

Dufferin Grove Park

North-west Corner and Clubhouse Improvements

Community Resource Group Meeting Summary
January 16, 2020

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:

Anne Freeman
Daniel Halpert
David Anderson
Ellen Manney
Erella Ganon
Erin George
Irena Hrzina
Jim McInnes
Migs Bartula
Robin Crombie
Shane Morgan
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
Sofia Oliveira, Programmer, Community Recreation

Design Team (Consultants)

Megan Torza, DTAH
Victoria Bell, DTAH

Facilitators

Liz McHardy, LURA Consulting
Michelle Diplock, LURA Consulting

Other:

Michael Vieira, Assistant for City Councilor Ana Bailão
2 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 CRG member expressed the importance of including park programming during construction in the meeting's agenda. A copy of the agenda is available in Appendix A.

PRESENTATION – CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

The design team presentation consisted of a review of new landscaping updates for the project as well as an introductory discussion of what construction phasing will look like once a construction contract has been signed. Topics included: site plan and landscape updates, architectural updates, the preliminary construction schedule and the preliminary construction phasing strategy. The slides presented at the CRG meeting are available online at <https://dufferingrove-northwestrevitalization.ca/document/january-16-crg-meeting>. Questions of clarification and comments were provided by participants throughout the presentation, with a question and answer period following the presentation.

DISCUSSION SUMMARY

Following the presentation CRG members were invited to ask questions of the design team and City of Toronto staff, members were also invited to provide input into the detailed design.

Questions of Clarification and Comments about the Detailed Design

Q. It was mentioned that to the north of the rinks there is a bioswale, what is a bioswale?

A. A bioswale is similar to a ditch. It manages the flow of stormwater and allows for infiltration of surface runoff and includes a variety of plants.

Q: Will the Gladstone path have fruit trees?

A: No. The fruit trees will be located in the plaza and community garden. The type of fruit-bearing plants have been selected to provide usable ingredients for the food programs and minimize the amount of fruit that may fall to the ground or decompose.

Q: There will be a trumpet vine growing up the side of the Zamboni garage. Can there be a range of plants and roses growing up the side of the building for full season blooms?

A: Yes, the planter south of the Zamboni garage can be filled with a variety of climbing vines over time. The purpose of the design including trumpet vines is to provide a foundation for the park plantings. It is anticipated that over time the City and the community can work together to add more variety to the planting.

Q: The walkway between the Clubhouse and the Zamboni garage is currently stairs, in the new design will it be flat?

A: The walkway in that location will be sloped, accessible for wheelchairs, and it will not include stairs.

Q: Will there be access for Market vehicles to the plaza, and will there be two access points? There is concern that with only one entrance for vehicles to use there will be conflicts with drivers entering and leaving the plaza when they drop off and set up their stalls for the market.

A: Yes, there is a vehicular service access to the Plaza, currently accommodated between the Clubhouse and Zamboni garage, and additionally from the Gladstone spine via the gates at the south end of the hockey rink. However, there is an issue of coordination between all park users, which will require working

with parks staff to allow this to happen. It may also require testing the configuration of programming once the design is built.

Post-meeting note: *The service access to the plaza will only be available to the Parks maintenance crew. The City and design team have investigated ways to design for a safe and direct access for farmers market vendor vehicles onto the rink slab from the Gladstone spine. Further conversations with Market coordinators will be scheduled to review access provisions and programming impacts.*

Q: Will trucks need to cross the basketball court to exit the plaza when dropping off goods for the Farmers Market?

A: If there is a conflict with the vehicles exiting at the main access point, then yes. The design contains vehicle movement as much as possible, but it will need to be closely coordinated among park users.

Post-meeting note: *With the new design solution for vehicles accessing the rink from the Gladstone Spine, vehicular access to the basketball court will be no longer needed.*

Q: Is the railing continuous across the elevated boardwalk? And are all the stair rise and runs of equal dimension?

A: The railing is continuous along the north side of the boardwalk. The stairs are clustered in groups with consistent treads and landings and have railings that will follow the form of the stairs. There is a break in the railings along the stairs from Dufferin Street to the Clubhouse at the crossing of the diagonal accessible path.

Q: The new bake oven is a new idea; will it be more efficient? Why can't the existing oven be moved?

A: The new oven will be built only if it is not feasible to move the existing oven. If it is not feasible to move the oven the old oven will remain in place and a new oven will be built in the proposed location in the design.

C: Some participants expressed concern over a new bake oven.

Post-meeting Note: *The City is investigating the possibility of relocating the existing oven to the proposed location prior to the construction commencement. If the condition of the existing oven does not allow for the relocation, then in consultation with recreation staff who are using the oven frequently, a new oven will be specified and installed. Then, the existing small oven will be demolished.*

Q: How will bathrooms be accessed during the construction shutdown? It was also noted that the Fieldhouse washrooms are not suitable and should be fixed.

A: The City is looking at providing temporary facilities in the interim before those washrooms open. The City has secured funding to renovate the Fieldhouse washrooms for 2021.

Q: Market vendors use electricity and water on the apron of the clubhouse. Will the Market have access to power during the first summer of construction?

A: This is the feedback the project team is looking for on the construction phasing plan. If the Market needs access to power, it is something the project team would like to know so they can try to address it in the plan.

Post-meeting note: *The Design Team is investigating maintaining power and water connections along the west side of the Clubhouse, and are looking into preserving the existing Zamboni garage during the*

construction period (which has power and water connections) in order to support Market and other functions that may require power and water service.

Q: There are 5,000 people that come to the Market in the spring, summer and fall. What can the Market expect from the City to help run the Market for as long as possible during construction?

A: The City would like to work with the Market and park users to find solutions for construction phasing. Operations and Parks and Recreation will set a meeting with the Farmers Market to discuss this.

Q: The Farmers Market is desperately looking for a winter location during construction, can City Council and City Staff work with them to find a new location?

A: The City is exploring possibilities.

C: It was noted that the City and the Farmers Market team would organize a time to initiate discussions following the meeting.

Q: Where is the staging area for the Night of Dread going to be, might this be the first year we don't have the Night of Dread?

A: In terms of phasing, this is the kind of feedback the City of Toronto and DTAH wishes to hear in order to better plan for phasing and construction. This is to ensure there is coordination between the construction schedule as well as existing programming.

C: Later it was noted that this discussion will take place as part of a meeting to discuss programming coordination during construction.

Q: Is the focus of the phasing plan to keep the hockey and shinny pads open for skating? Can the phasing be changed to favour the Night of Dread and the Market?

A: The Clubhouse renovation will take the longest to be done, and the rinks do not take more than one season to construct. This is why the phasing strategy leaves the Clubhouse inaccessible for the longest period of time. The goal is to ensure as little disruption as possible to the rest of the park.

C: Clay and Paper Theatre noted it has faced financial challenges regarding funding reductions from the Ontario Arts Council, and an increase in the cost of space. This makes it difficult to find and afford storage space to fit the puppets.

Q: How can space be secured to use other rinks for bike polo during the summer?

A: There is a lot of other rink space in the city that is unused in the summer, so there should be space available. In order to book any other City rink facility, it was recommended to call the City of Toronto's customer service line.

Q: Up until the construction tender process everything typically goes according to plan, but then falls apart. Is there a way to prevent this from happening?

A: The City will include stiff delay penalties for the construction contractor, but it was noted that enforcing these penalties can be a challenge because the City does not have control over who the contractor they hire will be, or what site conditions may impact or delay construction. The City of Toronto will do everything within their power to have it reopened on time.

Q: Is there a way to keep the existing Zamboni garage available temporarily for access to plumbing and electricity? This would be for the Farmers Market to be able to operate during the summer and fall in the first year of construction.

A: This option is a possibility and the project team will look into it.

Post-Meeting Note: The design team believes the demolition of the existing Zamboni Garage can be delayed until the latter phases of the construction project in order to allow that building to be used to support park programming during construction. This will be noted as part of the construction phasing requirements statements contained within the project specifications.

Q: The new community garden fence is described as a mesh, does the new fencing still allow kids to climb on it? Kids like to be able to do that, consider maintaining this.

A: The mesh would be a polymer mesh and mounted to the inside of the wood fencing posts and rails.

Q: The existing fence type around the community garden is beautiful, can those elements be saved?

A: The new fence takes design cues from the existing fence, but is required due to the expanded footprint of the garden and the disrepair of the existing fence. Specific elements of the existing fence can be salvaged by community members and reinstalled inside the community garden, but will not be reinstalled as part of the perimeter fence due to durability and safety concerns.

Q: What will happen to the existing fireplace in the Clubhouse which was donated by the Maytree Foundation and CELOS?

A: The City has the intention to remove the existing indoor wood burning oven at the end of the skate season. If the safety of reusing the oven is confirmed, then the City will return it to CELOS for use in another place.

Q: For the ramp coming from Dufferin Park Avenue up to the Clubhouse, how is it separated from the stairs so that people will not fall?

A: A railing separates the stairs from the ramp so that people with accessibility concerns will be able to navigate it safely.

Q: Can the ramp be built without the accompanying stairs?

A: There is not enough length from the sidewalk to the access door to the refrigeration room for only a ramp. The stairs and path along the building are needed to access that room. Additionally, building a ramp right against the side of the building would expose the foundation, which could pose problems.

C: The interface between the ramp and the stairs will have suitable protection for safety and accessibility.

Q: In the Clubhouse, can the point of sale and the office locations be switched?

A: No, the layout is designed to maintain the janitor's closet as close to the washrooms as possible for easy cleaning. This is also to ensure that if the multi-purpose room is divided there will be an office in each room.

Q: When the construction hoardings (fences) go up, is that the moment when Clay and Paper's puppets would need to be removed? Is there another place that the City can suggest for puppet storage?

A: All elements within the northwest corner of the park that belong to community partners must be removed prior to the construction hoarding being installed. Capital Staff suggested that this is an operational issue and nothing to do with the construction that Capital projects oversees. Clay and Paper Theatre should meet with Operations and Parks and Recreation staff to discuss this issue.

C: Clay and Paper Theatre has used storage containers in other parks, and this solution could work here too.

Q: Will DTAH continue to be involved in the project once construction begins?

A: Yes.

Other Comments:

C: Participants agreed that park activation during construction was a good idea. It was suggested that the City consider whether they could invest in activating the space during construction. CRG members were supportive of any funding available to activate the space being used to support the existing community groups (in particular community arts groups) that use the park. As one example, they indicated that a heated tent could be used to support programming, as an innovative way of providing programming. They posed the question “is there is another park in the city with a tent or structure Dufferin Grove could borrow”? They suggested money for activation and maintaining the sense of community would need to be included in the budget.

Post-meeting note: The City is investigating temporary facilities to support ongoing programming as well as possibilities of relocating programming.

C: If food for Friday Night Suppers is being brought from MacGregor Park, Cobb Café or other spaces it is a long distance that people and food will need to travel. This could have a negative impact on people attending the suppers and the people who will be bringing the food in.

C: The edge of the concrete pad around the clubhouse needs edging in addition to the railing for accessibility.

Post-meeting note: A railing is being installed around the west and south edge of the apron surrounding the Clubhouse, including a low rail that is cane-detectable.

C: CRG members reiterated concern that tender processes typically do not go according to plan, if there are delays CRG members requested that the City communicate this as soon as possible.

C: A CRG member wanted to ensure the design team was aware that the area to the north of the rinks (where the bioswale is planned) floods in the spring.

C: New railing materials (especially aluminum) do not wear as well as older materials. They tend to buckle and cut people’s hands.

NEXT STEPS

Liz McHardy of LURA Consulting thanked the Community Resource Group Members for their time and input and invited them to send in any more comments or concerns. Megan Torza from DTAH reiterated that the next Community Resources Group meeting would be scheduled once a construction contractor has been selected. Megan also mentioned that there are several meetings that need to happen. These meetings are outlined in the Action Items section.

MEETING ADJOURNED

ACTION ITEMS

Spring 2020 – Meeting between the City of Toronto Parks Staff and the Farmers Market to discuss vehicle coordination.

Spring 2020 – Meeting to discuss programming coordination during construction.

Spring 2020 – Meeting for information on when clubhouse users will need to remove their materials from the clubhouse prior to construction.

APPENDIX A – CRG MEETING AGENDA



Dufferin Grove Park North-west Corner and Clubhouse Improvements

Community Resource Group Meeting #7

Thursday January 16, 2020

St. Wenceslaus Church (496 Gladstone Ave)

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

AGENDA

Meeting Purpose:

- To provide an update on the project, including architectural updates
- To present and gather feedback on the preliminary construction schedule and phasing strategy
- To present any additional project updates

Agenda:

- 6:30 pm** **Opening Remarks, Introductions and Agenda Review**
- Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting, Facilitator
- 6:35 pm** **Presentation**
- Megan Torza, DTAH
 - Site Plan / Landscape Updates
 - Architectural Updates
 - Preliminary Construction Schedule
 - Preliminary Construction Phasing Strategy
 - Next Steps
- 7:10 pm** **Discussion**
- 8:25 pm** **Closing and Next Steps**
- Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting, Facilitator
- 8:30 pm** **Adjourn**