

The Design Review Panel subcommittee met on July 30, 2014 in the Richmond Room at Ottawa City Hall.

Attendance**Panel Members**

David Leinster	Ottawa
James Parakh	Ottawa
Mark Sterling	Ottawa

Proponent Representatives

Steve Cunliffe	The Regional Group
Barry Hobin	Barry Hobin & Associates Architects Inc.
Dave Kardish	The Regional Group
Josh Kardish	The Regional Group
Denis Laporte	eQ Homes
Gerry Larocque	Larocque Levstek Consulting Inc.
Gord Lorimer	Barry Hobin & Associates Architects Inc.
Erika Mayer	Lunchbox Consulting Inc.
John Riddell	Novatech Engineering
Paul Smolkin	Golder Associates Inc.

Community Representatives

Anthony Leaning	Old Ottawa East Community Association
Stephen Pope	Old Ottawa East Community Association
John Dance	Old Ottawa East Community Association

Staff

Sally Coutts	City of Ottawa Heritage
Selma Hassan	City of Ottawa Parks
Don Herweyer	City of Ottawa Development Review
Matthew Ippersiel	City of Ottawa Policy Development
Erin O'Connell	City of Ottawa Development Review
John Smit	City of Ottawa Development Review
Randolph Wang	City of Ottawa Urban Design

OBLATE LANDS REDEVELOPMENT | The Regional Group; Barry Hobin & Associates Architects Inc.; Novatech Engineering Consultants Inc.; eQ Homes; Lunchbox Consulting Inc.; Larocque Levstek Consulting Inc.; Golder Associates Inc.

General Comments

- The Panel generally supports the proposal's efforts to bring a sense of urbanity to the site and considers the current scheme quite strong.
- As the proposal progresses, the proponent will need to begin to model the spaces and streetscapes in three dimensions to better understand what kind of spaces will be created.
- The Panel encourages the City of Ottawa to consider the space within and around the Grande Allée and the semi-circular open space in front of the Deschatelet Building as a Public Park.

Massing / Building Design

- The broad range of housing types and the mix of densities, stepping down from tall to short towards river, is a strength of the project.
- As the plan develops, the proponent will need to refine the relationship between the 6-storey buildings and the Deschatelets building. Consider how they will relate to each other architecturally and also the nature of the small spaces between the buildings.
- How the 6-storey buildings address the street will also be important.

Street Network

- The Panel recommends the removal of the inner crescent road (to the east of the townhouses). This would help with the retention of existing trees and would increase the size of the adjacent open space.
- The Panel recommends continuing to study the outer crescent road and how it may be better linked to the rest of the street network at its north end. Currently, it creates a pinchpoint between the townhouses and the Sisters' property. Certain shifts in the geometry of the street network and the dimensions of the lots should be explored to improve this.
- Refining the right-of-way cross-sections will be challenging. The relationship between sidewalks, driving surface and trees needs to be carefully looked at. The proponent may consider looking at local historical street widths as precedents. Creative solutions will also need to be explored to accommodate emergency response.

Landscaping

- The issue of tree preservation around the entire site will need additional study as the scheme progresses.

- The Panel strongly supports the duality of the proposal, characterized by formal landscaping west of the Deschatelet Building, towards Main Street, and the transition to a more organic plan on the river side of the proposed development.
- The publicness and democratization of the riverfront is an asset of the proposal and is strongly supported. The waterfront needs to clearly read as public space. Separating the houses and park with a street and avoiding a strong housing edge help achieve this.
- The preservation of the power and structure of the Grande Allée, which includes elements of the lawn, will be an important part of the success of the scheme and the Panel is intrigued by the prospect of the vibrant linear space proposed. The design of the space between trees and how the space will be managed are issues that will require a certain amount of invention.
- The trees are an important character defining element of the Grande Allée and the proponent will need to continue to study the impact that development will have on existing trees. The Panel indicated that additional space may be needed to ensure the health of trees and requests that additional information regarding the breakdown of the space be provided.
- The Panel suggests that the applicant provide built form studies in three dimensions to understand the setbacks from the Grand Allée and determine the extent of lawn that should be retained.
- The Panel recommends that the hard surface plaza at the view terminus of Oblates remain a grassy area that retains the existing mature trees. The large trees will have the added benefit of helping to screen the six storey condominium buildings which are proposed to the north and to the south of the Deschatelet building.