

Town of Aurora Design Review Panel

Meeting Notes

Meeting #8: Monday, July 12, 2021 (1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.)

Design Review Panel Members

Present

Frank Ameryoun, Heritage Contractor

David Eqbal, Senior Architect, Pro Vision Architecture

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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

Stephen Corr, Senior Planner

✓

Anna Henriques, Manager, Development Planning

Representatives for Owner/Applicant

David Farrow, Alive Developments Inc.

✓

Hoordad Ghandehari, Icon Architects

✓

Venus Zakeri, Icon Architects

✓

Naama Blonder, Smart Density

✓

The Design Review Panel Co-Chair (David Eqbal) commenced the meeting with a review of the agenda.

The following applications were presented and discussed:

- 1. 15296, 15306 and 15314 Yonge Street
2772200 Ontario Inc. (Owner)
Proposed 137 unit, 6 to 8 storey condominium apartment building
Application: OPA-2021-03, ZBA-2021-03 and SP 2021-07**

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Town Presentation – Stephen Corr

Town Planning staff outlined the proposal in relation to the area context, applicable planning framework and preliminary comments provided to the applicant through the first submission review.

Applicant Presentation – Hoordad Ghandehari, Icon Architects

The applicant provided further details on the proposal including site and building design, building massing and articulation, existing grading conditions, building materials and treatment which blend heritage elements with a modern design and provision of sustainable design elements.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL GENERAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Design Review Panel considered the staff comments on the proposed development to be appropriate. The Panel also deliberated in closed session and invited the applicant back into the meeting to provide the following comments and recommendations:

Feedback on the proposed relationship with the streetscape and public realm.

The Panel generally liked the proposal and the proposed intensification along the Yonge Street corridor, but did have some comments and suggests to improve the integration with the public realm as follows:

Confirmation of ground level unit land uses and design.

- The applicant confirmed that the intended uses, as proposed in the Official Plan Amendment, is that ground units will be residential. It was acknowledged however, that the design of the units could potentially be 'live-work' units or potentially transition to non-residential uses in time.
- The panel considered that even if ground units are residential, it is appropriate they be designed to accommodate a potential transition to encourage and support a vibrant pedestrian-oriented streetscape. Recommendations were to provide larger floor to ceiling heights of 4.5 m, and a greater prominence of windows and doors.

Building Interface with Public Realm

The panel also considered it appropriate to improve the interface of the building with the public realm, with the following recommendations:

- Provide a larger building setback than the proposed 1 m along Yonge Street to achieve more room landscaping or streetscape elements, and to provide larger patio/terraces and entranceways to ground floor units.

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- Enhance the Yonge Street and Irvin Avenue corner of the building to create more visual prominence in accordance with the Aurora Promenade Concept Plan, key Terminus Site guidelines. Also update the Urban Design Brief to address how this corner is being enhanced.
- Provide more articulation to break up the mid-point of building mass on the Yonge Street façade. The panel was concerned with the with monolithic +80 m building line along this frontage.

Feedback on the Building Configuration

- The Panel recommended that the south building elevation incorporate setbacks on the fourth storey and above to provide a softer transition with the abutting four-storey stacked townhouses.
- The panel appreciated that the building was compliant with the angular plane guidelines to abutting stable neighbourhood to the west. However, to soften the aesthetic and mitigate overlook and privacy issues, it was recommended that the stepped back terraces at the rear of the building incorporate a planter wall.

Feedback on the Landscaping setbacks

- The panel was of the opinion that the landscaping submission was well thought out but agreed with the staff recommendation that the landscape buffer to the adjacent detached dwelling property to the west should be widened.
- The recommendation was a width of 3.0 metres to ensure sufficient room for sizeable landscape plantings as a buffer.
- This should be free and clear of the underground parking garage to accommodate sufficient soil volume capacity and ensures landscaping will not need to be removed for any future maintenance of the below grade structure.

The meeting concluded at approximately 2:35 p.m.

The next Design Review Panel meeting is tentatively scheduled for **Monday, October 4, 2021, at 1:00 p.m.**