

Baby Point Heritage Conservation District Study  
Old Millside Community Advisory Group Meeting #1 Summary

## Baby Point Heritage Conservation District Study

Old Millside Community Advisory Group Meeting #1

Monday, June 26, 2017

Humbercrest United Church, West Hall

16 Baby Point Road, Toronto

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

### Meeting Summary

#### Agenda Review, Opening Remarks and Introductions

Susan Hall, the facilitator from Lura Consulting, welcomed Community Advisory Group (CAG) members and thanked them for attending the session. Ms. Hall led a round of introductions of CAG members, City of Toronto staff and the project consultants from EVOQ, ASI and Lura Consulting and reviewed the meeting agenda. She explained that the meeting would provide CAG members with the opportunity to learn about, and offer input to, the Baby Point Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study. Ms. Hall also noted that the study is in the information gathering phase and that no decisions have been made.

Alex Corey, the Heritage Planner from the City of Toronto, also welcomed CAG members. He explained that the purpose of the meeting is to obtain feedback from CAG members to contribute to the information gathering phase of the HCD Study. He also explained that the preliminary research results would be shared and that no decisions or conclusions would be made at the meeting.

Susan facilitated a round of introductions and informed stakeholders that meeting notes were being prepared and would be circulated to the group. The following individuals attended the meeting:

| Community Advisory Group Members  | Project Team Member   |
|---|---|
| Albert Cohen  | Alex Corey, City of Toronto                                   |
| Jane Craig  | Mary MacDonald, City of Toronto                               |
| Karene Dumoulin   | Dima Cook, EVOQ (Consultant team – lead)                      |
| Michael Doody   | Reece Milton, EVOQ (Consultant team)                          |
| Niki Kavakonis  | David Robertson, ASI Heritage (Consultant team – archaeology) |
| Oleh Leszczyszyn  | Susan Hall, Lura Consulting (facilitator)                     |
| Peter McBurney (Old Millside Residents Association - HCD Liaison Officer) | Lily D'Souza, Lura Consulting (note-taker)                    |

The meeting agenda is included as Appendix A.

## Review of the Community Advisory Group Terms of Reference

Susan reviewed the mandate, roles and responsibilities, code of conduct and terms and conditions of CAG membership as described in the CAG Terms of Reference. She explained that the intent of the CAG is to provide local expertise and advice to the project team to ensure the range of perspectives and priorities in the community are reflected in the HCD Study and its recommendations. She clarified that the CAG is not a decision-making body and that the final decision with respect to the HCD Study will be made by the Toronto Preservation Board.

A copy of the CAG Terms of Reference is available on the [project webpage](#).

## Presentations

An overview presentation covering the following topics was provided to CAG members:

- **Baby Point HCD Study Overview and Process**  
Alex Corey, City of Toronto
- **HCD Preliminary Research**  
Dima Cook, EVOQ
- **Archaeological Framework and Key Considerations**  
David Robertson, ASI

The presentation was posted on the [project webpage](#) following the meeting.

## Guided Discussion

CAG members were given the opportunity to ask questions of clarification and to contribute to the information gathering phase of the Baby Point HCD Study by sharing their perspectives on the features of their neighbourhood that they consider important, and the types of changes they've seen that they think contribute to or detract from their appreciation of Old Millside. A summary of the guided discussion is presented below. A more detailed account of the discussion can be found in Appendix B.

### Study Process and Objectives

Responses to questions raised during the meeting clarified that:

- Separate CAGs were formed for Old Millside and Baby Point, as part of the overall Baby Point HCD Study, based on feedback received at the community meeting in March 2017. All input from both CAGs will inform the Baby Point HCD Study.

Baby Point Heritage Conservation District Study  
Old Millside Community Advisory Group Meeting #1 Summary

- An HCD study is initiated to determine if HCD designation is an appropriate tool in order to conserve the heritage value and character of a neighbourhood. Within an HCD there may be houses that are determined to be 'non-contributing' to the heritage value of the area and have a different level of protection.
- The purpose of the HCD Study is to determine if an area warrants designation as an HCD. Preliminary research is undertaken as part of the HCD Study process. A recent HCD Study was completed which did not recommend an HCD for the entire study area; designation is not predetermined.
- The Baby Point HCD Study is in the information gathering phase; the results and any recommendation to proceed with designation as an HCD and the preparation of an HCD will be reported to the Toronto Preservation Board. The HCD Study report will reflect the input of the CAGs, as well as community consultation meetings.
- There are no predefined characteristics for an HCD. The prevailing patterns and trends within the study area are assessed to determine whether certain features are important to the character of the neighbourhood and reflect the area's history of development; a variety of architectural and landscape features (e.g., height, setback, style, etc.) will be analyzed to identify trends.
- The benefits of a HCD designation in part depend on the community and what the community sees as its priorities.
- Redevelopment, including new construction, additions and alterations is permitted within HCDs; the intent is to make sure that development activity maintains the area's heritage character.

### **Defining Characteristics of Old Millside**

CAG members identified the following characteristics as defining features of the Old Millside neighbourhood:

#### *Built Form*

- House set-backs from sidewalks
- Variety of housing styles and designs
- Proportion of building size to lot space
- Lot sizes

#### *Public Space*

- Mature tree canopy
- Proximity to the Humber River/ravine and wildlife

#### *Landscaping*

- Lawn sizes

#### *Community Character*

- Proximity to subway and downtown Toronto
- Secluded, private and safe

Baby Point Heritage Conservation District Study  
Old Millside Community Advisory Group Meeting #1 Summary

- Low traffic
- Walkable

A number of CAG members conveyed that these defining characteristics are not necessarily unique to Old Millside but shared with other neighbourhoods in the City. As such they do not feel that they warrant identification as heritage features.

### **Changes in the Neighbourhood**

CAG members raised concerns about trees being removed without permits or notification to neighbours and the loss of homes with specific architectural characteristics (i.e., stone cladding). Multiple CAG members expressed concerns about the development of homes that do not respect the character of the neighbourhood (i.e., size, style and set-back), while other CAG members noted that some renovations and new developments have been a positive change.

### **Archaeology**

Responses to questions raised during the meeting clarified that:

- Archaeological review is a required component of all HCD studies. The benefit of integrating archaeology within the HCD process is that it presents an opportunity to refine the current understanding of potential archaeological resources within an area.
- Old Millside is considered part of the Baby Point Archaeologically Sensitive Area (ASA). The HCD Study process provides an opportunity to potentially refine the current understanding of the area's archaeological potential, which may include the identification of properties that have archaeological potential through detailed research, the refinement of existing protections and potentially building in greater flexibility, and the refinement of the approach to archaeological assessments when required by development/permit applications. It was noted that artefacts have not been found in Old Millside.
- The archaeological potential of the area will be reviewed on a property-by-property basis (e.g., evaluating current landscape treatments and/or the development pattern) but will not involve digging or require access to private property.
- Currently all Committee of Adjustment applications for minor variances on properties within an ASA are reviewed by Heritage Preservation Services to determine if the proposed work would impact potential archaeological resources, and requires archaeological assessment.

### **Information Needed**

CAG members highlighted the need for information about the following topics to address concerns and uncertainty associated with a potential HCD in Old Millside:

- Benefits of being designating an HCD to homeowners in Old Millside;
- Impacts of HCD designation on property values;
- Implications of HCD designation on properties that do not contribute to the HCD's heritage value;

Baby Point Heritage Conservation District Study  
Old Millside Community Advisory Group Meeting #1 Summary

- Limitations on renovations, redevelopments or additions that can result from HCD designation;
- How an HCD can prevent the development of houses that do not fit the character of the neighbourhood; and
- What other planning tools are available to stop these types of developments.

**Format/Location for Next Community Conversation**

No feedback was received in response to the final discussion question.

## **Wrap Up and Next Steps**

Alex Corey thanked CAG members for attending the meeting and explained that the meeting minutes would be circulated to CAG members before being posted to the project webpage. The next CAG meeting will take place in fall 2017.

## Appendix A – Agenda

### Baby Point Heritage Conservation District Study

### Old Millside Community Advisory Group Meeting #1

Monday, June 26, 2017

Humbercrest United Church, West Hall

16 Baby Point Road, Toronto

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

## AGENDA

### *Meeting Purpose:*

- Review the Baby Point Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study and process;
- Review the Terms of Reference and role of the Community Advisory Group;
- Provide an overview of the HCD Study work completed to date;
- Identify and discuss characteristics of the neighbourhood;
- Address questions and concerns from CAG members; and
- Review next steps

- 7:00 pm**      **Agenda Review, Opening Remarks and Introductions**
- Susan Hall, Lura Consulting, Facilitator
  - Alex Corey, City of Toronto, Heritage Preservation Services
- 7:10 pm**      **Review of the Community Advisory Group Terms of Reference**
- Susan Hall, Facilitator, Lura Consulting
- 7:30 pm**      **Presentations**
- Baby Point HCD Study Overview and Process – Alex Corey, City of Toronto, Heritage Preservation Services
  - HCD Preliminary Research – Dima Cook, Senior Associate, EVOQ Architecture
  - Archeological Framework and Key Considerations - David Robertson, Partner, ASI
- 8:00 pm**      **Guided Discussion**
- Susan Hall, Facilitator, Lura Consulting
- 8:55 pm**      **Wrap Up and Next Steps**
- Susan Hall, Facilitator, Lura Consulting
  - Alex Corey, City of Toronto
- 9:00 pm**      **Adjourn**

## Appendix B – Detailed Summary of Q+A and Guided Discussion

During the guided discussion, participants were asked the following key questions:

- Do you have any questions of clarification about the HCD study?
- Do you have any questions of clarification about the archeological framework presented?
- How would you define your neighbourhood? i.e. What defines Old Millside as a neighbourhood?
- What changes have you seen in the neighbourhood (i.e. recent developments in the neighbourhood)? What do you like? What don't you like?
- Given what we heard at the community meeting and the materials you have received today, what information would the CAG members (and the community) like from us in advance of the next CAG and CCM meetings?
- What are your thoughts on the format/location for the next community conversation?

A summary of the discussion is provided below under various categories. Questions are noted with **Q**, responses are noted by **A**, and comments are noted by **C**. Please note this is not a verbatim summary.

### HCD Study and Process

**Q. There are two Community Advisory Groups (CAGs) – one for Old Millside and one for Baby Point. Can you explain if this means that two separate studies are being done or if there are two CAGs within the Baby Point Heritage Conservation District study?**

**A.** One Heritage Conservation District (HCD) study is being undertaken. It was communicated by residents at the community consultation meeting on March 27, 2017 that Old Millside and Baby Point residents see their neighbourhoods as being distinct from one another. Based on feedback from the public meeting it was decided that two smaller CAGs would be formed.

**C. As I understand, it has been decided that the HCD will be applied to Baby Point, but it may or may not be applied to Old Millside.**

**A.** We have not made any decisions about the HCD at this time.

*Post-meeting point of clarification:* The HCD study is in the information gathering stage, and a recommendation on whether the study area or portions thereof should be designated as an HCD will be made to the Toronto Preservation Board at the conclusion of the HCD Study.

**Q. Will the final HCD Study report attribute CAG members' names to whether we support or oppose the HCD?**

**A.** The CAG meeting summaries will reflect all perspectives expressed by members, include a list of members in attendance, and will be published on the project webpage. Comments will not be attributed to individual members. Members will not be polled on whether they support or opposed any potential HCD.

**C. One of the documents sent to CAG members noted that overwhelming support is needed in order for the HCD to move forward.**

**A.** The document you are referring to is the City of Toronto's HCD Terms of Reference which is used to guide HCD studies. Resident support would be a benefit to the study process, but is not required to proceed with designating an HCD. HCD Policy 16 notes that residents will not be polled by City Planning to determine if designation is appropriate or warranted..

**C. As I understand it, the HCD study was initiated by a homeowner who was upset with the way another home was redeveloped, even though he had renovated his own home.**

**A.** This HCD study was initiated by the City of Toronto, following review of a nomination submitted by a community organization. The Study Area was authorized and prioritized for an HCD Study by Etobicoke-York Community Council and City Council.

### **Private Property and Homes**

**Q. Are you assuming that all the homes are in their original state? Old Millside has some homes that have not evolved much in the last 50-80 years, while other homes have been completely redeveloped, and others have been renovated.**

**A.** No, we are not assuming all homes are in their original state. We do make distinctions based on age, building materials, architectural styles, and renovations, to help us understand the prevailing patterns and trends of the neighbourhood from a historical point of view and whether they are important to supporting the character of the neighbourhood. A house can still contribute to the heritage value of the neighbourhood even if it has an addition (i.e., the original house may have heritage value, while the addition may not). Similarly, a brand new house may not be a heritage house but it can still fit the character of the neighbourhood. We have a map that dates the houses – determining the date of construction and any subsequent additions is part of the survey process.

**C. My concern is that Old Millside was included as part of this HCD because it is part of the Baby Point Archaeologically Sensitive Area (ASA). Now it seems as if the homes in Old Millside are being assessed to make them fit the characteristics of an HCD.**

**A.** Undertaking a survey of each property is part of an HCD study, regardless of the property's age, use, or changes made to the house over time– the survey is an objective record of each property in its current state.

**A.** We do not have a predefined list of characteristics or features that we expect to define the Baby Point and Old Millside neighbourhoods. It's not a check box approach. Each neighbourhood is distinct in its characteristics and features.

**Q. If a number of homes do not have any heritage or architectural qualities will they be included in the HCD?**

**A.** These homes may be examples of different characteristics within the neighbourhood.

*Post-meeting clarification:* Each HCD Study identifies homes that are either contributing or non-contributing to the area's heritage character. While non-contributing homes may not have any heritage



Baby Point Heritage Conservation District Study  
Old Millside Community Advisory Group Meeting #1 Summary

or architectural features worth conserving and may be permitted to be demolished, it is important that any new development be designed in a way that is compatible with the prevailing character of the area.

**Q. Did the English Garden Suburb [the plan designed by Robert Home Smith] apply to Old Millside?**

**A.** Robert Home Smith developed all of his neighbourhoods [including Baby Point, Old Millside, Riverside Drive, and the Kingsway] based on the English Garden Suburb concept. There are some basic characteristics of Old Millside that originate in the English Garden Suburb concept, including the street pattern. Many of the mature trees can be traced back to the fact that Smith did not permit most trees to be cut down.

**Q. The idea that an HCD could be used to avoid the development of “monster” homes has been floated. Have any such homes been developed in Wychwood Park since the area was designated as an HCD [1985]?**

**A.** No, but many HCDs have seen compatible new construction. The intent of HCD designation is to make sure that new development fits in with the existing neighbourhood's heritage character.

**Q. What are the issues and impacts of applying an HCD to Old Millside?**

**A.** The Civic Plan document presents objective data about housing prices within HCDs compared to non-designated neighbourhoods. The benefits of an HCD depend on the community and what the community wants. It is difficult to say what those benefits could be without input from the community. Each neighbourhood will have different views.

## **Archeological Framework**

**Q. How are you going to complete the ASA?**

**A.** In a sense it will be completed on a property-by-property basis to determine the archaeological potential (e.g., evaluating current landscape treatments or the development pattern). We will not be on your property digging things up. Based on the work completed to date, it appears that the pattern of development in Old Millside was quite different from Baby Point. Except for the foundations, lots were left pretty much intact in Baby Point. As a newer development, different construction practices were most likely used in Old Millside (i.e., grading). This means that any archaeology that may have been there has could been removed. The survey will further evaluate each property to determine the potential disturbance.

**Q. What have you found in Old Millside?**

**A.** We have not found anything in Old Millside yet. We are relying on 19<sup>th</sup> century expert accounts of archaeological finds within the area.

**Q. How deep do you have to dig to find any archaeological evidence?**

**A.** We have no plans to do any digging as part of the HCD Study process. The artefacts that have been recovered in Baby Point were found in one to two feet of soil. To clarify, an archaeological assessment is only needed if an addition or renovation requires digging below ground.

**Q. Can you clarify the connection between the ASA and the HCD study? If there are already mechanisms in place to review archaeologically sensitive sites why is an HCD needed?**

**A.** There are approximately 50 ASAs in Toronto; some of them are part of HCDs, but most are not. Old Millside is considered part of the Baby Point ASA because of the reports from the 1890s, as well as the various historical activities and uses known to have taken place in and around the area. Every HCD Study includes a review of archaeological potential within the area. The HCD Study is an opportunity to refine and create a more accurate reflection of archaeological potential. The benefit of having archaeology within the HCD Study process is that it provides an opportunity to refine the current understanding of potential archaeological resources within an area.

**Q. Is there any impact on what homeowners can do to their properties within an ASA?**

**A.** Committee of Adjustment applications for properties within an ASA are reviewed by Heritage Preservation Services to determine if the proposed work may impact potential archaeological resources. Applications for properties in Baby Point and Old Millside have been and continue to be evaluated based on the existing Baby point ASA, which does not factor in the individual development history of the property.

**Q. Would the “monster” home [referring to a new house in Old Millside] have gone through the same process?**

**A.** If the home went through the planning process within the last seven years then it probably would have required an archaeological assessment.

**Q. Who pays for an archaeological assessment?**

**A.** The property owner would pay for the assessment.

**Q. At the public meeting in March it was mentioned that a burial site in Baby Point was disturbed by utility work. Could I get a copy of the report?**

**A.** The Baby Point ASA report is available on the project webpage.

### **Defining Neighbourhood Characteristics and Changes in the Neighbourhood**

**C.** I love the mature trees and privacy they offer, the greenery and proximity to the Humber River. For the most part, residents are respectful of the greenery (with the exception of a homeowner that recently cut down all their backyard trees without a permit or informing their neighbours). The changes to some homes have been nice. I also like the set-backs of houses from the street in the neighbourhood; there is one new “monster” home that has not respected the prevailing set-back and it feels like it is on top of the sidewalk.

**C.** I agree that tree canopy, age of homes, proximity to the Humber River and park, and walkability define Old Millside. There are some houses that are shaped like boxes that do not really fit within the neighbourhood.

**C. I've lived here for over 25 years, so I certainly like the area. Old Millside is not as architecturally significant or distinctive as Baby Point. There are a lot of similarities, but they are not identical. Old Millside is removed from busy streets and less hectic, which is a defining feature; however I'm not sure that should be considered part of its heritage character.**

**C. What makes the neighbourhood are the trees (which should be protected), proximity to the Humber River and ravine, and the fact that kids can play on the street – not the individual buildings. I am struggling with the comparison to Baby Point. The homes are quite different; it would be hard to define certain styles. I like the variety and some of the modern houses. The facts on the ground are that no archaeological resources have been found for a long time. Presumably heritage should be separated from the archaeological side of things.**

**A. Archaeology takes place in the city regardless of whether it's in an HCD or not. The value of the ASA and HCD processes provide an opportunity to refine archaeological evaluations. Archaeology is a component of an area's heritage value.**

**C. I agree with previous comments that Old Millside is a secluded, low traffic area, and yet still within walking distance of the subway. While my house is 20 minutes from downtown, I can see deer in the area and from my backyard watch Salmon jump up the Humber River. It is an incredible place to live. However, there is nothing in the homes that is worthy of preserving from a heritage point of view. There is a real mix of architecture. I can see why heritage status would be applied to wartime, pre-fab houses with a distinct character, or Victorian homes in Cabbagetown; however the built structures in Old Millside are not that different from those in other Toronto neighbourhoods. I don't think there is heritage in Old Millside. I think the current process can deal with archaeology. I have a problem with a third party telling me what I can do with my property just because I live in an archaeologically sensitive area.**

**Q. Is my understanding correct that an area cannot be designated an HCD solely based on its being identified as an Archaeologically Sensitive Area (ASA), and that it must possess cultural heritage value?**

**A. Archaeological resources may contribute to an area's cultural heritage value, and an area may qualify for designation based on its archaeological resources, however none have to-date.**

*Post-meeting clarification:* HCDs in Toronto: Policies, Procedures and Terms of References states that an area may qualify for designation by demonstrating significance under a single criterion, which may include archaeology. Archaeological resources will be considered when determining whether to proceed with designation.

**C. What I love is that the area is so safe (e.g., children can walk to/from school, or residents can ask neighbours for help). I love the locust trees which are indigenous to the area, although some of them are quite old and rotting and need to be cut down. Another great quality about the neighbourhood is that residents take care of the houses to the extent they can. My house was built in 1957/8 and does**

**not have any important architectural features. Most of the houses have different details. Additions and redevelopments in the neighbourhood have been done with a certain degree of sensitivity to the area. These changes would have to go through the City's planning and permitting process anyway. I disagree that there is heritage in the neighbourhood compared to other areas that have a history to them (e.g., Fort York). It is important to understand how a designation would benefit or impact homeowners.**

**C. I love the set-backs, green space, lawns, lot sizes, trees, and privacy in the neighbourhood – it's like living in a park. I will note that there are not as many stone houses in the neighbourhood compared to when I first moved here. Many of the new homes are beautiful but don't belong in the neighbourhood and are being flipped by developers. I like that all the homes look different and think this is a unique heritage feature – I don't want my neighbourhood to look like a suburban neighbourhood. I think there is potential for an HCD in the neighbourhood. I understand why some homeowners are concerned about the ability to make decisions about their properties or sell their homes, but I was able to modernize the interior of my home and preserve the exterior.**

**C. People are up in arms about the HCD and how it will impact them, but we don't know what the limitations are – it's missing from the conversation. The limitations may benefit the neighbourhood (e.g., restrictions about set-backs). I think the zoning issues with the local school boards may have a bigger impact on the neighbourhood than designation as an HCD.**

**C. It's not clear whether an HCD is going prevent the development of homes that do not fit the character of the neighbourhood. There are other mechanisms in place to stop these types of developments (i.e., attending Committee of Adjustment meetings).**

**A. Yes, there are other mechanisms that can inform new development; however some of those mechanisms do not provide the same degree of detail as an HCD.**

**C. You should consider whether this is an appropriate area for an HCD. I am concerned that the preliminary research has not been done to determine if this is a HCD area.**

**A. The purpose of the HCD Study is to determine if this area warrants designation as an HCD. The preliminary research is being undertaken as part of the HCD Study process. A recent HCD Study was completed which did not recommend an HCD for the entire study area; designation is not predetermined. This review has to be a defensible and rigorous.**

## **Information Needed**

Participants did not list information needs directly, however raised a number of points throughout the discussion, including the following:

- How a HCD designation would benefit or impact homeowners;
- Impact of HCD designation on properties with no perceived heritage value;
- Impacts to homeowners' ability to make decisions about their properties;

Baby Point Heritage Conservation District Study  
Old Millside Community Advisory Group Meeting #1 Summary

- Impacts of HCD designation on property values and ability to sell;
- Types of restrictions/limitations that would be applied to private properties and when they apply; and
- How a HCD can prevent the development of homes that do not fit the character of the neighbourhood. What other mechanisms are there to stop these types of developments.

**Format/Location for Next Community Conversation**

No feedback was received in response to the final discussion question.