



Toronto Community Housing Design Review Panel
Minutes of Meeting
Wednesday, June 7, 2018

The Design Review Panel met on Wednesday, June 7, 2018 at
50 Regent Park Boulevard, Ground Floor Amenity Space 1:30pm

<p>Present: Anne McIlroy, Brook McIlroy (Chair)* Antoine Belaieff, Metrolinx (Vice Chair) Graeme Stewart, ERA Architects Andre D'Elia, Superkul David Anselmi, Canada Lands Company* William Shane, Alexandra Park Resident Yiwen Zhu, Urban Strategies Ali Elchanti, Regent Park Resident Gunta Mackars, Metrolinx Samuel Abebe, Lawrence Heights Resident* Roland Rom Colthoff, RAW Design Paul Bailey, REVIVE*</p>	<p>Regrets: Rubesha Zia, Regent Park Resident Berhane Abraha, Lawrence Heights Resident Sybil Wa, Diamond Schmitt Architects Shirley Blumberg, KPMB Architects David Leinster, The Planning Partnership Labib Chowdhury, Alexandra Park Resident</p>
<p>*did not participate in second project evaluation</p>	
<p>TCHC Staff</p>	<p>City of Toronto Staff:</p>
<p>Vincent Tong Kelly Skeith Jed Kilbourn Ilidio Coito Jason Chen</p>	<p>Seanna Kerr Helene Iardas Jason Brander</p>

Shawni Lo Cristina Raviele Pritha Josiah Allison Lebow Derek Brunelle Frozan Shaikhmiri	
Recording Secretary: Mirej Vasic	

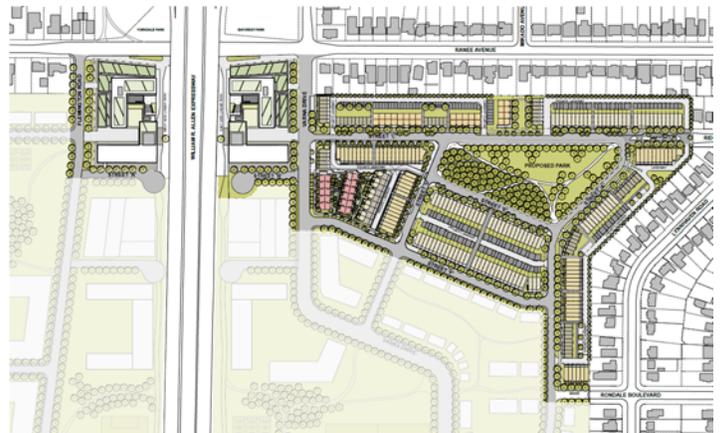
Project Reviews

The following projects were reviewed by the TCHC Design Review Panel on June 7, 2018:

- **Lawrence Heights – Northeast District (Second Review)**
- **Regent Park, Block 17S (Second Review)**

1.0 Project Review – Lawrence Heights Northeast District

Project type: Pre-Site Plan Approval
 Design Review: Second Review
 Design Team: TACT Architecture & The MBTW Group
 Presenters: Prishram Jain, TACT Architecture
 Gus Maurano, The MBTW Group



Conflict of Interest: N/A

Vote: Redesign - 0

Refine - 0

Fully Support – All

With conditions as follows:

- Explore higher density along east of Varna & along Street C
- Ensure that all mailboxes are located in visible locations
- Ensure legibility of Ridgevale Mews for pedestrians and cyclists (avoid the use of pots in the middle of the road)
- Consider making all townhouses Tier 2 of the Toronto Green Standards (including both rental and market units)

1.1 Project Information

Shawni Lo from Toronto Community Housing provided a snapshot of the Lawrence Heights revitalization. The revitalization is a four-phase, 20-year redevelopment that will replace 1,208 rent geared to income units. The project will introduce a series of neighbourhood parks throughout the phases, and phase 2 will entail creating a community hub.

Following the presentation by Shawni Lo, Seanna Kerr from the City of Toronto further spoke to the Lawrence Heights Secondary Plan. She explained that its goal is to create a mixed-income neighbourhood, encourage transit supportive development, and respect and enhance the area character.

Seanna noted that in terms of built form, tall buildings will be located around Lawrence Avenue West, with mid-rises along Allen Road, stepping down to a low-rise area at the edges of the development. Overall, the vision is for a park-focused plan for a complete, family-focused community, enhanced community facilities and pedestrian and cycling connections. Seanna noted that this vision has been translated into Official Plan policy.

Following the presentations by TCHC and the City of Toronto, TACT Architecture and The MBTW Group provided a presentation on the revised Northeast District plan.

1.2 Panel Commentary

The panel was happy that the presentation team took their previous comments to heart and commented that the proposal has been greatly improved. They offered the following feedback for further refinement:

Streets and Mews

The panel members liked that the presentation team introduced numerous mews, but noted that they should be streets, and more road-like with permeable paving, instead of being garden-like. In particular, the panel also said that the Ridgevale Mews feel confusing, and that the presentation team should consider what would happen during snow clearance.

The rear location for waste handling was praised, but it was noted that also placing the mailboxes at the back of townhouses could create an unsafe condition for residents. The panel recognized that though the intent was to promote an animated condition, residents could be discouraged from getting their mail after dark. Their location should therefore be re-considered.

The panel noted that the presentation team did not show where a bus shelter or spaces for delivery and car sharing could go. They noted that this should be part of the district design so that these elements are not an afterthought.

Parks and Landscaping

The panel liked that the park was treated as an urban room within the district, but wondered whether the park conditions could be extended to the adjacent streets, instead of being limited to its edges. In particular, it was said that Street D was great opportunity for place-making, and that the buildings facing it could potentially be angled to better integrate with the park.

The panel raised concerns about the quality of the landscape if potted trees are introduced along the Ridgevale Mews, and asked the presentation team to consider planting trees in tree cells.

Massing and Heights

The panel agreed that though they liked that a height transition was being proposed, they believed that the buildings east of Varna Drive and along Street C could be taller than four storeys. They encouraged the design

team to explore the possibility of six storeys as they felt this would be more appropriate.

In terms of building design, the panel liked that design quality was at the forefront, but noted that both the material palette and built form was a bit too homogenous. They said that the team could be more daring and explore more options. More specifically, the panel noted that some sections should be reversed, so that the main living area is adjacent to the backyard (see page 88 of the presentation package). The team should also confirm that a queen bed can fit into all of the bedrooms, and they should be mindful of having a bedroom right beside the furnace room.

In terms of the townhouses, the panel members were concerned about the lack of accessibility, and noted that someone with a stroller or a mobility impairment would have difficulties accessing the townhouses.

Lastly, it was noted the Northeast District should embrace a future urbanism, instead of being referential to the existing Lawrence Heights neighbourhood.

Sustainability

The panel noted that the presentation team should have incorporated more concepts of sustainability and TransformTO in their presentation. Importantly, the panel encouraged the team to design all residential buildings to meet Tier 2 of the Toronto Green Standards, not just TCHC buildings.

1.3 Chair's Summary

Due to time constraints and the succinctness of panel comments, the chair did not summarize the feedback provided.

2.0 Project Review – Regent Park Block 17S

Project type: Pre-Site Plan Approval
Design Review: Second Review
Design Team: Quadrangle Architects & Brook Mcllroy
Presenters: Less Klein, Quadrangle
Colin Berman, Brook Mcllroy
Conflict of Interest: Anne Mcllroy
Vote: Redesign - 0
Refine - 0
Fully Support – All



2.1 Project Information

Jed Kilbourn from TCHC provided project context, and reviewed the Regent Park Master Plan, showing how this project fits into the area. He indicated which buildings are under construction and others that are in the planning stages.

Following this presentation, Geoff Gibson from the Daniels Corporation described the revised design for the Block 17S building. He noted that significant retail in the form of a grocery store is proposed at the intersection of Oak Street and Dundas Street East, on the second floor, with fine grained retail and other community uses on Dundas Street East. He then introduced the design team and the presenters – including Less Klein of Quadrangle and Colin Berman of Brook Mcllroy.

Less Klein of Quadrangle explained that 17S will be a gateway to the community. Since the last DRP presentation, the site arrangement has changed, and that the building is now 33 storeys tall, with retail uses along Dundas Street East, and amenity space between the two towers. The design has been changed to clearly indicate where the entrances are, to

move the residential lobby northwards and introduce setbacks to create a sense of entrance. The decision was also made to tie the tower, mid-rise and podium together by using the same cladding materials. Colin Berman of Brook McIlroy described how the Living Lane has been designed to be a light and playful space that celebrates Toronto's bike culture.

2.2 Panel Commentary

The panel members commended the presentation team on the new design, and were very positive about the proposed mix of uses, particularly the large grocery store. They offered the following feedback for further refinement:

Building Massing

There were mixed assessments of the building façade, with a few members noting that the diversity of the facades between the mid-rise and the tower should not have been abandoned. One member noted that the variety of treatments introduced whimsy to the design. Other members said that the envelope changes were an improvement from the previous iteration, but asked whether it was necessary to include the brick-capped piers on the podium.

In addition to these comments on the outdoor cladding, the panel noted that it would be interesting to see the tower within its context, and the relationship with other buildings in its vicinity. They noted that it was difficult to evaluate how the building acts as part of an ensemble.

One member noted that the interior spaces should be a community in and of itself, and regard should also be given to the design of gathering spaces within the residential building. This member also noted that there should be flexibility in the design of corner units in order to create multi-generational housing.

In terms of outdoor amenity space, it was noted that the adjacency of the dining area and playing area on the roof should be rethought, because these uses could be very incompatible.

Lastly, it was also noted that the project team should give more consideration to sustainability features. Daniels noted that the building will be Tier 2 of the Toronto Green Standards.

Retail Uses

The panel was very enthusiastic about the addition of a large-format retail use on the second storey, but multiple members repeated that there should be direct access to this retail space from the residential building. It was also noted that the retail atrium should have an entrance on Dundas Street East and that there should be thought to programming the atrium so that it accommodates individuals waiting for transit.

The panel members praised the fact that some commercial units will be offered at below-market rates. In terms of their design, the panel members thought the smaller retail spaces on Dundas Street East were good, but it was noted that they should be articulated, and a slight recess would have a great benefit.

Living Lane

The DRP panel noted that it is great that project has ample bicycle parking, and introduces live-work spaces, but it was thought that these pieces should be further refined. Due to the fact that the number of live-work places within the Living Lane have been reduced, they seem like a token gesture. The panel would like to see more of such spaces.

In terms of the bicycle storage, the panel noted that a lot of bicycles will have to be pushed along the bicycle ramp to reach the parking spaces. The sheer volume of bikes and an aging population could make this a problem. The panel indicated that the presentation team should consider this. The panel also noted that the presentation team should look at the ride-in, ride-out opportunities in the bicycle parking to make it more seamless. This would make the bicycle parking safer. They also noted that there is a conflict between the Living Lane and cycling lane on River Street. They said that the presentation team should consider cross circulation between cyclists and vehicles.

One member noted that though they like the design of the Living Lane, and the fact that there are eyes on the street, the presentation team should

rethink the use of tropical wood, or ensure that the wood is sustainably sourced.

2.3 Chair's Summary

The chair commended the team on the clear presentation as well as the design. Suggestions for further development were summarized as follows:

- It is necessary to understand the different material palettes around the community to be able to assess whether the proposed building design fits into its context.
- The design should entail articulating the retail façade to place more emphasis on verticality in the podium in order to make it appear better balanced with the tower elements.
- There were some concerns about introducing a ramp leading to the long-term bicycle parking. Consideration should be given to the fact that an aging population would have problems with using these parking spaces.
- The live-work spaces within the Living Lane are great, but more of these spaces should be introduced.
- Lastly, while the large-format retail space on the second storey is a major asset, consideration should be given to allowing residents to access this space directly from the residential building without having to go outside.

The Chair brought up an additional item for TCHC, saying that regard should be given to ensuring that future presentations always provide building statistics to help the panel review the proposal.