

Beach BIA  
Analysis and Opinion of  
1884 Queen St. East proposed Development  
and

Professional Breakdown  
of the Prejudice of  
the Developer's Site Renderings

By Adam Smith

# Heritage and view of the Fire Hall

The historical firehall in the Beach has been a landmark for over a hundred years. Finished in 1905 it has become a part of Beach culture. For the Beach BIA is it a well-used icon, appearing in our literature, our tourist pamphlets and brochures, photos and paintings of it for sale are ubiquitous in our shops and galleries, and it has become a beacon in the night after the City and the BIA cost-shared to get it lit with LED lighting.

Queen and Woodbine is our western gateway into the Beach, as detailed in our 2008 Streetscape Master Plan assembled by Tod Hunter Associates. It is the view of the firehall as you enter the Beach that really indicates to visitors they have entered a distinct neighbourhood in the City. To obscure the view of the firehall is to obscure not just part of our history, but also reduces the importance and iconic status of the firehall to visitors. This could potentially lose sales of the photos and paintings of the firehall to visitors as it seems less significant both visually and culturally. Would one obscure the Statue of Liberty and expect the same sales of its merchandise?

The view of the firehall also attracts attention from people passing through. Queen and Woodbine is a heavily trafficked intersection, and the allure of the firehall can be an incentive for people to come and visit. Without it, looking across Queen St from Woodbine it seems like just another street of businesses and homes, as opposed to the historical neighbourhood the Beach truly is.



1. The Historical Beach Fire Hall

# View of the Fire Hall approaching from the West going East

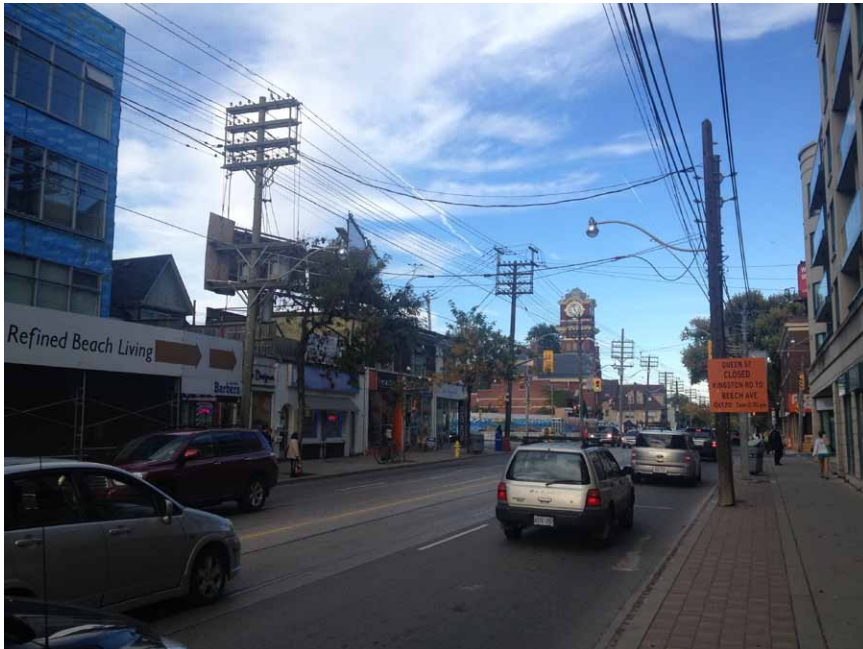
2.



3.



4.



5.



# Accurate depictions of the development

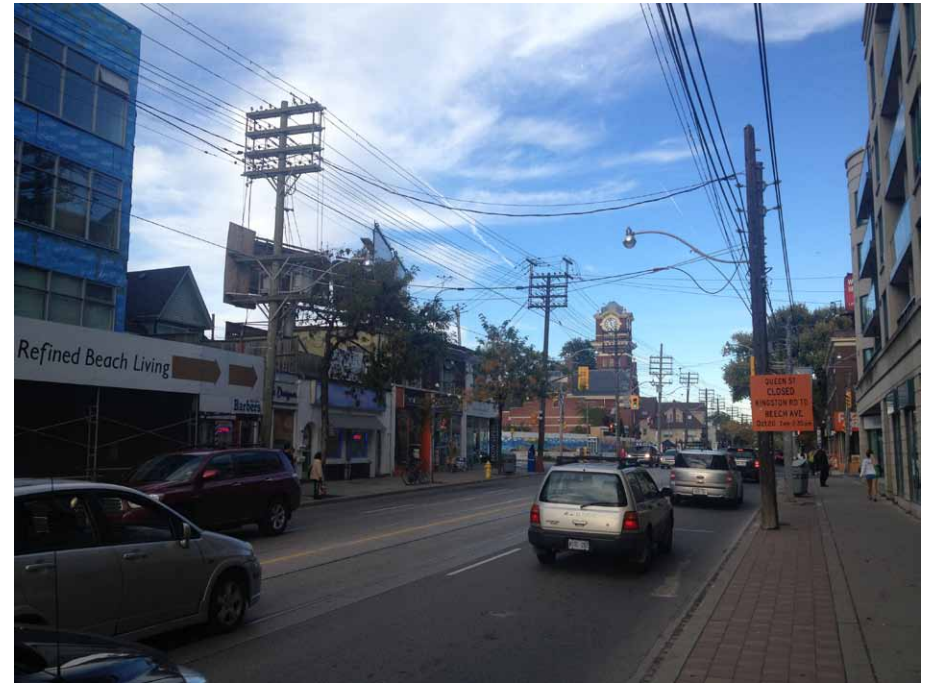
One can clearly see on the previous page the Fire hall is visible almost from the moment one enters the BIA (beginning at Lockwood Ave just west of Woodbine).

To the right I have devised what the new development will actually look like from the street view. In this report I have accomplished highly accurate renderings of the actual placement and size of the development in reality.

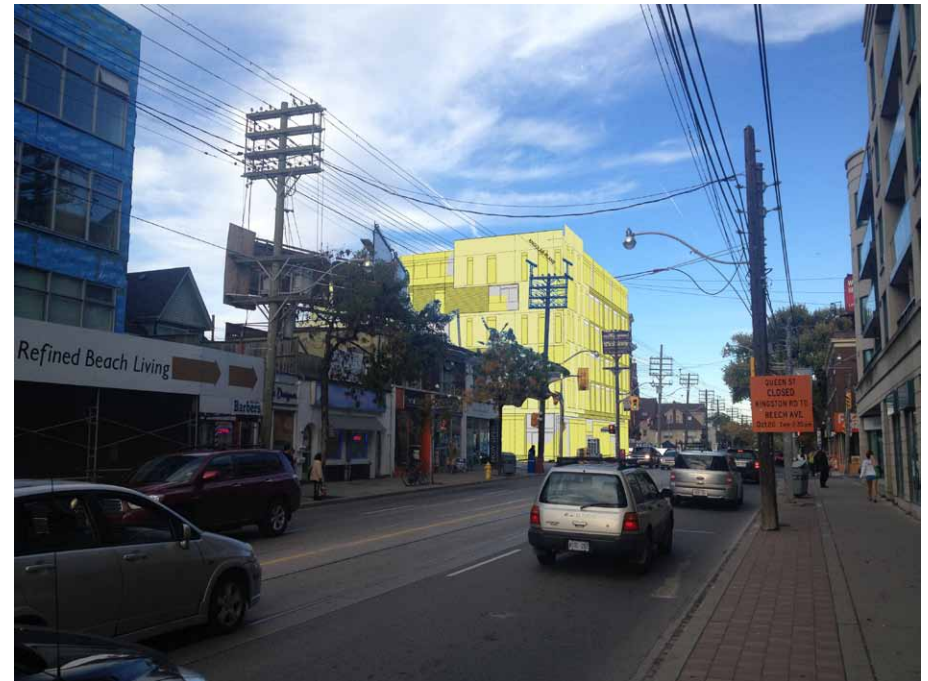
I have done this by taking the developer's plan drawings, building a model out of them, and then laying it over the photo. To ensure accuracy, the model contained not just the development, but also the fire hall, north side building, and Queen and Woodbine streets. Once the model was built precisely from the architectural plans, it was simply a matter of choosing the correct lens for the camera used to take the photo (an Iphone 4, which translates to a 29.4mm lens on a 35mm camera), and then align all the elements in the model with the photograph. Once the street, firehall, and north building are aligned, it reveals the actual position and scale of the development. It should be noted that the model I built does not have every detail carved out (windows etc), but the envelope is fairly accurate and even leaves out certain protrusions like balconies, so if anything it is more forgiving.

I have also made an animation detailing the view from a car driving in the right-hand eastbound lane of Queen approaching Woodbine. For this I have used a 50mm lens on a 35mm camera, which is accurate to the perspective humans see with their eyes.

As you can see, the view of the firehall is very blocked until you pass Woodbine. The flavour, history, culture and iconic beacon of the area is almost lost entirely.



6. South side of Queen west of Woodbine facing east



7. South side of Queen west of Woodbine facing east with development

# Prejudice of the developer's renderings

At the beginning of the hearing the council for the GBNA asked that the renderings of the development be excluded as prejudicial and it was decided they could stay. They are in fact highly prejudicial and misleading in a number of ways.

The renderings are in fact very well done. The texturing, modelling, and lighting are accurate and well achieved. However there is more to it than it seems at a glance, it is well contrived and purposefully designed to achieve a non-threatening impression.

## Qualifications:

I am a professional visual effects/CGI artist with 11 years experience in the field and have worked on all manner of advertising, television, and feature film. I am experienced in both the 3D and 2D realms and the various softwares used to accomplish CGI and motion graphics. I will prove that the choice of lens, framing and composition, and lack of context of the developer's renderings are all designed to give the development less visual impact and seem less imposing on the neighbouring buildings.

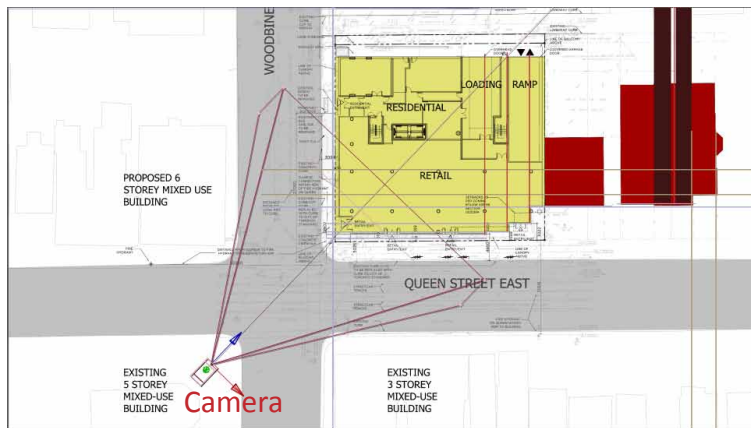


## Lensing and perspective:

In film and photography the size of a lens can vastly change the view and perspective of the resulting image. Wider angle lenses, that have a lower measurement in mm (18mm, 25mm etc) distort perspective to give a wider point of view, taking in more perspective than the human eye could perceive without having to turn their head.

On a 35mm camera (the standard size) the lens that captures a human eye's perception of perspective is a 50mm lens. I have illustrated below how the same camera in the same position with different lenses will change the perspective of the image. The top row is a plan view of the cameras in the same position, the bottom row is the view through that camera.

30mm

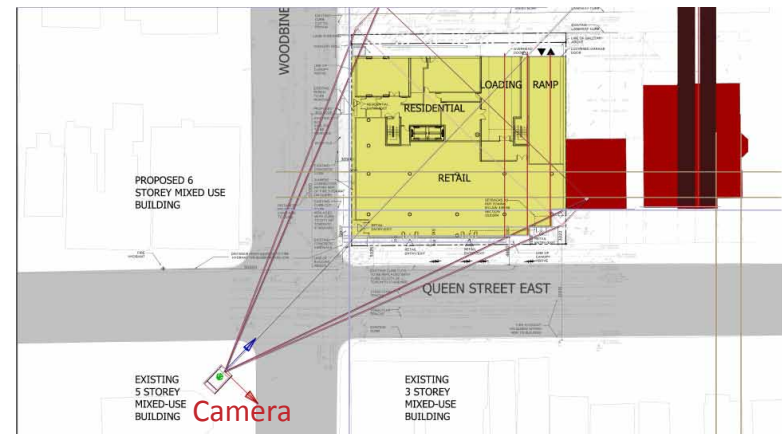


8. Plan view of 30mm camera setup



9. View of development through 30mm camera

50mm



10. Plan view of 50mm camera setup



11. View of development through 50mm camera



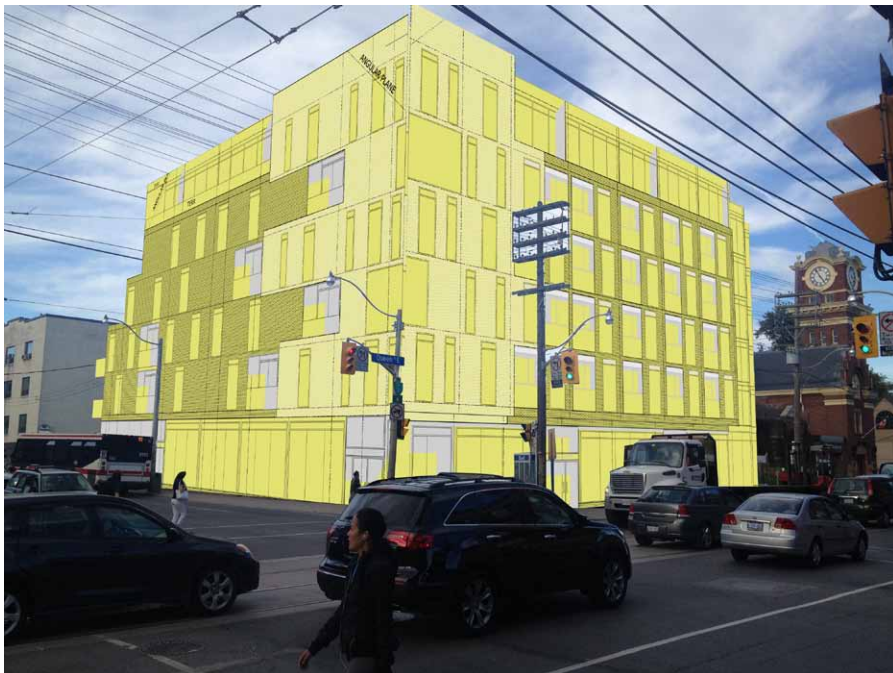
12. View of development facing southeast

## Framing and context

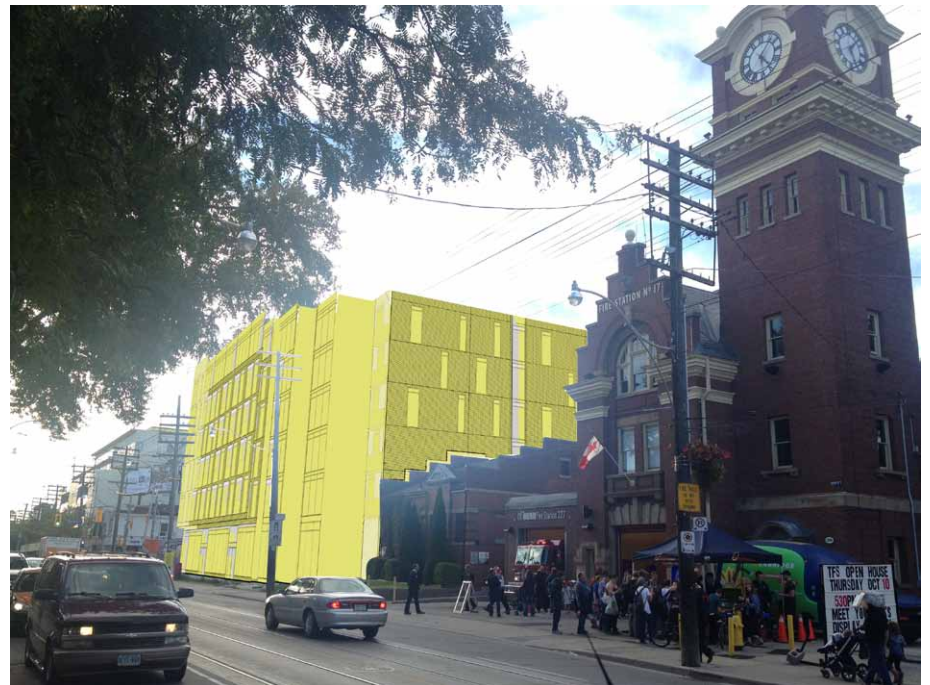
The developer's renderings are framed in a manner similar to what I have recreated at the bottom. It should be noted that the photos are not representative of what the human eye would see either, as stated earlier they are shot on an Iphone 4 which translates to a 29.4mm lens, similar to the 30mm example on the previous page.

The developer's artist did keep the camera at eye level, so it is accurate to the height of view of the average person from the street. However, in their south-east view they framed the north building, and in the north-west view they framed the firehall, to make them seem looming and large compared to the development. This is achieved in part from the framing and composition, but also aided by the perspective distortion of the lens.

The developer's renderings are also completely out of context with no street furniture or objects, making it seem alot cleaner and more open than it would be in reality, as illustrated by the photos. These are all common techniques of the architecture industry to remove developments from their full context in order to glamourize the look of the building.



13. View of development facing northeast



14. View of development facing northwest

# Conclusions

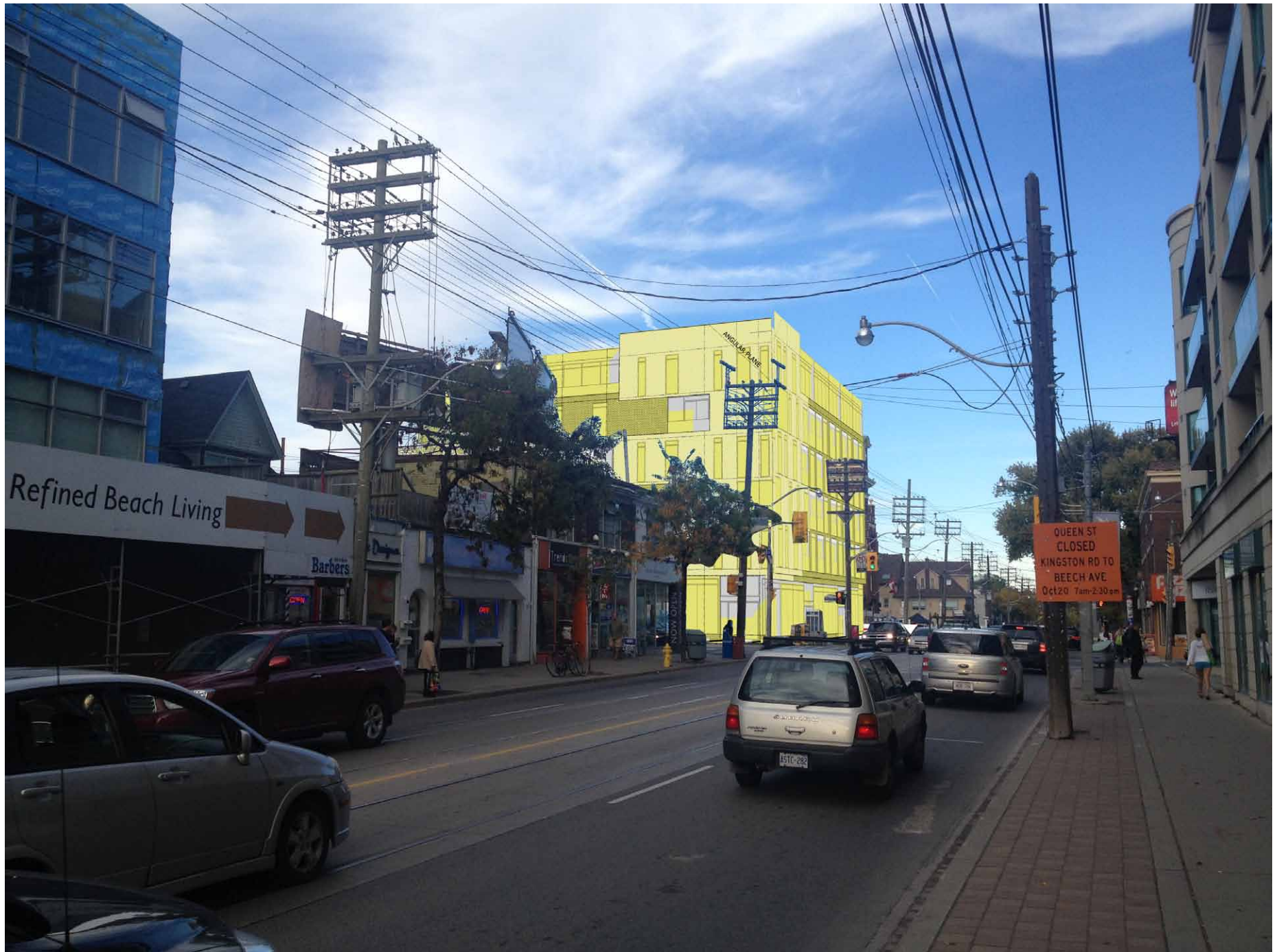
## Beach BIA:

Due to the intrusive and obstructing nature of the development, the Beach BIA maintains that the envelope of the established Urban Design Guidelines is the only option to retain the character of the area, the distinctiveness of the western gateway, and ensures the icon of the Fire Hall remains a draw for tourists and a cultural symbol of the area that our members can sell likenesses and imagery of. Without the clear visual impact of the Fire Hall it loses its power in the eyes and minds of visitors, and all its merchandise seems less significant or worthy of purchase.

## Developer's Renderings:

The highly prejudicial contriving and manipulation of architectural renderings to reduce the visual impact of the development, take it out of context, and frame it in a more positive light shows their potential to mislead the public and create confusion as to the actual impacts. In my professional opinion renderings of this nature should never be allowed unless done in a photographic context as I have, using a lens that mimics the human eye.

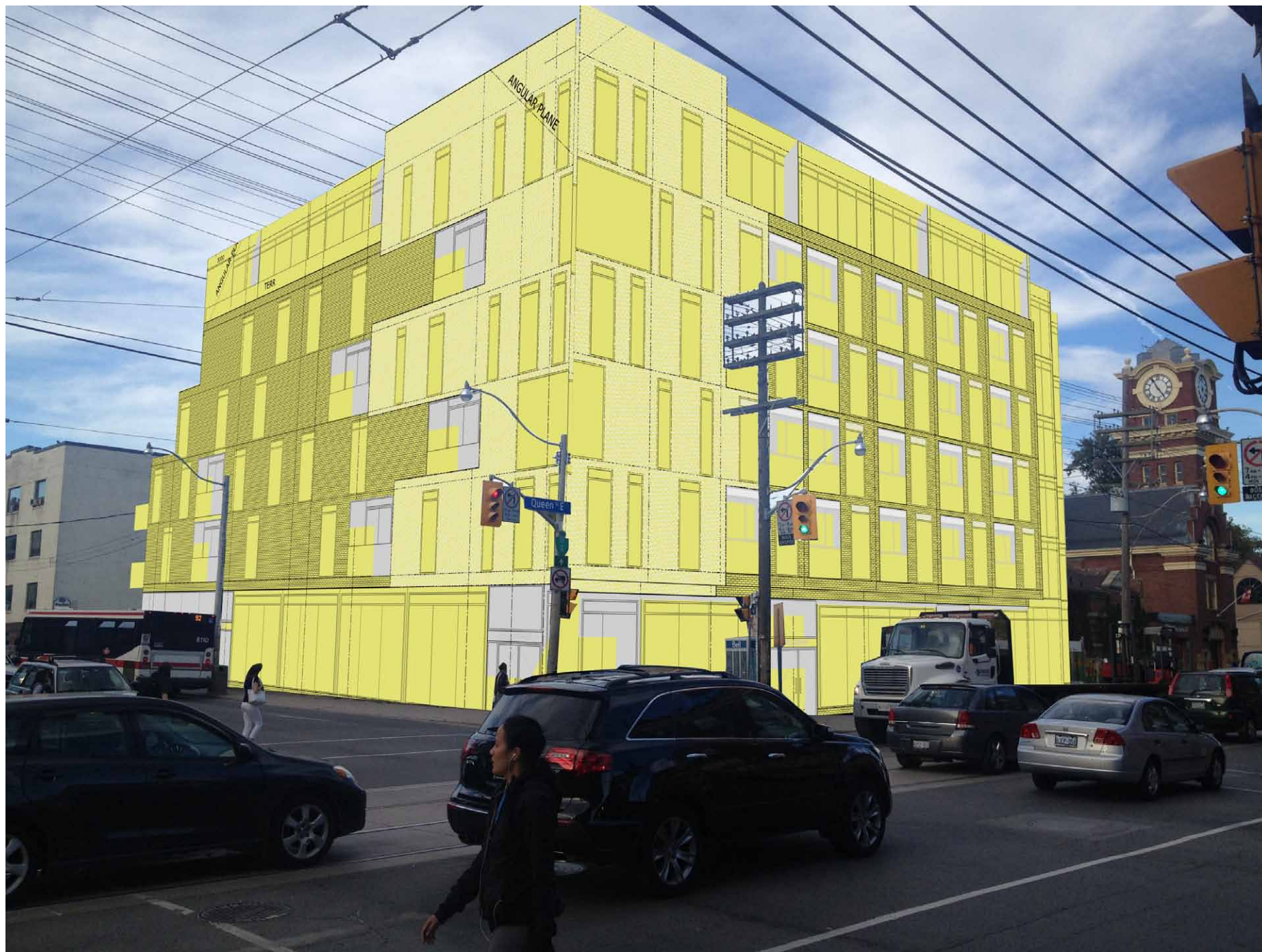
7. South side of Queen West of Woodbine facing east with development (enlarged)



12. View of development facing southeast (enlarged)



13. View of development facing northeast (enlarged)



14. View of development facing northwest (enlarged)

