



Meeting Summary

The Design Review Panel met virtually on **Thursday May 9th, 2024**, via WebEx.

Panel Members Present:

- David Clusiau, *Chair*
- Dayna Edwards
- Jennifer Mallard
- Joey Giaimo

Staff Present:

- Jana Kelemen, Manager of Heritage and Urban Design
- Michael Vortuba, SPM Heritage and Design
- Edward Winter, Planner 1-Urban Design
- Mark Michniak, Senior Planner

Others Present

Presentation #2	Gerry Tchisler, MHBC Laura Abrahams, Lintack Architects Steven, SLA	
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Regrets:

Ted Watson, Eldon Theodore, Jenn Sisson

Declaration of Interest:

PANEL MEMBERS ONLY - NONE

Schedule:

Start Time	Address	Type of Application	Applicant/ Agent	City Staff Planner
3:30pm	Masterplan Concept 386 Wilcox Street	Site Plan	Owner: Slate HWD Inc. Agent and Presentation: MHBC	Mark Michniak

Summary of Comments:

Note: The Design Review Panel is strictly an advisory body and makes recommendations to Planning Division staff. These comments should be reviewed in conjunction with all comments received by commenting agencies and should be discussed with Planning Division staff prior to resubmission.

386 Wilcox Street – Steelport Masterplan

Development Proposal Overview

The proposed masterplan covers a large area in the heart of the industrial harbour lands – approximately 211 hectares with potential for roughly 11 million square feet of employment Gross Floor Area. The proposal also includes updates to transportation and infrastructure networks and would focus accessory cultural and recreational spaces along the waterfront.

Key Questions to the Panel from Planning Staff

1. How well does the proposal organize space in a logical manner through the design, placement, and construction of new streets, buildings, structures, and landscaping?

Note: it is important to remember that we are at an early stage of design and considering blocks of subdivision and street layouts, as well as future buildings and public spaces.
2. How well does the proposal connect buildings and spaces through an efficient, intuitive, and safe network of streets, roads, alleys, lanes, sidewalks, and pathways?
3. How well does the proposal include provision of amenity space and what is the relationship to existing patterns of private and public amenity space?
4. How well does the proposal integrate, protect, and enhance environmental features, landscapes, and topographic features through site design?
5. How well does the proposal conserve and respect the existing built heritage features of the area?
6. How well does the proposal create, reinforce, and emphasize important public vistas and view corridors?

Panel Comments and Recommendations

- **Overview and Response to Context**

The panel appreciated the approach of starting with nature and the natural connections through the masterplan. The real challenge is the transition between cultural / public spaces and the private employment spaces.

The panel supported the approach to break-down the site into zoned areas around “the loop” – providing definition of individual spaces.

The panel noted the success of the public space components need the support of an active neighbourhood – including residential base to be served.

The panel asked about the feasibility/possibility of including residential within the proposed masterplan, and it was discussed that adding residential would have severe challenges and that efforts would be better spent finding and improving connections and links to nearby communities to support the proposal: including improvements to road infrastructure, transit schedules and capacity, potentially express services or charters or scheduled shuttles that linked the proposed public space “loop” to existing hubs around the city.

The panel noted that there was good large-scale green connections through the plan, but there is a need to develop a fine-grained network of natural features/connections through and between individual development blocks (mid-block connections).

A panel member noted the hybridization of the plan would be key to success – and noting that support would need to come from partnerships in all levels of government, private companies as well as charitable organizations as well as public support.

The panel noted several areas where different levels of government and private support could be partnered with the masterplan follow-through: Bike Share, Transit, Pedestrian network, Temporary installments/ Pop-up commercial activities within Phases 1 and 2.

- **Built Form and Character**

The panel supported the concept of embracing the industrial heritage of the former steel industry on the property – recognizing and celebrating the location and the unique history – honouring the land with it’s place in Canada’s history.

There are questions needing to be answered with respect to the retention of heritage components – how to define or re-define heritage, and how can traditional or non-traditional ways of commemoration of these elements be utilized to benefit these public spaces – adaptive reuse may not be the best path in all circumstances. Not every building needs to be retained / re-used, but important pieces of buildings can be used to shape the redesign of the building/space and share information about the history of that place.

The panel supported the link to the creative / arts community in Hamilton – noting that it is often the arts community that is working in and redeveloping up-and-coming areas within Hamilton.

- **Site Layout and Circulation**

The panel noted that one of the challenging components of the proposal is the sheer size of the proposed site, and being able to respond in multiple scales in the design.

The panel highlighted the need to have a variety of activities and programs available to reach all parts of the community. – Play structures, benches and trails, cultural spaces, open spaces, cafes/restaurant, active recreational activities, etc.

The panel noted that Phase 4 has most of the public space components and felt that this needed to be given some additional priority to give equitable use of the space and ensure support for any service / support components to the industrial spaces.

The panel saw that there would need to be a response to transportation demands to make it easy and convenient to use transit to get to and from the proposed public attractions at the far-end of the development – importantly to reduce the number of required parking spaces.

- **Streetscape, The Pedestrian Realm & Landscape Strategy**

A panel member noted the renderings all seemed to illustrate a weekend condition, and the panel noted there was interest in understanding how the proposed public spaces would function during the week to get a full understanding of the project's life and vitality.

A panel member noted that the lagoon scape component was very powerful and had the potential to become both a beautiful and functional space. The panel noted that collaboration with the indigenous peoples might be possible with the lagoon components – including native plant species and traditional knowledge of land and water management.

The panel was keen to see future renderings that envision four season use of the public spaces.

The panel appreciates the abundance of vegetation shown in the proposed plans and renderings.

Summary

- **The panel was very interested in the proposal and very receptive towards the concepts put forward in the masterplan. The panel noted that the question is now how to ensure that all the pieces work together to ensure the complete success of the masterplan.**
- **The panel noted there was some inherent conflict between the industrial and public uses, and further noted that the success of one could not and should not be at the detriment of the other use. (ie. The public uses should not impede the commercial / industrial success of the plan, and similarly the industrial functions should not negatively impact the public recreational uses).**
- **The panel was enthusiastic about the masterplan and encouraged the involvement of partnerships to assist with the development: including all levels of government, private industry and charitable organizations that have aligned values and fields of interest.**
- **The panel thought it would be wise to know the risks involved at each phase, and to have the team of public/private partners in-place, ready to respond when they are needed.**
- **The panel would like to see other examples where heavy industry is successful alongside similar public recreational and cultural uses.**

Meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.