

Danforth Avenue Planning Study

Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue



Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting # 1 Summary

Meeting

Monday, October 24, 2016, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Danforth Mennonite Church, 2174 Danforth Avenue

Attendance

Name	Organization
Stakeholder Advisory Committee Members and Alternates	
Tamara Bassilios	Resident
Trevor Bazilio	Main Square
Charles Braive	Friends of Danforth East
Heather Davies	Danforth Village Resident Association
Billy Dertilis	Danforth Mosaic BIA
Deborah Duckworth	Danforth Village BIA
Julia Gray	Resident
Oliver Hierlihy	Danforth Mosaic BIA
Andrey Kvedaras	DECA
Charles Lanktree	Resident
Angela Matich	Resident
Anita Millar	Toronto/East York Community Preservation Panel
Elaine Muller	Resident
Steve Wickens	DECA
Peter Woodcock	Friends of Stephenson Park
City of Toronto	
Councillor Janet Davis	Ward 31 Councillor, City of Toronto
Councillor Mary Margaret McMahon	Ward 32 Councillor, City of Toronto
Erin George	Executive Assistant to Councillor Davis, City of Toronto
Maximilien Longuet	Constituency Assistant to Councillor McMahon, City of Toronto
Daniel Woolfson	Community Planning, City of Toronto
Kyle Knoeck	Community Planning, City of Toronto
Pourya Nazemi	Heritage Preservation Services, City of Toronto
Facilitation Team	
Liz Nield	Lura Consulting
Amanda Crompton	Lura Consulting

Meeting Purpose

- Review Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) mandate and roles
- Provide update on study process and timeline
- Discuss and develop a vision statement for the study area

Meeting Highlights

- **Welcome and Introductions**
 - Councillor Janet Davis welcomed SAC participants and thanked them for their interest in contributing to the Danforth Avenue Planning Study
 - Liz Nield (Lura Consulting) welcomed participants to the first SAC meeting for the Danforth Avenue Planning Study
 - Liz Nield introduced herself as the independent facilitator for the SAC, noting that Lura Consulting is a neutral third party facilitating community engagement for the study
 - Participants introduced themselves and their interests in the community
 - The meeting agenda (see Appendix A) was reviewed
- **Stakeholder Advisory Committee Terms of Reference**
 - The SAC Terms of Reference (TOR) was reviewed and the role of the members discussed
 - SAC members approved the TOR
- **Project Overview and Background**
 - Daniel Woolfson (Community Planning, City of Toronto) provided a brief overview of the project and study area
 - It was noted that the planning study was initiated in 2016 after receiving direction from City Council in 2014
 - Daniel Woolfson outlined the planning framework and policies that currently guide development in the study area
- **Study Update and Overview of Community Feedback to Date**
 - Daniel Woolfson presented an overview of the community feedback that was collected from the Community Consultation Meeting held on June 27, 2016
 - Current community assets and areas for improvement as identified by the community were outlined
 - Suggestions received from the community on how to improve the planning study Terms of Reference were presented and the updated TOR was reviewed
- **Questions of Clarification**
- **Vision Exercise, Plenary Discussion and Feedback on Community Consultation Meeting #1 and SAC Meeting #1**
 - Following the questions of clarification, SAC members addressed the following discussion questions in small tables and plenary format:

1. Using the vision ingredients from CCM #1, what is your vision statement for the study area?
 2. If you could identify one key area of improvement for the study area, what would it be?
 3. Do you have any feedback/advice on the format of CCM #1 and/or SAC Meeting #1?
 - A summary of the feedback and advice is outlined in the following section.
- **Wrap Up and Next Steps**
 - Liz Nield outlined that the next SAC meeting will be held in January 2017, prior to Community Consultation Meeting #2

Questions of Clarification

Participants were given an opportunity to ask questions of clarification following the presentation. A summary of the discussion is provided below. Questions are noted with 'Q', responses are noted by 'A', and comments noted by 'C'.

Q1. Will this presentation be available on the project website?

A1. Yes, the presentation will be posted online, along with the meeting minutes.

Q2. Will there be overlap between the planning study for this portion of the Danforth, and the planning study for the western portion?

A2. We are conducting the planning studies at two different times. We will start the planning study for the second segment once this study is complete. We wanted to start with this portion of Danforth as there is more development pressure. I expect that we will have some lessons learned from this study.

Q3. Victoria Park Subway Station is not included in the study area map. Should it be?

A3. We didn't anticipate looking at that station. We have included the three subway stations that are within walking distance from Danforth Avenue. Victoria Park Station is located farther from Danforth Avenue than the other three stations, but we will consider it.

Q4. I have some concerns about the hard study area boundary line. Most of the issues associated with new development are felt at the boundary between the Avenue and the surrounding low-density residential. There is an important relationship between the Avenue and the surrounding area, and because of this, I would like to see a larger area of influence.

A4. Ensuring appropriate transitions are in place between higher-density Avenues and surrounding lower-density areas is very important. Careful consideration is given to transition zones when we are planning for growth along our Avenues. This is something we will be looking at very closely during the development of the design guidelines – an outcome of this planning study.

Q5. Is the Main Street GO Station included in the study area?

A5. No, the GO Station is not within the study area; however, we are taking a very close look at connectivity issues between the GO Station and Main Street Subway Station, as noted in the Scope of Work within the Terms of

Reference for the Danforth Avenue Planning Study. Metrolinx will also be conducting a planning study that looks at connectivity.

Q6. My understanding is that Metrolinx is establishing a kiss-and-ride at the bottom of Dawes Road. Will that be addressed as part of this study?

A6. This is a good example of why we are working with Metrolinx. I am not sure what the outcome of that project will be; however, we will continue to engage with them. We could also invite Metrolinx staff to attend one of our future SAC meetings.

Q7. Does the question of vehicular speed and traffic calming measures have a place in this study?

A7. We have identified looking at Complete Streets policies in the study Terms of Reference. Danforth Avenue is currently a major roadway, but we are trying to look at our right-of-way as an area for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users, in addition to private vehicle users. For example, adding bike lanes and/or expanding sidewalk widths. The old way of thinking about it was that roads are just for moving cars from point A to B, but we understand that transportation occurs in multiple modes. Speed is regulated by Transportation Services so it is not part of this study, but we can think of ways to improve the public realm, such as creating a better pedestrian experience, supporting cyclists, etc.

Vision Statement

Following the presentation and questions of clarification, SAC members worked in small groups to craft the following vision statements:

- Our Danforth is the heart of our community
- Our Danforth is a vibrant, diverse mix of primary uses that draws people (to the sidewalks) for different reasons, at different times of the day, and year-round
- The Danforth is a liveable, walkable, vibrant community built on a human-scale to create a place for everyone

Other feedback on vision statement elements:

- We want Danforth to remain authentic – E.g., having a bit of edge, or ‘grit’
- The Avenue should be planned for people (the human-scale)
- This corridor should be accessible to everyone. This is what currently makes it ‘gritty’ and ‘human’
- We don’t want to see people being pushed out because of development.
- It takes a lot of courage for a small business owner to open an independent business in our neighbourhood. This is part of what makes our community unlike a Yorkville. I can walk into these small businesses and get to know the owner, and invest in that individual and their business.
- Danforth is central to people’s lives in every aspect. You can live, work and play in this one community. We need to promote a diversity of uses that attract people at different times of the day, and different times of the year.
- Danforth is a place where people move at different scales, levels and speeds

Areas for Improvement

- Improve the behaviour of car drivers on the Danforth (e.g., reduce traffic speed)
- Add more density to the area to increase pedestrian traffic at all hours of the day
- Ensure cyclist safety (add bike lanes, prevent door accidents, etc.)
- Creatively make use of the abundance of vacant space in the area
- Build to the human-scale
- Plan for a vibrant and diverse Danforth
- Remove e-bikes from sidewalks
- Have fewer obstructions on the sidewalk – need a clear right-of-way for pedestrians (at some point everyone is a pedestrian)
- Encourage a diverse range of businesses along Danforth
- Beautify the Avenue and surrounding streets
- Add more trees
- Minimize the number of empty storefronts along Danforth
- Integrate more character along this portion of the Danforth
- Improve connectivity between transit (e.g., GO Station and subway station) – when the GO Train arrives, it can be difficult to exit our complex due to the volume of pedestrians
- Make better use of existing wide sidewalks
- Explore opportunities for new public spaces and make better use of existing public spaces
- Be more thoughtful about the types of businesses we make space for
- Better connect the south and north side of Danforth – the current long blocks impede pedestrian movement south/north
- Improve the economic viability of local, independent businesses
- Bring employment back into the area
- Consider the features that make the area between Woodbine/Danforth to East Lynn park successful and implement that here

Feedback and Advice

Feedback and advice on CCM #1:

- Hold the next community meeting in space that is larger, air conditioned (during summer months) and allows participants to better hear their neighbours during roundtable discussions

Feedback and advice on SAC Meeting #1:

- Make future presentations more concise, allowing more time for open discussion. We want to have time to provide our feedback, and hear other members input.
- Start with any creative activities first, followed by the presentation

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Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting #1 Summary

- Provide materials being discussed at the meeting ahead of time to allow members the opportunity to review them in advance
- SAC members agreed that the venue was suitable

Appendix A Meeting Agenda



Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting #1

Monday, October 24, 2016

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Danforth Mennonite Church, 2174 Danforth Avenue

Meeting Purpose: 1) Review SAC role and mandate; 2) Provide update on study process and timeline; and 3) Discuss and develop a vision statement for the study area.

AGENDA

- 7:00 pm **Introductions, Agenda Review and Welcome**
Liz Nield, Facilitator – Lura Consulting
Councillor Janet Davis, Ward 31 – City of Toronto
Councillor Mary-Margaret McMahon, Ward 32 – City of Toronto
- 7:15 pm **Review of SAC Terms of Reference**
Liz Nield, Facilitator – Lura Consulting
- 7:30 pm **Study Update and What We've Heard So Far**
Daniel Woolfson, Community Planning, City of Toronto
- 7:50 pm **Questions of Clarification**
- 8:05 pm **Vision Exercise**
Using the vision ingredients from CCM #1, develop a vision statement for the study area.
- 8:40 pm **Next Steps and Approach for Next Community Consultation Meeting**
Liz Nield, Facilitator – Lura Consulting
- 9:00 pm **Adjourn**