



Humber Bay Park – Building and Related Site Improvements

Architectural Community Resource Group Meeting #2

Wednesday July 5, 2017

6:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Polish Association of Toronto, 2282 Lake Shore Blvd W
Etobicoke, Ontario

Meeting Summary

1. Agenda Review, Opening Remarks and Introductions

Participants to the second Architectural Community Resource Group (ACRG) meeting for the Humber Bay Parks building improvement were welcomed by Liz Nield, Lura Consulting. Ms. Nield led a round of introductions and reviewed the meeting agenda. She explained that the purpose of the meeting was:

- Update on project, approach, and timing;
- To provide an overview of the draft precedents, program/uses, technical overview and potential site concepts;
- To discuss and seek feedback on program/uses, technical overview and potential site concepts;
- To discuss next steps for the building and site improvements.

The meeting agenda is attached as Appendix A, while a list of attending ACRG members can be found in Appendix B.

Ms. Nield welcomed the observers to the meeting and reminded the group that the materials presented are draft.

2. Project Update

Peter Klambauer, City of Toronto, provided an update on the Humber Bay Parks Master Plan. Mr. Klambauer advised the group that in today's meeting the hope is to look at building ideas, program and spaces, and see how they go together. The presentation will also look at sites and how they work. BSN will lead the discussion of vision, principles and objectives and asking for input, feedback and support for the proposed approach.

Mr. Klambauer advised that group that Recreation had expressed interest in staffing the building meaning that the building can be open to parks users longer than if it were unstaffed. In addition, limiting criteria will be employed to discourage hosting of large groups and the undesirable effects that can be associated with them, or conversion to commercialized usage.

3. Consultation Framework and What We Have Heard

Jon Neuert, Baird Sampson Neuert Architects, provided an overview of the consultation framework and presented the feedback received to date from the group.

The feedback helped inform the next phase of the project including considerations for siting options and programming pieces. The goal of today is to get a feel for the functions of the building as the scale issue

is malleable in terms of positioning the building on the site. We hope to receive feedback on programming and siting considerations so we can take an informed presentation to the Public Meeting.

4. Presentation

Mr. Neuert reviewed items developed in consultation with the ACRG members during the previous ACRG meeting (i.e. WHAT WE HEARD). This included:

- General Comments / Concerns
- Project Vision
- 5 Guiding Principles and Objectives
- Program Ideas - List of ACRG Programming / Use / Activities
- ACRG Image Quilt (precedent images provided by ACRG members)

The ACRG image quilt was expanded to include notable precedents illustrating buildings effectively integrated into the landscape using earth berms, green roofs, indoor/outdoor terraces and 'green design' concepts.

A distilled list of potential spaces was presented to the group, along with a list of possible programs/uses proposed by the ACRG including public washrooms, lobby, 2 adjoining multipurpose rooms, and staff and operations areas. Possible total building area was identified at under 750 square meters (8,000 s.f.) to allow for working with shapes, daylighting, etc. Comparative review of existing built elements was presented to help understand the scale of what was proposed.

A technical overview of the existing building site and adjoining master plan context was provided. This overview examined both the current site conditions and the future Master Plan landscape conditions. Key considerations are summarized following:

- Pond Levels - to improve habitat opportunity and overall water quality, the Master Plan proposes to raise the water level of the eastern pond by about 1.2 meters. As the pond is located immediately adjacent to the existing washroom and service buildings, a dike / retaining wall system will be required to prevent flooding of the existing buildings and enable the existing building to remain as is.
- Habitat Adjacency - The existing building site is located immediately adjacent to the proposed enhanced habitat area of the reconfigured eastern pond, and at a distance to the proposed active west pond.
- Trails – New Trail systems proposed in the Master Plan presents new opportunities and needs regarding access and connectivity between trails and buildings.
- Parking – the Master Plan proposes to reduce parking from 231 to 144 spaces in order to create a new pollinator meadow, immediately north of the building site. An integrated approach between buildings and landscape development will enable further realization of the pollinator meadow, by placing parking at the edge of the meadow.

A review of three building sites / options was presented which included:

- Option 1 - Reuse existing buildings and site (Noting issues related to raised adjacent water level).

- Option 2 - Develop new building on existing site that responds to the Master Plan context (Noting that the site has now changed, will be thick with growth, and is set apart from remaining recreational pond).
- Option 3 – Develop new buildings adjacent to active pond area and away from intensive habitat area of eastern pond (thus bringing building proximate to recreational pond use and visible at water's edge).

A pro and con evaluation of these options was briefly presented for discussion and elaboration by ACRG members, which included both the 'existing condition' and future 'master plan' context.

Discussion -Summary

Questions were encouraged throughout the presentation, some of which were asked ahead of explanatory information provided in the consultant's presentation. A summary of the questions of clarification are provided below. Questions are noted with **Q**, responses by the project team are noted by **A**, and comments are noted by **C**. Please note this is not a verbatim summary.

C: The ideas presented are all very interesting but it is important to note that many may have come from only a few voices.

A: True, the "What We Heard" presentation is a non-edited list of *all* ideas provided by ACRG members; it does not mean everything will be incorporated into the design. The consultant presentation (later in the agenda) shortlists ideas to include only those that advance the project vision, guiding principles and objectives determined in consultation with ACRG members.

Q: Understanding that the Master Plan is on hold now, when will it restart?

A: The Master Plan was advanced ahead of the building to establish an overall framework for the Park. From the outset, the planning process for the building and park was intended to be fully integrated. Both processes will come together in the fall. You will see when viewing tonight's site options presentation, that we have been working directly with the Master Plan team to improve the Master Plan framework through a back and forth process.

Q: Can you provide an example about how this project will facilitate the goals of the Master Plan?

A: The building project and related site improvements are conceived a means to advance the Master Plan's Guiding Principles and Objectives. It will contribute to the park's identity as a natural and restful place, provide and enhance resiliency for park flora and fauna by providing spaces that enable viewing but not disturbing of nature, and enable four-season recreational opportunities suited to the unique features of the park/ponds. It will enable adjoining landscape features including improved/redesigned ponds, new trails/ improved pedestrian & vehicle circulation and new pollinator meadow.

Q: After the second public meeting, how much room is there for redesign?

A: Current building options include renovating the existing building; building a new facility on the same site in response to the new pond configuration and landscape features proposed by the Master Plan; and a new building in an optimized location that responds to the new master plan and allows phasing of future master plan work. These options will be shared with the public, as with the ACRG, for feedback. The process was structured to be inclusive and collaborative with the public.

C: I am concerned heading into the public meeting that previous survey results be made available for review, and that the public has an opportunity to comment.

A: Survey results will be posted and available, there was a delay on the City's end in making this

material available. The public meeting presentations are intended to ensure ample opportunity for input and feedback from the public.

Q: What is the square feet of the existing buildings?

A: The existing buildings are approximately 260 square metres (2,800 square feet) in area. The associated paved areas immediately adjacent to the buildings and works yard have a footprint of about 1,100 square meters (13,000 square feet) combined with buildings, not including bridges, docks and boardwalk extensions.

Q: Are pond volumes natural or controlled?

A: The ponds are artificially maintained approximately 2m above lake level using a pumping system that draws water from the lake. The ponds have an engineered liner that keeps the water from seeping back into the lake.

Q: If we decide that education programs are going to be there, will there be a charge? And limited to Toronto residents?

A: Programming access would be consistent with Parks and Recreation policies regarding charging for services. We wish to build versatile space that is adaptable to the changing interests and needs of the community, and activities that complement the park context.

Q: Is the intention to have parks vacate the service facility?

A: Parks intends to consolidate service operations on the west side, however some service functions are required on both sides of the park in any event. The Master Plan is advancing details on this aspect of park planning.

Q: Is the space required for park service functions just the opinion of the park supervisor protecting their turf?

A: No. Parks has an operation to run and services to provide for all of Ward 6. There are space constraints that need to be addressed. We need to maintain approximately the same areas that exist, however may reconfigure according to the layout of a new facility.

C: The suggestions for the multipurpose room and what looks like functions that occur in community centres (like yoga) and not to do with educational space.

A: We have heard requests for both outdoor and indoor programming capabilities (i.e. skate changing, yoga, club space, etc). The suggestions of what to do with the space are based on what we heard, but it does not mean specific programs will be offered, which will be subject to Parks booking policy. As noted previously, the intention is to provide appropriately scaled flexible space that enables appropriate programming suited to the qualities of the park as a restful and natural place. Yoga might be keeping with this, not basketball. Usage will be determined by Recreation through their program modelling process, and consideration of appropriate uses.

Q: Can we get past the Parks needs? Why can't we define their needed space and get some traction on the community aspects?

A: we are working with Parks management's needs and will determine a solution that functions. When the West side service facility is expanded, some space on the east side maybe freed up for other uses.

C: I feel like all the space set aside for public gathering and events is much too large for a small park like this. We don't have the space. People want to be in nature and not be overrun with people.

R: The proposed programming areas are not designed for events and gathering. For reference, proposed public space of two multipurpose rooms is significantly smaller than the room this meeting is occurring in, which has 32 participants.

Q: Why two multipurpose rooms? You have a lobby, maybe you don't need two rooms?

A: Two rooms were proposed based on functional needs feedback from City Programming Staff who indicated that two small rooms side by side, means you can have one room and one switching over. The size is proposed to be about 25 x 35 feet each.

C: I'm worried that programming will drive the design of this building.

R: The 'site options' are intended to assess what an appropriate "fit to the site" looks and ensure an appropriate balance is achieved. There are many other drivers of the building design process including responding and advancing landscape improvements proposed in the Master Plan, sustainability and accessibility considerations, creating a design that responds to the unique qualities of place, etc .

C: I don't feel comfortable expressing my views in this meeting given the tone of some members of the ARGC.

R: It is our responsibility to host a safe place for discussion, and everyone's responsibility to contribute to that. We may have to do a better job of keeping our process comfortable for everyone.

C: I am really happy that you are trying to keep the proposed building in the existing development footprint. I like the idea of putting some of this underground. Maybe the rooms can be stacked.

R: It is possible to reduce the environmental footprint below that what is there now, and expand opportunities for programming and areas for wildlife/ habitat.

Q: Have we done our homework to see that the nature conservancy is a good idea for this park? Worth going for a visit and seeing how it is managed and understand its challenges. We have talked about it but not who will run the program.

A: We have had those conversations internally but a visit is a good idea.

C: Can go back to what is distinctive about this park? One of the guiding principles is to plan for the future and educate people about this park, educate the kids, help them to understand this unique place is both a constructed environment and a place of nature. This is a fundamental to what makes the park unique and important, and can help determine what we want in this park so that more people and wildlife can enjoy, learn, and use it.

C: There is a lot of beautiful stuff here, and I do like the idea of improving things but the focus should be on the natural space. We have finite resources and a lot of development. Soon this will be a nature park for thousands of people. We need to keep non-park uses out. I am not sure I like the staffing and definitely don't like having a multipurpose space.

C: The community is growing and there are so many children that they will eventually build a school. So why not use a room in that school.

C: Being a science teacher and enjoying introducing kids to the outdoors, this project is a dream come true. Having indoor space on site is completely different than a classroom in a school in terms of managing day trips for school groups. The indoor space will allow for slideshows before a nature walk, protection from the rain (and warm place to eat lunch in winter). It would be great and I would be

happy with the proposal for a lobby, two multipurpose rooms and public washrooms. Is there any talk about a green roof or possible viewing areas?

R: The idea of a vegetated building was a common theme brought forward by ACRG members (refer to the ACRG image quilt). Yes, the building will definitely have a green roof and is expected to become an exemplar for green design. Nature viewing areas will allow people in close proximity to wildlife - but at a distance needed for habitat protection. The existing earth berms on site can also be redeveloped to integrate built form into the landscape - replacing existing areas of mowed lawns with areas of enriched habitat for wildlife.

C: We have to keep in mind the use and needs of park users the future not just right now.

C: One thing that would be nice would be to pair usage numbers with the program area summary slide including what times of year, peak period, parking and bussing kids in etc. so we can have an overall picture of usage patterns and the impact to the park. If we define the needs and requirements then we can work through design. We can never get through design if we don't decide on the criteria.

A: Parks Staff have proposed a flexible pairing of multipurpose rooms that is intended to allow for long-term flexibility for small scale programming, rather than a highly determined design approach that precisely profiles what is happening now.

C: Maybe we shouldn't be looking at design solutions. Let's talk about requirements and what we are trying to accomplish.

A: Agreed – Design is the next step. The focus and agenda for today is to identify a suitable balance of activities/ uses suited to the Park using the 'guiding principles' developed with ACRG members, and assess where these uses are best located to develop a design.

C (staff): Generally speaking, we hear from the community a lot and they ask for space to hold an activity and a transition space. Users need a gathering space like a lobby, and would have small adjoining activity rooms. Two spaces are proposed so that people don't have to wait in transition. Two spaces are needed if a school group arrives on a standard school bus.

C (staff): Perhaps people would have less difficulty with the topic if the word 'programming' was replaced with the idea of 'usage'.

C: Talk of shelter with washrooms is a great idea and beneficial to park use such as picnicking. The reduction of parking bothers me because I know people will be affected by it. The piece around nature education has not been nailed down in terms of programming and we shouldn't build a building around this when the concept isn't developed.

A: The reduction in parking to develop a pollinator meadow is an idea developed and strongly supported through the Park Master Plan process. We are not proposing to build a nature centre, but provide flexible multi-use space rather than highly determined program ideas. This space would be sensitively sited and integrated with its environment, ensuring natural appreciation as part of the experience of visiting the building.

C: I am concerned about multi use spaces and lobby that will sit empty 10 months of the year. I would rather see the investment in picnic shelters beside lake.

A: The building and washrooms are intended to be open year round to promote 4 season use of the Park and ponds. Interior spaces will provide viewing opportunities of the site and adapt to provide space for skate changing and other indoor uses during the winter.

C: When residents were asked what they wanted, all-season washrooms were the one item in the majority. People go to a park to be outside not inside – that’s why I would want the smallest possible development footprint. The existing park is not maintained as it is. The larger you build it the more run down it will become. Focus on the outside, not the inside. Maintenance costs would be lower and it won’t attract as much vandalism.

R: All-season washrooms would require some staff presence to remain open; staff presence would also result in a better likelihood of improved facility management, compared to otherwise.

C: I like the idea of a well-built building. Build get something of quality that is small.

C: It seems like we are trying to build something here no matter what - even if potentially there is no need. Are you solving a problem that doesn't exist? The community needs didn't change – we still want green space.

A: The Guiding Principles of the Park Master Plan clearly identify the need to ‘Innovate and evolve’ and Plan for the Future’ in order to ‘accommodate growing numbers of users’, and ‘accommodate an increasing diversity of park users and needs’. The community is changing and the Park needs to realize its Guiding Principles to effectively manage these changes. If Recreation is able to run activities in the space then an important condition of usage is met, as the demand for Recreation activity is constant. We also want improved green space, and propose to do so with an integrated approach that takes its lead from the Master Plan.

Q: Glad we are looking at parking. Early concept of pollinator meadow – looks like a lot of trees will be lost to make the meadow – which if true would be a shame. Same for the removal of berms

A: Agreed – trees should be maintained where possible. The berms contribute to the site’s sense of place and also serve to shelter the ponds from westerly winter winds. Concepts presented are very preliminary and these concerns will be addressed in future work.

C: There was a survey completed and I don’t believe the whole results were shared; those would be helpful.

A: Those will be posted on the project website. The survey was part of the master Plan process that has been on hold while we worked to develop the ACRG, and was overlooked. We apologize for the delay.

C: I think we need to remember the changing demographics and users of the park. The ACRG members does not include any new comers who picnic, young families, older adults, people with disabilities disabled and we don’t represent that demographic. I think we need an indoor space to accommodate people of different abilities so that everyone can enjoy the park.

C: Maybe we can look at the building as an opportunity to enhance the park and its uniqueness and preserve park. The park can bring diverse groups together too and come together for a common purpose.

5. Next Steps

Many questions were raised tonight, it may be best for us to meet again in advance of a public presentation. Thank you,

Meeting adjourned.

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Etobicoke, Ontario

AGENDA

Meeting Purpose:

- Update on project, approach, and timing;
- To provide an overview of the draft precedents, program/uses, technical overview and potential site concepts;
- To discuss and seek feedback on program/uses, technical overview and potential site concepts;
- To discuss next steps for the building and site improvements.

- 6:30 pm** **Agenda Review, Opening Remarks and Introductions** - Liz Nield, Lura Consulting, Facilitator
- 6:40 pm** **Project Update** - Peter Klambauer, City of Toronto
- 6:50 pm** **Consultation Framework and What We Have Heard** - John Neuert, Baird Sampson Neuert Architects, Liz Nield, Lura Consulting
- 7:20 pm** **Presentation** – Jon Neuert, Baird Sampson Neuert Architects
- Precedents
 - Program and Uses
 - Discussion: What do you like, what concerns you, what suggestions would you make?
 - Technical Overview
 - Questions of Clarification
 - Site Concepts
 - Discussion: What do you like, what concerns you, what suggestions would you make?
- 8:55 pm** **Summary and Next Steps**
- 9:00 pm** **Adjourn**

Appendix B – List of Attendees

ACRG Members:

Barbara Keaveney – Citizens Concerned for the Future of the Etobicoke Waterfront
David Creelman – Friends of Humber Bay Park
Don Henderson – Humber Bay Shores Condominium Association
Eric Code – Local Resident
Irene Jardine – Friends of Humber Bay Park
Jim Reekie – Humber Bay Shores Condominium Association
Liz Alexander – Local Resident
Lucy Harris – Local Resident
Mary Hutcheon – Local Resident
Richard Jackson - Resident
Rick Levick – Metro Marine Modellers
Thomans Arkay – Local Resident
Walter Maceluch – Local Resident

Councillor Grimes' Office:

Melissa Haughton

Project Team Staff and Consultants:

Ann Myslicki – City of Toronto
Karen Harris – City of Toronto
Lori Ellis – City of Toronto
Peter Klambauer – City of Toronto
Liz Nield – Lura Consulting
Niki Angelis – Lura Consulting
Jon Neuert – BSN Architects