

Minutes of the Design Review Panel Meeting 11 – June 26, 2008

The Design Review Panel met on Thursday, June 26, 2008 in Committee Room 2, City Hall, 100 Queen Street West, Toronto, at 12:00 p.m.

Members of the Design Review Panel

***Meeting
Regrets***

Gordon Stratford (Chair): Architect, Senior Vice President, Design Director - HOK Canada

Daniel Leeming (Vice Chair): Planner, Partner - The Planning Partnership

Robert Allsopp: Landscape Architect, Planner, Architect, Principal - du Toit Allsopp Hillier ✓

Shirley Blumberg: Architect, Principal - KPMB

Paul Ferris: Landscape Architect, Principal - Ferris Associates

Ralph Giannone: Architect, Principal - Giannone Associates

Peter Halsall: Engineer, President - Halsall Associates

Michael Leckman: Architect, Principal - Diamond and Schmitt

David Pontarini: Architect, Principal - Hariri Pontarini

Janet Rosenberg: Landscape Architect, Principal - Janet Rosenberg Associates

Eric Turcotte: Planner, Architect, Senior Associate - Urban Strategies

Sol Wassermuhl: Architect, President - Page and Steele ✓

Confirmation of Minutes

On motion by Michael Leckman, the Design Review Panel confirmed the Minutes of the meeting held on May 29, 2008.

Recording Secretary

Hamish Goodwin: Urban Designer – City Planning Division

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Project 1 – Newtonbrook Plaza Redevelopment

North York Centre Pilot Area	
Address	5799-5915 Yonge Street
Use	Mixed-use commercial, retail and residential
Application Status	Pre-application consultation
Architect	Rudy Wallman, Wallman Architects
Owner	Silvercore Properties Inc.
Applicant/Agent	Murray Silverberg, Silvercore Properties Inc.
Review	First
City Staff	Catherine Cieply, Community Planning

Conflict of Interest:

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Evaluation: Redesign – 1: [Refine - 6](#)

Introduction

City staff outlined the area context, history and area policy priorities, and sought the Panel's advice on the following:

- Does the pattern of buildings and open spaces on the site, including the proposed central park space and the pedestrian linkages between the site and the adjacent streets and neighbourhood, create sufficient opportunities for the establishment of a high quality pedestrian realm throughout the site and along its boundaries?
- The applicant has prepared two potential alternatives for the eastern portion of the site and the development's transition to the adjacent stable residential neighbourhood to the east (townhouse option and linear park/ road option). What considerations might inform a decision as to an appropriate form of transition?
- How well do the proposed site layout and base building conditions along Yonge Street embrace the Secondary Plan urban design policies (in particular, those related to block definition and the division of larger blocks, building setbacks and step-backs, and animation of Yonge Street), as well as the emerging character of Yonge Street?

The applicant team described the design rationale and responded to questions from the Panel.

Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement

Sustainable Design

- Develop and integrate a proactive, comprehensive sustainable design strategy throughout the project, including but not limited to:
 - providing a functional mix of uses to encourage sustaining live/work/shop/entertainment neighbourhood

Response to Context

- If Option 1 pursued:
 - improve integration between proposed townhouses and existing context east of site
- Relative to the larger context:

- explore urban design alternatives that maintain high point of skyline further south of the site, rather than within this project
- explore urban design alternatives that break away from symmetry expressed in submission

Site Plan Design

- Majority of panel members preferred Option 1 over Option 2
- Develop design to:
 - address openings along Yonge to create high quality linkages into the site
 - achieve a high quality urban environment
 - mitigate shadow conditions on public spaces
 - explore lower density alternatives, given that the requested density is higher than allowed
 - increase distance between 10 storey mid-rise and base buildings
- Enhance clarity of Yonge Street by:
 - shifting towers to abide by 10 m setback for all towers
 - reducing width of East/West linkages
- Provide alternatives to the current “super block” concept:
 - improve integration into surrounding neighbourhood
 - provide a more dynamic urban form
- Enhance quality of open spaces including:
 - definition and transition of public vs. private spaces
 - increased clarity/integration of linked open spaces between Yonge and Averill Crescent
- Address vehicular conditions including:
 - creation of urban drop-off conditions, avoiding suburban character prevalent in area
 - creation of service areas that are sensitive to the creation of a high quality urban environment

Pedestrian Realm

- Develop design to:
 - provide high quality east/west pedestrian access routes through from Yonge to New Street and Averill Crescent
- Create a cohesive urban street/block pattern throughout site, including:
 - integration of pedestrian realm continuity
 - attention to driveway, drop-off and service/loading functions, supportive of pedestrian environment
- Create well integrated vehicular circulation including pedestrian friendly traffic calming and crossings

Building Form and Articulation

- Develop design to achieve an urban character throughout project
 - increase facing distances between tower buildings
 - reduce podium height to 6 – 8 floors
 - refine and articulate podium
 - provide higher options to 1 storey buildings at the north and south ends of site
- Consider new residential type alternatives to traditional townhouses

Landscaping Strategy

- Develop comprehensive, high quality sustainable landscape strategy
- Where landscape is placed above built form, provide sufficient soil depth to support mature, healthy trees
- Reduce quantity of pavement currently shown, in favour of landscaped areas

Submission Package

- The Panel commends the proponent both for bringing the project forward at a pre-application stage, and on the quality of the submission package
- In future submissions, please provide:
 - wind impact study and resulting mitigation strategy
 - further sun/shadow study and mitigation strategy

Comments for City Staff

- In future sessions for this project please provide more detailed information regarding anticipated context surrounding this project

Related Commentary

Sustainable Design

The proponent was encouraged to develop a sustainability plan for the proposal at this early stage of design conception. Among other things, this plan should give consideration to the location of buildings in order to maximize solar harvesting, providing a suitable mix of residential units (single and family) in order to develop social cohesion within the community, and exploring alternative approaches to traffic infrastructure such as traffic calming and shared-use roadways.

Response to Context

Of the two options presented, the Panel indicated a preference for the first one (which included townhouses located along the southern side of Averill Crescent). The reasons for this preference were largely because this option provided a better relationship to the existing built form over the other option. However, the Panel noted that while Option 1 is well connected with Yonge Street, connections to the adjoining road network to the east could be improved. It was suggested that without improved connections to the east, the proposal would effectively emerge as a disconnected 'super-block'.

Site Plan Design

While appreciative of the overall plan, many Panelists expressed concerns about the spacing distances between buildings on site, particularly between the 10-storey mid-block buildings and bases of the tall buildings located on Yonge Street. It was also suggested that the spacing of mid-block buildings which frame the interior open space could give it an uncomfortable and cavernous feeling, and the proponent was encouraged to consider lowering them. Use of the Tall Building Guidelines was suggested as a suitable method to approach the resolution of this issue.

One Panelist expressed uncertainty about the overall density within the application, and suggested that a rationale for the proposed density should have been included within the proponent's presentation. And while generally appreciative of the open space provisions within the proposal, some Panelists expressed concerns with the amount of shadowing that would occur on these spaces as a result of the density and heights being sought.

The proponent was also encouraged to develop a more urban environment at the northern end of the proposal along Cumer Avenue, particularly within the 1-storey retail portion.

Pedestrian Realm

Further to comments about examining options for a shared-use roadway within the proposal, the proponent was encouraged to ensure that the all opportunities to provide a pedestrian friendly environment are explored. This includes, among other things, ensuring safe pedestrian crossings of New Street, re-examining the use of suburban-styled car-court areas, and enhancing pedestrian connectivity in the east-west direction particularly in to the central courtyards.

Building Form and Articulation

As a general response to the proposal, the Panel felt that it was developing in the right direction in terms of heights and articulation. However, particular concern was raised with the height of the Yonge Street podium, the mid-block mid-rise buildings and the general articulation of the Yonge Street elevation.

Concerns were expressed that a 10-storey podium could lead to an uncomfortable relationship with the neighbouring Yonge Street fabric, particularly given that there will be three breaks in the building wall along Yonge Street. The Panel identified the property at the corner of Yorkville and Yonge Street as one that had achieved a successful relationship between the podium height, the street and the public and private spaces surrounding it, and the suggestion was put forth that the street-related elements of this proposal could learn from this proposal. Specifically, this would include reducing the podium height to something between 6- and 8-stories.

Taking an alternative opinion, one Panelist suggested that the 10-storey podium height would be appropriate and provide a balanced environment along Yonge Street in light of the extended street width in this area of the City (as opposed to the thinner width of Yonge Street in the location of the Yorkville example). It was suggested, however, that the streetscape and landscaping elements in this location should be treated in such a way as to attract and draw pedestrians eastwards into the site.

The proponent was encouraged to develop the proposal in a way that creates added interest and attraction within the site, including an alternative townhouse form of building, and a reduction of symmetry within the layout of buildings and open spaces.

Landscaping Strategy

The proponent was advised to provide the minimum 1.5 metre standard for soil depth for landscaped areas to be located above underground parking.

Submission Package

The proponent was commended for providing a complete package of submission and presentation materials, including a massing model. It was noted, however, that the shadow study did not cover the impacts that would be expected over the course of a full year.

Project 2 – Corktown Phase 2

King-Parliament Pilot Area	
Address	510, 512 and 530 King Street East
Use	Residential
Application Status	Site Plan, Rezoning and By-law Amendment Application
Architect	Leslie Klein, Quadrangle Architects
Owner	Streetcar Developments Inc.
Applicant/Agent	Jason Garland
Review	Second (1 st Review held March 2008)
City Staff	Gregory Pereira, Community Planning; Andrea Old, Urban Design

Conflict of Interest: none

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Evaluation: Non-support – 1: [Support - 5](#)

Introduction

City staff outlined the site context and area policy priorities, and sought the Panel's advice on the following:

- Does the massing of the proposed building adequately address the unique character and scale of Corktown? In considering the building's massing would the panel please speak to the following:
 - whether the proposed development adequately references the typical lot widths and building heights abutting King Street East;
 - whether the proposal will provide an adequate built form relationship between the itself and the existing three-storey apartment building to the east, the rear yards of the houses on Ashby Place to the west, and the rear yards of the buildings fronting Queen Street East to the north.
- Does the proposed building, through its architectural details, materials, step-backs etc. reinforce the character of the area on this section of King Street East, and enhance the pedestrian experience?

The applicant team described the design rationale of the proposal and responded to questions from the Panel.

Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement

In general, the panel agreed that the building's design was much improved through use of materials, façade treatment, articulation and detailing. The extent of changes that were made in a short time period were appreciated, however a number of suggestions for refinement were identified:

Sustainable Design

While improved over the previous review, the building could still use stronger elements to achieve sustainability through:

- Improved shading for glass facades

- Consideration of energy intensity

Response to Context

- Revisions to the plan provide it with a better contextual fit
- Develop design of west and northern façade to enhance the relationship to the adjacent 3-storey townhouses

Pedestrian Realm

- Consider increasing the set-back along King Street East to provide:
 - a wider sidewalk
 - an enhanced street tree planting arrangement
 - an improved front-door treatment
- Re-examine the ground floor front façade frameless glass element:
 - consider use of brick frames and recessed glass

Building Form and Articulation

Elements to be improved include:

- Further reduction of the building's bulk
- Reduce the ground floor weight:
 - increase its height
 - reconsidering the signage area
- Reduce the shadow area of the N-S Wing at the rear of the west elevation.

Submission Package

The panel appreciated the comparative walk-through of the latest changes in text and drawings

Related Commentary

Sustainable Design

The Panel expressed concern with the sustainable design strategy of the proposal, indicating that the high levels of un-shaded glazing would likely have a significantly negative impact upon the energy intensity of the building. The Panel would have appreciated discussion on this matter within the proponent's presentation.

Response to Context

The Panel was generally appreciative of the changes made to the proposal since it was first reviewed in March 2008. It was suggested that the revised articulation – including the rhythm and materials – particularly of the southern façade, will provide the building with a much better relationship to King Street East and the broader Corktown neighbourhood.

Building Form and Articulation

Despite some of the changes made to the proposal to reduce its bulk, the Panel was still uncertain about the suitability of the proposal's overall massing. It was suggested that the building is a larger than one would expect to see developed on the site, and that some of the interior aspects of the proposal – such as the central storage space – are indication of this large mass. It was also suggested that the large mass has an effect on the usability of the site plan arrangement - the location of the visitors' bicycle parking, being at the rear of the site and a substantial distance from the elevator lobby, was cited as one example of this. The Proponent was encouraged to further examine ways to reduce the overall mass, possibly by reducing the depth of the building at its rear elevation.

Another significant concern identified with the proposal related to a portion of the building located at the rear of the western elevation (this portion was referred to as the 'west wing'). It was noted by the Panel that the west wing, which is 8-storeys in height, will affect the livability of some rear-

facing units of the proposal by blocking their access to natural light. It was suggested that providing access to as much natural light as possible should be a primary objective of residential development, and subsequently, the proponent was encouraged to re-examine this aspect of the proposal. In doing this, the Panel also suggested that the relationship of this wing to the neighbouring residences to the west should be further developed, both in terms of its design and its massing. Qualifying this suggestion, the Panel also recognized the complexities of balancing financial viability with density in this form of mid-rise development.

In terms of the proposal's finer design detail, it was suggested that the current ground floor height of 4 metres makes the building base feel heavy, and that the current signage band and use of frameless glass on the ground floor is uncharacteristic within the Corktown neighbourhood. To improve these elements, the Panel encouraged the proponent to consider providing a heightened ground floor and a revised style of signage band. It was also suggested that the brick frames within the 'book-end' portion of this elevation would be enhanced by slightly recessing the glazing, rather than having the glazing flush with the brick, in order to introduce an additional element of texture and interest into the façade.

Landscaping Strategy

The Panel suggested that there would unlikely be insufficient space along the King Street East elevation of the proposal to permit the successful growth of street trees.

Submission Package

The Panel appreciated the submission materials and commended the proponent for providing the 3-page summary of revisions made since the project was first presented to the Panel.

Project 3 – Waterpark City Phase 2 Condominium

Fort York Neighbourhood Pilot Area	
Address	209 and 215 Fort York Boulevard
Use	Residential (Condominium)
Application Status	Site Plan Application
Architect	Vladimir Losner, Page and Steele
Owner	640 Fleet Street Developments Limited
Applicant/Agent	Lanterra Development
Review	Second (1 st Review held October 2007)
City Staff	Jamaica Hewston, Community Planning; James Parakh, Urban Design

Conflict of Interest: none

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Evaluation: Support – 0; Non-support - 7

Introduction

City staff outlined the site context and area policy priorities, and sought the Panel's advice on the following:

- How well has the applicant's team responded to the panels comments on sustainability, building form and public realm?
- How does the elevation changes, particularly at the pedestrian scale, respond to the panel's comments of reducing the "commercial" feeling of the streetscape in favor of strengthening the street-related "townhouse character and function"
- How does the changes to the courtyard design respond to the comments of the panel and the expressed desire to create an "enhanced garden setting"

The applicant team described the design rationale of the proposal and responded to questions from the Panel.

Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement

Sustainable Design

- Inclusion of the Green Development Standard checklist was helpful, however the sustainable design strategies could be enhanced further
- Re-consider the amount of glass used within the walls

Response to Context

- Re-examine the relationship between building mass and June Callwood Park to avoid overwhelming the park's scale and solar needs

Site Plan Design

- Develop design to resolve potential conflict between public and private areas:
 - re-examine the entryway adjacent to June Callwood Park to better strengthen the streetscape and pedestrian connections

- Reassess the servicing and garage access ramp arrangement:
 - to better permit a more cohesive central open-space area
 - to allow for a clearly-defined and unencumbered east-west pedestrian route

Pedestrian Realm

- Develop design to:
 - strengthen the definition between public and private spaces
 - improve privacy of grade-related units

Building Form and Articulation

- Revisions for second review provided improvements including:
 - a more continuous building pattern to strengthen the street edge
 - well resolved south elevation with a successful human-scale ground floor edge
- Further improvements to the form and articulation could be made through:
 - consider greater differentiation between Phase 1 and Phase 2 through massing and materials;
 - reassessing the east elevation town house treatment to simplify the use of balconies, glass and materials;
 - considering the impact of shadowing on June Callwood Park;
 - introducing a grade-related drop-off in place of the current 'suburban' courtyard treatment
 - introducing a broader gesture into the treatment of the roofline curves

Landscaping Strategy

- The landscaping plan should address:
 - further detailing and programming of the open-paved area
 - what the scale of the trees will be
 - what the pedestrian routes will be
 - relationship between the building and shadow and June Callwood Park

Submission Package

- Provide additional information on the following:
 - retail component and the context plan
 - landscape strategy
- Consistency in the content and organization of the submission materials is required
- A wind study should be conducted to determine the at-grade conditions within the service courtyard

Related Commentary

Sustainable Design

Despite inclusion of the Green Development Standard checklist within the submission package and the green roof within the design, the Panel was generally dissatisfied and unsupportive of the sustainable design strategy for the proposal. It was noted that issues raised during the first review – such as the building orientation and the extensive use of glass within the façade – remained unchanged within this second review. The shadow impacts on the park also remained unchanged from the first review.

Response to Context

The Panel raised a number of concerns about the evolving relationship of the proposal to its surrounding environment. During the first review, the Panel indicated that the building quality should be strong enough for it to succeed on its own merits rather than relying on the neighbouring public amenity to support it. The general feeling of the Panel during this second review was that the design required further refinement in order to achieve this strength. One

example provided to highlight this was the shadow impact of the proposal upon the park beside it. Additional examples are included in the 'Built Form and Articulation' section below.

Site Plan Design

Concerns with the servicing courtyard area were raised by Panelists, who indicated that the suburban-styled feature is unnecessary in this type of urban setting where passenger drop-offs and pick-ups can be conducted on the street. Additionally, it was noted that the location of the courtyard, including the under-ground ramp, impinges upon the flow of the east-west pedestrian connection shown on the context area plan (see "Pedestrian Realm" below for additional commentary on this subject). The inclusion of this feature was discouraged during the first review, and the Panel again encouraged the proponent to reconsider this element of the proposal, indicating that its inclusion was a missed opportunity to develop a successful urban and civic environment.

Pedestrian Realm

Panelists were disappointed with the proposal's treatment of the neighbourhood east-west pedestrian connection. The connection, which is part of a centrally located route within the Fort York Neighbourhood, links both 'Waterpark' developments (Phase 1 and Phase 2) with June Callwood Park, Bruyars Mews, and the broader City fabric further to the east. In addition to the physical disruption of this connection by the servicing area and underground ramp, it was also suggested that this area would have sense of being a private rather than public space. Additionally, it was suggested that the quality and overall success of the connection could be further reduced by possible wind-tunneling effects.

In addition to comments already mentioned as to how this aspect of the proposal could be improved (see Site Plan above), the proponent was encouraged to conduct – and respond to, as required - a wind study to determine how the planned development would impact the quality of this area.

Building Form and Articulation

The Panel identified a number of elements within the proposal which contribute to its success, and to the success of the emerging Fort York Neighbourhood. The Proponent was commended for proposing a form of development that creates a broad street edge, rather than one with breaks or gaps in it, as it helps provide a frame to the public realm. The proponent was also commended for introducing a level of built form continuity to the area, with the suggestion put forth that the type of rhythm and repetition that will be evident within Phase 1 and Phase 2 of this development – particularly along Fleet Street - is the type of attribute that is common to many successful waterfronts. Some Panelists, however, disagreed with this sentiment, highlighting the importance of developing differentiation and visual interest – rather than sameness – within the City skyline.

The Panel was also divided about the success of the southern elevation detailing and lower level arrangement. While some members indicated that it was somewhat successful, others expressed concerns with some elements including the treatment of residential and retail uses (detailing, materials etc. are the same) and that there will likely be limited privacy for the at-grade residential units.

While appreciating the changes made to East Elevation at the lower level, the Panel felt that there were still many unresolved issues with it. The main concern amongst members was the relationship between the grade-related terraces and the adjacent sidewalk. As these elements are at the same elevation, it was suggested that the unencumbered view into the private spaces from the sidewalk would create an uncomfortable and awkward relationship amongst its users. Subsequently, it was the Panel's opinion that greater separation of the public and private realm was required. Additionally, the Panel felt that more work was required to develop a successful interaction of the various architectural treatments that are proposed at this level (balconies, pre-cast portions, truncated elements etc.)

The Panel also provided a variety of suggestions as to how the bridge element within this elevation could be improved. These suggestions included developing the rhythm of glazing in this area in order to make it look more like a bridge; an alternative suggestion put forth was to place additional density on the bridge, so that the bridge helps to frame the park, so that the park itself - rather than the bridge - becomes the visual terminus from Bruyere Mews.

Landscaping Strategy

The lack of information and detailing relating to the proposal's landscaping strategy made it difficult for Panelists to understand and provide a proper critique of it.

Submission Package

The Panel was generally disappointed with the submission package for this project, especially given that it was for a second review. In addition to concerns identified with the landscaping materials, the Panel also expressed frustration with the quality and consistency of other submission materials.

Project 4 – Bathurst Street Bridge Reconstruction

Fort York Neighbourhood Pilot Area	
Threshold Criteria	City Capital Works Project
Project Management (City Division)	Technical Services, Structures and Expressways
Consultant	du Toit Allsopp Hillier; McCormick Rankin Corporation (MRC)
Review	First
City Staff	Mike Laidlaw, Technical Services; James Parakh, Urban Design

Conflict of Interest: none

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Evaluation: Refine - 0; Redesign - 6

Introduction

City staff outlined the site context and area policy priorities, and sought the Panel's advice on the following:

- Given the technical requirements that need to be fulfilled, how does the proposed architectural treatments of the proposed bridge respond to the area context and surrounding public realm, including the pedestrian connections below the bridge?
- How well do the proposed architectural details of the bridge relate to the heritage truss?

Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement

The applicant team described the design rationale of the proposal, which was to develop a design that touched the existing setting as lightly as possible. The team also responded to questions from the Panel.

Response to Context

- Develop design to include:
 - further definition of character and materials to emphasize views of the city as well as historical and experiential significance
 - celebrate link to the waterfront
 - recognition of bridge as a significant gateway
 - differentiation of threshold through the creation of a sense of entry
 - acknowledgement of importance of contextual fit through both upper deck level as well as integration "at grade" below the bridge

Pedestrian Realm

- Develop design to strengthen public realm provisions:
 - provide for expansion of pedestrian sidewalks and bikeways
 - this project is an opportunity to "get it right" from the start: opportunities to provide optimal accommodations for all bridge users should not be missed
- Re-examine the trade-off between the technical limitations, both built and proscribed, and the opportunities to provide for a high quality public realm
- Re-examine the height of the bridge at its southern limit
 - explore opportunities to provide relief to pedestrian environment underneath bridge

Built Form and Articulation

- Improve the form and articulation of the bridge structure through:
 - reconsider pavement allocations to better accommodate sidewalk and bikeway need
 - consider metal-work that could go beyond pre-manufacture elements
 - reassess the bridge support columns as a chance to create greater symbolic gesture
 - reexamine the conduit duct bank to make it even less over-powering
 - develop a lighting plan strategy for the entire bridge, including its underside.
- Preference for the vertical railing pickets over mesh panels
 - give further consideration of the durability of the expanded metal components used on the railings

Comments for City Staff

- The panel would like City Staff to address the issue of whether public art can be considered a component of the structure
- This type of project should have a fundamental regard to the long-term demands pertaining to planned future development in the area (eg pedestrian and cycling demands)
 - short-term financial considerations should not curtail the opportunity to provide for a meaningful and symbolic civic gesture

Related Commentary

Response to Context

The Panel provided a number of comments relating to the general qualities of bridges, suggesting they should act both as a gateway and as a symbolic gesture towards generational civic aspirations. The importance of the gateway quality of this project was highlighted, as the Bathurst Street Bridge is the only above-grade entrance leading into the City from the south (most others lead into the City from *underneath* the Gardiner Expressway). Furthermore, the City and skyline views that are available from this bridge, and the subsequent opportunities for interpretation and discovery upon it, provide the bridge with an additional level of significance. The below-grade space was also recognized as having importance, as it will link and frame the proposed linear pedestrian connection between the Fort York National Historic Site to the west and the emerging community to the east.

Bridge Design

While appreciating the overall essence of simplicity and elegance of the proposal, the Panel was disappointed with several aspects of it:

- Complete and Holistic Design
It was felt that the project requirements to accommodate TTC streetcar operations prevented the bridge consultant from exploring a more complete and holistic design solution. These requirements included:
 - the provision of transit right-of-way along the reconstructed portion of the bridge. This requirement resulted in the bridge span being widened from the existing 20-metres (approx.) to 30.5-metres; and
 - leveling the intersection of Bathurst Street and Fort York Boulevard, which required the southern end of the bridge to be lowered from 4.6 metres to 3.3 metres above the ground

The Panel noted that these requirements resulted in an unpleasant below-grade environment for pedestrians at the bridge's southern-most portion where the bridge, which will be 10 metres wider than the current span, will be just 3.3 metres above the ground (1.3 metres lower than the current configuration). It was suggested that this important connection area would be an unsafe environment for pedestrians, particularly at night-time, and generally unpleasant at other times. The Panel questioned why the City would pursue a design which provided such a compromised solution.

- **Build upon Opportunity**

The Panel felt that the design did not embrace the opportunity to create the type of entrance that one would expect to see leading into a great City. As such, the Panel encouraged the proponent to examine a more expressive design which outwardly celebrates the 'moment of arrival' – both to the bridge itself and the City fabric beyond. The Panel felt that this could be done by recognizing the transition point (the point being on land and being above land, on a bridge) within the design.

Other suggestions included:

- highlighting the point of tension between the new structure and the heritage truss, possibly through the use of a contrasting modern engineering style for the new portion;
- constructing an entirely new bridge beside the existing one; the new bridge would serve to provide a modern contrast to the heritage truss, and would also serve to provide appropriate pedestrian experiences and cycling connections; and
- in-filling some of the expanse with the intent of reducing overall construction costs, and assigning these savings into refining the current proposal.

- **Unbalanced Approach to Service Provision**

The Panel felt that the proposal had an unbalanced bias towards transit and automobile uses to the detriment of other forms of transportation such as walking and cycling. This suggestion was made when considering that the proposal maintains capacity for automobiles and increases capacity for TTC streetcars, but provides minimal enhancements for pedestrians on the bridge surface, sub-standard conditions below it (see "Complete and Holistic Design" above), and almost no accommodations for cyclists. It was suggested that with the opportunity to rebuild a bridge in this setting of National significance, equal attention should be given to enhancing the environment for all bridge users.

Pedestrian Realm

It was the Panel's opinion that the bridge design provided minimal celebration and enrichment of the pedestrian realm. In addition to comments highlighted above in relation to the below-grade environment, it was suggested that the sidewalks on the bridge deck were too narrow and undistinguished.

- **Connection to Fort York**

Further concerns were also raised in relation to the pedestrian connection which leads from the west side of the bridge to Fort York. The Panel noted that this arrangement is considerably inconvenient for pedestrians walking along the east side of the bridge, as they would be required to walk a circuitous route to safely access the feature. A more direct but less-safe route - walking across the bridge from one side to the other – would be encumbered by the streetcar right-of-way lane divisions.

The proponent was encouraged to further develop the scheme so that it provides a grand statement at the pedestrian scale – both through design and the use of materials - thereby enriching the pedestrian experience in this historic setting.

Building Form and Articulation

The Panel felt that the accommodation for service conduits within the proposal undermined the simplicity of the bridge's profile. It was suggested that this effect would be highlighted and emphasized at night-time, when the underside of the bridge would be lit. Subsequently the proponent was encouraged to determine whether or not it was possible to further conceal this element of the design.

The proponent was also encouraged to develop a lighting plan which ensures a safe night-time environment and that provides the bridge with an appropriate celebration of its civic qualities.

Suggestions for how this could be done included:

- developing a reflected ceiling plan underneath the bridge

- considering how the lit structure will appear from a long distance away
- developing a distinct plan for the heritage truss

In regard to the proponent's alternative railing schemes, which included both galvanized mesh and pickets, the Panel was overwhelmingly supportive of the latter. Building upon the Panel's sentiment to create a distinctive bridge design, one Panelist encouraged the proponent to develop a railing scheme which truly enhances the pedestrian experience and engages opportunities for interpretation and discovery. Suggestions put forth as to how this could be achieved included:

- designing a custom handrail, possibly as the Public Art component of the bridge
- using the railing as a space-making device to provide spaces/bays for pedestrians crossing the bridge to pause, rest, and experience the views at-hand
- additionally, the proponent was encouraged to examine other treatments for the concrete safety barrier and the lighting standards in order to enhance the pedestrian experience.

Comments to Staff

The Panel felt that the types of deficiencies outlined above provide significant limitations to the bridge's overall success, and expressed frustration that the project – which is a fresh opportunity to create something new – has resulted in so many compromised solutions. Subsequently, the proponent was encouraged to re-examine the aspects of the project requirements which resulted in these deficiencies (the clearance height at the southern end, the bridge span width, the pedestrian realm etc.), and to develop a proposal which celebrates its broader civic role.