



PLANNING A GREAT CITY TOGETHER

CITY OF TORONTO DESIGN REVIEW PANEL MINUTES: MEETING 11– November 23, 2016

The Design Review Panel met on Wednesday November 23, in Committee Room 2, Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen Street West, Toronto, at 1:15 pm.

	<i>Members Present</i>
Members of the Design Review Panel	
Gordon Stratford (Chair): Architect, Senior Vice President, Design Director – HOK	✓
Michael Leckman (Vice Chair): Architect, Principal – Diamond and Schmitt	
Carl Blanchaer: Architect, Principal – WZMH Architects	✓
Calvin Brook: Planner, Architect, Principal – Brook McIlroy	
Dima Cook: Heritage Specialist, Senior Architect & Senior Associate – FGMDA	✓
Ralph Giannone: Architect, Principal – Giannone Associates	✓
Meg Graham : Architect, Principal – superkül	✓
Brian Hollingworth: Transportation Engineer, Director – IBI Group	
Joe Lobko: Architect, Principal – DTAH	✓*
Jenny McMinn: Sustainability Specialist, Vice President – BuildGreen Solutions	
Jim Melvin: Landscape Architect, Principal – PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.	✓
Adam Nicklin: Landscape Architect, Principal – PUBLIC WORK	
David Sisam : Architect, Principal – Montgomery Sisam Architects	✓
Sibylle von Knobloch: Landscape Architect, Principle – NAK Design	

**was absent for second item*

Design Review Panel Coordinator

Janet Lee: Urban Design, City Planning Division

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Panel confirmed minutes of their previous meeting which was held on Oct 6, 2016. Additions to the Townhouse and Low-Rise Building Guidelines Minutes were raised and were revised.

MEETING 10 INDEX

- i. **2454 Bloor St W (1st Review)**
(2442-2454 Bloor St W and 1-9 Riverview Gardens)
- ii. **505 Richmond St West, (1st Review)**
(497, 505 and 511 Richmond St W)

505 RICHMOND ST WEST

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL MINUTES

DESIGN REVIEW	First Review
APPLICATION	Rezoning and Site Plan Approval
DEVELOPER	Mod Developments
<i>PRESENTATIONS:</i>	
DESIGN TEAM	Diamond Schmitt – Donald Schmitt
CITY STAFF	Michelle Knierem, Community Planning; Nasim Adab, Urban Design; John O'Reilly, Heritage Preservation Services
VOTE	Refinement –6 Redesign - 0



Introduction

City staff outlined the project history, existing and future context, and planning framework. Staff are seeking Panel's advice on the following issues:

1. Articulation, including:

- General approach
- Location and design of balconies
- Mechanical Penthouse design

2. West elevation design, floor levels 1-4:

Please advise on the 3D form and material expression of the modern infill piece that replaces the 1-storey garage.

3. Park interface: Staff are concerned with privatizing areas of the park for patrons of the food hall, and limiting full public programming and access to the park. Please advise how this could be improved.

The consultant provided background information, process to date, design rationale and responded to questions.

Chair's Summary of Key Points

The Panel thanks the proponent team for a programme and design that has the potential to greatly enhance the quality of life in a neighbourhood that has undergone considerable change. Further work is needed to fully realize this promising start, including the following:

- Continue to envision the entire block (development and park) as a cohesive whole.
- Improve street frontage permeability and accessibility of the ground level design; creating a stronger connection between interior and exterior public realm.
- Situate main pedestrian entry to YMCA off of the interior public realm.

- Further develop building design including: stepping back and breaking down penthouse massing, providing more verticality in façade articulation, and lightening the dark colour of the new built form.
- Provide more of the surrounding context in the 3D views in future submission.

Panel Comments

General

Panel members commended this "incredibly exciting" project and were generally impressed with the proposal for this important site. The mix of uses with housing, affordable housing, food hall, YMCA and adjacency to the park was appreciated by Panel members - "It's a project the whole city can be proud of." Similar to the Wychwood barns transformation into a successful community space, the re-use of the great hall will "reinvent the whole community".

Articulation –Tower (levels 5 and up)

- Consider ways to make the building a little less bulky:

While several Panel members advised refinements, others were supportive of the proposed with further progress on details and materials. A Panel member noted, "It's like the suits young men wear these days – the suits are a little bit too tight when they do up the buttons...The building feels a little bit big and bulky."

- More setbacks and setbacks:

A Panel member noted that part of the somewhat bulky massing has to do with the setbacks. It was observed that from the heritage building on Richmond St, the setback appears to be 2m and that the setbacks to the west and east also "seem a little bit modest...a bit of relief would make it more comfortable."

- Break down the penthouse massing:

A Panel member noted that the penthouse massing between the two arms of the building makes it bulky and suggested that the massing be more recessed as it faces Richmond St, or look at some way to break up the massing between the wings facing the Park. Another Panel member appreciated the "big strong simple boxes and vertical louvers" and advised further work on materiality and colour.

- Proportion and materials:

While the general articulation was commended, Panel members advised a little more work on geometry, proportion and material colour to benefit the building. A Panel member summarized, "it's less to do with height than colour and use of materials, proportion of windows and solid /void". For materials, a Panel member noted, "it's so nice to see brick rather than a typical glass box" adjacent the heritage building.

- Colour palette:

Several Panel members advised that the dark materials seem "heavy" and "looming", and recommended that lighter coloured materials be explored on top of the heritage building so as to appear "less massive" on top of the heritage building. However, several Panel members commended the general patterning of the new building and preliminary colour palette.

Balcony design

Several Panel members were supportive of the patterning of 'shifting' balconies in contrast to the orderliness of the heritage building.

However several other Panel members noted that more resolution is needed:

-The west and east elevations were commented on as "a bit dishevelled" by several Panel members.

- "The balconies on the north and south make me nervous...The staggered and offset geometry is a bit too much."

-As a consideration, the north side balconies were suggested to "push out a bit more to create another texture so it's not just a piece of glass with caulking"

Window refinements

Window proportion:

Several members advised further work on the proportion of windows on the heritage building and new facades. A Panel member advised that there is a disjunction between the tall existing windows and wider new window, and recommended further consideration.

Window patterning:

While acknowledging the project is still in progress, a Panel member advised a "slicker tauter look...the less mullions the better" in the windows in contrast to the heritage buildings. Noting that the renderings show different window patterns, "a critically contemporary building" rather than an industrial grid pattern was advised.

Articulation – Base (levels 1-3)

In general, this area to the underside of the 4th floor was noted to be "incredibly successful" by several Panel members. The 'movement' of mullions and into fins onto Augusta was commented on as particularly "sensitive and lovely".

West Elevation

The current articulation was commended, particularly the use of vertical louvers, as well as the transition provided between the heritage elements and the new building. Further refinements were suggested to be considered:

- Consider finer-grain articulation along Maud St:
A Panel member noted that the existing low scale and character of Maud St on the west side requires more fine grain cladding or articulation of the façade that spans the heritage structure. The servicing areas were noted to be reading as "too big" along the façade.
- Consider articulation of rooms along Maud St:
To provide further animation and finer scale elements, it was suggested to look reworking some of the service or back-of-house areas so as to express some of the interior rooms to the street.

Entrances

Several Panel members noted that the ground floor connectivity is "quite wonderful" and public access should be ensured, particularly in the west-east direction.

- Consider providing a more prominent main public entrance:
A Panel member noted the "incredible communal gesture" of the building program and encouraged a more prominent public entrance. The entrance to the YMCA was advised to be consolidated, so as to be accessed from the main entrance corridor as opposed to having a separate entrance from the street. Elements such as a canopy to signal the entrance were also encouraged.

- Consider expressing entrances on all sides:

A Panel member advised that the west, east and south sides need to be more prominent and welcoming, to express the important west-east and north-south connections provided by the building. Small forecourts to the entrances should also be considered in addition to canopy elements, that could be "more than two trees on Maud St" to announce the presence of these important public realm connections.

Relationship to Park

- Fully integrate the park and food hall:

Panel members advised there should be "as many doors as is feasible" to open to the park, with a Panel member urging the team and city, "To support the food hall - make sure that nothing inhibits success...Restaurants are places of community as well as private enterprise. The old idea of privatization especially in this neighbourhood, doesn't exist anymore – it's important that we support that."

The success of Bryant Park NYC was raised as an example that should occur here, as a previously "horrible" park that was completely transformed. It balances "a simple public space for everyone" with food amenities that bookend the park with east restaurants and west kiosks, and different kinds of seating with licensed areas to have a drink. "People will want to be here and people will want to enjoy the south facing park. Make it more integrated and blurred – it will be successful."

- Provide a design for what should occur outside to support the food hall:

A Panel member advised the team to "look at what the outdoor space could be – it can't stop at the property line. The success of the great hall will only survive with an outdoor component". Another Panel member noted the importance for restaurants in Toronto to have outdoor space in order to survive and advised a completely contiguous indoor and outdoor experience.

- Consider the great hall as a unique type of public space:

The proponent and city were urged by a Panel member to consider that the food hall is a unique new type of public space as a community hub -full integration with the park should occur here. It was noted that the new food halls are different from St Lawrence Market, an 'antique' type of space, whereas the new food halls, as a current international phenomena, are programmed for events and open morning to night.

Heritage

The overall approach to the heritage building was noted by a Panel member as showing "lots of sensitivity to the great hall." The need for the heritage building to turn the corner and be retained three dimensionally at the roof levels was noted as particularly important for this type of art deco building.

A Panel member noted that "the heritage building must become inviting – it was not designed to be that. It must become a permeable building."

Roof Amenities

- Consider use of rooftop as amenity space supportive of families with children:

A Panel member advised that there is great potential for the amenity roof to support families- for true livability, multiple amenity areas are "vital". In this case what could occur are passive quieter spaces on the roof and gathering party spaces at the lower outdoor amenity.

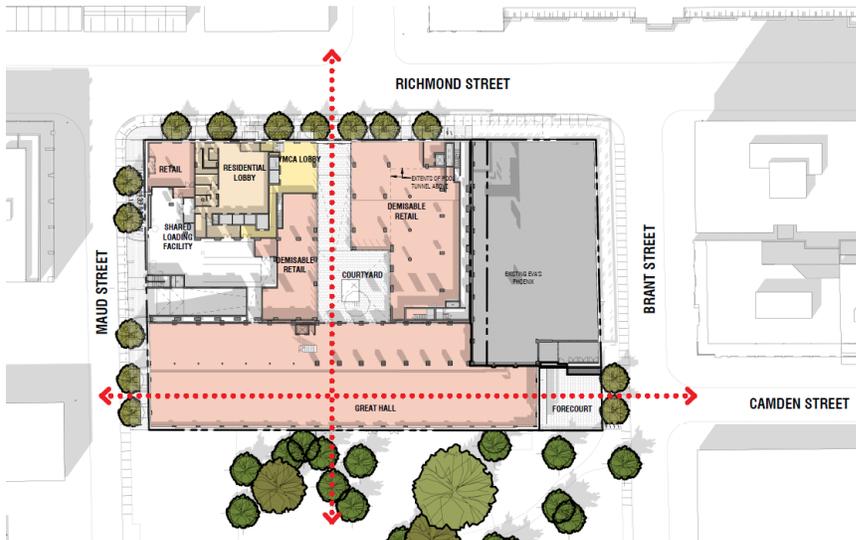
A small modest interior space on the roof was advised to be provided in order to effectively support the outdoor amenity area for families.

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- Consider ways to use or visually animate the heritage building roof:

A Panel member noted that for the heritage building, "especially when there is food being consumed on the ground floor, it would be great to have a place to grow food."

It was advised that should there be a structural problem with the heritage roof to accommodate a green roofs, at least a graphic type of pattern, membrane or a type of innovative approach to the roof should occur here so that 'there is not just a boring roof ' to look down on.





South Elevation
November 23, 2016

Diamond Schmitt Architects

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