

Danforth Avenue Planning Study

Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue



Stakeholder Advisory Committee – Meeting #5 Summary

Meeting

Monday, March 5, 2018 – 6:30 – 9:00 PM
Danforth Mennonite Church, 2174 Danforth Ave

Attendance

Name	Organization
Stakeholder Advisory Committee Members	
Matt Reid	Resident
Charles Lanktree	Resident
Phil Pothen	Ward 31 Bikes
Anita Millar	Toronto/East York Community Preservation Panel
Charles Braive	Friends of Danforth East
Melissa Lui	Urban Land Institute
Isaac Tang	Urban Land Institute
Oliver Hierlihy	Danforth Mosaic BIA
Billy Dertilis	Danforth Mosaic BIA
Andrey Kvedaras	DECA
Brian Spratley	DECA
Susan Spratley	DECA
Steve Wickens	DECA
Peter Woodcock	Friends of Stephenson Park
City of Toronto	
Councillor Janet Davis	Ward 31 Councillor, City of Toronto
Councillor Mary Margaret McMahon	Ward 32 Councillor, City of Toronto
Daniel Woolfson	Community Planning, City of Toronto
Trevor Greenman	Transportation Planning, City of Toronto
Caroline Kim	Urban Design, City of Toronto
George Pantazis	Community Planning, City of Toronto
Katie Wittmann	Cycling Infrastructure, City of Toronto
Pourya Nazemi	Heritage Planner, City of Toronto
Barbara Carou	Project Manager, Special Projects, City of Toronto
Kyle Knoeck	Community Planning, City of Toronto
Facilitation Team	
Liz McHardy	Lura Consulting
Sinead Petrasek	Lura Consulting

Meeting Purpose

- To review and discuss the draft presentation for Community Consultation Meeting #5 on recommendations for the Danforth Avenue Planning Study (Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue).

Meeting Overview

- **Welcome and Introductions**
 - Liz McHardy (Lura Consulting) welcomed SAC members to the fifth SAC meeting for the Danforth Avenue Planning Study.
 - Liz McHardy introduced herself as the independent facilitator for the SAC, noting that Lura Consulting is a neutral third party facilitating community engagement for the study.
 - Participants introduced themselves and their interests in the community.
 - The meeting agenda (see Appendix A) was reviewed.
- **Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting #4 Recap**
 - The SAC Meeting #4 Summary was approved.
- **Presentation: Danforth Avenue Planning Study Recommendations**
 - Daniel Woolfson (Community Planning, City of Toronto) welcomed participants to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance. He noted the purpose of the meeting was to review the scope of the Danforth Avenue Planning Study (Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue) and the potential policy recommendations that city staff will be bringing to Toronto and East York Community Council in the spring. Mr. Woolfson began with a review of changes to the study area, noting special attention to the proposed development at Main and Danforth and the mobility hub.
 - Participants raised some questions related to the revised study area:

Q. Can we talk about the revised boundary in more detail?

A. *This was presented at our last meeting and it captures all mixed-use area lanes identified for growth. We are looking at some taller form and how it will relate to midrise scale, and we want to make sure there's good access to transit, including the Danforth GO entrance on Dawes. We want to allow for mid-block connections to open up access to the GO station. The study area was specifically revised as a result of Toronto and East York Community Council Item TE27.42. City Council requested City Planning to initiate a study focusing on the development potential, built form, and public realm within proximity of the Main Street TTC station and the Danforth GO Station.*

Q. What is the rationale for not including the back-end of Shoppers World in the boundary area? There is a lot of warehouse property there, it is a deep lot so what was the rationale for not including it?

A. *We looked at properties that fronted on to Danforth. Lots in the middle are not designated for major growth. We will be recommending looking at the Shoppers World site in more detail.*

- The presentation continued with a review of the heritage component of the Plan. Pourya Nazemi, Heritage Planner, reviewed what had been heard through the consultation process and demonstrated how public input had shaped the policy recommendations. Mr. Nazemi noted that the heritage policy recommendations doesn't mean that the buildings cannot be touched, however, but the policy will create considerations for layers of protection to create balance between the conservation of heritage buildings and new development.
- Participants raised some questions related to heritage:
 - Q:** In regard to the impact of designated Main Street typology as heritage - does that mean you can't develop them?
 - A:** *It doesn't mean we cannot touch that building, it means there could be new considerations and more layers of protection that would create balance between conservation and new development.*
 - Q:** Why is the Public library is listed as a heritage site?
 - A:** *The library was suggested from the public.*
 - C:** The Main Street library is a beautiful building and it should be designated as heritage.
- The Presentation continued with a review of built form, retail and vitality by Caroline. Ms. Kim reviewed what had been heard through the consultation process and demonstrated how participant feedback had shaped the policy recommendations.
- Ms. Kim also reviewed the work that had been done with complete streets and how input from the public had shaped the policy recommendations. She highlighted that recommendations will call for a minimum 2.1 metre pedestrian clearway zone for sidewalks, that applicants will be requested to work with BIA for streetscaping improvements and emphasized the strong public support for protected bike lanes.
- Mr. Woolfson continued the presentation and reviewed the last portion of the meeting. This included transit stations (including the TTC and Metrolinx stations within the study area), parking and lane ways. Mr. Woolfson clarified that the City is working with Metrolinx on a connection between the Danforth Go Station and the TTC's Main Station. He stated that there has not been an identified need for more parking services, but that Green P and other additional parking services can be encouraged within new developments. Mr. Woolfson also discussed policy recommendations that will ensure that applicants adjacent to lanes expand the laneway network and provide opportunities for laneway housing.
- The final portion of the presentation included a review of the scope of work, policy direction, and planning rationale for policy recommendations regarding community services and facilities.

Questions of Clarification

Following the presentation, participants had the opportunity to ask additional questions of clarification from city staff. Questions are represented with a 'Q', comments are represented by a 'C', and answers are represented by an 'A'.

- Q1a.** Regarding the Shoppers Drug Mart site, I heard there was a development proposal in the works. I haven't seen anything about that. It's a deep lot but a through lot so it has frontage on each side, with Danforth frontage. The proposal doesn't seem to respect the policy direction that this study is taking.

- A1a.** *I haven't seen something on that particular site. The application would be reviewed against our City policies and direction coming out of this study.*
- Q1b.** No drawings of that configuration in the plan. I wondered if you were going to address that.
- A1b.** *It may take a unique approach but we're applying the lessons from this study. Lots on corner sites would still be asked to have the same set back. We won't be looking at massing that site but will look at what we've learned.*
- Q2.** Question about built form criteria on slides 22-25 [in PowerPoint presentation]. Specifically, identifying lots to support mid-rise development. These built form criteria would only be applicable to a few lots that were identified as sites for intensification, is that correct?
- A2.** *Policies would apply to every property. Sites that were shown in the presentation were examples that fit our proposed criteria.*
- Q3.** Is the policy going to include the criteria?
- A3.** *It may not be in policy framework but included in design guidelines. We can talk about whether it makes sense as a policy approach or guideline approach.*
- Q4.** In regard to built form and storefront, is it proposed that there will be policy that says any new development on street must comply with standards or is it only those that require an amendment to the zoning by-law? What would be mechanism for forcing developers to comply?
- A4.** *Our policy approach covers all properties, however, buildings that come in outside of rezoning would still have to use guidelines to provide direction.*
- Q5.** Would it not be binding?
- A5.** *The policy approach will apply to the entire study area. Yes, they're binding, the tools will be different and if it needed minor variance it would have. It is unlikely that we would get a lot of resistance from proponents to these criteria.*
- Q6.** Suppose you get an application that wants to demolish a building. Are there mechanisms to prevent demolishing buildings?
- A6.** *No, we would not have the leverage to prevent demolishing a building if it's not heritage or protected rental housing.*
- Q7.** In relation to built form, it does seem that the number of lots impacted by your policy recommendations are quite low; what would be the prescription for the other 85% of lots? What are the guidelines for the rest of the area?
- A7.** *We will be taking a similar approach in each circumstance the Planner will use the guidelines to evaluate the application. The policies will apply to every property so that we can ensure that the existing planned character is being provided for.*
- C1.** Congratulations on getting to this stage. I have a suggestion for the final presentation on the heritage component. My suggestion is to take your recommendations to the heritage board and to council. It might be important to say what your targets are to go to board and council (dates and timeline).
- C2.** In terms of the map for the development sites, I wonder if this is too technical for the average person.
- Q8.** Why is the Valu-Mart site not on this? It has jumped out as a potential development site.

A8. *We are thinking about this map and how we use it, so we can take a look at how to refine this to make it more appropriate for the general public. It is an oversight that Valu-Mart was left out of built form map.*

Liz McHardy then asked for ideas as to how to improve the presentation materials.

C3. Sections would be helpful.

C4. Use colours to describe the character areas.

C5. I like that you added employment into the document at this stage.

Q9. I have a question about office use designation. Are there any policies or zoning by-laws to encourage office development?

A9. *This would be done through a policy framework saying what we expect office development areas to have. This would include overall development criteria and specific sets of policies.*

Q10. What if a developer wanted to build a condo in an office priority area?

A10. *If it doesn't conform to the plans it could result in the City not accepting the application.*

Q11. On slide 25 [in PowerPoint presentation], with regard to built form – should one assume that these are the only sites with this criteria (area map showing built form recommendations i.e. shallow lots, deep lots)?

A11. Yes.

Q12a. Noted that the Main Street study area is separate. Why is the Woodbine site identified as a potential development site but it doesn't meet criteria?

A12a. *We are not going to say these are the sites we want to see change but it does mean these have been analyzed. We want to show properties that met the criteria to make the framework.*

Q. 12b So are these examples? Are the red sites are the only deep lots?

A12b. *Only ones that meet deep-lot criteria.*

Q13a. Please explain the diagram of heights for the shallow lot (7 storeys) – are these the ones that will be recommended?

A13b. *There is no clear preference for set-back options, we are showing the ones that were supported by the community.*

Q13b. So you would not be recommending one or the other?

A13b. *No, this is just a comparison.*

Q14. Do developers have the right to wrap the mechanical?

A14. Yes.

Group Discussion

Following the presentation and intermediary question break, there was time allotted for group discussion. A number of questions of were raised, a summary of the discussion is provided below. Questions are noted with **Q**, responses are noted by **A.**, and comments are noted by **C**.

Q1. Lanes of traffic and parking: is this a realistic idea of what's going to happen? One lane in each direction? What are the next steps?

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- A1.** *Starting that conversation, talking with the community about what their vision would be. There needs to be a detailed design framework. We know there's a policy framework that supports it.*
- Q2.** When is a final plan put in place?
- A2.** *We wait for Council to provide direction to initiate, and we will include timing in the cycling plan update that goes to Council in Jan 2019. Through that study we would come out with design for public consultation and it would come closer to reality.*
- Q3.** Further on street design, it seems to be looking at cross-sections, not looking at opportunities for additional crosswalks. There are a number of long blocks and people are encouraged to jaywalk. Can we get more crosswalks?
- A4.** *I agree with your concerns. This process was not looking at specific implementation of road design and change but that would be discussed through a transportation corridor study.*
- Q5.** Is the consideration for crosswalks part of the corridor study?
- A5.** *This is an arterial road so council will not approve crosswalks on this type of road. We can recommend a study or if it went to an Environmental Assessment that would be a full redesign.*
- Q6.** Couldn't we have a policy within the corridor plan to address that issue?
- C1.** It is dangerous to put crosswalk on an arterial road so maybe it's a new set of lights.
- A6.** *Implementation with Vision Zero. Goal for zero road fatalities.*
- Q7.** With regard to built form and varying heights, is there anywhere that a minimum setback has been determined?
- A7.** *Our recommendations shows the appropriate setback size for each height. It is a guideline.*
- Q8.** Community centres vary in terms of what they offer. Some of these spaces are just a room, with very little support or programming. There is a more significant need for various types of recreation spaces. The same goes for schools. The schools are over capacity. Will the City address those concerns?
- A8.** *This is an opportunity to contribute to increase in services. There are budgetary issues. We want to make sure we are tied to recommendations for what is needed city-wide. There is potential to build new shared spaces for the community. Various City divisions who program and provide for these spaces need to be aware of this.*
- Q8.** If there is a Phase 2 which is the Main/Danforth study which will produce more density, how can you draw conclusions about community services? It makes more sense to say there's going to be growth. Also, this hasn't taken into account the priority neighborhoods. It's going to have to look at demographic changes. I'm wondering if we need recommendations that there needs to be a much more in-depth study to look at community needs?
- A8.** *Possibly. We want to ensure we are tying our understanding of growth to the service level needs of the community.*
- C2.** For instance, it mentions youth counseling but it may be useful to be more specific about the kinds of needs in the neighborhood and establish priorities for investment.
- Q9.** Regarding mid-block connections, are we looking to identify the spots that are best right now or are we letting this play itself out?

- A9.** *This is showing the general location where we want to achieve mid-block connections and the general policy direction. We can discuss on a per-application basis if a development does come forward.*
- Q10.** When will a parking study will be done for proposed development at Main/Danforth?
- A10.** *We can look into that.*
- C3.** Slide 9 [in PowerPoint presentation] examines future Right of Way (ROW) configuration. Complete Streets guidelines were part of Terms of Reference. It seems that somehow the community consultations have recommended Complete Streets guidelines but it's the other way around. It should be noted. There hasn't actually been a discussion about bike lanes on Danforth. The discussion happened at Community Consultation Meeting Four because it was circulated through cyclist networks.
- C4.** We are not addressing congestion and air quality. If we put bike lanes in and cars are sitting idling that will result in worse air quality. Look at rewriting some of that language.
- C5.** Slide 47 [in PowerPoint presentation] – our table did not have this type of configuration, it had the one on Cosburn Avenue. It seems that somehow the whole community agreed with the configuration shown here which is not true.
- A5.** *Complete Streets established where our goals come from and as staff we agree that Complete Streets should apply to this area. All of the images from the meeting were in the report Lura prepared. Liz McHardy to check that Charles' image and comments are in the report.*
- C6.** Danforth bike lanes are part of 10-year cycling plan and this is the direction that we're moving in the City. Cycling does improve air quality.
- Q11.** Thank you for including the section on Community Services and Facilities. I'd like clarification on methodology used for population projections. Are we only projecting based on limited sites for development shown here? Are we really capturing the development projections? Projections may be much higher.
- C7.** I am concerned about long-term plans from school boards and not preparing for growth.
- C8.** We have to take exception to characterization about Complete Streets. Complete Streets was discussed very extensively at a couple of meetings previously. Every single table at the last community meeting included bike lanes in their ROW configuration. That meeting was not stacked with bike advocates so the value of that meeting should not be diminished.
- C9.** Mid-block connection between Dawes and Barrington is important. The way that the street patterns are shown they exclude a lane that almost connects to Danforth. It should be identified. It will likely be a site for development.
- C10.** I am concerned about conflating POPS with actual publicly owned publicly managed public spaces. We have something like a POPS at Main Square. Sometimes the owner shuts down debates and discussions they don't like. As an example, Talascar shut down the discussion.
- C11.** Talascar shut down that discussion because it was not applicable.
- C12.** That is a separate issue and was done without the developer's permission when they had given that site to the community which was partially funded with City money and misrepresenting DECA.
- C13.** Community Services: a fulsome and thorough assessment of community needs could never be done along a linear avenue, because that geography does not resemble how the community facilities are used. Some have small cachement areas and some have large. I think we need a tempering of expectations of what we can assess, analyze and deliver with this study. This inventories them and some yes are more substantive. When community facility needs are analyzed this is done with a deep analysis of population growth and

analysis. This won't be the be-all, end-all of community services. Be aware of what facilities are there are what we can protect.

- C14.** We haven't addressed affordable housing. I'm not sure it's appropriate to have them inventoried. I know we have rent subsidies. It would be useful to know the degree to which we have some affordable housing and how to address it. I think the broader policy at the City needs to be integrated.
- C15.** Places of worship on the inventory as nonprofit entities with large facilities and they may be potential sites for public use.
- Q12.** In terms of built form, I think one outcome has been a lot of buildings that look like the ones in the renderings. I'm wondering about flexibility. Where does flexibility lie? So, if a developer were to come in with a great building that is 9 stories but interesting, what would happen? How will OMB changes affect this?
- A12.** *We are waiting on regulations to the board. The Province is trying to limit certain appeals. We will see when regulations are passed. Our policy approach is less flexible. It doesn't mean someone can't apply for an Official Plan change for a development. These design guidelines respond to the values and visions for the community. We still see lots of varying building design and architecture.*
- Q13.** Is there a way of building in flexibility to review those guidelines?
- A13.** *Guidelines are inherently flexible.*
- C16.** There is a distinction to be made: this is the envelope within what we would like the applicant to design; how the architect designs is up to them.
- Q14.** Will the plan make any detailed recommendations about lighting?
- A14.** *Guidelines will speak to a general approach for storefronts to include appropriate lighting – no specific recommendations about lighting.*
- Q15.** With regards to the map, the pink section, the character section, is the area that has a lot of second story offices. There is a density of offices. Does that signal that that's not intended to protect those kinds of uses?
- A15.** *We want to encourage new office spaces but also maintain existing. We can hopefully discuss that with the community tomorrow.*

Recommendations for Community Consultation Meeting #5

Following the discussion period, participants were asked for the recommendations for the approaching Community Consultation Meeting #5. Participants provided the following feedback:

- People will have questions so need to provide for a public forum with Q & A.
- Can you put the info online for people to access prior? If you are sending notices provide the location for information.
- Be clear about what aspects are enforceable and what are just guidelines; be very clear and specific, not just broad goals.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

Liz McHardy thanked participants for their attendance and feedback. She encouraged members of the SAC to mail or email any additional feedback to Lura. She noted that there would be a meeting with the neighbourhood's

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Bangladeshi community on March 6th, 2018 as part of a concerted effort to seek their input. Ms. McHardy also noted that the final Community Consultation Meeting would take place on March 20th, 2018. It was noted that the final report, policy document and urban design guidelines will be submitted to Toronto and East York Community Council's second quarter meeting tentatively scheduled for May 2, 2018. One participant asked if they would have the opportunity to review the final policy document prior to its submission to Toronto and East York Community Council. It was stated that there would be an opportunity for review. The meeting was then adjourned.

Appendix A Meeting Agenda



Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting #5

Monday, March 5, 2018

6:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Danforth Mennonite Church – Lower Hall
(2174 Danforth Avenue, Toronto, ON, M4C 1K3)

Meeting Purpose: To review and discuss the draft presentation for Community Consultation Meeting #5 on recommendations for the Danforth Avenue Planning Study (Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue).

AGENDA

6:30 pm **Introductions, Agenda Review and Welcome**

Liz McHardy, Facilitator – Lura Consulting
Councillor Janet Davis – Ward 31
Councilor Mary Margaret McMahon – Ward 32

6:40 pm **Approval of SAC Meeting #4 Summary**

Liz McHardy, Facilitator – Lura Consulting

6:50 pm **Presentation – Daniel Woolfson Planning Study Recommendations**

Daniel Woolfson, Community Planning, City of Toronto
Caroline Kim, Urban Design, City of Toronto

7:30 pm **Group Discussion**
Discussion Questions

1. Do the recommendations capture our desired vision and future

directions for the Danforth Avenue planning study area (Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue)? Why or why not?

2. Should any changes or additions to the recommendations be considered?

3. What feedback or advice do you have to improve the clarity of the materials in preparation for Community Consultation Meeting #5?

8:30 pm **Community Consultation Meeting #5 – Desired Outcomes and Proposed Approach**

Liz McHardy, Facilitator – Lura Consulting

8:45 pm **Wrap-up and Next Steps**

Liz McHardy, Facilitator – Lura Consulting

9:00 pm **Adjourn**

Appendix B

Feedback Form Submissions

Discussion Questions

1. Do the recommendations capture our desired vision and future directions for the Danforth Avenue Planning Study Area? (Coxwell Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue)? Why or why not?

Form 1: The recommendations for Vision, Heritage, Retail, Public Realm, Transit Stations, Parking and Community Services reflect the views of most participants. The built form recommendations do not reflect the community desire for height limits. The eight storey limit was, and still is, the permissible height and no change is being recommended. The height is okay for sites adjacent to the TTC service but is not necessary or desired for other smaller sites, which should have a limit of six storeys.

It must be noted that the community did not actually request the Complete Street concept. It was complying with the Terms of Reference, set by the City mandating it. This may have discouraged people from participating.

The community was not authorized to discuss any vision for the Danforth ROW that didn't include Complete Street bike lanes.

2. Should any changes or additions to the recommendations be considered?

Form 1: Traffic congestion contributes to reduced local air quality. Efforts should be made to speed up traffic, not slow it or stop it.

We need to support evidence-based decisions before any changes are made to the Danforth ROW. Thorough traffic studies of volumes, times, vehicle types, etc must be done before any changes to the ROW.

Any changes to the Danforth Row must be informed by factual evidence that is relevant to our city. We don't want to experiment with our main street.

It should be noted that the Complete Streets guidelines make no mention of gridlock relief or any other type of traffic alleviation. Complete Streets are not a prescription for improving traffic flow volumes. Complete Streets make the unsupported assumption that traffic will convert to bicycles.

Additional Feedback or Advice

1. Do you have any other feedback or advice for staff based on the analysis and work completed to date?

Form 1: Complete Streets - The study was given no information about current traffic volumes currently using the Danforth. We have rush hour gridlock every weekday from Coxwell to Vic Park and it is unclear what effect it would have on local traffic, particularly on side streets, to remove any vehicle lanes from Danforth for bike lanes.