



Weston II Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study Community Consultation Meeting – Summary Report

Introduction

This summary report is a record of City Planning's first Community Consultation Meeting (CCM) for the Weston II HCD Study that took place in November 2019 and January 2020. When undertaking any local area study, City Planning conducts community engagement to gain insight and knowledge about the area from the people who live and work there.

The purpose of any first CCM (Open House) for an HCD Study project is to:

- Introduce the project team and explain the HCD Study process, including approach, timing, and activities;
- Share historical background material and preliminary knowledge of the study area;
- Receive input from community members about their understanding of the area's history and community;
- Answer participants questions about the HCD Study process;
- Highlight next steps; and
- Promote participation and seek applicants for the Community Advisory Group (CAG).

In addition to the Community Consultation Meetings (CCM), City Planning establishes a Community Advisory Group (CAG) to have a diverse group of individuals representing various perspectives. LURA Consulting has been hired to facilitate these meetings for the duration of the HCD Study.

Community Consultation Meeting

The CCM was conducted over two Open House events as the first event was suspended after one hour when the venue was evacuated due to a facility emergency. The first meeting was held on November 4, 2019 from 5:30 to 6:30 pm at Artscape Weston Common. The continuation of the CCM meeting was held on Saturday January 18, 2020 from 1:00 to 4:00 pm also at Artscape Weston Common. Councillor Nunziata was in attendance at both events to interact with participants.

Community Consultation Meeting Format

Both Open House events utilized the same format with seven display areas supported by City Staff offering community members an opportunity to learn about the HCD Study, interact with City Staff, and share feedback. A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document was provided to all participants, as was a comment form for those who wanted to provide written feedback. All display boards are available online on the City of Toronto's [project website](#) and the FAQ sheet is available on the City of Toronto's [website](#).

The seven display areas were:

1. Introduction to HCDs/About the Project
2. HCD Process and Criteria
3. Permit Process and Heritage Grant Programs
4. Historical Mapping
5. Dates of Construction
6. Historical Timeline
7. Base/Satellite Map of the Study Area (with sticky notes and markers available)

* Please note – for the second Open House meeting additional display boards on the heritage value criteria, HCD process and decision making roles were available to answer common questions from the earlier Open House. These three additional boards are available online.

Feedback was obtained through the following methods:

- a) Discussions with City Staff;
- b) Discussions with City Staff transcribed onto sticky notes and placed on specific areas on the study area maps available at the 'Base/Satellite Map' display area; and
- c) Written comment forms submitted during, and following, the meeting.

Approximately 60 participants (30 people per meeting) were in attendance, including a few people who attended both. Participants were invited to submit comment forms at the event or visit the project website after the event and submit comments and/or feedback via mail or e-mail. The comment forms could be submitted to City Planning until January 30, 2020. Several residents submitted applications to participate in the CAG and a limited number of comment forms were submitted.

The summary is based on recurring comments, concerns or suggestions from community members and is based on the (72) sticky notes, and (5) comment forms submitted at, and following, the meetings.

The feedback summary is organized by the key questions presented in the comment forms and questions prompted by City Staff at the different display areas. The historical mapping and timeline stations brought many participants to share their stories about their neighbourhood.

Questions about the HCD Process

Participants identified questions about the HCD Study and subsequent HCD Plan process, policies and guidelines associated with a designation for non-contributing and contributing properties, and impact on property values. Those who expressed support for an HCD designation noted the importance of preserving the heritage character of properties but also questioned the level of protection available to homes between the HCD Study and HCD Plan phase. Those who expressed opposition to a potential HCD

designation noted concerns with perceived negative impacts on property values, marketability of homes with designations for resale and maintenance restrictions. A few attendees also commented and posed questions about stopping the HCD Study process and undertaking a poll of homeowners within the proposed HCD boundary to assess the number of people in favour of a designation. *Note: City Planning Staff explained that Policy 16 of the Council-adopted terms of reference for Heritage Conservation Districts states that Heritage Preservation Services will not undertake any polling of residents or owners to determine if designation is appropriate or warranted.*

Highlights of Community Feedback:

Important People or Events that Shaped the Neighbourhood

- The history of transportation routes in Weston is important in how the area was shaped, including the Humber River, Carrying Place Trail, Plank Road, Weston Train Station and now the UPX Station.
- Residential buildings either housed important people (John Hall – civil engineer who straightened the streets in the Study Area) or important institutions like the Trinity College School and Dr. Carpenters house and practice – where many Weston residents were born.
- The area has a connection with the film industry as many movies have been shot here due to clapboard houses appearing like an American town.

Changes Observed in the Neighbourhood

- The changing street views – through demolition of homes and new buildings that don't fit in with the character of the neighbourhood.
- Alternatively, some participants noted that there is a renewed interest in maintaining heritage features of homes and landscape features such as the Humberstone walls.

Key Historical Stories of the Neighbourhood

- The long term history of Toronto including the Carrying Place Trail and the Mississaugas of the Credit.
- Understanding who the builders are, why they came to Weston and what they accomplished, including Dr. Irwin, James Grove, Dr. Irwin Osler, William Tyrrell, J. B. Tyrrell, and Elwy Yost.
- The connection of Weston to other towns and villages in Toronto due to Weston's 200 year old history.
- The people who built the community and their families who still live in the community.
- The village's independence from Toronto through varied occupations available in the area (both manufacturing and professional industries).



What Makes this Place Unique?

- Rich architectural history and unique houses with a mix of styles.
- The Humberstone walls originally constructed by stonemason James Gove are an important part of the community's identity.
- Important landscape features like the large trees.
- Relationship of large homes on Rosemount to the rail tracks, which is unlike other areas of Toronto where elite homes were not so close to rail tracks.
- The natural high point in landscape where water flows to the Humber in the west and Black Creek in the east.
- The spacing of homes is an apparent and common thread gluing the architectural styles together.

More information about the Weston II HCD Study can be found on the City of Toronto's [website](#).

Prepared by: Heritage Preservation Services