

Cabbagetown Southwest Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study

Community Advisory Group Meeting #2 – Summary Report

1. Meeting Details

Date: Tuesday November 13th, 2018

Location: Central Neighbourhood House, 349 Ontario Street

Time: 6:30pm – 8:30pm

2. Attendees

Community Advisory Group Members

- John Rider, Resident
- Richard Chambers, Resident
- Vanessa Magness, Resident
- Wallace Immen, Cabbagetown HCD Advisory Committee
- Karen Marren, Cabbagetown South Residents' Association
- Jordan Allison, Resident
- George Rust-D'Eye, Cabbagetown HCD Advisory Committee
- Philip Unrau, Central Neighbourhood House
- Stephen-Thomas Maciejowski, Cabbagetown BIA

Project Team

- Alex Corey, Project Manager and Heritage Planner, City of Toronto
- Tamara Anson-Cartwright, Program Manager Heritage Preservation Services, City of Toronto
- Dima Cook, EVOQ Architecture
- Reece Milton, EVOQ Architecture
- Susan Hall, Lura Consulting
- Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting

Meeting Purpose and Objectives

- Provide an update on the HCD Study and work completed;
- Respond to questions from CAG Meeting #1;
- Guided discussion; and
- Review of next steps.

3. Meeting Summary

Review of ‘What We Heard’ from CAG Meeting #1 and Follow-Up Questions

Susan Hall, Lura Consulting, reviewed the summary from CAG Meeting #1 and questions received from members following the meeting. Alex Corey, City of Toronto, provided an overview of the Garden District Heritage Conversation District, as requested from CAG members, and responded to questions received from members following the meeting.

Presentation – Cabbagetown Southwest HCD Research and Analysis Update

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

- History update (including a review of industries, social institutions, urban renewal and community activism)
- Review of analysis from CAG Meeting #1 (including dates of construction, styles, typologies and arrangements)
- Analysis update (including the analysis of front entrances, parking, landscaping, planning policy, setbacks, fencing, property depth and character areas)

Guided Discussion

Following the research and analysis update presentation, Susan led a guided discussion on the history and built form as well as the analysis updates. The following points summarize responses from CAG members during and following the meeting:

History and Built Form

Q 1. 1. Do you have any questions or comments on the additional historical research of Cabbagetown Southwest? Are there any important events that are missing or should be highlighted?

- Members noted that historically an entire row of homes might have been owned by a single landlord, and rented out to individual families. An example of the Burns Family was provided, who owned multiple properties on Seaton Street that they rented out, in addition to residing in the neighbourhood themselves.
- Another example provided was the owner of 249 Seaton Street (a name was not provided) who owned 5 houses close by as well.
- One member noted the importance of Darrell Kent, who is credited with sparking interest in moving to Cabbagetown in the 1960s and 1970s due to its historic character.
- Another member noted that the neighbourhood was home to people working at the former CBC studios on Jarvis Street, which spurred a large television and arts sector population in the 1960s and 1970s.
- 237 Gerrard Street East, at the corner of Ontario Street and Gerrard Street East, was noted as being a former hotel and is presently a convenience store that has been designated as heritage. It was also noted as being one of the first Dominion grocery stores in Toronto.
- 206 Gerrard Street East, near Sherbourne Street, was noted as having been occupied by Rev. William McLaren, who became the principal of Knox College at the University of Toronto in the early 20th century.
- Members noted the importance of a number of former commercial/industrial properties that were later converted for residential use, including:
 - The former Ault/Acme Dairy auxiliary building on Milan Street

Cabbagetown Southwest Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study
Community Advisory Group Meeting #2 – Summary Report

- The former Ault/Acme Dairy building on Berkeley Street
- The Imperial Optical building on Dundas Street East
- The former Ward Press/Ward Paper building on Dundas Street East (outside of the current study area)
- The former Evening Telegram building on Seaton Street

Q 2. Do the neighbourhood's former industrial and institutional properties, and their functions, contribute to your sense of place within Cabbagetown Southwest?

- Participants noted that each former industrial and institutional property identified in the presentation is important in telling a story of the neighbourhood.
- Some participants particularly noted that the former Lee School (38 Ontario Street) is an important part of the neighbourhood's story. It provided an education for unwed mothers who lived at the adjacent Girl's Home on Gerrard Street East (demolished).
- Additionally, Central Neighbourhood House was mentioned as being very important in the neighbourhood's history. The current Ontario Street location was previously 3 properties that were sold to Central Neighbourhood House for \$1 each after the organization outgrew their location on Sherbourne Street, and provided a new purpose-built space for them to continue to provide services to the neighbourhood.

Q 3. Does the landscape analysis reflect your understanding of the neighbourhood's landscaping and public space? Are there landscaping features you think are missing or should be further analyzed? Are there any other features within the neighbourhood that you think contribute to its character? (i.e. coach houses, garages, views, fences, etc.)

- One member noted that coach houses could provide opportunities to enhance laneways.
- One member noted the importance of protecting soft landscaped (i.e. gardens) front yards.
- Fences were noted as a defining feature, and that they have been installed predominantly for security purposes. Several members indicated a desire for guidelines on fences.
- One member noted that fences are getting taller and having a negative impact in the neighbourhood. It was suggested that fences could be tall so long as they aren't solid and block views or partial views into front yards and of houses.
- Green space and a large mature tree canopy were noted as a crucial and focal point for the entire area. It was indicated that more than 8 trees, older than 100 years each, were lost around Dundas Street and Gerrard Street as well as by the "Farm House" (located at 306 Seaton Street). Some members particularly noted that more greenery is needed on Poulett Street and Gerrard Street East.
- Participants discussed the need for a neighbourhood landscape plan and/or a broader community initiative to encourage cohesion about where and what should be planted to ensure a consistent pattern of replacement trees for when existing ones die. This was particularly noted on Seaton Street.
- Parkettes were also discussed and some participants indicated that Anniversary Park should be included in the HCD study boundary. One member stated that this park may be redeveloped as part of the ongoing Regent Park Revitalization Project.
- Participants noted that many front yards include City of Toronto property (i.e. right-of-way) and that Urban Forestry wants to fill landscaping gaps, however members are concerned with the rising number of dead trees throughout the neighbourhood and Urban Forestry's capacity to remove and replace them.

Cabbagetown Southwest Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study
Community Advisory Group Meeting #2 – Summary Report

- Street parking was noted as an opportunity and concern by participants. While some participants noted the importance of providing on-street parking in the area, one member noted that the widened lanes on Spruce Street (east of Parliament Street) which allows for street parking on both sides is not visually appealing to see from residents' front windows. A member noted that the provision of on-street parking has a negative impact on front porch/yard socializing in the neighbourhood, and differs from its historic condition.
- Additionally, one member indicated that periods of intensification led to the conversion of commercial properties and garages for residential purposes.

Q 4. Are there specific buildings that you would recommend for further research? (i.e. neighbourhood landmarks)

- Participants requested being provided a list of individual properties that are currently designated within the area.
- The City added members should focus on recommending buildings with histories and stories of significance that the consultant team may not be aware of and are not currently on the Heritage Register.
- A few specific building and properties recommended include:
 - A building on Berkeley Street near Lord Dufferin School that may have been owned by a judge.
 - 139 Seaton Street - the communal house where the Body Politic and Glad Day Bookstore is located.
 - The infill housing on Milan Street and Poulett Street which include eclectic homes and brick cottages as well as post-1960s row houses.
 - Either 251, 255 or 257 Berkeley Street, which was occupied by jazz artists Rosemary and James Galloway. Mrs. Galloway was a bass player, composer and bandleader who served on the board of the Toronto Musicians' Association. Mr. Galloway was a clarinet and saxophone player and the founding director of the du Maurier Downtown Jazz (later known as the TD Toronto Jazz Festival).
 - 60 Poulett Street, which is a fairly new home built in the 1980s, was historically a large garage for a Berkeley Street industrial property with an upper level apartment occupied by a painter, possibly named Al Green.

Q 5. Do you have any comments on the identified character areas? Are there other parts of the neighbourhood that have distinct character that have not been identified?

*The character analysis update noted four distinct character areas including: Predominant Residential, Commercial Streets, Area of Urban Redevelopment and Berkeley Street (North of Gerrard Street). A map of draft character areas can be found in **Appendix A**.*

- Some members questioned the need to divide the area up into character areas when the area as a whole is part of the same history.
 - The City clarified that identifying character areas within an overall neighbourhood can be a useful process to acknowledge minor changes, such as the difference between a traditional main street (i.e. Gerrard Street East) and a residential street. It can also help recognize differences between certain residential streets, where one may be defined by houses with deeper setbacks, or a greater consistency in architectural style.

Cabbagetown Southwest Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study
Community Advisory Group Meeting #2 – Summary Report

- When discussing the “Berkeley Street (North of Gerrard Street)” character area, one member noted that the distinction of the area compared to the rest of the neighbourhood are clear. Specifically, the presence of houses with wider lots and generally built to a larger scale than neighbourhood streets.

Q 6. What is it about the Area of Urban Redevelopment (character area) that contributes to the overall character of the neighbourhood?

- A few members noted that “Area of Urban Redevelopment” is not consistent with the rest of the neighbourhood. This specific character area was noted as being defined by the redevelopment of former industrial properties for housing in the 1970s and 1980s. Properties in this area have a different style than those in the rest of the neighbourhood. One member expressed uncertainty if that style is part of the history of the neighbourhood.
- Some members noted that there are plenty of non-contributing properties and some contributing properties (i.e. historic) in the character area.
- One member stated that Milan Street and Poulett Street were formerly back lanes to service the houses on other streets and were used for parking garages and workers housing. Milan Street served Berkeley Street and Ontario Street while Poulett Street served Berkeley Street and Parliament Street.
- One member suggested that Berkeley Street and Ontario Street are worth further consideration as they have historic properties, and that Milan Street could be omitted.
- One member noted the redevelopment of the Alt/Acme Dairy site into housing and stables is an interesting heritage retrofit which provides a linkage between the “Area of Urban Redevelopment” and the rest of the neighbourhood.
- Some members also indicated that the naming of this area is unclear and suggested renaming this character area to “Area of Urban Infill”.

Additional Feedback

The following represents a summary of the questions noted throughout the meeting. The summary is not verbatim. Questions posed by participants are noted with a ‘Q,’ comments made by participants are represented by a ‘C,’ and answers/responses provided by City of Toronto staff and the consultant team are represented by an ‘A.’

Q: How many houses have parking from the rear and side available and how many houses use street parking?

A: The HCD Study does not include a detailed survey of the number of on-property parking spaces in the area, or street parking permits issued.

Q: How are the detached and attached building classifications distinguished in the analysis?

A: This analysis does not relate to a property's legal classification, but is instead based on a visual survey. In general, attached refers to properties that share a party wall but are visually distinct, while detached are properties that have space between them and properties on either side. The study team is considering the use of different terms in response to concerns raised by CAG members and to avoid any confusion.

Q: Will this information be made public?

Cabbagetown Southwest Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study
Community Advisory Group Meeting #2 – Summary Report

A: Yes, all information presented to the CAG will be included in the final HCD Study, and a summary will be presented at the final open house.

Q: Why are raised entrances relevant to the study?

A: The height of a building's entrance can have an impact on the overall streetscape, and in some neighbourhoods may be a defining characteristic. Additionally, a building's entrance height may reflect its period of construction or architectural style, and contribute to the area's heritage character.

Q: What is front pad parking?

A: Front pad parking refers to a space in front of a house, generally paved, where a car can be parked. This analysis did not undertake research to determine front pad parking spots are legal.

Next Steps

CAG members were provided with the list of guided discussion questions in order to provide further feedback following the meeting. CAG members were invited to submit feedback until November 23rd, 2018 in order for it to be included in this summary report. The next Community Advisory Group meeting will be held in February 2019.

Cabbagetown Southwest Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study
Community Advisory Group Meeting #2 – Summary Report

Appendix A –Draft Character Areas Map

