

## **The Planning and Economic Development Department Design Review Panel – Pilot Project**

**Mandate – March 27, 2014**

## **1.0 Mandate:**

The Planning and Economic Development Department Design Review Panel (DRP) is a voluntary technical panel established to advise Planning Division staff on urban design matters of development within Design Priority Areas for a pilot period of two years to expire on December 31, 2015.

The DRP is strictly an advisory body, and makes recommendations to Planning Division staff. It does not have the authority to approve or refuse projects, or make policy decisions, or recommendations on land use.

## **2.0 Purpose:**

- 2.1** To give advice and make recommendations to staff on the potential physical and aesthetic impact of proposed buildings, structures, landscapes, streetscapes, parks, and infrastructure projects in the Design Priority Areas.
- 2.2** To give professional advice to staff regarding any proposed policy or guidelines affecting the Design Priority Areas' physical environment.
- 2.3** To ensure that the efforts to improve the quality of design through the reviews of the DRP are achieved in the context of an effective and timely process.
- 2.4** Support creative design responses in new development.
- 2.5** Foster an effective working relationship with the development industry.
- 2.6** Broaden public awareness about design in Hamilton.

## **3.0 Scope of Work:**

- 3.1** The DRP shall provide urban design advice to Planning Division staff on complex Zoning and Site Plan applications, civic projects, new policy

initiatives, and studies with urban design components in the following Design Priority Areas:

- (a) Downtown Hamilton Secondary Plan Area (See Map No. 1);
- (b) Areas of Major Change and Corridors of Gradual Change within Setting Sail Secondary Plan Area (See Map No. 2).
- (c) The Urban Hamilton Official Plan Primary Corridors (Upper James Street, James Street, Main Street, and King Street – See Map No. 3).
- (d) Notwithstanding (a), and (b) above, the Director of Planning or his or her designate may refer any other large scale project that has the potential to significantly impact the physical environment functionally and aesthetically.

**3.2** Notwithstanding Section 3.1 above, applications subject to review by the DRP shall include all complex Zoning and Major Site Plan applications subject to the following:

- (a) All ground related residential development including: singles, semis, and all townhouses will be exempt from DRP review.

**3.3** Notwithstanding Sections 3.1 and 3.2, the Director of Planning or his or her designate has the discretionary powers to waive projects from the review of the DRP, if the project is not deemed to have the potential to significantly impact the physical environment functionally and/or aesthetically. At the Formal Consultation Stage, projects subject to DRP will be identified.

## **4.0 DRP Composition, Selection, Term & Remuneration:**

### **4.1 Composition:**

The DRP will be comprised of a maximum of nine (9) members. The panel must include at least two (2) architects, one (1) landscape architect, and two (2) other individuals from a different discipline related to Urban Design

(i.e. urban designer, planner, heritage professional, or green technologies specialist). Quorum will be 50% of the membership, plus one.

#### **4.2 Selection:**

- (a) The DRP members will be selected from a qualified pool of candidates by the General Manager of the Planning and Economic Development Department and Director of Planning, based on the following:
  - (i) City of Hamilton employees are not eligible to participate on the DRP.
  - (ii) Potential members must meet specific criteria regarding qualifications, experience, and availability. People who work as consultants or with public agencies may be appointed to the Panel. Members will not be selected to represent an organizational perspective, but rather for their ability to provide objective, expert judgement. A high level of technical expertise shall be required among members.
- (b) The Planning and Economic Development Department will advertise for expressions of interest from community professionals who would be willing to volunteer for appointment to the DRP. Using the following criteria, the General Manager of the Planning and Economic Development Department and the Director of Planning will select individuals suitable for appointment as members.
  - (i) Because of the technical nature of the Panel, academic qualifications are important.
  - (ii) Individuals with a diversity of training will be viewed favourably.
  - (iii) As a group, the DRP should include a balance of expertise and, thus, appointments may favour disciplines where representation is weak. Members should be drawn from the following disciplines or subject areas:

- Architecture;
  
- Landscape Architecture;
- Urban Design;
- Urban Planning;
- Built Heritage; and,
- Green Technologies.

#### **4.3** Term:

DRP members will be required to serve for the two (2) year Pilot Project term. Non-attendance at more than three consecutive meetings may be sufficient grounds for replacement.

#### **4.4** Remuneration:

The DRP members are to be non-paid volunteer positions. Refreshments and travel expenses during the Pilot Project Term will be covered by the Planning and Economic Development Department.

### **5.0 Administration of the DRP:**

- 5.1** The Manager of Development Planning, Heritage and Design, or his/her designate, will attend and be responsible for the administration of the DRP.
  
- 5.2** The DRP will meet monthly, as required.
  
- 5.3** The DRP will appoint, from their membership, a Chair and Vice Chair. The role of the Chair is to preside over the discussions to ensure that the matters brought forward before the DRP are fairly considered.
  
- 5.4** The DRP meetings will be accurately documented in the meeting minutes by Planning and Economic Development staff.
  
- 5.5** Individual DRP members should not be identified in the minutes; specific comments can be recorded without attribution.

- 5.6** The draft meeting minutes will be prepared by Planning and Economic Development staff, and then sent to the DRP for approval. The approved minutes will be sent to the proponents and Planning and Economic Development staff. Proponents will not have the opportunity or ability to request any changes to the minutes. The approved minutes reflect the recommendations and comments of the DRP, and provide advice to City staff and the proponent.

## **6.0 DRP Process:**

### **6.1 Referral of Applications and Projects:**

The DRP will have applications and projects referred to the group by the Planning and Economic Development Department at initial project circulation, as determined through the Formal Consultation process.

### **6.2 DRP Submission Requirements:**

Once the application has been referred, Planning staff will contact the applicant and provide the DRP submission requirements, which may include:

- (a) Context Plan (=/- 800m radius);
- (b) Coloured copies of the site plan, building elevation plans (at a 1:50 scale), and landscape plans;
- (c) Photographs of the surrounding streetscape and adjacent lands;
- (d) Streetscape cross-section;
- (e) Coloured renderings, digital perspectives, and massing models showing the proposed development and its relationship to adjacent lands;
- (f) Floor plans for all ground related floors and roof plans to explain the scheme;
- (g) Building elevations and materials;

- (h) An urban design brief from the design consultants addressing the merits of the proposed design, recognizing the design policies contained in the Official Plan and any applicable planning policies, urban design guideline documents, the surrounding building context, and any applicable heritage information; and,
- (i) If required, a sun/shadow and/or wind study, visual impact analysis, and/or any other information as required and identified through the Formal Consultation Process.

Notes:

- (i) All presentation material should be mounted on panels of no more than 0.9m x 1.2m (3' x 4') in size;
- (ii) The preferred method for submissions to the DRP will be electronically; and,
- (iii) The applicant may choose to prepare a PowerPoint Presentation with the above information to further explain the proposed application at the DRP meeting.

**6.3** Meeting Protocol:

- (a) DRP meetings shall be attended by the applicant and/or representative/agent, panel, City Planning staff, and where needed, other relevant City staff.
- (b) DRP meetings will be open to the public for observation only. However, there shall be no written or verbal submissions by any individuals other than staff and the proponent. Others will have an opportunity to make written and verbal submissions during the standard application process for rezonings.
- (c) The DRP meetings will begin with a brief presentation by City Staff who will highlight the proposed amendments and explain the key policies and guidelines that apply.

- (d) Following City Staff's presentation, the proponent and their design consultant will provide a brief presentation who will explain the project's objectives and how it responds to the City's policies and guidelines.
- (e) Following the proponent's presentation, the DRP will have the opportunity to ask questions for clarification before beginning their deliberations in closed session and developing its advice with respect to the project on a consensus basis.
- (f) Following deliberations, the Chair will summarize the Panel's recommendations.
- (g) The DRP comments will be based on Council approved policies and guidelines. The DRP comments will range from an acknowledgement of the positive qualities of the proposal to suggestions that encourage a design, which better complies with relevant policies and guidelines.
- (h) Within 10 business days of the relevant DRP meeting, a copy of the approved meeting minutes, including the DRP's advice, will be finalized.

#### **6.4 Monitoring:**

- (a) Information will be obtained from the proponent and his/her consultant(s) from a brief survey, which will be provided at the meeting. The survey will provide question(s) regarding opinions of the process and any required improvements. This information will be compiled at the end of the Pilot Project term.
- (b) Information obtained from panel members and staff will also be obtained in order to identify positive and negative issues with the process and any required improvements. This information will be compiled at the end of the Pilot Project term.

## **7.0 Conflict of Interest/Code of Conduct**

Conflict of interest rules will apply to all Design Review Panel members, pursuant to the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, R.S.O., 1190, Chapter M.50. (a copy of which will be provided to members upon their

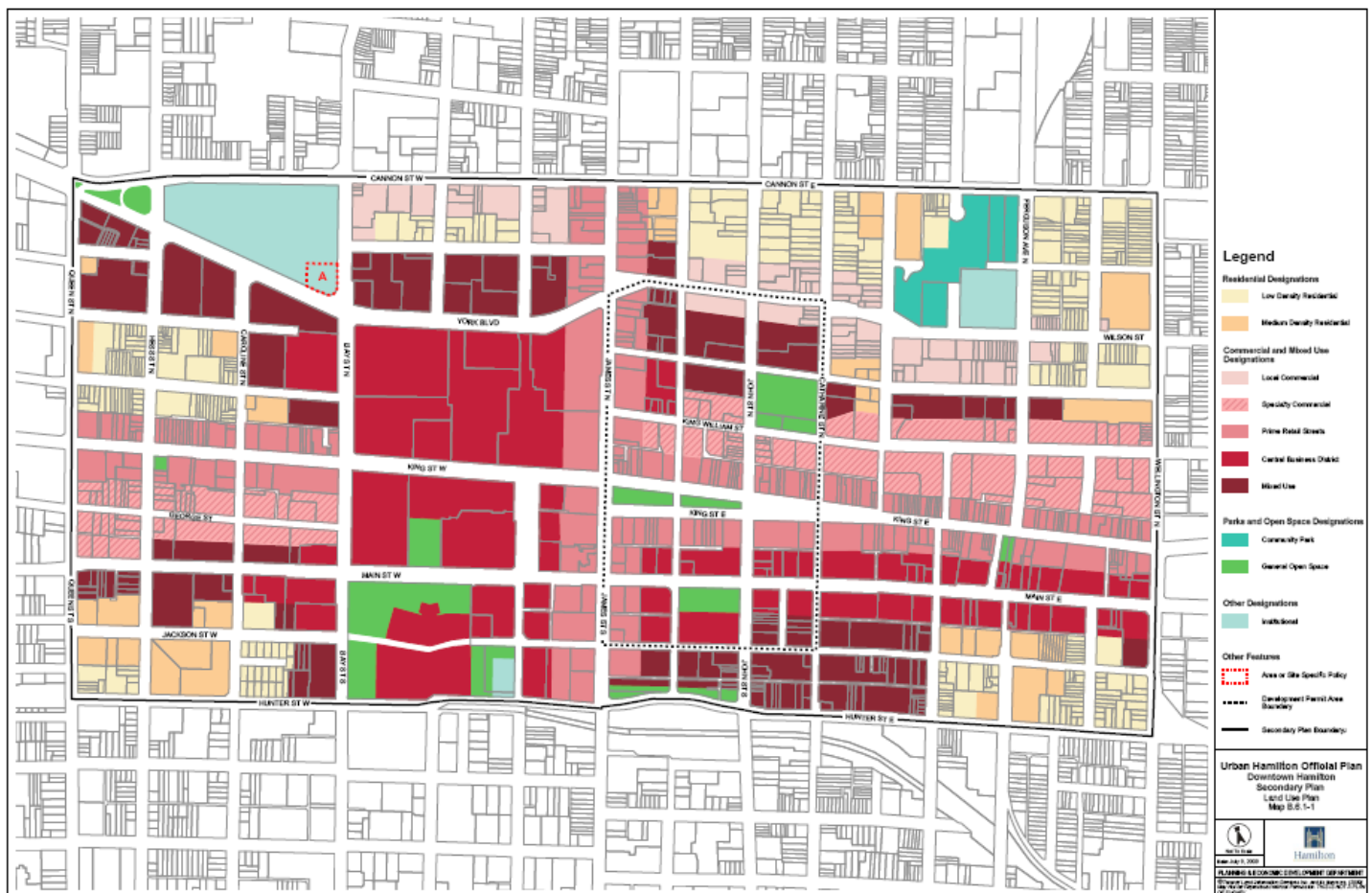


appointment) or any other pertinent legislation of governing bodies applying to professionals.

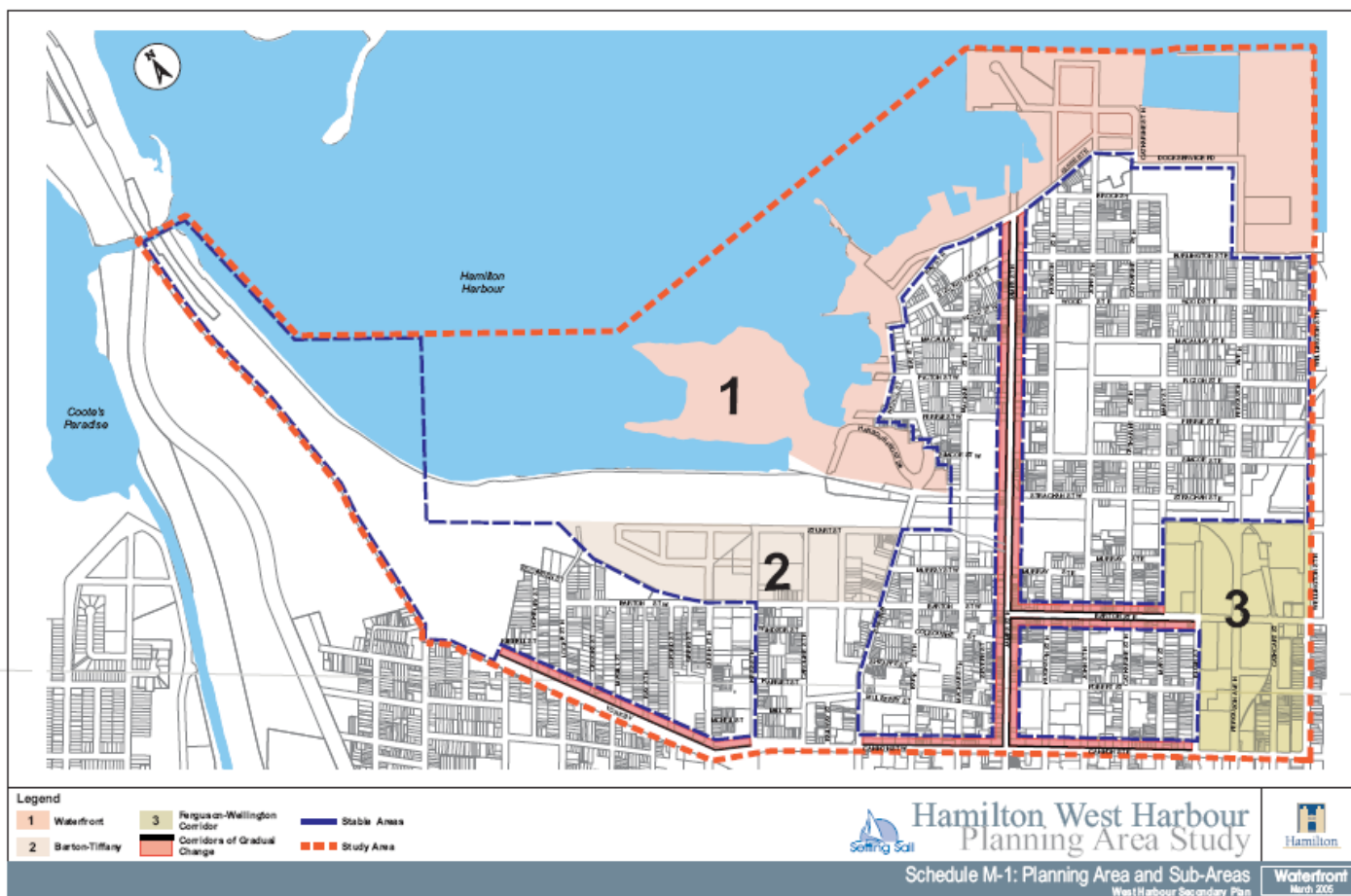
## 8.0 Confidentiality

DRP members may be required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement pertaining to any material of a proprietary nature which is forwarded to them in carrying out the DRP's mandate.

### Design Priority Area Map No. 1 - Downtown Hamilton Secondary Plan



**Design Priority Area Map No. 2 - Setting Sail Secondary Plan**



**Design Priority Area Map No. 3 – UHOP Primary Corridors**

