a special, symbolic place;
- Bay Street Entrance needs a strong, clear marker and the proposed pergola is a good design solution;
- Explore further potential “masking” of the vehicular tunnel entrance through additional features such as green roofs
- Parking spaces on site should be limited to provide a bare “minimum” and vehicular traffic into parking and service areas should be studied with TTC hours at given time
- Develop a potential second egress from the terminal area that will connect users directly to Yonge Street and will avoid a ‘dead-end’ situation at the south-east end of the terminal area

1.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support

The Acting Chair then asked for a vote of Support, Conditional Support or Non-support for the project. The Panel voted unanimously in Support of the project.

2.0 Villiers Island

ID#: 1069

Project Type: Precinct Plan

Location: Port Lands

Proponent: Urban Strategies Inc., Waterfront Toronto, City of Toronto

Architect/Designer: Urban Strategies Inc.

Review Stage: Design Concept

Review Round: First

Presenter(s): Amanda Santo, Waterfront Toronto / Melanie Hare, Urban Strategies Inc.

Delegation:

2.1 Introduction to the Issues

Amanda Santo, Director of Development Approvals with Waterfront Toronto, began the presentation by stating that this was the first time attending the Design Review Panel and is excited to present the work completed up to date. She then explained that the process started in 2014 and will be submitted to Council for approval in the Spring. Currently the project team is digesting all the feedback received at a workshop held in November.

Mr. Glaisek then introduced Melanie Hare, Partner at Urban Strategies Inc., to give the presentation.

2.2 Project Presentation

Ms. Hare began the presentation by stating that the project is about transformation. The project “transforms” the existing site into an island that becomes a focal point within the city through its topography, its land use and through place-making opportunities. She noted that while the site provided a range of heritage properties there were many ‘given’ constraints such as the landfill, dockwall in place, the future of the Don River, future transit-loaded streets and grading changes.

Ms. Hare presented along with illustrations and plans, the guiding principles and vision of the 88-acre land transformation into a new island community that will provide:

- a varied water’s edge;
- a “living room”
- a connected place;
- a complete community
- a destination; and
- an island with history.

Ms. Hare then explained key elements of the Precinct Plan including proposed public amenities, streets and blocks that are flexible, the new Cherry Street connection as a transit-loaded street, 34 acres of public spaces with various activities and uses. The area will be a highly walkable place where all amenities will be within a five to ten minute walking distance.

Ms. Hare explained the proposed built form, which was based on the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan and on discussions with stakeholders. The built form is predominantly mid-rise with towers which optimize higher densities near transit nodes while areas around heritage structures and along Keating Channel are low-rise.

Ms. Hare also presented the five “character areas” of the proposed precinct plan along with drawings and renderings:

- Keating Channel and Villiers Street is the island’s main “living room” with interesting places for people to gather, eat, shop and relax along the channel-side-promenade and Villiers Island Street which will become the main retail spines. Old Cherry Street will become the historic “corridor” flanked by heritage buildings which lead to the water’s edge.
- Harbour Side area will host catalytic uses as well as park spaces that will provide opportunities for activities in Promontory Park, through further study of MT35 building and its use in the future.
- New Cherry Street will be a “special street” with transit and wide boulevards to become a gateway to the island.
- Centre Street will have a different characteristic from other streets where it will be a local street with corner stores and walkable streets.
- Villiers Park on the east will have an elementary school that is adjacent to the park space.

2.3 Panel Questions

One of the Panel member asked what is happening on the north side of the channel. Mr. Glaisek explained that there is an EA currently being undertaken therefore it is undecided.

Another Panel member asked how the transit works on the island. Ms. Hare replied that the Cherry Street streetcar will be extended south across the channel and there is a split platform that will allow passengers to get on and off in the precinct.

Another Panel member asked how many people will live here. Ms. Hare replied that the plan is designed for 8,000 people and 2,800 jobs. The Panel member asked where the sustainability aspect of the presentation was and whether they have considered district energy for the area. Mrs. Hare replied that it could not be included given the 20-minute presentation limit, but discussions on sustainability have been ongoing.

Another Panel member asked where the community services were on the island. Ms. Santo replied that the plan accommodates an elementary school with two options for location, a community centre, two daycares and a fire hall.

Another Panel member asked whether the western dock will be operational? Ms. Santo replied that the assumption is that it will be operational.

A Panel member asked if this plan was “completed”. Ms. Santo replied that it is not a completed project.

2.4 Panel Comments

The Acting Chair then asked the Panel for their comments.

One Panel member felt very unsettled about the plan as there was a homogeneity and sameness to the place, where most buildings are eight-storeys without variety to the built form. The Panel member shared his concern about the absence of the “main street” where there were too many streets with retail activity. They noted that there is a lack of sustainability presented including shadow studies and investigations on potential energy sources. They also noted that tall towers are typically placed along the north side and not the south side. It was also noted that there is a lack of balance between residents and jobs and the community should be designed around a place where people will be able to live and work within the precinct. The Panel member also raised concerns on the location of the school near a river, as it is dangerous for school children without having a protected courtyard and supervision. The Panel member suggest that M35 building may have a potential to be re-purposed so that it can become a place of reminding what used to be there. The Panel member concluded that there is an apparent separation between the proponent working on the precinct plan and the consultants working on the Don River revitalization project, and advised that there should be more integration the two initiatives, such as the possibility of brining the “green” features through the island as part of the drainage design.

Another Panel member concurred that there is a “sameness” to the plan but also in the street right-of-ways, where all the streets seems to feel similar. They advised that the proponent should explore the nuances of scale of the street infrastructure through tweaking to the width so that they had variations of openness and closeness. The Panel member commented that the “sameness” also happens along the island’s edge and it creates a suburban quality to a place that could become otherwise filled with interesting spaces that have industrial and heritage traces. It was advised that the overall plan requires built form that could provide more moments of intimacy.

Another Panel member commented that the project sits on a great location given its island character, however, the industrial “DNA” seems to have been eradicated without taking cues from the heritage structures that exist. The Panel member suggested that, should MT35 building be retained, new facilities could be combined into the building. They also commented that the character of this place is about the landscape and connection to the land, however the presence of the landscape architects are not there. It was also suggested that storm water management should be one of the top drivers of the design and should be planned now in the early stages, so that it will be implementable during each phase of construction. The Panel member advised that the precinct plan should not reduce the island character and respect the industrial character.

2.5 Summary of the Panel’s Key Issues

The Acting Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel:

- There is a feeling of ‘sameness’ due to the lack of variety in character and built form and a suburban character. More work needs to be done to achieve a variation of built form, character of streets and overall experience.
- There should be a stronger focus to the environmental aspect including sustainable principles, opportunities for district energy, development of infrastructure and landscaping;
- Reconsider the balance between residents and jobs given the unique location and the potential to become a phenomenal place for a live-work community; and
- The unique, special spaces within the precinct is not apparent. A stronger connection to the history of the area should be explored.

2.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support

The Acting Chair noted that Precinct Plans are not subject for a vote of Support, Conditional Support or Non-support for the project.

3.0 I-7 Yonge

ID#: 1064

Project Type: Buildings

Location: CWF

Proponent: Pinnacle

Architect/Designer: Hariri Pontarini Architects

Review Stage: Design Concept

Review Round: Two

Presenter(s): David Pontarini

Delegation: Michael De Cotiis, Pinnacle International

3.1 Introduction to the Issues

Mr. Glaisek began by noting that this was the second time that this project has come to the Design Review Panel. He explained that the proponent has since, its last presentation in September worked to address the major concerns raised by the Panel:

- South block is unresolved, buildings feel boxed in and too big;
- Feels suburban at grade and needs better integration with the public realm;
- Servicing locations not consolidated enough;
- Sustainability needs to be far more robust especially given a project of this magnitude.

Mr. Glaisek then introduced David Pontarini, Partner at Hariri Pontarini Architects, to give the presentation.

3.2 Project Presentation

Mr. Pontarini began the presentation by stating that since the beginning of the rezoning application process, the proponent team has worked closely with the City and Waterfront Toronto, and continues to work closely with them. The project has been modified substantially since the September scheme when they received the comments from the Panel, and have resubmitted in November to the City. Mr. Pontarini noted that they will need to address any major comments from today's review before they will resubmit to the city, and that it is critical to resolve the massing issue of the proposed scheme.

Mr. Pontarini then summarized their revisions:

- The tower floorplates have been brought down to 1,000 square feet.
- The north block diagonal path has been changed to a north-south mid-block orientation.
- The south block massing has been reconfigured to provide a north-south mid-block path.
- There is a high degree of retail in the ground floor along the south block. The community centre of 50,000 square feet has been moved to the north block to allow earlier delivery (due to south block's leasing term) and now faces the park from the north-east, and from the second floor.
- The presence of servicing entries have been minimized by taking the service entrances off Harbour Street. The servicing access are now off Freeland Street for both north and south blocks.

Mr. Pontarini noted that all towers meet 25-metre separation distance, and the tower-area-ratio is within City's expectation for areas above 38 metres. Full shadow studies will be completed.

3.3 Panel Questions

One of the Panel members asked how the central loading corridor works on the north block. Mr. Pontarini explained, that all servicing vehicles will enter from Freeland Street and either enter the underground parking or circle around to exit back onto Freeland Street. The servicing trucks similarly will enter from Freeland Street and enter the overhead door to continue down and across to the west side of the block.

Another Panel member asked whether the east-west connection through the south-block has disappeared. Mr. Pontarini replied that as of today there are no east-west connections in the south block, only north-south connections.

Another Panel member asked what happens to the Toronto Star building. Mr. Pontarini replied that the building will be a complete renovation and re-cladding and the façade at grade level will be carved back with existing column to remain. The sidewalk along Yonge Street will be expanded to 10-metres and the grade change along the east edge will be dealt with inside the building.

Another Panel asked whether the scheme proposes a tower on top of the Toronto Star building. Mr. Pontarini replied that they will be building on top of the Toronto Star building.

Another Panel member asked whether the towers will be residential and what the podium heights are for the blocks. Mr. Pontarini replied that the towers on the north block are residential towers and the towers on the south block are commercial. The podium on the north blocks are to be 38 metres while the south block podium height is at 26 metres. The Panel member asked whether the podium shown on the north block was all covered. Mr. Pontarini replied that there is a covered outdoor walkway through the block which is open at grade, and there is a light well above the loading area and above the community centre which occupies the north-east area on the second level.

Another Panel member asked what the idea for the orphaned land at the north-west corner of the north block would be. Mr. Glaisek noted that there is potential for this land to have a café or a pavilion structure to anchor the corner, but not for it to be folded into the 1 Yonge site at this time.

A guest asked whether the loading dock entrance on the south block could be consolidated. Mr. Pontarini replied that this can be explored. The guest also asked if the design would have a major impact to the scheme in the event that the park will be located on another block. Mr. Pontarini replied that if the park moves, it would cause the team to rethink the entire south block and that they believe strongly on the current location of the park.

3.4 Panel Comments

The Acting Chair then asked the Panel for their comments.

One Panel member felt that it is an improvement to the last scheme as it provides a north-south connection through the blocks and shows investment in the perimeter of the building. They commented that it is important to see what the mid-block passageway would be like at grade, with the natural light in the drop-off zone. They also appreciated the efforts to reduce the impact of loading and servicing areas onto the streets. Overall, they felt that this is a much better proposal.

Another Panel member concurred that there have been substantial improvements. They were in favour of the loading configuration for both north and south blocks and the relocation of the community centre with views to the park. They suggested that the proposed atriums could have a grander gesture like the BCE Place. They also suggested that the rounded corners of the building should be further explored to have an urban building wall. Overall, they were pleased with the changes and support the project.

Another Panel member agreed with the two Panel members' comments and felt that it would be difficult to get a skylight through the community centre and down to the loading area. They suggested that perhaps providing top light between the east face of the west tower area may allow the light to work down into the loading area.

Another Panel member felt that the project is on a tricky site with complex issues. With the ferry terminal becoming a hub, it brings a level of public importance to the site, therefore it is a private development but with a public face, that will have a lot of people in the area. The Panel member commented that while the character of the north-south connections are essential, the idea of the east-west connections and the POPS have emerged as interesting dimensions of the public spaces within the development in the plan and the waterfront. The Panel member therefore felt that the east-west mid-block connection in the south block must be retained to be part of the finer-grain connection. The Panel member also did not agree with the location of the park, but felt it would have to be made to work as best as possible.

Another Panel member advised that the car-drop off on both north and south blocks should maintain a feeling of "being" public. An example of the drop-off at Fairmont Pacific Rim in Vancouver was raised which they felt is successful. The Panel member then commented that from an urban perspective, the rounded corners seems unresolved and requires a discussion of urbanity at the street level. The bridge across Harbour Street is not necessary, and the representation of the park seems too specific and it is better to keep it vague. The Panel member concluded that overall direction has improved.

2.5 Summary of the Panel's Key Issues

The Acting Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel noting that there has been a significant improvement and clarity to the design since the last iteration:

- The north-south connection is good, however considering the number of people who will live in the area, the public realm and connections must be reviewed to reintroducing the east-west connection in the south blocks;
- The revised massing has smaller floor plates and overall better integrated into its urban context;
- The loading and servicing has improved however there is a concern regarding the clarity of “publicness” and natural light into the drop-off areas;
- The café and pavilion shown for the north-west “orphaned” land shows uses that can be iconic;
- There should be no above-grade P.A.T.H. bridges within the precinct area; and
- The transit strategy should be further pushed to promoted walkability and access from Union Station and areas within the waterfront.

3.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support

The Acting Chair then asked for a vote of Support, Conditional Support or Non-support for the project. The Panel voted unanimously in Support of the project.

Lower Yonge Precinct Plan

ID#: 1063

Project Type: Precinct Plan

Location: Bounded by the Gardiner Expressway, Lower Jarvis St., Queens Quay and Yonge St.

Proponent: City of Toronto/Waterfront Toronto

Architect/Designer: N/A

Review Stage: Two

Review Round: Concept Design/Context Analysis

Presenter(s): Willie Macrae, City of Toronto / Chris Glaisek, Vice President of Planning and Design, Waterfront Toronto

4.1 Introduction to the Issues

Mr. Glaisek, Vice President of Planning and Design with Waterfront Toronto introduced the project by stating that this was the second time the project was coming to the Design Review Panel since the September meeting. The project is a collaboration between the City of Toronto and Waterfront Toronto which is based on the Urban Design Report which was endorsed by Council in 2014. Mr. Glaisek explained that since September, they have worked to address the major concerns raised by the Panel. He then welcomed Willie Macrae, Senior Planner with City of Toronto to start the presentation.

4.2 Project Presentation

Mr. Macrae began the presentation by explaining the area context of the project indicating that the study area is owned by LCBO, Pinnacle and Choice Properties (Loblaws). The vision for the precinct is to develop a complete community with a strong connection to the waterfront while providing a sustainable development.

Mr. Glaisek continued the presentation by addressing the issues raised during the September meeting:

- Promenades at Yonge, Cooper and Jarvis Streets in the study area will create connections and wider aperture towards the water.

- The public art plan connects the public realm through building sites and along the promenades.
- The PATH system will only have an above-grade connection over Lake Shore Boulevard.
- The parcel on the northwest corner of the precinct will be addressed in the future with a potential café or pavilion building that will act as a buffer to the highway and a gateway into the precinct.
- The Master Class EA will include the Church-Cooper Street extension as part of the study, including proposed bicycle routes along Harbour Street and north-south streets.
- A 10-meter curb to building front has been established for “promenade” streets for Yonge, Cooper and Jarvis street. The POPS plan establishes this strong north-south connection and east-west mid-block connections through the building sites.
- City council is currently discussing a transit “reset”, to look at East Bayfront’s transit in the context of a larger transit system and explore a more feasible and fundable proposal to service this area.
- The sustainability objectives for the precinct is to be District Energy-ready, requiring buildings to be able to potentially connect into the Enwave system.

Mr. Glaisek then noted that the next steps is to submit the Precinct Plan and Official Plan Amendment to Council by February 2016.

4.3 Panel Questions

One of the Panel members asked how wide and tall the elevated bridge across Lake Shore Boulevard would be and where the existing Harbour Street currently ends. Mr. Macrae replied that Harbour Street currently ends at Yonge Street and then it will be extended through the precinct plan to Jarvis Street. The width and height of the elevated PATH bridge will be studied.

Another Panel member asked how one would extend Church Street down to Cooper Street as there is an existing parking garage at the bottom of Church Street. It was noted that the owners of the property are currently thinking of redeveloping the east portion of their parking garage and that the tunnel extension may be an enhancement for their property.

Another Panel member also asked how this tunnel connection will be secured. Mr. Macrae noted that the EA will study this, including grading issues and identification of a right-of-way to protect for.

Another Panel member asked who would own the pavilion on the northwest corner. Mr. Glaisek replied that the land is City owned, and in the future it will be decided if they will retain ownership or dispose of it.

4.4 Panel Comments

The Acting Chair then asked the Panel for their comments.

One Panel member commented that they did not like the location of the park.

Another Panel member noted that the street level crossings should be explicit in the POPS plan, differentiating connections on the surface level and connections above.

Another Panel member commended that there has been good advancement within a short period of time. They encouraged the team to push the public art component as they are “signifiers” of the public realm. The Panel member felt that the PATH connections require further study and discussion, especially the bridge across Lake Shore Boulevard under the Gardiner Expressway. It was noted that the scale and the “skewed” intersection pose big challenges. The Panel member

also noted that the heritage buildings on the site are great and should be retained, and that the connections through these large buildings and blocks will be essential to create a public realm that is special and unique to this area.

4.5 Summary of the Panel's Key Issues

The Acting Chair then summarized the recommendations of the Panel noting that there has been a significant amount of progress since the last meeting:

- The Panel will accept the location of the proposed park;
- The emphasis on the north-south promenade connections is good;
- There should be no above-grade bridges within the precinct area and perhaps consider whether it is necessary to have a bridge over Lake Shore Boulevard;
- Be cognisant of the heritage buildings on site;
- Public art plan is an important aspect to create a strong public realm for the precinct.

3.6 Vote of Support/Non-Support

The Acting Chair then asked for a vote of Support, Conditional Support or Non-support for the project. The Panel voted unanimously in Support of the project.

CLOSING

The Acting Chair noted that on behalf of the Design Review Panel members, he wanted to personally thank Mr. Campbell for a remarkable leadership and thoughtfulness to support and enable great design in the waterfront.

Mr. Campbell thanked the Design Review Panel members for their time, and “arduous” debates throughout challenging times to achieve and maintain design excellence. He noted that Mr. Glaisek has been the torch bearer for the waterfront’s design excellence, which is an important element that enables quality of life and keeps talent in cities. He noted that cities should be fantastic, and design should be an inspiration for what makes our cities. He again expressed his appreciation to everyone on the Panel.

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