



## Meeting Summary

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The Design Review Panel met virtually on **Thursday July 14<sup>th</sup> 2020** via Webex.

### Panel Members Present:

**Colin Berman**, Brook McIlroy

**Vincent Colizza**, Vincent Colizza Architects, *Chair*

**Ute Maya-Giambattista**, Fotenn Planning + Design

**Tim Smith**, Urban Strategies Inc.

**Jackie VanderVelde**, Land Art Design Landscape Architects Inc.

**Yasin Visram**, Perkins + Will Canada

**James Webb**, Webb Planning Inc.

### Staff Present:

**Jason Thorne**, General Manager of Planning and Economic Development

**Stephen Robichaud**, Director of Planning and Chief Planner

**Shannon McKie**, Senior Project Manager, Urban Team

**Victoria Cox**, Urban Designer, Urban Team

**Andrea Dear**, Senior Planner, Urban Team

### Applicant and Design Team Present:

<p><b>Presentation #1</b> <b>Residential Development</b> 235 Main Street West, 74 Queen Street South, 244 and 246 Jackson Street West</p>	<p><b>Michael Spaziani</b>, MSAi Michael Spaziani Architect Inc. <b>Mario Patitucci</b>, Adesso Design Inc. <b>David Kemper</b>, Belmont Equity Partners Inc. <b>Richard Kennedy</b>, Belmont Equity Partners Inc. <b>Nancy Frieday</b>, GSP Group</p>
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### Regrets:

**Robert Freedman**, Freedman Urban Solutions (Panel Member)

### Declaration of Interest:

**Mario Patitucci**, Adesso Design Inc. (Panel Member)

## Schedule:

Start Time	Address	Type of Application	Applicant/ Agent	Development Planner
3:00 p.m.	<b>Residential Development</b> 235 Main Street West, 74 Queen Street South, 244 and 246 Jackson Street West	Urban Hamilton Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment UHOPA-18-005 and ZAC-18-012	Owner: Belmont Equity Group  Agent and Presentation: Michael Spaziani Architects.	Andrea Dear, Senior Planner

## 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.**

### 1. 235 Main Street West, 74 Queen Street South, 244 and 246 Jackson Street West

#### Development Proposal Overview

The revised development proposal includes a 23 storey multiple-dwelling building situated at the northern portion of the site fronting Main Street West and Queen Street South, and a three storey townhouse block oriented toward Jackson Street West. A total of 331 units are proposed. 125 parking spaces are proposed in an underground parking garage. The townhouse building includes six integrated parking garages accessed from the laneway to the rear of the units.

In order to preserve the cultural heritage value of the building located at 74 Queen, the proposed development preserves and adaptively re-uses the east and south façades, along with returns on the north and west façades and the front porch and stairs.

#### Key Questions to the Panel from Planning Staff

1. What is the relationship of the proposal to the existing neighbourhood character? Does it maintain, and where possible, enhance and build upon desirable established patterns, built form and landscapes?
2. Does the proposal respect the existing cultural and natural heritage features of the existing environment by re-using, adapting and incorporating existing characteristics?

3. Does the proposal create comfortable pedestrian environments by:
  - a) Locating principal facades and primary building entrances parallel to and as close to the street as possible;
  - b) Including ample glazing on ground floors to create visibility to and from the public sidewalk;
  - c) Including a quality landscape edge along frontages where buildings are set back from the street; and,
  - d) Using design techniques, such as building step-backs, to maximize sunlight to pedestrian areas.

### Panel Comments and Recommendations

#### a) Overview and Response to Context (Questions 1 and 2)

- The panel recognized the hard work done over the years and the positive evolution of this proposal. This is an important site due to its location and topographical elevation. The panel also recognized that this is a challenging site for a tall building, and this is partly addressed with a thoughtful design of the podium.
- Many panel members encouraged the design team to adhere to the Tall Building Guidelines and had concerns that certain guidelines were followed while others were ignored, notably the maximum tower floor plate size. They stated that as a gateway to the City, this site should be held to a high architectural standard. The tower element does not achieve this; however, the building base, landscape and pedestrian realm are well done.
- The panel noted that the built form and site layout responds well to the street and that the internalized loading and servicing area appears to work well, although the laneway is very tight and there is potential for conflicts. There were concerns about the integration of the tower to the stepped podium and the panel recommended that the podium and tower relationship be reworked and simplified in terms of design and materiality.

#### b) Built Form and Character (Questions 1, 2 and 3)

- The panel continues to have concerns about a tall building at this location, since it is surrounded by heritage buildings and outside the downtown, as delineated by the Downtown Secondary Plan, and will set a precedent for similar “gateway” sites. If the City supports the height, which appears to be the case, then one panel member recommended reviewing and updating the height limits at other prominent gateway intersections at the edges of downtown.

- The panel liked the overall design at street level including the retention of the façades at 74 Queen Street South and the introduction of the Jackson Street West town houses. The panel expressed concerns about the tower floorplate and resulting “girth” of the tower. They suggested increasing the step-backs, and that additional work could be done on the tower massing, articulation and materiality to make the building appear less ‘boxy’.
- The panel noted that a more slender tower should permit a wider laneway which would help with its multiple functions.
- Panel members were concerned that the horizontal treatment of the fourth and fifth storeys (upper podium) and lower podium seem to be competing for attention. The panel suggested that the architect try to reduce the horizontal elements and consider the use of fewer materials to help the tower and base work together, as well as allowing the heritage to be heritage and the contemporary to be contemporary.
- The panel recognized that this iteration of the proposal had greatly improved on the previous DRP submission, but they recommended that the tower portion be reworked using the Tall Building Guidelines. The random black-and-white patterning should be reconsidered, since it reinforces the buildings “boxiness”.

**c) Streetscape, The Pedestrian Realm & Landscape Strategy (Questions 2 and 3)**

- The panel agrees with the treatment of the Jackson Street West frontage as the transition respects the character of the existing neighbourhood. However, the Queen Street South frontage needs some reconsideration of the podium treatment to lessen the negative effects caused by a significant change in grade.
- The panel expressed support for the canopy feature and pedestrian friendly design on the main floor. The ground floor should be designed in anticipation of Main Street becoming more pedestrian-friendly over time. Although it might not be viable at this time, the panel suggested the main floor frontage along Main Street, at least at the corner, should be designed to accommodate small scale commercial spaces in the future.
- The panel encouraged the applicant to follow through with the proposed landscape and public realm design considerations and encouraged the City to use this as a precedent for Main Street as there is no Streetscape Master Plan in place.
- If garbage pick-up for the town houses on Jackson will happen from the street, then screened bin storage areas should be integrated into the design.

**Summary**

The panel appreciated the detailed presentation and recognized how far this development proposal has come from its previous submission to the Design Review Panel. The panel recognized the superior treatment of the landscape and public realm, but still feel there is work to be done in terms of the overall massing, podium design and its relationship with the tower portion of the building. The panel recommended a strict adherence to the Tall Building Guidelines and a reduction in the tower floor plate size to meet the guidelines. The articulation and materials of the tower should also be simplified. The panel would like to see the podium along the Queen Street frontage better respond to the drastic change in grade and have asked that the horizontal design of the fourth and fifth floors be reconsidered. The panel believes that this is an important site due to its location on Main Street West, but also because of its topographical elevation. This will be a landmark building if designed appropriately.

**Meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.**