

## **Terms of reference – Peer Review Panel**

114 Richmond Road, Ottawa

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The Planning and Growth Management Department wishes to retain the services of a panel of three professionals in the areas of Urban Design, Heritage Conservation and Landscape Architecture to conduct a peer review of the design for a proposed development at 114 Richmond Road, in the Westboro neighbourhood.

The property faces Richmond Road, an Official Plan-designated Traditional Mainstreet and is therefore subject to a number of planning and urban design policies pertaining to this land use designation, including the Official Plan, the Urban Design Guidelines for Development along Traditional Mainstreets, and other relevant planning and urban design policies. The property is also subject to the Richmond Road/Westboro Secondary Plan (adopted by Council in 2008 under the *Planning Act*). The Secondary Plan contains provisions and specific direction regarding the redevelopment of this property. It should be noted that the Planning and Growth Management Department developed a site-specific set of basic site plan and design principles, which spell out key considerations drawn from planning and design directions and site conditions for the redevelopment of the subject property. These principles were made available to all interested parties prior to the completion of the land purchase transaction.

The owner of the property proposes to redevelop it. The City has received a rezoning application in support of this redevelopment plan. The application is presently in the technical circulation phase (circulation to internal departments, external agencies and community associations) to solicit technical input on the proposal, including specific issues and conditions to be responded to.

### **Preservation of the Monastery**

The site is a 2.1-hectare property which includes a 145-year-old structure used until now as the monastery of the *Soeurs de la Visitation*, a cloistered order.

The City wishes to have the monastery preserved and, to that end, has issued a *Notice of Intention* to designate the buildings and the entire property under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. It is the City's objective to have the redevelopment enable the restoration, preservation and successful adaptive re-use of the historic monastery. The City further recognizes the economic challenge presented by these circumstances which need to be addressed in order to accomplish a successful adaptive re-use and respectful integration of new buildings.

There are Official Plan policies related to development adjacent to designated properties and City Council has endorsed Parks Canada's "Standards and Guidelines." These policies should be consulted in the preparation of the peer review.

## Role of Peer Review Panel

The Peer Review will be conducted independently by the Panel based on relevant City planning and design policies and the reviewers' professional experience. The City feels strongly that the success of a redevelopment for this unique site will largely rest on the quality and creativity of its design and its successful integration into the community context, as well as the successful interpretation of municipal policies concerning this community and the city overall.

The City expects the development of the site to meet a set of performance criteria including but not limited to:

- The respectful restoration, enhancement and adaptive reuse of the historic monastery, as described in the designation;
- The respectful and appropriate interaction and/or integration of any new buildings with the historic monastery;
- The opening of views to the historic monastery, where none have existed for a very long time, along Richmond Road, which is a Traditional Mainstreet (a mixed-use main street);
- The careful design and integration of any new construction with the surrounding community;
- The provision of the appropriate amount and types of public open spaces to frame the historic building and any new construction, as well as the establishment of pedestrian linkages between Richmond Road and Byron Linear Park through the site;
- The location of vehicular access points to underground parking.

The Peer Review will be conducted in two phases:

### PHASE I

The first Phase will focus on the high level elements of the redevelopment proposal as outlined in the **rezoning application**. It will notably address the issues of general design response to the site (master site plan); proposed building footprint; the creation of public and semi-public spaces; the relationship of new buildings and spaces to the heritage monastery; building height; proposed building uses; pedestrian and vehicular accessibility to the site and its various components; and integration with the surrounding community.

### PHASE II

The second phase will be undertaken at a later date, when a **site plan control application** is made under the *Planning Act* but before a final application under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The second phase will address the more detailed issues of urban design, architectural approaches, heritage conservation for the monastery, landscaping and the creation of new public and semi-public spaces, and building materials. This phase will be equivalent to a Design Review Preconsultation as provided under Bill 51 and OPA 76 for major development applications in Design Priority Areas.

The conclusions and recommendations of the Peer Review Panel will be advisory to the Planning and Growth Management Department, which will use them in formulating its response to the application.

## **Objectives and Tasks**

To undertake this peer review, the Peer Review Panel will be expected to perform the following tasks:

- Walk the site
- Review all applicable planning documentation pertaining to the site as detailed below
- Review the redevelopment proposal
- Meet with City staff, the City Councillor, the Proponent and their architect, and one community representative for each of the Hampton-Iona Community Association and the Island Park Community Association
- Provide a single written opinion on the redevelopment proposal and how it responds to all applicable planning, design and heritage considerations. The opinion can include recommendations or suggested changes to improve responsiveness as may be required based on the Panel's assessment and review.

## **Qualifications**

The City is looking for high-profile specialists who have a nationally- and internationally-recognized reputation of experience and expertise in the areas of urban design, heritage conservation and landscape architecture.

## **Time frame**

The time frame allotted to undertake this peer review would be three (3) weeks for Phase I which, subject to experts' availability, will start on May 28<sup>th</sup> and conclude on June 18<sup>th</sup> 2010; and one (1) week for Phase II, which will take place later in 2010 at dates to be confirmed as the process unfolds. It is anticipated that the level of effort required for Phase I will be the equivalent of one work week (35 hours) per panel member, and for Phase II, three work days per panel member.

## **Applicable Planning Documentation**

Official Plan and Residential Land Strategy  
Richmond Road/Westboro Secondary Plan  
Urban Design Guidelines for Development along Traditional Mainstreet  
Basic Site Plan and Design Principles for Redevelopment of 114 Richmond Road, Aug, 2009  
Statement of Cultural Heritage Value for 114 Richmond Road  
The proponent's planning rationale