



Meeting Summary

The Design Review Panel met virtually on **Thursday December 10th, 2020** via WebEx.

Panel Members Present:

- Vincent Colizza**, Vincent Colizza Architects, *Chair*
- Robert Freedman**, Freedman Urban Solutions
- Ute Maya-Giambattista**, Fotenn Planning + Design
- Mario Patitucci**, Adesso Design Inc.
- 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:

- Steve Robichaud**, Director and Chief Planner
- Anita Fabac**, Manager of Development Planning, Heritage and Design
- Shannon McKie**, Senior Project Manager, Urban Team
- Victoria Cox**, Urban Designer, Urban Team
- Mark Kehler**, Planner I, Urban Team

Others Present

Presentation #1 Mixed Use Development 80 John Street North	Gabriel Didiano , McCallum Sather Ashraf Azeem , McCallum Sather Anna-Maria Kaneff , Kaneff Properties Limited Dom Fanelli , Kaneff Properties Limited Colin Chung , Glen Schnarr & Associates Inc. Mark Condello , Glen Schnarr & Associates Inc.
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Regrets: Colin Berman, Brook McIlroy (Panel member)

Declaration of Interest: N/A

Schedule:

Start Time	Address	Type of Application	Applicant/ Agent	Development Planner
2:00 p.m.	Mixed Use Development 80 John Street North	Pre-consultation	Owner: Kaneff Properties Limited Agent and Presentation: mcCallumSather	Mark Kehler, Planner I

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.

80 John Street North

Development Proposal Overview

The applicant proposes to construct a mixed use development consisting of two 30 storey towers above a nine storey base building. A total of 619 dwelling units, 1,763 square metres of commercial space and 272 parking spaces are proposed. The subject lands are located within a Design Priority Area (Downtown Urban Growth Centre) and review by the Design Review Panel is required to inform a future site plan control application.

The subject property is located at the southeast corner of John Street North and Wilson Street in Downtown Hamilton. There is a three storey office building and two storey multiple dwellings to the north. There are two storey detached dwellings and a two storey Hamilton Police Service building to the east. There is a two storey health centre to the south and a surface parking lot to the west.

Key Questions to the Panel from Planning Staff

1. Does the proposal represent compatible integration with the surrounding area in terms of use, scale, form and character?

2. Does the proposal encourage a harmonious and compatible approach to infilling by minimizing the impacts of shadowing and maximizing light to adjacent properties and the public realm?
3. Does the proposal contribute to the character and ambiance of the community through appropriate design of streetscapes and amenity areas?

Panel Comments and Recommendations

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

- Generally, the panel felt that the proposal has massing issues and is not compatible with the surrounding community. The proposal does not align with the City's Tall Building Guidelines and defeats the intent of the guidelines in this area. The panel noted that if two towers are permitted, some reduction in tower separation may be required, but the guidelines that impact the public realm should be followed such as overall podium height, tower step-backs and lining of the above ground parking with active uses.
- The panel stated that the entire at-grade condition needs improving to better relate to the three diverse adjoining streets and that the proposed density of the site results in an overwhelming mass at the base that is out of scale with the existing and planned context. While the Downtown Secondary Plan envisions tall buildings in the area, podiums are intended to respect the historic context of the downtown, i.e. 3 – 6 storeys. With no tower step-backs, the proposal effectively has no podium.
- The quality and treatment of the pedestrian realm at-grade also needs to be further developed to address the various pedestrian conditions along the flanking streets.
- The panel noted the opportunity to include the property on Rebecca Street and coordinate with all other owners and developers to create a full City block plan for a more holistic project.

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

- The panel stated that the site is too small for two towers and is better suited to accommodate one tower. One panel member commented that a single tower could potentially exceed the maximum floorplate size in the Tall Building Guidelines if it was massed and sculpted sensitively to minimize adverse impacts on the public realm. If two towers are permitted, it may be possible to reduce the separation distance of the towers (no less than 20 metres) to mitigate some of the other negative

impacts to the surrounding community. It is important to achieve the intent of the Tall Building Guidelines and demonstrate that they are substantially being followed. In addition, the panel recommended staggering the towers to reduce their visual volume and improve views through the site. The panel also recommended providing a square shaped tower floorplate and staggering the tower heights to avoid all towers in the area being the same height and shape.

- As noted above, the podium design and how it relates to all streets needs improving. The panel suggested lowering the podium height to 22 metres so that it has a 1:1 ratio with the street, a more comfortable scale. The panel also stated that the podium should be designed within the limits of the zoning for ground level setbacks and that the towers above should step-back a minimum of 3 metres from the edge of the podium along all streets.
- The panel commented that the current Wilson Street treatment is problematic and could be improved through this development to provide more space for pedestrians.
- The panel has major concerns with the treatment along Catherine Street and stated that the current proposal is unacceptable; it should not be treated as a back but rather should have uses and character in keeping with existing development on the street. The panel notes that residential uses along Catherine would likely work and suggests laminating three storey townhouses on the parking structure for an appropriate transition.

c) Site Layout and Circulation (Question 3)

- The parking location and layout needs to be studied further. The applicant and design team are urged to provide active uses along all fronts. The panel notes it would be better to have all parking below grade.

d) Streetscape, The Pedestrian Realm & Landscape Strategy (Question 3)

- The panel stressed the importance of providing private outdoor amenity space for the residents and privately owned but publicly accessible outdoor space for the greater community. The panel noted that the development does not positively contribute to the general community and there is not enough outdoor amenity space for the future residents. With 600 units and an estimated 900+ residents, there needs to be ample amenity space provided.
- The panel noted the opportunity to provide rooftop amenity space; however, with the proposed tower orientation, the outdoor rooftop amenity space will be shaded all day. A north/south tower orientation would reduce shadows on the potential amenity areas.

Summary

The panel thanked the applicant and design team for the presentation and acknowledged that replacing a parking lot with a thoughtful urban development is important. The panel noted that accommodating two towers is a significant challenge, with the lack of tower step-backs being a fundamental issue to be addressed. The Catherine Street face of the project needs to be rethought, and the next iteration of the proposal should give more consideration to the at-grade condition, the adjacent public realm and common amenity space.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.