



Meeting Summary

The Design Review Panel met virtually on **Thursday October 12th, 2023** via WebEx.

Panel Members Present:

David Clusiau, *Chair*

Dayna Edwards
Jennifer Sisson

Jennifer Mallard

Joey Giaimo
Ted Watson

Staff Present:

Jana Kelemen, Manager of Heritage and Urban Design
Michael Vortuba, SPM Heritage and Design

Edward Winter, Planner 1-Urban Design
Jennifer Catarino, Area Planning Manager

Others Present

Presentation #3	Stephanie Mirtitsch , MHBC Planning Dave Aston , MHBC Planning	Amber , Valery Homes Liaquat Mian , LJM Developments
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Regrets:

Eldon Theodore

Declaration of Interest:

PANEL MEMBERS ONLY - NONE

Schedule:

Start Time	Address	Type of Application	Applicant/ Agent	City Staff Planner
3:00 pm	Residential Development 1494 Upper Wellington Street, Hamilton	Zoning By-Law Amendments	Owner: C. Valery Construction Ltd. Agent and Presentation: MHBC Planning	Jennifer Catarino

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.

1494 Upper Wellington Street

Development Proposal Overview

The concept proposes two (2) residential buildings with a total of 685 rental units and 910 parking spaces. The main building height is 20 storeys, and the proposed density is 285 units per hectare. The tallest heights of the concept at the site and a 5-storey podium with rooftop amenity space is proposed. The proposed development is at the intersection of Minor Arterials (Stone Church and Rymal Road) and the surrounding land uses include residential and institutional uses and open space.

Key Questions to the Panel from Planning Staff

- Does the proposed development build upon the established patterns and built form of the neighbourhood?
- Does the proposal demonstrate sensitivity toward the existing neighbourhood through understanding the character of place, context as well in the public and private realms?
- Does the proposal consider the relationship of the height, massing, and scale of nearby residential buildings?
- Does the proposal provide appropriate transitions in scale that reflect the existing neighbourhood character and provide adequate privacy for the surrounding residents and residents within the proposed development?
- Does the proposal complement the existing function of the neighbourhood and contribute to connectivity to support modes of public and active transportation?
- Does the proposal contribute to creating a comfortable pedestrian environment along Stone Church Road East and Upper Wellington Street?
- Does the proposal include design features that promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and other sustainable building features?

Panel Comments and Recommendations

a) Overview and Response to Context

The panel felt that proposed development was very large and located within a challenging context which appeared quite stable and unlikely to see development/change in the near future. The panel felt there was potential benefit from investigating the proposal within a larger context plan and the site section extending to adjacent buildings which may direct towards a lower density.

The panel was unable to support the development in its current form – but thought there was opportunity to make revisions to improve upon the plan in a manner that was more respectful of the surrounding context and which would provide better transition and more improvement to the streetscape and public realm.

b) Built Form and Character

The panel appreciated the 3-part massing, but felt the height was excessive in relation to the surroundings.

The panel felt the middle mass should be pushed back from the face of the podium with more significant step-back. The panel also noted the podium mass was very large and would benefit from additional details and breaking-up the massing along the street(s).

The street wall appears oppressive and needs to be broken down to better respect and provide transition from the surrounding which is largely 1 and 2-storey single family houses.

c) Site Layout and Circulation

The panel felt the design approach for the parking was quite suburban in contrast from the urban building form proposed.

The panel questioned if there were other forms of development that would better suited – perhaps the elimination of the podium to open-up the site and ground level. Panel members also noted a related concern of the building cores being deeply buried within the mass – leading to inefficient/inconvenient layout & circulation.

The panel appreciated the large amenity terrace but notes that efforts should also be made at grade with landscaping and amenity spaces to activate the public realm.

d) Streetscape, The Pedestrian Realm & Landscape Strategy

The panel noted a need to evaluate the public realm contribution from a proposal of this size, and especially noting the local context. Landscaping and streetscaping need to be both engaging for street activity while also providing transition in scale public/private space.

The panel saw an opportunity to build-up on the easement along the south property line to achieve more trees and a community pedestrian link to the adjacent.

Summary

Panel members thanked the applicant team for their presentation and acknowledged the clear opportunity for development on the site, but found the panel was not able to support the proposed development in the current form – noting a disconnect with the local context, suburban function with urban built form and density.

The panel recommended breaking down the massing both of the podium and street wall elevations, increasing the step backs above the podium, and investment in the public realm to both activate the street and provide transition / buffering.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.