

Midtown Planning Group Meeting #2: Parks and Public Realm Implementation

MINUTES

June 11, 2020:

Location: Virtual Teleconference (WebEx Event)

Next Meeting: July 22, 2020: 3:00 – 4:30 PM (via WebEx Event)

Introduction and Opening Remarks:

Cassidy Ritz, City Planning, hosted the WebEx session and welcomed the attendees to the MPG meeting. She started with an overview of the agenda and introduced the attendees and their representative organizations. Ms. Ritz then invited Councillors to give their opening remarks. A total of 25 MPG members participated in the meeting.

Councillor Josh Matlow (Ward 12), Lola Dandybaeva (Ward 8, on behalf of Councillor Mike Colle), and Rachel Van Fraassen (Ward 15, on behalf of Councillor Jaye Robinson) shared their thoughts and concerns about planning in the area. They highlighted the importance of parks and public realm improvements in Midtown and its increased urgency in light of COVID-19. There was also enthusiasm towards innovative ideas, such as the decking of the Davisville Subway Station.

Midtown Parks and Public Realm Implementation Strategy Update:

Svetlana Lavrentieva, City Planning, presented an overview of the Public Realm Moves. She covered the City's tools to implement its actions, the phasing of the work program and coordinating development to provide public realm space. Plans and renderings for the designs of the Eglinton Green Line and the Park Street Loop Public Realm Moves were shared as well as some of the challenges along Broadway Avenue. Ms. Lavrentieva also posed some questions for emailed feedback after the meeting. These asked for ideas on quick and low-cost public realm improvements as part of a Public Realm Move, if any of the Public Realm Moves should be prioritized for construction, and if any of the proposed park spaces within the secondary plan should be prioritized for acquisition.

Corinne Fox, Parks, Forestry & Recreation, provided an update on parkland acquisition and improvement in Midtown. She spoke on the implementation strategy for parkland, some of the challenges in parkland acquisition, recently secured and completed parks and shared the criteria being used to prioritize parkland projects. An update was also provided on the implementation of the Eglinton Park Master Plan and improvement of the Davisville Aquatic Centre.

A copy of the agenda is provided in **Appendix A**. A list of staff and MPG members who attended the meeting is provided in **Appendix B**. A copy of the emailed feedback for action items submitted after the meeting is provided in **Appendix C**.

Questions & Answers:

Following the presentation, attendees were able to ask panellists follow-up questions: This was facilitated through using the WebEx “raise hand” function or typing questions in the chat. Ms. Ritz invited attendees to follow up and send questions directly to staff if they were not addressed.

Q: COVID-19 left some issues unresolved from previous years. There are major gaps in cyclist and pedestrian safety. Safety issues haven't been resolved since a town hall last year. There are also safety issues around COVID-19 and with reopening (e.g. physical distancing on the Yonge Subway). Are there any initiatives we can do to improve walking and cycling as transportation modes and their safety? Particularly on major arterials as a way to reduce the load on Yonge Subway. And with Eglinton Connects, is there a way to accelerate interim solutions along Eglinton Avenue as part of COVID-19 response?

A:

(Cassidy Ritz)

- Partners in Transportation Planning and Transportation Services are best-equipped to discuss network and subway issues
- For transit, will look into getting representation from the TTC at next MPG meeting
- Planning for an MPG meeting on transportation is underway, with transportation staff present
- For Eglinton Connects, staff in Transportation Services are looking at implementation along all of Eglinton Avenue and assessing what an interim condition may look like
- Councillor Matlow moved a motion at the last Council meeting to study cycling lanes on Avenue Road to connect with the University Avenue ActiveTO initiative

(Al Rezoski)

- Bike Share Toronto stations are being expanded across the entire secondary plan area, to be completed by end of June

(Lola Dandybaeva)

- Councillor Colle moved a motion at the last Council meeting for an initiative to study securing bikes for low-income residents

Q: The parkland density assessment looks good in the Davisville area. Is the Mount Pleasant Cemetery counted as an equivalent to a park? There have been accessibility issues during COVID-19. Interested in providing info on priorities.

A:

(Corinne Fox)

- Cemeteries are excluded from the provision rate, so Davisville is considered a low-provision area
- Davisville is recognized as a priority and there will be an upcoming workshop with landowners to coordinate parkland dedication for larger parks

(Cassidy Ritz)

- The parkland provision map is based on 2016 population and data and doesn't include what is approved but not yet constructed
- With 2016 data, the map does not represent the latest population or employment estimates
- Parks Forestry and Recreation will be updating the parkland provision map to reflect the current and anticipated population

Q: For the Eglinton Green Line, with sites such as 90 and 150 Eglinton Avenue East, how will we protect the eventual purpose of these spots while the rest of the street has not been set back as much to ensure the space is not privatized (e.g. patios)?

(Svetlana Lavrentieva)

- The City is asking for a variety of areas for setbacks: some of these are for pedestrians, others for furniture and tree planting, etc.
- Some spaces will be flexible and dedicated for programming (such as patios or markets) and will reflect nature of developments
- These shouldn't be taken over by a private developer
- Some areas may be used by owner but the majority of the area dedicated for pedestrian use

(Cassidy Ritz)

- The City is also looking into how to secure privately-owned spaces to be publicly accessible (e.g. easements)
- The upcoming Bill 108 regulations to be released by the province should clarify the actions the City can take to secure them

Q: Looking for clarification on the Yonge Street Squares. It looks like the Canadian Tire Oxford development.

A:

(Cassidy Ritz)

- The Yonge Street Squares concept was from the 2014 Parks and Streetscape Master Plan was completed
- Idea of a series of squares along Yonge Street at key intersections along with general streetscape improvements
- At Yonge and Eglinton, seeking the largest possible square
 - Northeast corner already secured
 - When 1 Eglinton Avenue East redevelops, a square will also be secured for the south side
 - The secondary plan states that the largest public square will be secured at Canada Square

(Svetlana Lavrentieva)

- We're looking to have a cohesive materiality and approach running along one stretch, to be explored in the fall

Q: Where is Redpath Revisited on the list of priorities? Noticed it wasn't mentioned today. South of Soudan is missing a sidewalk on one side. In light of COVID-19, this should be our priority.

A:

(Svetlana Lavrentieva)

- Redpath Revisited will be examined in Q4 2020, looking at different sections, improvements
- This will also look into creating a shared space north of Eglinton Avenue

(Cassidy Ritz)

- For the shared street component, the City will retain a traffic consultant for analysis (although traffic patterns are currently disrupted due to COVID-19)
- There is a section of Redpath Avenue without sidewalks which is planned to be revamped
- Team is aware that there are also other streets in Midtown without sidewalk infrastructure

Q: Our two largest bodies of green space are cemeteries: Mt. Pleasant & Mt. Hope. Will the City work with cemetery management to improve access: e.g. expand hours to correspond with daylight; & improve entrance accessibility for cyclists & mobility devices?

A:

(Corinne Fox)

- There is direction in the secondary plan for the City to work with cemeteries for improving access

Q: There was a reference made "like a park" at 66 Broadway Ave. This might be referring to a landscaped mid-block connection between Erskine and Broadway. In the world of parks, are mid-block connections going to be synonymous with parks?

A:

(Corinne Fox)

- Mid-block connections and parks are not the same but they work together to connect green spaces
- The parkette at 66 Broadway Avenue is small but is planned to be expanded with an on-site dedication from the development to the west

(Cassidy Ritz)

- Connectivity is an important component of parks but mid-block connections wouldn't be considered to be a park space
- The development at 66 Broadway Avenue development secured a small park

(Jason Brander)

- As part of the 55 Erskine Avenue development, 280 square metres of parkland will be secured to connect with the site on 66 Broadway Avenue
- Work underway with Parks, Forestry & Recreation staff on the transition space between both parks

Q: The northwest corner of Yonge & Eglinton used to have large open space on the ground level that was significantly decreased by its structure. There was a great open space that was accessible by elevator. Is that considered private space or publicly accessible?

A:

(Al Rezoski)

- This was formally secured by the Privately Owned Public Spaces process, with several signs on-site to direct people towards the space
- This is fully accessible to the public

Q: What goals do you have for the Canada Square site to increase accessibility from the Quantum POP to Eglinton Park/Duplex?

A:

(Oren Tamir)

- The plan is to have a mid-block connection from the corner of Yonge and Eglinton to the new park on the Canada Square site

Q: Is the subway trench contemplated as part of the park plan? Imagining that it might be costly and wondering how it's contemplated as parkland.

A:

(Cassidy Ritz)

- Previously, the staff report identified this for a separate study
- While the park is part of the implementation work, this will take longer and so is separated to not hold up the other initiatives

(Corinne Fox)

- Will have to undertake a feasibility study with the TTC, which is planned to start later this year

Q: Will the City have to trade off building height, setbacks, floor plate, etc. in order to get funding for parks & public realm?

A:

(Cassidy Ritz)

- Normally, parkland dedication is secured from all development regardless of height
- The issue is usually more whether a functional park would result on the site or if it makes more sense to put this towards an off-site park
- There would also be Section 37 community benefits in exchange for increased height and density
- Under the changes in Bill 108, Section 37 benefits would no longer apply: parkland dedication would instead be based on the proposal and its land value

(Oren Tamir)

- Section 37 will continue to apply for at least another year or whenever the province issues its regulations

(Cassidy Ritz)

- While the finalized regulations are pending, we know there will still be some form of community benefits present
- We know there will no longer be a negotiation process associated with it

Synopsis of Emailed Feedback and Questions:

Following the MPG meeting, MPG members were invited to submit feedback via email on the draft MPG Terms of Reference, the Public Realm Moves and on the WebEx virtual meeting

format. A synopsis of the feedback in each of these areas are prepared below. In addition, MPG members were encouraged to submit their ideas for the City's COVID-19 Recovery & Rebuild initiative through a survey link. A copy of the full email text received is provided in **Appendix C**.

Terms of Reference and WebEx Events Format:

There were some typographical corrections for the Terms of Reference and mention on the importance of advancing heritage work earlier.

Some MPG members asked for the presentations to be forwarded ahead of time and to look into changing some aspects of the current virtual meetings format. In particular, these were to help with tracking the conversation through clearly identifying speakers (and their represented associations) as well as the names of City staff. There were also questions about whether WebEx Events is able to support breakout groups to help facilitate smaller discussions.

Public Realm Moves:

Three questions were provided to help guide the feedback.

1. Considering that some of the Public Realm Moves require reconstruction of streets and coordination with servicing upgrades, do you have any ideas for “light touch” and low-cost improvements (up to three) you think the City should advance as a quick start project help start advancing public realm improvements within one of the Public Realm Moves?

- Feedback was focused on making pedestrian-friendly street improvements, often with respect to road safety or enhancing public life
- Accessibility was also raised as an issue
- Specific suggestions included:
 - Pedestrianizing the east end of Helendale Avenue and installing public space improvements around Montgomery Square and the plaza at Whitehaus
 - Improving the Edith Drive entrance at Eglinton Park: road improvements and sidewalk installation for pedestrian safety
 - Establishing shared streets in the area with a focus on vehicle speed reduction (e.g. along Helendale Avenue, Soudan Avenue, Redpath Avenue)
 - Establishing separated bike lanes, preferably with creative décor
 - Major streets were suggested, particularly Yonge Street, Mount Pleasant Road, Davisville Avenue and Eglinton Avenue
 - Installing bump-outs with hardy plants
 - General additions of additional seating to encourage people to stay
 - Road improvements along:
 - Cowbell Lane –crosswalk between 2181/2191 Yonge Street and 40 Holly Street, and general traffic calming
 - Soudan Avenue – general pedestrian safety and traffic calming
 - Redpath Avenue – crosswalk between Soudan Avenue and Manor Road

2. Is there a Public Realm Move in particular you think should be prioritized for full construction ahead of others? Why?

- Recommendations generally in support of streetscape improvements in areas where pedestrian infrastructure is a priority
- Parks improvements were also mentioned
- Specific Public Realm Moves that were suggested included:
 - Redpath Revisited between Soudan Avenue and Manor Road to increase sidewalk capacity
 - Balliol/Pailton Green Streets on the north side of Balliol Street between Pailton Crescent and Yonge Street through sidewalk widening
 - Midtown Greenways along Soudan, prioritizing pedestrian crossings at cross streets for road safety
- Specific suggestions included Public Realm Moves that:
 - Install kid-friendly spaces
 - Encourage boulevard gardening (such as along Sherwood Avenue)
 - Green the Broadway Loop and potentially Eglinton Avenue as priorities due to high density and development activity
 - Accelerate improvements at Eglinton Park due to its high usage as a large park space
 - Complete the Yonge-Helendale street park
- Support for upcoming major projects such as the study on decking of the Davisville Subway Station

3. Of the proposed parks or park expansion areas on the Parks and Open Space Network Plan in the Secondary Plan, which do you think the City should target and prioritize for acquisition? Why?

- Suggested locations were generally within Apartment Neighbourhoods as well as corridors in Midtown
- Municipally-owned lands were also recommended as a relatively easy target
- Specific locations for acquisition included:
 - Yonge Street
 - In particular, the intersection with Roselawn Avenue near the BMO site
 - Converting the Castlefield Avenue Green P parking lot to below-grade and replacing the former site with a park
 - Lands along the Broadway Loop
 - North and south ends of Redpath Avenue
 - The Priority Parkland designated on Soudan Avenue
 - Lands within the Davisville Apartment Neighbourhood
 - Hillsdale Parkette (for improvement with a walkway between Soudan Avenue and Hillsdale Avenue East)
 - The municipally-owned lands along the Beltline east of Mount Pleasant Road, serving as an off-leash dog park
 - A linear park to connect Millwood Road with Davisville Avenue between the Davisville Aquatic Centre and the development at 1951 Yonge Street
 - Additional sites in the priority list submitted by SERRA in 2018 as part of a Midtown in Focus workshop
 - Necessary lands for decking the Davisville Subway Station
 - Lands behind 2131 Yonge Street, with focus on implementation
 - Parking lot behind 2075-2111 Yonge Street to connect Tullis Drive and Glebe Manor Park
 - Potential further expansion to 20 Glebe Road East

Appendix A: Agenda

Midtown Planning Group Meeting #2 - Midtown Parks and Public Realm Implementation

Thursday, June 11, 2020 | 3:00 – 4:30pm | WebEx Meeting

Discussion Item	Staff Lead	Duration
1 Introduction and Orientation	Cassidy Ritz	10 mins
2 Councillor Remarks		15 mins
3 Midtown Public Realm Update	Svetlana Lavrentieva	25 mins
4 Midtown Parks Update	Corrine Fox	10 mins
5 Next Steps	Cassidy Ritz & Svetlana Lavrentieva	10 mins
6 Q&A Session	All	20 mins

Appendix B: List of Attendees

Midtown Planning Group Meeting #2 - Midtown Parks and Public Realm Implementation

Thursday, June 11, 2020 | 3:00 – 4:30pm | WebEx Meeting

Councillors and Staff:

- Councillor Josh Matlow (Ward 12)
- Lola Dandybaeva (Ward 8, on behalf of Councillor Mike Colle)
- Rachel Van Fraassen (Ward 15, on behalf of Councillor Jaye Robinson)

City Staff:

- Al Rezoski, City Planning
- Alex Teixeira, City Planning
- Andrea Old, City Planning
- Anson Ma, City Planning
- Cassidy Ritz, City Planning
- Heather Oliver, City Planning
- Jason Brander, City Planning
- Oren Tamir, City Planning
- Svetlana Lavrentieva, City Planning
- Corinne Fox, Parks, Forestry & Recreation
- Paul Farish, Parks, Forestry & Recreation
- Toni Papa, Parks, Forestry & Recreation

MPG Members:

- Al Kivi, South Eglinton Ratepayers' and Residents' Association
- Andy Gort, South Eglinton Ratepayers' and Residents' Association
- Ann King, Stanley Knowles Housing Co-operative
- Daryle Hunt, Oriole Park Association
- Diane White, Quantum Owners and Residents Association
- Doug Obright, Leaside Residents' Association
- Geoff Kettel, Leaside Residents' Association and the Federation of North Toronto Residents' Associations
- Geri Berholz, Republic Residents' Association
- Heather Harris, Oriole Park Association
- Henry Byres, Bayview-Leaside BIA and Midtown Yonge BIA
- Jane Fitzwilliam, West Keewatin Neighbours
- John Taranu, Deer Park Residents Group and Cycle Toronto Midtown



- Keven Menager, Mount Pleasant Village BIA
- Lynne LeBlanc, Davisville Junior Public School
- Margaret Cheung, Anne Johnston Health Station
- Maureen Kapral, Lytton Park Residents' Organization
- Michael Black, Cycle Toronto
- Shelley Laskin, TDSB
- Susana Saravia, Stanley Knowles Housing Co-operative
- Tom Cohen, Eglinton Park Residents' Association
- Tomi Mitrovic, Quantum Owners and Residents Association
- Yvonne Choi, Toronto Lands Corporation (TDSB)

Appendix C: Emailed Feedback

Midtown Planning Group Meeting #2 - Midtown Parks and Public Realm Implementation

Thursday, June 11, 2020 | 3:00 – 4:30pm | WebEx Meeting

From: Geoff Kettel

On Behalf of the Leaside Residents' Association and the Federation of North Toronto Residents' Associations

Hi Heather

Re terms of reference -- a few comments

Page 2 - section 3 #7,- HCD study, #8 Heritage guidelines

Why shown as Future Phase - this is very disappointing - they need to be moved ahead ASAP

Page 3 section 3 (cont). - (#9) Yonge Eglinton should be Yonge-Eglinton

Page 4 section 5 (cont.) - Local Residential Associations should be Local Residents Associations

Page 7 Attachment 1 -

Bayview-Leaside should be Bayview-Leaside

Leaside Property Owners Association should be Leaside Residents Association (name changed last year)

Lytton Park Residents Association should be Lytton Park Residents Organization

Walk Toronto should be added??

Regards

Geoff

From: Tom Cohen

On Behalf of the Eglinton Park Residents' Association

Hi Heather and Cassidy

Re Slide 59 (help us identify it as they don't come numbered):

"Feedback from the MPG"

ONE

Re fast vs slow improvements: you ask.

For public support some quick, tangible results are very good. "At last they're doing something" carries a lot of water.

Some thoughts:

As we all know, roads are a huge part of public realm. And the car has taken them over.

Now, with Covid, we have had a holiday from traffic, amidst the economic woe. And it was really nice. Almost none of that black particulate matter on my table on the porch, that fine stuff that poisons people. Cleaner air; you can actually smell the flowers and the appetizing steaks grilling in back yards. Less background noise, and you can hear the birds. And, wonderful to see, actual children, on bikes, riding streets, in a city from which, sadly, children had largely vanished from public places.

And on Duplex they put up pylons and declared a shared space, all the way up to Yonge Blvd: that is probably 2.8 km or so of Woonerf, on the cheap.

And on side streets kids are playing basketball and street hockey.

Now the cars are beginning to creep back.

Me, I remember having a very nice dinner in Copenhagen, between the royal palace and the old fortress, not far from the famous mermaid statue. It was our anniversary, and the food was Nordic Neo, every bite full of flavour, and the waiter knew each farm, and loved to talk. And cars would drive by, on a cobbled road, going maybe 20 km/h max.

It is a whole other culture of driving. And I want Toronto to go there, via rethinking who uses streets. Interestingly, Duplex is now Woonerfish. And people drive slower than they do on Orchard View, speed bumps and all. It is the humans who have been given permission to invade the old car-preserve.

Now we cannot grab Broadway, but Helendale, Soudan, Redpath, maybe even Edith, Erskine, Roehampton, Keewatin: there are streets where we might be able to declare permanent multi-use space, and give priority to people. Put some flowers in nice planters, make the cars slalom, at low speed.

Also, fairly soon, we can seal the east end of Helendale, at Yonge, as soon as Whitehaus has finished interior work, and put that plaza Mike Colle and EPRA have long been pushing for, connecting Montgomery Square with the improved sidewalk at Whitehaus. There is a lot of room there, as the entrance to Whitehaus is many metres west of Yonge.

TWO

Is there a big move to do first?

If you could do the subway trench (ahead of Davisville Yards), that would be spectacular. People would be truly impressed. Boston (the Big Dig), Chicago (all that park atop the railway, by the famous Bean). It would be the North Toronto High Line. Throw in some native plants, some butterfly friendly, pollinator friendly garden, some fun stuff for kids to clamber on, and some good-natured art (a big raccoon a kid can climb on, a wave-deck bikes can rumble over, a zig-zag for scooters....).

Meanwhile, the heavy need is east of Yonge, as you note. And I observe, informally, a vast increase in the number of families with kids in the high rise, and many of them hike down to Eglinton Park for the playground. So installing more kid-friendly spaces, on private or public turf, will really help. Kid-watching is a social glue (as is dog-watching: the dogs gambol and the owners gossip, talk civic politics, and sometimes fall in love.).

Boulevards: are there quick ways of encouraging boulevard gardening. There are nice patches on Sherwood. Local initiative.

But I am drifting off your big-move question.

THREE

Where to get some park space?

I am keen on Yonge. In part that is because of the tussle around the old BMO site, where the developer wants two towers and a very small park far from Yonge and we want a bigger plaza on Yonge at Roselawn, the NE corner of the site.

And we would love to see the Green P at Castlefield put below grade, with a park atop it.

But the bigger need, as I write here, is among the apartments: if you could consolidate your holdings at the north end of Redpath, that is a very good spot. The south end is lovely already, and the pressures are less.

I don't know Davisville well enough to comment.

I am impressed by the contrast between the well-used field at North Toronto Collegiate, where the sight of so many people enjoying the space is lovely to behold, and the rather unfriendly surroundings of the John Fisher playground. Why not do at John Fisher what they do at the high school, and make the space welcoming. And ditto Davisville school when it is ready. And think to do the same when St. Monica's rebuilds.

And what of the field at Northern Secondary?

Now, when we did the Block Study at NDL it became clear that much of that block is the library roof itself. I proposed transforming it into a hanging garden. The library was adamant: No Way José.

Why not? Now we have Neon and Whitehaus and Montgomery Square right there. As well as Stanley Knowles. Why not find a way to transform it, merge it with the eventual reconfiguration of the East and South sides of NDL.



NO NUMBER:

I continue to bang my drum for very complete streets: kid-friendly, lively, full of Jane-Jacobs serendipity. Water play. Playful art. Street furniture to interact with, bring out the inner child in adults too. And I advocate for the forgotten adolescent, for whom nobody ever wants to plan, as we hope they disappear until the prefrontal cortex finally myelinates and at 25 they learn to plan ahead. But complete communities means teens too, with spaces that work for them.

And I want nature, and ecological awareness, and history, from the Ice Age to the Indigenous, across the settlers to the immigrants; it should be more visible. Yonge Street: we deserve an arch that says "Yonder lie Wawa, Kenora, and Lake of the Woods". And we should bring back our lost rivers, or at least point out where they run. "Here lies Mud Creek. It remembers where it heads." And signal the Beltline's lost stations.

Well, we can keep brainstorming forever.

MEETING FORMAT:

Help us with the chat. I tried to submit a question but it vanished into WebEx ether. And help a bit with the hand-raising. And, perhaps, make sure that question-askers give their names, as it is often hard to track them. And maybe ask each of us to post not only name but also organization.

The names of the city staff go by fast, and I struggle to capture them. So we at EPRA would love a directory: who does what and what is the email of each. It zips by too fast to catch on a medium with odd acoustics.

As for WebEx itself: I find it a bit harder than Zoom. A bit fussier, less intuitive.

And I want to know how Cassidy got her mounted bat. Cool!

Tom Cohen

EPRA chair

Cc Carla Lutchman

From: Lynne LeBlanc

On Behalf of the Davisville Junior Public School

Hello Heather and Cassidy,

I hope this email finds you well.

Thank you so much for organizing these virtual meetings. They are informative and a good method for providing insights, and ask questions.

I was a bit late last week to the call and I am not sure if the following two areas have been asked and answered:

- In light of all the planned development, how is the city working with the various school boards to ensure that there is adequate space being allocated for students? (by allocating space within private construction projects for education – at a market agreeable rate, similar to the model in downtown?)
- What is the timeline for the aquatic centre to begin construction and be completed on Davisville, next to the new school build for Davisville Junior Public School (currently expected to be substantially completed by late spring 2021)?

I appreciate any feedback you may be able to provide.

Thank you again for all the work and preparation that your group is doing,

Lynne

From: Andy Gort

On Behalf of the South Eglinton Ratepayers' and Residents' Association

Hi Cassidy and Heather,

Thanks for your response in the email below.

I also had a couple of other comments:

1) At the June 11th MPG meeting #2, I believe there was a request for us to review the Midtown Parks and Public Realm proposal and identify our priorities and "Quick wins"?

I also think you identified a deadline to respond back to the City?

Unless I missed it, **could you forward the presentation from the June 11th meeting to us**, so we can use that as our base?

(same as <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/8ed9-2018-05-23-MIF-Parks-and-Public-Realm.pdf> ?).

2) Now that we have a few virtual MPG meetings under our belt, I have a comment about the effectiveness of the virtual meeting format.

I think it is very effective when relaying information, including asking for clarifications. I think that was more or less the intend of our first meeting with as topic the Terms of Reference, the Zoning study and Built Form.

I found the virtual format less effective for the second session on Parks and Public Realm, where it would have been very helpful to have small break-out groups to discuss this topic. It



didn't really feel as if we had an effective way to interact with each other during the meeting. By the way, I haven't found this to be a problem when the meeting is with a small group (5-10 participants). **Does there exist in WEBEX an opportunity to create virtual breakout groups?**

One other observation about the virtual meeting format for a large group is that they take much more time than a large in-person meeting, which limits what you can accomplish in a 1-2 hour slot.

Please note that we are very pleased that the MPG meetings have started again.

Best,

Andy Gort

From: Tomi Mitrovic

On Behalf of the Quantum Owners and Residents Association

Could the presentations also be shared either right before the meeting or even during the meeting? This may be a function of Webex to add attachments to the meeting. It would be extremely helpful to reference during the meeting/Q&A session.

I agree with the breakout idea from Andy. That sort of interaction feels like a missing component to the meetings, as it's very siloed right now and doesn't really enable anyone to determine any sort of consensus. Hopefully now that we're two meetings in, we can cut back on the mic test and personal introduction time (~25 minutes) to make some time for that.

As someone that's been working remotely long before this pandemic, I fully understand that this is an *enormous* challenge to adapt to, and I want to commend everyone for doing a phenomenal job so far!

Thanks,

Tomi

From: Jane Fitzwilliam

On Behalf of the West Keewatin Neighbours

Hi Heather,

Here is the feedback requested on Public Realm and Parks

1) no suggestion at this time - all seem like big ticket items



2) 1st priority - greening of Broadway loop

Reasons:

In densest part of area in midtown

Has the highest population

So much development activity, seems like act now or lose the opportunity (like at Yonge st)

Very close 2nd priority - greening of Eglinton

Reasons: also impacts most amount of people but doesn't feel as pressured with window of opportunity.

3) park acquisition- 1st choice again focus on Broadway loop.

Next choice would be sections at top and bottom of Redpath. Church ground and spot between Erskine and Keewatin to complete the full street plan - create the destination.

Please reach out if any questions.

Thanks,

Jane Fitzwilliam

West Keewatin Neighbours

From: Ann King and Susana Saravia

On Behalf of the Stanley Knowles Housing Co-operative

Feedback on Midtown Planning Group Meeting #2 Parks and Public Realm June 11, 2020

From Stanley Knowles Housing Co-operative (Ann King and Susana Saravia)

SKHC support the plan laid out for improving the public realm in our community. Our priorities for 'public realm moves' are those initiatives that enhance and protect the safety and comfort of the people who live here. We have highlighted the following items:

Wide sidewalks – this is key. Sidewalks must be able to accommodate not only the increasing population, but the mobility devices required by an aging population and families with young children. This necessary for public safety and access.

Safe pedestrian crossings are essential for public safety. Pedestrian crossing signals must allow adequate time for elderly people to get to the other side. Vehicles must not be allowed to stop or park within 50 feet of an intersection; this obstructs visibility for

both motorists and pedestrians. Busy intersections should be clearly marked with guidelines and signs for both pedestrian (e.g. Orchard View)

Planting and seating allow improve the environment and give elderly pedestrian a chance to rest.

We share the concerns noted in “**Broadway Avenue Challenges**”. **Where will the space come from for the improvements?** Traffic has increased on Broadway due to the construction on Eglinton. This will continue or increase if vehicle traffic is reduced on Eglinton after the completion of the LRT. The fact that Broadway is lighted at all major intersections over to Bayview is another factor. Vehicles parked/stopped both legally and illegally on both sides of Broadway at Yonge impede the flow of traffic and reduce visibility.

Questions from page 59 of PowerPoint.

- *Considering that some of the Public Realm Moves require reconstruction of streets and coordination with servicing upgrades, do you have any ideas for “light touch” and low-cost improvements (up to three) you think the City should advance as a quick start project help start advancing public realm improvements within one of the Public Realm Moves?*
 1. **Improve the entrance to Eglinton Park from Edith.** Grade and pave the road and put in a sidewalk. The current situation is unsafe for pedestrian going the park or the NTCC.
 2. **Close off Helendale at Yonge to vehicle traffic permanently** in time for the completion of the Whitehaus development. It has been closed for @ 4 years already with no ill effect; there are signalled intersections 1 block north and south; it makes sense to do this now before the development is completed so that planning and construction of the extension of the existing Street park can proceed efficiently.
 3. Montgomery Square is essentially very exposed concrete slab. The planting will hopefully grow to provide some shade. In the meantime, would it be possible to **install a few attractive, secure umbrellas or other shade devices** to give protection from the sun in some places. This same recommendation applies to 66 Broadway and 77 Keewatin. Pending expansion and development, a few planters, some seating, and shade would make a big difference and immediately useable.

- *Is there are a Public Realm Move in particular you think should be prioritized for full construction ahead of others? Why?*

1. Eglinton Park should be given a high priority. It is used by many people and it is one of the areas few real parks. Completing its improvement would assist the most people while other smaller spaces are developed.
 2. The completion of the Yonge-Helendale street park. Timing is everything. It makes sense to complete that while the developments are being finished. The area has been under construction for 5 years. Finish already!
- *Of the proposed parks or park expansion areas on the Parks and Open Space Network Plan in the Secondary Plan, which do you think the City should target and prioritize for acquisition? Why?*
1. Go for low hanging fruit first and get **city owned land** designated for park/public realm use.
 2. The area indicated on Soudan Ave as Priority Parkland would provide some much-needed respite from all the development in that area.

July 22, 2020
Ann King
Susana Saravia

From: Andy Gort

On Behalf of the South Eglinton Ratepayers' and Residents' Association

Hello Heather and Cassidy,

Please find below SERRA's response to the three topics requested for feedback from the MPG #2 meeting.

As you will notice our comments focus primarily on the Parks and Public Realm needs of the SE quadrant (SERRA area) of the Y-E Secondary Plan area.

Our comments for topics #2 and #3 focus primarily on the need for Public Realm and Parks for the apartment neighbourhoods in the SERRA area - Soudan and Davisville.

Proposed action items do not require (relatively) large budgets.

Our feedback from the MPG June 25, 2020:

- **Considering that some of the Public Realm Moves require reconstruction of streets and coordination with servicing upgrades, do you have any ideas for light touch and low-cost**

improvements (up to three) you think the City should advance as a quick start project help start advancing public realm improvements within one of the Public Realm Moves?

1) Where possible create separated bike lanes in midtown so that cyclists feel safe on the road and get off the sidewalk. Use creative bollards in the short term. Your presentation offers some pics of options, where they have simply added some interesting-looking structures - not ugly concrete - to separate a bike lane from the street and sidewalk).

2) Add bump-outs that can be planted with hardy materials, such as ornamental grasses, and possibly some hardy, colourful plants/flowers. At this point we wouldn't recommend tree planting since that calls for special trenches and a more coordinated and costlier approach to streetscape changes.

3) Where feasible, in addition to "green" bump-outs, add more benches and seating areas to foster an environment where people want to linger. The whole point is that these streets have been designed mainly for through car traffic instead of encouraging people to linger - and shop, where appropriate.

• Is there a Public Realm Move in particular you think should be prioritized for full construction ahead of others? Why?

1) *Redpath Revisited* - section between Soudan Ave and Manor Rd. - increase sidewalk capacity

The section of Redpath between Soudan and Manor Road currently has a single narrow sidewalk on the east side (no sidewalk on the west side).

It functions as the ONLY N-S connector between the Soudan apartment neighbourhood and the area to the south (unless utilizing Mt Pleasant Rd or Yonge St).

It is heavily travelled by Soudan area pedestrians en-route to the park at the Church of the Transfiguration, the Davisville low-rise neighbourhood streets, the June Rowlands Park, the Beltline - Cemetery - Brickworks and in the future to the Davisville Aquatic Centre (we estimate that the Soudan apartment neighbourhood will grow from 6600 (2016 Canada Census) to 15000 residents when approved developments are completed).

Since this section of the Redpath roadway is located in a Neighbourhood, we expect it to be free of major construction, so a permanent improvement could be made now. Widening the sidewalk or adding a second sidewalk would provide for much needed walking capacity on this section of Redpath and could be an **excellent early improvement of "*Redpath Revisited*" at a relatively low cost**. By the way, this roadway currently has two vehicular lanes with enough width to allow parking on the same side as the narrow sidewalk (1 hr daytime and overnight). It might be reasonable to eliminate the parking to create space for the additional sidewalk capacity.

2) *Balliol/Pailton Green Streets* - Widen the pavement within the existing sidewalk width (on the north side of Balliol St between Pailton and Yonge).

Balliol, unlike Merton and Davisville is not heavily travelled by vehicles (ends at Yonge and has no traffic lights at Mt Pleasant) and as such is heavily used by Davisville apartment neighbourhood residents as a safe pedestrian E-W route. The only significant grocery store in the Davisville apartment neighbourhood is also located on the north side of Balliol.

The pavement portion of the north sidewalk is very narrow, but does have a small strip of grass between the road and the sidewalk pavement (without vegetation). The existing pavement should be widened within the existing sidewalk width (similar to the sidewalk design on the south side). Perhaps vegetation could be planted between the north sidewalk and the adjacent "Tower in the Park" apartments.

Other than the 22 Balliol development, we don't expect any infill development on the north side of Balliol for the foreseeable future, so improvements made could be permanent. **This would be a quick win towards implementation of the "Balliol Green Street".**

• Of the proposed parks or park expansion areas on the Parks and Open Space Network Plan in the Secondary Plan, which do you think the City should target and prioritize for acquisition? Why?

1) INSIDE the Davisville apartment neighbourhood

With the anticipated residential growth of the Davisville apartment neighbourhood accompanied by the expected dramatic reduction in privately owned open and green spaces of the 'Tower in the Park' sites, this area should be on the top of the list for acquisition of parkland, even if it is just for a children's playground with seating and some open spaces.

This neighbourhood too will see dramatic residential growth, likely to 15,000 residents. The population composition of this area is undergoing significant changes from singles to families with many new Canadians.

2) Hillsdale parkette (with or without expansion of 29-31 Soudan) - Already owned by the City - but needs 'programming' and 'construction'.

This narrow and relatively small plot of land is about to be turned over by the developer to City Parks.

We would initially ask only that a walkway is constructed between Soudan Ave and Hillsdale Ave E. with minimal landscaping to function as a green mid-block connector between Soudan Ave and Hillsdale Ave E.

It would enable a very large and growing residential population in the western portion of the Soudan apartment neighbourhood to use Hillsdale Ave East as an alternate to Soudan Ave as an E-W route to disperse into the Davisville low-rise neighbourhood (Soudan Ave increasingly is becoming a very busy and major vehicular E-W route).

3) Off-leash Dog 'parkette' immediately to the east of Mt Pleasant (an extension to the Beltline ... a small strip of land between the apartments/homes on Merton and the Mt Pleasant Cemetery).

With a growing residential population (and dog population) in the Davisville apartment neighbourhood, the Beltline is frequently used as an 'off-leash' area for dogs ... there is no off-leash dog area in the immediate vicinity. This small strip of public land east of Mt Pleasant, which extends only for a short distance beyond the Beltline could function as an off-leash dog area (is part of the MIF Parks Plan).

4) Create a (linear) park between Millwood and Davisville between the planned Davisville Aquatic Centre and the proposed Times Group development at 1951 Yonge.

As well as functioning as a small park, a linear park at this location could also function as a green route from the neighbourhoods to the north (via Millwood) to the Davisville Aquatic Centre and would facilitate a N-S internal neighbourhood travel route between the Beltline and the Y-E Centre area.

5) SERRA's original priority list for Parks and Open Spaces and a Pedestrian Network for the MIF Plan.

At the MIF Workshop in February, 2018 SERRA presented a list of Parks and Open Spaces priorities to the City MIF Planning Team (based on the City's proposed MIF Parks).

We have attached our Febr, 2018 submission as a file. Most of those priorities would still be valid today.

Best regards,

Andy Gort (on behalf of SERRA)

From: John Taranu

On Behalf of Cycle Toronto Midtown

Hi Heather and Cassidy,

This feedback is in response to the request from the Midtown Planning Group *Parks & Public Realm* session held on June 11th.

As Toronto is just starting its Phase 2 reopening, we need to rapidly deploy street safety interventions to keep our residents safe, healthy and physically distant.

Most urgently, we are renewing our call for a [bikeway on Yonge St in Midtown](#) during the reopening, to relieve pressure on the Yonge subway (once the busiest line in Canada), to provide healthy and safe transportation options for people, and to support our businesses as they recover.



As you are asking for "light touch and low cost" projects, a bikeway on Yonge is ideal as a short-term pilot project. There is plenty of room on the street, especially north of Heath. [This presentation illustrates](#) how it could be implemented rapidly using nothing more than materials Toronto already has.

A similar pilot treatment could be applied on Mt Pleasant, Davisville and Eglinton, [creating a "Midtown Loop"](#) to connect the dense nodes at Eglinton and Davisville with the main streets on Yonge and Mt Pleasant and the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Attached is [our letter we have sent to our councillors and Mayor Tory](#) calling for the Yonge bikeway. And you have seen [dozens of residents and community groups in Midtown asking for the Yonge bikeway](#).

John Taranu

Cycle Toronto Midtown: Ward 8 and 12 Advocacy Group
cycleto.ca/ward/12

[@CycleTOMidtown](#)

safe streets, a healthy city, a vibrant voice

From: Tomi Mitrovic

On Behalf of the Quantum Owners and Residents Association

Hi Cassidy and Heather,

Below are QuORA's responses for the requested feedback on Parks & Public Realm.

Thank you,

Tomi

Considering that some of the Public Realm Moves require reconstruction of streets and coordination with servicing upgrades, do you have any ideas for "light touch" and low-cost improvements (up to three) you think the City should advance as a quick start project help start advancing public realm improvements within one of the Public Realm Moves?

- Cowbell Lane - pedestrian crossing between 2181/2191 Yonge to 40 Holly; addition of crosswalk striping, signage, traffic calming where possible. This will be a critical need once north access from Eglinton reopens to traffic.
- Soudan Ave - pedestrian safety improvements to make crossings more visible and help calm traffic through use of curb extensions and crosswalk markings
- Redpath Ave - addition of a crosswalk on the west leg between Soudan to Manor

Is there a Public Realm Move in particular you think should be prioritized for full construction ahead of others? Why?

Midtown Greenways. Multiple apartment and condo construction projects are nearing completion at this time, which will bring a surge of new residents and increased risk of vehicle collisions due to increased traffic from the Eglinton Crosstown detours and new residents.

The pedestrian corridor along the buildings north of Soudan along Yonge to Redpath is very important asset to our residents and neighbours, used as an E-W route for walking to Eglinton Station or for running errands beyond Redpath. All efforts should be made to prioritize pedestrian crossings at all cross streets, including Cowbell Lane, and animate the corridor as a first-class route that's welcoming to everyone.

The city should be lining up public realm improvements as soon as new buildings complete construction to maintain safety and quality of life as the dust settles.

Of the proposed parks or park expansion areas on the Parks and Open Space Network Plan in the Secondary Plan, which do you think the City should target and prioritize for acquisition? Why?

- *Subway trench park* - This park would provide direct access to much needed green space to Quantum residents, and also build high quality connections to Oriole Park, the Beltline, and Mount Pleasant Cemetery.
- *Park behind 2131 Yonge St* - Lack of immediate vicinity to parks and construction at 2161 Yonge will heighten the need for park space for Quantum residents. Already acquired, but last we heard this is expected to possibly take 2 years to fully develop; consultation/implementation should be expedited.
- *Parking lot behind 2075-2111 Yonge* - A park expansion southwards would improve pedestrian/recreational access to Tullis Ave, connecting to Glebe Manor Park, which also helps avoid main street shopping pedestrian traffic along Yonge. Consider expanding a block further to the parking lot at 20 Glebe Rd E to form a "lite" version of the Soudan parks plan behind Yonge businesses.