

City of Toronto – Parks Development & Capital Projects

Melbourne Ave Parkette Playground Enhancement Public Meeting

Meeting Summary

November 17, 2020

Kaly Manson, Senior Project Coordinator
Danielle Charlton, Project Coordinator Landscape Architect



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Introduction

This document provides a summary of the Melbourne Avenue Parkette Playground Improvements Virtual Public Meeting that was held on November 17, 2020, from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

More information about the project can be found on the project webpage at www.toronto.ca/MelbourneImprovements

Panelists

City of Toronto – Parks, Forestry, and Recreation

Kaly Manson, Senior Project Coordinator, Acting
Danielle Charlton, Project Coordinator Landscape Architect

Ward Councillor's Office

Councillor Gord Perks, Ward 4 Parkdale-High Park
Dusha Sritharan, Advisor, Policy and Constituency Assistant for Office of Councillor

Attendees

12 Community Members

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of this meeting was to present and gather community feedback on a concept design for playground improvements at Melbourne Avenue Parkette.

Public Meeting Advertisement

- Project webpage
- Notice signage posted on-site
- Email notification to local community groups
- Notification through Councillor's communication channels

Feedback Summary

Staff introduced the project to the community, presenting the project background and the proposed concept design for playground improvements at Melbourne Avenue Parkette (for the full presentation, please visit www.toronto.ca/MelbourneImprovements). Following the presentation, participants asked the project team questions and shared their feedback. These questions (Q), answers (A), comments (C), and responses from staff (R) are presented below. The statements are not verbatim, but rather summaries of each statement.

C: I am concerned about safety and lack of lighting in the park, especially towards the back of the park near the community garden.

R: There are three existing light posts in the park, one located at the front, one in the middle and one at the back. New or improved lighting is not proposed in the concept design. City staff have noted concern for further consideration.

C: I like the clustered seating proposed in the concept design, but would prefer it moved to the front of the park instead of the middle.

R: Seating is not proposed near the front of the park due to tree protection and to limit injury to tree roots within tree protection zones, as per the City's Tree Protection Policy.

Q: My understanding is no dogs are allowed in this park. Why is that?

A: City staff present are not aware of existing park signage that prohibits dogs from entering the park. However, City park by-laws require dogs to be on-leash, with exception to designated off-leash areas. City staff will look into this further.

Post meeting note: Dogs are prohibited in Melbourne Avenue Parkette and there is existing signage on-site that indicates this. Dogs are prohibited because the park primarily serves as a playground and dogs are not permitted within playgrounds across the City.

Q: The images for the three proposed playground equipment options are difficult to see. Could you please explain the climbing opportunities for option 2 and 3?

A: Option 2 includes three climbing opportunities for children to get from ground-level onto the play structures. Option 3 includes two climbing opportunities.

Q: Will the existing guard rail along the east edge of the park remain?

A: Yes

Q: Can taller fencing around the community garden be included?

A: This potential improvement will likely need to be a separate project. City staff have noted the request and will keep it in mind if budget permits.

C: In my opinion this is not a "well-loved park". The park is not a positive, safe space to be. There is crime and drug use with needles found in the sand. I am concerned about sightlines and lighting. I would like to see other uses proposed in this park.

R: There is not sufficient physical space in this small parkette to propose other uses and there are also budget constraints to provide additional improvements beyond the playground and what is generally proposed in the concept plan.

Q: How are you addressing graffiti as part of this project?

A: Graffiti occurs in many parks and public spaces across the City and is removed by City staff as needed. Community members should call 311 or notify the Councillor's Office about graffiti. Sometimes murals or collaboration with the local Business Improvement Area (BIA) group are used to help deter graffiti.

Q: How is the City addressing encampments and homelessness?

A: Councillor Perks noted the City-wide rapid housing strategy to address homelessness. Councillor Perks also acknowledged that the City cannot legally borrow money to address emergencies and therefore additional support from the Province of Ontario is needed. Other supports for mental and physical disabilities, for example, are needed in addition to housing. The City also has a winter plan for additional shelters.

Q: Can the park sign be moved to the left side instead of its current location on the right?

A: City staff have noted this request for further consideration.

C: I would like to see a more naturalized park. I appreciate the playground improvements.

R: City staff have noted this request for further consideration.

Q: Can a dog off-leash area be installed anywhere in South Parkdale District?

A: The Councillor is aware of the interest and has looked into it several times. There is no park space that can accommodate size requirements of an off-leash area.

Q: Can other uses besides a playground be considered? There is already a massive playground at the Dufferin/King Parkette.

A: There is not sufficient physical space in this small parkette to propose other uses and there are also budget constraints to provide additional improvements beyond the playground and what is generally proposed in the concept plan. Local playgrounds are important in addition to larger neighbourhood playgrounds.

C: If City staff haven't already done so, please look into 311 and 911 calls for this park and speak to the Police. Also, Google Maps shows low use at various times throughout the day.

R: City staff have noted this request for further consideration.

Next Steps

The feedback gathered during the meeting and through emails received following the meeting will be used to refine the proposed parkette design. The refined design will be shared on the project webpage.

Contact Us

For questions or comments related to this project, please contact:

Kaly Manson
Senior Project Coordinator
City of Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation
kaly.manson@toronto.ca