

Town of Aurora Design Review Panel

Meeting Notes

Meeting #6: Monday, January 25, 2021 (1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Design Review Panel Members	Present
Frank Ameryoun, Heritage Contractor	
David Eqbal, Senior Architect, Pro Vision Architecture	✓
Chris Tyrrell, Vice President, Planning, Landscape Architecture & Urban Design, WSP	✓
Wai Ying DiGiorgio, Principal, Urban Design and Landscape Architecture, The Planning Partnership	✓
Julia van der Laan de Vries, Urban Designer, Region of Niagara	✓
Eldon Theodore, Partner and Urban Designer, MHBC	✓
Town of Aurora Staff	
Matthew Peverini, Planner	✓
Anna Henriques, Manager, Development Planning	✓
Representatives for Owner/Applicant	
Keith Loffler, Keith Loffler McApline Architects	✓
Joanna Fast, Evans Planning	✓
Harry Zhu, Evans Planning	✓

The Design Review Panel Chair (Wai Ying DiGiorgio) commenced the meeting with a review of the agenda.

The following proposals were presented and discussed:

- 1. 25 and 29 George Street**
2300485 Ontario Inc. and 2333564 Ontario Inc. (Owners)
Proposed 4 Storey Apartment Building
Application: ZBA 2020-06

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NOTES

Town Presentation – Matthew Peverini

Town Planning staff outlined the proposal, area context, planning framework and preliminary comments on the proposal.

Applicant Presentation – Keith Loffler, McAlpine Architects

The applicant provided further details on the proposal including site circulation, building massing, sustainable design and building materials and colours.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL GENERAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Design Review Panel deliberated in closed session and invited the applicant back into the meeting room to provide the following comments and recommendations:

General Comments

- A thoughtfully considered landscape (private and public), which isn't simply an afterthought, is integral to the development and should be illustrated and described as part of the presentation to the DRP.
- Appreciate that the existing grades are challenging (in this regard, commend some of the thoughtful/intelligent design moves)
- Why retain the existing building? If the building is required to remain to maintain the existing rental inventory there may be an opportunity to re-house existing residents in another location until the new building is completed. This would allow for a more holistic treatment of the site, and may address some of the issues relating to setbacks to property lines.
- The Urban Design Brief (UDB) makes statements of urban design achievements, without describing how

Built Form

- Agree with step back at the rear of the building. Suggest a similar step back at the front of the building

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- New building front yard setback should be similar to existing setbacks along the street
- The two sets of steps/stairs at the front could be combined, integrated with the grading and landscape better.
- Reduce the need for the overall number of steps.
- Consider locating the mechanical penthouse to the rear; at the front, it makes the building appear more massive than it is.
- Location of parking garage door is not ideally located as it is directly visible from the street.
- Consider pitched roof element as rooflines along street are typically pitched roofs (Even the multi-unit buildings with flat roofs have a pitched roof element along edge).
- Entrances to existing building (rear and front) should connect to sidewalk (not driveway). The units of the existing building facing the driveway need space to safely enter the unit (i.e. sidewalk along building edge). Existing driveway is 6.5m, so there is potential for a 0.5m walkway. Might need to plan this area as a (shared) flush street (woornerf).
- Outdoor bicycle parking would be better located closer to building front entrance.

Interface

- Concern for separation distance between the existing and proposed buildings (sunlight, shadowing, and overlook).
- Concern with property line setbacks (including 0m setback for underground parking) and sufficient space to provide robust landscaping, particularly along the north and south adjacent to the seniors building.
- Do not agree on the reliance on adjacent existing trees to provide landscape amenity and in fact, concerned with the parking structure impact on their root zones.
- The scale and extent of the exposed parking structure walls are concerning

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- Concern for overlook / privacy issue with respect to balconies and terraces as well as the 4th floor amenity (also concerned that the only onsite amenity is on the roof).

Design/Materials

- Agree with more muted / neutral colours and creating a complementary design to the existing building, including materials and colours.
- Agree with replacing precast materials with warmer stone or masonry.
- Would be concerned if stucco were proposed.
- There are good examples of building articulation, colour and materials in the UDB which are not reflected/referenced in the actual design of the building
- Conceptual landscaping appears to be globe cedars. This creates concerns due to physical separation and hiding spaces along the street edge. More typical treatment of deciduous street trees and low growing plant material is recommended.

The meeting concluded at approximately 2:30 p.m.

The next Design Review Panel meeting is tentatively scheduled for **Monday, April 12, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.**