

**Danforth Avenue
Planning Study
Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue**

Stakeholder Advisory Committee

Meeting #3 Summary

Meeting

Wednesday, June 28, 2017, 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Danforth Mennonite Church, 2174 Danforth Avenue

Attendance

Name	Organization
Stakeholder Advisory Committee Members and Alternates	
Tamara Bassilios	Resident
Charles Braive	Friends of Danforth East
Luisa Coluccio	Resident
Billy Dertilis	Danforth Mosaic BIA
Julia Gray	Resident
Oliver Hierlihy	Danforth Mosaic BIA
Andrey Kvedaras	DECA
Charles Lanktree	Resident
Anita Millar	Toronto/East York Community Preservation Panel
Mary Ann Neary	Ward 32 Spokes
Phil Pothen	Ward 31 Bikes
City of Toronto	
Councillor Janet Davis	Ward 31 Councillor, City of Toronto
Councillor Mary Margaret McMahon	Ward 32 Councillor, City of Toronto
Abby Ramcharan	Constituency Assistant, Councillor McMahon
Sarah Buchanan	Executive Assistant to Councillor Davis, City of Toronto
Daniel Woolfson	Community Planning, City of Toronto
Kyle Knoeck	Community Planning, City of Toronto
Caroline Kim	Urban Design, City of Toronto
James Parakh	Urban Design, City of Toronto
Pourya Nazemi	Heritage Preservation Services, City of Toronto

Metrolinx	
Gregory Pereira	Senior Advisor, RER Project Planning
Nadine Navarro	Manager, RER Project Planning
Jey Pillai	Project Manager, LSE Corridor
Mirjana Osojnicky	Environmental Project Manager, Environmental Assessment and Programs
ERA Architects	
Abbi Kusch	ERA Architects
Brendan McCabe	ERA Architects
Facilitation Team	
Liz Nield	Lura Consulting
Amanda Crompton	Lura Consulting

Meeting Purpose

- Provide update on study process and timeline
- Preview and discuss presentation information and format for Community Consultation Meeting #3
- Provide information on the Metrolinx connectivity study

Meeting Highlights

- **Welcome and Introductions**
 - Liz Nield (Lura Consulting) welcomed SAC members to the third 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 Meeting #2 Recap**
 - The SAC Meeting #2 Summary was approved as final
- **Study Update (Built Form, Parks, Land Use, and Heritage)**
 - Daniel Woolfson (Community Planning, City of Toronto) provided the context for the project, outlined the goals of the study, and presented a study timeline
 - Daniel Woolfson presented an overview of the community feedback that was collected from the Community Consultation Meeting held on February 23, 2017 and SAC Meeting held on January 26, 2017
 - Daniel Woolfson presented the built form analysis, which included explaining the criteria used to determine which lots on Danforth Avenue in the study area are considered appropriate (and not appropriate) for midrise development
 - Caroline Kim (Urban Design, City of Toronto) identified the lots on Danforth that the City considers suitable to accommodate midrise development, as well as the lots recently constructed, and lots with applications under review
 - Caroline Kim presented massing considerations, including two building step-back options

- Daniel Woolfson identified existing and potential park and public realm spaces in the study area
- Daniel Woolfson presented a land use map for the study area, specifically highlighting the current location of auto-related uses
- Pourya Nazemi (Heritage Preservation Services) provided an update on the cultural heritage resource assessment, including an introduction to ERA Architects who have been retained by the City to undertake the Danforth Avenue Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment
- **Discussion and Feedback on the Presentation**
 - Following the questions of clarification, SAC members addressed the following discussion questions:
 1. What feedback or advice do you have for staff on the built form analysis?
 2. Do the proposed building heights respect the character of the area and support our community vision?
 3. What feedback or advice do you have for staff on the criteria used to establish "lots large enough to model mid-rise buildings"?
 4. What public spaces/parks do you like best/least and why?
 5. Where do you see the greatest need and opportunities for improved and new public spaces/parks?
 6. Staff have heard that members of the community do not like auto-related uses (i.e. car washes, auto-repair, and gas stations, etc.) in this area. What is the concern around auto-related uses in this area?
 7. What auto-related uses are appropriate in this location?
 8. If all, or some, auto-related uses weren't permitted on Danforth Avenue, how would that improve your neighbourhood?
 9. What feedback or advice do you have to improve the clarity of the presentation material in preparation for Community Consultation Meeting #3?
 10. What feedback or advice do you have for staff on the structure and format of CCM #3?
 - A summary of the feedback and advice is outlined in the following section. A detailed summary of questions and answers is provided in Appendix B.
- **Metrolinx Presentation and Discussion**
 - Gregory Pereira (Senior Advisor, Metrolinx) provided a presentation on the proposed redevelopment of Danforth GO Station in order to accommodate a 4th track
- **Wrap Up and Next Steps**
 - Liz Nield encouraged members of the SAC to mail or email any additional feedback to Lura before July 12, 2017

Feedback and Advice

Feedback and advice on the built form analysis:

- Create building variety and diversity to maintain the predominately narrow retail frontages that create a regular rhythm of shops along the street (do not want to see large, uniform buildings)
- Lower the street-wall to 2 or 3-storeys in height
- Build wider sidewalks
- Include the mechanical penthouse when measuring the overall building height (e.g., a 7-storey building is inclusive of the mechanical penthouse)

- Include balcony frontages in setback calculations
- Prefer option #1 for step-backs
- Ensure angular planes minimize shading on the street and address privacy concerns
- Be a people-focused and people-scaled street (in terms of building heights, scale, connectivity, auto-uses, accessibility to parks from Danforth, etc.)
- The 15 metre minimum lot frontage for midrise development seems reasonable as long as adequate step-backs and other massing transitions are required in order to prevent awkward relationships and blank walls visible down the street
- Lots identified as appropriate for intensification should be as wide as they are deep (avoid long, narrow buildings). The proposed criteria for the ratio of street frontage to lot depth is too narrow and would result in unreasonably tall buildings on lots that have a narrow frontage on the street
- Consideration should be given to the relationship between adjacent properties before approving midrise development (e.g., do not want to see a street pattern of tall, short, tall, short, and so on)
- 7-storey buildings along Danforth Avenue is too tall for any lot
- Build to a maximum height of 8-storeys on the north side of Danforth and 6-storeys on the south side
- Consider and articulate how the ownership of the rear laneways impacts development
- Ensure buildings have clearly visible entrances and respect their context within the neighbourhood
- Corner lots should address the corner at an angle
- Consider making the first step-back at the 5th floor more pronounced (step-backs are too small)
- Encourage balconies be made from opaque materials
- Ensure building materials are complementary to the existing character of the street. Buildings should have a mix of materials to avoid uniformity (e.g., not all glass or concrete façade)
- The existing bylaw height of 4-storeys is appropriate and respectful of the street and neighbourhood
- Support the proposal to lower the avenue designation midrise allowable height to 7-storeys
- Smaller sites identified in the built form map should be limited to 6-storeys with appropriate step-backs
- Character Area #3 (Main St. to Victoria Park) should have a height limit of 6-storeys
- Lots large enough to model midrise buildings should be lots where the depth is close to 60% of the width and vice versa. These lots are a comfortable fit for 7-storey construction.
- The design guidelines should address any large soft sites in detail (e.g., the TTC Yards at Coxwell, the plaza at Victoria Park)
- Through-lots that face a low-profile residential street, such as the one at Chisholm (Shopper's Drug Mart), should be identified and addressed as a unique site in the design guidelines
- Include overhauls/ recessed entryways for weather protection
- Require retail be located at grade
- Lower store signage to be at the pedestrian scale

Feedback and advice on the parks and public realm analysis:

- East Lynn Park is a great park with mature trees, seating, a defined entrance mid-block, interesting topography and good public facilities. This park is used to its capacity
- Alexander the Great Parkette (Danforth/Logan) is the best public space on the street (planters and a fountain animate the small space)
- Coleman Park is a good park with mature trees
- A minimum sidewalk width of 4.8 metres should be the requirement for any new building
- Larger sidewalk widths should be encouraged where larger buildings are developed
- Need more park space on the Danforth

- The inclusion of forecourts on new buildings should be considered to enhance the public realm and street aesthetic
- Fountains help to modulate the ambient noise of a busy street
- Kinetic sculptures inspire wonder and appreciation
- Do not want to see public spaces that are too small to be of real benefit to the public
- The inclusion of small boulevards or larger corner sidewalk allowances should be discouraged in overall estimations of available public space
- Main Square Plaza needs to be renovated
- The use of POPS can enhance the public realm and should be considered for recommendation; however, they cannot replace public parks and community amenities
- Character Areas #2 and #3 need functional public space
- The TTC Yard at Coxwell presents an opportunity for redevelopment, including park space
- Additional park space and improved pedestrian access to the plaza at Victoria Park is needed
- The area from the GO Station to the TTC Station at Main needs to be better planned (Metrolinx and City staff need to work together on this)
- Do not permit developers to give funds for parks in other areas in place of providing park space here
- Provide additional safe public spaces for kids and families in this neighbourhood
- Extend Coleman Park to Danforth Avenue using a mid-block connection
- Consider extending Stevenson Park to Danforth (e.g., through the Sobey's site)
- Potential locations for new parks: TTC Yard, Canadian Tire, Sobey's, Main Square, Shoppers World, Shoppers Drug Mart
- Animate Main Street south of Danforth to improve walkability between the GO Station and TTC Station (e.g., add retail on the east side of Main, add trees, add green space, etc.)

Feedback and advice on auto-related land uses:

- Provide a more predictable and uniform sidewalk with fewer curb-cuts to increase pedestrian safety. The primary concern with auto-related land uses is that their entrances cut into the pedestrian sidewalk. Automobile uses, such as gas stations (Petro Canada), car washes and large surface parking lots, have high in-and-out traffic that cut through the sidewalk.
- Sidewalks should not be crossed by motor vehicles as they are dangerous to pedestrians and cyclists – especially to children walking to Gledhill Public School and Secord Elementary School
- Auto-related uses should be phased out – restrict auto-oriented uses in order to transition to a Complete Street
- Auto-related land uses result in holes in the street-wall and “dead zones” on the street
- Minimize the frequency of empty lots being used for auto-related uses (e.g., carwash) during the parcel assembly process
- Prohibit deliveries from taking place during school hours (e.g., delivery of vehicles at car dealerships)
- Left turns exiting lots fronting Danforth should not be permitted during rush-hour (e.g., Sobey's exit)
- Focus on pedestrian safety and walkability

Feedback and advice on the presentation and CCM #3 format:

CCM #3 Presentation

- Refer to building heights in storey's (and metres if required)
- Ensure text on PowerPoint is legible (consider the use of two screens to provide a “zoomed-in” view)

- Include lot addresses and location maps to provide context on where various lots are located within the neighbourhood (e.g., show what is there now)
- Provide positive examples where planning initiatives improved the local economy of an area in the past (e.g., King Street rezoning). For example, can zoning changes stimulate economic development (e.g., would it be desirable and/or feasible to require that the first 2-storeys of a midrise building be dedicated to commercial use?)
- Provide more colour perspective drawings to illustrate various views of the built form (the view from adjacent neighbourhoods is also important)
- Include a cross-section through the entire corridor to show the 1:1 relationship of building to street width
- Include a 3D digital model of the entire segment from Coxwell to Victoria Park to best illustrate the planning intent
- Include a separate map showing parks and open spaces
- The choice and range of material used in presentations has been very good
- Avoid recounting a complete history of the study to date at the start of every public meeting. If someone is attending a meeting for the first time it is incumbent on them to get up to speed with what has already been presented and discussed.

CCM #3 Format

- Consider having separate spaces at the next CCM for different topics (e.g., built form, parks and public realm, heritage, etc.). Small group discussions do not work in a small room.
- Have a large map of the Danforth Avenue study area along a wall and ask participants to write their feedback on sticky notes and place them on the map
- Provide sufficient time for individuals to share their views and opinions (do not spend too much time on a presentation)
- Consider the use of live polling to obtain feedback
- Create a digital map of the street where you can click on a point and drop a pin or note
- Consider making the meeting longer (e.g., splitting over a few days by topic)
- Have computers available so participants can use streetview to provide additional context
- Consider the drawbacks of small discussion groups: they are limited in terms of informed and creative discussion; good ideas may not be reported by the group spokesperson; and the discussion can get stuck on one item and not cover the complete agenda
- Present a well-illustrated PowerPoint and allow time for questions and answers
- Allow comment forms to be returned by email or mail two weeks after the meeting
- Host the meeting at a large enough venue (e.g., Main Community Centre)
- Have a large screen for viewing the PowerPoint
- Use a good sound system

Other Feedback

- The project website is informative and well-maintained
- Large-group discussion, questions and answers are most useful for SAC meetings. A good facilitator will keep discussion focused and within the agenda. Sharing questions and ideas in a large group stimulates creativity and openness
- The nostalgic vision expressed by some people of a future for the Danforth as a small town main street with little 'Mom and Pop' shops lining the length of the street likely will not work in 21st century Toronto - historic romanticism won't bring the progress or economic prosperity desired by so many.

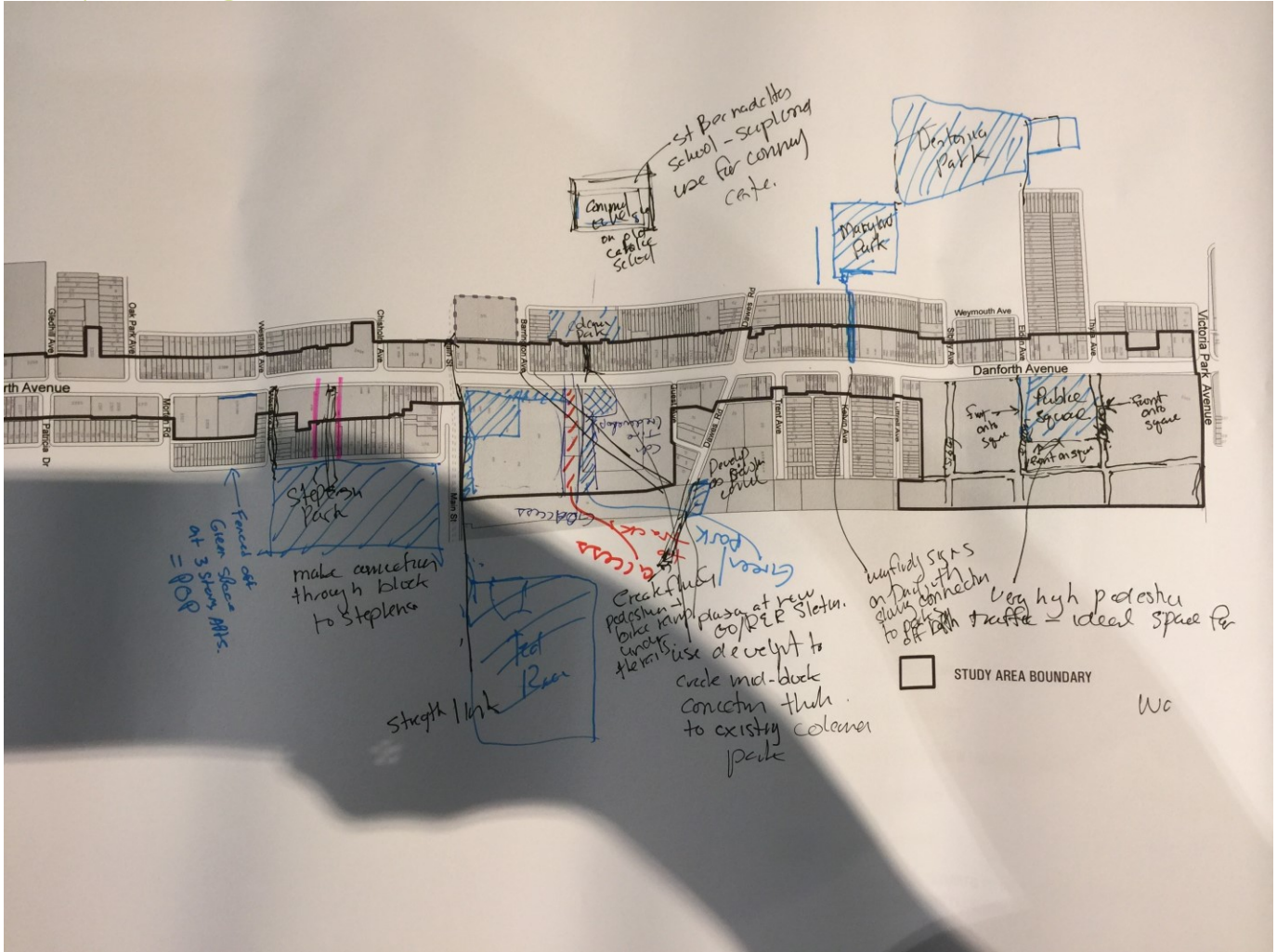
- Staff should consider taking a more assertive role when discussing changes and in particular the potential consequences of those changes
- Consider local community needs in the context of the larger neighbourhood. No community 'owns' their corner of the city. We should continue to share our Danforth with the whole of the city.
- Provide meaningful community centres (e.g., not a gym or church basement)
- Consider ways in which zoning can foster economic activity
- The base of Luttrell and Kelvin is a good location for small/mid-sized business and industry to locate (e.g., brewery, coffee roasters, design firm, culture and art organizations, etc.)

Comments, feedback and advice on the Metrolinx Connectivity Study

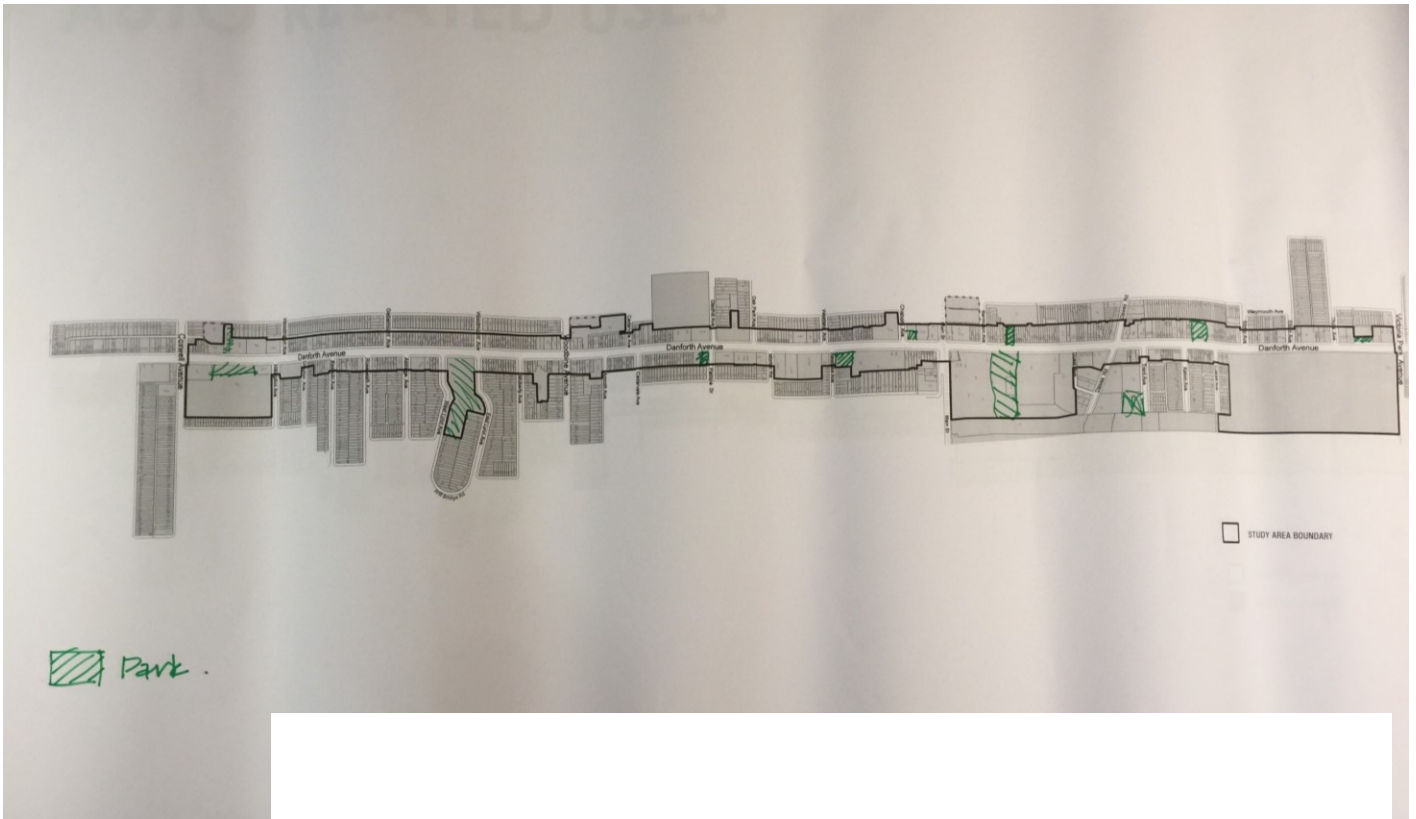
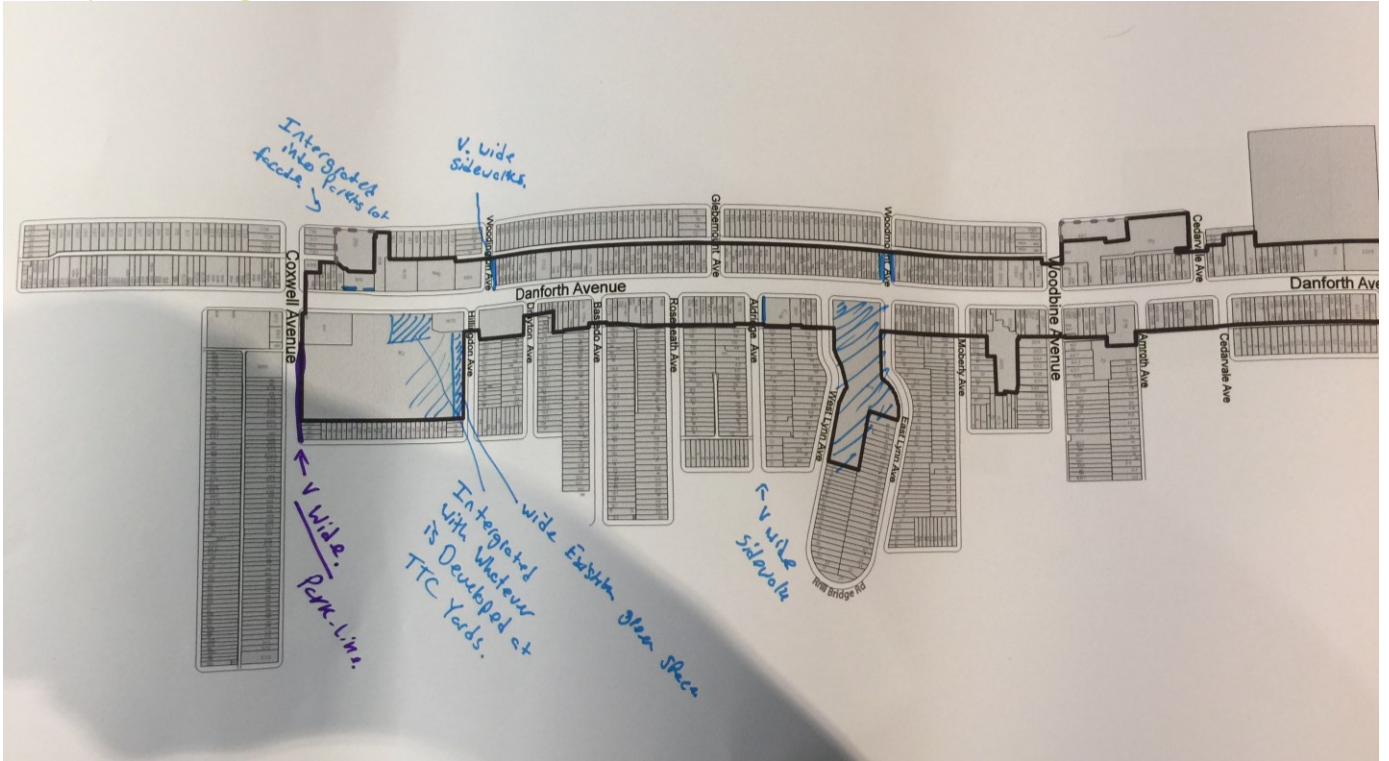
- The tunnels that exist now do not act as an effective connection. The tunnel should contribute to a fluid pathway that takes the pedestrian or cyclist from street to tunnel. Any tunnel should feel like a continuation of the street.
- Continue to explore the feasibility of having the station moved west to be on Danforth at-grade
- Connectivity and accessibility to existing transit, such as the TTC Station, should be improved. A benefit of this project must be increased connectivity and walkability between the GO and the TTC (e.g., covered walkway, shorter distance)
- Circular zones outlined in the presentation are not realistic – it is not a 2-5 minute walk to the TTC Station
- Ensure pedestrians can still access the train from the west side
- Make the grade transition accessible by incorporating an escalator/elevator
- Users will not use the Dawes entrance right away as there is very little development there currently – assume the current entrance will remain the most widely used entrance and plan accordingly
- Consider the average user at Main Station when making design decisions

Feedback and Advice (Maps)

Danforth Avenue Planning Study (Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue)
 Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting #3 Summary



Danforth Avenue Planning Study (Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue)
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Appendix A Meeting Agenda

Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting #3

Wednesday, June 28, 2017, 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm
Danforth Mennonite Church, 2174 Danforth Avenue

Meeting Purpose: 1) Provide update on study process and timeline; 2) Preview and discuss presentation materials and format for Community Consultation Meeting (CCM) #3; and 3) Provide information on the Metrolinx connectivity study.

AGENDA

- 6:30 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
- 6:40 pm **SAC Meeting #2 Recap, Review and Approval of Meeting #2 Summary**
Liz Nield, Facilitator – Lura Consulting
- 6:45 pm **Study Update (Built Form, Parks, Land Use, and Heritage)**
Daniel Wolfson, Community Planning, City of Toronto
Caroline Kim, Urban Design, City of Toronto
Pourya Nazemi, Heritage Preservation Services, City of Toronto
- 7:15 pm **Questions and Feedback on the Presentation**
Discussion Questions
- Built form*
1. *What feedback or advice do you have for staff on the built form analysis?*
 2. *Do the proposed building heights respect the character of the area and support our community vision?*

3. *What feedback or advice do you have for staff on the criteria used to establish "lots large enough to model mid-rise buildings"?*

Parks

1. *What public spaces/parks do you like best/least and why?*
2. *Where do you see the greatest need and opportunities for improved and new public spaces/parks?*

Land Use - Auto

1. *Staff have heard that members of the community do not like auto-related uses (i.e. car washes, auto-repair, and gas stations, etc.) in this area. What is the concern around auto-related uses in this area?*
2. *What auto-related uses are appropriate in this location?*
3. *If all, or some, auto-related uses weren't permitted on Danforth Avenue, how would that improve your neighbourhood?*

Other feedback or advice

1. *Do you have any other feedback or advice for staff based on the analysis and work completed to date?*

Feedback and Advice on the Format of Community Consultation Meeting #3

Discussion Questions

1. *What feedback or advice do you have to improve the clarity of the presentation material in preparation for Community Consultation Meeting #3?*
2. *What feedback or advice do you have for staff on the structure and format of CCM #3?*

8:15 pm

Metrolinx Presentation and Discussion

*Gregory Pereira, Senior Advisor, Metrolinx
Other Metrolinx staff*

8:55 pm

Wrap-up and Next Steps

Liz Nield, Facilitator – Lura Consulting

9:00 pm

Adjourn



Appendix B

Q&A, Comments, and Advice

During the discussion, a number of questions of clarification were raised relating to the content of the presentation and the study. A summary of the discussion is provided below. Questions are noted with **Q**, responses are noted by **A**, and comments are noted by **C**.

Q. Why is rental housing excluded from potential intensification?

A. We want to maintain as much rental housing stock as possible. We are happy to discuss this criterion further during the comment period.

Q. Why wasn't Valu-mart included (located at Woodbine and Danforth)?

A. We can discuss specific sites during the comment/discussion period.

Q. Are you including the mechanical penthouse in your maximum building heights?

A. No, but they will be included in the angular plane.

Q. What is the proposed setback from public laneways?

A. Right now we are showing potential development close to the laneway. We are showing a 7.5 metre setback from the adjacent property line, which includes the laneway (typically 3.5-5 metres). This allows for an appropriate angular plane as per the Midrise Guidelines.

Q. How wide would the lot have to be to accommodate a midrise building? Is it possible for someone with a 15-foot lot to build an 8-storey building?

A. We have established a 15 metre minimum lot width for potential midrise development.

A. When we have done these study's in the east end, the result is a guideline that explains how someone can build an acceptable midrise building in this area if they have a lot size large enough. The guidelines typically outline how large a lot should be to appropriately accommodate a midrise building. Since we are not proposing that these sites be rezoned, the landowner would still need to go through the regular rezoning application process which includes community consultation. That is our chance to say, "sorry, your lot is not large enough to appropriately accommodate a midrise building".

Q. How tall do you envision potential new buildings on these smaller lots being?

A. Every lot in this area is included in the existing zoning bylaw and we do not plan to amend that. The existing maximum building height for most lots in the area is 14 metres. Any proposed development above 14 m will need to submit a rezoning application, and at that time we refer to the guidelines that come from this study to determine if the proposed height is appropriate for the site.

Q. Why are we restricting how tall a landowner can build on a narrower site? Why set a minimum limit? This restriction ends up encouraging people to assemble smaller lots into one large property. We will end up with large buildings that all look the same. What adds to the character of the street is building diversity.

A. To appropriately deal with parking, loading, amenities, making the ground-floor work, having active retail space at-grade, etc., you typically need to have a wider lot. If someone can achieve everything on a smaller lot, that is fine, but we don't want to have rules in place that suggest you will be able to accommodate a 6 or 7-storey building on narrow lot.

A. It is liability issue from the perspective of the buyer.

Q. Was there any thought given to having wider sidewalk widths near some of the bigger lots?

A. This is something we are happy to discuss during the feedback and comment period. 4.8 metres is the minimum, but there might be potential for larger sites to incorporate additional public space.

Q. I understand that the 4-storey street-wall comes from the existing zoning permission, but it seems arbitrary as most existing buildings are 2 and 3-storeys in height. I would like to see the guidelines encourage 2 or 3-storey street-walls instead of 4-storeys.

A. We are very open to feedback like this.

Q. How does laneway housing fit into this discussion?

A. Laneway housing is being looked at City-wide, but there is not much attention for laneway housing on our main streets, such as Danforth Avenue. Laneways within the context of this study are important for providing rear vehicular access.