DESIGN REVIEW PANEL FOR HERITAGE PROPERTIES

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.0 Introduction

The Town of Aurora Design Review Panel for the Heritage Properties (the Panel) is being established in order to assist in the review of development and redevelopment applications to ensure the protection of the Town’s Heritage Resources and the character of the Town’s Historic Neighbourhoods. The Panel will review (re)development applications for historic properties in order to ensure that they are appropriately designed within the historic context of the area. It is a fundamental principle of the Town’s Official Plan to “promote the conservation and enhancement of Aurora’s cultural heritage resources...to tell the story of a community’s evolution and provide important visual reminders that can help define a sense of place.”

2.0 Duties of the Panel

2.1 The Duty of the Panel is to give independent design advice and make recommendations to staff, the applicant and their consultants with respect to development and redevelopment applications:

   a) For properties located within the Town’s Heritage Resource Area, as identified on Schedule ‘D’ of the Town’s Official Plan, attached hereto;

   b) For properties which are Designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act; and

   c) For listed properties in the Town’s Inventory of Heritage Properties.

2.2 The Director of Planning & Development Services (Director) may at his/her discretion require that a (re)development project located adjacent to a property Designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act or Listed in the Town’s Inventory of Historic Properties be subject to review by the Panel.

2.3 Projects which are not required to appear before the Town’s Heritage Advisory Committee or Council for approval (ie. projects which only require Building Permit issuance from the Town’s Building & By-law Services) shall not be reviewed by the Panel or be discussed at their meetings.

2.4 The Panel shall advise and comment with respect to the potential physical and aesthetic impact of the proposed (re)development on the character of the surrounding properties, neighbourhood, and streetscape.
2.5 The Panel may advise and comment with respect to design matters including building design and style, building materials and colour.

3.0 Panel Membership

3.1 Individuals qualified to sit on the Panel include: Urban & Regional Planners, Urban Designers, Architects, Landscape Architects and Civil, Structural and Transportation Engineers.

3.2 Individuals appointed to the Panel will normally be a resident of Aurora or a business owner in Aurora. Notwithstanding this provision, to ensure appropriate professional representation, Council may appoint non-residents or non-Aurora business owners to the Panel.

3.3 The Panel shall consist of between 4 to 8 members.

3.4 The Town will issue a Request for Expression of Interest for Panel members which will include criteria to ensure an appropriate mix of professionals with appropriate experience.

3.5 Town staff will nominate Panel members from Expressions of Interest and make recommendations for approval by Council.

3.6 Panel members will be appointed for the term of Council. Council may reappoint a Panel member for one additional term.

3.7 Membership on the Panel is a non-paid position.

3.8 Panel membership may be revoked upon being absent from 3 consecutive meetings without prior authorization from the Town Clerk.

3.9 No Members of Council, Town staff or members of other Town Boards or Committees shall be appointed to the Design Review Panel.

4.0 Panel Nomination Criteria

4.1 Design Review Panelists shall be qualified professionals who have membership in one of the following professional organizations:
   a) Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI)
   b) Professional Engineers of Ontario (PEO)
   c) Ontario Association of Architects (OAA)
   d) Ontario Association of Landscape Architects (OALA)

4.2 The Panel shall have a wide range of relevant professional experience including:
a) High quality design in the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, heritage design, urban planning and transportation engineering;

b) a mix of local, provincial and international practice;

c) a mix of project scales;

d) a mix of project types for a variety of land uses;

e) knowledge and practice of sustainable design; and

f) professional research and academic involvement.

5.0 Conflict of Interest

5.1 Each member has a duty to advise Town staff and the Chair of the Panel of any conflict of interest prior to project review.

5.2 If a conflict of interest arises, the Panel member shall not participate in the project review and shall remove themselves from the meeting.

5.3 A Conflict of Interest is defined as a Panel member having financial, personal or business interest in a project being reviewed by the Panel; or where multiple interests, one of which could influence, corrupt or exploit a decision, or where the appearance of a conflict exists. Any declared conflicts shall be recorded by the Director.

6.0 Meeting Protocol

6.1 The Town’s Procedural By-law and Policy for Ad Hoc/Advisory Committees and Local Boards does not apply to the Panel.

6.2 Panel meetings shall normally be held on a monthly basis, as scheduled by the Director; in consultation with Panel members. In the event that there are no applications to review, the meeting shall be cancelled.

6.3 The Panel members shall select from among themselves a Chair and Vice Chair at the first meeting.

6.4 The Chair, with the assistance of the Director, will summarize the comments and recommendations of the Panel members. The Chair will obtain the consensus of the Panel members regarding their comments and recommendations.

6.5 A maximum of 3 projects shall be scheduled for each meeting.

6.6 To ensure the strongest possible discussion on projects presented meetings will be informal.
6.7 Staff or the applicant will make a brief presentation to describe the project and design objectives.

6.8 The Panel will have the opportunity to ask questions of the design team on any aspect of their design proposal.

6.9 The Panel will review the presentation material, followed by a discussion on the merits of the design of the project. The Panel will formulate their comments and recommendations for the project through the Chairperson.

6.10 The Panel’s advice and comments will be based on approved design criteria, such as The Aurora Promenade Urban Design Strategy, Northeast Old Aurora Heritage Conservation District Plan and urban design policies in the Town’s Official Plan.

6.11 Following the meeting, the Director or his/her designate(s) will undertake a review of the comments and recommendations and determine the appropriate actions to be taken by the applicant.

7.0 Project Review

7.1 Projects subject to the Design Review Panel process shall, depending on scale and impact of the proposal, be reviewed twice in accordance with the following procedures:

   a) Conceptual Review: The first review shall consist of a pre-consultation during the initial design of the project. This is to afford the opportunity for significant changes prior to the detailed design of the project. This review shall take place prior to the submission of a formal application to the Town.

   b) Detailed Review: The second and final review shall take place once detailed plans have been submitted to Planning & Development Services.

8.0 Required Materials

8.1 The onus is on the applicant to provide the Panel with materials which contain sufficient information for the members to make comments and recommendations.

8.2 For the Conceptual Review stage (first review as described in Section 7.1a) this may consist of:

   • Photos of the Site and surrounding Streetscape/Neighbourhood
   • Conceptual Site Plan
   • Conceptual Landscape Plan
   • Conceptual Building Elevations
   • Coloured Renderings
8.3 For the Detailed Review stage (second and final review as described in Section 7.1b) this shall consist of materials which were submitted as part of a Planning & Development or Building Permit Application which would assist in providing the Panel information regarding the detailed design of the project. These materials may include:

- Site Plan
- Landscape Plan
- Planting Plan
- Grading Plan
- Building Elevations
- Building Sections
- Building Materials Samples
- Building Height/Massing Analysis
- Sun/Shadow Analysis

- Any other information as requested by the Director or his/her designate(s)

8.4 The applicant shall provide 12 copies of the materials described in Sections 8.2 and 8.3 in a bound booklet form at a measurement of 11 x 17 inches.

8.5 The applicant shall also provide one digital copy of the materials to the Town.

8.6 The onus is on the applicant to ensure that the presentation materials at the Design Review Panel meeting are legible and displayed in a fashion which is functional.

9.0 Information Reporting

9.1 The comments and recommendations of the Panel will be summarized for the Heritage Advisory Committee to assist them in making recommendations on a project to Council.

9.2 The Director will when reporting to Council on an application ensure that the comments and recommendations of the Panel are summarized.