

## Baby Point Heritage Conservation District Study

Baby Point Community Advisory Group Meeting #1

Tuesday, June 27, 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.

Stakeholders were informed that a summary of the meeting would be circulated to the group. The following individuals attended the meeting:

Community Advisory Group Members	Project Team Member
Ariel Blais	Alex Corey, City of Toronto
Danica Loncar (Baby Point Gates BIA)	Tamara Anson-Cartwright, City of Toronto
Frank Serafini (Etobicoke-York Community Preservation Panel)	Dima Cook, EVOQ (Consultant team – lead)
Maria Subtelny	Reece Milton, EVOQ (Consultant team)
Mary Anne De Monte-Whelan (Baby Point Heritage Foundation)	David Robertson, ASI Heritage (Consultant team – archaeology)
Paul Millar	Susan Hall, Lura Consulting (Facilitator)
Sandhya Kohli	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 Hall 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 will be made by Toronto City Council.

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 Archaeology

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 Baby Point. 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:

- 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

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benefit of reviewing the archaeological potential within the HCD Study process is that it provides an opportunity to refine the current understanding of archaeological resources within an area.

- The HCD Study is in the information gathering phase; no decisions have been made at this stage.
- The intent of HCDs is to provide contextual policies and guidelines to conserve and enhance the historical character of the neighbourhood; they do not impose homogeneity. Each HCD Plan is unique, and responds to its neighbourhood.
- No research to-date has indicated that property values are negatively impacted by HCD designation.
- In an HCD the district designation is registered on title of a property. However, any restrictions that result from the HCD are included in the HCD Plan; they are not included on the title of the property itself.

### **Defining Characteristics of Baby Point**

CAG members were asked to identify features within Baby Point that they feel define the neighbourhood. While some characteristics were agreed upon by the group as a whole, there were differences in opinions on others. The following characteristics were identified through the course of discussion:

#### *Built Form*

- House setbacks from side-walks
- Consistency of architectural styles
- Massing of homes
- Large lot sizes
- The Baby Point Gates

#### *Public Space*

- Mature tree canopy and number of trees
- Curvilinear street design
- Neighbourhood views
- Proximity to the Humber River and parks

#### *Landscaping*

- Limited or few fences in front of or between properties

#### *Community Character*

- Village-like sociability and atmosphere
- Safe and walkable community

### **Changes in the Neighbourhood**

A few CAG members expressed concerns about the development of new homes that are not consistent with the character of the neighbourhood (i.e., scale, massing, size, building materials, and architectural design). The concern is that over time these developments will change the character of the

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neighbourhood and impact the root structure of the neighbourhood trees. In relation to this, a few CAG members noted that there are examples of newer homes and alterations to older homes that are consistent with the neighbourhood's character. It was noted that homes need to be able to incorporate new building materials and techniques to increase energy efficiency. One member noted that stone homes are being taken down and this is a loss for the neighbourhood in terms of character and heritage.

A few CAG members also agreed that change and revitalization should be encouraged in Baby Point, as long as the neighbourhood's defining characteristics are maintained, and that an HCD would be a useful tool to support compatible new development and renovations.

### Archaeology

Responses to questions raised during the meeting clarified that:

- The Archaeologically Sensitive Area (ASA) concept emerged during the development of the City of Toronto's Archaeological Management Plan; the conservation of archaeological resources has legislative authority under the Ontario Heritage Act.
- An archaeological assessment includes reviewing and evaluating changes to the landscape of a property (e.g., movement of soil, excavations, etc.) as well as natural features (e.g., slopes). A visual survey would be completed to inform if and where any archaeological assessment would be needed in cases of development/redevelopment.
- Two burials have been documented as a result of two separate Enbridge projects within Baby Point, however assessments completed on individual properties have not yet resulted in any archaeological discoveries, likely due to changes in the landscape of the properties in the past 50-60 years.

### Information Needed

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

- The number of completed archaeological assessments and confirmation that no artefacts have been discovered;
- The results of the survey and research in quantifiable terms where possible;
- The financial and insurance implications, if there are any, associated with an HCD;
- A definition of the "cultural heritage value" of Baby Point;
- The features that will be defined and preserved through the HCD (i.e., building materials, frontages, architectural styles, etc.), if designation is determined to be appropriate;
- The rationale for designating the area an HCD and whether existing tools and mechanisms already reinforce the neighbourhood character;
- Clarity on the existing planning layers and tools in place;
- If there is a mechanism to exclude an individual home from an HCD; and
- The benefits and positive aspects of completing an HCD study.

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**Format/Location for Next Community Conversation**

No feedback was received in response to the final discussion question directly. Members noted it is important to have the factual information available, and determine format at the next meeting.

**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

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Tuesday, June 27, 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 Study 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 Baby Point 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. What is the significance of an Archaeologically Sensitive Area (ASA) within the Heritage Conservation District (HCD) study process?**

**A.** 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, by reviewing individual properties. The benefit of reviewing the archaeological potential within the HCD Study process is that it provides an opportunity to refine the current understanding of archaeological resources within an area.

#### **Q. How many homes in the area have a heritage designation? What percentage of properties in the area have a common aesthetic/style? There have been a lot of changes over time.**

**A.** There is one home with heritage designation in the neighbourhood – 1 Baby Point Road. This is not uncommon in a residential area. We will present the results of our analysis on defining features of the area at the next advisory group meeting (e.g., architectural styles, building heights, roof types, garage types, etc.).

*Post meeting clarification:* On October 20, 2016 City Council stated its intention to designate the property at 68 Baby Point Road under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

#### **C. My concern is that the HCD plan will be used as a style manual and prescribe how things should look.**

**A.** The intent of the HCD (should the area be recommended for designation) is to provide contextual policies and guidelines to conserve and enhance the historical character of the neighbourhood; it is not

intended as a rulebook to impose homogeneity. New development should be designed to be of its time, and not replicate historical styles.

**Q. Did property taxes change in Rosedale after the HCD designation was applied there? Is there any compensation to property owners for maintaining the heritage value of their home?**

**A.** There is no heritage tax classification and therefore no change in property tax as a result of the HCD designation in Rosedale. The Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) does not assess property values based on heritage designations. Property owners within an HCD have access to a heritage grant program through the City of Toronto; the home would have to be a contributing property of the HCD and the grant is for conservation-related work on the exterior of the home.

**Q. Are there examples of what the guidelines could be?**

**A.** HCD Plan guidelines are unique to each neighbourhood. The HCD Study process is being undertaken to identify the area's defining characteristics. It is too early to say what the guidelines may be as it has not been determined what defines Baby Point and if an HCD is appropriate.

**Q. Could Robert Home Smith's guidelines regarding building materials, etc. be incorporated in the HCD?**

**A.** An HCD does not require proactive work for existing homes to conform to policies and guidelines. The specific policies and guidelines that may be included in any HCD Plan are developed during the Plan phase.

**Q. Will the built form survey include an analysis of city data on the number and type of alterations made to individual homes within the study area?**

**A.** No, the survey does not include research into the history of applications, however additions and alterations visible from the street to the original house will be noted.

### **Private Property and Homes**

**Q. How are freehold interests and property rights restricted by a heritage designation? The concern is that new residents may be deterred from moving to the neighbourhood if there are restrictions on the property title. Will an independent evaluation of the potential impact of designation on the value of properties in the HCD be conducted?**

**A.** In an HCD the district designation is registered on title. However, any restrictions that result from the HCD are included in the HCD plan; they are not included on the title of the property itself. The district designation does not restrict property rights. The HCD Study process does not include the evaluation of the potential impacts of designation on the value of properties.

**Q. Will an HCD designation affect the saleability of a property?**

**A.** Rosedale is a great example of a community where the HCD has not affected the saleability of homes, and has provided predictability in the neighbourhood in regards to additions and new development.

Note: One member noted that heritage designation can attract buyers to the district.

**C. A heritage designation does not obligate you to do something you do not want to do, but it does place restrictions on things you may want to change on your property. Amending a zoning bylaw would be a similar example of the process.**

### **Archaeological Framework**

**Q. What documentation is available on actual archaeological finds? What is the relationship between excavations and finds?**

**A.** In recent years, two burials have been documented as a result of two separate Enbridge projects. Since 2005, any redevelopment in the area has generally been preceded by an archaeological assessment. These assessments have not yet resulted in any archaeological discoveries, likely due to changes in the landscape of the properties in the past 50-60 years.

**Q. When was Baby Point designated as an ASA?**

**A.** The City began developing an Archaeological Management Plan in 2003. The ASA concept emerged from that planning process. ASAs are considered to be “living organisms” and are often modified and refined through processes like this HCD Study.

**Q. The Baby Point landscape has been modified significantly (e.g., roads, terracing) in the past. How are these changes considered in an archaeological assessment of a property (i.e., before installing a pool)?**

**A.** An archaeological assessment includes reviewing and evaluating changes to the landscape of a property (e.g., movement of soil, excavations, etc.) as well as natural features (e.g., slopes). A visual survey would be completed to inform if and where any digging would be needed.

**Q. What happened to the unmarked cemetery behind Magwood Park?**

**A.** There are reports of a burial mound at Magwood Park. There is however no archaeological evidence to support the reality of a burial mound. No artefacts have been found on or near the mound that the City is aware of.

**Q. What is your definition of an artefact (i.e., indigenous tool, horse shoe)?**

**A.** Artefacts are context specific; the term refers to any item reflective of past use. Artefacts related to the Seneca and pre-Seneca occupation would be of particular interest in this area. The Baby homestead would be another significant archaeological site if discovered.

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

**C. I love the street design, setbacks, gardens, ample yards and beautiful trees. I understand that the architecture varies, but there is some consistency in architectural styles. My concern is when a new homeowner levels the property and develops a new structure that is alien to the existing styles in the neighbourhood (i.e., different building materials, minimalist architectural design). If this continues the entire area will change dramatically, changing the historical character of the neighbourhood.**

**C. Several features stand out that work together to make the area special, including the architecture, massing, Baby Point Gates, street arrangement, and generous lot sizes. A prevalent feature of the new construction in the area is the massing of the buildings, which is out of character and scale compared to other properties. This also puts mature trees at risk by interfering with the root structure.**

**C. I agree with the previous points. My concern is that neighbourhoods should be encouraged to change over time as long as certain defining characteristics are maintained (e.g., tree canopy, setbacks, etc.).**

**C. I agree that the mature tree canopy and curvilinear road are defining characteristics of the neighbourhood.**

**C. There is a need to encourage some level of revitalization in Baby Point while preserving the neighbourhood's defining characteristics. The HCD could provide a template or guidelines to preserve the historical character of the neighbourhood without discouraging revitalization. It would be advantageous to have a plan going forward based on expert analysis of the area's heritage.**

**C. There is a need to consider newer homes built in the 1960s as part of the heritage conservation district. I am also concerned that some of the heritage homes in the area have been renovated in such a way that the architectural integrity has been compromised.**

**A. To clarify, if a house is not currently listed or designated as a heritage property there are no restrictions in place to prevent the property owner from making changes to the exterior of the home that do not conserve its heritage or architectural integrity. Some property owners may do it voluntarily to maintain the character of the home, or to "grandfather" certain historical features into a home.**

**C. Baby Point has a "je ne sais quoi" atmosphere to it. The neighbourhood has ready access to the river and parks. The configuration of the neighbourhood promotes sociability which is hard to find in Toronto. There is a feeling of being in a village or private club. It also boils down to aesthetics – there are old homes that are hideous and do not fit the character of the neighbourhood and there are newer homes built in the last 10 years that are gorgeous and consistent with the neighbourhood's character. This is to say that it is possible to have new developments within Baby Point that support its character.**

**C. Another defining feature of the neighbourhood is that there are no fences in front or between properties, contributing to a park like setting.**

### **Information Needed**

**C. I understand that Baby Point is an ASA and that there is provincial legislation in place that requires individuals to complete an archaeological assessment prior to any redevelopment and to report the**

**discovery of buried artefacts. Residents should be made aware that no artefacts have been discovered.**

**C. In other countries that have mature heritage laws (e.g., England) onerous responsibilities are placed on owners of heritage properties. It is important to be clear if there will/will not be any financial implications of an HCD here.**

**C. More information is needed about the features that will be defined and preserved through the HCD (i.e., building materials, frontages, architectural styles, etc.), and how many homes have been renovated and completely altered.**

**A.** That is part of what we are doing now. It is important to note that HCDs only focus on what can be seen from the street. There is a distinction between alterations and maintenance – we do recognize that things change over the lifespan of a house. We will be looking at the age of houses but will not be doing a permit search to determine when homes were renovated and additions made.

**C. Many area residents will want their extensively renovated homes to be excluded from the HCD.**

**A.** An extensive renovation does not negate the heritage value of a building, or necessarily impact its ability to contribute to any potential HCD.

**C. Another key issue for residents is insurance; it is unclear if insurance rates will increase if a heritage designation is applied.**

**A.** We have been assured by insurance companies that insurance rates are not assessed based on a heritage designation. They may consider the building age and materials, but not the heritage designation.

**C. It is critical to treat this [designation as an HCD] as positive change – it can influence people's attitudes and perceptions.**

**C. There are already significant restrictions on residential construction (e.g., tree permit requirements, massing, roof height etc.). It is important for residents to understand the difference between the existing planning and development system and potential restrictions from the HCD. The HCD should only incur restrictions if there are no other tools or mechanisms in place to protect the neighbourhood's defining features (i.e., the City will need to provide a rationale for the HCD policies and guidelines).**

**A.** A sub-consultant has been retained to review the existing planning tools in-force within Baby Point and determine whether any of the planning tools (secondary plans, zoning by-law, site and area specific policies, etc.) support the neighbourhood's defining characteristics identified through the HCD study.

**C. There are existing rules in place, beyond heritage, that restrict development in the neighbourhood (i.e. tree protection bylaw). It is very important for residents (and realtors) to understand the existing framework, especially if the existing restrictions have nothing to do with heritage.**

**Q. Is there a mechanism to exclude homes from the HCD if it were to be established?**

**A.** We will add that to the list of items that require clarification, however the study area and any potential plan area boundaries are recommended by Staff and must be approved by City Council. Appeals of the HCD Plan can be made to the Ontario Municipal Board if it is adopted by City Council.

**C. Consideration needs to be given about how the concerns of the larger group can be assuaged.**

**A.** We would appreciate your input on how best to communicate with residents (e.g., posted letters, e-blast).

**C. I would recommend you highlight the benefits and positive aspects of completing an HCD study in a letter that is mailed to each resident in the study area (i.e., circulate fact-based information).**

**C. There is a need to define what “cultural heritage value” is to help residents understand the intent and benefit of the HCD, or they will focus on restrictions and saleability.**

**A.** The HCD Study report will include a statement of cultural heritage value for any area recommended for designation. The criteria for determining cultural heritage value is included in *Heritage Conservation Districts in Toronto – Procedures, Policies and Terms of Reference*, which was circulated to CAG members and is available online

### **Format/Location for Next Community Conversation**

No feedback was received in response to the final discussion question directly; however members noted that the community conversation needs to focus on fact-based information. Members noted a discussion on the community conversation would be beneficial at the next advisory group meeting.