

CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 114 – January 25, 2024

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 30, 2023 Meeting

9:30 am

Yonge & Steeles Development Inc. - 7028 Yonge St. & 2 Steeles Ave High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 2nd Review

Presentations:

Lauren Capilongo, Malone Given Parsons

Stephen Hood, Arcadis Architects (Canada) Inc.

10:40 pm

Break

10:45 pm

Humboldt Properties - Yonge & Steeles - 7040/ 7054 Yonge St. & 72 Steeles Ave High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 2nd Review

Presentations:

Dickson So, Kirkor Architects and Planners

Nick Pileggi, Macaulay Shiomi Howson Ltd.

11:55 pm

Adjournment

CITY OF VAUGHAN

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Meeting 114 – January 25, 2024

The Design Review Panel met virtually on Thursday, January 25, 2024. 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

Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc

Harim Labuschagne, BDP Quadrangle

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair)

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Megan Torza, DTAH

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Absent

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

John Tassiopoulos, WSP / MMM Group Limited

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Sharon Sterling, WSP / MMM Group Limited

STAFF

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

Cory Gray, Senior Manager, VMC Program

Armine Hassakourians, Program Manager, Yonge/ Steeles

Michael Tranquada, Senior Urban Designer, Development Planning

Aimee Pugao, Senior Planner, Parks Infrastructure Planning and Development

Shirley Marsh, Project Manager, Urban Design Development Planning

Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Design, Development Planning

Alex Yang, Urban Design, Development Planning
Andrea Shotlander, Project Manager, VMC Program
Anna Rosen, Project Manager, Parks Development (VMC)
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 9:34 am with Alfredo Landaeta in the Chair.

1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Henry Burstyn, conflict with the 1st item on the agenda.

3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES

Meeting minutes for November 30, 2023, were approved.

4. DESIGN REVIEW

Yonge & Steeles Development Inc.
7028 Yonge St. & 2 Steeles Ave
High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 2nd Review
Architect: Arcadis Architects (Canada) Inc.
Planner: Malone Given Parsons

Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

- Is the project responding effectively to the principles, goals and vision of the Yonge & Steeles Secondary Plan and the Yonge & Steeles Urban Design and Streetscape Plan as those relate to:
 - 1. Phasing and overall coordination
 - 2. Sustainability
 - 3. Active, safe and accessible sites
- How efficient is the proposed phasing of the property?
- Has the project managed to create active, engaging frontages along the surrounding public streets, the mid-block connection, the open spaces and the parks?

Overview

- **Presentation:** Panel thanked the applicant for a comprehensive presentation, and acknowledged the complexity and constraints of this project, and appreciated the progression observed and revisions responded to from the initial round of comments.
- **Transit-Oriented Development:** The TTC connection should be recognized as a main public link that serves a broader area and population. Panel disagreed with the current proposal approach that almost treats this connection as a private access and suggested revising the layout to better coordinate with the surrounding context, allowing a more seamless pedestrian flow in and out of this site, and aligning better with the public nature of the TTC connection.
- **Landscape:** Panel emphasized the pedestrian flow that runs diagonally from the northeast POPS to the centre courtyard connecting to the TTC station at the intersection of Yonge and Steels. However, the proposed landscape expression visually focuses on the plan graphic and does not align with the actual pedestrian flow.
- Given the close relationship with the surrounding developments, Panel encouraged the design teams to work together more collectively on the landscape design to ensure consistency from one project to another.
- **Ground Floor Uses:** Panel recommended enhancing the lobby space by re-organizing the ground floor uses to expose it to the outside. Ensuring public visibility and maximizing sun exposure for the lobby area were emphasized as key considerations for improvement.
- **Courtyard Engagement:** Panel expressed concerns about the courtyard that does not engage well with the adjacent building ground floor uses due to disconnection between the interior and exterior. Eliminating some of the corridors to allow direct connections between the courtyard and active ground floor uses is recommended.
- **Phasing:** Panel questioned the phasing of the northwest POPS to phase 2. Noting potential challenges for pedestrian circulation and the public realm strategy in phase 1, due to the absence of outdoor engagement for ground floor uses in phase 1.
- **Architectural Materiality:** Panel commented on the retail façade along Yonge Street that needs to be more engaging and powerful, as it currently appears to be an afterthought. Additional effort should be implemented to ensure a strong and visually appealing façade. One of the concerns of having a large tenant is that they will only have one single entry point, and the rest of the façade will lack animation.

Comments

Site Organization

- Panel highlighted the importance of the relationship of the surrounding context and strongly recommended further coordination with the neighbours to ensure a successful development. From a site plan perspective, demonstrating how all the surrounding developments, including the site plan and landscape plan, collaboratively fit together is essential to achieve design excellence.
- Considering the TTC station generates a large amount of pedestrian flow, this identity should be recognized by the site organization. The site plan proposed two distinctive interior and exterior connections that conflicted with each other. The interior connection used a continuous corridor to connect everything, but at the same time, it prevented people from accessing the exterior courtyard.
- Further to the above, Panel suggested doubling down on the open space connection as it is the key element in this plan. Meanwhile, eliminating the long corridors to ensure a more active engagement between central POPS with lobbies and other uses. Overall, the ground-floor organization needs to be revisited to strengthen the connection to the TTC station, and to encourage people to engage with the outdoor space to create a successful public realm.

Lobby locations

- Panel commented on the poor way-finding strategy for the residential lobby, particularly from a ground-floor organization perspective. For instance, the lobby at the southeast corner that accesses Steeles Ave goes through a long corridor, and the entrance to Steeles Ave is not as well-defined as the rest of the others.
- In addition to the lobby entrance issues, Panel suggested putting extra thought towards accessibility, such as wheelchair pick-up, which also helps with solving ground-floor issues. For example, pickup locations for people coming from either the underground parking or the TTC station may contribute to defining a better location for the lobby entrance.
- Panel recommended increasing the percentage of lobby exposure to natural daylight. Noting that the southeast tower lobby is buried inside and surrounded by garbage and bicycle storage. The lack of daylight provision is against people's best interest for an optimum design.
- Further to the above, improving the public visibility of the building lobbies is another key element to ensure design excellence. Noting that the office lobby is hidden from public view, Panel suggested moving it further east to front Yonge Street.
- Further to the above, Panel suggested providing a hierarchy to the drawing by clarifying vehicular spaces and pedestrian spaces. It helps to understand how the public uses the building on a daily basis, which in turn could assist in designing a better ground floor layout for the residential lobby, particularly for the southeast tower.

Road and Accessibility

- Panel expressed concerns that the east-west road along the north boundary is too tight to accommodate loading and access needs. Considering the northern neighbour will also have their main entrance off this road, it would put a heavy traffic demand on this access. Therefore, having a secondary entrance for the residential tower off this access is recommended.
- Panel highlighted the importance of creating a continuous pedestrian connection to the northwest open space in order to make the overall pedestrian circulation more successful. This important connection is currently discontinued by the east-west service lane in the middle.
- Further to the above, in response to the substantial pedestrian traffic from the TTC subway station, Panel recommended a redesign of this service lane, aiming to create a more pedestrian-friendly public realm, such as a Woonerf, for improved accessibility and urban experience.
- Panel suggested organizing the underground ramps and loading to avoid having every phase on its own. From a functional perspective, the amount of traffic using the ramp and loading is not significant. It might be feasible to share the ramp and loading between phases, and less ramp and loading could provide more opportunities for site plan improvements.
- In addition, Panel suggested consolidating the loading and ramp where possible. More specifically, regarding the southwest tower, consider moving the residential lobby to the corner and consolidating the loading and ramp. Therefore, potentially liberate the northern edge for a better pedestrian realm opportunity that connects to the centre courtyard.
- Panel expressed concern about the adequacy of the hotel layby drop-off on the southwest corner, citing that only two available spots, and shared with residential uses are insufficient. To address this issue, Panel recommended implementing a dedicated drop-off area for the Hotel.
- Regarding the road curb and bollard details, Panel was concerned that people could drive into the POPS based on practical experience, and therefore suggested using a barrier curb or bollard to protect the public. Meanwhile, Panel referred to precedents that have similar programs, such as the Four Seasons at 18 Yorkville, to demonstrate how to retrofit the series of bollards into the road curbs.

Phasing

- Panel noted that the current phasing plan is high-level and lacks the necessary detail, particularly in addressing the complexity of the edge conditions. Thereby suggesting showing more details that focus on the elements that impact the quality of the public realm.
- Panel disagreed with placing the northwest POPS in the second phase. The absence of outdoor space will cause the adjacent phase 1 building and the ground floor uses function improperly due to the lack of public engagement.

Landscape

- In General, Panel highlighted a lack of coordination with neighbours and emphasized the need for more details in the landscape vision. Therefore, Panel recommended for the City to request a comprehensive and coordinated landscape plan during the SPA process to work through the details. Use one of the details as an example: the vent shafts that straddle the curbs should be reconsidered to avoid ruining the ambition of making a safe and successful public realm.
- Panel disagreed with the utilization of the term 'POPS' as these spaces lack direct public access and do not align with its understanding of publicly accessible private spaces. Using precise terminology, such as 'outdoor spaces', would help clarify the design intention.
- Panel acknowledged that the landscape graphic is solid and has a strong graphic feel. However, it is also confusing since the permeate and flows of the paving could only be perceivable from the bird's eye view but not by the public at the pedestrian level. In light of this, revising the curve graphic to create a more profound orientation to anchor the public space and pedestrian flow is encouraged.
- In addition, Panel emphasized the diagonal desire line that draws individuals towards the TTC station, and noted that the landscape island in the centre courtyard was bound to the ribbon of the plan graphic but failed to align with the actual pedestrian flow. As a result, it is recommended to adjust the courtyard design to better respond to the primary pedestrian desire line, aiming to enhance the overall success of the public realm.
- Panel questioned the northwest outdoor space to be the primary one in the current design, noting a lack of clear definition and proper integration with the surrounding building. The current configuration gives the impression of leftover space beside the driveway. Therefore, it is suggested to use the centre courtyard instead to serve as the primary open space, emphasizing its potential to function as a key anchor from a landscape design perspective.
- Further to the above, to further enhance the central open space, Panel strongly recommended eliminating the long corridor within the building that connects all the uses but also isolates them from the centre courtyard. This adjustment aims to establish more direct public access. Consequently, the central courtyard could serve as a profound entrance to the lobby, enhancing the overall appeal and accessibility.

Streetscape and Frontages

- Panel encouraged the applicant to include a comprehensive site plan in the next package that illustrates as much detail as available and includes the ground floor uses for the adjacent developments. For instance, there is a significant loading frontage adjacent to the residential lobby entrance on the southwest building, which could be improved by merging the site plan with the neighbour and working together.

- To achieve the optimum design, there are many streetscape and frontage conditions that could be improved, such as the loading relationship to the POPS, and the pedestrian route diagonal through the site from the northwest to the southeast.
- Panel commented that the north elevations for both buildings are undesirable due to a significant portion of frontages occupied by the loading accesses, ramps and other utility rooms. For improvement, Panel suggested minimizing the loading areas on public frontages, consolidating the loading and waste collection, and incorporating them below grade if possible in order to free more frontage for active ground floor uses.
- Panel emphasized the need for a more thoughtful approach to create a vibrant retail experience from an elevation perspective. The rendered high-glazed appearance raised concerns about potentially retrofitting with branding. Therefore, eliminating some of the glazing to create a proper space for signage is recommended. Panel suggested exploring various materials such as brick, precast, or aluminum spandrel panels as reference for achieving an optimal and aesthetically pleasing retail façade.

Sustainability

- Given the fact that this package does not include enough content for a sustainability approach. The panel encouraged the applicant to include them in the next package and suggested considering the building envelope, natural sunlight, shadow impact and the building performance.
- Panel commented on the tower's materiality, expressed concern that incorporating strip balconies throughout the façade with extensive glazing could pose challenges for the mechanical systems and significantly hinder the overall sustainability of the project.

Humboldt Properties - Yonge & Steeles
7040/ 7054 Yonge St. & 72 Steeles Ave
High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 2nd Review

Architect: Kirkor Architects and Planners

Planner: Macaulay Shiomi Howson Ltd.

Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

- Is the project responding effectively to the principles, goals and vision of the Yonge & Steeles Secondary Plan and the Yonge & Steeles Urban Design and Streetscape Plan as those relate to:
 1. Phasing and overall coordination
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 3. Active, safe and accessible sites
- How efficient is the proposed phasing of the property?
- Has the project managed to create active, engaging frontages along the surrounding public streets, the mid-block connection, the open spaces and the parks?

Overview

- **Presentation:** The Panel thanked the applicant for an informative presentation package; however, noted that it lacked clarity in some areas. Incorporating simpler diagrams that express the key ideas around the configuration of the different levels and the proposed programming would be useful. Also, there is a level of detail missing as it relates to the ground floor façade articulation; how different elements such as, awnings, shading devices and signage are being incorporated in the overall design, and how they may be perceived from the public realm. In general, Panel noted that grade-related facades will need to be treated in a way to enforce a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- **Overall Site Configuration and Coordination:** Panel commended the applicant for coordinating their design with their immediate neighbour to the east and encouraged them to continue looking at the intricacies of the plan comprehensively to treat the whole block as one. Panel also noted that further coordination is necessary with the neighbouring projects to the west and the overall Master Plan for the area. Lastly, it was noted, that the new road alignment and park distribution is more successful compared to the first DRP presentation.
- **Connectivity:** Further to the above, Panel noted the need for a consistent and coherent design over the integration of pedestrian flows between this site and the neighbouring site to the east to create a seamless public environment that transitions efficiently from one development to the next. The open space system and the pedestrian connectivity to and from the TTC to the park system will need to be reinforced to create a safe and enjoyable pedestrian focused environment.

- **Active Frontages:** Panel noted that frontages on the woonerf, the POPS, the park and in general the pedestrian open spaces will need to be enhanced to be more noble and active. Elements put forward from Panel that can help in this direction are:
 - Rationalize and consolidate access to loading and parking areas.
 - Maximize the pedestrian realm.
 - Prioritize the retail/ residential frontages and lobbies on the private roads.
 - Work through the materiality of the grade-related frontages incorporating rich, human-scale materials at grade.
 - Maximize green space and tree planting within the streetscape.
- Panel also mentioned that though the location of the lobbies was not a concern, how those interact with the open spaces and how they contribute to the pedestrian connectivity may need to be further reviewed for them to fully contribute to an engaging public edge and an efficient circulation.
- There were some concerns raised by Panel about the viability of the retail. Though retail uses can successfully activate frontages, a design strategy planning for other potential alternative active uses to be hosted in those spaces should be put in place to ensure that in the case where retail fails the uses replacing it will provide the same degree of activation and will create the same community experience.
- **Architectural Expression:** Panel commented on the integration of the towers with podiums and how that can be enhanced by looking in more detail at the interface between the podiums and the towers. Panel also noted that the buildings require high-quality ground floor facades in support of the woonerf, the POPS, the public street edges, and the pedestrian connection between the TTC to the future park system to the west.
- **Microclimate:** Due to the proposed density, the open spaces will be in shade for long periods of time as such creating and maintaining a lush landscape at grade will be a challenge. Open spaces will also be impacted by wind; measures should be put in place for a successful wind mitigation without impeding pedestrian circulation. Overall, Panel noted that the design should consider microclimate conditions on site and provide measures that will allow the creation of a comfortable and enjoyable environment.

Comments

Phasing and Overall Coordination

- Panel commended the applicant for attempting a more comprehensive understanding of the entire block, however, it was noted that a comprehensive Landscape Master Plan representing the experience at grade was missing, along with clear diagrams of the proposed programming/ Panel was unsure to what level this critical coordination between these two properties had been achieved.

- The applicant was encouraged to continue collaborating with their neighbours through this stage of design and to continue treating the entirety of the block as one coherent block. Panel noted that this block should be designed as a gateway block to the whole community to the north and the west coordinating and managing the pedestrian flows from the TTC to the future linear park system.
- In terms of phasing, Panel noted that this project can be phased in a way so that the loading and parking ramps are rationalized, consolidated and coordinated for all buildings below grade.
- Panel raised concerns on how the phasing might impact the viability of the retail proposed internally to the site. Considering that there will be a significant amount of time between Phase 1 and Phase 2, the current condition of the lot for Building C, may impact the viability of the proposed retail space.

Site Configuration and Coordination

- Panel acknowledged the efforts of coordination between this site and neighbouring site to the east resulting in a more efficient road network configuration with shared laneways and perimeter streets. Specifically, realignment of Building B and the accompanying north-south street with the incorporated bend, are strong revisions resulting in effectively framing the open spaces and successfully managing the site.
- Greater coordination with the neighbour to the west was deemed necessary by Panel. It was suggested that a shared service lane is introduced between Building A and the development to the west to host loading, access, and servicing for both sites. The townhouse units can then be proposed on the east side of Building A framing and facing the POPS resulting in a much more desirable condition for all three sites.
- Panel mentioned that the design of the woonerf can be better coordinated between the two developments in this block, to establish a consistent width, that would allow for uniformity of trees and other streetscape elements establishing stronger connections between the different buildings within this whole block.
- The location of the park was perceived as positive from the Panel, as it has a more public character and it is better coordinated with the overall master plan which would allow it to double in size at full build-out of the area.

Pedestrian Circulation and Connectivity

- Panel acknowledged the applicant's effort to strengthen the pedestrian character of the east-west road by framing it with active uses.
- The importance of the Gupta development as it relates to pedestrian flows, is becoming more apparent now as the site plan evolves. Panel noted that there is a transversal pedestrian route from the future subway, through the POPS on the Gupta project, to this site and beyond to the future park, that needs to be further defined. Currently two of the residential lobbies are on this route which is a strong move but needs to be further emphasized.
- The north-south green corridor starting from the linear amenity at the south-west corner of the site linking up to the park is another critical connection that Panel

would like to see revised to be more generous incorporating a pedestrian boulevard while managing the transition to the private yards.

- Further to the above, with the introduction of retail uses internal to the site, the relationship with the Gupta development needs to be even stronger to make this new node successful, safe, and well-used.
- Panel spoke to reducing curb cuts throughout the development with the further consolidation and coordination of loading, servicing, and underground parking access.
- Further to the above, the south edge of Building B is critical to establishing the pedestrian character of the woonerf. Panel suggested that the loading/servicing uses proposed off the woonerf be relocated and consolidated with those off the north-south road. This would allow for more control over the south frontage and potentially a larger sidewalk that will be necessary to ensure pedestrian safety as the woonerf is expected to have significant traffic as per the proposed density.
- Delineate the pedestrian versus vehicular circulation carefully and intentionally, incorporating curbs where necessary to avoid having to retrofit bollards in the design to manage the vehicular flows and at grade parking.

Active Frontages and Architectural Expression

- Panel noted that there are still conflicting visions over how portions of the perimeter streets are going to function, for example in Building A the loading is placed across from a lobby on the Gupta property and vice versa the lobby of Building C is facing the loading on the north edge of the Gupta development. Coordinating, adjusting, and relocating uses will be beneficial in establishing a coherent character through the block.
- Further to the above, the north portion of the north-south road could have a more residential feel since the applicant has the most control over this portion of the road. Also, Panel noted that though the east end of the woonerf is framed by lobbies on both sides, the loading area of Building B disrupts that frontage; consolidate the loading/servicing in one central core off the north-south road.
- Panel noted that more detailed elevations need to be produced for the ground floor frontages for the buildings to establish their unique identity. For example, in Building A, what is the treatment of the retail lobby on Steeles versus that of the internal residential lobby and how do the two interact and convey the front and back of that building. The applicant was encouraged, to zoom in and get more tectonic on their design explorations, through detailed ground floor elevation drawings of a greater scale, to understand how these elevations relate to the expression of the woonerf and how this pedestrian environment can be created.
- The architectural articulation and expression of the podiums should respond to the road width they are fronting on, Yonge St. and Steeles Ave have a very different scale and provide a different context compared to the roads internal to the site. As such Panel noted that internal to site the building needs to respond appropriately to that change in scale and respond with a more intimate expression either through materiality or articulation as it would be overwhelming to bring the scale of the Yonge/Steeles frontage into the site.
- Further to the above, the relationship between the podium and the tower needs to be refined, taking advantage of the opportunity to provide a different texture

and treatment closer and around the ground floor to enhance that residential/ pedestrian character.

- Specifically for Building A, Panel noted that the architectural expression on Steeles Ave. through that one storey element can be made stronger. Panel suggested that the one storey element is integrated in the podium to better respond to the width of Steeles Ave.
- With regards to the proposed retail units, Panel mentioned that the unified and singular architectural expression should be established for all units, and their design should be at greater detail to coordinate canopies, signage, patios, and other such elements for the related spill-out spaces.
- Also, the architectural expression of the residential units, needs to be more fine grain strongly representing their residential character through materiality and façade articulation.
- Overall Panel noted that materiality needs to be defined at greater detail with rich, human-scale materials proposed at grade instead of the same treatment being extended from the towers to the base of the buildings or precast being heavily used.
- Further to the above, Panel noted that though it is commendable that the shafts have been incorporated in the building design and have a vertical orientation the design of those facades should ensure that those elements are coordinated with servicing and access to avoid having a profusion of venting shafts after loading and parking access points as that would impact the public character of those frontages.
- Panel questioned the viability of the retail internal to the site but also along Yonge St. and encouraged the applicant to design those spaces as spaces that can host alternative active uses, that can still support and enhance the open space and the character of the community overall.
- Panel also, noted that the tops of the buildings can be further enhanced with grander architectural gestures to mark the City's skyline.

Landscape and Streetscape

- Maximize green space and tree planting on site taking advantage of every opportunity and carving out space to create planters and planting beds, such as but not limited to, along Royal Palm, along Steeles Ave as well as at the north edge of the north-south road past the curb cut, that has no trees.
- Panel noted that the design of the park will need to be reviewed in greater detail and in relation to the perimeter landscape. Currently patios are shown along the park edges, but it is unclear what their relationship is with the park, what is the landscape treatment proposed, whether there is any grade differentiation etc. As such Panel mentioned that frontages along the park, should be treated as secondary front entrances with a porch instead of back yards with a patio to provide the park with the active frontage it demands.
- Further to above, enhance the pedestrian boulevard along the park increasing it in width or pairing it with a walkway on the public side within the park. Panel noted that this boulevard should not be underestimated as a destination since it is the main access point to the park, and it will host supportive uses such a bike parking; as such it should be treated as a key public face.

- Panel identified the south-west corner of the park as a major gateway to the park that should be designed with more intention and consideration; currently it is a left-over space and instead it needs to be designed in coordination with the future western extension of the park and assume the role of the gateway.
- A consistent and unified landscape approach and tree planting strategy should be established between the two projects over the woonerf design, to achieve a consistent treatment throughout the entire length and width of the shared woonerf.
- Further to the above, Panel mentioned that understanding how the paving will work between the two sites and especially over the woonerf, is critical in knitting the two properties together.
- Panel identified the possibility of accessing the park through the public amenity west of Building A and encouraged the applicant to explore that connection in greater detail, to clearly define the pedestrian circulation through this space, and to determine the treatment of that space to create a strong link between Steeles Ave and the park. Attention though should be paid to the interface with the site to the west as there may be back-of-house uses lined up across from it. In this case protective and mitigation measures will need to be put in place to manage noise, fumes, screening, and transition. Also, the relationship with the residential units fronting onto that space should be looked at in greater detail for the appropriate transitions to be put in place.
- Panel noted that one of the shafts, at the north-west corner of Building A, is disrupting the east-west pedestrian path of travel and should be moved south and be better incorporated in landscape design to minimize its impact on the streetscape and the pedestrian circulation.
- Panel noted that the woonerf is expected to have a significant amount of traffic due to the proposed density, as such the proposed sidewalks should be expanded to effectively serve pedestrians; currently they are too narrow for the expected use.

Microclimate

- Panel noted concerns about the microclimate conditions, specifically relating to wind impact. The wind report identifies uncomfortable conditions for most of the year, along the east-west woonerf. Considering that this connection plays a critical role to the pedestrian circulation through the site to and from the subway, and that all proposed mitigation measures are ground mounted elements, Panel strongly encouraged the applicant to explore other wind mitigation strategies at grade that do not impede on the pedestrian movement allowing for the woonerf to be fully traversable.
- Panel noted that the open spaces are going to be in shade for long periods of the day which will make the maintenance of a lush landscape environment challenging. The design therefore should take the microclimate conditions into account to create a pleasant, comfortable pedestrian focused space.

END OF MINUTES

CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 115 – February 29, 2024

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 January 25, 2024 Meeting

9:30 am

Zancor Homes (Steeles) LP - 2600/2700 Steeles Ave High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 2nd Review

Presentations:

Brendan Griffith, Rafael + Bigauskas Architects

Daniel Rende, Bousfields Inc.

Bryn Barron, Strybos Barron King Landscape Architecture

10:40 pm

Adjournment

CITY OF VAUGHAN

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Meeting 114 – February 29, 2024

The Design Review Panel met virtually on Thursday, February 29, 2024. The meeting was recorded and will be posted on the City of Vaughan website.

PANEL MEMBERS

Present

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec (Chair)

Megan Torza, DTAH

Ute Maya-Giambattista, O2 Planning & Design Inc.

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc

Harim Labuschagne, BDP Quadrangle

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair)

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

Absent

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Guela Solow Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

John Tassiopoulos, WSP / MMM Group Limited

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Sharon Sterling, WSP / MMM Group Limited

STAFF

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

Michael Tranquada, Senior Urban Designer, Development Planning

Shirley Marsh, Project Manager, Urban Design Development Planning

Chrisa Assimopoulos, 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

Lucy D'Acunto, Administrative Coordinator, Development Planning

Letizia D'Addario, Senior Planner, Development Planning

Mary Caputo, Senior Manager, Development Planning

The meeting was called to order at 9:34 am with Alfredo Landaeta in the Chair.

1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Sharon Sterling, conflict with the 1st item on the agenda

John Tassiopoulos, conflict with the 1st item on the agenda

Margaret Briegmann, conflict with the 1st item on the agenda

3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES

Meeting minutes for February 29, 2024, were approved.

4. DESIGN REVIEW

Zancor Homes (Steeles) LP

2600/2700 Steeles Ave

High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 2nd Review

Architect: Rafael + Bigauskas Architects.

Planner: Bousfields Inc.

Landscape: Strybos Barron King Landscape Architecture

Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

- How successful is the ground floor organization and overall internal programming?
- Are the proposed interfaces successfully addressing the interim relationship with the adjacent functioning uses and the ultimate context?
- Please comment on the sustainable best practices that can be incorporated into the building design at this stage to improve the quality of the design.

Overview

- **Presentation:** Panel thanked the applicant for a comprehensive presentation, appreciated the thorough package, and acknowledged the improvement in comparison with the last submission in terms of general building location and the distribution of spaces.
- **Transit-Oriented Development:** Panel questioned the overall design for prioritizing cars despite the site's proximity to the TTC station. The design contradicts the principles of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). Therefore, Panel suggested using a stronger TOD approach with more focus on pedestrians and cyclists.
- Further to the above, to better align with the TOD aspirations, Panel suggested relocating the bike storage room to be more evident for people coming from the transit station and closer to the lobby.
- **Complete Community:** Panel emphasized that this development is going to be a precursor for future development. However, the high density and isolated parcel design will put a heavy burden on the surroundings. Therefore, creating a complete community by considering community facilities such as schools and other amenities is important for creating a strong sense of place.
- **Retail Strategy:** Panel identified inconsistencies in the retail strategy, particularly along the greenway corridor. To address this, panel recommended a thorough study to analyze the greenway's character, identify retail types, explore how the public spaces can be activated, and ensure a cohesive pedestrian experience across both sides of the street, considering both visual appeal and seamless flow for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Panel reminded that the active frontage can be achieved not only with retail but also with community facilities, and therefore encouraged investigating additional uses for the ground floor that will provide community engagement and activation.
- **Sustainability:** Panel expressed concern that the project's current sustainability strategies only meet the basic requirements but fall short of ambitious aspirations. To address this, a more proactive approach is recommended to enhance the overall building's sustainable performance.
- Panel questioned the stormwater management system for the greenway as it sits above the concrete slab of the underground parking. Further research and exploration are encouraged to enhance the water percolation while maintaining the parking levels.
- Further to the above, panel highlighted the greenway potential that is more than a piece of sustainable infrastructure, it is also an engaging public space, a way-finding device, and an educational resource. Furthermore, these principles could

be extended to other streets, creating a well-connected, comprehensive green network throughout the community.

- **Architectural Elevation:** Panel disagreed on the ground floor façade's excessive blank walls and the lack of signage opportunities. Therefore, Panel recommended incorporating other materials to activate the façade for improved aesthetics and functionality.

Comments

General Massing and Scale

- Panel expressed concerns regarding massing and scale, because the proposal will be bringing a large density similar to the population of the town of Stratford into this development block, which will place a heavy burden on the existing community resources due to the lack of schools or other amenities. For instance, the nearest school is approximately an hour's walk away from this site which risks creating an isolated enclave to the overall urban fabric.
- Further to the above, Panel highly recommended revisiting the City's Secondary Plan and conducting a comprehensive study on the larger context to ensure all the development blocks are coordinated and can effectively serve a population of this scale.
- Based on the tower placement, half of the residents' principal view is of another tower. Even though the tower distance meets the minimum requirements, it compromises the intended quality of life and benefits for the residents. Panel suggested revising the southern tower arrangement to improve the residents' views. Potential solutions include exploring a different tower form, adjusting the orientation, or implementing a "scissor stair" design to reduce its visual mass.
- Panel suggested enhancing the tower form to better align with their uses. For instance, consider incorporating recessed outdoor spaces instead of bulky balcony designs to create a more visually interesting tower and podium design.

Complete Community

- Panel emphasized the importance of conducting a comprehensive study on the services to ensure a complete community can be delivered. Considering this development is the first submitted application, Panel reminded the proponent of their responsibility to explore creating a new community rather than just a condo block.
- Further to the above, Panel highlighted the greenway as one of the study areas and suggested creating a pedestrian spine that integrates services, community spaces, and amenity areas. This would fulfill the vision of a complete community, aligning with the central spine concept outlined in the Secondary Plan. Additionally, establishing design standards would ensure a cohesive aesthetic and guide development for the neighbouring blocks.

Site Organization and Ground Floor Uses

- Panel criticized the suburban site layout that deviates from the urban principle, particularly the cul-de-sac and the drop-off location. To better align with the transit-oriented vision, Panel suggested improving the overall site layout with the following strategies:
 - i) Locate this parking access to the back side of the building, possibly from the east laneway, which allows the lobbies to front the street and be better accessible for pedestrians.
 - ii) Eliminate the loop and drop-off layout and restrict it to one parking access. Create one consolidated loading and servicing space for two buildings and access from the laneway.
 - iii) Free up the space between the two towers to create a vibrant pedestrian realm.
 - iv) Use on-street layby for the drop-off to better align with urban principles.
- Panel questioned the retail spaces for being too shallow which deviates from the function of retail needs. Therefore, Panel suggested improving the retail space organization to ensure its viability.
- The site layout prioritizes car use over pedestrians, failing to take advantage of the public transit station and contradicting the vision for active transportation and transit-oriented development. Panel criticized the placement of the bike storage room at the back of the building and far away from the public transit and suggested relocating it close to the residential lobby for visibility and convenient access.

Architectural Elevations

- Panel addressed concerns about the building's excessive use of curtain walls and metal frames, which can be problematic for thermal bridging and energy efficiency. While the architectural design meets the minimum code requirements, there are big opportunities to achieve a more contemporary and sustainable approach.
- Further to the above, the blank curtain walls along the retail façade lack space for signage. Panel recommended incorporating a variety of materials, such as canopies, brick, stones, or other solid elements that can break up the large curtain wall, provide signage opportunities, visually enhance the retail facade and create a human-scaled experience for pedestrians.

Wind Mitigation

- Panel identified shortcomings in the wind mitigation strategies for this development block. More specifically, the Wind Study highlighted the highest level of wind around the residential lobbies and the ground-floor bike storage, reaching uncomfortable thresholds. However, the proposed wind mitigation

strategies appear insufficient, particularly for the bike storage room which lacks measures other than a recessed entry.

- To better support the transit-oriented development principles, especially considering the large amount of density being proposed, fostering a community less reliant on vehicles is crucial. This requires prioritizing public transit and cycling infrastructure. From a wind mitigation perspective, efforts need to be made to ensure all pedestrian and cyclist entrances are designed for comfort and safety.

Landscape and Sustainability

- Panel commented on the overall landscape design for being rudimentary and recognized the greenway's immense potential for place-making and fostering educational experiences in ecological stormwater management best practices. Therefore, Panel strongly encouraged the applicant, as well as all the other landowners who are fronting this green corridor, to improve the design and achieve an amazing linear mixed-use atmosphere instead of a normal green area with just lawn, sidewalks, and roadway.
- Panel identified critical shortcomings in the current design of the greenway. Because the underground parking extended to the property line, which prevents stormwater infiltration through the concrete slab, and the landscaping resembles a hardscape urban street rather than a green corridor, failing to capitalize on its potential.
- To address the above-mentioned issues, Panel recommended a holistic reconsideration of the greenway design with a grander vision. This could include incorporating structural soil beneath the sidewalk to facilitate stormwater management, creating a mutually beneficial solution for both private and public property. Redesigning the greenway with a more ecological vision to ensure a productive and environmentally beneficial space.

END OF MINUTES

CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 116 – March 28, 2024

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 29, 2024 Meeting

9:30 am

Liv on Yonge - 7080 Yonge Street

High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1st Review

Presentations:

Varun-Preet Singh, Kirkor Architects

Clifford Korman, Kirkor Architects

Heider Alward, StudioTLA

Michael Vani, Weston Consulting

10:40 am

Break

10:45 am

Nova Condos - 10069 Weston Road

Mid-Rise Residential Development, 1st Review

Presentations:

Raza Mehdi, Turner Fleischer Architects

Michele Gucciardi, Turner Fleischer Architects

Rosemarie Humphries, Humphries Planning Group

Isabella Meggetto, Humphries Planning Group

11:55 am

Adjournment

CITY OF VAUGHAN

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Meeting 114 – March 28, 2024

The Design Review Panel met virtually on Thursday, March 28, 2024. The meeting was recorded and will be posted on the City of Vaughan website.

PANEL MEMBERS

Present

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec (Chair)
Megan Torza, DTAH
Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.
Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc
Harim Labuschagne, BDP Quadrangle
Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair)
Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.
Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio
Henry Burstyn, IBI Group
Margaret Briegmann, BA Group (Conflict with 1st item)

Absent

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects
Guela Solow Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects
John Tassiopoulos, WSP / MMM Group Limited
Sharon Sterling, WSP / MMM Group Limited

STAFF

Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Manager, Urban Design & Cultural Heritage, Development Planning
Michael Tranquada, Senior Urban Designer, Development Planning
Shirley Marsh, Project Manager, Urban Design Development Planning
Shirin Rohani, Urban Design, Development Planning
Armine Hassakourians, Project Manager, Policy Planning & Special Programs
Alex Yang, Urban Design, Development Planning
Andrea Shotlander, Project Manager, VMC Program

Christina Bruce, Director, Project Manager, Policy Planning & Special Programs

Christina Ciccone, Senior Planner, Policy Planning & Special Programs

Nancy Tuckett, Director, Development Planning

Haiqing Xu, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management

The meeting was called to order at 9:34 am with Alfredo Landaeta in the Chair.

1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Sharon Sterling, conflict with the 1st item on the agenda

Margaret Briegmann, conflict with the 1st item on the agenda

3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES

The meeting minutes for March 28, 2024, were approved.

4. DESIGN REVIEW

LIVEON Yonge
7080 Yonge Street
High-Rise Mixed Use Development, 1st Review
Architect: Kirkor Architects
Planner: Weston Consulting
Landscape: Studio tla

Introduction

1. Is the project responding effectively to the principles, goals and vision of the Yonge & Steeles Secondary Plan and the Yonge & Steeles Urban Design and Streetscape Plan as those related to:
 - a. Sustainability
 - b. Active, safe and accessible sites
2. How successful is the project in creating active, engaging frontages along the surrounding public streets and the park?

Overview

- **Presentation:** Panel thanked the applicant for a comprehensive presentation, the detailed package, and good quality renderings.
- **Massing and Built Form:** The panel appreciated the site's challenging geometry and acknowledged that most of the massing was determined through

hearing settlements. However, panel advised the applicant to improve the massing's readability by further simplifying the built form and creating more expressive volumes.

- **Ground Floor and Edge Conditions:** There was a unanimous concern regarding the porte-cochere, the six parking spaces, and the juxtaposition of the non-compatible uses proposed in the area. Panel noted other opportunities to improve the space, such as optimizing the ground floor and reorganizing the service uses, relocating the indoor and outdoor amenity spaces to upper floors, and allocating the freed-up space for a better-integrated parking and loading space and further separation between the vehicular circulation with pedestrians and the public realm.
- **Land use and Public Interface:** Panel expressed concern about the inadequacy and undesirability of the outdoor amenity space. The applicant was encouraged to relocate the amenity spaces to the upper floors with better access and connections to the residential units. Furthermore, this move will create space on the ground floor for other critical uses. Panel questioned the size and presence of the lobbies and other pedestrian entrances along the main façade and the feasibility and functionality of the proposed retail along the south-western frontage of the building, specifically during the interim phases of the secondary plan's development.
- **Sustainability:** The applicant was encouraged to look into the sustainability performances as an integral part of the building design, infrastructure, and material choice and set a high standard in sustainable design by going above and beyond the minimum required standards and what can be achieved due to the site's location and its proximity to amenities and infrastructures.
- **Overall:** The panel complimented the design team on their effort to achieve a functional site within a tight and constrained site while dealing with the complexities of the interim and ultimate conditions.

Comments

General Massing and Built form

- It was acknowledged that massing was mostly determined as part of OLT settlements. The site's narrow geometry made controlling the edges of the property very difficult. Panel noted that a lack of dialogue between the site and the neighbouring properties to the north dictates a blank wall along the northern property boundary. The applicant was advised to be cognizant of that condition and adjust the design accordingly.
- Panel also pointed out that the architectural move that signifies the expression of a corner condition along Yonge Street and the eastern portion of the building is interrupted by the rectangular volume of the commercial spaces fronting Yonge and also by another different expression, the colonnades, which both compete against the intent of having a lower but bolder tower volume along Yonge and a taller tower further in the back. The panel advised simplifying the moves further to have a more pronounced volumetric expression.

Ground Floor Organization and Interfaces

- Panel unanimously criticized the porte-cochere and the pedestrian experience in that space and noted that having a garbage pickup external to the building and beside the lobby entrance creates a very harsh condition. Panel recommended internalizing all the back-of-the-house services to create a clear separation between the incompatible uses. Furthermore, some panel members questioned the prominent parking and loading access location and suggested that the western edge of the building might be a better location for vehicular access, which should be explored. There was a consensus among the members that the number of pick-up and drop-off spots should be reduced or eliminated completely in favour of a more pronounced pedestrian environment. Panel emphasized the fact that these types of accommodations for vehicular drop-off have no place within a densification area in close proximity to transit infrastructure with a big focus on pedestrian circulation.
- The size of the residential lobbies along the future Royal Palm Drive was criticized. Panel found the porte-cochere, which serves as loading and servicing access and a few pick-up and drop-off spaces, became the dominant focal point and overshadowed the importance of other uses. Panel advised reducing the size of the porte-cochere and increasing the presence of pedestrian entrances along the Royal Palm Drive to establish a residential prominent entrance.
- Panel questioned the viability of the commercial unit along the park, specifically in the interim conditions. Furthermore, Panel noted that the commercial units proposed along Royal Palm Drive are extremely shallow, which creates challenging conditions for accommodating the back-of-the-house services of the individual units, causing active facades to be blocked off. The applicant was advised to rearrange the ground floor by relocating the amenity spaces elsewhere and considering deeper commercial units that can house the required services and the back of the house needs on the north side of the units and away from the public frontages.
- The location, size, and microclimate of the indoor and outdoor amenity spaces and their access and functionality in the proposed location were questioned. Panel advised relocating the amenity spaces to the upper floor to achieve better quality amenity spaces and reshuffling the services on the ground floor to achieve functionality for the other proposed ground floor uses.

Architectural Expressions and Elevation

- Panel expressed concern regarding some of the architectural features, such as the proposed colonnade along the southern façade, being ornamental and tacked on to the building façade. They noted the risk of these features being value-engineered and eliminated at the final stages, leaving the building with a façade relying only on colour variations for architectural expression. Panel expressed that the façade elements and architectural features should preferably be an integral part of the building structure to ensure an articulated and vibrant façade can be achieved.
- Furthermore, the prominence and visibility of the community space entrance along the public realm was questioned and a revision in the location of the entrance and its expression was recommended.
- Additionally, panel noted that the efforts invested in the architectural expression of the porte-cochere are more suitable elsewhere as the proposed breezeway

houses back-of-the-house services such as garbage pick up, loading and the parking ramp and recommended celebrating other uses such as the residential lobbies, and the community entrance instead.

- The proposed colonnade and its functionality were questioned due to its ornamental character and its limited separation from the main façade. These noted qualities limited its performance as a usable space and could potentially have an adverse impact on pedestrian circulation and the visibility of the retail behind it.

Sustainability and Landscape

- The panel noted that many of the development's achieved sustainability points are within the categories tied to the site's location and proximity to the public transit, which does not require additional design efforts. Panel encouraged the applicant to achieve more by showing leadership and setting benchmarks for other developments in the area. Panel specifically pointed to the areas of particular improvements, such as increasing EVSE (electric vehicle supply equipment), protected spots, and rough-ins from 10 percent to a higher percentage to meet the demands and objectives of the future.
- Panel pointed to the importance of allocating car-share spaces in the parking garage, considering the development's proximity to future high-order transit, which indicates reduced demand for car ownership.
- Furthermore, it was noted that the sustainability points achieved in the infrastructure and building section are related to the landscape features, light pollution and bird-friendly design, all mandatory requirements enforced by law in most municipalities, including Vaughan. Panel encouraged demonstrating further efforts in reducing the building's embodied carbon and enhancing its performance associated with the building design that is currently missing from the list of proposed achievements.
- The sliver of land dedicated to outdoor amenity spaces could feel claustrophobic and constrained from a pedestrian safety and comfort perspective. Panel advised on integrating the space as an extension to the interior amenity area to achieve better function.
- The view terminus of the proposed breezeway, which houses the garbage pick-up area and access to the parking ramp was questioned, and panel advised on additional design features such as screens to enhance the pedestrian experience and the view terminus of the breezeway.

Nova Condos
10069 Weston Road
Mid-Rise Residential Development, 1st Review
Architect: Turner Fleischer Architects
Planner: Humphries Planning Group
Landscape: Site/C Landscape Architecture Inc.

Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

- How successful is the built-form transition to the surrounding context?
- How successful are the architecture and landscape interfaces in addressing the Weston Road and the surrounding context?
- How can the design improve in terms of sustainability and accessibility?

Overview

- **Presentation:** Panel thanked the applicant for a comprehensive presentation and appreciated all the efforts in preparing great graphics, and a clear and thorough presentation.
- **Massing:** Panel expressed concerns about the massing for the long building and commented on the current unsuccessful technique that is used in breaking the long façade by only creating several big chunks with multiple materials.

Panel questioned the necessity of the bridge as it strengthened the large massing appearance by setting up a datum line and unifying everything together in a strong way. Therefore, panel suggested removing the bridge and introducing some variations in height to add more articulations and make it look like multiple buildings.

- **Coordination and Pedestrian route:** Panel highly recommended coordinating with the southern development to negotiate a shared access point out of the private laneway to the south. It would provide an opportunity to consolidate vehicular routes, increase outdoor amenity areas, and significantly improve pedestrian circulation.

Panel strongly urged coordination with the southern development to create a seamless pedestrian connection, to allow people not only from this development but also from the surrounding context to access Major Mackenzie Dr in a direct way.

- **Ground Floor Layout:** Panel criticized the lobby layout for the lack of public street opening and completely focused on the internal drop-off area. This deviates from the principle of creating a pedestrian-oriented space.

Panel disagreed with the location of amenity space for the lack of public exposure and pedestrian access. The design looks like an afterthought because it is located between the underground ramp and garbage loading, while the most appropriate space that has access and public visibility is designed for surface parking instead.

- **Landscape:** Panel expressed concerns about the overuse of raised planters everywhere which creates lots of unnecessary walls and negatively impacts the public realm. While maintaining a robust soil for healthy planting is important, Panel recommended maximizing the flush condition wherever possible.
- **Grading:** Panel questioned the grading strategy that caused unpleasant at-grade conditions for some units. And therefore, suggested disconnecting the two buildings to have a flexible strategy to negotiate the grading conditions between inside and outside in an elegant way.

Comments

General Massing and Scale

- Panel expressed concerns regarding the overall large massing, particularly the bridge visually extending the building length and accentuating the overall appearance. Therefore, Panel suggested further breaking the visual appearance by removing the bridge, using a larger setback, and using different building heights to add more articulation. Furthermore, continue to explore façade articulation strategy to differentiate the two buildings.
- Panel highlighted the townhouse condition to the north of the site and recommended using a 2 to 3-storey podium with the upper storey further setback to recognize this scale across the street. This would be more successful in achieving a pedestrian-scaled streetscape.

Site Organization and Coordination

- Panel highlighted the redundancy of the double driveway condition to the south edge, arguing that it represents a missed opportunity for more efficient site planning, including the shared access point, better vehicular circulation, viable outdoor amenity space, and pedestrian connection.
- Panel emphasized that from a forward-thinking perspective, the presence of double driveway condition offers nothing but speaks to the inability to coordinate. Drawing upon examples from Yonge and Steeles, where multiple landowners effectively collaborated to create shared driveways and entrances in a much higher-density setting. The successful coordination between five or six partners suggests that addressing coordination challenges within this much

smaller development is not insurmountable, but rather a matter of strategic urban design.

- Panel expressed disagreement with the current layout of the building's rear site, where dominated by surface parking and vehicular movement but lacks public realm for pedestrian movement. Panel recommended moving as many cars as possible to the underground parking to create more areas for a meaningful outdoor amenity space.
- Further to the above, Panel commented that the proposed little outdoor amenity space was not viable because it is surrounded by the laneway, underground ramp, and garbage loading. Panel suggested consolidating the garbage and loading zone and relocating the amenity space.

Pedestrian Circulation

- Panel highlighted the opportunity to create a seamless north-south pedestrian connection that aligns with the intuitive user desire lines towards Major Mackenzie Dr. This connection not only enhances accessibility for this development but also strengthens the permeability of the broader context.
- Further to the above, it is imperative to note that the pedestrian connection does not necessitate the perfect alignment of the breezeway with the southern development. It is more important to create a meaningful and viable public realm to foster a seamless connection. To achieve this, Panel advocated for the reduction of surface parking to facilitate a more generous and inviting amenity area that seamlessly integrates with the desired north-south pedestrian circulation.

Ground Floor Layout and Grading

- Panel suggested improving the ground floor plan by accurately describing the grade relationship with the floor plan as well as the landscape plan. The current landscape plan indicates 8 risers of grade difference while the overall site is drawn flat, and the rendering did not accurately reflect these grade changes.
- Panel noted a grading concern for some ground-floor units, as their level is significantly lower than the natural grade. Consequently, this results in an undesirable condition for the upper-floor balconies within reach of the street, diminishing their appeal and aesthetic value.
- Panel questioned the lobby design from both layout and grading perspectives. The current design is car-oriented and only opens to the pick-up/drop-off area, also it is sunken down below grade. This design not only causes drainage issues but also lacks public visibility from the street. To address this, creating an opening to the public street for the lobby is necessary.
- Panel commented on the townhouse unit design being restricted by the grading. The townhouse units run hundreds of metres long and are connected to a central corridor that is controlled a constant elevation making it difficult to integrate with the variations in the exterior grading.

- Further to the above, Panel suggested breaking down the central corridor connection to allow the townhouse units on different levels and to integrate better with the exterior grading. Additionally, make up the grade difference by using a higher second or third floor to maintain a constant datum. This design would allow a consistent grade condition at the porch level, enhancing accessibility and usability.

Architectural

- Panel criticized the bridge design as it is not necessarily needed from a floor plan perspective but significantly impacts the overall massing and the reading of the built form from the street. To improve the overall massing, Panel suggested removing the bridge and designing the massing as two separate buildings.
- Further to the above, the space between the two separated buildings could be designed into a landscaped courtyard and extended with meaningful outdoor amenity space to allow a bigger and more viable pedestrian realm that aligns with the pedestrian desire line and promotes connectivity.
- Panel suggested further breaking up the massing of the building by recognizing the building corner with glass material, which helps articulate the building in a positive way.
- Panel disagreed with the balcony design, citing concerns that it makes the façade busier than it needs to be, especially given the substantial scale of the building. As a remedy, an inset balcony design could mitigate this visual clutter.

Landscape

- Panel expressed concerns about the fragmented nature of the current landscape design, resulting in underutilized and visually unappealing scattered spaces. The current design looks like an afterthought and should be improved by cohesive planning and integration with the overall development.
- Further to the above, Panel highlighted the undesired condition that the surface parking and asphalt driveway occupied the majority of the building's rear side. A deduction of surface parking in exchange for a better pedestrian environment is highly recommended.
- Panel suggested providing a more generous setback from Weston Rd. This aligns with the Secondary Plan and helps the residential units to have a better streetscape and effectively mitigate the noise from the arterial road.
- Panel disagreed with the proposed amenity spaces due to the small size and the location between the underground ramp and loading. To create a meaningful amenity space, Panel suggested relocating it to the west side and along Weston Road. This will not only address the above-mentioned noise issue, but also create an accessible outdoor space away from the loading and ramp.
- Panel identified the raised planters along the south edge as creating a barrier, and turning its back to the surrounding context. Therefore, Panel encouraged minimizing vertical elements and prioritizing flush surfaces, particularly along the pedestrian desire line.

END OF MINUTES

CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 117 – April 25, 2024

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 28, 2024 Meeting

9:30 am

201 Millway Avenue

Vaughan Metropolitan Centre

High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1st Review

Presentations:

Kurt Franklin from KBFranklin Planning

Shane Morgan from Weston Consulting

Yvonne Battista from Studio TLA

10:40 am

Adjournment

CITY OF VAUGHAN

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Meeting 117 – April 25, 2024

The Design Review Panel met virtually on Thursday, April 25, 2024. 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)

Guela Solow Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

John Tassiopoulos, WSP / MMM Group Limited

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Harim Labuschagne, BDP Quadrangle

Sharon Sterling, WSP / MMM Group Limited

Megan Torza, DTAH

Absent

Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

STAFF

Gaston Soucy, Senior Manager, VMC Program

Cory Gray, Senior Manager, VMC Program

Matthew Peverini, Senior Planner, VMC Program

Natalie Wong, Senior Planner, VMC Program

Michael Tranquada, Senior Urban Designer, Development Planning

Shirley Marsh, Project Manager, Urban Design Development Planning

Shirin Rohani, Urban Designer, Development Planning

Alex Yang, Urban Designer, Development Planning
Andrea Shotlander, Project Manager, VMC Program
Ashwani Kumar, Urban Designer, VMC Program
Julia Crane, Landscape Architect, VMC Program
Nicholas Trajkovski, Planner, VMC Program
Michelle Perrone, Planner, VMC Program
Jillian Britto, Transportation Project Manager, VMC Program
Lucy D'Acunto, Administrative Coordinator, Development Planning

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.

3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES

Meeting minutes for March 28, 2024 were approved.

4. DESIGN REVIEW

201 Millway

Vaughan Metropolitan Centre

High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1st Review

Planner: KBFranklin Planning

Designer: Weston Consulting

Landscape Architect: Studio TLA

Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

- Are the proposed massing, site plan, ground floor plan uses and landscape design strategies adequately responding to the policy and context envisioned in the current VMC Secondary Plan, the forthcoming VMC Secondary Plan update and other VMC Guidelines and documents in creating the desired built-form balance and pedestrian scale to deliver a successful public realm in a downtown setting?

- Does the proposed building massing contribute to providing a clear and strong definition of the public realm and an appropriate transition to the adjacent employment lands to the north and Station Precinct lands to the south?
- Is the internal private road network fragmenting the site to the point of compromising the at-grade, pedestrian-oriented vision, functionality and proposed active uses?

Overview

- **Presentation:** The Panel commended the applicant for coming in with an early submission knowing that the application is in Expansion area B of the VMC Secondary Plan (VMCSP) boundary, which is pending Council endorsement.
- **Site Connectivity and Circulation:** The Panel raised concerns about conflicts between road access and the open space strategy, particularly with the N-S driveway disrupting pedestrian connectivity. It was noted that an east-west public road along the entirety of the northern site boundary would improve site connectivity, strengthen the pedestrian realm, and support the development functions. Enhanced pedestrian and cyclist connectivity to transit was also advocated.
- **Site Organization, Building Massing and Orientation:** Recommendations were made to reconsider the building massing and orientation to effectively frame the public streets and ensure compatibility with the surrounding developments. Emphasis was placed on establishing a strong building line along the street frontage and respecting the development vision for the larger area. The Panel advised tapering the proposed building heights to provide an appropriate transition to the neighbouring properties north of the VMC.
- **Architectural Design, Proposed Uses and Placemaking:** The Panel expressed concerns about the relationship between the proposed buildings and their respective uses and the feasibility of implementing the project as proposed given the complexity of the program. The applicant was directed to consider the compatibility of the proposed built form, uses and loading/servicing requirements to ensure they can be properly accommodated. The applicant was encouraged to explore non-residential uses in ways that enhance the development's appeal, support the VMC Policy documents and create a destination within the area.
- **Privately Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces (POPS):** Reservations were expressed about the validity of the proposed POPS, with a suggestion to redesign and consolidate spaces to minimize pedestrian-vehicular conflicts and enhance the pedestrian realm. The Panel urged the applicant to organize the POPS by establishing a clear hierarchy of public spaces – distinguishing from public, semi-public and private zones – to create a more functional open space network.
- **Sustainability:** The Panel highlighted the need to consider the proposed development's carbon footprint and suggested to incorporate sustainability measures to improve pedestrian comfort in the public spaces.

Comments

Site Organization, Building Massing and Orientation

- The Panel suggested re-evaluating the building massing and orientation to create a stronger at-grade pedestrian experience defining the public streets with a strong podium building line. The applicant was advised to scale down the massing to ensure compatibility of the proposed built form with the surrounding developments. As such, the proposed building heights should respect the intent of the VMCSPP vision and provide appropriate transitions to the existing employment areas to the north.
- The Panel observed that the subject property location, at the corner of Jane Street and Portage Parkway, presents an opportunity to create a statement building, which can be achieved through the unique shaping of the building. The Panel would prefer a distinctive design through creative massing and architectural treatment as opposed to relying on building height.
- The Panel expressed concern about the proposed deep building podiums and the inefficient units produced as a result. Slimming the podium massing will allow for more feasible floor plates and better sun exposure into the interior spaces. The applicant was encouraged to consider the serviceability, use and functionality of the podium floor plates to better inform the design.

Site Connectivity and Circulation

- The Panel recommended revising the east-west driveway to an east-west local public road that connects from Millway Ave. to Jane Street as noted in the VMC SP Update as this would significantly improve the site connectivity and alleviate some of the current site accessibility challenges.
- Various concerns were raised regarding conflicts between the proposed road network particularly the N-S Driveway that bisects and disrupts pedestrian connectivity across the proposed open spaces. It was noted that the north end of the property lacked a pedestrian focused approach and presented various safety concerns.
- The Panel acknowledged that while some pick-up and drop-off (PUDO) activities might happen along Millway Avenue, these areas should be accommodated along the east-west local road, catering to the different proposed uses, and given the size and scale of the proposed development.
- The Panel advocated for reinforcing a connection for pedestrians and cyclists to transit.

Architectural Design, Building Uses and Placemaking

- The Panel advised engaging a certified architect to better evaluate the feasibility of the proposed development and formulate a cohesive vision that aligns with VMC Policy documents. Additionally, the Panel emphasized the need for credible plans and layouts to ensure the proposed uses are viable. A market feasibility study was recommended to explore a wider range of non-residential programs. While acknowledging the proposal's preliminary state, the Panel highlighted the importance of architectural design in creating a sense of place and identity for the development.

- The Panel expressed skepticism about the viability of the proposed non-residential uses, their relationship across the site and the surrounding vicinity. For example, the hotel building does not currently occupy the most prominent corner of the site and would benefit from a stronger street presence at the corner. Additionally, there is a conflicting relationship between the proposed linear POPS along the northern site boundary and the grocery store's back-of-the-house servicing and loading/unloading activities.

Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS)

- The Panel voiced significant concerns about the viability of the three proposed POPS and their non-conformance with POPS criteria defined in the VMC Policy documents. Panel members noted the lack of hierarchy, public exposure and poor pedestrian comfort and microclimate conditions especially for POPS-2 and the north linear POPS (identified as a Landscape Strip). POPS-2 was identified as a remnant open space with limited sun exposure.
- The Panel members encourage the applicant to rethink the POPS strategy to satisfy POPS criteria and prioritize the pedestrian experience. The Panel stressed the importance of considering human scale and enhancing pedestrian comfort in public spaces, noting that the development proposal will benefit from a clearer distinction between public and private open spaces.

Sustainability

- The Panel noted that while the development is in its early design stages, there is significant opportunity to enhance the sustainability approach and offset its carbon footprint. The subject location is within close proximity to the existing transit system and would strongly benefit from this connection being reinforced and further supported. The development should incorporate additional sustainable features and principles into the building design and overall plan.

END OF MINUTES

CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 118 – June 27, 2024

Virtual Meeting

10:30 am

Pre-Meeting

Committee Members

10:45 am

Call to Order

Chair's Review of Agenda

Disclosure of Interest

Confirmation of Minutes of April 25, 2024 Meeting

11:00 am

3812 Major MacKenzie Dr. West.

High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1st Review

Presentations:

Mauricio Rogato, Blackthorn Development Corp.

Catherine Jay, SGL Planning and Design Inc.

Shikha Jagwani, SGL Planning and Design Inc.

Barry Graziani, Graziani and Corazza Architects

Rob Lincoln, Graziani and Corazza Architects

12:10 pm

Adjournment

CITY OF VAUGHAN

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Meeting 118 – June 27, 2024

The Design Review Panel met virtually on Thursday, June 27, 2024. The meeting was recorded and will be posted on the City of Vaughan website.

PANEL MEMBERS

Present

Megan Torza, DTAH (Chair)

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Harim Labuschagne, BDP Quadrangle

Sharon Sterling, WSP / MMM Group Limited

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Absent

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will

Guela Solow Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

John Tassiopoulos, WSP / MMM Group Limited

STAFF

Nancy Tuckett, Director of Development Planning

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

Mary Caputo, Senior Manager of Development Planning

Michael Tranquada, Senior Urban Designer, Development Planning

Letizia D'Addario, Senior Planner, Development Planning

Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Designer, Development Planning
Shirin Rohani, Urban Designer, Development Planning
Alex Yang, Urban Designer, Development Planning
Shirley Marsh, Project Manager Urban Design, Development Planning
Cory Gray, Senior Manager, VMC Program
Andrea Shotlander, Project Manager, VMC Program
Ashwani Kumar, Urban Designer, VMC Program
Anna Rosen, Parks Development, VMC Program
Monica Wu, Senior Planner, VMC Program
Nicholas Trajkovski, Planner, VMC Program
Lucy D'Acunto, Administrative Coordinator, Development Planning

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 am with Megan Torza 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 April 25, 2024, were approved.

4. DESIGN REVIEW

3812 Major MacKenzie Dr. West

High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1st Review.

Planner: Blackthorn Development Corp.

Planner: SGL Planning and Design Inc.

Designer: Graziani and Corazza Architects

Landscape Architect: SGL Planning and Design Inc.

Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

- How successful are the proposed streetscape conditions and the interfaces between the building edges and the outdoor amenity spaces. How can the pedestrian realm be enhanced in the interim and the ultimate?
- How successful is the proposed sustainability strategy and how can it be enhanced?

Overview

- **Master Plan:** Panel requested that the Master Plan be effectively developed as a complete and thorough document. They questioned specific decisions of the Master Plan and encouraged the applicant to revisit the Master Plan prior to engaging in work related to Phase 1. More specifically working out the details in the key areas identified in need of refinement to bring out the quality, character and value, before moving ahead with the first phase of the development. Effectively developing the Master Plan will allow the clear delineation of phasing and more detailed design decisions necessary for the individual phases. Detailed Phase 1 design will be informed by and will reinforce decisions made at the Master Plan stage.
- **Presentation:** Panel recognized that the project is early in its progression and all the aspects of the design will need to be defined in greater detail. The applicant was asked to find and build layers of character and placemaking on the property at a Master Plan level of design. Panel specifically spoke to the following key elements:
- **Landscape Character:** Panel identified the open space network as a character building and placemaking device and encouraged the applicant to lead with landscape and explore how the robust, highly porous, interconnected network of landscapes on the property can create a network of spaces with different character. This would be reinforced and emphasized through the details of paving, planting, scale, topography, amenity, giving the opportunity to future residents to find their own place within those open spaces. Lastly, the flanking ground floor uses should be incorporated in the design to further emphasize the different characters and atmospheres to be developed at each part of the plan.
- **Streetscape Character:** Panel asked for more information on the scale, the material quality, and the relationship between the streetscape, the public realm and the ground floor uses. It was requested that the proponent create cross sections at the pedestrian scale to investigate the relationship between the streetscape and the flanking ground floor uses, and to ensure

that privacy for private uses and clarity of the limits between public and private landscape is achieved while pedestrian porosity is maintained.

- **Sustainable Design:** The constraints of the sustainable design mandate can be used as tools to create character. Panel considered the sustainability ambitions in the presented package as generic and strongly encouraged the applicant to create a more robust sustainability strategy to establish diverse spaces in terms of character and atmosphere and to educate residents on sustainability around water, biodiversity, wellness and more. Stormwater management and architectural design were identified as key elements to sustainability. A robust stormwater management strategy should be established on site and should be expressed at the surface of the site through landscape design. Similarly, for architecture, Panel noted that the 3D models contemplated a great amount of glazing, and the design of the elevations is not based on their orientation to the sun. Panel believed that overall, the architecture should better respond to its place in the world and meet sustainability ambitions to reduce energy consumption and in general to improve quality of life. This would contribute to the creation of a much more interesting and thought-provoking place.
- **Programming:** Consider the different programming that will take place in the proposed open space areas and ensure that this is reflected in the design of those spaces. Design should capture the permanent programming that is accommodated throughout the year but also the opportunities for temporary programming such as markets.
- **Ground floor uses:** Ground floor uses are critical to the establishment and maintenance of character of spaces. Panel encouraged the applicant to go through a detailed design exercise, looking at layer by layer how the different elements correspond with each other; frontages to road network, pedestrian network, lobbies and pedestrian desire lines, and transit facilities etc. Analyze each layer and scrutinize the relationship between the layers to resolve discrepancies and conflicts between them, such as the location of service areas, the active frontages, the lobby locations and the pedestrian circulation. Ensure that the decisions made at each layer reinforces the character of the site.

Comments

Site Organization

- Panel noted that the proposed phasing is confusing, as it is too expansive in terms of number of phases, does not provide a firm commitment as to when the public park will be provided and does not clarify the staging areas and the interim access points to the site.
- Panel questioned the road network and delivery as it relates to phasing. It is still unclear at what extent “New Road A” will be delivered at Phase 1 and as such Panel encouraged the applicant to provide the full extent of that road from Major Mackenzie to Farooq Blvd. This will allow for strong connectivity north-south but also to the east, not only for vehicles but also for pedestrians and cyclists. Also, for access to and from the site, if “New Road A” does not connect to Farooq Blvd. the only full-moves access would be at the west end of Sandwell, negatively impacting the existing townhouses.
- Panel noted that there are some strong decisions made that promote connectivity and aim to build a sense of place, specifically:
 - The diagonal pedestrian gesture through the site and the pedestrian connectivity it promotes.
 - The pick-up and drop-off areas and the pedestrian crossings as depicted on the Landscape Plan that contribute to the pedestrian circulation on the site.
 - There is a strong relationship between the urban square and the scale of the buildings framing it with the public streets.
 - Retail is proposed to frame the public streets and create active frontages.

However, Panel noted, that though there are some great materials put forth, the logical progression and rationale between key design decisions is not clear, and the project seems to be lacking in character.

- Further to the above, there is a strong opportunity to present the diagonal gesture as the spine of the project and then identify character areas around it organizing further the fronts of the buildings, the service areas, the lobbies, etc.
- Panel noted that there is a lost opportunity to establish a strong relationship between the uses of the buildings and the landscape. Some key examples of that, would be:
 - The service areas being spread through the site and framing urban open spaces.

- The lobbies not relating to one another, to street frontages, and the adjacent spill-out spaces.
- The daycare attempting to relate to the park but that relationship being interrupted by the private street and similarly not relating to the interior of the block because of the drop-off location.
- The retail edges not establishing connections through the landscape design to the urban square. They are noted as uses on the drawings, but that relationship is not reflected on the plans.
- Panel suggested establishing zones at the ground floor for specific supportive activities, to free up space for other uses. For example, the service areas now being spread throughout the site, can be consolidated in a specific zone, taking up a portion of the ground floor. That gesture will enhance the pedestrian quality of the woonerf, will free up areas of the site that are key to pedestrian connectivity such as the corners of the urban square, and allow for active pedestrian uses, such as lobbies or retail units, to expand.
- Panel noted that lobbies facing internally enhances connectivity through the woonerf and the pick-up and drop-off locations, however, where it is possible, lobbies should also connect to the outward streets bringing pedestrians from transit facilities into the site from all sides. Especially at Phase 1 when the road network will not be fully established, the lobby connection to “New Road A” will be necessary to serve the site, for pedestrian circulation and fire access.
- Regarding the daycare, Panel noted that it has the potential to activate the internal space if a stronger relationship to the piazza was established.
- Panel found the retail units uniform and generic in terms of layout and location and questioned whether they will be successful. A revaluation of their size, and location would not only help in their success but will also activate the site. For example, if retail uses expanded internally to frame a portion of the woonerf, especially where greater pedestrian activity is expected, the woonerf would be more effectively engaged establishing the character of a mini commercial boulevard.
- Panel noted that coordination is required between the underground parking ramps and the loading and servicing areas. Currently the design requires for a truck to back out, which in some cases creates unsafe conditions for vehicles using the ramp. Considering also that this takes place on the woonerf, conflicts with pedestrian traffic will need to be resolved as well.
- Similarly, there are expected conflicts between the daycare pick-up/drop-off and the facilities serving the building, as the loop does not seem big enough to accommodate all expected cars visiting the daycare; a more detailed design approach is necessary to resolve the issue.

Streetscape

- Panel noted the need for a clear coordination between establishing a pedestrian and cyclist network and phasing. There are six phases in total and so in the interim when a portion of the woonerf and public/ private roads are not built, it is important to determine how people connect east-west, to the bus stops or cycling facilities.
- Panel noted that streetscapes are not well-defined or well-developed; specifically:
 - For the “New Road A” a street section would be required to clearly identify the different elements of that ROW; whether an MUP is provided or a sidewalk, whether cycling facilities contemplated and where etc.
 - Focus on the separation of the different streetscape elements, for example, the space separating the public sidewalk and the walk-ups. Those spaces should be designed as spaces of comfort accommodating additional vegetation and becoming “softer”. This will also allow the project to reach some high-level sustainability goals.
 - Relating to the woonerf design, Panel noted that the intersection of the eastern part of the woonerf and the private driveway will need to be designed in greater detail.
- All the servicing and access of all buildings on the site is to be accommodated through the ring road intended to be a woonerf. For the woonerf to be successful, it should be designed to represent its shared character and create a balance between pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular traffic, focusing on safe and effective pedestrian navigation through this space. In general, Panel noted that the woonerf is a good idea, but cross sections will need to be generated to establish the shared character of the space and ensure that pedestrian and cyclist can safely connect to the mid-block connections and the surrounding streets.
- The woonerf and the private “L” shaped driveway, proposed along the south and east edge of the park, serve the same purpose and the same loads and responsibility in terms of circulation and servicing, as such those two elements should not be treated differently and the woonerf treatment should be expanded to the driveway as well. Lastly, the entrance points of the driveway, should be designed to promote pedestrian connectivity along Farooq and the “New Road A”, with continuous sidewalks across the driveway entrances and paving treatment that is not indicative of a crosswalk but that is similar with the pedestrian connections provided through the woonerf.

Landscape Design

- Panel acknowledged the strong intentions built in the plan but noted that it is lacking in detail in various aspects, creating ambiguity on the character of the space.
- The arrangement of the open spaces and the interconnectivity envisioned is very interesting, however, the programming and activation of those open spaces would need to be coordinated with the proposed phasing. As it is communicated through the phasing plan, residents will be occupying the site prior to the creation of the bigger open spaces. If a portion of the park is built at Phase 1 then it can accommodate some programming for the first residents of this development. If not, then the internal spaces would need to be programmed appropriately to serve the different groups inhabiting the site.
- Panel noted that the park is now separated from the community due to the private driveway around it and encouraged the applicant to explore ways to establish that relationship.
- Similarly, it was noted that the urban square and the urban piazza are disconnected due to the woonerf, and it was suggested that an alternate design of two branches ending before the urban square is explored.
- The landscape design is still hardscape dominated, uniform, and the programming is passive. Panel encouraged the applicant to think intentionally about the programming of those spaces and to focus their efforts on establishing key programming zones while allowing for other areas to be more flexible and establish themselves more organically.
- Further to above, the character of the internal piazza should be defined more clearly, as a space to serve this community, reflecting the residential uses surrounding it. The design of this space should not be the same as an urban piazza but more at the intersection between an urban plaza and park with more an open green that is framed by urban elements. This central open green space can offer more flexible programming, allowing for spontaneous play areas for example.
- Key design decisions would need to be reevaluated in terms of feasibility and character for example:
 - There are mature trees depicted in restricted pits in the urban plaza and smaller trees depicted in raised open planters, where someone would be expecting the opposite.
 - There is a food production area proposed within the internal piazza which is at the harshest space possible as the piazza is heavily hardscaped.
 - The piazza it is the central internal open space, inward oriented, framed by residential units, but it is treated mainly with hardscape

elements reaching up to the private front yards of the units creating a harsh environment.

- Panel questioned whether the urban plaza would be successful as a public gathering space due to the high-volume of traffic. The option to maintain pedestrian access, but space narrower by flanking it with additional exterior program or landscape elements should be explored.

Sustainability

- Panel noted that the presented sustainability goals are generic and “boilerplate” and noted that deliberate and creative sustainable design is necessary for this project to go beyond minimum standards. Specifically, Panel spoke to:
 - Carbon; The proposed open spaces are heavily hardscaped and as such carbon intensive. Incorporating more vegetation would be a first step in the reduction of the carbon footprint of this development.
 - Water; Water collected on site can be used for passive irrigation.
 - Biodiversity; Greater biodiversity can be incorporated into the design for the planting strategy.
 - Wellness; Wellness, active living and fitness should be incorporated and supported through the facilities proposed onsite; a key example to this is the bike parking rate which currently is not meeting minimum requirements and would need to be increased to meet community needs. Community spaces should be contemplated and with programs and uses phased in appropriately to effectively serve residents at all phases.
 - Tree Planting; The project is currently underachieving in tree planting and considering that all planting will need to be on slab open planters, establishing larger open green spaces can help in bringing more tree planting on site.
 - Architecture; The architecture should better respond to its place in the world and meet the sustainability ambitions to reduce energy consumption and in general to improve quality of life. Also, elevation design and materiality should respond effectively to the sun orientation of each façade.

END OF MINUTES

CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL
AGENDA: MEETING 119 – July 25, 2024
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 27, 2024 Meeting

9:30 am **130 Doughton Road - GB (Doughton) Limited Partnership**
Vaughan Metropolitan Centre
High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1st Review

Presentations:
Cliff Korman, Kirkor Architects and Planners
Scott Burbidge, Baker Turner Inc.

10:40 am Adjournment

CITY OF VAUGHAN

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Meeting 119 – July 25, 2024

The Design Review Panel (“Panel”) met virtually on Thursday, July 25, 2024. 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)

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Harim Labuschagne, BDP Quadrangle

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc

Ute Maya-Giambattista, O2 Planning + Design Inc.

Sharon Sterling, WSP Canada Inc.

Absent

Guela Solow Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

John Tassiopoulos, WSP Canada Inc.

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

STAFF

Gaston Soucy, Senior Manager, VMC Program

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

Musa Deo, Manager, Development Engineering, VMC Program

Matthew Peverini, Senior Development Planner, VMC Program

Monica Wu, Senior Development Planner, VMC Program

Shirley Marsh, Project Manager, Urban Design, Development Planning

Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Designer, Development Planning

Alex Yang, Urban Designer, Development Planning

Andrea Shotlander, Project Manager, Urban Design, VMC Program
Anna Rosen, Project Manager, Parks Development, VMC Program
Ashwani Kumar, Urban Designer, VMC Program
Nicholas Trajkovski, Planner, VMC Program
Michelle Perrone, Planner, VMC Program
Dana Khademi, Stormwater Engineer, VMC Program
Jillian Britto, Transportation Project Manager, VMC Program
Temi Fashina, Development Engineering Review Coordinator, VMC Program
Lamita Hermez, Student, Urban Design, VMC Program
Lucy D'Acunto, Administrative Coordinator, Development Planning

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

Megan Torza, DTAH

3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES

Meeting minutes for July 25, 2024 were approved.

4. DESIGN REVIEW

130 Doughton Road

Vaughan Metropolitan Centre

High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1st Review

Planner: KLM Planning

Designer: KIRKOR Architects and Planners

Landscape Architect: Baker Turner Inc. (BTi)

Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. How successful is the overall site organization, including land use distribution, circulation, loading and servicing, and access points?
2. How well does the proposal respond to the surroundings, particularly the proposed developments to the north and future Neighbourhood Precinct to the south?
3. How effectively does the building massing address pedestrian scale, public realm and micro-climatic considerations in the surrounding context?

Overview

- **Presentation:** The Panel thanked the applicant for a thorough presentation.
- **Site Organization, Building Massing and Orientation:** The Panel expressed concerns that the proposed three tower configuration was too ambitious for the site. Reducing the number of towers and exploring alternative massing strategies could help create a more varied and engaging architectural composition. Additionally, recommendations were made to redistribute building heights to provide a better transition to the height and scale of the future Neighbourhood precinct and school site south of the subject site.
- **Site Context, Circulation and Connectivity:** Circulation and connectivity were highlighted by the Panel as areas needing improvement, both within the site and in relation to the broader context of the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre. The Panel stressed the importance of creating better pedestrian and bicyclist connections and future-proofing the proposed development to integrate with the surrounding context, specially to the potential future school and Neighbourhood precinct to the south.
- **Ground Floor Design and the Public Realm:** The Panel raised concerns about the ground floor program being too dense and the lack of generous, multi-purpose outdoor spaces. The need for better-defined public spaces, improved streetscapes, and more thoughtful integration of servicing and loading areas was also emphasized. Suggestions were made to consider reconfiguring podiums and towers footprints to achieve this and free up ground-level space for a plaza-like open space.
- **Sustainability:** The Panel discussed the sustainability and microclimate considerations, with recommendations to address wind conditions, access to sun, and incorporate more sustainable design features throughout the project.

Comments

Site Organization, Building Massing and Orientation

- The Panel considered the development proposal to be ambitious given the site's location and context. The use of three identical towers with varying heights was viewed as a simplistic and rigid approach to occupying the site. It was noted that this approach, while effective in maximizing the development potential of the site, is not pedestrian-friendly or conducive to generating high-quality spaces for residents and the broader community.
- The Panel recommended eliminating one of the proposed towers and encouraged the applicant to reshape the towers to provide more variety and architectural interest, potentially by considering a "family" of tower shapes to create a more visually engaging site.
- Recommendations were made to adjust the podium design to create more diverse ground-level pedestrian experiences and to increase the amenity space at grade. The Panel emphasized the importance of balancing service requirements with the need to establish cohesive landscape connections and enhance the pedestrian experience.
- The Panel expressed concern regarding the back-to-back relationship with the neighboring development to the East, noting that the adjacent property will likely require a duplication of the driveway leading to parking and service access. It was suggested to consolidate parking and service accesses by adjusting the podium design to create a unified space for services, loading, and ramps, while freeing up ground-level space for pedestrian areas such as a park or corner plaza.

Site Context, Circulation and Connectivity

- The Panel strongly recommended to better integrate the ground floor design with the broader VMC context, including the planned developments in the site's vicinity and connections to transit nodes. The Panel expressed desire to see a diagram demonstrating the connectivity of the site and the proposed development to its surroundings.
- It was stressed that, while maximizing the development potential of the land is important, the project also bears the responsibility of delivering a strong public realm. Given the scale of this development, it is crucial to consider the "human factor" and create a more robust and engaging public realm through more sensible massing and design.
- The current height arrangement was questioned by the Panel, with suggestions to reverse the height progression to improve solar access and better respond to the context. This adjustment would provide a smoother transition in building heights, particularly in relation to the potential future school and the Neighbourhood precinct planned towards the south.

- The Panel expressed concern about the disconnect between the north and south portions of the site, highlighting the need to improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation through the site.
- The interim cul-de-sac design for White Elm Road was seen as intrusive and problematic. The Panel suggested exploring alternative turnaround designs, such as a hammerhead configuration.
- The Panel stressed the importance of better integrating the site with future surrounding developments. Future-proofing connections to adjacent communities, as advised by the Panel, will ensure a seamless integration as the area evolves.

Ground Floor Design and the Public Realm

- The Panel observed that the current proposal lacks a high-quality pedestrian environment and fails to create a focal point that would energize the site and its surroundings. The ground floor layout is too dense, with insufficient pedestrian space and outdoor amenities. According to the Panel, the design needs better-defined public spaces, including "front porch" areas and corner plazas.
- The Panel emphasized the need for clearer definition of retail spaces and their relationship to the public realm, ensuring that these areas contribute positively to the pedestrian experience.
- A lack of clarity regarding main entrances was pointed out with a suggestion to create distinct entry points for residential and office components to improve the overall functionality of the ground floor.
- Panel recommended improving the streetscape along the western building edge addressing concerns regarding the lack of pick-up/drop-off areas and the potential conflicts with landscaping.

Sustainability

- The predominantly glazed east and west facades were identified as problematic from a sustainability perspective. The Panel recommended incorporating more purposeful sun protection strategies.
- Concerns were raised about taller towers casting shadows on lower towers and on rooftop outdoor amenity areas in the current proposal. A more thoughtful approach to building massing and orientation would be required to mitigate this issue. The Panel encouraged a more precise and purposeful integration of sustainability features into the overall design.

END OF MINUTES

CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 120 – September 26, 2024

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 July 25, 2024 Meeting

9:30 am

3790 Highway 7

High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1st Review

Presentations:

Ryan Mino, KLM Planning Partners Inc.

Les Klein, BDP Quadrangle

Robert Ng, Nak Design Strategies

10:40 am

Adjournment

CITY OF VAUGHAN

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Meeting 119 – September 26, 2024

The Design Review Panel ("Panel") met virtually on Thursday, September 26, 2024. 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)

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc

Megan Torza, DTAH

Sharon Sterling, WSP Canada Inc.

Absent

Ute Maya-Giambattista, O2 Planning + Design Inc.

Harim Labuschagne, BDP Quadrangle

Guela Solow Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

John Tassiopoulos, WSP Canada Inc.

STAFF

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

Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Manager of Urban Design and Culture Heritage, Development Planning

Michael Tranquada, Senior Urban Designer, Development Planning

Shirley Marsh, Project Manager, Urban Design, Development Planning

Alex Yang, Urban Designer, Development Planning

Shirin Rohani, Urban Designer, Development Planning

Ashwani Kumar, Urban Designer, VMC Program

Julia Crane, Landscape Architect, Policy Planning & Special Programs

Kemi Apanisile, Senior Planner, Development Planning

Temi Fashina, Development Engineering Review Coordinator, Policy Planning & Special Programs

Aimee Pugao, Acting Manager, Parks Infrastructure Planning and Development

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

N/A

3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES

Meeting minutes for September 26, 2024 were approved.

4. DESIGN REVIEW

3790 Highway 7

High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1st Review

Planner: KLM Planning

Designer: BDP Quadrangle

Landscape Architect: NAK Design Strategies

Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. How successful is the masterplan in relation to the principles and vision of the Secondary Plan; specifically, in balancing intensification and creating an inclusive, well-connected and well-serviced community?
2. How successful is the proposed road network, open space system, massing, and scale?

Overview

- **Presentation:** Panel thanked the applicant for a strong package for the initial submission. Meanwhile, Panel recommended reinforcing the rationale by showing this development as part of a block plan in the context of the Secondary Plan area, which could help reshape an improved strategy for the overall structure, traffic circulation, architecture and public realm.
- **Road network:** Panel expressed concerns about the east-west road, especially the breakdown of public and private. It was noted that it is essential to relate it to the Weston 7 Secondary Plan and study the overall road network from a block plan level, focusing on how to connect this development with the surrounding community.

Additionally, Panel commented on the streetscape on road-facing facades and suggested minimizing the car spaces to provide a more active engaging presence, particularly on Tower C, to create a believable and successful retail component.

Panel highlighted the importance of creating a strong pedestrian connection to the surrounding public transit. Therefore, conducting further study on the green area and its connectivity, particularly in the area around Tower C is necessary.

- **Open spaces and edges:** Panel emphasized the importance of the block plan and how it impacts the structure of this development. Particularly when taking the north public park into consideration, proposing a park exposed to Highway 7 may not necessarily be perceived as an asset.

Additionally, the programming of this park should emphasize its role as a community hub within a larger network, serving as an activity attractor while creating meaningful connections in various directions. This approach will enhance the overall sense of integration with the block plan.

Panel noted the importance of aligning the proposed pedestrian circulation in the open spaces with natural desire lines. Since people tend to take the shortest routes to their destinations, designing circulation paths that follow these patterns will encourage movement and enhance the active use of the open spaces.

- **Architecture and ground floor use:** Panel expressed concern about the disconnection between the towers and the podiums. The towers get most of the attention with elegant design in terms of articulation and materials, however, the podiums are left without much consideration. Therefore, a stronger connection between the towers and podiums is recommended in terms of visual connection, materiality, and specific attention should be given to the podium facades that face the park to ensure they are interesting and engaging.
Further to the above, Panel suggested starting with adjustments to the podium massing to address wind issues, as this would not only strengthen the

architectural connection but also help with creating a more inviting open space and enhancing the outdoor activity environment.

Panel questioned the inward-focused approach to retail and amenity spaces, noting that it only addresses the density within this development. There is a missing opportunity here to adopt a broader community approach and maximize the uses of the central park to create a shopping anchor for a much bigger context.

Comments

Road Network and Circulation

- Panel questioned the east-west road that was proposed to the north side of the subject site and particularly the private portion of that road. It was noted that it needs to align with the City's Secondary Plan vision to ensure that a successful transportation plan can be achieved.
- Panel suggested implementing an active transportation network on both sides of the public road, particularly on the north side to ensure it connects to the future northern development and accommodate people to get down to Highway 7 without using Weston Road.
- Given the limited access to both Weston Road and Highway 7, the two main proposed access points are Right-In, Right-Out. Addressing transit constraints is especially crucial in the design of Phase One. Panel suggested a deeper understanding of the neighbouring property and its road network. Incorporating temporary access and facilitating east-west movement could improve vehicular circulation.
- Panel questioned the loading and servicing location for Building C as it sacrificed a lot of outdoor amenity space and compromised the public realm on the street edge that should be treated as a public street. The ring road that services Building A and B helped provide servicing consolidation, and Panel suggested continuing the servicing for Building C through this lane, so that the north edge of Building C can be effectively used for a more pedestrian-scaled public realm.

Site Organization

- In general, the context is critical for the site design, and Panel strongly recommended expanding the plan to include the adjacent neighbouring developments, allowing the site design to be reviewed holistically at the block scale. This approach aims to prevent individual developers from independently developing their own portions at different times, which could result in a fragmented and disjointed public realm.
- Further to the above, creating a contextual map would help determine an appropriate height and density that aligns and complements the context. Given

the gateway location of the subject site, considering the skyline will also help this development integrate better with other developments.

- The Panel specifically mentioned the abutting gas station and recommended taking that into the overall design consideration. Because the future redevelopment of the gas station could have potential access to Weston Road and Highway 7 which would in turn help to shape this site structure and improve the road network.
- Given that more people currently rely on shared transportation modes, the Pick-Up/Drop-Off (PUDO) area has become more important. In Building C, the combined location of the loading and PUDO area creates conflicts. Panel suggested separating them and relocating the servicing and loading to the lane, which allows the lane to consolidate all the servicing. This would free up the east-west road for more active frontage and improved pedestrian engagement.

Park and Public Realm

- The Weston 7 Secondary Plan identified a bigger community park in the area, but the concept proposed a smaller neighbourhood park with less programming. Panel questioned how this park would align with the Secondary Plan vision and suggested reconsidering its size and particularly the programming.
- Additionally, Panel recognized the challenges posed by the park's size and location due to the property division. However, this split will complicate the connectivity and programming between the parks in two adjacent properties. How to ensure the proposed programming complements those planned for the northern property should be further investigated.
- The Panel emphasized the need for better alignment between the public desire lines and the proposed pedestrian circulation. People would want to get to public transit through the shortest path. Designing a pedestrian circulation by adjusting the hard and softscape in response to the public desire lines is essential to creating a successful public realm.
- Panel criticized the design of the public realm for its internal focus rather than contributing to the larger context. To improve this, the plan should consider creating urban edges and focus on street relationships rather than buffering from the street.
- Further to the above, Panel recommended using context photos of northern and eastern frontages as of today to help get the pedestrian realm and ground floor design right, as it provides references to balance temporary uses with the vision of new development.
- Panel questioned the edge interface treatment along the adjacent gas station as it is currently treated as a buffer as opposed to considering potential future connections and promoting permeability. Particularly for the mews south of Tower C, where a lot of raised planters form like obstacles that prevent connectivity.

Ground Floor Uses

- Given the location of the subject site is so close to the major intersection within the Weston 7 Secondary Plan, the ground floor uses should be much more activated to accommodate not only the density of this development but also consider contributing to the future surrounding development as it evolves. Instead of using only townhouse units at grade, Panel encouraged exploring the podium design by using larger retail, community, daycare or other engaging activities to activate the ground floor uses to support a broader community.
- A lack of activated outdoor amenity space was pointed out with a suggestion to reconsider the retail positioning and functionality. Further recommendations include podium articulation, retail patio incorporation and enhancing connectivity to strengthen the overall public realm.
- Panel appreciated the design of central space with community facilities around it, recognizing it as a positive path forward. To further enhance this, strengthening the connection between indoor and outdoor space is essential. Panel also suggested incorporating distinct amenity accessible to all residents to foster greater community engagement.
- Further to the above, Panel cited a precedent of condo development on King East, where amenities are shared amongst three buildings. This shared use creates a nexus of community at the center of the site, which allows individuals from the three buildings to have more opportunities to communicate with each other when passing through the central public realm.
- Panel suggested strengthening the park activity as the focal point of the community. To achieve this, they recommended adjusting more active uses towards the centre park and moving the back-of-house uses to the perimeter streets, therefore sacrificing the perimeter to allow more opportunities to lean into the park.

Architecture

- Panel appraised the elegant design of the towers to allow each to have their own personality but within the same family. However, the podium was left without careful consideration which looked like completely un-related pieces stitched together. In addition to using material or massing articulation to better incorporate the podium into the tower, Panel also suggested lowering the podium height which also reduced the shadow impact on the public realm.
- Given the lace is the inspiration for the tower design, and the architectural appearance leans into the fabric metaphor, like denim it has a “warp” and “weft” that can be seen and felt. Panel recommend extending this visual interest to the podium, even with very different articulation or massing, the continuity of this visual interest could bring comfort and scale to the pedestrian.

Microclimate and Sustainability

- The wind study shows a lot of uncomfortable areas in the public realm, particularly for the POPS and north edge of the site. Panel recommended resolving this through podium massing adjustment at this early stage as it is more effective. Additionally, creating a more comfortable wind condition for the public realm could allow the POPS design to be more engaging with the potential of seating and hang-out space.

- Panel appreciated the sustainable design ideas around geothermal, balconies and solar heat gain, and encouraged the applicant to continue doing the exploration and detailing them in the final designs.

END OF MINUTES

CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 121 – October 31, 2024

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 September 26, 2024 Meeting

9:30 am

2951-2957 Highway 7 (Phase 1) - 1834371 Ontario Inc. Vaughan Metropolitan Centre High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 2nd Review

Presentations:

Gianni Ria, ARCADIS | IBI Group

Jackie VanderVelde, LandArt

10:40 am

Adjournment

CITY OF VAUGHAN

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Meeting 121 – October 31, 2024

The Design Review Panel (“Panel”) met virtually on Thursday, October 31, 2024. The meeting was recorded and will be posted on the City of Vaughan website.

PANEL MEMBERS

Present

Paul Kulig, Perkins+Will (Chair – acting in the absence of Alfredo Landaeta)

Harim Labuschagne, BDP Quadrangle

Sharon Sterling, WSP Canada Inc.

Ute Maya-Giambattista, O2 Planning + Design Inc.

Guela Solow Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc

John Tassiopoulos, Williams & Stewart Associates Limited

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Absent

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Megan Torza, DTAH

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

STAFF

Christina Bruce, Director, Policy Planning and Special Programs

Gaston Soucy, Senior Manager, VMC Program

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

Musa Deo, Manager, Development Engineering, VMC Program

Matthew Peverini, Senior Development Planner, VMC Program

Monica Wu, Senior Development Planner, VMC Program

Shirley Marsh, Project Manager, Urban Design, Development Planning

Shirin Rohani, Urban Designer, Development Planning
Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Designer, Development Planning
Alex Yang, Urban Designer, Development Planning
Andrea Shotlander, Project Manager, Urban Design, VMC Program
Anna Rosen, Project Manager, Parks Development, VMC Program
Ashwani Kumar, Urban Designer, VMC Program
Nicholas Trajkovski, Planner, VMC Program
Michelle Perrone, Planner, VMC Program
Dana Khademi, Stormwater Engineer, VMC Program
James Norris, Development Engineering Lead, VMC Program
Jillian Britto, Transportation Project Manager, VMC Program
Temi Fashina, Development Engineering Review Coordinator, VMC Program
Lucy D'Acunto, Administrative Coordinator, Development Planning

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am with Paul Kulig in the Chair.

1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

None.

3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES

Meeting minutes for September 26, 2024 were approved.

4. DESIGN REVIEW

2951-2957 Highway 7 (Phase 1) – 1834371 Ontario Inc.

Vaughan Metropolitan Centre

High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 2nd Review

Architect & Planner: Arcadis

Landscape Architect: Landart Design

Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. Has the architectural design for Phase 1 development successfully addressed the Panel's previous comments regarding:
 - Refining building massing to create a more pedestrian-friendly and human-scaled environment;
 - Shifting from a vehicle-centric site plan towards a more pedestrian- and cyclist-oriented public realm;
 - Enhancing public spaces with compatible at-grade uses to improve activation; and,
 - Consolidating loading and service areas to reduce vehicular space and strengthen indoor-outdoor connectivity.
2. Are the architectural design, materiality and overall expression achieving the placemaking objectives for a mixed-use development in the Station Precinct as envisioned in the VMC Secondary Plan and supporting policy documents, while also balancing sustainability goals?

Overview

- **Presentation:** The Panel thanked the applicant for a well-prepared presentation and commended their ambition to create a mixed-use development that blends residential, retail, and green spaces within an urban environment. However, the Panel urged a re-evaluation of the site organization, encouraging the applicant to shift away from suburban, car-centric strategies in favor of a layout that better supports pedestrian access, active public spaces, and connectivity to the broader community.
- **Building Identity and Context:** The Panel highlighted the need for a unified design that creates a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly environment and aligns with the project's high-density, mixed-use, urban aspirations. By shifting retail toward sunnier locations and emphasizing connections with the surrounding community, the project could foster a more inviting, pedestrian-friendly character that strengthens its urban identity. A contextual plan showing how the site fits within the area's broader development would help ensure that the project complements its surroundings and reflects a consistent urban identity.
- **Site Organization and Balance of Uses:** Reservations were expressed about the site's car-centric layout, recommending a rebalancing of uses to reduce vehicle prioritization and emphasize pedestrian and amenity spaces. The Panel suggested that the outdoor amenity space should be more accessible and integrated with building entrances. Reducing surface parking and consolidating vehicular access would allow for a more cohesive, community-oriented design.

- **Pedestrian Prioritization and Public Realm Activation:** The Panel advised improving pedestrian and cyclist routes to connect with transit facilities and future parks, with clear wayfinding and accessible entryways. Removing some surface parking would improve the quality of the outdoor amenity space which has the potential to become the “heart of the community”. The Panel emphasized the need for sufficient bicycle parking to encourage active transportation.
- **Detailed Site and Design Considerations:** The Panel recommended addressing specific design elements at this stage to create a comfortable, pedestrian-friendly experience. This includes optimizing lobby access, minimizing clutter from vent shafts, and organizing ground-level elements for accessibility and visual appeal. Referencing similar high-density projects could provide guidance for achieving a cohesive design that maximizes green space without compromising functionality.

Comments

Building Identity and Context

- The Panel noted that the proposal exhibits an ambitious mixed-use program, aiming to incorporate retail, residential, and outdoor amenity spaces within a dense urban setting. However, the current organization leans heavily on suburban, car-centric principles, which conflict with the desired urban character and connection to the surrounding context.
- The Panel suggested relocating or adding additional retail connectivity to areas with better sun exposure and closer integration with the outdoor amenity space to encourage pedestrian activity. By rethinking retail spaces and strengthening pedestrian connections, the project could establish a more cohesive identity that aligns with the evolving urban context of the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre.
- Further integration between the building’s identity and its surroundings was recommended to avoid “orphaning” the outdoor amenity space. The Panel advised to focus on pedestrian engagement where community-serving retail and amenity areas could be reimagined for better integration with the streetscape.

Site Organization and Balance of Uses

- The Panel emphasized that the current site organization prioritizes vehicle circulation over pedestrian access, which leads to fragmented public and green spaces that feel secondary within the layout. The applicant was encouraged to explore a more compact, less vehicle-dependent circulation strategy that consolidates vehicle access, potentially placing parking and services underground.
- At-grade parking and service areas surrounding the outdoor amenity space limit its usability as a community space. The Panel recommended rethinking the layout to integrate the outdoor amenity space seamlessly with building entrances and

pedestrian pathways, creating a cohesive space where people can gather without interference from vehicular traffic.

- The Panel stressed that optimizing the site for pedestrian-friendly circulation would create a safer, more welcoming atmosphere while supporting a balanced mix of uses. Adjusting lobby entrances, relocating garbage and service operations to lower levels, and minimizing surface parking could significantly enhance the site organization.
- The Panel advised reconsidering the Pick-up and Drop-off (PUDO) strategy, noting that the current perpendicular parking provision would be insufficient for a development of this scale and might create conflicts. Additional short-term parking areas should be supported to better serve retail and residential needs. The applicant was encouraged to collaborate with the City on aspects like on-street parking, to support retail spaces and minimize the need for on-site surface parking.

Pedestrian Prioritization and Public Realm Activation

- The current layout does not adequately support a continuous pedestrian flow or clearly defines entry points. Sidewalks are frequently interrupted by vehicular movement and loading zones, which reduces pedestrian safety. The Panel highlighted the importance of prioritizing pedestrian access, connectivity, and safety, especially given the site's proximity to transit facilities.
- The Panel encouraged the applicant to enhance pedestrian and cyclist connectivity, creating clearer, safer routes to transit and community amenities.
- To activate the public realm, the Panel suggested reimagining the site as a pedestrian-focused environment, with better-defined routes, inviting entrances, and well-connected open spaces.
- The applicant was encouraged to adopt a more intuitive pedestrian circulation strategy that would guide users through active, engaging spaces toward the central outdoor amenity area, creating a focal point for community interaction.

Detailed Site and Design Considerations

- The Panel noted a lack of detailing and design development in the proposal, given the advanced stage of the Development Approval application.
- Several recommendations were made to improve specific design elements such as vent shaft placement, materiality, paving treatments, canopy treatments, and driveway configurations to enhance visual appeal and functional quality.
- Vent shafts and other infrastructural elements need to be strategically placed and screened to avoid cluttering open spaces. The Panel emphasized the importance of resolving these elements in the current stage of design, not later.
- Various concerns were raised regarding conflicts between service functions, including loading and garbage collection, and pedestrian movement. The proposal would benefit from freeing up the valuable ground-floor space for pedestrian and community uses.

- Expanding and relocating bicycle parking closer to entrances would also support sustainable travel options.
- The Panel encouraged the applicant to reference established similar urban precedents (18 Yorkville Avenue, Toronto) that effectively balance public space and reduce clutter at ground level, creating a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented environment.

END OF MINUTES

CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 122 – November 28, 2024

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 31, 2024 Meeting

9:30 am

City of Vaughan POPS Guidelines & Standards

Presentations:

Charles Gosselin - Giguère, DTAH

Colin Berman, DTAH

10:40 am

Adjournment

CITY OF VAUGHAN

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Meeting 122 – November 28th, 2024

The Design Review Panel (“Panel”) met virtually on Thursday, November 28th, 2024. The meeting was recorded and will be posted on the City of Vaughan website.

PANEL MEMBERS

Present

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

Harim Labuschagne, BDP Quadrangle

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Guela Solow Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc

John Tassiopoulos, Williams & Stewart Associates Limited

Absent

Megan Torza, DTAH

Paul Kulig, Perkins+Will

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Ute Maya-Giambattista, O2 Planning + Design Inc.

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

STAFF

Christina Bruce, Director, Policy Planning and Special Programs

Gaston Soucy, Senior Manager, VMC Program

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

Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Senior Manager, Development and Parks Planning

Michael Tranquada, Senior Urban Designer, Policy Planning & Special Programs

Shirley Marsh, Project Manager, Urban Design, Development and Parks Planning

Shirin Rohani, Urban Designer, Development and Parks Planning

Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Designer, Development and Parks Planning

Alex Yang, Urban Designer, Development and Parks Planning
Aimee Pugao, Acting Manager, Parks and Open Space Planning
Andrea Shotlander, Project Manager, Urban Design, VMC Program
Anna Rosen, Project Manager, Parks Development, VMC Program
Ashwani Kumar, Urban Designer, VMC Program
Nicholas Trajkovski, Planner, VMC Program
Dana Khademi, Stormwater Engineer, VMC Program

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am with Paul Kulig in the Chair.

1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

None.

3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES

Meeting minutes for November 28, 2024 were approved.

4. DESIGN REVIEW

City of Vaughan POPS Guidelines & Standards

Planner: gladki planning associates

Landscape Architect: DTAH

Introduction

City Staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. Do the base requirements include everything we should cover?
2. Do you foresee any challenges with the Points Based Approach during design?
3. On your experience with any developments that have active features in POPS or stratified parks?
4. Now that all POPS will have active features, what do you use as the major design or implementation challenges?

Overview

- **Presentation:** Panel thanked the consultant for the thorough presentation and appreciated the ambitious approach. They noted that it established a strong framework and language while reinforcing the City's public realm and open space vision through the credit system.
- **Future Proofing:** Panel suggested providing incentives that could be negotiated with the owner, proposing a formula that allows larger POPS to share maintenance costs with the City. This approach would prevent full reliance on condo associations, which may become unsustainable over time. Panel also noted that residents in buildings with larger POPS could face significantly higher condo fees compared to those with smaller ones.
- **Hierarchy System:** Panel recommended creating measures to ensure a well-integrated open space system with diverse scales and uses that cater to various needs while avoiding redundancy and duplicated functions.
- **Legal Template:** Panel suggested implementing a robust legal framework to guide the process, particularly in the phases following the condo association's takeover. Given that maintenance costs could become a significant financial burden, clear guidelines and long-term strategies are essential to ensure the sustainability and upkeep of these spaces over time.

Comments

Vision & Principles

- Panel recommended more consideration of environmental factors, including resiliency, and climate adaptation. Incorporating climate mitigation strategies into landscape design, such as bioswales and water retention features to address the climate crisis.
- Panel recognized the effort to introduce activity-driven design into the spaces, enhancing their meaning, narrative, and programming in a way that resonates with the local community and complements existing amenities.
- Panel recommended including public safety as a sub-point, emphasizing the importance of visibility and natural surveillance ('eyes on the space') to ensure that people of all ages and genders feel comfortable and welcomed.
- Panel inquired about budget considerations and their impact on deliverable quality. It emphasized that cost allocation—determining who pays for what—will influence the design. Panel recommended coordinating with City staff to clarify cost responsibilities and ensure the design meets the intended quality standards.

POPS Hierarchy

- Panel highlighted the distinction between POPS and public parks in terms of programming and use. It noted that POPS, often irregularly shaped, provide an opportunity to create a dynamic interface between buildings and the city. Unlike the more uniform layout of public parks with defined uses, POPS may consider other potential like passive uses. However, City staff confirmed that if requesting Parkland credit for the POPS, it has to be designed to the satisfaction of the City.
- Panel inquired about the mid-block connection in the VMC and whether it could be credited. City staff confirmed that in the VMC, the mews are considered part of the transportation network rather than the parkland system. As a result, it is not credible and will not be considered a POPS.
- Further to the above, Panel expressed concerns about the transition spaces such as mews and mid-block connections that should not be considered as a POPS. Conversely, if they are not able to receive credit, there would be no incentive to create them, potentially resulting in their complete loss. Given their importance in the design, Panel recommended a more flexible approach, such as awarding bonus points when considering parkland credit.

Uses and activity

- In terms of space activation, Panel suggested avoiding a single-focus design, as it may make the space feel limited to one purpose. They emphasized that the best public spaces are diverse and inclusive, supporting a mix of activities, populations, and natural elements.
- Panel suggested implementing a flexible point system for guiding POPS active uses, allowing for adaptability to evolving community needs rather than relying on a fixed or overly prescriptive list.
- Regarding active uses, Panel recommended using a broader term, such as 'other appropriate active spaces,' rather than specifying retail or food services. This approach would help prevent these uses from being placed deep within the building and instead encourage their integration with the POPS interface.
- Panel emphasized the difference between a public park and a POPS, noting that public parks are typically more rectangular and subject to specific restrictions, whereas POPS offer greater flexibility in design and experience. Panel questioned why a different shape of POPS with similar public benefit—such as one surrounded by restaurant patios that create a public atmosphere—should not receive credit simply because it does not conform to a traditional rectangular shape with typical sports program within it.
- Panel recommended greater flexibility in defining POPS by establishing a specific threshold or minimum requirement, such as 500 square meters or 10 percent of a site. Passive spaces have value, and not all areas need to be active spaces. To prevent the loss of significant parkland through this approach, allowing more

flexibility could encourage creativity and foster greater community engagement. Additionally, greater flexibility can also ensure a variety of spaces with different qualities and scales, contributing to rich and dynamic environments. POPS should complement other spaces rather than serve as a replacement.

END OF MINUTES