

Dufferin Grove Park
North-west Corner and Clubhouse Improvements

Community Resource Group Meeting Summary
March 26, 2019

This meeting summary report was prepared by LURA Consulting, the independent facilitator and consultation specialist. If you have any questions or comments regarding the report, please contact either:

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ATTENDED BY:

Community Resource Group Members:

Adam Dirks (for Shane Morgan)

Andrea Holtslander

Anne Freeman

Daniel Halpert

David Anderson

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Jim McInnes (for John Dondertman)

Jutta Mason

Kathryn Scharf

Migs Bartula Robin

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Jackson

Tamara Romanchuk

City of Toronto:

Katy Aminian, Senior Project Coordinator

Peter Didiano, Supervisor, Capital Projects

Peter White, Manager, Parks

Sofia Oliveira, Community Recreation

Design Team (Consultants)

Megan Torza, DTAH

Facilitators

Liz McHardy, LURA Consulting

Alex Lavasidis, LURA Consulting

Other:

Brandon Lean and Emily Summers, Assistants for City Councillor Ana Bailão

2 members of the public signed in as observers

These minutes are not intended to provide verbatim accounts of discussions. Rather, they summarize and document the key points made during the discussions, as well as the outcomes and actions arising from the CRG meeting.

OPENING REMARKS, INTRODUCTIONS AND AGENDA REVIEW

Liz McHardy, LURA Consulting, welcomed participants to the Community Resource Group (CRG) meeting. Ms. McHardy provided a brief overview of the meeting's agenda and facilitated a round of introductions. Ms. McHardy noted that added to the agenda would be a short 10-minute break halfway through the meeting, given the three-hour meeting length.

A participant commented that they did not feel like the design concepts had developed enough for the number of meetings community members had attended. They questioned if community input was being addressed through the process. The design team responded that they believe the CRG presentation to follow would address the participant's concerns. The design team also noted that they have received conflicting information and suggestions from different community members, which added complexity to finding a path forward. They noted that this complexity takes time to manage.

PRESENTATION – PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND REFINED DESIGN

The design team provided a project overview presentation. This presentation is available online at <https://dufferingrove-northwestrevitalization.ca/document/community-resource-group-march-26-2019-meeting-presentation>. The presentation began with a 10-minute overview of the engagement process so far, and a summary of the feedback from the February 6, 2019 public meeting and subsequent online feedback form. The remainder of the presentation introduced three refined design strategies for the Dufferin Grove Park North-west Corner and Clubhouse Improvements. Questions of clarification and comments were provided by participants throughout the presentation. These questions of clarification and comments are included in the discussion summary, below.

DISCUSSION

Following the presentation, participants were asked the following questions:

- What do you like about the refined design strategies? What don't you like?
- Is there anything that you expected to see in the strategies that you feel is missing? If so, what?
- Other advice?

The following provides a summary of the CRG's input from the discussion period, and the feedback and questions posed throughout the presentation. Project team feedback is identified using *italics*.

Suggestions for Improving the Presentation

- Throughout the presentation, clearly identify the picnic tables near the community ovens. These are an important gathering location.
 - Consider labeling the picnic tables as a "CELOS" area and mentioning CELOS throughout the presentation.
- Throughout the presentation, clearly identify and increase the visibility of the bake ovens (especially in slides 15 and 16).
- Throughout the presentation, clearly identify and increase the visibility of the locations of the community gardens. Highlight the impact of different design options on the community gardens.

- Flipping back and forth between the 3D images to show the current conditions and the proposed changes is a useful way to show the community what options are being proposed. This should continue.

High-level Feedback on the Three Refined Design Strategies:

- A participant commented that refined design strategy Option 1 seems too similar to the current park, and does not provide enough positive improvement to make the changes feel worth the disruption to park programming that would be experienced during construction.
- Some participants shared their preference for Option 2 (*Note: Participants were not directly asked to share which option they preferred, therefore every meeting participant did not provide this type of feedback*).
- A participant noted that though they like the placemaking of the plaza space in Option 3, they are concerned that this rink placement cuts off the eastern side of the park, creating a compartmentalized instead of a welcoming space.

Feature-Specific Feedback on the Three Refined Design Strategies:

Pleasure Pad

- In the refined design strategies presented, there is no fencing proposed for the pleasure pad. Participants commented on the benefits and drawbacks of including fencing around the pleasure pad. This feedback includes:
 - Some participants prefer fencing around the pleasure pad. They noted that fencing is very helpful for people who are learning how to skate, as they can grab onto the fencing as a support.
 - Other participants noted that other rinks in the city (e.g. City Hall) do not have fencing around the exterior, but still appeal to many new skaters.
 - A participant explained that a challenge of not including fencing around the rink, is that the rink cannot be secured overnight. In the past, before the Dufferin Grove Park rinks were secured overnight, hockey players would play well into the night. The noise from the puck hitting off of the boards would disturb neighbours trying to sleep. The participant stated that if the pleasure pad can't be secured, noise from people playing hockey at night would be an issue for the community.
 - Some participants suggested the inclusion of a temporary, accordion (or other style) wall that could be used during the skating season, and removed in warmer months.
 - *The design team noted that this is an option that they will investigate.*
 - A participant noted that they prefer the open, fence-free design, as it creates a more visually appealing space for skaters and park users. They also noted that they feel the fence-free design creates a more open, welcoming feeling and provides stronger connection to the rest of the park. The participant noted that if the boards are only needed during the few months an ice rink is in place, it may be advantageous to find a solution that still allows the area to be fence-free for the majority of the year.
 - A participant representing the skateboarding community noted that they had met with a company that creates urban skateable furniture. There is potential for this type of furniture to be used to partially enclose the pleasure pad area.
- A participant would like for there to be additional space for parents and grandparents to watch their families skate around the pleasure pad.

Hockey Rink

- A participant suggested that in Option 1 and 2, the hockey rink entrance be moved from its current location, as the area is currently congested.
- A participant noted that when the hockey rink is used for bike polo in the summer, the court only needs a moveable wall on **one** side of the arena. This would allow for the creation of a bike polo space on one end of the rink, and a futsal space on the other end of the rink.
 - *The design team responded that they had previously understood that the bike polo community desired the playing area to have symmetry relative to the team seating area and in regards to the hockey playing lines on the surface of the rink space. They thanked the participant for their input.*
- Participants discussed the replacement of the hockey rinks. Some participants suggested they, and others in the community they have spoken with (including hockey players) do not feel

replacing the rink to the City's standard size is necessary. Other participants noted that they, and other hockey players, do feel replacing the rink to the City's standard size is beneficial. Those in favour of the rink being official size explained that currently, the Zamboni cannot properly resurface the rink corners (due to the size of the rink), which makes the surface unsafe for skating; replacement to a standard size rink would eliminate this problem.

- A participant noted that they do not think that replacement of the pads is necessary, and that replacing the pads before they reach the end of their functioning life would have an unnecessary environmental cost. They stated that another CRG member had spoken to a City staff member (Peter White) who said the rink was not at the end of its life. The participant suggested that the park does not keep maintenance records, so the condition of the pad is not known. The participant stated that they do not want to replace the rink because of the environmental cost, and because they have young children and therefore do not want to lose the use of the skating rink for an unnecessary replacement.
 - *Peter White, Manager, Parks, noted that he was the member of staff who had been misquoted in an earlier CRG meeting. He stated that he is not a refrigeration expert and did not recall making any statement about the pad being in good or bad condition, as he would not be qualified to make that judgement. He noted that everything the City procures must follow sustainability guidelines to be environmentally procured. He stated that the rink does need to be replaced, and that the City will do the best they can using new technologies to be environmentally responsible through this replacement.*
 - *Another member of the project team noted that the City must uphold the City's Green Development Standards throughout the project. They also noted that the rink slab needs to be replaced to allow for the Zamboni to reach the corners of the rink to ensure a safe surface for skaters.*
 - *A third member of the project team requested that the names and contact information of the rink users who do not think the rink should be of standard size be provided to the project team. They noted that the project team would be happy to speak to these individuals about the need for the rink replacement and the standardization of the rink's size.*
 - A participant responded that they think it is important for staff who are invested in this work to also recognize that community members are here volunteering their time, and are thinking about the park. They stated that it is important for participants' questions and feedback to be listed to without

being jumped on. The participant also suggested a popup with hockey players next season would be a good way to gather their input.

- *A member of the project team noted that they are open to a discussion with community members about the rink at any time. They wanted to establish that if any community members have concerns, they can contact the project team to discuss those concerns.*
 - A participant noted that they are a hockey player at the Dufferin Grove Park rink, and are involved in various email list serve discussions with others who play hockey in Dufferin Grove Park. They noted that while it is not unanimous, there is a broad consensus that the inability for the Zamboni to properly resurface the corners of the rink is a problem that decreases the usefulness and quality of the rink, compared to other neighbouring rinks. They noted that creating a standard size rink that would allow the Zamboni to properly resurface the corners would be beneficial.
 - *Ms. McHardy inquired if the notification for the next public meeting could be shared within email list serves the CRG member is a part of.*
 - The participant noted that they would post the public meeting notice within those email list serves.
 - The Councillor's representative also noted that the Councillor's office would distribute the public meeting notifications.
 - A participant noted that the design of the site should include a dedicated area for snow from the Zamboni to be dumped, so that it does not end up being placed in a plaza space.
- Storage*
- A participant noted that the rink design should include benches, or that existing benches be made more visible in the presentation.

- A participant noted that they are concerned there is not enough storage space on-site for all the skateboard ramps and activity materials. They would like these storage needs to be addressed on-site.

Bake Ovens

- A participant noted that the bake ovens are easy to move. They can be lifted and relocated with a forklift.

Clubhouse Layout

- Multiple participants noted they appreciate the mechanical equipment being housed outside of the Clubhouse.
- A participant noted that to refine Option 3, it would be beneficial to put the two multi-purpose spaces together with a collapsible sliding wall installed between them for flexibility in dividing the space.
 - *The design team confirmed that it is an option to move the kitchen and washrooms to the north end of the building, locating the multipurpose area at the south end of the building, and removing the north-south corridor.*
 - Multiple participants agreed that they preferred one large multi-purpose space with flexible space dividers (e.g. a collapsible wall). Suggested benefits of this layout include:
 - All winter farmer's market vendors could be located in one space.
 - One large multipurpose space allows for multiple activities to happen in that space at once, allowing people to stay longer, mix, mingle, and meet.

- One large multipurpose space may allow for the return of Puppets on Ice (Clay and Paper Theatre).
 - A participant noted that pushing the kitchen to the north side of the Clubhouse would create a large separation between the kitchen and the outdoor seating area and bake ovens on the south side of the Clubhouse.
 - *The design team noted that they were initially concerned about people in the kitchen moving through the Clubhouse space without disrupting other activities in the building. The design team noted that potentially, the kitchen could be located on the south end of the building and the multipurpose space on the north end.*
 - In a follow-up email, a participant suggested that it would be useful for serving food, if the kitchen (located on the south side of the building), could be attached to a large multipurpose room on the east side. This could include a window for serving food, and could face the rinks. North of this space, a skate rental area could face the rinks on the east side of the building. Bathrooms and offices could be located on the north side of the building.
- A participant inquired if the storage space located in the south-west corner of the Clubhouse in Option 3 could be moved elsewhere.
 - *The design team noted that this is possible, but that it would be useful to keep some storage space in the multi-purpose area, as this storage would be used to store furniture and other goods used by the programs and activities that operate within that space.*
- A participant noted that in Option 3, it may be more appropriate to connect the kitchen to the east side of the building, as that enables better connection to eating and baking outdoor spaces.
- A participant noted that they were not certain that the wall of glass, as proposed in all three options as a replacement for the current garage door on the south side of the Clubhouse, was best for circulation or function. They noted that even in the winter it seems that the existing garage door is usually open.
 - Another participant noted that they prefer the glass wall that is pictured in the various design options.
 - *The design team responded that the glass wall can be designed to open in different ways (e.g. accordion style, multiple doors, etc.). The team explained that if the goal is to be more energy efficient, there are better ways to manage access to the space in the winter, rather than opening up the large garage door. The design team will look into various options for this wall.*
 - A participant suggested the wall of glass be moved to the east side of the building to allow family members to view children skating from a climate-controlled environment.

Washrooms

- A participant noted that they prefer the use of gender-neutral washrooms as these are more accessible for users. They would prefer to see gender neutral washrooms used in the Clubhouse redesign.

Plaza

- Some participants noted their support for the plaza, shown in Option 3, while others noted they do not support the addition of a plaza.
 - A participant noted that they like the plaza proposed in Option 3, as it provides more community space. They would like to see the potential addition of even more

community space. The participant noted that the plaza proposed in Option 3 feels like the heart of the space, which is charming.

- Another participant echoed this sentiment, expanding that if the plaza were connected to an extended community room within the Clubhouse (if the spaces could be connected) it could be a very exciting community space. They noted this type of space would be useful for activities and performances like Night of Dread.
- A participant noted that they are concerned the plaza space in Option 3 has the risk of turning into dead space, while also reducing green area. They noted that while the plaza has the potential to be a nice feature, they would prefer as much greenspace remain in the park as possible, with concrete area minimized.
 - Another participant noted that they would not want the space to end up feeling abandoned (e.g. the plaza at King and Strachan).
- A participant noted that the plaza may create more dark corners at night, which is a concern that should be mitigated. Another participant agreed that this is an issue that needs to be addressed.
- Suggestions for improving the plaza space include:
 - The inclusion of vine plants to be used to provide shade in warmer months (e.g. grape vines).
 - The inclusion of street furniture in a shape conducive to conversation, unlike the round benches in the plaza at Queen and Lisgar, which don't allow people to face each other.
 - The inclusion of raised planter beds.
 - A soft, permeable surface (instead of concrete).
 - Keeping the plaza overall, feeling soft, permeable, and inviting for those moving through and within the space.

Environment, Community Gardens, and Landscaping

- A participant noted that they want to ensure that any trees lost would be replaced.
 - *The project team responded that this is already a City policy and would therefore occur.*
- Multiple participants noted that there are Saskatoon Berry trees and other fruiting trees present in community gardens that are well loved by the community. They suggested these should be preserved as much as possible.
- A participant is concerned that the community gardens seem like an afterthought in the presented design options. They noted that the community gardens are an integral part of the park, describing how people wander through the gardens, engage with gardeners, and with each other over the gardens. The participant asked that more emphasis be placed on the community gardens through the proposed designs.
 - Multiple participants noted they would like the community gardens to remain undisturbed, or to be disturbed as little as possible. They noted that maintaining an inviting flow through the community gardens is important.
 - Some participants like the idea of creating community gardens through the use of raised beds (e.g. Riverdale Farm), while others prefer keeping the existing community gardens in their current form and location.
 - A participant suggested that in Option 3, the space labeled "5" be combined with the other greenspace to create one large community garden plot below the proposed plaza area.

- *The design team noted that they will be asking for additional feedback from community garden members to better understand what configuration of garden space would be best for them. They noted that the design team may need to rethink the “islands” of gardens proposed in the design options.*

Public Art

- A participant noted that they strongly support the addition of public art into the project. They noted that public art makes everything feel original.
- A participant noted that they do not want any weathered steel included in any public art or furnishings in Dufferin Grove Park.

Other

- A participant noted that while they understand that memorials are very healing for some, they can also be very traumatizing for others. They noted that this should be considered through the design process, and that they would prefer memorials are not included in the redesign.
- A participant noted they appreciate the consideration for accessibility throughout the designs, including improvements to pathways and the apron (which is currently difficult to traverse for mobility devices and strollers).
- A participant suggested that a wall within the Clubhouse should include a collection of images that highlight the history of the park.
 - Other participants noted that they are holding meetings on this topic.
- A participant noted that they feel that Dufferin Grove Park is already at capacity, and that they are concerned about the new developments being proposed and constructed in the neighbourhood. The participant feels that new developments are relying on the existing Dufferin Grove Park to absorb increased population in the neighbourhood, instead of providing additional park land for these new proposed residents. Overall the participant is concerned about whether the Dufferin Grove Park will meet the needs of the people who will move into the neighbourhood in the future, as well as existing residents. They would like to see more leadership from the City to ensure that the developers in the area are providing adequate greenspace to ensure the greenspace needs of new and existing residents are met.
 - Councillor Bailão’s assistant noted that some development sites are too small to provide useable park or public land. In these cases, the City asks for funds in lieu of parkland dedication. The City can then use those funds to buy additional or improve existing parkland. When the site is large enough for parkland dedication to be provided, this is a requirement for the developer (the City always asks for parkland first). In some cases, the developer must provide parkland dedication along with funds in lieu.
- Participants are concerned about how long facilities would need to be closed for construction in all of the proposed options. They would like more information on the potential interruption of programming and activities during construction for each of the options.
 - *The project team noted that they will work with the community to reduce community impacts of construction options. Construction phasing will occur at a later stage of the process.*
 - A participant noted that they would like the project team to consider construction phasing needs as soon as possible. They want to ensure that adequate budget is allocated for alternative construction options that reduce impact of existing park use and programming.

- *The project team responded that the City will consider construction impact mitigation before the procurement process for construction begins (before the City creates the construction plan or hires a firm to begin construction). They explained that the only significant difference between the three proposed options, in terms of potential construction timelines, is that Option 3 may result in the basketball courts being moved. The impacts of this potential move would need to be mitigated during construction. Otherwise, all three options are generally the same in terms of construction timelines. Therefore, the project team suggested that participants base their opinions on the various options on what they prefer for the North-west Corner and Clubhouse, rather than based their preference on potential construction phasing.*

Public Engagement

- A participant suggested inviting representation from the basketball community and the country dancing community into the CRG.

Questions of Clarification

- In options 1 and 2, is the pleasure pad moved over and the Zamboni Garage connected to the pleasure pad directly?
 - *The design team responded that the Zamboni Garage is connected to the pleasure pad. This allows the Zamboni to exit the garage directly onto the pleasure pad. The Zamboni can then access the hockey rink through the pleasure pad, as both ice pads are connected.*
- In option 2, does the entrance to the hockey rink maintain its current position or does it move? Right now, the entrance is tight and very busy, so looking into alternate locations would be valuable.
 - *The design team responded that the location of the rink entrance will be discussed further in later stages of the design, but noted that this feedback was valuable and will be considered.*
- In Option 3, where have the community gardens gone?
 - *The design team responded that in Option 3, the community gardens are impacted more than in the other two options.*
- Can the building layout shown in Option 3 be considered in an option where the mechanical equipment is housed in a separate structure (e.g. like in Option 1 or 2)?
 - *The design team responded that yes, this is possible. They noted that the eventual preferred option will likely be a hybrid of the various options presented.*
- Is there storage space for any potential temporary removable fencing and skateboard ramps?
 - *The design team responded that there is some storage accommodated in the project but it is currently not assumed that all seasonal items would be stored on-site. The design team is aiming to accommodate seasonal items when in use, on-site, and then storing seasonal items off-site when not in use.*
 - A participant noted that currently, the skateboard ramps are stored partly outside, which is not ideal, and partly in the Fieldhouse.
- Is the City planning to offer additional kitchen programming after the renovations, or will the kitchen only maintain its existing uses?
 - *The project team responded that once a kitchen that can accommodate different programming is built, then the City can consider additional kitchen and food-based*

programming. Currently, the appropriate infrastructure is not in place to support additional programming.

- Does the rink refrigerant system use ammonia, and would a new system use ammonia?
 - *The project team responded that the slab replacement would be completed with environmentally-friendly materials, including for the internal piping structures.*
- If the third option is the most expensive choice, or if we as a community select the most expensive option, would that mean the project would not be able to expand to other areas of the park (e.g. the Fieldhouse)?
 - *The project team responded that if there is an expansion into other areas of the park, that expansion would be considered a separate project with a separate budget and funding stream. Therefore, the decisions made as part of the Dufferin Grove Park North-west Corner and Clubhouse Improvements project will not impact the budget of any potential expansion.*
- Will the entire Fieldhouse be part of the potential expansion?
 - *The project team responded that the entire Fieldhouse is included in the potential expansion project that the City is exploring.*

PRESENTATION – POTENTIAL PUBLIC MEETING FORMAT AND CONSULTATION

LURA Consulting presented a potential public meeting format. This presentation is available online at <https://dufferingrove-northwestrevitalization.ca/document/community-resource-group-march-26-2019-meeting-presentation>.

DISCUSSION

Following the presentation on the Potential Public Meeting Format and Consultation, participants were asked the following questions:

- Do you have feedback about the potential public meeting format overall?
- Do you have feedback about the potential public meeting questions?
- Do you have any feedback on the consultation approach following the meeting (e.g. popups, the online survey, or youth engagement)?

The following provides a summary of the CRG's input from this discussion period.

Improving Information Provided at the Meeting

- Showcase the three design Options on the boards around the room, so that people don't have to wait for the presentation.
- Provide clear information about budgeting on boards and in the presentation.
- Provide clear information about the potential project expansion, and how this is a separate budget from the current project. Provide this information on boards and during the presentation.
- Provide a board of "Quick FAQ", including why the rink is changing, what the project is, etc.

Small Table Discussions

- There was a discussion about whether or not there should be project team members at each table during the small table discussion. The outcome of the discussion was that there should be a neutral facilitator at each table. Project team members should sit throughout the room during the presentation, and then during the small table discussions, project team members should move throughout the room to answer questions various tables may have.
- Make the table discussions shorter than the proposed 30 minutes.
- Ensure the answers to the questions that are raised during the small table discussions are repeated at the end of the session, for everyone to hear.
- One CRG member will sit at each table to provide context to the discussion when possible.

Overall

- The City and project staff should sit throughout the room.
- There should be numerous opportunities for people's questions to be answered.
- Find a way to help avoid the anger that existed at the last meeting. This made people close up and provide less feedback.
 - A participant suggested that one way to reduce anger may be to avoid the Question and Answer session after the presentation. However, many other participants noted that this would likely cause more anger as it would appear as though there was something to hide. There will therefore be a Question and Answer session after the presentation.
- A participant suggested that one way to address anger may be to show how much community effort has gone into this project already. They suggested that members of the CRG stand up at the start of the meeting to explain the process so far, and all of the community work that has gone into trying to make this project as good as it can be.
 - Another participant supported this idea and suggested that the amount of time that all community resource group members have spent on this project be recognized.
- Ellen Manney and Anne Freeman shared that they were the two CRG members who were a part of the City's procurement process, which resulted in DTAH being hired as the project design team and project leads. They noted that this process included 50 hours of volunteer time.
- Four CRG members volunteered to speak at the beginning of the April public meeting.
 - A participant highlighted that there should be acknowledgement of all the things CRG members have put aside to make this project a priority.
 - *Ms. McHardy will arrange a phone call with these four CRG members to help organise the speakers and confirm the timing and format of the CRG speech. Ms. McHardy also noted that LURA can calculate the number of hours the CRG members have volunteered, collectively, for this project.*
 - All CRG members will stand at the start of the public meeting to allow other community members to see who they are, so they can all be acknowledged for the time they have volunteered for this project.
- CRG members will sit spread out at the small tables during discussion. This will help provide context during small table discussions.
- A participant noted that these actions (above) will allow CRG members to take ownership over the process.

NEXT STEPS

The Design Team will refine the presentation based on CRG feedback from this meeting. The edited presentation will be presented at the public meeting, on April 17, 2019.

MEETING ADJOURNED**ACTION ITEMS**

Mar.26.01 - The project team will make the necessary revisions to the presentation for the public meeting, based on CRG meeting feedback.

Mar.26.02 - The project team will make the necessary revisions to the public meeting format/agenda, based on CRG meeting feedback.

Mar.26.03 - Ms. McHardy will arrange a phone call with these four CRG members to help organise the speakers and confirm the timing and format of the CRG speech.

Mar.26.04 When public meeting notices are distributed, CRG members and Councillor Ana Bailão's office will distribute these flyers amongst their community networks (including email list serves they are a part of).