



Jarvis Streetscape Improvement Community Advisory Group

Meeting #2

November 18, 2008

Ryerson University, SURP, 105 Bond St, 3rd Floor

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

SUMMARY NOTES

ATTENDANCE:

City of Toronto

- Councillor Kyle Rae
- Ryan Lahr (Councillor Rae's office)
- Mark Wilson (Councillor Rae's office)
- Penelope Palmer (Transportation Services)
- Mike Logan (Public Consultation Unit)

Consultants

- Ray Bacquie (iTrans Consulting Inc.)
- Guinevere Ngau (iTrans Consulting Inc.)
- Shawna Bowen (BMI|Pace Architects)

Community Advisory Group Members

- Florence Chung (Bay Corridor Community Association)
- Jacqueline Jordan (Upper Jarvis Neighbourhood Association)
- Frank Randall (National Ballet School)
- Glen Simourd
- Warren Price
- Jim Vasilakakos (Red Lion Pub)
- Chris Crane (Upper Jarvis Neighbourhood Association)
- Lawrence Altrows (Ryerson University)
- Wayne Wiley (Homewood & Allan Gardens Neighbourhood Association)

Observers

- Norm Mierins (North Rosedale Residents' Association)

Regrets

Jan Innes (Rogers Communications)

1.0 Opening Remarks and Overview

Penelope Palmer, Mike Logan and **Kyle Rae** welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Kyle Rae indicated that **Norm Mierins** from the North Rosedale Residents' Association is attending as an observer.

Mike Logan indicated that this meeting will help prepare for the next public meeting.

2.0 Summary of Public Events and feedback

- Public Meeting #1

Ray Bacquie said that the first meeting was intended to introduce the first stages of EA process and provide a formal opportunity for community input. The consultants provided background information on operations (i.e., traffic, speed, delay, capacity of roadway system, parking supply and demand) and existing conditions and future conditions were explored. The consultants came to conclusion that there is sufficient capacity if the centre lane is removed and that the options were reasonably good for a downtown core streets system. There were some constraints for pedestrians and cyclists.

During this first public meeting, the problem and opportunity statements and four different solutions were presented.

Mike Logan added that 168 attended people attended the first meeting. Of those, 47% heard about it from the delivered flyer. And, 57% preferred alternative 5. The three big issues were: trees; consistent and nice light fixtures, and bike lanes. Other issues included traffic, transit, street furniture, and economic development issues. Many hoped that Jarvis could be modelled after the following streets: University, St. George, and the Esplanade.

- Walkshop

Shawna Bowen explained that each of the walkshop groups were given two cameras – one to take photos of features they liked, and the other to take photos of features that they didn't like.

Some examples of what walkshop participants liked:

- National Ballet School
- Simple, durable elements
- History and heritage
- Block that encompasses Allan Gardens
- Trees that thrive

Examples of what they did not like:

- Inconsistency/lack of cohesiveness in design
- No distinction between public and private right of way - can make sidewalk feel narrow
- Cluttered sidewalk

- Facebook

The Facebook group method is being piloted as a way of engaging people. So far there are 146 group members. The group included lengthy discussions on bike lanes. It also includes suggestions for better engaging the ideas of low income and under-housed people.

3.0 Updates to Urban Design

Shawna Bowen went through block-by-block describing how the urban design elements could be incorporated.

The Urban Design elements include the following::

- Focus areas & Plazas
- Public Art and Heritage
- Trees and Plantings
- Sidewalks and Crosswalks
- Streetscape elements

Panels presented to the CAG are attached.

The following is a summary of the questions/comments made during this portion of the meeting.

Jacqueline Jordan asked what the plan was for lighting (at Mount Pleasant and Jarvis) and whether areas would be well-lit at night. **Shawna Bowen** replied yes, they would be well lit. However, she was unsure where the lights would be placed as of yet.

Wayne Wylie said that there used to be a piece of art (a stylized tree) at Mount Pleasant and Jarvis, but, it was moved over to Huntley Street. He wondered if it would be returning. **Kyle Rae** said it does not look like it will be coming back. It was not public art as Rogers owned it. He said it could be a good idea to ask Rogers for a public art donation.

Jacqueline Jordan said it seems to take about 10 minutes to cross the street right now at Mount Pleasant and Jarvis because of the configurations of the crosswalks. She indicated that she did not hear anything about this being changed. **Ray Bacquie** said we did look at that. At the south leg you can only cross on 3 legs of the intersection. A scramble intersection may be a viable solution. The scramble at Yonge and Dundas square still has to be evaluated before it may be used elsewhere.

Chris Crane asked if there were any plans to re-orientate the intersection with development of Northwest corner. There was talk that money from those developments could go to enhancing the intersection (Mount Pleasant and Jarvis). **Ray Bacquie** said the problem is that if the bullnose was extended south, there would not be enough space for vehicles to move from Mt. Pleasant southbound to Bloor Street via Jarvis northbound, and this is a high-volume area. **Kyle Rae** said we should look at it. **Penelope Palmer** said she talked to traffic operations about the possibility of having a scramble there but it is still being evaluated. **Ray Bacquie** said there are some issues that we likely won't be able to resolve in this EA, but could be looked at in parallel with this EA.

Warren Price asked if there is another design package coming after the EA and detailed design. **Ray Bacquie** said yes, this is just preliminary design. The next steps will include the detailed design, costing, etc. **Warren Price** said his understanding is that this is beginning of a scoping project to lead to a bigger design. He said that this project could be used to celebrate the potential and raise expectations a bit more. **Penelope Palmer** said typically in City projects, our public art group gets pulled in at the detailed design phase and they have one or more public charettes to contribute to the design phase. We have jumpstarted this by inviting our public art staff to participate at this earlier stage. They are still feeling that want to do the public art charette portion when getting into a detailed design, but they could still do some of it beforehand. This would mean that the public could contribute to what they want to see on the street. We will set the base in terms of the look, style and feel of the street, but art will take it one step further.

Warren Price asked about involving economic development department as this project will change how people think of this part of the city. **Penelope Palmer** will find out who should be involved. **Ray Bacquie** said in past projects there was buy-in from staff on a technical level first and then economic development followed.

Wayne Wiley said there is interest amongst his neighbours about the project. But, they are still sceptical that there will be funding available. **Kyle Rae** said there are funds that the city raises out of development that goes into capital improvements in the City. These funds reflect the intensification and development in the neighbourhood. Because of the intensification of residential development on Jarvis Street, there may be the opportunity to use development charge money, debt, and capital budget funds. We need to get through the study process, then it can go to through budgeting process.

Penelope Palmer said she is also exploring whether any of the utilities (i.e., water, sewer) may have work in the study area planned for future. If they do have something planned for future, we should try to co-ordinate the work as this could help support the improvements.

Warren Price asked if new developments (at Jarvis and Mount Pleasant) are going to be built back from the street. **Kyle Rae** said they will be significantly setback at 590 Jarvis. He could not recall how far back 580 is. But, the intent is to put in a grocery store which, typically, would not be that far back.

Chris Crane said design elements, such as benches, at Jarvis and Wellesley might facilitate overnight trade and drug dealing. Lighting and sightlines need to be considered throughout the design. Police need to be involved in the design. **Shawna Bowen** said the point is well taken about lighting. **Kyle Rae** said lighting could also make it easier for drug sellers to be seen which could act as advertising for drug dealers.

Jimmy Vasilakakos asked if additional trees will be added on the east side from Maitland to Carlton as there is a line of trees there already. **Shawna Bowen** said we have 1.8 metres of sidewalk, so we can bring out trees to curb edge to create a buffer to the traffic. Right now the only trees that are there are behind the sidewalk. **Jimmy Vasilakakos** said there will be issues with visibility with retail signage. **Kyle Rae** said trees are good. Part of business you have is serving local neighbourhood. **Jimmy Vasilakakos** said he wants to want to make sure signs are exposed. There are a lot of trees there already. **Shawna Bowen** said the existing trees are in private realm. The spacing of trees will be at +/- 8 metres, which will ensure that sightlines are maintained. **Jimmy Vasilakakos** asked if there is an intention to put in pedestrian lighting in this

section. **Shawna Bowen** said yes. We won't suggest new poles, but have light fixture coming out of existing street lights. We have not selected a fixture yet.

Chris Crane asked what the rationale was for the parking requirement in front of courthouse. **Penelope Palmer** said she does not think parking will be put there. It was a direct request from police. **Wayne Wiley** said the plaza area in front of courthouse is grim and it would be nice if the province would change it.

Glen Simourd said he is surprised that all of the focus areas are above Gerrard. The southeast corner at the armouries has lots of room there for focus areas. **Shawna Bowen** said it is private land. **Kyle Rae** said the federal government does not negotiate with this sort of thing very readily.

Norm Mierins asked why the study area stops at Queen. **Kyle Rae** said that is where the reversible lane ends. **Penelope Palmer** said there is another study that encompasses Jarvis up to Queen.

4.0 Summary of Issues

- Allan Gardens

Penelope Palmer said Allan Gardens is celebrating a milestone in 2010. It would be nice to see construction starting so we could tie our work into the anniversary.

- Tree Planting

Penelope Palmer said we have had in-depth conversations with Urban Forestry. We have heard from them that it is important to mix tree species so if there is a disease that attacks the trees, we do not lose all the trees. We have taken this advice into consideration.

Chris Crane asked if there are any intentions for working with the utility companies so trees do not have to be cut down due to overhead utilities. **Penelope Palmer** said we have spoken at length with Toronto Hydro. They are not looking at burying the utilities on Jarvis street and we would not recommend the burying due to cost. **Kyle Rae** said it costs over a million to do one kilometer of burying hydro. **Ray Bacquie** said we will be shifting the curb out, so it won't be completely clear. Directly above the trees there should not be any major lines.

- Parking

Penelope Palmer said we will not be having parking on Jarvis. This is a big concern for commercial and retail. We did a detailed parking analysis so that if we had to remove parking, we would have adequate parking throughout the neighbourhood. **Frank Randall** said there is no evening short term parking in the area, there is only permit parking. Street parking after 6:30 p.m. is the only option for parents of children at the National Ballet School. **Glen Simourd** said it is dangerous for the children in terms of traffic. **Chris Crane** asked if there is any consideration for the Toronto Parking Authority to be involved and to work with the school and retailers. **Kyle Rae** said we have been dealing with the underground site across from National Ballet and that may be useful parking site. A request has also been made for TPA staff to investigate and

report back on the feasibility of the TPA purchasing the parking lot on Maitland Street that is currently for sale, and converting to public parking. **Rae Bacquie** said there are three issues: operation of parking, interaction between parking and cyclists, trying to avoid utilities. Since the meeting with urban forestry and residents we learned we could plant over utilities.

Chris Crane asked how many spots available in that big parking lot. **Jimmy Vasilakakos** said there are 93 spots.

Frank Randall said if there is public parking available there needs to be a crosswalk there.

Jimmy Vasilakakos said he would like to see the area be a retail and commercial hub, especially with the National Ballet School bringing in people from all over the world. The parking lot there is for sale as well.

Kyle Rae will look into the parking issue.

- Cycling

Penelope Palmer said the provision of bike lanes is the biggest concern out of public consultation. We went through this section of Jarvis on block-by-block basis and looked at the following: space that is available to us with removing that centre reversible lane; the space that needs to be provided in providing bike lanes on either side of the road; space needed to meet requirements of the study in terms of meeting requirements of the study from a public realm point of view and respecting accessibility design guidelines for people with access issues. We have come to realization cannot have everything, including bike lanes. Curb lanes that are comfortable to cyclists will be provided. We are working with the Toronto Cyclist Union and the Pedestrian Infrastructure group to look at ways to make cyclists more visible. They will be at the next public meeting.

Chris Crane said those are single issue groups. It has to be made clear that this project takes a balanced approach within the constraints of available space and the role of Jarvis as a key north/south artery (for all vehicles including bicycles). There are existing bicycle lanes on Sherbourne Street which was part of the study area.

Frank Randall he asked if bike lanes went both North and South, as in Montreal, would save space. **Penelope Palmer** said no, as this would prevent the traffic lanes from being a standard width and prevent sidewalks from meeting accessibility guidelines. Another issue for cyclists is the speed on Jarvis.

Jimmy Vasilakakos asked what the maximum speed limit is. **Penelope Palmer** said the speed limit is 50 kilometres per hour. But, cars drive faster than this. **Kyle Rae** said north of Bloor there has been targeted enforcement that helped to slow down cars.

- Transit

Kyle Rae said that there used to be a north/south bus on Church Street. Jarvis could be a good place to introduce a north/south bus. If we cannot deal with bike lanes in an effective way, transit could be the next best way. **Penelope Palmer** said we will approach transit about options again.

5.0 Next Steps

- Public Meeting #2

Penelope Palmer said the next meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 22, 2009 at Currie Hall at the National Ballet School. We will send updates via mailing list, local paper notices and City and Facebook website. **Glen Simourd** said it is important to make sure the mailing list is complete as last time some people did not get the information. **Penelope Palmer** said the mailing list has been amended.

Penelope Palmer said we will present the information discussed tonight, with modifications based on the discussion. Then we will prepare a staff report to go to the Public Works and Infrastructure committee meeting in May. We will seek their endorsement and City Council endorsement. If we get approval, we would file an environmental study report in the public realm (i.e., city hall; public libraries). The review period will be open for 30 days and if there are any objections, they can be submitted to the Minister of the Environment asking for a Part II order.

Jimmy Vasilakakos asked if the EA is done. **Penelope Palmer** said the EA study would not be completed until all of the previously mentioned steps were completed. **Ray Bacquie** said there would hopefully be enough time to file before the summer starts.

Chris Crane asked if there were any other major contentious issues that would prevent this from going forward. **Kyle Rae** said there are concerns from North Rosedale and opposition from Moore Park. They are losing their 'expressway' to downtown. **Norm Mierins** said the North Rosedale community is worried about traffic spillage in their community. **Chris Crane** said the existing 2+2 lanes north of Bloor manage the traffic so there should not be any issue with the same lane configuration south of Bloor. This was also the general conclusion of the traffic study several years ago. **Norm Mierins** said he wants to ensure members of his community are informed.

Penelope Palmer said we do have background studies that address those issues, and we will be referencing the feasibility study that was completed in 2005.

Jimmy Vasilakakos asked why the TTC would not agree with putting in a bus. **Penelope Palmer** said TTC does not believe they have the ridership. We will ask them to look at ridership feasibility again. **Kyle Rae** said it is hard to advocate when more buses are needed in the suburbs. However, people come from the suburbs do come to downtown. **Jimmy Vasilakakos** asked if they could try out a six month bus trial. **Norm Mierins** said that would be too short a trial. **Chris Crane** said this should be tied into the Waterfront planning. **Penelope Palmer** said with Transit City, they may look at other connection points, such as the Queens Quay line. **Chris Crane** said improved commuter service should be priority. **Norm Mierins** said there is a good bus on Sherbourne. More buses on this route could help. **Kyle Rae** said the Sherbourne bus disappears to Rosedale in a strange way, the Mount Pleasant express bus could be extended.

Glen Simourd asked where the rest of the committee members are. **Kyle Rae** said there were some people who could not make it.

Chris Crane said there should be planning around how to answer questions for certain topics. **Penelope Palmer** said it will be an interactive open house with multiple display board with lots of staff in attendance. We will not have a formal presentation. **Chris Crane** said that will help.

Norm Mierins asked how feedback is gathered. **Penelope Palmer** said attendees will be given a comment sheet when they sign in. It can be dropped off in a comment box or faxed, mailed or emailed back. Staff will also be recording significant themes they pick up from comments during the night.

Warren Price said it is important to include a list of who you consulted with. **Penelope Palmer** said this will be included in the EA documentation.

6.0 Wrap-up and Thanks

Mike Logan said if there are any further comments he can be contacted.

Kyle Rae thanked Penelope Palmer and Ray Bacquie for their work. The report gives us hope. **Penelope Palmer** thanked Kyle Rae for his support.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.