



Jarvis Streetscape Improvement Community Advisory Group

Meeting #1

February 21, 2008

519 Church St. Community Centre

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

SUMMARY NOTES

ATTENDANCE:

City of Toronto

- Penelope Palmer– Transportation Services
- Maogosha Pyjor – Public Consultation Unit
- Kyle Rae, City Councillor
- Michael Robertson, Executive Assistant to Councillor Rae

Consultants

- Ray Bacquie, iTrans Consulting Inc.
- Guinevere Ngau., iTrans Consulting Inc.
- Anne McIlroy, Brook McIlroy/Pace Architects

Community Advisory Group Members

- Frank Randall
- Geoffrey Dyer
- Shawn Tracey
- Eric Siminovitch
- Stauffer Smith
- Warren Price
- Jimmy Vasilakakos
- Ralph Hoeche
- Glen Simourd
- John MacMillan
- Jan Innes
- Steve Ogilvie
- Wayne Wylie
- June Macdonald
- Jacqueline Jordan
- Rene Biberstein
- Person wearing cap

Regrets

- Lawrence Altrows
- Chris Crane
- Joanna Gertler

1.0 Welcoming Remarks and Overview

Maogsha Pyjor opened the meeting at 6:05 p.m. She welcomed all Community Advisory Group members.

Kyle Rae welcomed the group and gave a history of the project. This project started in 1996, when Rogers indicated that they needed more land to construct their building at Jarvis and Bloor. They were interested in taking down a heritage building and in exchange they gave the City one million dollars towards improvements along Jarvis Street. However, a lot was happening with the City at the time and it was difficult to focus on this issue. Now, we are able to call upon the City staff to work with residents and business owners who have an interest in heritage and improved conditions for transit, pedestrians and cyclists. They are keen to see Jarvis return to a city street and not a freeway. The hope is that we can recapture the splendour of the former Jarvis. In addition to Rogers, other private sector partners have also made financial contributions and shown interest in the project.

Penelope Palmer said that City Planning is also undertaking a Cultural Avenues Study. Jarvis has been identified as one of the cultural corridors in this study. Each project manager will be keeping the other informed as to the progress of each study so that the work for both projects compliment each other

2.0 Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference were circulated to attendees and **Maogsha Pyjor** walked through all of the sections.

There were two amendments added. They were to have 'other modes of transportation' and 'parking' added in under the public issues.

3.0 Background

Penelope Palmer discussed the feasibility study and alternatives.

A copy of the 2005 Jarvis Street Streetscape Traffic Study is available online.
<http://www.toronto.ca/involved/projects/jarvis/index.htm>

4.0 Paper Tour of Site

Anne McIlroy circulated the inventory of existing conditions. She discussed the history of Jarvis Street and potential treatments that can be applied for this project.

A copy of the site tour is available online <http://www.toronto.ca/involved/projects/jarvis/index.htm>

under Related Information.

5.0 Results of Subsurface Utility Engineering (SUE)

Ray Bacquie displayed the drawings of utilities and discussed the constraints on widening. Drawings of utilities are available online <http://www.toronto.ca/involved/projects/jarvis/index.htm> under Related Information.

6.0 Comments and Questions

Ralph Hoeche said he was concerned about how any additional trees would thrive. **Penelope Palmer** said the City's 'urban forester' would be acting as a resource to assist with knowledge about trees. Any existing trees would not be removed. **Ray Bacquie** said that St. George Street is a good example of trees thriving. Where trees cannot be planted we can look at other means of greening a street such as St. George Street through the University of Toronto campus. **Anne McIlroy** noted that sustainable elements, such as solar power or biofiltration trenches, could also be included.

Kyle Rae asked if the drawings of the utilities would be online. **Ray Bacquie** replied yes.

Warren asked if the green areas on the drawings of utilities represent the only new places available for trees. **Ray Bacquie** replied that no, the green bars are only the opportunity indicator where we can widen the boulevard. Where there are no green bars it means that we have to look at that. Generally where there are trees in this area they are doing well.

Warren asked about the bulb outs and their use. **Ray Bacquie** replied that the bulb outs provide a narrowing of the road at intersections and provide space for streetscape and place making improvements. They also improve the pedestrian environment by reducing the distance that pedestrians need to cross the road. The Isabella Street, Gloucester Street and Maitland Street intersections would be ideal candidates for bulb outs at intersections because they are one way streets that intersect with Jarvis with on street parking. The bulb outs along the length of Jarvis is a possible on street parking bay treatment that can be considered for Jarvis Street. The underground utilities are a constraint to tree planting in many locations near the south of the project limits. Other treatments such as plantings or parking bays could be considered at these locations. **Anne McIlroy** added that narrowing the street would mean bringing the opposite sidewalks closer together. A café or terrace would be able to move out a bit further because of the additional space created by the narrowing.

Kyle Rae said we should be talking to the utility companies about being good corporate citizens. We should have discussions with utility companies to move the utilities (at their costs) to allow for more flexibility of improvements.

Jan Innes asked if different utilities share the same space. **John MacMillan** asked if utilities pay rent to the city for pipes and cable. **Penelope Palmer** replied that she was not one hundred percent sure, but it was likely the case that they pay a nominal fee if they cut into sidewalks. We will check to see if this is correct. One of the reasons earlier we were looking at a granite curb was so that if work is done near the curb it can go back to same state after repairs.

Wayne asked if the upcoming anniversary of Allan Gardens in 2010 could tie into this project. **Anne McIlroy** replied that Allan Gardens is an important part of the Jarvis neighbourhood, but it

does not, unfortunately, feel well considered. I think with a little intervention we could change that with planting, alignment of trees, and some form of recognition at the trees' edge. We would love to talk to you in order to integrate your ideas into the project. **Wayne** said I heard years ago about some plans for this anniversary, but now none of us can remember when it was and what was going on with it. **Kyle Rae** said the plans looked at creating an exhibition space behind the pool that dogs frequent, but there has been no fundraising or ability to visualize it. **Geoffrey Dyer** asked if this project could be integrated with the Allan Gardens anniversary. **Kyle Rae** said someone at the City started to do this, but they have since left the City.

Michael Robertson asked how far back did you do a survey of Allan Gardens. **Ray Bacquie** responded that we would have everything within the road right of way. We would not have information within the Allan Gardens property we would not have that information. **Michael Robertson** asked if trees could be planted there. **Ray Bacquie** said yes.

Shawn Tracy said that he seconded Kyle Rae's motion to communicate with the utility companies. Given the restrictions I argue in favour of planting in a centre median (like on University Avenue), but it seems like that option has been put aside. **Ray Bacquie** said we are here for your input. He indicated that so far narrowing the road (or widening the boulevard) seemed to be the best approach.

Geoffrey said that he assumed that when looking at the usage in terms of traffic they took into account ideas like burying Jarvis. In terms of the opportunity for traffic and road usage, for years people have talked about a one-way system. **Ray Bacquie** replied that in our study we did not look at dramatically different transit systems and road networks. We did look at what the traffic redistribution would be. We did not look at one way systems or major infrastructure changes, such as burying.

Warren asked if they looked at adding additional crosswalks. **Ray Bacquie** said that there has been an additional pedestrian signal implemented by the Sears building north of Dundas Street and that we will be looking at informal crossings in this process. **Anne McIlroy** said we have noted large differences between Maitland and Carlton and Gerrard and Dundas where the blocks are particularly long. We have identified those as locations where mid-block crosswalks make sense. **Glen Simourd** said the Gerrard and Dundas crosswalk has been fixed with a new light. **Anne McIlroy** thanked him for the information.

John MacMillan said right now the City is putting in new water mains on Bloor Street. He wondered if Jarvis is in line for this as something could be done about the utilities at the same time. **Penelope Palmer** said we have consulted with Toronto Water and they have no immediate future plans for water or sewer changes in the Jarvis area.

7.0 Next Steps and Continued Discussion

Penelope Palmer announced that the General Public Meeting will be held on Wednesday March 19 at the Town hall room at the National Ballet School. Community members will be notified of the meeting in the following ways: neighbourhood flyers; local paper advertisement; and the City's Jarvis street website. **Email notification will be sent to CAG members.** The meeting's presentation will include a brief history, an explanation of why we are doing this, information presented tonight and an opportunity to ask for specific comments on specific ideas.

Shawn Tracy asked if the week of the public meeting was March Break. **Penelope Palmer** replied no. **Jan Innes** said that some private schools do have two week breaks (which would mean that the public meeting could be over some families' March Break).

Penelope Palmer asked the group if it should be held another day. A show of hands by the group indicated that the meeting should remain on March 19.

Penelope Palmer said that following the public meeting a walkshop will be held in the neighbourhood. Both CAG members and community members will be invited. It will be held on a weekend morning, likely on either Saturday March 29 or Saturday April 5. We will schedule two dates in case of rain. Walkshop attendees will walk the entire length of study area and point out places of interest to see what the community likes and dislikes about certain treatments. We could have staff members available with digital cameras. Some would take photos of the likes and others would take photos of the dislikes. We would then be able to bring the photos back and incorporate what the community wants to see more of and try to change some of things they dislike.

Shawn Tracy said that he has been involved with two walkshops previously. He found it useful to have someone from each of the applicable City departments attend so that there is always an expert available to answer questions. **Penelope Palmer** said that the number of City staff attending is dependant on the numbers of people attending the walkshop. We also put together a frequently asked question list to try to get commonly asked questions answered.

Glen Simourd asked if they will factor in the comments made in the questionnaires that we replied to at the Rogers theatre a few years ago. **Penelope Palmer** said we can pull those out and make sure that if things have not been addressed we can address them.

Kyle Rae asked if a Heritage person will lead the walkshop, such as Michael McClelland. **Penelope Palmer** said that yes, a heritage person will lead the walk. **Anne McIlroy** agreed that Michael McClelland would be a good choice.

Penelope Palmer asked the group if they were comfortable going forward with a public meeting without another Community Advisory Group meeting. The group agreed to have it after the next public meeting.

Jimmy Vasilakakos asked if a 'mansion district' could be created, with street signs, etc. He wondered if this could be looked at as part of the project. **Kyle Rae** told him to write him a letter about this idea.

Shawn Tracy asked if there was an overarching vision or design theme for the remaking of Jarvis, such as recalling old Jarvis or a boulevard-like University. **Kyle Rae** said I am not sure if Jan feels as strongly as ten years ago when got the funds. The original intention was to do a heritage reinterpretation of Jarvis and to rebuild the pedestrian and neighbourhood quality that is reflected in the heritage homes. The City also came out with the cultural plan of which Jarvis is a part. **Jan Innes** agreed with Kyle's interpretation.

Ray Bacquie said the Environmental Assessment process has a structured set of requirements to present to the community and get feedback. With the first public meeting, it is usually about the needs and opportunity statement. **The needs and opportunity statement for this project will made available on the Jarvis website.**

Geoffrey Dyer encouraged diverse plantings beyond trees as they have their limits and do not last. Do not limit the plant expertise to the urban forestry people. It is important to also look to the botanical gardens. We need to make it beautiful and innovative. With sidewalks it would be nice if they were permeable so water does not just run off into the drain. **Anne McIlroy** said the City is looking at caring for trees in a different way and we will bring that knowledge forth.

Penelope Palmer said they City's urban forestry staff are looking at hybrid trees that have been known to be hardier during salt/snow. Once more information is available on these trees we will let you know.

Person wearing hat: It would be helpful to include examples of streets in other cities that have similar restrictions so that we can look at to understand what it Jarvis could look like. **Anne McIlroy** said we can do that for the public information session. We can bring in local examples. We need to be cognizant of bringing in examples where it features would not be possible.

John MacMillan asked about the timing of the project. **Penelope Palmer** said that the second public meeting will be held in June. The documentation and project completion/submission to council will be in September/October. After we have gone through council we have thirty days to resolve objections. We hope by keeping the project open and involving CAG members that we will not reach that stage. If there are no part two order requests, it would depend on budget. The detailed design would be at about 30% when we are finished this study and then another six months would be needed for the detailed design. Then we would look to the councilor to get this as a priority into the budget.

Warren Price asked what the budget is. **Penelope Palmer** said it is unknown as it depends on the options we have.

Rene said that in Montreal West, for example Sherbrooke Street through Shaughnessy Village, it is similar to Jarvis in terms of history and is nicely restored. They have an extended plaque system with history of the buildings included. Also, Ryerson is undergoing a Master Plan that is talking about dramatically redesigning their campus. It could be interesting for them to work with the Jarvis street group on an aspect of it. Part of that plan may impact Jarvis and vice versa. Jarvis may impact one of the residences that back onto Jarvis. Permeable trenches are a good idea. A big challenge is with all the salt and how the plants will survive in salt water. **Anne McIlroy** said she would check with York about the trenches as they would be dealing with that condition.

Wayne Wylie said there is encouragement to use alternatives to cars, such as cycling and walking. In terms of pedestrian safety, but I avoid walking on Jarvis street because it is like walking beside the 401. On the long stretch from Maitand to Gerrard, cyclists go so fast on the sidewalk that you have to be careful as a pedestrian. **Anne McIlroy** replied that with the narrowing of the road, it will reduce the highway aspect. The new elements will slow the road down as well.

Ralph Hoeche asked how bright Jarvis can be made in order to deal with drug dealers and sex trade workers. **Kyle Rae** replied that is not why we are around this table. **Ralph Hoeche** said that it is indirectly related. **Frank Randall** said that the Ballet School has been told to turn off their exterior lighting at night as they were seen as too bright. **June MacDonald** said there can be health effects from bright lights at night.

Kyle Rae said the people who live in Moore Park and north Rosedale are not here. They do not live here. They see our neighbourhood as their freeway. They came to the Rogers Centre

meeting and they were unhappy. **Geoffrey Dyer** said I assume there is traffic evidence. **Penelope Palmer** said we have a traffic feasibility study that was done. We revisited the numbers so we were not basing the study on old data. We will have that available at the meeting and provide a defensible position.

Jan Innes asked if street parking would still be allowed on Jarvis. **Penelope Palmer** said the feasibility study indicated that we may have to remove some street parking. There are areas where we cannot do planting which may be a potential area for on-street parking. **Jimmy Vasilakakos** asked if there would be an area for intensified parking. **Penelope Palmer** said there would be no additional on-street parking than currently exists. I would not call it intensified parking. **Ray Bacquie** said there are ways of making parking treatment desirable to make the road feel narrower. **Anne McIlroy** said part of it is deciding what to tradeoff. **Jimmy Vasilakakos** said we need to create a retail hub with on-street parking. **Wayne Wylie** asked how the councilors feel about it. **Kyle Rae** said he did not know. The residents' opinion will be key.

Shawn Tracy said in order to placate the voices in those areas we could indicate that some of us would prefer three lanes, but we tried to balance it as we know people north of this area use it so we went to four lanes. **Rae Bacquie** said that is a valid argument as in our traffic study we did consider it. **Kyle Rae** said if there was a TTC component to this they would use it.

Rene Biberstein said one of the least friendly areas in this study least friendly is the Moss Park barracks. I wish there was a way to negotiate interesting landscaping. **Penelope Palmer** said we have identified that as a visual obstruction.

8.0 Wrap-up and Thanks

Penelope Palmer thanked the group for their participation. She said they would be in touch frequently. In the meantime committee members can be in touch with comments.

Kyle Rae said it has taken a long time, but now this project is finally moving ahead.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.