



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED
With Confidential Attachment**

Design Review Panel: Appointment of New Members

Date:	January 7, 2011
To:	Planning and Growth Management Committee
From:	Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division
Wards:	All
Reason for Confidential Information:	This report deals with personal matters about identifiable persons.
Reference Number:	Pg11004

SUMMARY

The Design Review Panel (DRP) provides professional, objective advice aimed at improving matters of design that affect the public realm, including the design of streets, parks, open spaces and buildings. The Panel is comprised of thirteen volunteer design professionals. The term of appointment to the Panel is two years, or until a successor is appointed. Three to four new members are appointed to the Panel each year to fill vacancies created through the end-of-term of current Members.

The purpose of this report is to recommend approval of five new members to fill vacancies created through the end-of-term of five current members. One alternate member candidate is also being recommended in order to fill a mid-term vacancy, if the need arises.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. Council approve the recommended new members for the Design Review Panel outlined in Attachment 1 to serve for a period of two years or until their successors are appointed;

2. Council approve appointment of the alternate candidate listed on Attachment 1, in order to fill a mid-term vacancy, if the need arises; and
3. Council approve the public release of the confidential information contained within Attachment 1;

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

Upon City Council approval, the recommended individuals can serve as members on the Design Review Panel.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations of this report.

DECISION HISTORY

City Council (December 5-7, 2005) directed City Planning staff to consult with key stakeholders on the development of the Design Review Panel Pilot Project and report back to the Planning and Transportation Committee on recommendations for such a Pilot Project. Formation of the Design Review Panel Pilot Project was approved by City Council at its meeting of April 23rd and 24th, 2007. At its meeting of August 5th and 6th 2009, City Council approved an extension of the Pilot Project to November 2009. City Council then approved the Design Review Panel as a permanent component of the development assessment process at its meeting of November 30, December 1, 2, 4 and 7, 2009.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Design Review Panel (DRP) is an advisory body to City staff; it does not have statutory decision-making powers. The Panel reviews both private development and public capital projects and provides design advice to staff relating to these proposals. Advice is aimed at improving matters of design that affect the public realm, and is based on publicly approved criteria including the built form and public realm policies of the Official Plan. For private development, the Panel's advice is incorporated into planning reports related to an application and referred to the appropriate decision-making body for consideration. Advice for public projects is provided to the lead division or agency, and to City Planning staff, and is used to advance that project's design.

The DRP can help raise standards of development, encourage designers to avoid compromising on quality, and help make new development compatible with its surroundings. The process of design review takes place as an additional stream of consultation within the existing framework and timeframe of development review. Procedures for the DRP were developed through an analysis of best practices and were further refined throughout the course of the Pilot Project. The role of DRPs in helping to

achieve design excellence both in public works and in new development is recognized in Section 3.1.1 of the City of Toronto Official Plan.

COMMENTS

The Design Review Panel is comprised of thirteen private-sector/citizen/volunteer design professionals as follows:

- 6 Architects;
- 3 Landscape Architects;
- 2 Urban Designers (professional planners, architects or landscape architects with expertise in urban design);
- 1 Engineer; and
- 1 Heritage Conservation Specialist (adjunct member).

Appointment to the Panel is for a two-year term, or until a successor is appointed. The appointment of new Members coincides with the end-of-term for five current Members. The breakdown of outgoing members includes two architects, two landscape architects, and one engineer. The appointment of new members was conducted with the objective of maintaining the above-noted compliment and ratio of professions.

The process to identify and nominate the new members was carried out according to the approved Panel Member nomination procedures (City Council, June 2006). These procedures were based on those of other Canadian cities with Design Review Panels, such as Ottawa and Vancouver. The procedures are in keeping with the City's Policy for Citizen Appointments for Program Advisory Bodies. The process for selection of the recommended members is outlined below.

Nomination Criteria

The following criteria were used to select preferred candidates for Membership on the Design Review Panel:

- a) Membership in a related professional design association including:
 - Ontario Association of Architects
 - Ontario Association of Landscape Architects
 - Ontario Professional Planners Institute
 - Professional Engineers of Ontario
 - Canadian Institute of Transportation Engineers
- b) Level of experience as indicated by a minimum of 15-years of practice in the respective design profession.
- c) A broad range of relevant professional experience including:
 - high quality design in the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, urban design and engineering;
 - range of local and international practice;

- range of project scales including large scale development;
 - range of project types including residential, commercial, institutional, parks and public space design;
 - knowledge of the City;
 - sustainable design practice;
 - professional research and academic involvement; and
 - sitting on or having projects reviewed by other Design Review Panels.
- d) Well respected among peers as recognized by awards, publications and teaching appointments.
- e) Being articulate in discussing design issues related to their profession, and possessing a solid understanding of the municipal planning system and development economics.

Nomination Process

An open ‘Call for Members’ inviting individual experts to submit an application was advertised through the assistance of related professional associations including the Ontario Association of Architects, the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects, the Professional Engineers of Ontario, and the Canadian Institute of Transportation Engineers. Additional outreach was conducted with the assistance of the Toronto Society of Architects, and all information related to the Call was posted on the City's website.

Twenty-seven expressions of interest were collected in response to the Call. In their role as regulating bodies, these professional associations ensured that the interested candidates were in good-standing before forwarding their applications to the City.

A nominating group comprised of City staff was then struck to review the applications and carry out the nomination process using the criteria described above. The nominating group was comprised of City staff who are familiar with the types of projects that qualify for review by the DRP and included representation from the following Divisions:

- City Planning (including Community Planning and Urban Design);
- Parks Forestry and Recreation;
- Transportation Services; and
- Real Estate Services.

In accordance with the approved DRP member nomination procedures described above, five member candidates are being recommended for approval by the Planning and Growth Management Committee and City Council. One alternate member candidate is also being recommended in order to fill a mid-term vacancy, if the need arises. All candidates being recommended for appointment to the DRP are identified in Attachment 1 of this report.

Conclusion

Good design of buildings, public spaces and their relationship to each other is fundamental to Toronto’s economic success, competitive advantage and the quality of life of its citizens. The Official Plan recognizes that high quality design of the City’s built

environment is an important public interest, and that Design Review Panels can help achieve design excellence both in public works and in new development.

As part of the ongoing rotation of current Members with new ones, an open appointment process was conducted to encourage the participation of interested individuals. The report recommends the approval of five nominated Members and one alternate Member. The process for selection of nomination of these candidates is also outlined in the report. Approval of these Members will ensure that the Panel can function at full capacity in their role as an advisory body on matters relating to design within the public realm.

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Confidential Information Design Review Panel – Recommended New Members