

Dufferin Grove Park
North-west Corner and Clubhouse Improvements

Community Resource Group Meeting Summary
September 4, 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:

Katy Aminian
City of Toronto
55 John Street, 24th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M5V 3C6
416-397-4084
kaminia@toronto.ca

Liz McHardy
LURA Consulting
777 Richmond St W
Toronto, Ontario M6J 0C2
416-536-6174
Lmchardy@LURA.ca

ATTENDED BY:

Community Resource Group Members:

Andrea Holtslander
Benjamin Hoff
Daniel Halpert
David Anderson
Ellen Manney
Erella Ganon
Erin George
Irena Hrzina
Ross Waddell (for John Dondertman)
Migs Bartula
Robin Crombie
Skylar Hill-Jackson
Tamara Romanchuk
Yves Bonnardeaux

City of Toronto:

Katy Aminian, Senior Project Coordinator
Peter Didiano, Supervisor, Capital Projects
Peter White, Manager, Parks
Donna Densmore, Supervisor, Community Recreation
Cheryl MacDonald, Manager, Community Recreation

Design Team (Consultants)

Megan Torza, DTAH

Facilitators

Liz McHardy, LURA Consulting
Alex Lavasidis, LURA Consulting

Other:

Michael Vieira, Assistants for City Councilor Ana Bailão
5 members of the public attended 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. A copy of the agenda is available in appendix A.

PRESENTATION – REFINED DESIGN

The design team presentation consisted of a review of the ten draft project information boards, to be presented at the upcoming September 19 public meeting. Boards topics included: an overview of the project, including background information and a project schedule; a layout plan; trees and plantings; furnishings and fixtures; active recreation; clubhouse renovation and Zamboni building, and; sustainability. The draft project information boards are available online at <https://dufferingrove-northwestrevitalization.ca/document/september-4-crg-meeting-presentation-review-draft-public-meeting-information-boards>. Questions of clarification and comments were provided by participants throughout the presentation, with a plenary discussion following the presentation. After discussing the detailed design, a second presentation took place. This short oral presentation outlined a suggested format for the September 19 public meeting: an open house session, with project team members present to answer questions and record oral feedback. Feedback would also be collected through written feedback forms. Following the public open house, all informational materials would be posted online along with an online survey. The online survey would reflect the feedback forms available at the open house.

DISCUSSION SUMMARY

Following the presentation of the project information boards, participants were asked the following prompting question:

- Do you have any feedback on the Project Information Boards (e.g. is any information missing, is any information resented unclear)?

Following the presentation of the potential public meeting format, participants were asked the following prompting questions:

- Is there any topic that is missing from the set of Project Information Boards that would be useful to present at the public meeting?
- Do you have any feedback about the intended public meeting format?

The next section provides a summary of the questions of clarification and feedback provided during the meeting, along with feedback provided through email the week following the CRG meeting. Project team feedback is identified using *italics*.

Questions of Clarification

Q. Will future CRG meetings take place during in the contract documents phase?

A. Yes, and one of the meetings will likely speak specifically to construction timing.

Q. When might that CRG meeting take place?

A. This fall.

Q. What is the incline on the proposed pedestrian bridge?

A. Less than a 5% incline. It will be accessible.

Q. What is the size of the hockey rink in these designs?

A. Standard city size, which is larger than the existing size, allowing for the Zamboni to reach all areas of the ice pad (e.g. the corners).

Q. What is proposed for the bridge design?

A. Potentially a galvanized steel for the railing with steel planks for the base. The planks would provide solid grip for those moving over the bridge, whether by foot or wheel. The specific design is still to be determined.

Q. With this design, would the green roof be accessible?

A. Although, we are looking at a blue roof (for stormwater management) on the clubhouse and a pollinator green roof on the Zamboni garage, the green roof above the Zamboni garage will not be accessible, because that would require access, locks and other safety features that would seem intrusive and cumbersome for a little accessible space.

Q. What stormwater features would be present on the clubhouse roof?

A. We are aiming to ensure the roof has the capacity to hold and slowly release a large amount of stormwater. This helps prevent flooding during a large rain event as the roof could absorb water instead of allowing water to flow off it and into stormwater drains. This would increase the overall stormwater capacity of the park.

Q. Hanging lights are shown in the design. Are there hanging lights at The Toronto Brickworks?

A. Yes, there are catenary lights at the Evergreen Brick Works in the Central Parking lot, and they also exist at the Atwater Market in Montreal, as another example. All lights on the site would be LED.

Q. Will the bottle filling station work in the winter?

A. No, as the City drains them to ensure they last longer. There would be water available in the clubhouse during the winter.

Q. What is the texture of permeable paving like to move over with wheels?

A. The permeable paving is accessible and comfortable to roll over. The pavers lay smoothly because they are interlocking.

Q. Can you provide more details about the proposed bike racks?

A. We are proposing 24 bike rack spaces in total, located on the east side of the clubhouse. These would be covered by a canopy. With the proposed bike stand, people would lock their front wheel and frame to the rack.

Q. For the friction-fit, modular and seasonal hockey rink wall, how many people would it take to move?

A. It takes multiple people to put in place. The City perspective is that it is best to put the wall up in the spring and keep it in place all season. The fewer moves the better as the durability is related to how many times the wall is assembled and disassembled. Note that there are no sleeves required within the refrigerated slab for this wall, as it is friction-fit.

Q. Can you provide additional manufacturer information on the friction-fit walls?

A. Yes, we will email you additional information on the manufacturer.

Post-Meeting Response: The manufacturer the design team has been in contact with is Omni Sport out of Alberta, but numerous manufacturers of dasher boards make this type of product. The typical rink divider is made for an interior application, but they can also be configured for exterior installation by replacing the panel material with a plastic type suitable for exterior conditions. The design team will be developing the specification for this piece of equipment in concert with a manufacturer but ultimately the tender will be open to any manufacturer who can produce a comparable product (the City does not allow sole-sourcing of this type of equipment).

Q. Is there a board on the west side of the hockey rink, in front of the benches?

A. No, there is no board. Instead there is a curb and an area of rubber matting wide enough to allow someone to pass while putting on skates at the bench.

Q. In the new kitchen, is there a place for the bread making mixer?

A. Yes, the drawing shows one large and one slightly smaller mixer. The larger mixer is the bread mixer.

Q. Is there a dishwasher?

A. Yes, the commercial dishwasher is located next to the triple sink in the kitchen.

Q. When the market is indoors, where will the seating and tables go?

A. They will be stackable and will go into the storage space at the south end of the clubhouse.

Q. Can you reuse the light posts that are currently used for the outdoor skating area?

A. That is a good question. We are not certain yet, but will look into possible reuse. They may also be able to be resold.

Post Meeting Note: Subsequent meetings with Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff has determined that the poles are too old to reuse on the site. Their removal from the site will be governed by the material waste diversion target during construction. If they can be resold or recycled, they will be.

Q. Many interlocking bricks end up settling poorly and unevenly. What can be done to prevent that from happening in the park?

A. We have to prepare the soil underneath the pavers with various layers of granular material in order for those pavers to sit smoothly and not heave. We have experience designing them to perform that way.

Q. Where will gardening and skateboard equipment be stored? The Zamboni garage is very far from the gardens and therefore is not an appropriate storage location for the gardening equipment.

A. The design team is still looking into potential reuse of some of the sheds, placing them appropriately for their uses (e.g. gardening). We understand a lot of gardening tools need to be available in the park and we are trying to identify the most appropriate location for their storage.

Q. Is there something more interesting than chain link that is durable and can be used around the rink?

A. Chain link is unmatched in terms of durability.

Comment. Consider decorating the supports if chain link must be used.

Comment. Plants can be grown on chain link fencing for decoration.

Feedback on the Detailed Design

Participants noted they like:

- The inclusion of a small, accessible, pedestrian bridge to preserve the large tree south of the clubhouse while connecting two accessible pathways.
- The preservation of trees along the Gladstone path.
- The inclusion of a larger, City standard sized hockey rink, to ensure the corners of the ice can be resurfaced by the Zamboni.
- Snow storage (from the Zamboni) being located on the basketball court, as this provides a snow mountain for children to play on.
- The bottle filler located beside the rinks.
- The temporary modular boards being added to the rink in the summer to create two separate spaces within the hockey rink (as long as the temporary boards can withstand people and items leaning against them).
- The energy efficiency and sustainability elements incorporated into the design.
- The overall design.

Participants would like to see the following changes and additions:

Accessibility and Pathways

- Ensure that the area where the new accessible pathways meet the existing Gladstone path is fully accessible, as the area is currently very uneven and treacherous.
- Create a more important and pleasant access point from Dufferin Street.
- The intersection of the Gladstone path and new pathways is an important location that should be turned into a key feature in the park, eliminate the awkward transitions where the three paths meet.
- Consider creating a paved and accessible path out to Havelock.
- Consider CNIB design guidelines in the final design, including using glow in the dark TWSIs.
- High contrast nose strips on all outdoor stairs, and not just the top and bottom stairs.
- High contrast railings with high contrast markings at the top and bottom, like subway stations which have yellow bands around the top and bottom of the metal handrails.
- Functioning accessible doors.
- For the washrooms automatic flush, taps, and soap dispensers would increase access, and should not just be in the accessible washroom.

Seating and Furniture

- Ensure plentiful seating is available and various seating types are available.
 - Do not include benches with centre handrails as this can be hostile towards homeless people who sleep on benches.
 - In the “U” seating area on the south end of the plaza, consider adding backs on some portion of the benches. This is beneficial for breastfeeding mothers and some people with disabilities.
- Moveable furniture should be provided in a contrasting colour to the background (ground), because this makes the furniture more visible for people with reduced vision.
- Consider placing window seating (thin tables and stools) in the multipurpose clubhouse space as this is a good spot for children to sit in the winter to watch rink activities. This would also increase seating capacity inside the space.
- Ensure all furniture chosen for the design is durable and selected for longevity.
- Add high-contrast coloured hooks in the multi-purpose room for hanging jackets.
- Consider adding seating to the pedestrian bridge and the south west edge of the clubhouse apron.

- The design team noted that the drop around the bridge requires a guard, but they will investigate options to include seating in the design. They also noted that no seating was included around the south west edge of the clubhouse apron to create a more flexible space for market use.
- Non-reflective surfaces indoors and outdoors for kitchen tables, chairs, walls, doors. (I.e.. No silver metallic chairs on a light grey concrete surface or white chairs and tables on a white floor with white walls) to enhance accessibility for people with low vision. Benches also need to contrast with the floors and walls.

Bikes

- Consider adding a bike fixing/tool station.
- Consider alternative bike rack designs and locations.
 - Consider providing various types of bike racks, including some that are more visually interesting, like the iron cutout bike racks on Dovercourt. Providing a variety of bike racks could work well for those with paniers, bike wagons, and other bike features.
 - Consider moving the location of the bike racks. The current position against the east clubhouse wall, in the plaza area is a prime location for people to mingle, so bike racks in this area may be awkward and a misuse of space. The benefit of bike racks in this location instead of on the west side of the building is that it provides bike owners with better visibility and allows for the rack to be covered under an awning off of the clubhouse.
 - The bike rack should be relocated to another area, as it will be difficult for someone with low vision to navigate around to enter and exit the rink house.

Aesthetics

- Consider brightly-coloured flooring for inside the clubhouse.
- Consider adding space for the giant masks created by Clay and Paper Theatre along the walls of the multipurpose room. This would be a good way to signify that Clay and Paper Theatre is a part of the community.
- No clear glass walls or doors.
- Adequate lighting indoors, especially in transition zones and private bathroom stalls.

Storage

- Arts programs and workshops will not be able to use the multipurpose room in the same way they currently do, as there is less storage space in the clubhouse for these programs and organizations (e.g. Clay and Paper Theatre). Arts-based programming requires long-term storage space (e.g. for 4-week workshops).
 - The design team asked Clay and Paper Theatre to provide pictures of the type of changes to the space they are looking for to make the clubhouse more appropriate for their activities. Clay and Paper Theatre will provide these images. Clay and Paper Theatre noted that storage for puppets is not the only requirement, as hanging puppets is more decorative than practical. It is most important to have long-term storage space that allows arts programs to leave materials in the clubhouse for workshops, as it is highly impractical to have to remove materials after every session. This is important not just for Clay and Paper Theatre, but for any other arts-based programming that may take place at the clubhouse in the future. The City suggested the Zamboni garage storage as potential storage space for Clay and Paper Theater and suggested hanging puppets from the ceiling for long-term storage, especially if other programming materials (e.g. skateboard ramps) can be stored underneath. The City also noted that they are trying to move forward with a state of good repair report for the Fieldhouse, which may eventually lead to its renovation. This would be a project separate from the clubhouse, but could result in more long-term

storage space for Clay and Paper Theatre. Clay and Paper Theatre noted that they could take that discussion offline. The design team noted they would like to do more to accommodate Clay and Paper Theatre and asked Clay and Paper Theatre to provide a description or photo of what a typical workshop kits includes. This would allow the design team to better consider those needs when refining the design of the multipurpose room.

Trees

- Reconsider placing fruit trees close to light-coloured paving as many fruits and berries are staining.
 - Some members of the CRG suggested that falling fruits should not be a problem as they are almost always harvested before they fall.
- Consider selecting trees for the site that are good for climbing.

Play Area

- Consider creating a simple, natural play area just south of the proposed pedestrian bridge (e.g. using logs). This is a good location for a play space as it would be in eyesight of parents at the market and around the clubhouse.

Rinks

- The space between the linear bench and the pleasure pad is narrow and should be widened as a parent tying kid's skate laces would likely block circulation.
- Ensure there is a way for both ends of the hockey rink to be squeegeed and drained in warm months, when the modular boards are in place.
- Drainage is required at north end and east end of the hockey rink for bike polo use, and a drainage opening on south end of skatepark extension is required for skateboarder use.
 - Currently, the drainage openings at the rink are very small, consider widening.
- Consider two different rink finishes:
 - Pleasure Pad polished finish for the skateboarding area.
 - Hockey Rink more abrasive finish for the bike polo area.

Other

- Prevent shadowing in areas adjacent to the large sport lighting.
 - Skateboarders prefer that the lighting is distributed as evenly as possible.
- If the existing fireplace inside the clubhouse is replaced or not reused inside the clubhouse, consider reusing it as an outdoor fireplace.
- While preserving the trees along the Gladstone path, consider integrating something into this space to activate the eastern edge of the hockey rink.
- Consider adding a fire pit into the "U" seating area at the south end of the plaza. This could work well with the proposed curved seating area. This could also be inviting for people on skates as it would be located in a rubberized area in the winter (e.g. The Colonel Sam Smith Park skate loop).
- Reconsider the use of catenary lights as the ambience desired is best achieved when in they are installed in higher density than what's shown.
- Add contrast strips to improve the visibility around the pedestrian bridge.
- Consider renovating other park bathrooms before construction takes place as they are not in good condition and will be the only bathrooms available during construction.
- Consider indoor or covered space for skate ramp storage.
- Consider using solar heating (e.g. as in High Park at the Children's Garden building) and bullfrog power in the clubhouse.
- Consider the addition of other sustainability features including rain barrels, composting bins, and updated recycling and sorting bins.
- Consider including more indoor plants in the clubhouse to improve air quality.
- Consider using the Dynamic Symbol of Access rather than the International Symbol for Access.

- Consider having two of the six basketball nets at a lower height so younger children can play.
- Coat racks need to contrast with the walls.

Suggestions for Improving the Information Boards

- Consider changing the language around the pedestrian “bridge”, as use of the word “bridge” evokes a more elevated and large structure than is proposed in this plan (e.g. “elevated walkway”).
- Include a rendered site plan on the boards to make the plan easier for members of the public to visualize (e.g. the covered area on the east side of the clubhouse).
- Include an overview of how decision making occurred to reach the current design.
- Include an overall number or range of how many people were engaged through the entire consultation process.
- Colour code the sod vs. bioswale vs. other materials to make this more obvious.
- Provide renderings of the new spaces.
- Provide updated visuals that showcase market layouts in different seasons.

Feedback on the Potential Public Meeting Format

CRG members would like a presentation, less detailed than the one provided at the CRG meeting, included at the public meeting. The design team confirmed that the public meeting would include an open house segment and a short presentation, followed by a second open house segment. Additional design team members (e.g. engineers) will be present to answer questions from the public.

Community Petition

A member of the CRG presented a community petition with 800 signatures in support of returning to a previous phase of the design process to select an east-west orientation of the rinks rather than a north-south orientation of the rinks. They noted that they believe community members are not aware of the plans for the park and that the majority are against a north-south rink orientation. The City asked to be provided with the petition, which would be included in the process in the same manner as other community feedback. The CRG member noted that they would supply a photocopy of the petition to the City.

The following summarizes discussion about the community petition:

- CRG member noted that the petition should be presented at the September 19 public meeting.
- The City noted that the decision to move forward with a north-south rink orientation was based on many rounds of stakeholder and public feedback.
- The CRG member who introduced the petition noted that it seemed as though the north-south rink orientation came out of nowhere and was selected with little notice.
- The City responded that from the outset of the project, three options were provided. These went through various phases of refinement. A north-south option was included in the three options provided, which is part of the public record, available on the project website.
- There was audible agreement from the CRG members that the north-south orientation had been part of the public consultation process for many phases of consultation.
- A CRG member inquired about the CRG “vote count” for the north-south or east-west orientation.
- The design team explained how the consultation process lead to the current rink orientation and overall design:
 - In March 2019 the CRG was presented with 3 options which included a north-south rink orientation.
 - The selection was narrowed from 3 to 2 design options based on feedback received through consultations.

- A north-south orientation and an east-west orientation were presented at the May 22 CRG meeting, the June 5 public meeting, popups in park, in an online survey, and at youth engagements. The majority of youth, public, and CRG members were most excited about the north-south orientation of the rinks. There are various reasons for this. For example, the sports players were excited because of the solar glare reduction on the rinks. Many people were excited about the plaza, which exists because of the north-south orientation.
- In the last phase, the north-south orientation was presented as the preferred design.
- We are now in the detailed design phase where we are working on refining the preferred design at a detailed level.
- The design team noted that it will be important to incorporate the decision-making timeline and process clearly at the September 19 public meeting.
 - A CRG member noted that it was not clear when the final decision on rink orientation would be made, and that they were surprised when the decision was made.
 - The design team noted that the decision-making process, and the narrowing of the designs to one final design, was clearly outlined in the Project Schedule, which was available from the start of the process and was included in every public and CRG meeting up to this point.
- A CRG member stated that they thought the decision to select the north-south rink orientation was made based on a vote following the last CRG meeting.
 - The design team noted that the CRG are an advisory group, but not the only group the design team is listening to for input. Members of the public and staff also provide important input. The decision was made to reflect the input of all consultation.
- An observer noted that there were not many participants at the last public meeting, when input on the rink orientation was collected.
 - The design team noted that this is why popups, youth engagement, and an online survey were also part of that round of engagement. The design team noted that CRG members are always encouraged to help spread the word about public meetings and encourage community member attendance.
 - One CRG member noted there were many members of the community in attendance at past public meetings.
- The CRG member who introduced the petition noted that many people prefer an east-west rink orientation. They suggested this orientation would result in fewer trees being removed, less money being spent, and would not require the basketball court to be rebuilt.
 - The City noted that no matter which direction the rinks are oriented, they need to be rebuilt to ensure they can serve the growing community. The preferred design being refined results in less energy consumption over time compared to the current systems in the park.
- The design team noted that they would like to review the petition to gain a better understanding of how to make the strengths of the current plan clearer, as they seem to address the concerns mentioned by the CRG member who introduced the petition. For example, if the rinks remained at an east-west orientation, more trees would need to be removed to accommodate the City Standard rink size that is required. Additionally, construction impacts are relatively equivalent regardless of the rink orientation. The design team is working on a strategy to phase construction that would allow the basketball space and all spaces to be returned to public use as quickly as possible.
- The design team also noted it will be important to clearly explain the layers of decision making that lead to the current design. The design team noted that it is important to get as many people as possible out to the September 19 public meeting or to visit the website for information so that opinions are not formed based on hearsay.

- A CRG member noted their support for the process, reminding the room that originally, design options had included a complete rebuild of the clubhouse, which did not move forward based on community feedback.
- A CRG member asked that the petition be read aloud to gain a better understanding of what people were asked to sign, and what information they were given.
- The CRG member who introduced the petition read the preamble:
 - Dufferin Grove Park Petition regarding the proposed north/west corner renovation.
 - We, the undersigned, are NOT in favor of Option 2, which is to switch the Dufferin Grove Park ice rinks from the current east/west direction to a north/south direction.
 - Following are Davenport residents' and park users' reasons AGAINST this proposal.
 - A May 2019 Freedom of Information response from the City of Toronto showed that the current rinks are not violating any bylaws or building codes and do not need to be replaced. Changing the two rinks direction will incur unnecessary costs, long rink service disruption & will create a huge environmental impact.
 - Removing and replacing the SIX large flood lights will incur unnecessary costs & wasted time.
 - Tearing up the current (nothing wrong with it) basketball court to build a brand new court which will face east/west will incur unnecessary costs, unnecessary disruption of service and create a large environmental impact.
 - Taking down SEVEN old-growth trees will cause an unacceptable loss of shade and carbon capture which will take many years for newly planted trees to replace.
 - We would like the Zamboni garage to be a permanent building built at the east-end of the rinks next to the Gladstone park walkway. This solves the Zamboni rink access and exiting issues. The rink machinery should remain in the rink house but be replaced, as recommended in the State of Good Repair report.
 - At the June public meeting, the architect noted that, since there's no room for the Zamboni's "snow hills" in the plan, her firm will either construct a facility to melt snow cleared by the Zamboni, or city staff will have to truck the cleared snow away. This is unnecessarily carbon-intensive, and also removes a winter play area for children. We want the snow removal "mountains" to be placed on the basketball court, as they have in the past.
- A CRG member inquired if the CRG member who introduced the petition had additional information to provide about the freedom of information concern.
 - The CRG member responded that they did not have additional information with them.
- A CRG member thanked the design team for all of the work that had been put into the process and design. They noted that they felt the design reflected the input of CRG members and others throughout the process. They stated that it is a beautiful design which they love.
- The CRG member who introduced the petition agreed that the design is beautiful and reflective of concerns, except that the rinks should be oriented east-west instead of north-south.

NEXT STEPS

The Design Team will refine the Project Information Boards based on CRG feedback from this meeting. The edited Project Information Boards will be presented at the public meeting, on September 19, 2019

MEETING ADJOURNED

ACTION ITEMS

Sept. 04. 01 – Clay and Paper Theatre will provide images of the space they require for storage of supplies, a photo or description of a workshop kit, and feedback on any needs around the minimum height for hanging lights in the plaza space.

APPENDIX A – CRG MEETING AGENDA