

# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 106 – February 23, 2023

Virtual Meeting

9:00 am

## **Pre-Meeting**

Committee Members

9:15 am

## **Call to Order**

Chair's Review of Agenda

Disclosure of Interest

Confirmation of Minutes of November 24, 2022 Meeting

9:30 am

## **3300 Rutherford Rd.**

### **High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1<sup>st</sup> Review**

Presentations:

Mark Reid, Urban Strategies

Dev Mehta, BDP Quadrangle

10:40 am

Break

10:50 am

## **Abeja Phase 2 - 401 Caldari Road**

### **High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1<sup>st</sup> Review**

Presentations:

Michele Gucciardi, Turner Fleischer Architects

Paul Marsala, Studio TLA

12:00 pm

Adjournment

# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Meeting 103 – February 23, 2023**

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The Design Review Panel met virtually on Thursday, February 23, 2023. The meeting was recorded and will be posted on the City of Vaughan website.

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Megan Torza, DTAH (Chair)

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc. (Did not attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> item)

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

John Tassiopoulos, WSP / MMM Group Limited

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

Guela Solow-Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair) (Did not comment on the 1<sup>st</sup> item)

Sharon Sterling, WSP

Ute Maya-Giambattista, Fotenn Planning + Design (Did not attend the 1<sup>st</sup> item)

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd. (Did not attend the 1<sup>st</sup> item)

##### **Absent**

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Harim Labuschagne, BDP. Quadrangle

##### **STAFF**

Shahzad Davoudi-Strike, Manager, Urban Design & Cultural Heritage, Development Planning

Shirley Marsh, Project Manager & Urban Design, Development Planning

Michael Tranquada, Senior Urban Designer, Development Planning

Chris Assimopoulos, Urban Design, Development Planning

Alex Yang, Urban Design, Development Planning

Ben Nagarajah, Urban Design, Development Planning

Shirin Rohani, Urban Design, Development Planning

Mary Caputo, Senior Manager, Development Planning

Daniela Degasperis, Planner, Development Planning

Margaret Holyday, Senior Planner, Development Planning

Tania Dowhaniuk, Parks Planner, Parks Infrastructure Planning and Development

Cory Gray, Manager, Parks & Strategic Initiatives, VMC

**The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am with Megan Torza in the Chair.**

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Fung Lee, conflict with the 1<sup>st</sup> item on the agenda

Peter Turner, conflict with the 2<sup>nd</sup> item on the agenda

Harim Labushchagne, conflict with the 2<sup>nd</sup> item on the agenda

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting minutes for February 23, 2023, were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**3300 Rutherford Road**

Architect: BDP Quadrangle

Urban Design: Urban Strategies

**Introduction**

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

- How successful does the proposed massing appropriately fit into the existing context and respond to the Vaughan Mills Centre Secondary Plan?
- How successful is the proposed road network, open space system, mews, POPS, and built forms?
- Are the ground floor uses and public realm strategy successful in establishing a pedestrian-oriented environment and interfacing with the larger context and vision for this area?

## Overview

- **Overall Presentation** – Panel thanked the applicant for a comprehensive presentation and complimented the place making opportunities for this development. Also it was noted that, there were some details on the plan that could be further explored to reach their full potential, as noted below.
- **Open Space** – Panel generally appreciated the volume and the variety of open space that was provided in this application, especially the integration with the northern neighbours. But noted that the frontages of Rutherford Road and Sweetriver Blvd need more attention and consideration.

The open space system should be further developed to improve the connectivity to the arterial road, particularly in creating the hierarchy and the character of the street. Panel suggested getting into the perspective of the street-level study of each individual type of street, as well as the cross-sections to improve the place-making and street quality.

Further to the above, Panel recommended further study on the residential frontages. Considering that townhouse frontages demand a different kind of streetscape than the retail, a woonerf street character would be more appropriate for the residential frontages as opposed to the vehicular character.

- **Road Network** – Panel encouraged the applicant to further study the street hierarchy by reconfiguring private and public roads, which would also help improve the volume of pedestrian priority spaces on the overall site.

Panel suggested reconsidering the east-west road as it currently terminates at a roundabout with a pedestrian linkage above. Explore the opportunities to create a pedestrian-scaled terminus at grade without having a linkage above.

- **Built-form and Transition** – Panel are generally comfortable with the overall built form and the transition strategy. However, there were concerns about the massing for Block 1 being too large and lacking façade variety along Rutherford Rd. Panel expressed their concerns that the massive scale of the building might setup an inappropriate precedent in character for other developments along Rutherford Rd, and greater attention should be placed on the pedestrian scale.
- **Architecture** – Panel questioned the retail frontages along Rutherford Rd., as the plan is vehicle-oriented. There is a lack of pedestrian traffic to support the proposed retail frontages along Rutherford Road, and most people would drive into the underground parking and use the elevators to access the retail.

Panel suggested looping the retail experience to create a pedestrian flow and considering the flexibility of those retail spaces to become other potential uses if the market does not support it.

Panel addressed the private and public tension on daycare use as it fronted onto the public park. To avoid a conflict of interest between visual privacy and open space connectivity, Panel suggested relocating the daycare to prevent having a large privacy fence fronting the park.

## **Comments**

### Open Space Network and Frontages

- Panel acknowledged that the proposed open space network is interesting as it successfully connects to the northern neighbourhood with a prioritized pedestrian movement from Sweetriver Blvd to Komura Rd and further to the residential neighbourhood to the north.
- Panel suggested exploring the frontages along Rutherford Rd and Canada's Wonderland Dr, expanding the open space network further south to benefit the retail along Rutherford Rd and maximize their full potential. Considering there are other facilities, such as transit, and bike amenities that would support pedestrians, there are opportunities to create a pedestrian-oriented interface along Rutherford Rd. In addition, the interface along Canada's Wonderland Dr could also be designed to be more pedestrian friendly.
- Panel commented on the sameness of the street frontages, particularly the townhouse interface. Whether they are fronting on private drives, public streets or open spaces, the plan proposed a similar cross-section with the same setback. The street should be provided with a hierarchy, and the interface need further exploration of the materiality as well as functionality.
- Further to the above, Panel encouraged the applicant to further explore the different road cross-sections by figuring out all the road elements that contribute to the active transportation network, such as bike lanes, and the pedestrian realm. This will also help to improve the pedestrian connection from Rutherford Rd to the northern neighbourhood.
- Panel appreciated the big public park proposed in the centre of the site, which greatly contributes to the overall open space network. However, the loading accesses directly fronting the main public park is inappropriate and should be further reviewed and if possible, relocated.
- Panel questioned the triangle POPS located on Komura Rd with townhouse units fronting on it. Considering the direct adjacency of the main public park on the east, the functionality of this small POPS does not contribute to the plan. Instead, Panel suggested changing it to a more integrated outdoor public space for those townhouse units.

## Road Network

- Regarding the overall road network, Panel encouraged the applicant to further explore the street hierarchy by analysing whether a road should be public or private based on the connection and frontages. For example, the main east-west road should be public since it has multiple access points for loading, underground entrances, and the roadway to the north. Reconfigure roads that accommodate only private uses as private.
- Panel raised concerns that the main east-west public road terminates with the view of highway 400, and also questioned the roundabout as the termination point, which does not benefit the development. If Canada's Wonderland Dr connection is not possible, Panel suggested reworking the road network to mitigate the highway impact by designing the termination point to a much stronger view terminus with a mixed form of drop-off and pedestrian-friendly open space.
- Notwithstanding above, Panel encouraged the applicant to coordinate with the City to acquire access from Canada's Wonderland Dr., which would provide access to deal with loading and servicing and help with the road network configuration.
- Panel raised concerns that the diagonal street has a public nature as it connects to the existing northern neighbourhood and has building lobbies fronting it, but this nature contradicts with the residential private amenity spaces and front doors. As an option, Panel suggested a courtyard-type of buildings, using pedestrian-based mews instead of vehicular connection, and reducing the road surface to potentially make the west corner more successful.
- Alternatively, Panel suggested to change the diagonal private road to public, since it is connected to Komura Rd, a high-order public road with a sidewalk. It also gives an opportunity to reconfigure the roads along the public park. Panel suggested flipping the road to the east side of the park to connect to Love Run Rd, and having a pedestrian-oriented street on the west side.
- As another alternative, Panel suggested a different road alignment for the diagonal road by "kinking" it up quickly at the terminus like a hockey stick which allows it to be straight as it connects to the north road to avoid the angle.

## Architecture Massing and At-grade Use

- Panel were concerned with the size of the massing for Building 1, which requires a larger loading area with two access openings. More importantly, having one of the loading accesses fronting the public park was questioned and not well received. Therefore, Panel suggested breaking up the massing to create a finer-grain block, potentially allowing a different loading layout without interfering with the public park. It was further noted that the size needs to take into consideration the large anchor tenant and that further review of the loading configuration was necessary.
- Further to the above, Panel suggested creating a mid-block pedestrian connection that goes through Block 1 to break up the “big” massing and connect to the public park. It helps create a varied building façade along Rutherford Rd, improves the permeability and enhances the connectivity between Rutherford Rd and the central park.
- Panel questioned the daycare location in front of the public park which has high public exposure. As the daycare uses require privacy, it would need a large screen wall for privacy and to prevent vulnerable children from being directly exposed to the public. Panel recommended relocating the daycare to the lower-density residential place on Komura Rd.
- Panel were concerned about the viability of the retail uses along the Rutherford Rd frontage, especially at the corner of Canada’s Wonderland Dr. The retail was situated at a dead-end location on the pedestrian route, and to improve the viability, Panel suggested creating a loop for the pedestrian circulation and making the retail a part of the loop.
- Alternatively, Panel suggested relocating the retail to the east side that fronts Sweetriver Blvd. Furthermore, Pushing the lobby entrances further west will help create more room for retail frontages.
- Panel suggested introducing more flex space for ground-related uses such as live/work, 2-storey structure with columns rather than a shear wall, and leave it to future generations to decide what should happen in terms of the uses.
- Panel commented on the location of Building 1 and Building 4 lobbies that face the north-south street, which may conflict with the loading entrances. And suggested flipping them with the loading entrances to avoid people going through the loading to access the lobbies.

## **Abeja Phase 2 - 401 Caldari Road High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1st Review**

Architect: Turner Fleischer Architects

Landscape Architect: Studio TLA

### **Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. How successful is the proposed ground floor layout, the open space system, and the built form in response to the site constraints and the compatibility of uses?
2. Please comment on the proposed massing and transition to the neighbouring low-rise context.
3. Is the ground floor layout, the internal pedestrian circulation network, and the interface with the public realm successful in responding to the adjacent context, both in the interim and ultimate conditions, as per the proposed phasing plan?

### **Overview**

- **Master Plan** – Panel criticized the absence of an overall comprehensive Master Plan that properly addresses the significance of the site; its proximity to the natural resources as well as the challenging incompatible uses to the east and south of the development. It was noted that the proposed master plan required significant improvements with respect to the following issues:
  - **Street Network, Circulations and Connections:** Panel found the proposed street network disconnected and lacking hierarchy. The proposal does not address the public frontages properly or take advantage of the resources on the site. Panel noted that the volume of the streets penetrating the site is very limited, and public connections terminate on the back of the house uses and services. The applicant was advised to consider vehicular and pedestrian access points to the public realm by highlighting the existing and future desired paths and destinations.
  - **Incompatibility of Uses:** Panel expressed concern about the immediacy of the noise sources and encouraged the applicant to refer to existing precedents and consider better siting and built-form configuration to address the adjacent incompatible uses at the master plan level to provide high-quality communities and open spaces.
  - **Open Space Network:** Panel members criticized the connectivity of the proposed open spaces and their physical and visual access to the public right of way. It was noted that visual presence and connections to the public realm are necessary for an open space to be perceived as publicly accessible.
  - **Micro Climatic Impact:** Panel advised the applicant to be mindful of the microclimate impacts imposed on the site by the proposed massing. It was emphasized by Panel members that other means of mitigation, such as diversity in form and massing, building footprints and orientations, should be

considered at the master plan level to not only mitigate the undesirable microclimate impacts but create attractive communities.

- **Phasing:** It was noted that the first phase of the development appears to face significant challenges. Panel advised other phasing strategies that allow for the required studies to develop and issues to be coordinated further in conjunction with the first phase of the development.
- **Site plan** – Panel pointed to the following issues at the site plan level:
  - **Ground Floor:** There were concerns regarding the lack of activation and pedestrian access along Caldari Road and the open space network. Panel advised reconfiguration and consolidation of the multiple loading and parking accesses to free up the ground floor level for active uses.
  - **Streetscape Design:** There were recommendations to not only meet the minimum standards for the Public Street but to exceed those requirements to provide a streetscape that matches the proposed density and the urban character of the development by considering adequate active transportation facilities and room for street tree planting.

### General Comments

- Panel acknowledged that the site is very challenging, as the development has to mitigate the impacts of the adjacent incompatible uses.
- Panel stated that significant revisions and fundamental studies at the master plan level are required to ensure design excellence and habitability of the proposed community. It was expressed that the proposed master plan lacks any organizing elements and does not account for the periphery conditions
- Panel questioned the nature of the proposed park and open space network and expressed that the ties and connections of the development to the overall context and the public right of ways were weak and limited. It was noted that the open space network was perceived as private and a back condition due to the building allocations. The proposed phasing strategy further exacerbates this condition for the first phase of the development.
- Panel felt the phasing of the development is not responding to the constraints on the site, and there is ambiguity with respect to the interface of different phases.
- There was a consensus among Panel members regarding the lack of connection to the adjacent context. More specifically related to the open space network and how it is framed by the built form. As well as the desirability of the proposed spaces with their challenging microclimate.
- Panel asked for a consistent pedestrian public realm and a purposeful pedestrian circulation network cognizant of destinations and desired paths.
- Members noted the lack of hierarchy and diversity in the design and strongly recommended revising the building footprints, orientations, heights, and massing to achieve visual connections, view corridors and skyline opportunities while addressing the site constraints and adjacencies.

- Panel encouraged the applicant to revisit the development as a community with gathering places and the amenities needed for such density and to embrace the challenges of the site through creative design ideas at the master plan level.
- Panel Pointed that without understanding the existing and envisioned context, the members can't review this phase of the proposal thoroughly.

#### Site Plan Organization

- Panel encouraged improving the overall connectivity as the current first phase design lacks meaningful connections with the surrounding context. The connectivity could be improved the following ways:
  - i) Relocate and consolidate loading and parking access and orient them away from the public right of way.
  - ii) Improve the pedestrian experience at the ground level by reorienting the buildings and their placement on the site to create more connection between the public right of way and the proposed open space network.
  - iii) A more sensible building allocation that responds to the edge conditions and proximities.

#### Public Interface and Ground Floor Uses

- Panel noted that the ground floor plan does not have any active frontages, as the entire periphery of the building at the ground level is consumed by services and utilities.
- Access to both lobby and bike rooms is compromised, and the public interface lacks animation along the public right of way and the internal green space.
- Panel questioned the proposed streetscape design and amenities and encouraged the applicant to exceed the minimum municipal standards and propose amenities that match the ambitious proposed development.

**END OF MINUTES**

# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 107 – March 30, 2023

Virtual Meeting

9:00 am

## **Pre-Meeting**

Committee Members

9:15 am

## **Call to Order**

Chair's Review of Agenda

Disclosure of Interest

Confirmation of Minutes of February 23, 2023 Meeting

9:30 am

## **Chelsea Eagle Point Development – Phase I High-Rise Residential Development, 2<sup>nd</sup> Review**

Presentations:

Les Klein, BDP Quadrangle

Robert Ng, NAK Design Strategies

10:40 am

Break

10:50 am

## **25 Interchange Way – Intergreen Developments (BT) Inc. Vaughan Metropolitan Centre High-Rise Mixed Use Development, 1st Review**

Presentations:

Enzo Corazza, Graziani + Corazza Architects

Thiago Ranzatti, Graziani + Corazza Architects

Victoria Borsodi, Land Art Design Landscape Architects

Joaquin Sevillano, Land Art Design Landscape Architects

12:00 pm

Adjournment

# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Meeting 103 – March 30, 2023**

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The Design Review Panel met virtually on Thursday, March 30, 2023. The meeting was recorded and will be posted on the City of Vaughan website.

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Megan Torza, DTAH (Chair)

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc.

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Ute Maya-Giambattista, Fotenn Planning + Design

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

John Tassiopoulos, WSP / MMM Group Limited

##### **Absent**

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Sharon Sterling, WSP

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair)

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

Guela Solow-Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Harim Labuschagne, BDP. Quadrangle

##### **STAFF**

Shahzad Davoudi-Strike, Manager, Urban Design & Cultural Heritage, Development Planning

Shirley Marsh, Project Manager & Urban Design, Development Planning

Michael Tranquada, Senior Urban Designer, Development Planning

Chris Assimopoulos, Urban Design, Development Planning

Alex Yang, Urban Design, Development Planning

Shirin Rohani, Urban Design, Development Planning

Margaret Holyday, Senior Planner, Development Planning

Nancy Tuckett, Director of Development Planning, Development Planning

Anna Rosen, Project Manager, Parks Development (VMC), Policy Planning & Special Programs

Gaston Soucy, Senior Manager, Planning and Urban Design VMC, Policy Planning & Special Programs

Natalie Wong, Senior Planner, VMC, Policy Planning & Special Programs

Matthew Peverini, Senior Planner, VMC, Policy Planning & Special Programs

Cory Gray, Manager, Parks & Strategic Initiatives, VMC

Tania Dowhaniuk, Planner, Parks Infrastructure Planning and Development

**The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am with Megan Torza in the Chair.**

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Sharon Sterling, conflict with the 1<sup>st</sup> item on the agenda John

Tassiopoulos, conflict with the 1<sup>st</sup> item on the agenda Harim

Labushchagne, conflict with the 2<sup>nd</sup> item on the agenda

Margaret Briegmann, conflict with both items on the agenda

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting minutes for February 23, 2023, were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**Chelsea Eagle Point Development Phase I, 2nd Review**

Architect: BDP Quadrangle

Landscape: NAK Design Strategies **Introduction**

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

- How successful is the revised proposal in addressing the concerns and comments raised on the first DRP regarding the character of McNaughton Road, balancing pedestrian, and vehicular circulation internally and playing a key placemaking role in the context?

- Does the architectural/landscape design and material choices respond well to sustainable best practices and contribute to the site and context?
- How successful is the proposal in responding to the microclimate constraints? Please comment on the proposed mitigative measures.

## Overview

- **Overall Presentation** – Panel thanked the applicant for a concise presentation, acknowledged the moves made in response to the previous session, and noted that there are still more opportunities that can be explored.
- **Landscape** – Panel expressed the desire to balance the hardscape and softscape on the east side of the property to increase the pedestrian realm and connection with nature.

Panel suggested consolidating the footprint of the vehicular, and service movements within the block, and changing the secondary vehicular entrance to the pedestrian realm to create a view terminus.

Panel commented on the public realm along McNaughton Road and suggested improving the relationship between public and private amenity spaces by considering how to accommodate the different uses along the pedestrian circulation.

- **Wind Mitigation** – Panel acknowledged that most of the measures in terms of wind mitigation undertaken are reasonable and address most concerns. But noted that there are still some areas continuously showing uncomfortable levels based on the report, particularly around the lobby and entrances. It was suggested the applicant take further action, such as using a canopy or structure to provide shelter for the ground plane.

Panel recommended relocating the ramp or integrating the ramp into the built form to reduce the footprint of the vehicular movement. This coincides with the development of the canopy structure that addresses the wind mitigation concerns around the lobby for Building 3.

- **Architecture** – Panel introduced the idea of biophilia, which is fundamentally the notion that humans desire to be next to other forms of life, such as landscape. This site is adjacent to the golf course, but the architecture did not reflect this unique condition from a material character perspective. Panel noted that the nature of this golf course would inevitably be transformed over time into a naturalistic type of landscape. Therefore, this is an opportunity and challenge for the architect to create a building that introduces landscape into its fabric by adjusting the materials of the east façade to respond to the landscape.

Panel appreciated the design of the triangular building shape and encouraged further exploration of other aspects, such as cladding design, balcony design etc., to ensure the building reflects its unique position and takes advantage of all the opportunities.

## Comments

### General

- Considering the presentation is the second time in the DRP, Panel appreciated the concise summary of the previous comments and acknowledged the presentation had improved in terms of providing responses on how to address comments from the previous submission.

### Transit and Circulation

- Panel addressed that there is a missing opportunity to take advantage of the golf course frontage as the service lane goes through the entire interface with all the loading and servicing oriented towards it. To improve pedestrian realm and vehicular circulation, Panel suggested several strategies as follows:
  - i) Consolidating the loading and ramp through the middle of the block and minimizing the laneway.
  - ii) Further balancing the pedestrian and vehicular circulation to deal with the continuity of the loading and ramp locations along the edge of the golf course for two separate buildings.
  - iii) To break the linearity of the narrow long condition, introducing a pedestrian sidewalk or underlaying the laneway to allow a wider pedestrian realm similar to the frontages along McNaughton Road, especially at the secondary lookout area between the two towers, and providing additional landscape at the end of the intersection.
  - iv) Incorporating the Phase 1 and Phase 2 areas together, if possible, and exploring opportunities that could have only one ramp and one garbage pickup for all the buildings to minimize vehicular circulation, which would leave more land up against the golf course.

### Landscape and Public Realm

- Panel complimented the POPS design, for the good interface that is well utilized and how the topography has been used to showcase the landscaping and program. Panel further suggested incorporating the golf course layout into the design and considering fencing off some areas to maintain safety from golf activities.
- Panel had concerns that the POPS is isolated and disconnected from the rest of the development and suggested creating a better interface with Building 3 by removing the road in between so that the children's play area could be extended to create more interaction with the rest of the site.

- To improve the overall pedestrian experience and public realm for the development, Panel suggested creating an interconnected public space throughout the site and recommended the following strategies:
  - i) Creating a public element at the street terminus between the two towers.
  - ii) Covering the ramp between Buildings 2 & 3 with an amenity space, which could use a similar technique that was used in the POPS topography and provide an overlook to the golf course.
  - iii) Consolidating the loading and ramp within Building 2 and removing the road connection at the south end of the site to allow a direct connection between Building 3 and POPS for more public engagement.
  - iv) Providing more pedestrian east-west connections to promote permeability.
- Panel encouraged the applicant to explore more on the pedestrian experience on both the west and east sides. And suggested the following:
  - i) On the west side, considering the sidewalk is small and separated from the patio space, Panel suggested creating an interesting plaza with more articulation that connected to the pedestrian crossing, which allowed people to move around the site.
  - ii) On the east side, the current plan proposes a continuous 6m wide service lane and a rigid edge between pedestrian and vehicular circulation. Panel recommended creating a woonerf type of promenade, with an articulated edge that is wide in some places and narrow in others. This helps to create a more interesting pedestrian space and blurs the harsh line that separates pedestrian and vehicular circulation.

### Wind Mitigation

- Panel acknowledged that the applicant had implemented many good strategies regarding mitigating the wind impact, such as landscape and tree clusters. However, the wind report still identified some problem areas, and Panel addressed an opportunity to improve the lobby area by pulling it back and providing increased cover.
- From a building material and wind mitigation perspective, instead of the basic combination of metal panels, precast concrete, and glass, Panel encouraged the applicant to explore more innovative strategies to improve the micro-climate condition.

### Architecture and Material

- Panel complimented the design of the triangular shaped tower, and appreciated the effort in approaching a unique and iconic built form in Vaughan.

- Panel commented on the horizontal banding on the elevation for Building 3 that feels too even between the base and the upper portion. They recommended using other materials at the grade, such as brick or a different kind of metal panel or colours, which provides more contrast between the base and the above.

## **25 Interchange Way – Intergreen Developments (BT) Inc. Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, High-Rise Mixed Use Development, 1st Review**

Architect: Graziani + Corazza Architects  
Landscape Architect: Land Art Design Landscape Architects

### **Introduction**

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

- Is the proposed building massing providing an appropriate transition towards the Neighbourhood Precinct and school sites to the west?
- Is the proposed architectural site plan design and the related ground floor uses adequately responding to the policy and context envisions in the VMC Secondary Plan and the other VMC Guidelines and documents?

### **Overview**

- **Presentation** – Panel thanked the applicant for a comprehensive presentation and package.
- **Architectural Massing and Articulation** – Panel recommended reducing the substantial building heights and reorganizing the distribution of built form massing on site to better suit the surrounding site context. The proposed tower heights do not respond to the subject property location, located in the south precinct, meant to serve as a transition zone from the station precinct to the north and neighbourhood precinct to the west.

The panel encouraged the applicant to consider reducing the height of the podium and adjusting the materiality to create a more intimate setting at the ground scale. The introduction of a more diverse palette of materials and textures would further improve the pedestrian experience at grade by softening the imposing and monotonous scale and massing of the proposed built-form and podiums.

- **Site Plan Design and Placemaking** – Panel voiced concerns about the vehicular-centric development noting that more than 50% of the ground floor is dedicated to servicing. The panel noted that the proposed podium is not appropriate for the subject site as it heavily focused on accommodating the high pedestrian yield with little emphasis on the pedestrian realm and its immediate surroundings. The panel encourages the applicant to revisit the site plan design with an emphasis on creating a more urban, pedestrian service vision.

The panel encouraged the applicant to relocate the townhouses to front the proposed parklands and adjust the location of the proposed retail to wrap along Interchange Way supporting the vision set out in the secondary plan.

- **Loading and Dropoff** – Panel noted that consolidating loading and services to the east façade is a critical component for activating the street frontages and park. Relocating the service access away from the north side of the building will stimulate activity and lessen the opportunity for the road south of the park to read as a service road.
- **Adjacencies and context** – Panel questioned how the proposed development relates to the larger VMC context specifically the adjacencies to larger park framework and the neighbourhood precinct to the west. The Panel emphasized the importance of ensuring the development responds appropriately to its adjacencies as set out in the VMC Secondary Plan and visioning documents.

## Comments

### Architectural Design, Massing and Transitions

- Panel raised concerns of the overwhelming architectural scale and massing of the subject development. The proposed development appears out of place as it does not accurately respond to the surrounding site context. The panel recommends reviewing the role of the block within the larger context; rethinking the scale, built form transitions and massing. Consider the location of the subject property relative to the north park property, west neighbourhood precinct with the potential school site, south station precinct and further residential uses proposed to the east. The architectural massing should respond to the location of the subject property as a transition area between the two precincts and highlight the connectivity of the proposed park relative to the larger park framework. Further review the frontage along the north-south road of Interchange Way as it will create a desire line to the proposed park and cater to the neighbourhood precinct - and potential school site - to the west providing a frontage that is inviting to pedestrian traffic.
- The current parking ratio is prohibiting the quality of the podium, active frontages, and proposed units. Panel members concluded that the quality of the project is being negatively affected by the amount of density which in turn is affecting the parking. The panel encourages the applicant to reduce the parking rates and/or relocate the above grade parking below ground. Reducing the podium height will create a more intimate experience at the ground floor level. The podium must consider the immediate surroundings and the contributions to the public realm.
- The panel encourages the applicant to strengthen the design language of the proposed development. The current building facades are service oriented and lack activation and promotion of the pedestrian experience. Considerations should be made of how the interior building footprint informs the exterior amenity and ground floor level of the site. Activating street edges should be the number

one priority. The panel suggest incorporating a more diverse range of materials and textures at the podium level to soften the built form and create a more intimate setting.

- The Panel encouraged the applicant to revisit the building massing in relation to the prepared sun/shadow study. Further considerations should be made to address the shadow impact on the adjacent lands and across the building podium. The panel encourages the applicant to play with the location of the towers and the building typology.

#### Site Plan, Organization and Ground Floor Uses

- Panel voiced concerns that the current site plan configuration is heavily catering towards a vehicular oriented design, more typical of a suburban development. Panel drew attention to the three separate loading areas provided noting the blank service-oriented frontage. The loading area fronting onto the park site jeopardizes the opportunity for an intimate residential frontage reading as a service road type. Panel proposes consolidating the access/loading entrances to one location along the east façade to achieve the urban pedestrian service vision. Reviewing the ground floor footprint and reducing the parking yields will allow for more porosity across the site.
- Panel recommended relocating the proposed townhouses along Interchange Way to front the proposed park to support the residential frontage envisioned by the secondary plan and ideals set out in the adjacent neighbourhood precinct. This will allow the roadway located between the park block and development to serve as a pedestrian focused area well suited for the residential setting.
- Panel noted that the character of the urban park in the southwest quadrant will cater to the surrounding residential frontages differing greatly from the proposed urban park in the northwest quadrant. The role that the park plays shall be honoured in the design of the architecture and the design of the future street. Panel encourages the applicant to allow for that residential character to influence the streetscape proposing a public road instead of a private road.
- The panel encouraged the applicant to reconfigure the location of the retail space along the West and South of Interchange Way to align with the secondary plan and provide for a dynamic street frontage.
- Panel encouraged the applicant to remove the strata component from the park as creating a strata condition will limit the future design and capacity of the proposed park space.

**END OF MINUTES**

# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 108 – April 27, 2023

Virtual Meeting

9:00 am

## **Pre-Meeting**

Committee Members

9:15 am

## **Call to Order**

Chair's Review of Agenda

Disclosure of Interest

Confirmation of Minutes of March 30, 2023 Meeting

9:30 am

## **Princess Lands, Vaughan Metropolitan Center High-Rise Residential Development, 1<sup>st</sup> Review**

Presentations:

Martin Jarvie, BDP Quadrangle

Yvonne Battista, Studio TLA

10:40 pm

Adjournment

# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Meeting 108 – April 27, 2023**

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The Design Review Panel met virtually on Thursday, April 27, 2023. The meeting was recorded and will be posted on the City of Vaughan website.

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Megan Torza, DTAH (Chair)

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc

Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

Guela Solow Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Sharon Sterling, WSP / MMM Group Limited

##### **Absent**

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair)

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

John Tassiopoulos, WSP / MMM Group Limited

Harim Labuschagne, BDP Quadrangle

##### **STAFF**

Christina Bruce, Director, Policy Planning & Special Programs

Chris Ainsworth, Ward 4 Councillor

Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Manager, Urban Design & Cultural Heritage, Development Planning

Gaston Soucy, Senior Manager, VMC Program

Cory Gray, Senior Manager, VMC Program

Musa Deo, Senior Manager, VMC Program

Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Design, Development Planning  
Shirin Rohani, Urban Design, Development Planning  
Alex Yang, Urban Design, Development Planning  
Anna Rosen, Project Manager, VMC Program  
Andrea Shotlander, Project Manager, VMC Program  
Alyssa Pangilinan, Planning Technician, VMC Program  
Natalie Wong, Senior Planner, VMC Program  
Shirley Marsh, Project Manager, Urban Design Development Planning  
Dana Khademi, Storm Drainage Engineer, VMC Program  
Matthew Peverini, Senior Planner, VMC Program

**The meeting was called to order at 9:40 am with Megan Torza in the Chair.**

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Harim Labuschagne, conflict with the 1<sup>st</sup> item on the agenda

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting minutes for March 30, 2023, were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**Princess Lands  
Vaughan Metropolitan Centre  
High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1<sup>st</sup> Review**  
Architect: BDP Quadrangle  
Landscape Architect: Studio TLA

## Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

- Is the overall building massing and materiality achieving the pedestrian scale, placemaking objectives and adequate transitions to the immediate context as intended in the VMC Secondary Plan and other VMC supporting documents?
- Are the proposed site plan, ground floor uses and landscape design strategies adequately promoting an activated public realm in a Neighbourhood Precinct as envisioned in the VMC Secondary Plan and other VMC supporting documents?

## Overview

- **Presentation** – Panel thanked the applicant for a comprehensive presentation and package.
- **Adjacencies and Context**– Panel requested that the applicant share its broader visions of future phases for the subject lands to identify how the phases will be integrated and function as a whole. Panel encouraged the applicant to think about the overall massing, connectivity, and shadow impact on the provided amenity space. The subject property is located along HWY 7 an arterial road, Barnes Court (a minor collector) and two private roadways. Consider the adjacencies to the north and south and the surrounding uses like the proposed school site to the north. For example, the proposed pedestrian connection is a fantastic thoroughfare, but it is difficult to gauge its effectiveness as it is not known how the areas north and south of the site will function.
- **Architectural Massing and Articulation**– Panel noted that the proposed built form is simple in design and shape lacking interest. Panel encouraged the applicant to play with the materiality of the building – colour and texture to add visual interest and improve the pedestrian experience at grade. The Panel was intrigued by the proposed colonnade and flexible open/closed balconies. They cautioned the applicant to consider the potential shadow impact and harsh environment created by the colonnade facing north and the office like building façade it's design suggests. The Panel recommended varying the tower heights to add more interest to the skyline view and transition to the school site area.
- **Site Plan Design and Placemaking** – Panel voiced concerns about the current site plan. A total of four service driveways are proposed promoting a vehicular-centric development. Panel recommended consolidating these entrances and removing the service exit onto Barnes Court as this would free up the façade interface to activate the public realm. As more than 70% of the Barnes Court frontage is a blank wall, promoting active uses along Barnes Court is essential to creating a vibrant streetscape. The site plan should be updated to include a cycling facility on both the north and south side Barnes Court providing strong connectivity to the subject site and surrounding area amenities like Edgeley Pond and Park.

## Comments

### Adjacencies and Context

- Panel recommends reviewing the role of the subject property within the larger context and sharing the broader visions for the master plan. The Panel highlighted the importance of connectivity, massing and built form transitions between phase one, future phases and beyond the subject property. Further consideration would be required to analyze the subject property location in relation to the properties to the north and future school site, the south and connection to HWY 7 and transit, the future east employment lands and Edgeley Pond and Park to the west.

### Architectural Design and Massing

- Panel encouraged the applicant to vary the tower heights to create interest in the city skyline. Tapering the building height to provide an appropriate transition to smaller building typologies would be an effective strategy. Further to this, it was noted that the proposed buildings lack appeal and recommended changing the building materiality, colour and texture, and draw inspiration to what was done at Expo 5 as a building precedent.
- Panel encouraged the applicant to strengthen the design language of the proposed development at the pedestrian scale. The current building facades are service oriented and lack activation and promotion of the pedestrian experience. The panel encouraged the applicant to raise the podium height to three storeys to align with the standards set out in the VMC Secondary plan.
- Panel took an interest to the proposed colonnade and amenity decks above and alluded their success will depend on the planting that will help define the podium level. Some Panel members questioned the appropriateness of the colonnade as a wind strategy given its location and the Vaughan climate. Others felt that the current podium component does not take advantage of the future school site to the north stating that it should be more residential in scale and better frame the amenity space to the south. The Panel encouraged the applicant to explore the final location and structure of the colonnade to better frame the amenity space and/or public realm.
- The Panel was intrigued by the proposed Balcony design, treatment and materiality. They encouraged the applicant to push and further explore this opportunity as a design feature that could tell the story of the buildings more broadly, and mention sustainability and how each unit's individual exterior amenity space is occupied in a high noise, high wind environment.

### Site Plan, Organization and Ground Floor Uses

- Panel encouraged the applicant to reorganize their site plan, consolidating servicing to private roadways while activating Barnes Court and future proofing the proposed amenities at the ground floor level. Panel voiced concerns that the current site plan configuration is heavily catering towards a vehicular oriented design. Panel drew attention to the four separate loading areas provided noting the blank service-oriented frontage along the public realm, especially along Barnes Court. Panel noted that Barnes court should be highlighted as the front door of the development providing an active frontage and an appropriate right-of-way width to maintain bidirectional cycling facilities. The current site plan suggests a downgrade of Barnes Court to resemble a back of house frontage.
- Panel suggested the outdoor amenity space be relocated to front Barnes Court providing greater public access and a reduced shadow impact in the future, after the properties to the south develop. Adding the north and south cycling facility along Barnes Court would improve the sites connectivity to the surrounding area.
- The Panel encouraged the applicant to future proof the ground floor and ensure a level of flexibility is built in. They suggested the applicant look at the surrounding context – what is built and what is to come – to ensure appropriate amenities can be provided to accommodate a wide variety of people and activities. Understanding the ground floor uses on the existing and future proposed neighbouring properties will allow the applicant to see how services should be provided along the surrounding streets. Further to this, the Panel recommended strengthening the connection between indoor and outdoor amenities. Site plan features like the proposed mid-block pedestrian connection creates a lot of curiosity and interest, however, it would need to be connected beyond phase one of the development.
- Panel requested that a traditional site plan, underground parking and elevations be provided as part of the presentation in the next DRP.

**END OF MINUTES**

# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 109 – May 25, 2023

Virtual Meeting

9:00 am

## **Pre-Meeting**

Committee Members

9:15 am

## **Call to Order**

Chair's Review of Agenda

Disclosure of Interest

Confirmation of Minutes of April 27, 2023 Meeting

9:30 am

## **7800 Jane Street – 7800 Jane Street Inc.**

**Vaughan Metropolitan Centre**

**Public Art Plan, 1st Review**

Presentations:

Timothy Shilling, KLM Planning Partners Inc.

Ben Mills, Public Art Management

10:40 pm

Adjournment

# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Meeting 109 – May 25, 2023**

The Design Review Panel met virtually on Thursday, May 25, 2023. The meeting was recorded and will be posted on the City of Vaughan website.

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Megan Torza, DTAH (Chair)

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc

Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

Guela Solow Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair)

John Tassiopoulos, WSP / MMM Group Limited

##### **Absent**

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Sharon Sterling, WSP / MMM Group Limited

Harim Labuschagne, BDP Quadrangle

##### **STAFF**

Sharon Gaum-Kuchar, Senior Art Curator and Planner

Gaston Soucy, Senior Manager, VMC Program

Cory Gray, Senior Manager, VMC Program

Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Design, Development Planning

Shirin Rohani, Urban Design, Development Planning

Alex Yang, Urban Design, Development Planning

Anna Rosen, Project Manager, VMC Program  
Andrea Shotlander, Project Manager, VMC Program  
Natalie Wong, Senior Planner, VMC Program  
Shirley Marsh, Project Manager, Urban Design Development Planning  
Michael Tranquada, Senior Urban Designer  
Julia Crane, Landscape Architect, VMC Program

**The meeting was called to order at 9:15 am with Megan Torza in the Chair.**

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

No conflicts of interests disclosed.

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting minutes for April 27, 2023, were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**7800 Jane Street**  
**Vaughan Metropolitan Centre**  
**Public Art Plan, 1st Review**  
Planning: KLM Planning Partners Inc.  
Public Art Consultant: Public Art Management

## Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

- Does the overall vision and project objectives align with the strategic directions outlined in the VMC Culture and Public Art Framework?
- Do you feel public art expression and viewer experiences can be achieved successfully through the proposed strategy of integrating three distinct public art installations within their respective locations as well as a cohesive program?

## Overview

- **Presentation** – Panel thanked the applicant for a comprehensive presentation and package.
- **Adjacencies and Context** – Panel requested that the applicant consider adjacent site uses, sight lines and circulation when determining locations and selecting works. The area identified as Site 1, at the corner of Jane Street and Highway 7, sees significant vehicular and pedestrian traffic and is an opportunity for a landmark art installation within the VMC. Panel was divided on the scale and nature of the installation within Site 2, along Jane Street and Apple Mill Road, given its proximity to residential development and role as a pedestrian route. Panel indicated that Site 3, the galleria, is a more intimate space and questioned whether a large art installation is appropriate but agreed that this location provides a unique opportunity. Panel noted that an art installation within Site 3, the galleria, may require collaboration with the architect to create a piece that is responsive to the proposed building architecture.
- **Distribution of Budget** – Panel indicated that the total budget for the three art installations should be distributed based on a hierarchy that reflects the exposure of each identified site and accessibility at both the vehicular and pedestrian scale. Panel agreed that Site 1 should see more funding due to its prominent location and exposure to vehicles and pedestrians. Site 2 will see substantial pedestrian traffic from the subway extension and Edgeley Pond and Park and should not be overlooked in importance. Site 3 will see the least amount of exposure. Panel voiced concerns that while the installation is public, the location within a private development is limiting to Site 3's potential.
- **Art Theming** – Panel emphasized that the subject development is located on indigenous lands and directly adjacent to Edgeley Pond and Park, providing an opportunity for artists to draw upon its history, ecological and cultural significance in their proposals. The exploration of incorporating natural materials and/or man-made materials to mimic the surrounding natural features and building architecture will create a placemaking opportunity and strong correlation to the adjacent site context.
- **Artist Selection and Involvement** – Panel encouraged the applicant to engage the artist early to coordinate the proposed art installations with the proposed

building design. This will allow for a seamless integration between the art installations and the proposed development.

## Comments

### Adjacencies and Context

- Panel recommends reviewing the transportation infrastructure and natural systems within the greater context of the site to better identify the placement, scale and nature of the art installations, given its proximity to transit systems and Edgeley Pond and Park. Opportunities to connect the art installations to their surroundings through their subject matter or materiality should be explored to strengthen a sense of place and wayfinding within the site and beyond.
- Panel noted that the site caters to different users who will form different relationships with the proposed art installations. Residents, commuters, passersby and drivers will all see the installations at varying distances and intervals, creating unique individual experiences to all.
- Panel agreed that Site 1 is the strongest opportunity for a landmark or “gateway” art installation, given its prime location on Jane Street and Highway 7 and exposure to vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
- The role of Site 2 on Apple Mill Road was divisive among the Panel. Benefits of the site were identified as its position in the centre of a pedestrian thoroughfare between transit facilities and the adjacent Edgeley Pond and Park, giving the opportunity for an art installation of human scale. Conversely, points were raised that Site 2 is in a primarily residential area, a long space to fill, and an art installation in this location will not see as much traffic or visitors as Site 1. Panel identified this site as having potential for wayfinding components.
- Panel indicated that Site 3 within the galleria was likely the lowest priority, with the most barriers across the three sites. Panel was complementary towards the existing design and questioned whether an art installation was ultimately needed. Concerns were raised over the role of the galleria as a passive space. Its location within a private development has potential to limit the art installation as a boon to the public realm. Panel agreed that the structure of the galleria raised a unique opportunity for an art installation involving light, sound, or kinetic movement.

### Distribution of Budget

- Panel encouraged the applicant to put additional consideration into the distribution of the budget between the three art installations. Site 1, at the corner of Jane Street and Highway 7 was identified as a key site in creating a “gateway” feature within the VMC, and should see a larger portion of funding.
- The applicant was encouraged to consider the circulation of pedestrians and vehicles within and around the site, as a means of determining the scale and funding for each installation.
- Panel raised concerns over the nature of Site 3. Questions were raised over the appeal and functionality of the galleria as a public space and circulation route, given its passive nature. As such, a scaled-back art installation in Site 3 may be an opportunity to distribute increased funding to Sites 1 and 2, which hold more potential.

### Art Theming

- Panel suggested integrating elements of the site context into the call for proposals, indicating potential materiality or themes for the artists to channel. The east frontage along Edgeley Pond and Park suggests connective tissues to nature while the historical and cultural significance calls upon honouring the indigenous teachings of the area. Emphasizing the site's history, and adjacencies provides a unique wayfinding and visioning opportunity for the site. Consider how this site can contribute to the story being told amongst the larger framework of the VMC. Proposals should be tailored to each of the three sites identified instead of a generalized approach for the site as a whole.

### Artist Selection and Involvement

- Panel encouraged the early selection and engagement of an artist for the public art specifically within the galleria. Coordination between the architect and artist may be required to finalize an installation that is sensitive to the surrounding architecture and to determine appropriate anchorage or attachment methods to the building, if necessary.

**END OF MINUTES**

# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 110 – June 29, 2023

Virtual Meeting

9:00 am

## **Pre-Meeting**

Committee Members

9:15 am

## **Call to Order**

Chair's Review of Agenda

Disclosure of Interest

Confirmation of Minutes of May 25, 2023 Meeting

9:30 am

## **Atelier Park, Master Plan**

### **2160 - 2180 Highway 7, 1st Review**

Presentations:

Raymond Lee, Arcadis Professional Services

Neno Kovacevic, Arcadis Professional Services

10:40 pm

## **Promenade Centre**

### **Public Realm Framework and Urban Design Guidelines**

Presentations:

Caitlin Schultz, Brook McIlroy Inc.

Anne McIlroy, Brook McIlroy Inc.

11:50 pm

Adjournment

# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Meeting 110 – June 29, 2023**

The Design Review Panel met virtually on Thursday, June 29, 2023. The meeting was recorded and will be posted on the City of Vaughan website.

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec (Acting Chair)  
Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects  
Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc  
Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio  
John Tassiopoulos, WSP / MMM Group Limited  
Henry Burstyn, IBI Group (Conflict with 1<sup>st</sup> Item)  
Margaret Briegmann, BA Group (Conflict with 2<sup>nd</sup> item)  
Sharon Sterling, WSP / MMM Group Limited  
Harim Labuschagne, BDP Quadrangle-conflict

##### **Absent**

Megan Torza, DTAH  
Ute Maya-Giambattista, Fotenn Planning and Design  
Guela Solow Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects  
Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair)  
Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

##### **STAFF**

Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Manager, Urban Design and Cultural Heritage  
Aimee Pugao, Senior Planner, Parks and Infrastructure Planning  
Celene Mariano, Project Manager, Parks and Infrastructure Planning  
Cory Gray, Senior Manager, VMC Program  
Carol Birch, Planner, Development Planning  
Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Design, Development Planning

Shirin Rohani, Urban Design, Development Planning  
Alex Yang, Urban Design, Development Planning  
Anna Rosen, Project Manager, VMC Program  
Andrea Shotlander, Project Manager, VMC Program  
Shirley Marsh, Project Manager, Urban Design Development Planning  
Michael Tranquada, Senior Urban Designer

**The meeting was called to order at 9:15 am with Alfredo Landaeta in the Chair.**

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group  
Harim Labuschagne, BDP Quadrangle

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting minutes for May 25, 2023, were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**Atelier Park, Master Plan**  
**2160 - 2180 Highway 7, 1st Review**  
Architect: Raymond Lee, Arcadis Professional Services  
Landscape: Neno Kovacevic, Arcadis Professional Services

## Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

- Please provide your input on the big moves and the site's structure and distributions of uses, considering the existing and future planned urban infrastructures.
- Please comment on the built-form diversity and transition to the low-rise context to the north and south of Highway 7. Is the development successful in the transition between the city's employment lands and a shift in the character of the area?
- Please comment on the master plan's proposed phasing and how to best deliver the open space and road network at each phase

## Overview

- **Presentation** Panel thanked the applicant for the comprehensive graphics and elaborate presentation. The built-form inspiration was questioned by Panel, and it was noted that the inspiration should be more in keeping with the visions and principles of the proposed community with respect to inclusivity.
- **Adjacencies and Context**–Panel requested that the applicant emphasize the larger master planning and block plan study and be cognizant of its importance and how it can provide a broader perspective on what may or may not happen in the future. The block plan study can assist in identifying the challenges of the site and would plant the seed for future transitions, a combination of uses and effective and optimized connections within a multi-use community.
- **Built Form Diversity and Massing Articulation**–Panel noted that the proposed built form does not acknowledge the site conditions, the pedestrian experience at the ground level, and adversely impacts the microclimate of the central open space. Panel encouraged the applicant to continue studying and exploring the massing of buildings and improve the pedestrian experience at grade. They also cautioned the applicant to consider the potential shadow impact on the central open space and the unpleasant environment at the peripheries of the site. Panel recommended varying the podium heights to create a more defined edge for the open space and add more interest to the skyline view.
- **Phasing and Placemaking** – Panel voiced concerns about the current phasing plan. Noting that the proposed phasing would result in scattered construction and an unfinished and incomplete community. Panel emphasized that the central open space should mature more quickly to ensure the earlier phases of development are more livable in the interim phases.

## Comments

### Adjacencies and Context

- Panel questioned the block pattern and the road alignments and their appropriateness for a residential context. They noted that a residential, mixed-

use community needs a finer grain circulation network and block pattern rather than the traditional industrial blocks that dominate the surrounding context.

- The importance of the larger block plan was emphasized by the Panel, and the applicant was advised to use the overall block plan study to their benefit to ensure proper adjacencies are considered based on the realities of the existing and the planned context.
- The notion of connectivity and pedestrian circulation was brought up. Panel raised concern regarding the conflict of pedestrian and vehicular movements on the overall master plan. Further, they advised the applicant to refine the pedestrian circulation and provide more clarity on the street cross sections and multi-modal movement within both the central open space and along the periphery of the site, and to be cognizant of the destinations and the shortest paths of travel. Panel also noted that the development is inward-looking, and the pedestrian experience along the peripheries should be further considered.

### Built-Form and Massing

- Panel expressed concern regarding the microclimate of the internal open space and its inadequate sun exposure. The applicant was advised to consider introducing height and massing variations for the podiums and the towers to provide additional sunlight into the internal POPS and create a defined open space and a more diverse skyline.

### Site Plan, Organization and Ground Floor Uses

- Panel acknowledged the complexity and the challenges of the site and the intention of protecting the internal open space from the incompatible uses surrounding the site; however, the applicant was encouraged to address the developments interface with the neighbouring properties and address the challenges along the peripheries, with introducing engaging land uses and pedestrian amenities.
- Panel encouraged the applicant to be cognizant of the adjacencies of the open space in its context and noted that the development is a residential island within a sea of industrial lands; hence treatment of its edges is critical. Panel noted that the proposed uses in the open space are not carrying the weight they should. The POPS is surrounded by private amenities and feels uninviting and private. Panel advised providing more animating uses along the edges of the POPS and introducing some retail into the space by wrapping around the use at the corners.

### Phasing

- Panel raised concerns with the proposed phasing plan and found it to be scattered, which may cause the development to feel unfinished and incomplete as a community. It was noted that the east-west road could provide a better physical and visual distance between the early phases of the development and the future phases. Panel found that starting the early phases along Highway 7

and south of the east-west road would support a more livable environment in the interim conditions.

- Regarding the phasing of the open space and amenity area, panel emphasized that delivering the open space as a whole and as a finished usable space is very important since the existing amenities in the neighbourhood are not easily accessible. It was noted that cutting the POPS in half for the first phase is not acceptable.

## **City of Vaughan – Promenade Centre Public Realm Framework and Urban Design Guidelines**

Key Stakeholders: Caitlin Schultz, Brook McIlroy Inc.  
Anne McIlroy, Brook McIlroy Inc.

Review: 1st Review

### **Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

- Does the design framework appropriately respond to the hierarchy of blocks, parks/open space, streets and paths network?
- Do the proposed public realm guidelines successfully respond to the design framework with regards to transitions, adjacent uses, and interfaces?
- Do the proposed built form guidelines provide sufficient flexibility to encourage a varied and context-responsive built form? Do they pose any buildability concerns?
- Considering the uncertainty of development timing and phasing, how can the design guidelines ensure the best possible public realm and urban design conditions across different development scenarios?

### **Comments**

#### General

- Panel thanked the consultant for the overall presentation, and acknowledged that the application is well-rounded, and creates an aspiration for the promenade mall.
- Panel suggested avoiding being too descriptive on guideline prescriptions and simplifying the language to allow it to be treated as a guide rather than a formula, which allows more flexibility and is not being treated as a by-law.
- Panel pointed out that the park design should utilize the potential advantages of grade changes and slopes in the design process.

#### Street Cross-Section

- Panel acknowledged that the low street cross-section had set a good example and suggested considering a similar approach for the high street and creating a vision for it to describe what the street will look like.
- Panel commented on the cross-section of the retail edge and stated that it is challenging to accommodate all the street elements, such as drop-off, pick-up, layby parking, and the bike lane. Therefore, they suggested an approach to focus only on vehicle drop-off and pick-up without having a dedicated bike lane, as the nature of the street being narrowed would slow down the traffic in comparison with the dedicated bike lane.
- From an accessibility point of view, Panel suggested adding some flexibility for the pick-up and drop-off area, particularly for the road immediately adjacent to the mall and when transitioning to the below-grade parking.
- Panel suggested the applicant consider how the bicycle traffic feeds into the mobility hub and recommended combining cycling and vehicular traffic and providing a shared lane on the street where close to the mall, and separating it into a dedicated bike lane where further away from the hub.
- Considering everything will be below grade eventually, Panel suggested having more descriptions of bicycle infrastructure access to the retail lobbies, and how it ties into the high street design.
- Panel suggested expanding the pedestrian zone from 2.1 m to 2.5 m wide, which allows opportunities for landscape in places where busy and needed.

#### Street Section and Setback

- In review of the street sections and that the proposed setbacks specifically depend on the type of uses. Panel expressed concerns that in the future, the different setbacks may set constraints when converting one use to another, and therefore suggest using more general setbacks to help future proof the development.
- Panel commented that the high street setback from the street edge seem small and that dimensions should be taken from the back of the tree instead of from the face of the curb to the building face to ensure there is enough space for the healthy tree growth and canopy.

#### Parking

- Panel expressed concerns that parking could be a potential issue when developing the edge, and suggested adding descriptions with respect to the structured parking, and particularly how it worked at grade. For example, it is possible to improve the streetscape by using active uses and high-quality elevations for the architecture.
- Panel recommended establishing clear requirements for the minimum parking, and to clearly identify strategies for how the parking will function with the mall in the guidelines. Further clarification on how the surface parking will transition in future is needed to ensure that the mall can continue to operate during the interim.

- As all the blocks will be sold off to the developers and there will be no parking left for the mall, which could make the mall not viable. Panel suggested having a discussion with the owners to allow a certain amount of parking associated with the mall to maintain its viability.

### Interim Condition

- Panel stated the importance of the interim process because the mall redevelopment will take place over several phases. Having a clear interim process identified in the policies will help ensure that the applicants understand what is involved and how to achieve the desired end goal.
- Panel emphasized that the mall is still a major amenity as part of the community. Therefore, it is important to ensure the flexibility of the mall can still be functional within the framework and during the interim while development takes place.
- Panel suggested adding a clear definition of the parking requirements regarding the reduction of mall uses and recommended creating a positive and more transparent interface for the redevelopment of the mall edges.
- Panel stated that the mall is naturally a closed box with a few entrances and not open to the street frontage. They highlighted the challenge of dealing with the mall interface and creating a quality space for the interim condition and how to incentivize the mall to open outwards to the street. Opening the mall to the street and how it relates to the adjacent context should be described more in the document to make a more robust implementation.
- Further to the above, Panel listed an example of the Eaton Centre, and explained that it started completely closed to the street and killed the retail in the area, but later it introduced a strong change on Yonge Street and eventually involved a very active street frontage which increased the street value.

### Phasing

- Panel asked for a phasing plan to be part of the development process and ensure the development of the parcels can fit into the phasing strategy. They suggested providing a phasing plan for interim uses, which flashed out with more details such as the construction process, staging, access to the construction pad and screening.
- Further to the above, Panel gave some examples, such as adding descriptions that the phasing plan is required for each application and demonstrating how the interim spaces or uses around potential development sites are contributing to the public realm strategy. Additionally, describing the transformation from a retail experience to a mixed-use community experience.
- Panel advised drawing inspiration from successful interim phasing strategies implemented in other malls, specifically citing Don Mills Mall and Yorkdale Mall as precedents. They also suggested including a schedule or appendix that showcases the examples of developments along the mall edges, as well as within the broader context.

## Road Hierarchy

- Panel emphasized the importance of the road hierarchy and clearly identifying which roads can remain private and which one would expect to become public over time. As the development proceeds, providing more prescriptive and flexibility in the guideline is necessary.
- Panel addressed that the low street will be harder to achieve because of the amount of loading and servicing, and there is a significant grade difference from the north end. Therefore, Panel suggested re-evaluating the bicycle lane on that street by taking the high volume of loading and grade change into account.
- Panel suggested introducing principles for the high street to ensure there is a minimum percentage of frontages to be commercial. This is based on past experience which shows that some developments ended up with no active uses along similar streets with mostly structured parking.
- Panel commented that the hardest part of achieving a complete street is the continuous vegetation on the street and adequately dealing with subsurface utilities. Therefore, they suggested setting up priority for the street over making other decisions to line up with the trees.

**END OF MINUTES**

# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 111 – July 27, 2023

Virtual Meeting

9:00 am

## **Pre-Meeting**

Committee Members

9:15 am

## **Call to Order**

Chair's Review of Agenda

Disclosure of Interest

Confirmation of Minutes of June 29, 2023 Meeting

9:30 am

## **3131 Highway 7 - Toromont Industries Ltd.**

### **Vaughan Metropolitan Centre**

### **High-Rise Mixed-Use, 1st Review**

Presentations:

Len Abelman and Nicola Casciato, WZMH Architects

Ray Ronaghan and Jeffery Craft, Studio TLA

Anna Wynveen and Emma West, Bousfield Inc.

10:40 pm

Adjournment

# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Meeting 111 – July 27, 2023**

The Design Review Panel met virtually on Thursday, July 27, 2023. The meeting was recorded and will be posted on the City of Vaughan website.

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Megan Torza, DTAH (Chair)

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair)

John Tassiopoulos, WSP / MMM Group Limited

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

Harim Labuschagne, BDP Quadrangle

##### **Absent**

Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.

Guela Solow Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Sharon Sterling, WSP / MMM Group Limited

##### **STAFF**

Christina Bruce, Director, Policy Planning & Special Programs

Gaston Soucy, Senior Manager, VMC Program

Cory Gray, Manager, Parks & Strategic Initiatives, VMC Program

Natalie Wong, Senior Planner, VMC Program

Matthew Peverini, Senior Planner, VMC Program

Monica Wu, Planner, VMC Program

Alyssa Pangilinan, Planning Technician, VMC Program  
Anna Rosen, Project Manager, VMC Program  
Andrea Shotlander, Project Manager, VMC Program  
Julia Crane, Landscape Architect, VMC Program  
Dana Khademi, Storm Drainage Engineer, VMC Program  
Jillian Britto, Transportation Project Manager, VMC Program  
Shirley Marsh, Project Manager, Urban Design, Development Planning  
Michael Tranquada, Senior Urban Designer  
Shawn Persaud, Senior Planner  
Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Design, Development Planning  
Alex Yang, Urban Design, Development Planning  
Dorianne Squadrilla, Office Coordinator

**The meeting was called to order at 9:35 am with Megan Torza in the Chair.**

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Margaret Briegmann, conflict with the 1<sup>st</sup> item on the agenda

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting minutes for June 29, 2023, were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**3131 Highway 7 – Toromont Industries Ltd.**

**Vaughan Metropolitan Centre**

**High-Rise Mixed-Use, 1st Review**

Architect: WZMH Architects

Landscape Architect: Studio TLA

Planner: Bousfield Inc.

## Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

- Is the proposed massing and typology creating the desired built-form balance and pedestrian scale envisioned in the VMC Secondary Plan and other VMC supporting documents?
- Are the proposed site plan, ground floor uses and landscape design strategies adequately promoting an activated public realm as envisioned in the VMC Secondary Plan and other VMC supporting documents?

## Overview

- **Presentation** – Panel thanked the applicant for a comprehensive presentation and package.
- **Massing and Grain Size** – Panel expressed concern for the overwhelming massing of the proposed development. The Panel encouraged the applicant to further investigate the sun/shadow studies and prepare a wind report to inform the proposed building placement and shape, as well as recommended reducing the number of towers. Special attention should be directed towards the creation of suitable microclimatic conditions for the subject property and surrounding vicinity. Emphasis was placed on further exploring the character of the built form, materiality, and sustainability of podiums to improve the pedestrian experience. Panel advised researching design precedents across Ontario and beyond with similar densities to identify potential strategies for massing and layout. Given the prime location of the site within the VMC, there is an opportunity to create a unique landmark feature that is innovative in its architectural and landscape treatments.
- **Ground Floor Usage** – Panel requested refinement of the proposed ground floor uses to better compliment the proposed park/promenade and eliminate any vehicular and pedestrian conflicts. The applicant is encouraged to further explore how the loading and servicing can be consolidated with the adjacent residential uses. The Panel encouraged the applicant to explore how people will move through the space and identify important edges they wish to highlight. Emphasis was placed on infusing cultural arts and community uses along Millway Avenue to create a more diverse pedestrian experience. The Panel recommended researching similar precedents with dynamic retail street frontages to see how these ideals can be incorporated along the Millway Avenue Promenade.
- **Millway Park and Promenade and Open Space Network** – Panel appreciated the incorporation of the VMC's history as an agricultural area into the design of the Millway Park and Promenade but would like to see a greater focus on its new role within an arts and culture district. More facilities are requested to activate the space, which must also consider seasonality and all-day usage. Additional refinement of the courtyard spaces will be needed as the design progresses, as the Panel raised concerns about the tenure, size and scale.

Special consideration should be placed on achieving a more pedestrian-friendly scale and reducing the visual impact of the surrounding residential towers.

- **Response to Site Context** – Panel encouraged the applicant to consider the site adjacencies and wide diversity of conditions throughout the subject property. The site is currently bounded by a regional road, two urban parks, local streets, and a minor collector road. Establishing a hierarchy between the street block through the use of built form will provide a stronger delineation among the street network. The proposed streetscape design can be used to influence the character of the interior and exterior roadways. Additionally, the Panel suggested modifying the proposed layout of Doughton road to allow for a more interesting block plan.

## Comments

### Massing and Grain Size

- Panel raised concerns for the overwhelming size and stature of the built form currently proposed. The building heights, podium heights and density proposed largely exceed the standards set out in the VMC Secondary Plan.
- The building massing is homogenous in nature and lacks character. The Panel noted that the proposed tower massing and configuration creates a hostile microclimatic environment. They encouraged the applicant to review wind and shadow reports to better inform the proposed building massing and placement.
- Reducing building heights and massing will ease concerns over density and shadow impacts. Tapered building heights will create interest amongst the VMC Skyline and given the subject property a stronger identity as a landmark feature as envisioned by the applicant.
- Panel suggested modifying the bend along Doughton Road to create a more efficient block plan with block sizes that increase available parkland space to the south.
- Panel noted that scale is a significant issue across the VMC already. Consider the scale of the large park/promenade along Millway Avenue and the size of the courtyard spaces relative to the built form proposed. Integrating more built form diversity at grade may help to better define and curate both public and private open spaces. Consider adding stronger podiums expression to the towers adjacent to the courtyard areas to break up the massing to allow for a more comfortable pedestrian scale.
- Additionally, the Panel encouraged the applicant to consider the use of innovative, sustainable materiality and practices in the architectural and landscape design strategy. This will aid in creating a unique identity for this landmark site.
- Applicant was encouraged by the Panel to reference developments with similar conditions in Toronto (City Place, Regent Park) as precedents for their proposal and to identify strategies to address concerns over building scale and densities.

### Ground Floor Usage

- Panel questioned the current layout and uses proposed at the ground floor of the subject development. A main concern is the perceived lack of servicing and loading areas for retail and commercial spaces. The Panel encouraged the applicant to relocate the servicing underground or consider consolidating with residential to minimize its presence on the ground floor.

- The changing nature of retail was brought up by the Panel. The applicant was encouraged to explore flexibility to convert the ground floor space to other uses in five or ten years to adapt to current trends.
- Generally, more variety in the ground floor usage is desired. Panel would like to see more cultural facilities and community services, and encouraged the integration of facilities beyond retail on the ground floor to entertain and cater to the residents and visitors. Millway Avenue is identified as an arts and culture corridor in the Secondary Plan and the current proposal does not demonstrate this vision. The applicant is encouraged to consider how their proposal can contribute to the VMC as a whole.
- Panel advised that the location and range of uses adjacent to the Millway Promenade and the park should be carefully considered, as the adjacent ground floor uses will impact how active and ultimately how successful these areas will be. As a general strategy for the site, the applicant should ensure that there is connectivity and fluidity between interior and exterior spaces.
- Moving the proposed office spaces from the northeast corner of the site closer to the TTC subway station as suggested by the Panel will increase activity within the Millway Promenade.
- Panel is unsure of the feasibility of a grocery store on the TTC-owned properties, noting that the applicant may need to consider an alternative location.

#### Millway Park and Open Space

- Panel appreciated the inclusion of courtyards with pedestrian amenities within the development, as well as the nod to the VMC's agricultural history and Black Creek as a motif within the design of the Millway Promenade.
- Given the scale and location of the Millway Promenade, the applicant has an opportunity to create a landmark public space within the VMC. The Panel concluded that the current plans do not reach the goal of converting the area into a "cultural spine," and that there are not enough facilities shown to fully activate the space.
- Panel noted that the open space network generally needs refinement as the courtyards are expansive and could be more palatable on a pedestrian scale. Additionally, there is a lack of private open space shown for the future residents. Further refinement and separation of the public and private domain is required.
- Panel encouraged the applicant to consider how frequently the outdoor courtyard spaces will be used given the scale of development and its proximity to transit. The design should account for use in all seasons, at all times of day.
- Panel noted concern for the scale of the Millway Avenue corridor as it relates to its two retail frontages being so far apart. Panel recommended that the applicant should consider how the Millway Promenade could act as a connector between the active frontages on the east and west side of Millway Avenue.

#### Response to Site Context

- Panel recommended reviewing the proposed development through a broader lens looking at the surrounding site conditions as the proposed building massing and streetscape should be refined to specifically respond to the different site conditions.
- Panel encouraged the applicant to consider unique treatments for the roads throughout the site depending on their nature. For example, Celebration Avenue is a local street that will have a different character and traffic conditions than the exterior roads, as such,

Panel recommended that the building and streetscape design along these roads should specifically respond to this condition.

**END OF MINUTES**

# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 112 – October 26, 2023

Virtual Meeting

9:00 am

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## **Pre-Meeting**

Committee Members

9:15 am

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## **Call to Order**

Chair's Review of Agenda

Disclosure of Interest

Confirmation of Minutes of July 27, 2023 Meeting

9:30 am

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## **Woodbridge South, Mid-Rise Mixed-Use, 1st Review 239, 245 & 251 Woodbridge Ave.**

Presentations:

Katie Pandey, Weston Consulting

Hanieh Alyassin, Weston Consulting

Johnny Chimienti, Graziani & Corazza Architects

10:40 pm

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Adjournment

# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Meeting 112 – October 26, 2023**

The Design Review Panel met virtually on Thursday, October 26, 2023. The meeting was recorded and will be posted on the City of Vaughan website.

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec (Chair)

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair)

Megan Torza, DTAH

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc

Harim Labuschagne, BDP Quadrangle

Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.

Guela Solow Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

##### **Absent**

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

John Tassiopoulos, WSP / MMM Group Limited

Sharon Sterling, WSP / MMM Group Limited

##### **STAFF**

Haiqing Xu, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management

Nancy Tuckett, Director of Development Planning

Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Manager, Urban Design and Cultural Heritage

Michael Tranquada, Senior Urban Designer

Cassandra Krysko, Senior Planner, Development Planning

Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Design, Development Planning

Shirley Marsh, Project Manager, Urban Design, Development Planning

Alex Yang, Urban Design, Development Planning

Shirin Rohani, Urban Design, Development Planning

Julia Crane, Landscape Architect, VMC Program

Dorianne Squadrilla, Office Coordinator

**The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am with Alfredo Landaeta in the Chair.**

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

None noted.

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting minutes for July 27, 2023, were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**Woodbridge South – 2103604 Ontario Ltd c/o Hardrock Group of Companies  
239, 245 & 251 Woodbridge Ave.**

**Mid-Rise Mixed-Use, 1st Review**

Architect: Graziani and Corazza Architects

Landscape Architect: Cosburn Nauboris Ltd. Landscape Architects

Planner: Weston Consulting, Planning and Urban Design

## Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. How successful does the proposed built form and massing interface with:
  - a. The neighbouring site
  - b. Woodbridge Ave
  - c. The Woodbridge Heritage District overall
2. Does the project respond well to the grade conditions along Woodbridge Ave., and does it create an active and accessible frontage?
3. How successful is the private open space proposed in serving the future residents and providing a transition space from the CP Rail?

## Overview

- **Presentation** – Panel thanked the applicant for a comprehensive presentation and package. Panel also acknowledged the constraints on the site and the restriction imposed on the development by the grade difference and the railway setback.
- **Site Organization and the Relationship to Woodbridge Ave** – Panel urged the applicant to revisit the project and see how it can better fit in an urban context and how the frontage on Woodbridge Ave. can become more functional, establishing a level of continuity for the street façade, and transition seamlessly with the existing and future public sidewalk without neglecting traffic, safety and access requirements.
  - Panel expressed concern that Woodbridge Ave. as a pedestrian corridor and as an integral part of the village of Woodbridge has been diminished. They noted that a lot of the issues relating to access, landscape, and architecture can benefit from the overall reorganization of the floor plan and of the access to the site and the building.
  - With regards to streetscape, there is a misalignment with the established condition to the west and there is a break in the pedestrian frontage with the proposed underground parking access. It was also noted that the City is currently building a sidewalk under the existing bridge to the east that should be incorporated in the streetscape design for a continuous path of travel to be maintained.
  - Panel suggested strengthening the pedestrian interface along Woodbridge Ave. by relocating the underground parking access, making a stronger lobby connection at grade. Panel questioned the necessity of retail. A stronger lobby presence on Woodbridge Ave will help funnelling visitors through the site and reserving the back of the site for residents and the necessary servicing. It will also allow for a more accessible building design compared to the outdoor staircase and the long dark corridor currently proposed.
  - Recognizing the significant grade difference on the site, Panel noted that creative ways of mitigating this difference should be implored to achieve a

- pleasant pedestrian experience and contribute to the overall streetscape. If the outdoor staircase is to remain, it should be treated for extreme weather conditions and as a more civic experience with public art and/ or landscape.
- Lastly, the relationship with the property to the south will need to be better resolved. The easement through the immediate property to the south leads to an established neighbourhood that is anticipated to generate local traffic but not necessarily outside/ visitor traffic.
  - **Landscape Design** – Panel noted that the landscape design could be simplified and consolidated with gestures that will speak better to the reconfiguration of the frontage on Woodbridge Ave. and the open space at the upper level.
    - Looking at the top level, there is opportunity to create larger landscape areas, by reconfiguring the vehicular circulation and the parking; this would allow for a better transition to the units and for more privacy as currently there is no buffer between the units and the public circulation areas.
    - Panel noted that the landscape along the interface with the railway is necessary in order to mitigate the visual impact of the rail corridor and that of the necessary protective measures. That can be provided in the form of a buffer that includes tall trees or other landscape treatments.
  - **Architecture Design** – Panel acknowledged that the adjustments at the ground floor layout and the frontage on Woodbridge will have a big impact on the layout and the distribution of the units. Also, it was suggested that two architectural languages are established, one for the Woodbridge relating to the streetscape and the other for the rest of the building to deal with the constraints of the site.
    - A relocation of pedestrian and resident access as noted above, and revisiting the circulation core could significantly reduce the length of the proposed corridor and allow for the corridor to be upgraded to contribute to the architectural dialog. Specifically, replacing the spandrel panels with functional glass will help provide more natural light in the corridor and the units themselves.
    - Panel noted there are several examples and precedents of buildings on challenging sites for the applicant to draw from. For example, industrial “saw-tooth floor plate” buildings can allow for the building to mitigate the noise impact more effectively from the rail corridor.
    - With respect to the units that are at the ground floor, the grade difference can be used to increase the sense of privacy and separation of those units from the common areas, by bringing them to a higher level.

## Comments

### Site Organization, Access and Relationship to Woodbridge Ave

- Panel raised concerns for the alignment of the building component at the lower street level with the neighbouring building to the west, as currently it is set on an angle, and it does not speak to a consistent street edge. Aligning with the neighbouring property to the west will allow for a continuous street frontage, and for the underground parking

access to be set further back making the retail component more pronounced to Woodbridge Ave.

- Panel noted that the combination of the design solutions on pedestrian access seems like a missed opportunity for a much more gracious interaction with the building. There is a great deal of improvement in the pedestrian experience available through the reorganization of both the interior and the exterior entry, making it a much more welcoming experience. Panel strongly suggested that the lobby establishes a strong presence on Woodbridge Ave. creating a stronger pedestrian access point. If it is necessary, the outdoor staircase can remain and may also become a feature for this development on Woodbridge Ave. if opportunities such as public art or landscape are incorporated and if overall a more civic design approach is implored.
- Panel raised concerns on the vehicular circulation and specifically;
  - On the sight lines at the underground parking entrance/ exit. The applicant will need to review whether there is a sight line conflict with the driveway across Woodbridge Ave. and amend the plans as necessary to ensure the safety of the future users of the site.
  - There is a public road on the other side of the bridge on Woodbridge Ave., which appears to be set at approximately 15 m away, centreline to centreline, from the proposed driveway causing safety issues. The separation distance between the driveway and this road will need to be reviewed and the plans will need to be amended as necessary to ensure the safety of future users.
  - The distance from the curb to the building along the fire route might be problematic and will need to be further reviewed to confirm it meets the code.
- Panel raised concerns on the accessibility of the building and particularly as it relates to emergency evacuation strategies. Specifically, it was noted that the space to the west can be designed as an evacuation space for residents in the case of railway emergency.
- To allow for more generous open spaces by the drop-off area and along the railway corridor Panel suggested that the drop-off is moved south and the parking ratio is adjusted to reduce the amount of space dedicated to vehicular circulation.

### Landscape Design

- Panel requested for a simplified landscape scheme and for the consolidation of open spaces to achieve meaningful private amenity space for the residents; specifically,
  - On the West side there is a segregation of spaces. It was recommended to create a larger communal space that has the potential to be internally separated into smaller more private spaces if necessary.
  - At the Woodbridge level, a more deliberate forecourt design should be implored, with a walkway along the façade, continuous unit paving, and an enhanced treatment at the residential entrance creating a more gracious arrival sequence for residents and visitors. Deliberation in the planting scheme can help differentiate the lobby entrance from the patio/ entrances to the retail.
  - The amenity space at the northeast corner, should be conjoined with the entrance-arrival walkway to create opportunities for interaction and foster community relationships between the future residents.
- Create a stronger more gracious connection to the dog park, for the future users of that space.
- A more generous landscape buffer should be provided along the railway corridor, to soften that edge of the crash wall and fence.

## Architecture Design

- Panel acknowledging the constraints on the site, encouraged the applicant to take a step back in the process, reorganize their thinking over the design process, and look into precedents of similar projects that have successfully embraced such constraints and have turned them into really inspiring projects. Currently the project has turned its back on its main frontage on Woodbridge Ave. and has directed its main entrance to the driveway. This condition will need to be revised to address Woodbridge Ave and truly embrace the one of the few truly walkable villages in Vaughan. Specifically, the Panel suggested,
  - Provide a more prominent frontage with lobby on Woodbridge Ave.
  - Keep the waste storage in the back.
  - Replace the pick-up and drop-off with amenity recognizing the potential of that open space.
  - Make the site more accessible and pedestrian friendly. Currently the walkway off Woodbridge connects to an inaccessible staircase that leads to the main entrance and connects to a walkway that ends at the crash wall on one side, and at the neighbours parking lot and waste collection area on the other.
  - Working with a single-loaded corridor scheme, the corridor currently seems like a missed opportunity to bring some humanity to the interior of the residential floors; providing natural light even if it is diffused by a translucent panel will greatly elevate the resident's experience moving through that corridor.
  - The size of the elevator core and its alignment with the natural light provision can also contribute to a more humane experience of the interiors of the building.
  - Panel suggested moving the south staircase inboard and provide a through unit on the south with windows. Also, the whole north edged of building should have windows. Privacy will not be a concern in this case but where it may arise it can be addressed with treated glass.
- Panel raised concerns on the level of detail of the building design and interior layout, specifically:
  - The elevator core is missing from all upper-level floor plans.
  - It is unclear how the two-bedroom apartments operate since the window placement suggests that one of the bedrooms and the living room will have no windows. Acknowledging that unit floor plans were not included in the presentation, there is a concern on the viability of the two-bedroom units and specifically the one at the "elbow" of the building.
  - It would be helpful if the window distribution on the neighbouring building was shown for the Panel to get an understanding as to whether the proposed design solutions and treatment are necessary.
  - The residential entrance is downplayed on the façade making it almost undistinguishable.
  - The step back proposed at the fourth floor, might be more impactful in terms of alignment with the neighbour, if it was set two storeys lower.
- Panel challenged the design solution of a single-loaded corridor and instead suggested that the rearrangement of the elevator core into a circulation hub can potentially eliminate the need of the corridor. Furthermore, the privacy concerns were also challenged on the premise that the 12 metre separation distance is sufficient based on universal standards for units to face the existing building to the west. As such the single-loaded corridor can become central to the building.

- The retail component was also challenged by Panel especially since it comes at the expense of accessibility that can be achieved with a strong lobby presence on Woodbridge Ave.
- The lobby can take advantage of the alignment with the building to the west and achieve a double-height presence on Woodbridge Ave. Indoor amenity can also be moved down at the Woodbridge level, complimenting the lobby and allowing for another unit to be proposed at the upper level. Smaller retail may still be accommodated on that frontage to serve future residents, if the parking scheme is revised.
- Further to the above, Panel suggested that the residential parking is separated in two different areas. Specifically, it was suggested that one covered residential parking area is provided at the upper level accessible from the public road to the south, available only to residents and then the lower level accommodates visitor parking, the pick-up and drop-off areas and potentially additional residential parking spaces at the back. This can allow for a more successful internal relationship with the lobby, a stronger address of Woodbridge Ave., and to help keep visitors from funnelling through the established neighbourhood.
- With regards to materials, Panel recognized that the village of Woodbridge is rather eclectic and as such a deliberate decision needs to be made to establish a character for the building. It was therefore suggested that the podium is treated independently compared to the residential above. The applicant was encouraged to step away from the New Vernacular style and more towards the Heritage Industrial style getting inspiration from the area's mills, rail, the farm and agricultural buildings for the podium. That would allow for historically accurate materials to be integrated and interpreted in a contemporary fashion to successfully address the different forms proposed.
- Creating a spandrel façade was considered from the Panel inappropriate and a missed opportunity to become a good neighbour to the adjacent building. Openings appropriately treated for privacy but allowing natural light, increased amounts of texture and patterning and even art can make for a more pleasant neighbour while creating a more welcoming building internally.
- Panel noted that the selection of brick as a material is suitable for the area, however, encouraged the applicant to play with the patterning at a finer grain level.

**END OF MINUTES**

# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 113 – November 30, 2023

Virtual Meeting

9:00 am

## **Pre-Meeting**

Committee Members

9:15 am

## **Call to Order**

Chair's Review of Agenda

Disclosure of Interest

Confirmation of Minutes of October 26, 2023 Meeting

9:30 am

## **Princess Lands – Cortel Group**

### **Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, High-Rise, Residential, 2nd Review**

Presentations:

Martin Jarvie, BDP Quadrangle

10:40 am

Break

10:45 am

## **VMC South Block - SmartCentres**

### **Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, High-Rise, Mixed-Use, 1st Review**

Presentations:

Paula Bustard, SmartCenters

Jens Holm, 3XN Architects

Greg Costa, MHBC Planning, Urban Design and Landscape Architecture

11:55 am

Adjournment

# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Meeting 113 – November 30, 2023**

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The Design Review Panel met virtually on Thursday, November 30, 2023. The meeting was recorded and will be posted on the City of Vaughan website.

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec (Chair)

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Guela Solow Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.

John Tassiopoulos, WSP / MMM Group Limited

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Harim Labuschagne, BDP Quadrangle

##### **Absent**

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair)

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Megan Torza, DTAH

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Sharon Sterling, WSP / MMM Group Limited

##### **STAFF**

Christina Bruce, Director, Policy Planning & Special Programs

Chris Ainsworth, Ward 4 Councillor

Anna Commisso, Councillor EA, Ward 4

Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Manager, Urban Design & Cultural Heritage, Development Planning

Gaston Soucy, Senior Manager, VMC Program

Cory Gray, Senior Manager, VMC Program

Musa Deo, Senior Manager, VMC Program

Natalie Wong, Senior Planner, VMC Program  
Monica Wu, Senior Planner, VMC Program  
Michael Tranquada, Senior Urban Designer, Development Planning  
Shirley Marsh, Project Manager, Urban Design Development Planning  
Jillian Britto, Transportation Project Manager, VMC Program  
Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Design, Development Planning  
Shirin Rohani, Urban Design, Development Planning  
Alex Yang, Urban Design, Development Planning  
Andrea Shotlander, Project Manager, VMC Program  
Julia Crane, Landscape Architect, VMC Program  
Nicholas Trajkovski, Planner, VMC Program  
Alyssa Pangilinan, Planning Technician, VMC Program  
Lucy D'Acunto, Administrative Coordinator, Development Planning

**The meeting was called to order at 9:35 am with Alfredo Landaeta in the Chair.**

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Harim Labuschagne, conflict with the 1<sup>st</sup> item on the agenda.

Margaret Briegmann, conflict with the 2<sup>nd</sup> item on the agenda.

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting minutes for October 26, 2023, were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**Princess Lands**  
**Vaughan Metropolitan Centre**  
**High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 2<sup>nd</sup> Review**  
Architect: BDP Quadrangle  
Landscape Architect: Studio TLA

## Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

- Has the architectural design successfully addressed previous comments by the Panel regarding building expression, podium design, tower heights, and overall massing to provide a more integrated and transitioned approach to the existing and future context?
- Are the proposed updates to the ground floor uses and site plan addressing previous comments made by the panel to improve the relationship and activation of the public realm, proposed amenity space and connectivity to the future school site?

## Overview

- **Presentation:** The Panel thanked the applicant for a comprehensive presentation.
- **Site Connectivity and Circulation:** The Panel acknowledged that uncertain edge conditions and ultimate surrounding land uses create challenging design conditions for the Applicant and emphasized anticipating change and creating a “future-proof” design. While there are multiple routes through the site via the edges, private road and amenity area, there are still improvements that can be made to the pedestrian realm.
- **Façade Design and Materiality:** The Panel was complementary of the architectural approach to the towers and indicated that the materiality and design proposed is unique within the VMC currently, however there will need to be a focus on using high-quality materials and finishes to achieve excellence. Concerns were raised over the blank nature of the north façades of the two towers at ground level, with the Panel expressing that there are opportunities for either art installations or alternative façade treatments as potential improvements.
- **Amenity Area and Land Uses:** There was agreement among the Panel that the courtyard and landscape treatments along the south end of the site were a focus and strength within the design. The Panel questioned the proposed planter along the southern edge of the courtyard, indicating that it impedes pedestrian movement through the space. Concerns were raised over future development to the south of the subject site potentially shading out the courtyard space in the future. The Panel commended the Applicant for considering flexibility when designing amenity spaces around the courtyard that may convert to retail.

## Comments

### Site Connectivity and Circulation

- Panel encouraged the Applicant to “future-proof” their design, given the uncertain edge conditions. This included considering future land uses and phasing to anticipate the flow of pedestrians through and to the site, to future

development phases, the connection to nearby public transit and the potential school site that has been identified to the north of the subject site.

- The Panel was in agreement that the edges of the site need to be softened further and provide more activation than what is currently shown. Despite a strong midblock connection, with a large number of pedestrians likely to transverse the property, the edge conditions and quality cannot be overlooked.
- Panel raised concerns over the number of proposed curb cuts and ramps on site, particularly over the width of the curb cut along the private road at the east end of the site, indicating it was not an ideal condition for pedestrians, which may be improved by the further consolidation of site servicing and vehicular entrances. Panel recommended that vehicular service entrances should be moved away from the corners of the proposed buildings.
- Panel noted that the large planter with trees on the south end of the courtyard, as well as the general courtyard design, does not designate a clear path for pedestrians traversing the site. These barriers interfere with the site's porosity and may direct flows to the east side of the site, which presents the least ideal pedestrian condition of all of the site's edges.
- Panel inquired why the colonnade had not been extended to the edge of the east tower (Tower 2), to create a more uniform façade and to improve pedestrian connectivity. It was also raised that the colonnade being shifted south, adjacent to the courtyard, may improve the pedestrian experience and create a stronger presence.

#### Façade Design and Materiality

- Panel was impressed by the clean architectural design of the towers and the innovative treatments that the Applicant has proposed. It was noted that the success of the design will require the use of high-quality materials and finishes. Panel was skeptical of the ground floor treatment along the north façade of the two towers and were concerned about blank façades. The Applicant proposed precast concrete panels, which the Panel indicated does too little to activate the edge and engage pedestrians. The Panel suggested that the Applicant further consider art installations or alternative innovative treatments for this façade that enhance the public realm.

#### Amenity Area and Land Uses

- Panel noted that the courtyard and south frontage appeared to be a focus within the design package and noted that it was one of the proposal's strengths.
- Concerns were raised on the shadow impacts from future development to the south of the site. The construction of towers, where the banquet hall currently stands, has potential to shade out the courtyard space and generate poor microclimatic conditions. Panel indicated that the large planter to the south of the courtyard created a barrier impeding pedestrian movement through the site. While the proposed planter is a measure to visually screen the waste storage area of the neighbouring property, the Panel recommended instead proceeding with a temporary measure that can be removed once the site to the south is redeveloped. Panel commended the organization of interior amenity spaces around the courtyard. It was raised whether or not there is a place for retail within these spaces, however it was acknowledged that there is flexibility to

convert these areas to more commercial uses in the future if there is a need within the community.

**SmartCentres South Block**  
**Vaughan Metropolitan Centre**  
**High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1<sup>st</sup> Review**  
Architect: 3XN GXN

## Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

- Are the proposed site plan and landscape design strategies adequately promoting an activated public realm as envisioned in the VMC Secondary Plan and other VMC supporting documents?
- Is the connectivity provided to the existing and proposed context appropriate?

## Overview

- **Presentation:** The Panel thanked the applicant for a comprehensive presentation and package, especially in the early stages of this development.
- **Massing and Land Use:** The Panel was interested in the unique approach to tower massing and heights. Panel recommended that the Applicant reconsider the layout of the towers, to allow for better definition between residential and commercial users. The Panel indicated that the clear linear geometry and strong entrance point from the east side of the property raises concerns about a weak terminus at the west end of the development. The Applicant was encouraged to determine if the shadows cast by adjacent proposed developments to the south will hinder the success of their central courtyard space.
- **Pedestrian Realm:** The Panel showed interest in the central courtyard. There was agreement that the courtyard area would benefit from further refinement as the design develops to provide distinctive zones that cater to certain user groups. Panel was curious about the proposed tiered treatment of the retail area and would like to see further development of that idea. It was noted that the lobbies of the towers proposed along the south property line all face into the courtyard, which may be confusing to visitors looking to enter from Highway 7.
- **Edge Activation and Servicing:** Panel noted that the proposed design has good porosity and a strong concept with the central courtyard. However, the Panel noted that the treatment along Highway 7 was generally lacking, and that the site's edges are equally as important as its interior. New Park Place is simultaneously an opportunity for quality pedestrian realm treatments and also presents challenges as the primary road for site servicing, and the northwest corner of the site was identified by the Panel as a key area of activation. The Panel raised whether the midblock crossing could be shifted to create a better connection point to the adjacent North Urban Park.

## Comments

### Massing and Land Use

- Generally, the Panel appreciated the lowered tower heights compared to adjacent proposed and existing developments, but noted that the tower spacing seemed to be less than the policy requirement in some cases.
- Panel was intrigued over the tower heights in the proposed design. There was interest in the choice to place shorter towers along Highway 7, and in the proposed bookmarking of the site with larger towers. It was understood that this is to maximize solar access into the site.
- The layout of the towers, based on their proposed uses, was questioned by the Panel, who suggested that the office towers be clustered to the east to be serviced by the subway station, with the residential towers shifted west. This may also allow for the courtyard to be spatially organized to better suit both user groups.
- Panel noted that the strong axes within the proposed design, as well as the linear nature of the courtyard will create an issue with the site lines at the west end of the site. The east property line is bookended with a large, architecturally interesting office tower and gateway, while the terminus at the west end is weaker by comparison, and could be refined.
- While the central courtyard as a retail hub was generally appreciated by the Panel, there was agreement that the type of retail must be carefully determined for the space to truly succeed. The idea of reducing and clustering the retail component was raised, in order to create a focused, stronger retail area.
- Applicant was encouraged to consider the impact of the proposed developments to the south. Solar access is needed to ensure the success of the central courtyard space, however the proposed tall tower heights of adjacent developments may shade out this space creating unpleasant microclimatic conditions.
- Panel recommended introducing a sheltered area within the courtyard to extend its use into the colder months and to provide protection during inclement weather.
- Panel is interested in seeing the outcome of wind studies for the site.

### Pedestrian Realm

- Panel was in general agreement that the interior courtyard was a strong design choice and showed interest in the tiered treatment of the retail space, but would like to see more information on how the upper tier is accessed through the courtyard and through the buildings.
- Panel would like to see the design of the courtyard developed further. Currently the plans look linear and homogenous, and the Panel recommended dividing the courtyard space up to better service the residential towers, retail areas and office towers separately.

- The current courtyard design appears to be dominated by hardscape elements, which the Panel noted contradicts with the Applicant's narrative of a green public realm and relation to the adjacent North Urban Park.

#### Edge Activation and Servicing

- Panel agreed with the Applicant's idea of a highly-porous site, which was reflected in their design presentation. It was raised that the proposed midblock connection could be shifted east to better line up with the North Urban Park access point.
- Panel noted that the streetscape design and activation along Highway 7 seemed downplayed in the proposal. Despite the challenging nature of Highway 7 as a main vehicular route, it should also receive attention as part of the pedestrian realm. The design also shows the lobbies of the towers along the south of the site as facing into the courtyard area, limiting access from Highway 7.
- The Applicant was encouraged to consider the edge conditions when designing the pedestrian realm. New Park Place and Highway 7 have very different characteristics and will require different treatments. There are challenges with New Park Place being the main road for servicing, and also a pedestrian-focused street, which the Applicant must design around.

**END OF MINUTES**