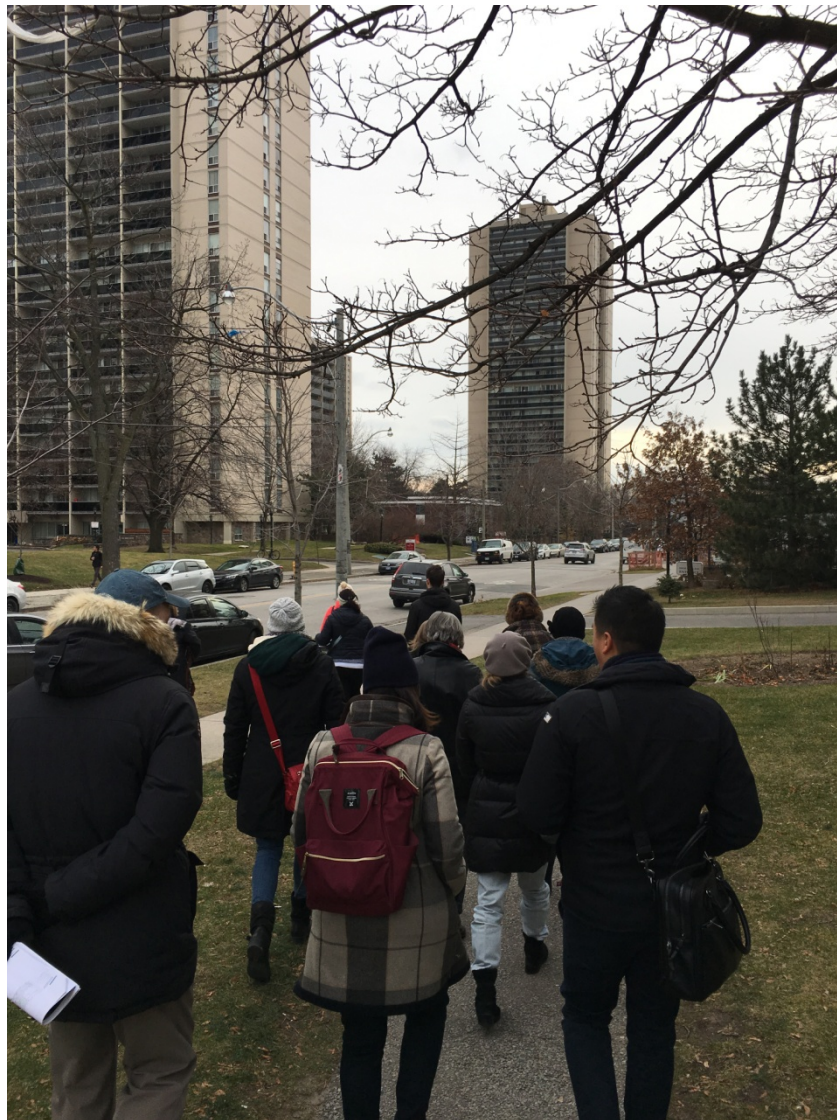


High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Character Study

Working Group Meeting #1: Introductions and Neighbourhood Walk

December 9, 2017



Meeting Summary

Saturday December 9, 2017
10:00am – 1:45pm
100 High Park Avenue & Study Area Walk

Working Group Attendance:

Local Councillor, Sarah Doucette – Ward 13
Sarah Henstock, Manager, Etobicoke York District
Elisabeth Silva Stewart, Planner, Etobicoke York District
Allison Reid, Senior Urban Designer, Etobicoke York District
Carla Schreiber, Administrative Assistant, Etobicoke York District
6 High Park Area Residents
4 Study Area Land Owner Representatives
1 High Park Tenants Association Representative
1 Bloor West Village Rate Payers Association Representative
1 High Park Community Alliance Representative
1 High Park Natural Environment Committee Representative
1 Oakview Tenants Association Representative

Regrets:

1 Land Owner Representative
1 High Park Residents Association Representative

Summary of Meeting

On Saturday December 9, 2017, the City of Toronto hosted the first Working Group Meeting for the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Character Study. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce Working Group members to each other and to the study. City staff Sarah Henstock, Elisabeth Silva Stewart, Allison Reid, and Carla Schreiber, and City Councillor Sarah Doucette attended representing the City.

Councillor Doucette welcomed everyone. The meeting began with introductions followed by a review of the meeting agenda. Sarah Henstock introduced the study; Elisabeth Silva Stewart provided an overview of the study process and planning context,

and Allison Reid introduced urban design concepts, character defining elements, and community engagement tools to be used in this study process.

The purpose of the Working Group is to provide advice to City Staff and roles and responsibilities were outlined in the Working Group Terms of Reference. Working Group members are to provide their insights about living in the community, as their contribution is valuable. Different perspectives are also valued. Potential study outcomes, timing, and proposed study scope were also reviewed. Study timelines were reviewed, and staff plan to consult with the Working Group at each phase of the study.

Results from community engagement to date were revealed. Highlights from answers to the 3 questions asked at the October Community Meeting were shared with the Working Group with 'Green Space', 'Space Between Buildings', and 'Trees' coming up most frequently as the physical characteristics and character elements most valued in this neighbourhood. 'Noise' and 'Transportation' issues were conditions frequently described as less desirable in this neighbourhood.

A new community consultation tool called 'Social Pinpoint' was introduced. Staff plan to launch this tool mid-December and collect community information until mid-January.

Staff requested Working Group Members to review draft Character Elements and Social Pinpoint questions and respond back to Staff with comments on these before the end of the next week.

Discussion Items

Official Plan: When was OP introduced? Clarification noted for environmental maps shown in the presentation. What is the interpretation of growth within Neighbourhoods?

The Official Plan was introduced in 2002, but has been updated through the years with Official Plan Amendments.

One of the environmental maps shown has been updated through an Official Plan Amendment earlier in 2017.

The Official Plan anticipates some infill within Neighbourhoods, provided it respects and reinforces the existing character of the Neighbourhood.

Timing: Will this study influence the outcome of current applications? Is the outcome of the two applications currently before the City already determined?

Decisions on the applications have not taken place. The Official Plan and Council direction require that this study take place in order to evaluate the proposals currently before the City. Staff intend on using the findings of the study to evaluate the current and future proposals in the study area. It is anticipated that the study will result in a site and area specific Official Plan policy and urban design guidelines that will provide greater direction on how to evaluate current and future applications within the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood.

Families in Apartment Neighbourhoods: Reference was made to "Growing up - Vertical Communities Guidelines" (planning for families). This guideline will apply to the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood. The Character Study will include this lens.

Accurate Imagery of the proposals: A request for accurate imagery and 3D visualization of the proposals was made as the images posted online are not accurate. Staff will provide 3D modelling as the study progresses.

Timing of Social Pinpoint: Should be available on the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Character Study website mid-December.

Next Steps

Communicate Working Group discussions back to your organizations and constituencies. Next Working Group meeting will go over Preliminary Findings.

Neighbourhood Walk

The meeting was then moved outside for a walkabout in the neighbourhood. Working Group members were reminded to consider the questions while on the walk:

- What Elements Define the Physical Character of the Area?
- What Space and Attributes are most valued?
- What Conditions are less desirable and how can these be improved?

Character items/issues/concerns mentioned by Working Group members while on the Walk included:

- Timing of the walk (i.e. Saturday morning) does not accurately reflect what takes place during peak times on weekdays (mornings/afternoons) – there is a different vibe during the week;

- Windy Area concerns were identified – especially near building entrances and North Street concerns;
- Gathering Areas for social interactions are valuable such as picnics, movie nights, yard sales, BBQs were identified. What will happen to their space/activities? This space is valuable to local residents as it unites community/neighbours;
- Boulevard Trees and Streetscapes are valued – especially High Park Avenue;
- Existing walkways were observed – these are used regularly as connections in between blocks and shortcuts leading to High Park and the subway;
- There are many pedestrians, especially school children in the area – suggestions to make it more pedestrian friendly included introducing speed bumps to slow traffic; cross-walk/school crossings;
- Families with children need more active and passive play areas including playgrounds, parks and open space, swimming pools (separated from dog areas);
- Location of dog friendly/off leash areas need to be considered (statistic: twice as many dog owners than the city average live in the High Park area). There is a Planning for pets (guidelines) initiative currently underway at the City and in the process of being completed;
- Garbage area concerns – enclosed garbage bins should be mandatory;
- Concerns with access/circulation to underground parking were identified: better signage for drivers needed – one-way signs are not easily seen;
- Concerns with the impacts of proposals on current amenity areas were noted;
- Dust from active/current construction is a concern: is it possible to limit the amount of construction taking place at the same time;
- Some areas are too shady;
- Tree-lined street create visual impact - looking down the "corridor";
- Ensure setbacks from road are maintained with existing sidewalks;
- Green space is not the same as underutilized lands;
- Will proposals contain additional surface parking; Convenience to car-share; Outdoor events;
- Were condo board members invited to participate? Yes, invitations were extended to individual Condo Boards. Still waiting to hear back;
- Apartment buildings near subway tunnels – impact of noise/vibration;
- How about creating a 'community garden' for residents;
- Staff are studying the heritage value of the neighbourhood – there are two officially designated heritage buildings in/adjacent to the study area.