

# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 78 – January 30, 2020

City Hall, 2141 Major Mackenzie Drive, Committee Room 243,  
Second Level

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 28 Meeting

9:30 am

## **Weston and Major Mackenzie - SmartCentres High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1st Review**

Presentations:

Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Urban Design

Chris Caverson - SmartCentres REIT

Jay Claggett - IBI Group

Mansoor Kazerouni - IBI Group

Nancy Wilson - Kasian

Michael Presutti - MEP Design

10:45 am

## **Break**

11:00 am

## **Vaughan City Square, 7551 & 7601 Jane Street Vaughan Metropolitan Centre High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1st Review**

Presentations:

Gaston Soucy, Urban Design - VMC

Cory Gray, Parks - VMC

Maurizio Rogato - Blackthorn Development

Russell Fleischer - Turner Fleischer Architects

Jeffrey Craft - Studio tla

Catherine Jay - SGL Planning & Design

12:20 pm

## **Adjournment**

# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Minutes of Meeting**

#### **Meeting 78 – January 30, 2020**

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The Design Review Panel met on Thursday, January 30, 2020 in Committee Room 243, City Hall, 2141 Major MacKenzie Drive, Vaughan

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Megan Torza, DTAH (Chair)

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc.

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Ute Maya-Giambattista, Fotenn Planning and Design.

Sheldon Levitt, Quadrangle Architects Ltd.

Guela Solow-Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

##### **Absent**

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair)

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

John Tassiopoulos, WSP / MMM Group Limited

##### **STAFF**

Jason Schmidt-Shoukri, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management

Amy Roots, VMC Urban Design

Jennifer Cappola-Logullo, VMC Development Engineering

Gerardo Paez Alonso, VMC Parks Initiative

Nancy Tuckett, Development Planning

Gaston Soucy, VMC Urban Design  
Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Urban Design  
Jessica Kwan, VMC Planning  
Cory Gray, VMC Parks Development  
Shirin Rohani, Urban Design  
Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Design  
Shirley March, Urban Design

**The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am with Megan Torza in the Chair.**

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Peter Turner declared a conflict of interest with the Vaughan City Square

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting Minutes for November 28, 2019 were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**Weston and Major Mackenzie - SmartCentres**

Architecture: IBI Group and Kasian Architects

Landscape: MEP Design

Review: 1<sup>st</sup> Review

**Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. How successful is the site organization, massing, and the ground floor layout in establishing a pedestrian oriented environment in line with the Site-Specific policies of the VOP 2010 for Northeast Quadrant of Major Mackenzie Drive and Weston Road?

## Overview

### Site Organization

- Panel requested the applicant to return to the Official Plan (OP) policies and find ways to bolster the intent of the policies.
- Rebalance the vehicular circulation needs with other modes of transportation to realize the pedestrian promenade envisioned in the area specific OP policies.
- La Passeggiata should bring people to places and connect destinations, its character needs to be better defined.
- Define the character of the development on Major Mackenzie Drive.
- Panel applauded the porosity of the development along the south boundary but pointed to the lack of porosity on the north recommending to break the building to allow for connections to pedestrian walkways to the north of the site.

### Massing

- Panel recommended break the massing of the Revera development to allow for porosity to the north.
- Panel made a real plea to the applicant to take microclimate conditions seriously. While 60% of the site is open space if it is too windy it will be unused and uninhabitable.
- The development has a lot of glass walls facing south and west which makes the rooms uncomfortable without shade, Panel asked the architect to revisit the façade (solid vs glass ratio) from microclimate perspective.

### Ground Floor Layout

- Panel asked the applicant to address pedestrian continuity from piazza to the adjacent site to the east and from north of the site to Major Mackenzie Drive.
- Panel appreciated the promise of the intergenerational play and share and asked the applicant to further break the barriers through programming and design.
- Panel referred to the fact the most indoor amenities are not well used and recommend revising some of the amenities to units and offer different amenity programs shared between buildings.
- Panel questioned the viability of retail at the corner, and whether the café will thrive, Panel recommended looking at other activating uses such as fitness centre or daycare.

### Site Organization, Architecture

- Panel asked the applicant to keep the spirit of the OP intent with a pedestrian diagonal connection to the urban square. In the current design outside of the public square, the pedestrian notion disappears in a driveway.
- Panel suggested that instead of the curved central road, applicant can take design idea from Las Ramblas Boulevard in Barcelona, with a circular drop-off

promenade in the middle, flipping the buildings to have entrances opening on to the promenade.

- Propose more units at the ground floor to strengthen the notion of the internal street and clarify the character of the external streets.
- While the north-south orientation of the towers works best for sun penetration, introducing 1 or 2 storey podiums can create the notion of the promenade edge.
- In the Revera development, 175m is a long wall, Panel referred to it as a “big institutional wall of older people”. The applicant should explore breaking this wall and using the push and pull to break the massing visually.
- In the Revera development, there is need for a drop off closer to the core of the buildings.
- Panel asked the applicant to recognize the site as a complete community with seniors to the north and young families to the south and better Integrate the bigger pieces;
  - through an all-season landscape strategy that blurs the generational boundaries, integrates seniors into daily life and creates mingle spaces.
  - Through a revised ground floor layout that ties indoor amenities to the shared outdoor amenities to create a dialogue.
- Panel asked that the loading and underground ramp to be decoupled to improve the pedestrian east-west connection called La Passeggiata.
- Panel commented on the future development of Sandy Farm, and the need for a mid-block connection from Farooq Boulevard through the site.
- Panel commented on the lack of urban edge along Major Mackenzie Drive and asked the applicant to revisit that edge to explore the opportunity to create a public edge.
- The central private street does not have the qualities of the precedent images. Panel asked the applicant to better strategize the edges of the promenade and ensure that all the programming can be carried to the next site.
- Consolidate the vehicular drop offs in the site.

### Landscape

- Panel acknowledged that the landscape strategy is doing the heavy lifting for the vision, but also noted that the vision is contradictory to the City’s vision that required maximizing the ground floor to create an intimate pedestrian setting.
- Panel asked for more integration of the two developments through the landscape strategy
- Pay attention to the scale of the proposed typologies within the site; the Passeggiata and the Piazza. Use the same approach for the central space introducing different nodes with different sizes that can accommodate multi generational programs.
- Propose an open green area that can accommodate different activities.

- Playground is really small and should be expanded to get more sun opportunities.
- The space between buildings E and F needs to be more flexible, creating opportunities for people to come out.
- Bike circulation should be further explored, with the multiuse pathway and transit line on Major Mackenzie Drive there are desire lines for bike accessibility.
- Panel questioned lack of street trees on the two private streets.
- Panel expressed concern about the ownership and maintenance of the open space in order to maintain the quality.

### **Vaughan City Square, 7551 & 7601 Jane Street**

Architecture: Turner Fleischer Architects  
 Landscape: Studio tla  
 Review: 1<sup>st</sup> Review

#### **Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. How effective is the overall site organization and massing in incorporating the Neighbourhood Precinct character envisioned in the VMC Secondary Plan and Urban Design Guidelines?
2. How successfully does the proposed development interface with the public realm, particularly the proposed Public Square and Black Creek corridor?

#### **Overview**

- **Overall Presentation** - Panel thanked the applicant for a comprehensive package and presentation.
- **Precinct Character** – The project is not achieving the Neighbourhood Precinct character envisioned in the VMC Secondary Plan and Urban Design Guidelines. Review the vision, policies, and design principles outlined in these documents in order to incorporate them into the overall design.
- **Site Organization** – The general design of the master plan is logical but requires fine-tuning in order to better achieve the desired public realm porosity and spatial hierarchies envisioned for a project of this scale and within a Neighbourhood Precinct.
- **Architectural Expression** – In order to better achieve a neighbourhood scale, explore breaking the massing and continuity of the street wall with more grain and variety, and introducing more diversity in the facades.

## Comments

### Site Organization

- Panel agreed that the location and scale of this project creates a unique opportunity to produce something very special within the VMC.
- The master plan presents a hierarchy of open spaces including POPS, amenity spaces and a public square. Fine-tuning is required to reinforce connections between these spaces and to give it a stronger neighbourhood character.
- This is a very large development for which the order of the phasing merits looking into the size and hierarchy of its public open spaces. Make sure that there are adequate allocated areas for POPS, parks and other public amenity spaces throughout the development stages and don't rely on private outdoor amenity spaces as substitutes to these important functions.
- Re-evaluate the proposal based on the City's vision for neighbourhoods outlined in the policy and placemaking framework documents. Is there enough variety, character, porosity, mid-block connections, fine grain of expression, etc.? A neighbourhood is one characterized by variety, character, diversity and fine grain experiences.
- Reconsider the ground floor programming and uses around the site and public square. Look into having less amenity spaces facing the public realm and creating civic and neighbourhood programming that will, in turn, inform the design of the podiums.
- The pedestrian connections at an urban scale need to be looked at carefully as they are currently going through service areas and are not leading to an appropriate terminus point. Look at what's happening around King Street West in Toronto where some service alleys have become woonerfs that seamlessly serve both vehicles and pedestrians.
- The neighbouring condominium corporation to the west of Phase 1 is causing less than optimal urban design conditions. Look at potential solutions such as:
  - Create a holistic design that includes the neighbouring site. This would not only better inform the design strategy for Phase 1 but also setup a base that could influence how the adjacent property eventually develops.
  - Create a series of site-specific Urban Design Guidelines that addresses built form and frontages along the Black Creek linear promenade and its surroundings.
  - Have conversations regarding a joint design strategy that could generate preliminary ideas that benefit both developments.
  - Reach an agreement that allows the neighbour to get access to their property through the Phase 1 internal driveway. This would also allow for the main park to have a clean pedestrian connection along its southern boundary instead of a driveway.

- The hotel block currently has a less than desirable interior courtyard. Treat it as a solid block that will allow for a centralization of the parking/services within and articulate the periphery to address the public realm. This would also help address the hotel's presence at street level which is currently unclear.
- Consider improving and increasing the number of connections to the Black Creek corridor throughout the entire site.

### Architecture

- Although the proposal is on a privileged location that could act as the VMC's south gateway, it currently has a uniform and austere appearance that could be softened and improved through better architectural expression, variety and design that gives it more prominence within the VMC. Other than reaching 58 storeys, nothing in the project shows itself as gateway.
- The northern-most building could connect better with the larger, overall context and serve as a focal viewpoint from the south-west quadrant urban park.
- The Phase 1 building has an open space along its west façade that seems tight against the neighbouring condominium corporation building. Consider slimming down the podiums to generate a larger sized, more open exterior amenity space.
- Provide more porosity and variety by physically breaking the podiums apart at a pedestrian level and not just separating the towers above.
- Explore the idea of extending the presence of the lobbies to the surrounding streets by creating direct accesses from the pedestrian boulevards. The courtyard accesses should be secondary.
- Create a diversity of streetscapes and building forms, and explore at different setback from Maplecrete Road.

### Sustainability

- Be mindful of the risks and challenges from western winds coming through the site. Analyze the areas of concern as identified in the Wind Study Report and provide protective solutions through creative design and programming.
- Panel looks forward to seeing storm water management strategies integrated into the project, as there is a great opportunity for a demonstrative public square with storm water management initiatives.



# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 79 – February 27, 2020

City Hall, 2141 Major Mackenzie Drive, Committee Room 243,  
Second Level

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 30, 2020 Meeting

9:30 am

## **400 and 7 Masterplan - SmartCentres REIT High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1st Review**

Presentations:

Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Urban Design

Paula Bustard - SmartCentres REIT

Raymond Lee - WestonWilliamson+Partners

10:45 am

## **Adjournment**

# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Minutes of Meeting**

#### **Meeting 79 – February 27, 2020**

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The Design Review Panel met on Thursday, January 30, 2020 in Committee Room 243, City Hall, 2141 Major MacKenzie Drive, Vaughan

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair)

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc.

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.

John Tassiopoulos, WSP Canada Group Ltd

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

##### **Absent**

Megan Torza, DTAH (Chair)

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Sheldon Levitt, Quadrangle Architects Ltd.

Guela Solow-Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

##### **STAFF**

Rob Bayley, Urban Design

Christina Bruce, VMC Director

Amy Roots, VMC Urban Design

Gerardo Paez Alonso, VMC Parks Initiative

Jessica Kwan, VMC Planning

Cory Gray, VMC Parks Development  
Carmella Marrelli, Development Planning  
Mary Caputo, Development Planning  
Frank Marzo, Policy Planning  
Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Urban Design  
Shirin Rohani, Urban Design  
Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Design  
Shirley March, Urban Design

**The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am with Paul Kulig in the Chair.**

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Margaret Briegmann declared a conflict of interests via email.

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting Minutes for January 30, 2020 were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**400 and 7 Masterplan – Smart Centres REIT**

Architects: Weston Williamson + Partners

Review: 1<sup>st</sup> Review

**Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. Please comment on the master plan's road network, block structure, parks and POPS distribution, building typologies and it's potential to create a successful vibrant urban environment setting precedents for future development within the forthcoming West 7 Secondary Plan?
2. Please comment on the built form interface along Highway 400 and Avenue 7 and opportunities for pedestrian permeability into the overall development from Avenue 7

## Overview

### Secondary Plan

- Panel thanked the applicant for the compelling presentation, quality of diagrams, sketches, and continued efforts in city building. They encouraged the applicant to fully engage with the Secondary Plan process collaborating with the City and stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive plan is developed for the entire area.

### Building Typologies

- Panel acknowledges that there is a clarity in block structure of the master plan but asked the applicant to explore more diverse typologies in addition to tower in the park and tower on podium.
- The tower in the park idea is clear but it needs to be proven. Panel acknowledged the applicant's aspiration to create a positive edge along Highway 400, however recommended to re-examine the typology based on the findings of the noise study and if needed potentially flip the two typologies to ensure noise is fully mitigated within the site.
- For the edge along Highway 400, Panel was skeptical about the realities of the site. Panel used Highway 427 intersection with East and West Mall roads as an example and asked the applicant to consider the challenges of programming the open space along that edge, the required chain link fence and the MTO trench.
- Panel suggested a different approach can be a harder podium edge along Highway 400 using the 14m MTO setback to bury the parking. This allows the applicant to drop the heights on the more interior blocks transferring the density onto the blocks adjacent to Highway 400 where it has less impact on the proposed community.

### Open Space Typologies and At-grade Experience

- Panel told the applicant to be courageous in their approach and noted that there is enough critical mass to create a self-sustaining neighbourhood with community supported uses such as daycare, places of worship, local library, etc. to activate the public realm during daytime
- In evaluating the size and programming of the park/open space, Panel referred to local residential intensification projects such as the Esplanade, Queens Quay west of Spadina and suburban intensification projects such as Markham Centre.
- Ensure there is a hierarchy of open space typologies; courtyards, streets and parks can create a network while each plays a different roll.
- Panel expressed skepticism over elevated publicly accessible courtyards and recommended to further study and test the typology to ensure its success as public realm.
- Re-evaluate the size of the courtyards in relation to the massing and height of the towers to ensure an appropriate proportion is achieved and residential units' access to sun light and privacy is not impacted, Panel felt that the courtyards are too small for the proposed massing.
- Panel appreciated the design departure from traditional suburban "lollypop" drop off areas in favour of a more urban access and servicing.

## Comments

### Site Organization, Building Typology

- Panel asked the applicant to further study the vertical challenges of the grade to better understand the transition and accessibility within the master plan.
- How to create an active public realm in the absence of retail was the question that Panel posed to the applicant, it is more than clear glazing, condo gym, or multi-purpose rooms that are empty most of the time. Panel really encouraged the applicant to explore other community-based uses to activate the street.
- While Panel appreciated the proposed character of the main spine as green street, they questioned the character of the Northview boulevard with proposed storage rooms. Northview Boulevard should be treated as the main address for the project with the proposed park facing it, strengthening the sense of arrival and servicing the entire precinct.
- Panel stressed the importance of phasing analysis for the success of the master plan. It is essential to set the stage with the right development block(s) and infrastructure at the early phases to ensure long term success.
- As the design is refined, the interfaces between buildings in Block A, B, J and I should be resolved, and the heights may need to be reduced to 6 to 8 storey mid-rise to create a balance between open space and massing in those blocks.

### Open Space and Public Realm

- Panel questioned the porosity along Highway 400 and called the environment “undesirable”. However, if the MTO requirement for setbacks are revised, the edge provides opportunities for dog walk, skateboard park and other programs that are not noise sensitive.
- Panel questioned the size of the proposed park for 4000 units and called it insufficient by most parkland dedication calculations. They called for a hierarchy of open spaces with potentially another more intimate park on the south west corner of the site.
- Panel cautioned about the microclimate conditions of the proposed parks to ensure they receive ample sunlight. Also, to achieve the noise criterion of 55dB in the park the applicant may have to shift the park further west.
- For the tower in the park typology, Panel stressed the importance of properly designing the spaces in-between to avoid the failure of garden cities.
- Panel suggested to strengthen the character of the small pockets of open space at the intersections and along the main spine incorporating public arts and creating a sequence of events that helps activate the public realm.

### Sustainability

- Panel appreciated the intention for District Energy and asked the applicant to seriously explore the option with its neighbours. Also, to consider other sustainable approaches such as passive house in building design, sustainable building materials and landscape approaches.

# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 80 – April 30, 2020

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 27, 2020 Meeting

9:30 am

## **700 Centre Street, Thornhill - SmartCentres REIT High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1st Review**

Presentations:

Paula Bustard, SmartCentres REIT

Dermot Sweeny, Sweeny &Co Architects Inc

10:40 am

## **Break**

10:55 am

## **5217 - 5225 Highway 7, First Avenue Properties Inc. Mid-Rise Residential Development, 1st Review**

Presentations:

Kregg Fordyce, KFA Architects+Planners Inc.

12:05 am

## **Adjournment**

# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Minutes of Meeting**

#### **Meeting 80 – April 30, 2020**

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The Design Review Panel was held online on Thursday, April 30, 2020 over Microsoft Teams Virtual Platform.

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Megan Torza, DTAH (Chair)

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair)

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc.

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.

John Tassiopoulos, WSP Canada Group Ltd

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Sheldon Levitt, Quadrangle Architects Ltd.

Guela Solow-Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

##### **Absent**

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

##### **STAFF**

Rob Bayley, Urban Design

Amy Roots, Urban Design

Nancy Tuckett, Development Planning

Carmela Marrelli, Development Planning

Eugene Fera, Development Planning

Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Urban Design

Shirin Rohani, Urban Design

Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Design

Shirley March, Urban Design

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

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

No conflict of Interest

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting Minutes for February 27, 2020 were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**700 Centre Street– Thornhill, Smart Centres REIT**

Architects: Sweeny & Co Architects /WSP / MHBC

Review: 1<sup>st</sup> Review

**Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. Please evaluate the proposal's success in responding to its context and outlaying a strong site organization that responds to the big moves envisioned in the VOP for this area.
2. Please comment on the overall massing, podium structure and the ground floor layout in response to the urban public realm and the pedestrian oriented environment that is envisioned as the character of the ultimate development of the Thornhill Town Center.

**Overview**

**Master Planning**

- Panel encouraged the applicant to fully take advantage of the single land ownership to develop a comprehensive master plan for the entire area that envisions a pedestrian oriented community both in the interim and ultimate phases. The plan should expand on the success of the existing commercial uses



and invest on the ground floor synergies between the parcels to support the future expansion.

- Panel felt that the relationship of the building with the context was not clear and the edge conditions needed to be further studied.
- At the Master Plan level, Panel asked the applicant to be consistent with respect to pedestrian, retail and active frontage connectivity to the context.
- Panel questioned the proposed density of the site and its impact on the design.

#### Building Typologies

- While Panel was sympathetic to the affordability intent of the project, but questioned the above-grade parking as an appropriate solution considering the cost associated with the technical challenges of construction.
- Panel acknowledged the simplicity and clarity of form and the logical podium scale and asked the applicant to adhere to the required separation distances between the podium and the neighbouring properties, specially the properties to the north and east.
- Panel was concerned about the impact of the above-grade parking on the overall context and expressed that if this typology gets replicated in the Master Plan, it will damage the public realm. Panel advised the applicant to prioritize supporting active frontages by burying the parking.
- Panel stated that having the highest buildings of the area on an interior lot is not optimal for the Master Plan.

#### Open Space Typologies and At-grade Experience

- Panel told the applicant to be mindful of landscape connectivity and encouraged the applicant to take advantage of the other existing resources adjacent to the site and encouraged the applicant to put additional effort to ensure connections to the boarder context.
- The applicant was advised to provide a mid-block connection, incorporating the grade, connecting to the pathway north of the site.
- Panel encouraged a transportation and parking strategy that prioritizes active frontages and underground parking to activate the ground floor wherever possible
- Panel requested additional effort to be made for landscape connectivity, and encouraged engaging resources adjacent to the site

#### **Comments**

##### Site Organization, Building Typology

- The relationship of the building to the context is unclear, the only edge of the building that is defined and detailed is the southern edge. Panel advised the applicant to study all edges of the building in the context of the neighboring lots and address the required separation distances.

- Unsuitability of the above-ground parking in the context and in relation to the neighbors was echoed by all members, and it was advised that having residential units on the street would be beneficial in the overall context.
- Panel acknowledged that introducing retail at ground floor as an extension of retail in the context is an appropriate approach but asked for a retail study to provide better connection to retails on Disera Drive and to create future retail spines south to Center street.

### Architecture

- Panel pointed out to the misalignment between the elevations and plans in the expression of the residential units and the entrance experience for the residents.
- The applicant was encouraged to investigate smaller scale entrances for the residence and introducing multiple entrances for the two towers, to give each tower a different identity.
- On the other hand, some panel members expressed that the consolidated entrance on the ground floor was more efficient and provided livelihood to the public street by giving more space to retail.
- Wrapping the parkade on east and west with residential units and moving some of the parking underground will improve the podium's relation to the context
- Panel mentioned that the challenges created by the above-ground parking structure were the result of too much density on site. Panel advised the applicant to revise the programs and reduce the density to alleviate some of these challenges.

### Public Realm

- Panel questioned the lack of pedestrian connections in the context plan including no sidewalk connection to Disera Drive.
- The parkade is visible from the north and east. Panel was concerned of its impacts on existing residential units and the future development on the east.
- Moving the parking underground was suggested to alleviate the difficult hard edge conditions and also create a better pedestrian experience both internally and externally.
- The layout of the ground floor has missed any opportunities for a better treatment of the east edge.
- Panel advised the proposal to provide a termination point for the roads and transform them to something that is more than a driveway.
- The viability of the retail at grade was questioned and Panel encouraged the applicant to consider the ground floor experience if retail becomes unfeasible.
- Applicant was encouraged to take advantage of the existing mid-block connection to the north and to pay attention to the pedestrian conditions on secondary frontages.
- Panel applauded the robust streetscape on Disera Drive and advised to be mindful of paving patterns and AODA requirements.

- Panel advised the applicant to address the microclimate conditions in all amenity terraces.

## **5217-5225 Highway 07**

Architecture: KFA Architects + Planners Inc.

Landscape:

Review: 1<sup>st</sup> Review

### **Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. How can the site organization be improved to create a successful at grade pedestrian experience along Regional road 7 and permeability through the site?
2. Please comment on the compatibility of the overall massing with the existing and future context and how to improve the transition to the adjacent low-rise neighborhood

### **Overview**

#### Master Planning, Site Organization, and Context

- Panel expressed that the proposal does not prove itself to be context aware in massing, adjacencies, and pedestrian and vehicular connectivity. Panel was not convinced the proposal was appropriate and advised collaboration with the neighboring properties or assembly of parcels to find a suitable solution that resolves some of the major concerns.
- Panel acknowledged that the site is very challenging to plan both in the existing and the future context and the proposed Master Plan is very unlikely to happen.
- Panel was concerned about the back of house uses and their relation to the future phases of development. Panel expressed how landscape can contribute to the buffers and transitions to stable residential neighborhood in the block and advised the applicant to investigate open space provisions at the block plan level.
- Pedestrian connectivity is a major concern, what currently exists for the residents is not adequate. Panel advised the applicant to improve the pedestrian experience and emphasized that the pedestrian connectivity should be secured for in both existing and future scenarios.

#### Massing and Ground Floor Layout

- The massing transition, from the built form perspective, to the west, east and south needs to be demonstrated according to urban design guidelines. Panel did not find these transitions to be suitable.
- Panel encouraged lobby's presence along the highway 7 at the corner to create a more civic presence on highway 7.
- Ground floor units' marketability and desirability were a concern for the panel members due to their harsh frontage.

## Comments

### Master Planning, Site Organization and Building Typology

- At the Master Plan stage, the most probable outcome would be the north-south connection on the east and possibly to Kipling Avenue on the west. Panel advised to analyze the project based on the existing situation and expressed that the proposal is too dense and too complex for the existing site that is too narrow. The applicant should look into acquiring the property to the west or east if considering this density.
- If the existing condition is the ultimate situation, the applicant should consider lower density and massing and a more sensible approach to ground floor layout.
- The shadow impact on the neighbours to the east is very pronounced and is a major concern. Investigating the point tower typology was encouraged just to minimize the shadow impact on the neighbors.
- The applicant was advised to investigate the road and pedestrian network both for the existing and future conditions.
- In the Master Plan proposal, it was expressed that Makenzie Drive as a public road cannot be connected to a private driveway, and it needs to keep its connection to Highway 7.
- The applicant was encouraged to revise the Master Plan to better address the public and private roads.

### Open Space and Pedestrian Experience

- Panel questioned lack of outdoor amenity, and the location of the indoor amenity facing Highway 7.
- Panel suggested continuing the sidewalk from highway 7 south to Hawman Avenue to provide both pedestrian and bike connection.
- The interim road that connects to Hawman Avenue should be relocated to the east to create a better termination point for the proposed street.
- It was mentioned that the 2.1m wide sidewalk can not provide any privacy mitigation for the at grade residential units facing it.
- The eastern edge was considered challenging for planting and the applicant was advised to propose more creative planting solution for the interim situation.
- Panel acknowledged and appreciated considering the microclimate of Highway 7 and proposed relocating the lobby closed to Highway 7 at the corner to reduce the travel distance to public transit.
- Proposed right-in/right-out with the pork-chop design is considered most challenging for pedestrians. The applicant was advised to look into that whole frontage through the lens of pedestrian connectivity and coordinate his effort with the neighbor to the west.
- Applicant was also advised to redesign the southern part of the project to improve pedestrian connectivity providing better connection through the site to Kipling Avenue and Hawman Avenue.

### Architecture

- Panel encouraged better terracing and setbacks from the property edges to mitigate the impact on low rise residential and the property to the west
- Panel expressed concern for the ground floor units in terms of privacy and the impact of surface parking. The applicant was advised to eliminate the surface parking and include landscaping.
- Panel questioned the feasibility of the building's western edge due to its proximity to the gas station and code requirements.
- The AODA parking spaces were considered too far away from the lobby.
- Units on the third and fourth floors without any setbacks from Highway 7 were considered undesirable.

### Sustainability

- Panel advised to be mindful of the north western winds and provide better pedestrian condition through architectural mitigation and reducing the travel distance between the building and public transit stop.

# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 81 – May 28, 2020

Virtual Meeting

9:00 am

## **Pre-Meeting**

Committee Members

9:15 am

## **Call to Order**

Chair's Review of Agenda

Disclosure of Interest

Confirmation of Minutes of April 30, 2020 Meeting

9:30 am

## **180 Steeles Avenue - Mizrahi Development. High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1st Review**

Presentations:

Ryan Guetter, Weston Consulting

Babak Eslahjou, Core Architects

Gus Maurano, MBTW

10:40 am

## **Break**

10:55 am

## **100 Steeles Avenue - Dream Unlimited Corp. High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1st Review**

Presentations:

Richard Witt, Quadrangle Architects

12:05 am

## **Adjournment**

# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Minutes of Meeting**

#### **Meeting 81 – May 28, 2020**

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The Design Review Panel was held online on Thursday, May 28, 2020 over Microsoft Teams Virtual Platform.

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Megan Torza, DTAH (Chair)

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice-Chair)

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

John Tassiopoulos, WSP Canada Group Ltd

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc.

Sheldon Levitt, Quadrangle Architects Ltd.

Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.

##### **Absent**

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Guela Solow-Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

##### **STAFF**

Rob Bayley, Urban Design

Amy Roots, VMC Urban Design

Nancy Tuckett, Development Planning

Mary Caputo, Development Planning

David Marcucci, Policy Planning

Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Urban Design

Shirin Rohani, Urban Design

Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Design

Shirley Marsh, Urban Design

**The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am with Megan Torza in the Chair.**

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Sheldon Levitt disclosed conflict of interest with item two on the Agenda.

Margaret Briegmann disclosed conflict of interest with both items on the Agenda.

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting Minutes for April 30, 2020 were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**180 Steeles Avenue West – Mizrahi Developments**

Architects: Core Architects

Review: 1<sup>st</sup> Review

**Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. Please comment on the massing and scale of each development in relation to each other, to the existing commercial uses, the established neighbourhood to the north and the future intensification vision of Yonge and Steels Corridor Secondary plan.
2. Please comment on the ground floor layout and the circulation network of each development and their potential to establish a cohesive, connected and successful urban public realm.



## **Overview**

### Presentation

- Panel commended the applicant for the comprehensive presentation package.

### Site Organization and Coordination with the Adjacent Properties

- Panel felt that the plan is not well-coordinated with the adjacent properties to the east and west and that the success of the development depends on the connection of the roads and open spaces between the different development.
- Panel strongly encouraged the applicant to coordinate the development with the adjacent owners. In particular, Panel stressed that the success of the east-west road depends on its continuity across the different development sites.
- Panel suggested exploring the option to create a shared north-south road with 100 Steeles Avenue West as it would free up space at the ground level and create opportunities to consolidate resources and improve the built-form.
- Panel urged the applicant to reconsider the location of the back-of-house uses fronting onto major public spaces, particularly at the north-west corner of the site where future park has been identified in Secondary Plan.
- While Panel acknowledged the limitations of the site, it urged the applicant to organize the site to optimize the micro-climate conditions in the open spaces.

### Open Space and the Public Realm

- Considering the density of the development, the amount of open space is insufficient, and what exists is disconnected. Opportunities should be sought to provide more open space and to consolidate and connect open spaces.
- Panel noted it was important to provide a variety of experiences, for example, a quiet mews parallel to Steeles Avenue. The pedestrian experience on the secondary east-west streets should be different from the pedestrian experience on Steeles Avenue.
- Panel thought that the experience along the north-south road street could be improved by creating variations in the built form, using the lobbies to create focal points, reconsidering the distribution of retail, and improving the delineation between the retail and residential parts.
- Panel considered that more community activation was needed to bring life to the middle of the site.

## **Comments**

### Site Organization and Coordination with Adjacent Properties

- There must be complete coordination, in the form of a block plan, with the properties to the east and west. The coordination should inform the distribution of the built form and open spaces.
- A major priority for the coordination is to connect the east-west road between the sites, as its success depends on this continuity.

- There will be benefits for having the north-south road shared between the two developments at the boundaries of the site; more area at the ground level could be dedicated to community activities and playgrounds, and the central north-south spine could be reconfigured as a pedestrian mews.
- The central north-south street does not have to continue all the way to the north and can terminate at the east-west road to create a more useable public realm and provide a softer transition between the retail and the residential uses.
- Panel encouraged the applicant to consolidate the loading and parking access functions to minimize the area they occupy at-grade and provide more opportunities for useable open spaces.
- The shadow study shows that virtually all the open spaces, including the POPS, are in shadow all day except at noon. Even for the retail experience, this may not be enough. The applicant should seek to optimize sun exposure within the limitations.
- Panel commended the clarity of hierarchy and relationship between the functional road B and the frontage of road A.
- Panel was concerned that without proper coordination, the east and west edges of the site might become a mismatch of service areas creating problematic edge conditions, when there is great potential if the design is coordinated.

#### Massing and Architecture

- Panel felt that the proposal does not provide a variety of experiences and that the overall simplicity is missing a hierarchy of scale and interest.
- The applicant should create a variety of smaller-scale experiences within the large-scale architectural framework.
- The podiums of buildings 1 and 2 are very long creating a very homogeneous distribution of retail. They could benefit from more breaks and changes; building articulation in the lobby areas is one of the possible means to achieve more variation.
- The lobbies in building 1 and 2 should either be combined into one lobby or be broken into two completely separate lobbies.
- Considering potential long-term changes to the future of retail, consider how the retail spaces may be reconfigured if there is not enough demand.
- The configuration of retail spaces should include patio spaces for the restaurants.

#### Open Space and the Public Realm

- Panel felt that the development is lacking useable/programmable open space relative to the proposed density. Panel suggested reconfiguring/removing the townhouses at the north edge along Royal Palm Drive, and changing the courtyard turn-arounds, which occupy too much precious area to be used for only servicing, to open spaces for the developments.
- By coordinating the design with neighbouring properties, there is potential to expand and combine the POPS spaces with POPS on the adjacent properties.
- The POPS act more as private open spaces than publicly accessible spaces and need to be reconfigured to have public frontages.

- Open spaces at the ground level need to have community-oriented functions to be activated.
- The north-west corner is adjacent to one of the parks in the Secondary Plan, but it contains back-of-house uses. The program should be re-examined; replacing services with active uses more suitable as a frontage to park.
- Since the proposed roads are private, they provide more freedom to work with the edges to contribute to the retail experience, and the applicant should make better use of this opportunity.

### **100 Steeles Avenue West – Westdale Properties & Dream Development**

Architects: Quadrangle Architects

Review: 1<sup>st</sup> Review

#### **Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. Please comment on the massing and scale of each development in relation to each other, to the existing commercial uses, the established neighbourhood to the north and the future intensification vision of Yonge and Steeles Corridor Secondary plan.
2. Please comment on the ground floor layout and the circulation network of each development and their potential to establish a cohesive, connected and successful urban public realm.

#### **Overview**

##### Site Organization and Coordination with the Adjacent Properties

- Panel emphasized that it was critical that the applicant coordinate the design with the neighbours to the east and west and consider the whole corridor in their thinking. The coordinated approach should be applied to overall streets and block patterns, and to the optimization of services to avoid redundant or repeating elements.
- Panel encouraged the applicant to reconsider the extensive use of turn-around facilities and instead make use of the streets with lay-by areas. Where turn-around facilities cannot be avoided, cover them with useable amenity space.
- Panel suggested that the location of the service areas should be reconsidered to reduce the occurrence of opaque frontages, especially where they are facing the neighbours' property frontages.

##### Massing and Architecture

- The relationship between towers could be improved by staggering; this reorganization should be considered in the context of a block plan.

- Panel felt that the podiums are too tall relative to the proposed right-of-way width and should be lowered for a more comfortable space.
- The commercial block's lack of design is problematic, Panel stressed that consideration must be provided for its design framework to provide context for the entire development.
- The façade treatments require more articulation and differentiation.

#### Open Spaces and the Public Realm

- Panel expressed that there is little open space for the density proposed.
- Panel suggested consolidating open spaces to create fewer larger open spaces to maximize the potential for sun exposure and connect them across the blocks.

#### **Comments**

#### Site Organization and Coordination with Adjacent Properties

- There is a critical need for coordination with future developments in the adjacent properties, especially with 180 Steeles Avenue West. The most critical aspects to be coordinated include the east-west service road, which must be integrated with the adjacent properties, and the width, programming and design of the POPS on the north side.
- As part of the coordination with 180 Steeles Ave West, a shared road should be considered at the joint property line.
- The current organization of the services sacrifices open space for servicing; the north turn-around spaces could be eliminated while keeping the service function; the residential drop-off for the south-east block could be moved to the main north-south street as lay-by spaces; the turn-around space could then be minimized or covered with a useable roof above. Alternatively, shared underground servicing between the buildings could help tighten the road network and free-up valuable space at-grade.
- While the adjacent properties may redevelop in near future, consideration should be given to their existing condition specifically the interface with the church to the east, which is facing the proposed service uses on the site.
- Panel suggested to consider curving the north-south road towards west after entering the site to provide a shared right-of-way with the neighbour and create an opportunity for a more substantial public realm on both sites.

#### Massing and Architecture

- While they are apart 25m, Towers 1 and 2 are very close to each other when considering their heights. More offset would improve this condition.
- Exploring the built form of the commercial block will provide a better understanding of the development as a whole. As part of this exploration, there must be consideration of the west edge of the commercial block, which is shown with a party-wall on the property line.
- More conceptual 3d massing studies are needed to show the overall impact of the development on the site.

- The 6-storey podium of the north blocks seems high for transitioning to the park; 3-4 storeys would be more appropriate to acknowledge the residential character.
- Architectural articulation is required to reduce the perceived volume and bulk of the buildings.
- While the architectural language of the building is completely different, there is insufficient response to local conditions on the ground such as the POPS edge.
- The frontages towards the future north street are not resolved as frontages to a local street.
- On the south block, a more substantial transition is required between the retail and residential uses at-grade.

#### Open Space and Public Realm

- There is little open space in the development considering the proposed density. One approach is to expand and enhance the POPS at the north of the site along the future boulevard.

# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 82 – June 25, 2020

Virtual Meeting

9:00 am

## **Pre-Meeting**

Committee Members

9:15 am

## **Call to Order**

Chair's Review of Agenda

Disclosure of Interest

Confirmation of Minutes of May 28, 2020 Meeting

9:30 am

## **7800 Jane Street, Aspen Ridge**

### **Vaughan Metropolitan Centre**

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

Presentations:

Les Klein, Quadrangle Architects

Gus Maurano, The MBTW Group

10:40 am

## **Break**

10:45 am

## **Carrville Community Centre, Library and District Park -**

### **City of Vaughan**

#### **Low-Rise Public Development, 1st Review**

Presentations:

Duff Balmer, Perkins + Will

11:55 am

## **Adjournment**

# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Minutes of Meeting**

#### **Meeting 82 – June 25, 2020**

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The Design Review Panel was held online on Thursday, June 25, 2020, over Microsoft Teams Virtual Platform.

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Megan Torza, DTAH (Chair)

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice-Chair)

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

John Tassiopoulos, WSP Canada Group Ltd

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc.

Sheldon Levitt, Quadrangle Architects Ltd.

Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.

##### **Absent**

Guela Solow-Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

##### **STAFF**

Rob Bayley, Urban Design

Amy Roots, VMC Urban Design

Nancy Tuckett, Development Planning

Mary Caputo, Development Planning

David Marcucci, Policy Planning

Shirin Rohani, Urban Design  
Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Design  
Shirley Marsh, Urban Design  
Misha Bereznyak, Urban Design

**The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am with Megan Torza in the Chair.**

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Margaret Briegmann and Sheldon Levitt disclosed a conflict of interest with item one on the agenda.

Paul Kulig disclosed a conflict of interest with item two of the agenda.

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting Minutes for May 28, 2020, were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**7800 Jane Street, Vaughan Metropolitan Centre**

Architect: Quadrangle Architects

Landscape Architect: The MBTW Group

Review: 1<sup>st</sup> Review

**Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. How successful is the overall site organization, including land use distribution, circulation, parking, loading and servicing, access and public realm design?
2. How successful is the design of the podium in accommodating the above ground parking while generating variety in massing, activation and materiality?

**Overview**

- **Overall Presentation** – Panel thanked the applicant for the breadth and thoughtfulness of the package and presentation.



- **Site Organization and Context** – Panel commented on the quality and ambition of the project, the mix of uses and site organization, as well as the efforts to create active and attractive frontages in all four sides of the building.
- **Streetscape** – Panel noted that streetscape frontages should maintain their civic quality and improve the relationship of the building with the public realm as flood mitigation issues and grading concerns are addressed.
- **Context** – Panel expressed the desire to see the project in the context of its immediate neighbours to fully understand the proposed design approach in a more holistic manner.
- **Architectural Expression** – Panel recognized the efforts being put forward regarding the podium design, materiality and articulation but encouraged fine tuning the design of the facades to better respond to their location and orientation, as well as the general design of the proposed breezeway.
- **Sustainability** – Panel commended and confirmed support for geothermal and other sustainability measures being proposed and recommended fine tuning and enhancing these initiatives as the project moves forward.

## Comments

### Site Organization

- The site organization, including land use allocation and overall massing, is creating good urban edges around the building. The mix of uses and the proposed location of the office building at the corner of Jane Street and Highway 7 were also considered appropriate by Panel.
- Appropriate flood plain mitigation strategies will be critical in helping reduce the grade differences along the ground floor and improve the relationship and permeability of the public realm with all the proposed ground floor uses. This will also eliminate the podium and planter separation that is currently impeding pedestrians from easily accessing the proposed mid-block breezeway connection, active uses along Jane Street and the weather protection offered by the proposed canopies above.
- Revisit the intentionality of the land uses at each corner, especially where retail is being proposed. For instance:
  - consider shifting the main ‘centre of gravity’ of the retail uses to the corners, rather than treating them as ‘tail ends’, to take more advantage of these prominent locations.
  - Explore whether the residential lobby should peek around the corner of Jane Street and Apple Mill Road, or if the proposed commercial use should wrap around and have a bigger presence along Apple Mill Road.
- Continue to explore how the proposal will affect the context outside the limits of the block, as it has an opportunity to generate very interesting synergies with its surrounding uses.

### Landscape

- The proposed amenity terraces at the podium rooftop are an opportunity to establish a strong relationship between the building’s elevated landscape and Edgeley Pond and

Park across Jane Street. Consider adding more greenery along the Jane Street frontage of the amenity space to enhance this visual connection.

- The boulevard treatment along Apple Mill Road is an effective threshold to the park. Considered a similar treatment at the corner of Jane Street and Highway 7 by adding more trees and enhanced pavement treatments.
- Make sure to coordinate the location of the boulevard trees so that they are not blocking the pedestrian breezeway openings.

### Architecture

- Panel expressed that wrapping the above ground parking with active uses is a good move as it hides it from most of the periphery and creates diversity and interest, but encouraged fine tuning of the west façade along the length of the new north-south street where the parking structure is being proposed, as well as more articulation along the residential podium façade facing the park.
- The proposed breezeway is a good idea as it breaks the building massing along Jane and the north-south street. However, and as per the precedents presented, it could become more welcoming and grander through a variety of ground floor active uses that combine and balance residential and retail components along the entirety of its length and around its corners.
- The parking level recesses above the breezeway could be reduced to the vehicular circulation aisle acting as bridges that connect the north and south parking areas. This would allow for sunlight to penetrate through the leftover spaces to the breezeway below, creating a pedestrianized sky-lit galleria heading west which could be continued by the western neighbours all the way to Millway Avenue.
- Consider punching some openings or adding some landscape features to the upper volume above the breezeway to allow for a visual connection to active uses as shown in the design precedents.
- The efficacy of the breezeway will also be dependent on favourable microclimate conditions, in particular having comfortable wind levels suitable for the intended uses.
- In addition to the active uses, and wind mitigation strategies, the breezeway could benefit from additional design moves that slow down pedestrian traffic; such as creating breaks along the way that could generate more interesting spaces within the length of the connection.
- The overall size of the proposal is quite large but having the void from Edgeley Park's open space across the street helps mitigate this perception. Nevertheless, consider its impact to the west. e.g. the middle tower could be a terminus viewpoint from New Park Place west of Millway Avenue.
- Refine the overall design of the façades to better reflect their materiality and articulation in relation to their location and orientation. e.g. at ground floor to address the specific uses and their interrelationship with the public realm, and above to enhance or reduce the solar gain and energy efficiency during the year.

## Sustainability

- Consider splitting/sharing the geothermal energy between the residential and office uses so that all buildings can benefit from offsetting energy use during their respective peak hours.

## **Carrville Community Centre, Library & District Park – City of Vaughan**

Architects: Perkins and Will

Review: 1<sup>st</sup> Review

## **Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. Please comment on the location of the built form on the site, distribution of surface parking and edge conditions.
2. Please comment on the building architecture and overall landscape design.

## **Overview**

### Site Organization and Coordination with the Adjacent Properties

- The relationship between the community centre, park, the future school, church and Major MacKenzie Drive is critical for the success of this area as a community hub and park. Interrelationships between these civic and community facilities should be pursued and encouraged.
- Panel was hopeful that the minutes of the meeting could assist in encouraging the church and the school board to engage in a conversation with the City to look at this area as a community hub and not as separate components.
- While the individual components are beautifully designed, there is fragmentation between the elements and the way they relate to their context. Panel encouraged the applicant to identify potential synergies - between the more urban components and streetscapes surrounding the site and between the more quiet and bucolic parts which can relate to the valley - and explore how these can be strengthened to clarify the components of the plan.
- It is not clear what is the most prominent component of the site. There is a disconnect between the strong presence of the building and the design intent of having the park as the dominant feature.
- Panel encouraged the applicant to consider how the park can be a unifying element, and the building broken down a bit to have a more subservient relationship to the park and a more comfortable relationship with the surrounding urban context.

### Open Space and the Public Realm

- Panel considered that a stronger relationship to the valley lands was needed, with a softer edge between the park and valley land.
- Panel encouraged the applicant to make more use of the existing trees on the site.
- Panel considered the challenge of grade changes as a potential opportunity that can be used to soften harsh transitions and expand areas in the landscape to a less urban and gentler relationship, allowing varied connections to occur.

## **Comments**

### Integration with the Adjacent Civic Uses

- The church should be brought to the table to make the designs relate to one another. Collaboration would be very desirable, and both sides can gain from it.
- The different existing and planned civic uses for the area, the proposed community centre and park, the church and the future school can all enjoy sharing a central public space. Panel referenced the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, in regard to the scale of the building and the idea of pavilions and consolidation of programming and creating welcoming outdoor spaces.
- Panel was disappointed that there is no high-level urban design framework by the City for this "community hub," which includes the community centre and park, the church and the future school. Panel felt that this lack of an overall design strategy prevented achieving more usefulness, interest and complexity.
- Such an overall plan could take either the direction of a street-oriented urban place or a campus plan, but in any way, it would provide a foundation for this hub.

### Overall Organization

- Panel thought that a bigger move for the site organization is needed.
- There is a lot of emphasis on the building and its relation to the immediate surroundings, but the concept of how the building sits in the park in the bigger context is still weak.
- Even if the concept is a building in a park, there can be urban moments. Panel referred to the Regent Park Aquatic Centre in Toronto, where the building is set back within the park, but still creates a very urban environment in its relation to the street.
- The applicant should consider not only how users get to the park but also crossing through the park. The desire lines for movement through the park should be considered, specifically diagonal pedestrian connections.
- Consider clustering programs for exposure to different age groups and a more consolidated recreation centre in the park. These considerations can also help identify what should be the building setbacks from the street.

### Connection to the Valley

- Through more cross-sections, the applicant should explore how visually/physically accessible the valley is.
- The south parking lot is dividing the park by blocking the two outdoor spaces located south of the building and prevents achieving the desired porosity.

### Relation to the Streets

- A more urban approach may be appropriate to provide a stronger impact on the South-west corner and a stronger connection with the community, by shifting the building to the south and making the outdoor area on the corner more like a plaza. This area would be more appropriate to use for events such as the farmers market than the parking lot.
- Currently, the most passive space is in the most active location, the south-west corner of the site. The organization of the programs should be reconsidered to create a core of active and dynamic uses at that corner.

### Open Space and the Public Realm

- Panel commended the building design, which had many good ideas, but felt that now the landscape architecture should be developed to the same level to influence the overall combination.
- The applicant should look at how the park can be the main component in the site, with the building sitting in the park, and how such an approach can help solve some of the edge conditions and transitions.
- A stronger connection to the valley should be explored in the landscape design. The landscape design should generate a continuous vista and relationship to the valley edge.
- The applicant should explore if there can be access to the tributary and consider that in the programming.
- The existing trees should be more engaged and celebrated in the landscape design.
- The slope of the site, which was not clearly shown, may be used as a feature.
- There should be a sense of arrival when moving from Major MacKenzie Drive to the community node along the local Thomas Cook Ave, perhaps by design that leads from the entrance to the site to the building entry.
- The landscape approach is very compartmentalized to single functions. Instead, it should be organized in clusters of activities and programming that provide different experiences.
- The active zone seems to be unnecessarily constrained to a small area.
- The outdoor area east of the building could be softer and less tight, with a reconsideration of the stairs.

### Parking Lots

- Consider moving the south parking lot to the east property line, similar to how the north parking lot is next to a side property line. This would allow a better connection between the park programs. Considering the rich programming in the park, the parking serves both the building and the park, and it does not have to be next to the building.
- Two parking lots may not be the right solutions; it's currently a big detriment to how the park functions. An alternative solution is to consider connecting the two parking lots, combining them with one drop-off. While this connection will cut through the site, which will need to be addressed, it will function better when there is a crowd.
- If the south parking lot remains as is, there may be an opportunity to create a safe passage across it to the playground and open lawn area.

### Architecture

- Panel commended the architectural design and said the building had many good ideas and that it was beautifully organized.
- Panel felt that the building feels more like a big building than a pavilion as was intended. Even though it was set back from the street, the building design seems to belong more on a major arterial rather than a local street. A breakdown of the building would be a better fit for the pavilion concept and help resolve the relation to the different sides of the site.
- Panel encouraged the applicant to further investigate the uses and possible shapes of the building.
- The building seems to be designed for a very urban environment, but it does not fit with the valley and the street corner of the site. Softer edges would help provide a better fit for the context.
- Panel suggested that the roof design should be justified, and its design fine-tuned through a light modelling study.
- Panel encouraged the applicant to consider if the central walkway in the lower level could be wider or more circuitous, beyond its utilitarian role.
- Panel suggested the applicant to look into where food and beverage, and other important common functions of the building could be located to create a heart for the building.

# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 83 – July 30, 2020

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 25, 2020 Meeting

9:30 am

## **VMC Block C2 (East Block South), SmartCentres, High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1<sup>st</sup> Review**

Presentations:

Paula Bustard - SmartCentres

David Epstein - Gensler

10:40 am

## **Break**

10:50 am

## **7850 Dufferin Street, Marydel Homes, Mid-Rise Residential Development, 2<sup>nd</sup> Review**

Presentations:

Sean Lawrence – Kohn Partnership Architects

Michael Vani – Weston Consulting

12:10 pm

## **Break (Lunch)**

12:30 pm

## **Vaughan Mills Centre Public Realm and Streetscape Plan, City of Vaughan, 1<sup>st</sup> Review**

Presentations:

Brent Raymond - DTAH

1:40 pm

## **Adjournment**

# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Minutes of Meeting**

#### **Meeting 83 – July 30, 2020**

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The Design Review Panel was held online on Thursday, July 30, 2020, over Microsoft Teams Virtual Platform.

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Megan Torza, DTAH (Chair)

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice-Chair)

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc.

Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.

Guela Solow-Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

##### **Absent**

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

John Tassiopoulos, WSP Canada Group Ltd

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Sheldon Levitt, Quadrangle Architects Ltd.

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

##### **STAFF**

Rob Bayley, Urban Design

Amy Roots, VMC Urban Design

Nancy Tuckett, Development Planning

Mary Caputo, Development Planning

Gaston Soucy, VMC Urban Design



Natalie Wong, VMC Development Planning

Carol Birch, Development Planning

David Marcucci, Policy Planning

Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Urban Design

Cory Gray, VMC Parks

Shirin Rohani, Urban Design

Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Design

Shirley Marsh, Urban Design

Misha Bereznyak, Urban Design

**The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am with Megan Torza in the Chair.**

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Megan Torza disclosed a conflict of interest with item three on the agenda.

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting Minutes for June 25, 2020, were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**Block C2 (East Block South), Vaughan Metropolitan Centre**

Architect: Gensler

Review: 1<sup>st</sup> Review

**Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. How successful is the site organization, including land use distribution, circulation, access, loading and servicing in providing an active and pedestrian friendly public realm?
2. Does the proposal deliver the principles and functionality outlined by Urban Design and Engineering Staff in considering the proposed road deletion?

- Mid-block connection to the south block future N/S road (type of connection to be determined)
- Providing passenger pick-up/drop-off and on street parking
- Full moves at Apple Mill Road
- Integrating a POPS and strong pedestrian public connection (with public access easements)
- Accommodating servicing and loading
- Ensuring office use is integrated

## Overview

Panel commended the design team for a good presentation, as well as for showing progress drawings and a willingness to work with Staff. The following overview comments were provided:

- **Site Plan and Frontages:**
  - As with most projects that are in dynamic locations, all frontages are important. Panel acknowledged that the proposal is wrestling with the challenges of resolving a mix of uses and related servicing. The main challenge will be the discreet location of the back of house elements. If possible, Panel urged the design team to push some of the servicing components below grade.
  - Panel felt the portals were intriguing and appealing but cautioned that they be oriented and designed in distinct ways so that they react to the external and internal context. Consider terminal views, pedestrian flows, etc.
  - Panel felt the materiality was good, and noted that the colonnade is a nice gesture, if used sparingly.
- **Transportation and Connectivity:**
  - The east west local street plays an important role as a drop-off and pedestrian zone, but will be a likely location for services, so aligning the built form and service access will be key.
  - The shape of the hotel could become a contributor to the east west street if lobby access is located along that frontage.
  - Loading below grade would benefit the public realm frontages.
  - Allow for lobby connections through the buildings to connect to both interior and exterior spaces.
  - Provide more approach views for pedestrians coming from destinations in context, such as from the SmartVMC bus terminal and Edgeley Park.

## Comments

### Package

- Panel appreciated the package and presentation. The process outlining the design evolution was very helpful.

## Site Plan and Organization

- The site composition, organization, location of buildings and uses are taking good advantage of the most utilitarian components of the design. This strategy works, and can be used as the base to explore how the public realm can start defining the pedestrian connectivity and start developing the different transitions and characters of the open spaces; from a more active and public south-west corner to a more quiet and private space at the north side.
- The mix of uses are great and provide a unique opportunity, well translated to the built form and layout.
- The central plaza, along with the north and south blocks being related, is a strong design concept.
- Some of the traditional street edges are being sacrificed in favour of the courtyard.
- Tightening up of the courtyard might be a good idea to control the large open space.
- Solving servicing, drop-offs, loading, pedestrian interfaces etc. will be critical and functional issues must be resolved prior to finalizing the ground floor and public realm. The new plan being developed with Staff is starting to address some of the early challenges.
- Explore whether it is possible to have a large underground solution to all loading, to create a better ground floor public realm and rationalize the servicing.
- Explore whether the residential lobby should face Jane street. Consider a through access on the residential lobby to Jane Street.
- Focal points in the plan are good. Generally, the portals are creating interesting angles and relationships. Panel felt the portal from Millway was a strong gesture to frame a landmark building as an invitation into the civic courtyard. However, Panel felt there were challenges at portal to the south with respect to the entrances to the buildings If loading and services are located there. Consideration of the view and connection from the road to the south requires attention.
- Undertake a clear pedestrian analysis to help inform where the passages should be located. Focus on desire lines to determine where the frontages and back of house are located.
- Resolving the main entrance, drop-off and servicing to the hotel is critical. The tabletop crossing is being blocked by the hotel loading. Consider relocating and explore a layby along Millway Avenue to create a grand hotel entrance.
- The permeable south-west corner at Apple Mill and Millway creates a good focal point at a very important location. But is it at the right distance to the edge to allow for the street activation to happen?
- The heroic view at the south west-corner of Apple Mill and Millway might not be representing the actual experience that pedestrians will have as they move across Millway from the transit hub. Doing clear and more precise pedestrian maps would help determine what the experience could be like and provide information to help refine the design and better respond to its users and context.

## Landscape

- The landscape framework and connections are appreciated.
- The portal through Millway is quite large but it is understood as a big transit connector.
- More activation is preferred along Jane Street, especially at the corner at Apple Mill and Jane.
- The large opening towards Jane Street is not necessary as it takes away from the streetscape activation and character. The character along Jane Street across from the Edgeley Park, as well as the character along Apple Mill will be critical to mediate with the park to the east.
- Elimination of the south-east portal will allow for a good development of the connection from the east-west road (east end) to the south-west corner.

## **7850 Dufferin Street – Marydel Homes**

Architects: Kohn Partnership Architects  
Review: 2<sup>nd</sup> Review

## **Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. How successful is the revised design in addressing the first-round comments related to:
  - creating a balance between roads/driveways, open space and built form.
  - Creating a clear hierarchy of street network and blocks, with an understanding of the location of building frontages/entrances vs servicing/loading.
  - Walkability and pedestrian comfort and permeability
2. Please comment on the proposed architectural expression of the mid-rise buildings.

## **Overview**

- While Panel acknowledged the improvements over the previous presentation, they noted that further consideration is required for effective placemaking; consider how streets contribute to a sense of place, and how places like mews and the courtyard create character. Panel encouraged the applicant to think on the pedestrian level.
- The mews can be a special place, but currently, fire access requirements is what drives the design. The applicant should provide more landscaping and consider

an alternative fire route access, the townhouse typology and the location of the playground to make the open space a destination for the residents.

- The east-west street is the potential gateway to the site and should have its own presence contributing to the placemaking approach with street trees, and proper relationship to building frontages not a purely utilitarian driveway. As the point of arrival, the first impression should have identity and gravitas. There is room on site to reorganize and adjust the buildings to achieve this.
- there is opportunity to connect the mid-rise buildings and share the lay-by and drop-off zones to avoid a turn-around in the courtyard. The project is not large enough to require two drop-offs.
- The architectural expression feels commercial; it needs a more pedestrian-friendly base to be perceived as people's homes. views from the ground level can help achieve this.
- The identity of the street along the western edge and hydro corridor is still unclear. Consider how this roadway, which flanks an extensive open space, can benefit from it. Consider the material language as well as the configuration of parking and planting.
- Consider different massing options other than the townhouses or identify other ways to loosen the plan. The buildings are too close together at the north end; balance the built form to create better public spaces and provide individual addresses for the townhouse units.
- The applicant should appreciate that there will be a large development on the site to the south, and the placement of buildings should be respectful of facing distances and separation requirements.

## **Comments**

### Improvement over the Previous Presentation

- Panel appreciated the improvement in the site plan design over the first presentation and commended the functional amenity spaces and the consistent approach.

### Coordination with Neighbouring Sites

- A land swap with the neighbour to the south is desirable to create better conditions on both properties.
- The applicant should work with the neighbour to the south to coordinate the site organization and ensure the two sites are well-connected.

### Overall Site Plan

- The site plan lacks a clear idea of internal site connections. The site planning should be more than the sum of technical requirements of setbacks and vehicular access. Dufferin Street and the Hydro corridor should play major roles in determining the site organization and Green spaces throughout the site should create a whole.
- Since there are no pre-existing conditions within the site that must be accommodated, the blocks can be laid out in any way. A radical rethinking of the proposal may be warranted.

- The design is a tight scheme that could be improved by loosening up in certain areas especially around the townhouses. Maybe the townhouse blocks should be reconsidered for an all mid-rise proposal to allow rationalizing of the access points, streets and open spaces.
- Determine whether the road along the hydro corridor a positive space and a central spine, or is it a service road and the central spine is in the mews
- Overall, improving the usability of the outdoor amenity spaces and the arrival experience are major aspects that need to be addressed in the site plan.

#### Arrival from Dufferin Street

- The central driveway off Dufferin Street is the main arrival experience into the site, and as such, requires significant improvement. The sidewalk is narrow; it requires a stronger streetscape language to be designed more like a boulevard with rows of trees and possibly with lay-by parking.

#### Street Network

- The applicant should look at the design as building a community. The Streets are an expression of the community; they don't have only a functional role and should not be considered only for vehicular use.
- More street hierarchy is required; currently, all roads are designed as driveways. The driveway from Dufferin Street and the north-south driveway should be looked at as streets.
- There should be more consideration for pedestrian movement along the north-south axis.

#### Parking

- Parallel parking should be considered along the north-south street, with bump out connections at crossings to the hydro corridor; this could allow eliminating some of the visitor parking throughout the site.
- The majority of the parking should be accommodated underground, with the balance as parallel parking.

#### Mews

- The mews present a great opportunity but currently is still a residual space. It is important to understand the cross-section of the mews in terms of room for active uses and landscaping for the townhouses.
- The south end of the mews is very problematic; it ends at the side of a building where it intersects with the main entrance to the site.
- The idea of the mews should be carried to the south portion of the site. In this way, all buildings would have front doors on the mews, and the mews will connect the two amenity spaces. The west road could then become just a hard-working back lane that takes on all the servicing functions.
- The applicant should examine if it is possible to locate the firetruck turn-around between buildings C and D and meet the required fire access distance. By eliminating the need for fire access into the mews, there will be opportunities for trees and landscaping in the mews.

### Mid-Rise Buildings Organization

- Building B does not provide sufficient separation from the south property line to allow development on the adjacent property.
- The two mid-rise buildings may be combined into one U-shaped building connected through a central link or a lobby facing the courtyard.
- The leg on building A is unnecessary, and the building may work better as a simple slab building.

### Outdoor Amenity Area

- While the central open amenity area in Phase 2 was improved over the previous presentation, there is still room for improvement, specifically in the way it is flanked by the turn-around. The vehicular movement could be tightened to support a more useable amenity space.
- The location of the playground is not convincing; it should be more centralized and located in the mews area, for example, in a widened space between buildings C and D.

### Architecture

- The architectural expression of the mid-rise buildings feels more institutional or commercial than residential. Explore a more residential expression and tie the aesthetics of both components of the site into one cohesive expression.
- There should be a stronger identity to the architecture, as it feels cold and anonymous; perhaps materiality and the design approach of the townhouses can be translated to the mid-rise buildings to make them more connected and appealing.
- The architectural expression of the mid-rise building could be improved by relating a base to the scale of the townhouses rather than only using a stand-alone design logic.
- The mid-rise buildings don't have a base that would relate to the pedestrian scale. A taller ground floor would assist in achieving a better relationship to the ground level.

## **Vaughan Mills Centre Public Realm and Streetscape Plan – City of Vaughan**

Architects: DTAH

Review: 1<sup>st</sup> Review

### **Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. Did we miss anything in our Existing Conditions Analysis?
2. What do you think about the initial thoughts?
3. Are there additional quick wins or long-term strategies to consider for the Vaughan Mills Mall?

## Overview

- Panel appreciated the comprehensiveness of the presentation and flexibility of the proposed ideas as a way to explore them without committing to them.
- The form and structure the place is already identified in the Secondary Plan and now needs to be refined. There are opportunities to develop the plan in a way that builds on the framework of the Secondary Plan.
- Panel raised questions about the lack of collaboration of the mall owner; Staff should ensure that this collaboration happens during the study.
- There are a few opportunities for “quick wins”, actions that can be implemented in a short timeframe that have high visual impact, to incentivize the city and the stakeholders to further push for the implementation of the plan.
- To create a flexible framework, it is important to ensure that there is a clear hierarchy so that the framework can withstand individual changes. The framework should identify what is the heart of the place: the open spaces and elements that are not negotiable. The secondary spaces can complement those and would be more flexible.
- In the west side, the ambition of Black Creek and the green-blue infrastructure has the potential to create a unique and memorable place.
- It is worthwhile to document the challenges and lessons learnt from other similar projects such as mall redevelopments in the GTA to understand how they can be applied in this plan. This will help prioritize where efforts should be spent by picking the major elements that are critical to the plan’s success and focusing on them.

## Comments

### Overall Framework

- It is important to set the overall framework to allow flexibility in the implementation of the details.
- In the longer term, it is important to look at dissecting the mall footprint, not only to connect but also as the heart of the community for the eastern part of the plan.
- Consider what will be the heart, the centre of the eastern part, and how it will be a meaningful central open space.
- Panel was compelled by the notion of the emerald necklace and the emphasis on complete streets.
- The plan will present specific challenges, including public vs. private streets and what they mean for above- and below-grade design, access and servicing, implementing mid-block connections, and how servicing and loading should not prevent achieving great streetscapes.
- The relationship of community facilities and open spaces is critical, and the potential facilities and services that were identified in the Secondary Plan should be aligned with open spaces throughout the plan.



### The Ring Road

- The implementation of the plan where the interior of the ring road remains as is while the exterior is being redeveloped will create challenging conditions, with surface parking on one side and active uses on the other.
- Assuming the ring road will stay at its current alignment, greening it would go a long way to make a better place. It could become a secondary walking circuit in the same way seniors use the mall right now.
- While shifting the alignment of the ring road to provide opportunities for development on both sides would be beneficial, it would be challenging; but even in its current location, the ring road can be greened and become a unique typology as a memory of the mall, similar to how Roman circuses became plazas or boulevards replaced the obsolete walls of walled cities.

### Interface with Highway 400

- The interface with Highway 400 may be the weakest part of the plan. Perhaps the current plan is too constrained by the existing road network. Active streets with an urban feel, cannot be achieved successfully only with landscaping and will require the use of built form. Maybe in the long term, the western part of the road (on the east part of the site) should be brought closer to the mall to have built form against the highway to achieve a double-loaded pedestrian-oriented street.
- Panel loved the concept of the emerald necklace and the connection that it provided along the highway.
- Making a positive space along the highway will be hard to implement; identifying its distinction from other open spaces will help refine the overall hierarchy. It does not need to be an open space that will be occupied and promote gathering.
- Intervention along the highway is a low-hanging fruit, as the green interface with the highway will change the feel of how you experience the space.

### Quick Wins

- One of the opportunities for quick wins is using seasonal features to allow the attraction of the mall to reach beyond the interior so that people can come and realize what the new opportunities in the area are. These could include improvements such as a splash pad, picnic tables, food trucks.
- It is important to keep making gradual improvements, such as the greening of the highway, so that people see that improvements are happening.
- Green streets and complete streets can be short term wins. Streets that approach the mall site can be made conducive to biking and walking. These are more important in the short term than the green spaces, which will be created in conjunction with new development.

### Public Engagement and Keeping an Updated Plan

- A missing part in the plan is the ongoing review. The package is well-based and covers all the major elements, but where will updates be kept? There have to be mechanisms for feedback and continuous adjustments.
- While currently the mall owner is not involved, there should be a dialogue with the people who use the mall.

- A continuous model of the schemes could help communicate with the public. Don't limit the engagement to stakeholders' meeting; instead, create working groups. This will help drive enthusiasm and create leadership to show that progress is happening.

### The West Side

- On the west side, there is an opportunity for creating a clear vision of an office area along the green and blue infrastructure. the ability to create a place from scratch is an amazing opportunity.
- In employment-centred areas, the users want shared amenity for everyone, not partitioned campus-style developments. These places also help supplement the needs of the broader community.
- Black Creek can help define the west side, this is an opportunity that the east side doesn't have.

### Learning from Precedents

- Mall conversions are now common in the GTA; at this stage of the project, it would be worthwhile looking at the challenges of implementation experienced by other places. Here, there is a special challenge in that the actual mall itself is not yet part of the plan.
- Learn and implement early lessons regarding cross-sections, standards, consolidating service access points to retain active frontages.
- The VMC is an example of a place where a very high-level of landscaping and materiality is not able to compensate for the overly wide street cross-sections. This was the result of a plan that was created in a different urban design context. It's important that the City reviews and provides flexibility with its municipal standards to ensure that Vaughan Mills will not fail to achieve its goals of creating a great public realm.

# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 84 – September 24, 2020

Virtual Meeting

9:00 am

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## **Pre-Meeting**

Committee Members

9:15 am

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## **Call to Order**

Chair's Review of Agenda

Disclosure of Interest

Confirmation of Minutes of July 30, 2020 Meeting

9:30 am

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## **8188 Yonge Street, Constantine and Trulife Mid-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 2<sup>nd</sup> Review**

Presentations:

Lauren Capilongo - Malone Given Parsons

Bonnie Chan - ZO1

Joaquin Sevillano - Land Art Design Landscape Architects

10:40 am

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## **Adjournment**

# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Meeting 84 – September 24, 2020**

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The Design Review Panel was held online on Thursday, September 30, 2020, over Microsoft Teams Virtual Platform.

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Megan Torza, DTAH (Chair)

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

Guela Solow-Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Sheldon Levitt, Quadrangle Architects Ltd.

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair)

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc.

Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

##### **Absent**

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

John Tassiopoulos, WSP Canada Group Ltd

#### **STAFF**

Rob Bayley, Urban Design

Shahzad Davoudi-Strike, Urban Design

Shirin Rohani, Urban Design

Misha Bereznyak, Urban Design

Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Design

Shirley Marsh, Urban Design

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

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

No conflict of interest was declared among the present Panel members.

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting minutes for July 30, 2020, were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**8188 Yonge Street – Constantine and Trulife**

Architect: Z01

Review: 2<sup>nd</sup> Review

**Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

How successful is the new proposal:

- In its response to the neighbouring low-rise residential context, on Uplands Avenue and Helen Street?
- In terms of site organization, massing and architectural expression?
- In creating an urban and fine-grained street wall along Yonge Street?

**Overview**

Overall

- Panel thanked the applicant for the compelling presentation, provided detailed drawings, and responses to the previous DRP comments in 2016.

Building Typologies

- Panel appreciated the proposed massing and block structure and found it very dynamic and very responsive to the context; however, it recommended not adhering to the symmetry of the design at the expense of the functionality of the internal layout.

Landscape and Grading

- The grading of the POPS and the mid-block connection should respect the neighbouring properties. At the proposed concept, the south-west corner of the POPS is roughly one meter higher than the residential property to the west.
- Panel found the entrance to the POPS from Yonge street very inviting; however, the northern entrance on Upland Avenue feels more like a private entrance and not inviting.
- The ambition and the different design ideas proposed for the POPS seems too large for the relatively small space. Panel expressed skepticism regarding the functionality and contribution of ornamental metal panels.
- Panel advised to review/refine the arrival and termination points of the midblock connection into the POPS.
- Panel advised looking into the possibility of consolidating the private amenity spaces at the ground level, on one side of the mid-block connection.

### Architecture

- Panel advised the applicant to simplify the design, both in architecture and in the use of materials and be mindful of future value engineering.
- The practicality and functionality of the ground floor were questioned, with regards to moving, loading and circulation for the south portion of the building.
- The ground floor units along Helen Avenue were considered too small for having two entrances. Ensure the street entrances are not compromised and consider how it would impact the street frontage.
- Retail presence along Yonge street was questioned. The façade does not advertise as a retail façade. The retail canopies need to be included as part of the street wall along the Yonge street and into the midblock connection. Panel recommended reducing or removing the integrated symmetrical design in favour of a unique retail frontage.
- The architectural language of the archway is foreign to the rest of the development; Panel recommended the architect to draw from the existing language for the design of the entrance feature.

## **Comments**

### Overall

- Panel commended the comprehensive approach to the site and the improvements in the project from the last Panel meeting and appreciated the effort and detail put in the presentation and the clear communication of the scheme and the changes from the last iteration.
- Panel felt that the project was full of ideas, almost to an overwhelming degree, and that it may be made more successful by focusing on a couple of very strong ideas and creating a stronger hierarchy of ideas.

### Contextual Fit of the Building

- The building fits well into the surrounding context, and the built-form transition to the lower-scale residential generally works well and will feel more natural as more development takes place in the area.
- Panel applauded the general massing of the project and its ambition for creating connectivity and permeability.

#### Podium and Towers Composition

- The 7-storey podium between the tower may be too tall to create the desired relation to grade; a 5-storey would be preferable, and the lost density may be regained in an 11th storey.
- The building may be too small for two towers, as the scheme creates issues in the higher levels; perhaps the building could be simplified and treated as a large podium, eliminating the opening in the middle.
- Alternatively, Panel suggested looking at giving more emphasis to the gap, e.g. by indenting that area.

#### General Site Design

- The site plan is suffering from the symmetry: the private amenity spaces are split unnecessarily, as spaces both are rather small. The applicant should consider shifting the mid-block connection north to consolidate them; this will also allow it to terminate at the POPS, which now is a little offset, and will help rationalize the ground floor activities.
- Panel suggested that there may be too many different site elements and recommended identifying the most important ones to bullet-proof the design so that it can withstand future value-engineering and eliminate concerns about the future cost of maintenance.

#### Mid-Block Connection

- The entrance to the mid-block connection is a very inviting opening on Yonge Street, but the entrance from Uplands Avenue feels like a private garden, and it is not inviting.
- It's not clear how the mid-block will provide value, considering it connects to a low-density area.
- To support permeability, there should be a clear narrative about why people would use the mid-block connection – as a shortcut, for leisure, shopping etc. – to provide meaning and drive the design. At 80 m, the connection is long, but it could work if it is framed and supported by programming.
- Panel felt that the big gesture that starts at the arch and the grand promenade does not end in a significant manner. There needs to be an arrival place in the courtyard where you know you have transitioned from the more public space near Yonge Street, and further differentiation from the residents' amenity spaces.
- The area within the courtyard feels too wide and open, in contrast to the transition from Yonge Street.
- The termination of the connection from Yonge Street at the POPS should be resolved to properly 'catch the energy' from Yonge Street.

## POPS

- The POPS, with the meandering paths and lack of sitting spaces, is currently not designed to encourage staying.
- There should be a more natural integration of the POPS with the east-west connection.
- The POPS has the potential to be very successful and serve both the public and the residents of the project but should be designed to allow passive enjoyment and sitting.
- The scale of the POPS does not afford the idea of a forest with meandering paths, and the interface with the neighbour does not address potential privacy issues.

## Metal Elements

- Panel had doubts about the necessity of the metal screens throughout the site. In the passage, the elements are counterproductive since that area should be an integral part of Yonge Street.
- Panel raised a concern about the potential of the metal elements to create glare issues.

## Servicing

- Vehicular movements may not work well as they seem to be in conflict with people walking
- Some functional issues seem not to be resolved yet, e.g. getting from the moving bay to the south tower.
- Three lobbies are necessary, but it is not clear that access for deliveries and drop-offs works or that the one parking spot for deliveries is enough. Consider making use of the indoor-outdoor connection to make the need to cross the site (e.g. to pick up a pizza delivery) a feature instead of using internal corridors.

## Grading

- The rationale for the proposed grade difference at the west edge is not clear, since there is no underground parking and it only creates an unnecessary ramp from Yonge to the rear. Removing the grade difference will also make the private amenity spaces more functional and clear.
- Panel raised a concern regarding the grading condition at the west edge of the site that it was not accurately represented and could result in overland flooding.

## Architectural Expression

- The massing of the building is very dynamic and responsive to the context. However, the envelope expression, in materiality and colour, does not support the massing or allow it to be expressed to the full extent. Panel encouraged the applicant to approach the architectural expression with a more holistic view and to edit out and tone down some of the elements while maintaining the important parts.
- Panel suggested a few specific approaches to simplifying the building:
  - Consider eliminating some of the schemes;



- Examine if the additional materiality of the balconies soffits is needed;
- Eliminate some of the heavier stone and open up the amenity spaces with curtain wall;
- Use the architectural language shown in the evocative view of the terraces from above or the language of the west elevation as a guide for the language larger portions of the building.
- Panel suggested looking at lightening the building as it was perceived as quite dark.
- The breakdown to architectural schemes A, B, C good and strong move, but can be mixed and matched more between the north and south buildings.
- The material palette is clear and consistent but does not work with the entry arch element, which introduces foreign material and form that are not echoed elsewhere in the site.

### Retail

- Panel appreciated the effort to create a strong retail frontage but was concerned that the architectural elements do not advertise it as such, lacking projecting wall signs that are seen in all directions. Architectural integration may be prioritized too much over the prominence of retail, and the overall architecture of the building may be too strong and should not be brought down to the retail level.
- Panel suggested that the retail canopies should be integrated into the street wall.
- The spill-over of the retail into the area and the arch are good. There are similar existing examples that work well, even in narrower and longer conditions.

### General Concerns

- The small size of the units at the ground level facing the streets may not work with two entrances, and it is important to ensure that direct entries from the street are not compromised. If they cannot work with two entrances, the units should retain direct street access.
- Panel raised a concern that the typical 9' ceiling height will not be enough to accommodate the transfers required at the terraces.

# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 85 – October 29, 2020

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 24, 2020 Meeting

9:30 am

## **7800 Jane Street, Aspen Ridge and Metrus, Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 2<sup>nd</sup> Review**

Presentations:

Les Klein - Quadrangle Architects

Gus Maurano - MBTW Group

10:40 am

## **Break**

10:50 am

## **7818 Dufferin Street, Enirox Group, High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1<sup>st</sup> Review**

Presentations:

Mohammed Al-Atheri - WZMH Architects

Mario Patitucci - Adesso Design Inc.

Roman Tsap - KFA Architects + Planners Inc.

12:10 pm

## **Break (Lunch)**

12:30 pm

## **7082 Islington Avenue (Primont) - Phase 2 - Towers 3 & 4, High-Rise Residential, 1<sup>st</sup> Review**

Presentations:

Les Klein - Quadrangle Architects

1:40 pm

## **Adjournment**

# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Meeting 85 – October 29, 2020**

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The Design Review Panel was held online on Thursday, October 29, 2020, over Microsoft Teams Virtual Platform.

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Megan Torza, DTAH (Chair)

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

Guela Solow-Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Sheldon Levitt, Quadrangle Architects Ltd.

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc.

Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

John Tassiopoulos, WSP Canada Group Ltd

##### **Absent**

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair)

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

##### **STAFF**

Rob Bayley, Urban Design

Amy Roots, VMC Urban Design

Gaston Soucy, VMC Urban Design

Natalie Wong, VMC Development Planning

Eugene Fera, Development Planning

Chris Cosentino, Development Planning

Carol Birch, Development Planning

Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Urban Design

Shirin Rohani, Urban Design

Misha Bereznyak, Urban Design

Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Design

Shirley Marsh, Urban Design

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

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Sheldon Levitt declared conflict of interest for items 1 and 3.

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting minutes for September 24, 2020, were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**7800 Jane Street, Vaughan Metropolitan Centre**

Architect: Quadrangle Architects

Landscape Architect: The MBTW Group

Review: 2<sup>nd</sup> Review

**Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. How successful is the overall building program and design in responding to, and integrating with, the surrounding context?
2. How effective is the proposed public realm in relation to the building's ground floor intended uses, and in aligning with the VMC Secondary Plan and the VMC Streetscape and Open Space Plan policies and recommendations?

**Overview**

- **Overall Presentation** – Panel thanked the applicant for a comprehensive presentation that addressed and responded to previous DRP comments.

- **Site Organization and Context** – Panel noted that the programming, design and location of the proposed building frontages offer good animation potential throughout the block which will help serve the surrounding context in a positive manner.
- **Streetscape** – Panel appreciated an overall landscape strategy that provides a great deal of amenity and beauty to the streetscapes that surround the building but emphasized that more greening along Highway 7 and at residential entrances would improve the quality of the public realm.
- **Architecture** – Panel recognized the efforts to improve the design of the proposed breezeway through the inclusion of more suitable active uses along its frontages and the incorporation of the serpentine design element as a wind mitigation strategy. However, Panel still expressed concerns regarding the design, and had the following recommendations:
  - Additional strategies such as massaging the façades and/or articulation of the flanking walls should be studied to contribute in minimizing potentially adverse wind tunneling impacts along the breezeway.
  - Carefully study the signage and identity strategy as this will be crucial to the success of the breezeway. Consider incorporating this into the wind mitigation design strategy.
  - Consider flexibility in the design. The proposed serpentine option might not be flexible enough to accommodate simple changes in the future to the potential distribution and programming of the ground floor spaces.
- **Programming and Uses** – Panel recommended allowing for the overall ground floor design to be as flexible as possible to accommodate other programs and uses in the event that retail viability does not work as originally intended. e.g. workshare spaces.
- **Public Art** – Panel noted that there is an opportunity for the incorporation of public art to take advantage of the iconic nature of the site, particularly at the corner of Jane Street and Highway 7.

## Comments

### Site Organization

- Good approach on the dual scale of the project, in recognizing the importance of the site, anchoring the corner and creating a grand, iconic gateway while addressing a more intimate human scale at the public realm level.
- The approach to look at options and strategies in response to the flood plain issue is smart, as it allows for the project to evolve and move forward in a viable manner.
- The dramatic grade change at the corner of Jane Street and Highway 7 presents challenges but also opportunities. Look for examples of projects with similar conditions that improve the human scale and fine grain nature of the space by providing more intimate seating, planting and other elements that allow for a better transition in scale and invite for people to use the space for something more than just passing by. e.g. steps that transform into seating, more benches around planters.

- The potential to continue the midblock pedestrian connection west to the Millway Avenue subway access is very promising and should be represented as a recommendation in the context plan.
- The location of the main office and residential lobby entrances is good as they create points of interest that activate the corners.
- The undulating façade along the parkade west wall is creating an interesting articulation that softens its presence on the future north-south local road.
- The design approach of adding townhouse frontages and residential lobby entrances along the future north-south local road, as well as creating a pedestrian friendly boulevard that includes trees and planters, is very positive as it does not read as a service road.
- Concentrating the service, loading and parking ramp access areas to the central core of the buildings is a good move that allows for a better public realm. But these areas seem tight and might not function as well in practice.

### Landscape

- The overall landscape approach throughout the site shows a high-level ambition and thoughtfulness - particularly along the Apple Mill Road boulevard and at the rooftop terrace.
- The rooftop amenity terrace resolution is very rich and includes a significant amount of planting which is good. The programming and inclusion of outdoor workstation areas is thoughtful, especially during these times when outdoor space is becoming so valuable.
- The landscape design along Highway 7 could be greener to reinforce the strategy of a threshold to Edgeley Pond and Park. Study the inclusion of additional planting and trees even if through multi-level, raised planters, if underground slabs and/or the flood plain issues represent obstacles.
- Pending resolution of the flood plain issue, Option 2, which assumes that the flood plain problems are resolved, is a more favourable option as it allows for a better relationship between the building's ground floor and the adjacent public realm. Nevertheless, and in the context of both options, use a similar lens to create equal opportunities for pedestrians when it comes to design and the amount of seating.

### Architecture

- The overall design successfully unifies and incorporates a variety of massing forms, materials and articulations with free flow elements that adapt successfully into the landscape.
- The residential lobbies could benefit from the incorporation of canopies that help strengthen the human scale, protect people from the elements and create stronger gestures that accentuate each building's point of entrance.
- The breezeway is an important move that brings permeability to the site. It needs to be inviting, while successfully functioning at a human scale and through all the seasons. Explore opportunities to adapt the space through the year, including possibilities for enclosure during the winter months.

- The articulation of the façade wrapping down onto the breezeway works well in signaling where the entrance is, but it might have a counter effect by amplifying the wind and generating a wind tunnel.
- The design of the breezeway interiors does not seem to provide enough wind mitigation. Adding more articulation and breaks to the edges might help to alleviate the wind tunnel effect.
- The proposed serpentine design element inside the breezeway works well from an aesthetic point of view but does not seem to allow for flexibility when it comes to the use of the space.
- The inclusion of more retail and other active uses along the breezeway is a positive move that will help animate the space. However, it is a challenging space that will require more thought when it comes to the design and scale of the entrances, signage and wind mitigation strategies. Consider making the entrances taller and incorporating signage to their design to give them a stronger presence in the space.
- Consider incorporating CPTED principles when designing the breezeway elements to ensure that new problems are not created as existing ones are solved. e.g. hiding points when proposing entrances, signage and wind mitigation strategies.
- Consider deleting the east side of the parking aisle through the parkade above to create a nudge that allows light to flow all the way from the rooftop amenity to the breezeway.

#### Public Art

- There is an excellent opportunity to incorporate a public art element at the corner of Jane Street and Highway 7 that helps the project transition to an at-grade, pedestrian scale that invites people to stay in, and enjoy the space.

#### **7818 Dufferin Street – Enirox Group**

Architect: WZMH Architects  
 Review: 1<sup>st</sup> Review

#### **Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. Does the site organization and proposed built form fits well within its immediate context and the greater context of the neighborhood?
2. How successful is the proposed public realm along the streets and interior to the site?

#### **Overview**

##### Site Organization and Contextual Fit

- With regards to the contextual fit, there was support for the design analysis at the macro level with respect to built form height progression from North to South, but

at the micro level the design is inconsistent with the big picture; the townhouse element along Dufferin St does not fit into that idea. Vehicular access and traffic were another concern for the townhouses. Panel unanimously questioned the appropriateness of them.

- Panel also remarked that the way development has addressed the corner of Dufferin and Centre is weak and a stronger presence is needed.
- The podium heights in particular don't support the notion of a vibrant, comfortable setting; the massing is too bulky to allow for a pleasant environment, not only within the center of the block, but more importantly, around the edges.
- Panel questioned the architectural character of the podium and asked for a more compatible architectural language between the podium and tower element.

### Public Realm

- There is too much investment in the courtyard and not enough given to the edges of the site; the edges on Dufferin and Centre need to be more urban, more transparent, and more accessible to the pedestrians along the public rights-of-way. The edges to the West and the North need to be given more energy and investment so that they are actual places in and of themselves.
- The diagonal connection should be either reconsidered or modified to ensure that it connects to a significant place and not a drop-off.
- Explore the hydro corridor as a potential future amenity that has a positive influence on the site, in terms of the treatment of the roadway and the screening elements themselves.
- Reconsider how the drop-off is located and related to the location of lobbies in the property. A discrete turn-around may not be required, as long as the drop-off areas are visible and within reasonable walking distances from the lobbies.

## **Comments**

### General

- There is clarity in the presentation materials. Panel applauded the good intentions and the good analysis of the greater context, but there is difficulty reconciling these with the reality of the context and the proposed design.

### Comprehensive Approach

- The site and the adjacent properties are all designed individually. This approach doesn't follow the design guidelines for the corner, which envision a mid-block pedestrian connection. A more comprehensive block development, and coordination with the neighbours to the north is vitally important; in addition to vehicular connection to the site there should also be pedestrian connections to the courtyard(s) to the north.

### Massing and Built Form

- The general massing arrangement is good. The west side of the site is the appropriate place for the greatest height, but Panel expressed concern about the



shadow impact on the courtyard and request the massing be redesigned to minimize this impact.

- The north bar building facing the site to the north will create an unfavourable condition due to its height. Reduce the height or find other means to improve the condition.
- On the south-east corner, while the shape is interesting, the sharp angles may be problematic with the views from window to window; a 90-degree connection would be preferable.
- At the south-east corner, Panel recommended to drop the height to 3 storeys and do terracing up to 6 storeys to open up the space at the pinch point.
- The building is complex, and a lot of the GFA is not good area. Could be improved by being simpler.
- The 12-storey podium on the south building is problematic. The move from 12 storeys to 25 storeys does not favour the tower. The 12 storey is too high for the podium and should be lowered; a 6-storey podium would work better and provide more sun in the courtyard.
- Revisit the proportions between the built form and the open space; a lower podium will allow to simplify the building with fewer step-backs.

#### Vehicular Access and Servicing

- The residential drop-off creates a lot of circuitous movement within site, is hard to find, and too removed from the lobbies and density. It is better to integrate drop-offs through lay-by parking spaces on the north and west roads
- If visitor parking for retail is underground, the access to the ramp is inconvenient and far too removed from it.
- Explore integrating services to reduce the frontage dedicated to servicing on the west service driveway.
- A traffic circle type treatment at north-west corner could allow for a turn-around and take the drop-off outside the outdoor amenity space. The ramp doesn't need to be close to the drop-off. The pick-up and drop-off could take place on the driveway and allow to strengthen the pedestrian treatment at edge of site.

#### General Site Organization

- While Panel appreciated the intent of the open space, they felt that it not well defined and is too big. It will be a high expense for the condominium to maintain it. The open space should be less in size but more meaningful in programming.
- The hockey stick part may provide an interesting opportunity to create a linear park. It's not clear why the diagonal is in the same direction as the site to the north; it would have been better to mirror the direction of the plans and have both diagonals connecting to that linear park. The tower is next to three hydro towers, and mirroring the plan will also provide more spacing from the hydro corridor.

#### Streets/Driveways at the North and West Edges of the Site

- Panel appreciated the thoughtfulness about Centre and Dufferin Streets as urban boulevards; however, there is lack of hierarchy and clear role for the new local

streets, and they feel more like back-of-house areas. Some of the landscaped space could be applied to these other streets, to create boulevards on the secondary streets.

- The design ignores the north street between the sites which is the most important east-west connection through the site. The design creates a canyon effect; the buildings should be at least 10 m from the property line to create a place that doesn't feel like a back alley both for the experience at-grade and the residents overlooking from their windows. It should have a pedestrian feel, with boulevard trees and with grade-related units rather than a blank wall. The whole building can be shifted southward closer to Centre Street to achieve that.
- The articulation of the two 'L's is challenging; maybe the north 'L' can be moved east towards Dufferin Street to make the west street a better place and allow for a boulevard. On the west street, street parking should be on the other side with a pedestrian connection along that edge and ground floor units should have a proper interface with separation from the street.

#### Interface with the Hydro Corridor

- The reality of the hydro corridor is worse than what is conveyed in the presentation. The corridor and Highway 407 are not well integrated into the city, and they should be visually and acoustically concealed but there is potential for future improvements of Hydro corridor and applicant should explore future connections.

#### Interface with Centre Street and Dufferin Street

- The open corner should be strengthened with a direct connection from the BRT station into the POPS and retail wrap around, the landscape treatment should also emphasize this particular connection. The retail should be concentrated at the square to reinforce it with activity.
- The viability of the retail on the site should be considered carefully. Hopefully, Centre street will be more viable with the introduction of the BRT but it is hard to imagine a pedestrian flow towards the Hydro corridor and the freeway, the retail on Centre Street may not be functional.
- Dufferin Street is not planned to change and feels like a highway; the viability of the retail on this street should also be considered with the understanding of these realities. This would also impact the appropriate landscape treatment.
- For the major streets, the landscape treatment is mostly huge swathes of lawn; instead of a permeable treatment to make the space less separating. While the retail won't be able to rely on pedestrian traffic, it would still be better to have more meaningful planting instead of a buffer.
- The gateway landmark piece works at the macro scale, but at micro level one expects a mass and instead there is a void. This is made even more significant as the podium facades facing the street are less appealing than the upper portions. The void, in combination with the enormity of the intersection, does not make an urban or inviting place; it is not supported by the retail, and there is danger of having empty retail or poor-quality shops.

### The Courtyard Area

- While the diagonal connection is a big gesture, its promise is unfulfilled as it arrives at a drop-off area. Panel proposed a few possible approaches to resolve this: break the linear path to allow it to arrive at a significant place and create a more playful path, and/or relocate the proposed art piece at the end of the diagonal path.
- Panel suggested the applicant to identify if the courtyard is a public place or a private space as suggested by ground related uses.
- To make the courtyard lively, the at-grade units facing the courtyard should have direct access to it. Passive programming such as flexible seating areas for individuals and small groups is missing from the courtyard.
- The connection between the open space to the courtyard should be more urban, even if not necessarily fully paved.
- As the outdoor amenity area has good access to the late afternoon sun, the applicant should consider locating café-type retail in that area.
- Wind impact should be mitigated to ensure the courtyard is useable all year round.

### The Townhouse Component

- Panel reiterated the importance of coordination with the neighbour to resolve the problems associated with this piece of land.
- The townhouse component does not fit the applicant's analysis, which shows increasing height and density when approaching south to Centre Street, as the townhouses are a tiny element adjacent to the large mid-rise block. The townhouse piece also doesn't work from a transportation perspective since the traffic to/from Dufferin Street will make the units inaccessible.

### Architectural Expression

- The connection between the podium and tower is unsuccessful and feels like two different projects. There needs to be an interface and a sense of familiarity between the parts. The different languages don't relate to each other, and the podium doesn't act as a base.

## **7082 Islington Avenue - Phase 2 (Tower 3 &4) – Primont**

Architect: Quadrangle

Review: 1<sup>st</sup> Review

### **Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. How successful is the phase 2 proposal in its spatial relationship with the phase 1 development, the approved townhouses and the existing church?

2. Does the phase 2 proposal create a strong relationship to the overall public realm on Islington Avenue and the open space network interior to the site supporting more pedestrian movement and street life?

## Overview

### Spatial relationship to Phase one:

- Panel generally supported the overall design approach. However, they questioned the location and connectivity of amenity space to the lobby. Panel emphasized the importance of having a clear overall outdoor open space hierarchy between the amenity spaces in phase 1 and phase 2 and how they will be understood by residents within the overall development.
- Explore the relationship between the lower entry lobby and the area facing the church by introducing a two storey (additional) lobby or a landscaped pedestrian access into the site; to define that frontage and the character of the space next to the church.
- Explore the potential to combine the loading and the ramps in phase 2 with the phase 1 or relocate them to minimize the vehicular circulation in favour of public realm.

### Public Realm

- The most significant amenity on this site is the ravine landscape to the west and south, and it's important to eliminate as many barriers between the residents' front door and that landscape amenity.
- The applicant should maximize the ravine's edge landscape by reducing the pavement within the roundabout and improving the relationship between the building frontages onto the walkway at the southern edge of the property. The walkway itself should be safe at all times through the principles of CPTED.
- The ramp to the underground parking should be relocated/combined to reduce the driveway and increase public open space.
- It's important to optimize and maximize the animated frontages of the site and to use the grade change to hide the elements that don't contribute to a lively building edge.

## Comments

### General

- Understanding the project requires more cross sections, especially at the interface with the church. The package could have benefited from a comprehensive plan between both phases, showing a composite view of the architecture and the landscape.
- While this is not in the scope of this phase, it would be desirable if there was a density exchange made with the townhouses to the south to open-up a view to the ravine.

- There is an opportunity to integrate the two courtyards and make them more cohesive.

### Tower Separation

- The small separation of tower 4 from the south property line is problematic. The south wing of the base building should be moved north to achieve minimum 12.5 m tower separation from the property line.
- The zoning bylaw framework has towers 3 and 4 with a right-angle relationship. There is a question whether the increased dimension between the towers is more valuable than having clear long views to the north, it might be better to have a tighter corner relationship in favour of a better view.

### Relationship with the Church

- There is ambiguity about what happens around the church. Currently, the area doesn't function as an outdoor space with the framing and the programming. Explore how the amenity space facing the church can connect to the lobby and to the ravine pathway and how it can create a public place.

### The Trail

- The edge against the trail has a lot of opportunity, but the building is too close to the trail. The design should focus on this edge as an important frontage.
- Explore a secondary pathway providing access from the area behind the church to the ravine pathway
- Safety is critical on the trail next to the blank wall of the ramp.
- Clarify how the slope works: if it is level or if there is a retaining wall condition along the pathway.

### The Courtyard

- The loading and underground ramp overwhelm the courtyard. Applicant should look to integrate them between the two project phases - two ramps for four towers are not needed. The only service area that should be separate for this phase is space for moving and deliveries.
- The drop-off is too generous, there is an opportunity to gain useable area south of the building by reducing parking spaces and relocating or consolidating elements of vehicular circulation; decreasing the amount of pavement while maintaining maneuverability.
- If the median is required it should be extended to the first entrance; if not, there is additional potential for reducing pavement.
- The landscaped space south of the courtyard could make a nice lookout point; There are no interior uses that are related to this space, but there is an opportunity to use it in a more active way.
- There should be more thinking about the landscape pattern within the overall site.

### Amenity Spaces and Lobbies

- Create a story for the amenity spaces at the different levels, as they connect the public and private areas.
- Consider having the main entrance from the area facing the church to make the lobby more significant with a centralized two-storey lobby relating back to the lower portion . An additional stair could connect to a modest secondary pedestrian lobby on the corner.
- There is opportunity to extend the outdoor amenity area on the 4th level to the south to get closer to ravine and the woodlot.

# CITY OF VAUGHAN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

AGENDA: MEETING 86 – November 26, 2020

Virtual Meeting

9:00 am

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## Pre-Meeting

Committee Members

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9:15 am

## Call to Order

Chair's Review of Agenda

Disclosure of Interest

Confirmation of Minutes of October 29, 2020 Meeting

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9:30 am

## Block A5 - SmartCentres, Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, High-Rise Mixed-Use Development, 1<sup>st</sup> Review

Presentations:

David Pontarini - Hariri Pontarini Architects

Greg Costa - MHBC Planning Urban Design & Landscape Architecture

Paula Bustard - SmartCentres

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10:40 am

## Adjournment

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# **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

## **DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

### **Meeting 86 – November 26, 2020**

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The Design Review Panel was held online on Thursday, November 26, 2020, over Microsoft Teams Virtual Platform.

#### **PANEL MEMBERS**

##### **Present**

Megan Torza, DTAH (Chair)

Alfredo Landaeta, Forrec

Sheldon Levitt, Quadrangle Architects Ltd.

Peter Turner, Turner Fleischer Architects Inc.

Ute Maya-Giambattista, SGL Planning & Design Inc.

Henry Burstyn, IBI Group

John Tassiopoulos, WSP Canada Group Ltd

Wayne Swanton, Janet Rosenberg & Studio

##### **Absent**

Paul Kulig, Perkins + Will (Vice Chair)

Guela Solow-Ruda, Petroff Partnership Architects

Michael Rietta, Giannone Petricone Associates Architects

Margaret Briegmann, BA Group

Fung Lee, PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

##### **STAFF**

Rob Bayley, Urban Design

Christina Bruce, Director, VMC Program

Amy Roots, Development Planning, VMC Program

Jennifer Cappola-Logullo, Development Engineering, VMC Program

Gerardo Paez Alonso, Parks, VMC Program

Gaston Soucy, Urban Design, VMC Program

Natalie Wong, Development Planning, VMC Program



Musa Deo, Transportation, VMC Program  
Alex Lee, Development Engineering, VMC Program  
Cory Gray, Parks, VMC Program  
Shahrzad Davoudi-Strike, Urban Design  
Shirin Rohani, Urban Design  
Misha Bereznyak, Urban Design  
Chrisa Assimopoulos, Urban Design  
Shirley Marsh, Urban Design

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

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA**

APPROVED unanimously by present members.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

**3. ADOPTION/CORRECTION OF MINUTES**

Meeting minutes for October 29, 2020, were approved.

**4. DESIGN REVIEW**

**Block A5 - SmartCentres, Vaughan Metropolitan Centre**

Architect: Hariri Pontarini Architects

Landscape Architect: MHBC Planning Urban Design & Landscape Architecture

Review: 1<sup>st</sup> Review

**Introduction**

City staff sought Panel's advice on the following:

1. Is the overall building massing, site organization and future east-west road right-of-way positioned appropriately in response to the adjacent context and vision for the quadrant as expressed in the VMC Secondary Plan and Urban Design Guidelines?
2. Are the proposed accesses, services, programming and uses appropriately located within the site and in respect to the surrounding public realm, central courtyard and built context?

## Overview

- **Overall Presentation** – Panel thanked the applicant for a comprehensive and thoughtful presentation.
- **Site Organization and Context** – Panel appreciated the ambition in the variety of scale, character and function within the outdoor open space and public realm network, but had questions and comments pertaining to the distinction between public and private spaces. Panel commented there was room for improvement to make these spaces more visually accessible, welcoming and public and noted that the programming of the building ground floor uses will help determine the character of the street and open spaces network. Consideration should be made for a smaller scale, more flexible design that allows for innovative programming and a variety uses.
- **Streetscape** – Panel commented that it will be very important to understand the envisioned character of each of the streets and how each block contributes to the consistency and vision for the rest of the quadrant. For example, Buttermill Avenue has the Centre of Community daycare across the street and a group of townhouses to the north which suggest a specific character that should be consistent throughout.
- **Architecture** – Panel expressed appreciation for the high aspiration and overall design strategy of the project including the heterogeneous design, variety in height and materiality.

The proposed amenity “jewel” building at the south east corner is an intriguing concept but more work is required to determine its shape, character, function and ultimate role within the proposal and the public realm. Panel debated whether it would be better suited for a pure function or whether it should be more flexible in nature? Should it be integrated with public art?

- **Servicing** – Panel praised the benefits of the proposed strategy\ to internalize and locate some of the services underground in a compact manner. However, the location of the service access near the north east corner is generating a blind corner which is not contributing to the activation of a healthy public realm.

Panel recommended that the proposed vehicular drop-off should be studied in more depth to determine if it is justified at this location and if it is contributing to the vision and character of the street.

- **Circulation** – Panel suggested studying pedestrian movement desire lines and destination points when designing the circulation network to determine how these will affect the functionality and programming of the courtyards and open spaces.

## Comments

### Site Organization and Landscape

- Good overall presentation and concept for the entire site. Design principles are simple, clear and give a good, general understanding of the intentions of the project.
- It would be good to show an expanded context outside the site to better understand the overall intent and character of the area. For example, what is the future vision and purpose of Buttermilk Avenue, the east-west connection and development blocks to the north. This data will inform how the project should respond to these frontages in terms of design and function and how these will, in turn, affect the overall design and vision of the area.
- Having the east-west local road positioned so that it is contiguous and aligned with the east-west roadway to the east and directly north of the YMCA building will be very important. This alignment should be consistent throughout the plan.
- In regard to the ground floor and community experience, there seems to be a focus on the idea of purity when it comes to having entirely pedestrianized zones. This can result in the danger of creating dull spaces because, in spite of the good intentions, these might not be interesting spaces to be in.
- The bold approach to take over the entire site and start interconnecting the different blocks through internal open spaces is exciting but creates concerns as to how these courtyards are really going to function and interact with each other, especially at a larger master plan level. There might be a need for different scales and functions within these spaces as opposed to similarly sized courtyards and programming throughout the project. In this regard, there is a wonderful opportunity to conceive of the whole project as a cohesive whole, and program the spaces as a big network rather than individual courtyards.
- Panel noted that the ground floor public realm will operate as a series of organic and free flowing circulation paths connecting to/from different directions which should create healthy activation on all fronts. But how these are designed to allow for efficient movement through the site and quadrant without interfering with the primary intended programming, functions and uses of these spaces will be key to the success of this strategy.
- The public north-south pedestrian connection is quite clear, but the proposed furnishing and canopies seem to be separating it from the central courtyard, making it more difficult to read as either public or private. The same applies to the spaces around the amenity “jewel” building at the south east corner which seem to be working only as underutilized circulation spaces. The central courtyard is not feeling public enough and seems to be given over to a single use which is not clearly defined. Understanding that there are conflicting needs and requirements for these spaces, Panel agreed that it would be beneficial to explore a clear programming strategy that better defines the intended uses and relationships between these spaces.

- Instead of traditional retail and amenity uses, this area would benefit from the creation of more in flux alternative uses at the ground floor level where dynamic and interesting activities could happen throughout the site. Explore the idea of smaller places that people can take over, such as community uses or work-share spaces at the ground floor level.
- With the understanding that it is very difficult to design a building with four good development frontages, the location of the utility/service access will be critical to the success of the project. Panel recommended exploring the idea of accommodating the more utilitarian frontage on the east-west road to the north rather than in front of the Centre of Community daycare playground on Buttermill Avenue.
- Relocating some of the loading functions to the underground is a good move to help keep the ground floor public realm more pedestrian friendly. However, the location and size of the ground floor ramp and loading dock at the corner are questionable. Panel recommended moving this further to the west to create more room for queuing and manoeuvring functions and/or reorienting the ramp towards the south side to alleviate the pressure at the north-east corner. This would allow for a more appropriate active use of the corner.

#### Architecture, Built Form and Massing

- The project brings a unique approach that's different from the other tower and podium proposals in the area creating a shape and style that is both fresh and innovative. The strong built form and distribution of massing which maximize solar gains set it up to be a good project.
- The proposed amenity "jewel" building at the south east corner is an interesting idea and opportunity that perhaps should be explored as something more independent and less connected to the development. Panel recommended exploring the opportunity to create a more playful free-standing sculptural building that offers community-oriented or retail-related services, rather than amenity spaces for the condo residents. Panel noted that the evening and nighttime function of the space should be carefully considered, which will also affect how the surrounding open spaces are designed.
- Panel noted that the proposed amenity "jewel" building is a special but expensive building and suggested that perhaps that effort could be instead focused on the six-storey midrise building facing the park which could then become the "jewel." This building could have very unique ground floor uses that respond to the park.
- The tower locations and height transitions work well and respond to the surrounding context, but some of the facing distances are tight which might generate privacy concerns. Consider chamfering or reshaping the corners to reduce potential visibility conflicts.
- Consider lowering the height of building C to reduce the shadow impact on the courtyard during the shoulder seasons.

- Panel recognized the quality, grain and detail of the tower architecture but noticed that the tower at Buttermill Avenue is landing straight down to grade and suggested introducing a horizontal projection in the form of a special feature such as a porte cochere or canopy at the lobby entrance, in addition to the proposed colonnade.

#### Public Art

- Panel supported the idea of introducing public art at the south east corner or alternatively incorporating it into the architecture of the proposed amenity “jewel” building.