



Bloor West Village Heritage Conservation District Study

Meeting Summary: Community Consultation Meeting 1

Runnymede United Church, 432 Runnymede Road, Lower Memorial Hall
February 15, 2018, 5:30-8:30 pm



BLOOR WEST VILLAGE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY, MEETING SUMMARY FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING 1

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction.....	1
2.0	Key Messages.....	3
3.0	Detailed Summary of Feedback	5
3.1	Built Form and Heritage.....	5
3.2	Landscape and Views	6
3.3	Indigenous Land Use and History.....	8
3.4	Urban Fabric and Public Realm.....	8
3.5	Boundaries and Character Sub-Areas.....	9
3.6	BIA and Small Businesses	9
3.7	Community Values	10
3.8	Concerns	10
4.0	Next Steps.....	11

List of Plates

Plate 1: One-on-one conversations at CCM 1	2
Plate 2: Map exercise at CCM 1	2
Plate 3: Map exercise at CCM 1	2
Plate 4: Display panels at CCM 1	2
Plate 5: Example of the results of the map exercise.....	3

List of Appendices

Appendix A: Comment Sheet.....	A.1
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BLOOR WEST VILLAGE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY, MEETING SUMMARY FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING 1

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

The Community Consultation Meeting (CCM) 1 for the Bloor West Village Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study was held on February 15, 2018 at Runnymede United Church, Lower Memorial Hall, from 5:30-8:30 pm. The meeting was an open house format and included the following:

- Welcome table with sign-in register and comment sheets
- Display boards:
 - Welcome
 - The Project Team
 - Study Background
 - Planning Context
 - History of Bloor Street West
 - Archaeological Potential
 - Heritage Incentive Programs
 - Bloor West Village HCD Study
 - HCDs in Toronto
 - Map your Perspective
 - Next Steps
 - How to Stay Involved
- Mapping Exercise
- Archival Photo Station
- Community Advisory Group (CAG) application table
- Planning Study Station

The map tables included a “dot” exercise where stickers, markers, and Post-it notes were available for the community to add their insight to maps of the study area. Five maps were provided and the public was asked to identify the following: potential character sub-areas, built heritage resources, landscapes and public realm, significant views, and landmarks.

The meeting was well attended, and information was gathered through one-on-one conversations, comment sheets, and a mapping exercise (Plate 1 to Plate 5). Members of the public were also invited to apply for the Bloor West Village HCD Study Community Advisory Group (CAG). A copy of the comment sheet is provided in Appendix A.

BLOOR WEST VILLAGE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY, MEETING SUMMARY FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING 1

Introduction



Plate 1: One-on-one conversations at CCM 1



Plate 2: Map exercise at CCM 1



Plate 3: Map exercise at CCM 1



Plate 4: Display panels at CCM 1

BLOOR WEST VILLAGE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY, MEETING SUMMARY FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING 1

Key Messages



Plate 5: Example of the results of the map exercise

2.0 Key Messages

The following key messages were gathered from public feedback at the Bloor West Village HCD Study CCM1:

- **Built Heritage Resources:** Bloor West Village is a functional neighbourhood that includes a commercial core that is surrounded, and supported by, a residential community. The commercial core includes many 19th and early 20th century buildings that have contextual value to the community. There are several notable buildings that were identified as being of significance to the local community.

BLOOR WEST VILLAGE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY, MEETING SUMMARY FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING 1

Key Messages

Notable buildings tend to have distinguished architecture and somewhat act as landmarks.

- **Landscape and Views:** The community mainly identified cultural heritage landscape elements in the east and west ends of the Bloor West Village HCD Study Area. Concentrations of landscape elements were noted in the vicinity of High Park and the section of the Study Area between South Kingsway and the Humber River. Few heritage landscape elements were identified in the commercial core. Views were identified by community members throughout the Study Area but were most concentrated in the vicinity of High Park and in the block between Armadale Avenue and Jane Street.
- **Urban Fabric and Public Realm:** The two-to-three storey building scale and fine grain property parcels within the commercial core were identified as being character defining elements of the neighbourhood by the local community. The community also noted that the north and south sides of Bloor Street West have different characters, which is related to the density of properties and presence of TTC stations on the north side of the street.
- **Boundaries and Sub-Character Areas:** Differing feedback was received from the local community regarding the boundaries of the potential Bloor West Village HCD. Suggested boundaries ranged from the full Study Area (extending between Keele Street and the Humber River) and limiting the potential HCD to the commercial core (between Clendenan Avenue and Jane Street).
- **Small Businesses and BIA:** The Bloor West Village Business Improvement Area (BIA) and small businesses were noted as being of significance to the character of Bloor West Village. It was noted by several community members that small businesses should be supported by a potential HCD in the area.
- **Community Values:** It was noted that the Bloor West Village Toronto Ukrainian Festival is an important event for the community.
- **Concerns:** Several community members noted that there is development pressure in the area, which has already started to change the face of Bloor West Village. New developments typically have greater massing and coarse property grain when compared with the existing built form. Concerns were also expressed regarding the potential impact of an HCD on property values in the area.

BLOOR WEST VILLAGE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY, MEETING SUMMARY FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING 1

Detailed Summary of Feedback

3.0 Detailed Summary of Feedback

3.1 Built Form and Heritage

It was noted that the Bloor West Village is a functional commercial strip that has a few stand out buildings. The neighbourhood centres on the commercial core, which was noted as having a “high-street” feel that is a product of neighbourhood planning and design from the early 20th century. Notable buildings in the Study Area include:

- Runnymede Theatre: 2223 Bloor Street West
- Runnymede Public Library: 2178 Bloor Street West
- 5 High Park Avenue
- 1778 Bloor Street West
- 1908 Bloor Street West
- Grenadier Mansions: 1942-1946 and 1950-1954 Bloor Street West
- 2010 Bloor Street West
- 2001 Bloor Street West
- 2197 Bloor Street West
- 2199 Bloor Street West
- St. Pius Church: 2305 Bloor Street West
- 2326 Bloor Street West
- Turner and Porter Funeral Home: 2333-2357 Bloor Street West
- Campbell Apartments: 2407 Bloor Street West
- Humber Cinema: 2442 Bloor Street West
- 2452 Bloor Street West
- 2487 Bloor Street West
- 2545 Bloor Street West

In addition to the above listed buildings, numerous fine grain commercial and residential buildings were identified as having heritage value in the mapping exercise. While these buildings may not be notable from an architectural perspective, they date to the early 20th century and appear to have significant contextual value to the community. Fine grain buildings that may have contextual value were mainly noted in the High Park frontage area and in the commercial core of Bloor West Village.

Finally, the residential property at the intersection of Bloor Street West, South Kingsway, and Mossom Road (308 South Kingsway) was noted as a potential heritage resource that could be added to the Study Area since it is a Tudor Revival style building that occupies a prominent position along Bloor Street West.

Other notes received related to built form and heritage include:

BLOOR WEST VILLAGE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY, MEETING SUMMARY FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING 1

Detailed Summary of Feedback

- Heritage features noticed the most in the Study Area include early 20th century homes and commercial buildings in Bloor West Village
- This is a functional commercial strip
- Notable architectural styles include Edwardian, Neo-Gothic, Tudor Revival, and Arts and Crafts
- The built form is unique and worth preserving
- The built form is reasonably consistent and has an actual neighbourhood feel
- There should be a focus on retaining/restoring heritage buildings and ensuring that new development is compatible in design and scale
- 2487 Bloor Street (on the edge of Mossom Road) was a former pharmacy/doctor's office
- There was an old hospital at 32 Gothic Avenue
- 2001 Bloor Street was once an apartment block that rented to single women at a time when this was not the norm
- The Turner and Porter Funeral home is an important landmark in the area
- The McDonald's Building at 2218 Bloor Street West is modern infill
- The building at 2454 Bloor Street West housed a furrier and a school
- Maison Fou (2197 Bloor Street West) was originally a funeral parlor
- The theatres play an important role in the area
- The Avenue Study's Built Form Recommendations should pay attention to heritage properties and HCD findings, especially in the commercial core

3.2 Landscape and Views

The Bloor West Village HCD Study Area is comprised of a mixed commercial and residential streetscape that extends from Keele Street to the Humber River. The consultation results and mapping exercise determined that very few landscape elements were identified within the commercial core of Bloor West Village. Rather, landscape elements were mainly identified in the vicinity of High Park and west of South Kingsway. In the High Park area, High Park itself was identified as a heritage landscape. The park is located outside the Study Area, but it is still worth noting that this space is a significant landscape to the community. In addition, several properties on the north side of Bloor Street West in the vicinity of High Park were noted as having significant landscape components. These properties include early 20th century residences and low-rise apartment buildings with moderate setbacks that include landscape elements such as mature trees, lawns, and gardens. The west end of the Study Area, was also noted as having significant landscape features. The properties between the Humber River and South Kingsway have relatively deep setbacks compared with the rest of the study area. Here the setbacks contain lawns, mature trees, and gardens.

Specific properties in the study area noted as having landscape value include:

BLOOR WEST VILLAGE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY, MEETING SUMMARY FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING 1

Detailed Summary of Feedback

- 2559 and 2561 Bloor Street West
- 2520 Bloor Street West
- 2 Jane Street
- 490 Riverside Drive

In addition to the specific properties within the Study Area, the following parks were identified as landscapes that are significant to the Bloor West Village community. These parks are located outside the Study Area but are noted here:

- High Park
- Traymore Park
- Willard Gardens Parkette
- George Chater Parkette
- Neil McLellan Park
- Keele Community Centre
- Kennedy-Margdon Parkette
- Bennett Park

As a linear corridor, several views within the Study Area were noted as significant by the local community. Notable views include:

- Views from the west end of the Study Area to the Humber River
- View between the southeast corner of South Kingsway/Bloor Street West and northeast of Riverview Gardens/Bloor Street West
- View from west of Armadale Avenue to Jane Street
- View across 2155 Bloor Street West of mature trees/vegetation Urban Fabric
- Views south from properties along the north side of Bloor Street West to High Park
- Westward view from High Park Avenue
- Views north and south of the High Park entrance at High Park Avenue
- Southeast view from the southeast corner of Bloor Street West/Clendenan Avenue to High Park
- Eastward view from the Runnymede Library to High Park
- View west of Bloor Street West from Harcroft Road

Other comments received relating to landscape and views include:

- Existing greenspaces, trees, and walkways should be preserved
- Views of the natural environment (i.e. mature trees, High Park, Humber River) should be preserved as much as possible
- Ernest Hemingway wrote about the oak trees in Bloor West Village
- There is a white oak tree on the southwest corner of Jane Street and Weatherell Street that is a few hundred years old (north of Study Area)
- Historic creeks in High Park have importance and are related to the evolution of the area

BLOOR WEST VILLAGE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY, MEETING SUMMARY FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING 1

Detailed Summary of Feedback

3.3 Indigenous Land Use and History

The community noted that the Carrying Place Trail is located along the Humber River, at the west end of the Study Area. It was also noted that the Village of Teiaiagon was located at what is now Baby Point. René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, was noted to have camped at Teiaiagon prior to his explorations in the United States.

3.4 Urban Fabric and Public Realm

The current two-to-three storey height of buildings and fine grain of properties within Bloor West Village commercial core are seen as key characteristics of this area by the local community. The commercial core of the Study Area was also noted as having very deep lots that are underutilized in the back. Community members also noted that there are informal pedestrian walkways along the rear side of the commercial core on the north side of Bloor Street West. These walkways are connected to the TTC stations and are also linked by the public parking lots that are located on the north side of the commercial core.

It was noted that the north and south sides of the commercial core have differing characters. The north side is seen to be sunny and lively while the south side was noted as having a greater number of larger properties/breaks in the streetscape. Community members noted that they would sometimes cross the street to the north side of Bloor Street West to avoid “dead zones” on the south side of the street.

Other comments received regarding urban fabric include:

- Bloor West Village is a low-rise, sunny neighbourhood with a European feel
- High Park is a sleepy area since it consists mainly of residences with limited commercial properties
- There should be a 2-3 storey height restriction in the Study Area to complement the existing/historical building heights along Bloor Street West
- Rear lanes could be considered along the back of properties on the north side of Bloor Street West
- The north side of Bloor Street West has very deep lots. Other uses could be explored to meet density goals at the back of these lots
- Mid-rise buildings are viewed as not complementary to the historic fabric of Bloor Street West
- Fine grain property lots are a character defining feature of Bloor West Village
- There is a laneway that parallels Keele Street. This acts as an alternate pedestrian route for local residents.
- Historical lot lines and narrow frontages should be preserved
- Incremental change, in scale with existing property fabric, should be encouraged in the HCD

BLOOR WEST VILLAGE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY, MEETING SUMMARY FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING 1

Detailed Summary of Feedback

3.5 Boundaries and Character Sub-Areas

Various comments and opinions on the potential Bloor Street West HCD boundary were received at CCM1. Some community members felt that the boundary should run from High Park to the Humber River. This broad boundary would ensure that the potential HCD would be bounded by two significant natural areas. Another suggested HCD boundary was limited to the area captured by the Keele, High Park, Runnymede, and Jane TTC Stations. The smallest suggested boundary included the commercial core only. A common message to all boundary discussions was that the commercial core should be protected and strengthened.

Other comments received regarding potential Bloor West Village HCD boundaries include:

- The Humber River acts as the western limit for Bloor West Village
- Boundaries are difficult to identify since this is a linear corridor
- Potential HCD boundaries should extend from Jane Street to Runnymede Library
- Potential HCD boundaries should extend from Jane Street to Glendonwynne Road
- Possible boundary could run from the Tridel Building on the west to High Park on the east
- The HCD should include the whole Study Area from the Humber River to High Park
- The Humber River and High Park serve as natural bookends to the Study Area.
- The boundaries of the BIA are appropriate for the HCD
- The residential properties on the north side of High Park would not fit in an HCD
- The HCD should be confined to the commercial core
- The HCD could be confined to the TTC Station limits
- Suggestion received that the boundary should include nearby churches

3.6 BIA and Small Businesses

Several comments were received regarding the role of small businesses in the Bloor West Village HCD Study Area. Commercial property owners and small business operators are noted as being key to the success of Bloor West Village. There is a strong feeling that small business owners need to be supported since they form a key part of the neighbourhood. Several community members noted that there appears to be a general decrease in small businesses and that larger chain stores have moved into the area. The BIA was also noted as being very important to the Bloor West Village community.

Other comments related to the BIA and small businesses include:

- One of the founders of the BIA owned Marlborough's Stationary. The store is the oldest store in the Bloor West Village. It first opened its doors in 1922

BLOOR WEST VILLAGE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY, MEETING SUMMARY FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING 1

Detailed Summary of Feedback

- This is a functional neighbourhood where you can get everything you need walking down the street, mostly from independent businesses
- The street had no department stores and is made up of individual, small-scale stores
- The BIA is very important
- Heritage Property Tax Rebate Program would be a good incentive for commercial property owners

3.7 Community Values

Two community events were noted to be of importance to Bloor West Village during CCM1. The first is the Bloor West Village Toronto Ukrainian Festival, which has been held in Bloor West Village for the past 22 years. The second is Janes' Walk, a former heritage walk that once started at Quebec Street. No other community events were noted at CCM1.

Other comments received related to community include:

- Ukrainian Street Festival is of importance to the local community
- Local community play house is a community hub (Village Play House)
- The area once hosted a Janes' Walk that started at Quebec Street
- This is a proud, long-standing community that includes many long-term residents

3.8 Concerns

Several concerns regarding a potential Bloor West Village HCD were raised during CCM1. The main concern centred on the potential impact of an HCD on commercial property owners. It was noted that commercial property owners should be supported and that an HCD designation may impact the viability of small businesses in the area if property values were to change. The second concern voiced at CCM1 was that there is much intensification pressure in the area. The south side of Bloor Street West and High Park frontage areas were specifically mentioned as being under threat by redevelopment. Several community members noted that large block redevelopments that have been built in the study area block views and break up the fine grain urban fabric that is seen to be character defining for the area.

Other comments received relating to community concerns include:

- New development should complement the existing neighbourhood
- New development that is seen "not to fit" with the neighbourhood includes the High Park Apartment Complex, Odeon Mega Block, and One and Two Old Mill
- New/major developments could be supported in the area since they bring in new residents and businesses

BLOOR WEST VILLAGE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY, MEETING SUMMARY FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING 1

Next Steps

- Some community members are concerned with the potential HCD since it is perceived that designation may affect property values and the viability of small businesses in the area
- Commercial property owners are concerned about the value of their property should an HCD be established
- There is a general loss of independent businesses in the neighbourhood, which has changed the face of Bloor West Village
- There are some unoccupied/vacant properties in the Study Area
- An HCD should revitalize the Study Area
- Bars were on the south side of Bloor Street West as it was the wet section in the 1920s. York Township became a wet section in the 1950s.
- Jane Street north to Annette Street was also annexed in 1920 by the City of Toronto.
- Many heritage resources have been lost and many changes have already occurred in Bloor West Village

4.0 Next Steps

The City and the consulting team asked that community members submit their feedback and/or apply for the Community Advisory Group (CAG) by March 2nd, 2018. The results of CCM1, in the form of this summary, are to be posted online on the City's *Bloor West Village Heritage Conservation District* [website](#), when ready. The date and location of the two (2) CAG meetings and CCM2 will be shared when available.

APPENDIX

**BLOOR WEST VILLAGE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY, MEETING
SUMMARY FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING 1**

Appendix A Comment Sheet

Appendix A Comment Sheet



COMMENT FORM

Bloor West Village - Heritage Conservation District Study

Runnymede United Church, 423 Runnymede Road, Toronto, ON

February 15, 2018

Your comments will help us to understand what is important to people in the study area. Please provide your comments on the following questions.

1. Are you:

- ☐ A property owner in the Study Area?
- ☐ A business owner in the Study Area?
- ☐ A resident in the Study Area?
- ☐ Other?

2. Do you have a family or personal history in the Study Area that you wish to share? If you would like to share items (stories, photos or clippings) with the project team, please add a description below or email us at BloorWestVillageHCD@stantec.com.

3. What heritage features do you notice most when you are in the Bloor West Village Study area? Do you think the area has qualities that make it unique or different?

4. What features in the Bloor West Village do you consider to be important? Please check all that apply and describe:

- ☐ Historical architecture
- ☐ Building types and sizes
- ☐ Landscape features (i.e. parks, trees, sidewalks, street paving, etc.)
- ☐ Views to or from a specific property
- ☐ Other

COMMENT FORM

Bloor West Village - Heritage Conservation District Study

Runnymede United Church, 423 Runnymede Road, Toronto, ON

February 15, 2018

5. What would be the Bloor West Village boundary (in your opinion)? Are there particular features or locations that you think help define the boundaries?

6. Do you have any other comments about the HCD Study that you would like to provide?

Please leave your completed comment sheet in the drop box provided or submit **(by March 2, 2018)** to:

Heidy Schopf, Cultural Heritage Specialist

Stantec Consulting Ltd.

300W-675 Cochrane Drive

Markham, ON, L3R 0B8

Tel. 647-649-3098 Email: BloorWestVillageHCD@stantec.com

Name and Address (optional) PLEASE PRINT

Name:

Mailing Address:

(include postal code)

Tel:

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