



Meeting Summary

The Design Review Panel met virtually on **Thursday February 11, 2021** via Webex.

Panel Members Present:

David Clusiau, *Chair*

Dayna Edwards

Hoda Kameli

Joey Giaimo

Jana Kelemen

Jennifer Mallard

Jennifer Sisson

Eldon Theodore

Ted Watston

Staff Present:

Stephen Robichaud, Director of Planning and Chief Planner

Anita Fabac, Manager, Development Planning, Heritage and Design

Shannon McKie, Senior Project Manager, Urban Team

Victoria Cox, Urban Designer, Urban Team

Andrea Dear, Senior Planner, Urban Team

Applicant and Design Team Present:

Presentation #1 Residential Development 220-222 Main Street West & 115-117 George Street	Michael Krasic , Coletara Development Ashley Paton , GSP Group
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Regrets:

N/A

Declaration of Interest:

N/A

Schedule:

Start Time	Address	Type of Application	Applicant/ Agent	Development Planner
2:00 p.m.	220-222 Main Street West & 115-117 George Street	Urban Hamilton Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment UHOPA-20-025/ZAC-20-038	Owner: Coletera Development Agent and Presentation: GSP Group	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.

220-222 Main Street West & 115-117 George Street

Development Proposal Overview

The proposal includes a 23 storey mixed use development with retail/commercial at grade along Main Street West and George Street. The existing two storey brick building along George Street will be retained. The 23 storey building steps back from the Main Street West frontage, dropping to 18 storeys, then to 12 storeys as the project moves toward the retained brick building on George Street. 119 parking spaces are proposed to be located in one level of underground parking and a portion of the main floor, as well as the third floor and fourth floor within the building podium.

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 acknowledged that the site is located on a Primary Corridor and is suited for an appropriately designed tall building; however, the City of Hamilton's Tall Building Guidelines should be applied in order to mitigate negative impacts to the adjacent properties. The TBGs should be reviewed and followed, especially separation distances and floor plate areas. Generally, the height and density should both be lowered to reduce negative impacts to the community.
- The panel noted the tower separation from the interior lot lines creates a difficult scenario for the future development of the adjacent lots.
- The panel agreed that the Queen Street streetscape must incorporate active uses with more permeability between the proposal and the street with multiple entrances. The panel noted that parking should be situated below ground, but any proposed above grade parking should be screened from public views and should be wrapped by either residential or commercial uses to mimic the existing rhythm along the street.
- The building massing needs to respect Hess Village and provide appropriate transitions to mitigate shadows and access to sun issues.
- The panel commended the applicant on preserving and integrating the existing heritage building into the development. More consideration should be given to how the buildings relate to each other.

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

- The panel noted that the proposed building height at the corner seems reasonable, but even with stepping down, the proposal appears bulky and has severe impacts to the surrounding community. The overall building mass and floor plate areas should be reduced to create a more sophisticated and sleek proposal.

- Panel members indicated that the massing might better reflect the character of the existing area if the proposed mid-rise portion of the building was removed, reducing the bulky appearance of the proposal. The hybrid design is not successful in the context.
- The significant shadow impacts to Hess Village need to be mitigated to reduce the shadowing between noon and sunset to provide an appropriate pedestrian setting. The panel recommended applying a 45-degree angular plane from the George Street right of way to help inform adequate step backs and increase sun access.
- The panel recommended providing residential units on Queen Street and suggested incorporating three storey towns.
- One panel member noted their appreciation for the level of articulation and thinking into the building base in terms of the depth and materiality but suggested some consolidation.
- The panel encouraged the applicant to enlarge the retail area.
- One panel member suggested including a mural on the east elevation.

c) Heritage Resources (Questions 2 and 3)

- The panel noted that the preservation of Hess Village is critical, and this proposal will help with its revitalization.
- The panel agreed that the incorporation of the existing heritage building positively contributes to the development, although the proposal should better relate to the heritage building by providing more breathing room. The panel recommends maintaining a three storey podium (not four) to help highlight the retained heritage building.

d) Site Layout and Circulation

- One panel member suggested investigating opportunities to use the existing laneway for access to the parking area.
- The panel noted the high wind conditions at the corner of Queen Street South and Main Street West, suggesting that seating in this location is not ideal. Wind mitigation measures are needed to make this area comfortable.

e) Streetscape, The Pedestrian Realm & Landscape Strategy

- The panel agreed that the Queen Street façade should be composed of active uses and noted that enhanced landscaping alone does not achieve an active streetscape. A blank façade will not retain the unique character of the area.
- One panel member noted that the proposed entrance signage at George Street nicely reflects the Hess Village signage and is a positive element of the proposal.

Summary

The panel appreciated the detailed presentation and recognized that there is great potential on this site for redevelopment. The panel agreed that the Main Street West frontage could accommodate some height but recommended reducing the bulkiness of the development by removing the mid-rise section of the building. The panel emphasized the importance of maintaining a positive relationship between the proposed development and Hess Village. The panel appreciated the desire to preserve the heritage building and maintain the existing pedestrian character of George Street.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:12 p.m.