

High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Character Study

Community Consultation Meeting #2: Existing Conditions, Character Analysis & Draft Guiding Principles

March 8, 2018



Meeting Summary

Thursday, March 8, 2018
6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Open House
7:00 – 9:00 p.m. Presentation and Workshop
Runnymede United Church Memorial Hall

Summary of Meeting

On Thursday, March 8, 2018, the City of Toronto hosted the second Community Consultation Meeting for the High Park Apartment Neighbourhood Area Character Study. The purpose of this meeting was to present existing conditions and emerging findings from the assessment of character defining elements, seek feedback on draft Guiding Principles and workshop community priorities to guide change and compatible infill development.

Approximately 100 people attended the meeting. City Staff, representatives from the Toronto District School Board and Toronto Catholic District School Board and Councillor Sarah Doucette were in attendance.

The meeting began with a one hour open house followed by a welcoming address from Councillor Doucette. Display panels posted at the Open House presented findings from the analysis of existing conditions and character defining elements. Draft Guiding Principles were also posted at the Open House and comments were collected.

The next two hours consisted of a formal presentation by City staff and a workshop with community participants. The workshop covered the following three focus areas: 1. Open space and natural features; 2. Connections; and 3. Built Form. Participants were given 25 minutes for each focus area to discuss questions and provide input. The meeting concluded with a summary from each table facilitator highlighting key messages raised by workshop participants.

Workshop Focus Areas

1. Open Spaces and Natural Features



Using a 2D plan of the Study Area showing buildings, streets, trees, walkways, and landscaped open space participants were asked to help identify:

- important open space areas within each block, including child-friendly and pet-friendly spaces
- potentially significant natural features, infiltration areas, areas of mature trees and wildlife habitat
- open space areas that should be “publically” accessible
- open space areas that should be reserved for resident or community use/amenity
- other noteworthy aspects

2. Routes and Connections



Using a 2D plan of the Study Area showing buildings, streets, trees, walkways, and landscaped open space participants were asked to help identify:

- significant views from the public realm
- important routes and crossings for:
 - pedestrians
 - cyclists
 - vehicles
 - visual access

- new connections or views
- locations for better way-finding signage
- other noteworthy aspects

3. Built Form



Using a 3D LEGO model and sunlight mapping, participants were asked to help identify:

- important existing or potential routes and open space areas
- positive relationships that currently exist between buildings
- areas where transition between buildings is successful or unsuccessful
- your ideas about setbacks, building types, heights and transition
- infill opportunities and possible scale
- other noteworthy aspects

Key Messages

The following comments were provided by community members participating in the workshops:

1. Open Spaces and Natural Features

- Maintain the double row of trees along High Park Avenue.
- Maintain views looking east to Mountview Ave.
- Introduce more parkettes.
- Use the existing open space along Glenlake space to provide active open space areas for kids; the same can be shared with adjacent to the Neighbourhoods.
- Maintain the amenity areas between buildings, such as the picnic areas and pools.
- Maintain garden spaces and flower beds between apartment buildings, as well as benches and seating areas. These garden spaces are bird-friendly areas.

- The existing open spaces are associated with the migration of birds (blue jays, cardinals).
- The study area is an extension of High Park, there are concerns regarding potential impacts to the natural environment and runoff if the population is increased.
- Enhance TTC station and surrounding space.
- Increase the number of mature and native trees within the area.
- Create and identify dog areas and public areas.
- Need more open spaces to High Park located along Quebec Ave, High Park Ave and Pacific Avenue.
- Aboriginal study – lands were once a native burial ground.
- Increase the number of trees within the unencumbered portions of the study area.
- Concerns regarding existing wind conditions on open spaces.
- Outdoor garage areas need to be improved or incorporated into built form.
- Increase potential infiltration areas
- Identify bird-friendly areas.
- Protect sunny areas.
- Create amenities for the youth, such as a skate park.
- Maintain and protect the openness, views and light.
- Natural heritage assessment must be conducted before asking about built form.
- Natural beauty associated with mental and physical health.
- Introduce a children's playground on City owned space.
- Improve landscaped space to include more plants and benches.
- Provide designated areas for community gardens.
- Minimize the reduction of the existing open space.
- Create a green space buffer along the east side of High Park Ave to offset the loss of green space on the site.
- Preserve the existing open space and sunlight behind 66 Pacific Avenue.
- The existing placement of trees is very natural.
- Concerned that new landscape will be too modern, sculpted and manicured.
- People often use the walkways within the green space.
- Seniors depend on the tree canopy to provide shade in the summer, especially when travelling with groceries.
- Don't want to lose the feeling of living in the park.
- The parks within the study area are not used as often as High Park.

- Provide/introduce green walls or roofs, or roof top community gardens.
- Let community groups use the open space to increase the animation of the space.
- Do not introduce cement, similar to the Daniel's building.
- Residents of the area have a preference of walking through green areas/space than along streets.
- Introduce a resident skating rink within the open space.
- Allow farmer markets to use the existing open space.
- The north facing open spaces tend to be colder.
- Amenities should be used by residents of the buildings to whom they belong to.
- Introduce spaces for movie nights within the existing open space.
- Natural areas that can be seen are just as important as the ones that can be touched.
- No noise concerns/gathering at night.
- Open space within the Quebec/Gothic block are not well used.
- Interested in the idea of linear open spaces and active places.
- Fronts and backs are not always clearly defined and often the backside acts as lovely open space. Partly due to through lobbies, but also to park-like landscaping.

2. Routes and Connections

- Position traffic lights in locations that increase pedestrian safety and ease.
- Provide dedicated bike lanes.
- Provide new crosswalk connection to the subway
- Incorporate schools within the buildings
- Provide corridors and pathways that can be used during the day and night.
- Pathways used for dog walking
- Decrease the amount of above grade street parking
- The existing buildings do not have a defined front or back yards which results in good flow within the space.
- Provide pathways with better views.
- Spaces between buildings are becoming more urban spaces.
- Provide underground walkways to subway for safety reasons (better connectivity and prevention of jay-walking)
- Some of the existing views from pathways are distinct and should be protected.

- Remove the existing fence along Mountview, as the space feels disconnected.
- Introduce more seating along routes.
- Introduce more traffic calming measures.
- Need crosswalks across High Park Avenue
- Construction is currently ruining existing paths/routes
- 51 Quebec has destroyed the walkability through Block D
- Private property pathways need to be improved and properly maintained.
- Natural views from pathways affect mental and physical health.
- Community swimming pool within Block C is really important to the community.
- The existing sidewalk widths are horrible.
- There is too much existing traffic.
- The neighbourhood was designed to provide connections within the area.
- Need traffic signals to accommodate new traffic
- Improve street lighting, especially at night.
- Adequate wayfinding from the subway to High Park already exists.
- The existing views and trees along High Park need to be protected.
- The current views down the street are nice but that is because of the trees that hide the buildings.
- Increase the amount of mature trees along the streets.
- Enhance the pedestrian connections from the TTC to Pacific Avenue.

3. Built Form

- New building heights should conform to new City Planning guidelines.
- Any new buildings should be made of brick to blend in with the existing neighbourhood.
- No new towers in the area.
- Introducing retail uses within the area is unacceptable.
- Locate low-rise development on top of garbage areas and incorporate the garage within the built form.
- The density can be doubled without high rise towers.
- Less space between buildings.
- Buildings don't necessarily have to relate to each other.
- Introduce a variety of architecture and styles.
- Limit new development should only be midrise buildings with a maximum height of 7-8 storeys.
- Incorporate new affordable housing.

- Provide amenities on the roof top of buildings, such as tennis courts.
- Allow the development of stack townhouses or duplexes.
- New development must respect the human scale.
- Preserve the larger setbacks from High Park Avenue.
- On Pacific should be consistent with Daniel's building.
- All new development should be LEED buildings.
- Conserve green space/ green roof/ new landscaping.
- Preserve older buildings.
- No contrast between new and old buildings.
- Ensure new buildings fit and are compatible with older buildings.
- Attention must be given to the size and spatial arrangement of new residential units.
- All buildings should be lower in height than the existing buildings.
- Prefer one tall building and keeping the remaining open space.
- Wind is a factor in the neighbourhood. Ensure all new buildings include proper wind mitigations.
- What is the rationale of the existing built form? This information could inform and help guide the built form, orientation and location of new proposals.
- Important that new buildings are located along the streets to preserve the open space within the interior of the existing blocks.
- No glass curtain walls buildings.
- Intensification / density will put "stress" on the existing infrastructure/ utilities and traffic
- Ensure privacy and long views are protected.
- If the space is already asphalted, reluctant yes to new low rise development.
- Relocate garbage areas to underground or within the built form.
- All parking should be underground, even visitor parking space especially if the majority of underground parking spaces are unused.
- Shadows at-grade are not the only shadows. Shadowing of balconies should be studied, as people often use their balconies.
- Don't just focus on sunniest areas as green spaces preserved, think about the large green space we look at from our windows.
- Views into the block from above (even to the "back of house").
- Modernist context.
- Look at Bosco Verticale, where tree pits are embedded on various step back levels

- A new set of guidelines need to be established because the existing tall and midrise building guidelines don't really apply to the area.
- Modify and reshape to apartment guidelines.
- Replace the existing townhouses with 8-storey midrise buildings.
- Attention must be given to facing distance between buildings.
- Ensure adequate infrastructure is in place to accommodate new buildings.
- Tall buildings would be best along Bloor Street West or on top of the subway.
- No buildings along the street edges, no street walls – not the area character.
- There is a wonderful permeability and flow to the neighbourhood.