

City of Toronto – Parks Development & Capital Projects

Kidstown Water Park

Community Resource Group Meeting 2

Feedback Summary

November 25, 2020

Joe Ferrara, Senior Project Coordinator

Jane Farrow, Public Engagement Consultant, Department of Words and Deeds



Contents

- Introduction 2
- Community Resource Group (CRG) Meeting 2 2
- Meeting Attendees 3
 - Community Resource Group Members..... 3
 - City Staff..... 3
- Feedback Summary 4
 - Summary of Key Points 4
 - Detailed Feedback By Theme 4
- Next Steps 7

Introduction

This document provides a summary of the second Community Resource Group Meeting for the Kidstown Water Park Redesign that was held on November 25, 2020.

More information about the project can be found on the project webpage:

www.toronto.ca/KidstownRedesign

Community Resource Group (CRG) Meeting 2

The purpose of the second CRG meeting was to confirm how the water park is used now and to identify overall goals and objectives that will establish priorities for the park's renovations.

The meeting was held on Zoom and facilitated by Jane Farrow from the Department of Words & Deeds. There were 15 participants present at the meeting including City staff and the project team.

Following a land acknowledgement by Joe Ferrara from the City of Toronto, an overview of the consultation process and schedule were presented. PMA Landscape Architects' Fung Lee provided a summary of the feedback received at meeting #1 of the CRG, through the online survey and through consultation with members of the Huron-Wendat Nation. This was followed by design guidelines, objectives and preliminary design concepts. In discussion, CRG members were asked to share their thoughts on the three design concept options as well as individual design elements that were presented in each option. Participants were welcomed to attend and encouraged to invite others to the public meeting on Tuesday December 1 at 6:30 p.m and to take (and share) the online survey which will launch after the public meeting.

The Dept of Words & Deeds produced this summary of key points and themes from the video conference discussion, and group chat. It will be circulated to the Community Resource Group for review before being finalized and posted to the project webpage.

Meeting Attendees

Community Resource Group Members

Chris Lee - lives downtown

Vera Puckrin - local resident

Simone Grant-Lewis - frequent user of the park over many years

Nadia Persaud - STYLE Program Coordinator, Learning Disabilities Association, Toronto District

Rhonda Underhill-Gray

Absent

Ramla Abukar, Coordinator, Advocacy and
Community Engagement (GTA), CNIB
Foundation

Caroline

Clara Chen, local resident

Rima Dib, parent and local resident,
unofficial representative for local
community of parents

Ken Gilbert

Tarah Hamilton

Houri

Kristine

Oren Leung, local resident

Manosh

Cate Monteiro, work with Autism Services of
Toronto

Nicole

Nisha Noble

Saira Oslam, long-time user of the park

Eric Panganiban

Rose Patrick

Teddy Ramarosan

Kimberly Stevens

Dorothy Tsui

City Staff

Joe Ferrara - Senior Project Coordinator

Robert Wright - Supervisor Property Management & Maintenance

Scott Topping - Supervisor Parks Maintenance & Construction

Alex Lavasidis – Senior Public Consultation Coordinator

Design Team

PMA Architects

Fung Lee

Mehran Ataee

Waiyee Chou

Anya Moryoussef Architect

Anya Moryoussef

Facilitation Team - Dept of Words & Deeds

Jane Farrow

Pauline Craig

Feedback Summary

Summary of Key Points

- All participants preferred Option B for the parking lot layout.
- The water park design options were all received very well by the group. Some participants had preferences for overall layouts but appreciated all of the designs.
- Combining design elements from all three design options will create a tailored option that will meet the needs of the community.
- The design options do a good job of providing access to all ages and abilities but some participants reiterated some of the features, like the surfacing, picnic tables and change rooms should be designed to ensure maximum accessibility for a broad range of abilities.
- Include design elements that allow visitors to engage with water without having to be immersed.
- Include design elements that are integrated into the natural landscape and mimic natural forms and features.
- Locating the splash pad close to the building will improve convenience for parents of small children to better accommodate quick bathroom visits.
- The open-air change room and shower area should be located so that visitors must pass through this area before entering the park. The design of the change area into small pods or groupings of lockers and washrooms will help visitors to orient themselves and find their way more easily.
- Incorporate plans for signage early in the design process so it is integrated with the design and not an afterthought.
- Include a picnic area where families and camps can sit to have lunch without having to purchase something from the concession area.

Detailed Feedback By Theme

Parking Lot Layout

All participants preferred the design option B for the parking lot and park access. They preferred to see the bus drop-off / pick-up separated from car circulation. One participant questioned if the turning area was wide enough for buses, and another wished to know if the access from the TTC stop would be level or have a slope as in the current conditions.

Note: A City of Toronto representative said that regardless of the final design option, the turning radii for buses will be evaluated to ensure that it is adequate. The design of the TTC stop and access has not yet been determined but will be part of the next phase of design once a preferred design concept has been identified.

Great Designs

All of the participants were very pleased with the design layouts presented and offered very positive feedback to the design team. Some had preferences for one option over another, while there were specific elements found in each of the designs that were liked by several participants. One participant said they preferred the layout of Option A (Beach) but that all the designs had very good potential. Two other participants said they liked the layout of Option A (Beach) but they would prefer to include the “lazy river” from Option B. Similarly, another participant said they liked the water park layout from Option A but preferred a number of elements from Option B and C. Features such as the canal bubblers, water tunnel and stepping stones were favoured by more than one participant. One participant liked all the splash pads that were shown while another said they hoped to see bright colours used as the designs are further refined.

Mix and Match Design Elements

One participant noted that the water slide, rope bridges, and floating platforms were her preferred elements from the perspective of her son and his play interests.

Other Elements that were preferred by participants included the small bucket dump, water tunnel, sail shade structure, lazy river, stepping stones, rope bridge and built in seating

The water room was preferred because it creates a lot of excitement due to a variety of things happening with the water providing both auditory and visual stimulus.

One participant asked if a wave pool experience would be possible.

Note: A PMA Architects representative said that most of the time it is possible to mix and match the favourite elements and come up with the best design, and they would consult with their water specialist to see if a wave pool or similar experience was possible.

Accessibility Features of the Design

One participant pointed out that sloped surfaces can be a bit challenging for children with sight loss and encouraged the design team to make use of bright colour contrast on stepping stones, edges, and steps. Another suggestion included having a controlled area so that the number of children could be limited in order to make the experience more comfortable for younger children or children with visual challenges.

A majority of participants felt that the accessible water slide would be an excellent addition to the park.

Non-Immersive Water Features

Specific design features that allow for interaction with water without having to be immersed were preferred by participants. These included the water tunnel, waterfall that allows access underneath or behind it, and bubbling features or other sensory stimulus that doesn't require children to get into the water to enjoy it.

Landscape Integrated Design Elements

Several participants expressed their appreciation for the design forms and elements that help to integrate the park into the natural landscape and create play opportunities that inspire curiosity and love for nature. The southern area of Option C (Lake) concept was mentioned as a good example of this. Elements that were very well received in this regard included the runnels, little pools, rope ladder, climbing rocks, lazy river and the bioswales.

Splash Pad Location

Most participants agreed that having the splash pad close to the building would be very helpful for parents of small children because it would make bathroom visits more convenient.

Change Rooms, Washrooms and Showers

All participants felt that positioning the entrance so that visitors must walk through the change rooms, shower and washroom area would be very helpful for parents and anyone bringing a group of children into the park.

The open-air design of the changing area was very well received by participants and of the design options presented, several participants preferred the design in Concept B (Clusters) that groups the changing areas into clusters. Participants felt that this layout would be easier to navigate and easier for children to orient themselves. One participant did not see view sight lines as an issue with this option. One participant said they liked the misting poles shown in Options A and C and thought they would create a fun and relaxed experience if combined with Option B

Several participants suggested that colour coding the clusters and providing signage that would assign themes to the pods, for example “bear” or “beaver” would help with wayfinding and be an opportunity to incorporate some of the feedback from the indigenous consultation.

The benches currently shown on the north side of the change facility were preferred by the group as they accommodate waiting for others in the change area.

One participant suggested having life jackets available on racks in different sizes for the kids.

The group discussed the size of the changing clusters and how many people could be accommodated in each one. One participant said that there is a wide range of group sizes that could range from 2 – 6 people and then much larger groups and camps. Some participants suggested prioritizing the best design to accommodate community members with visual or physical challenges and felt that by doing so the design would work well for everyone.

Following some discussion, the group felt that the trade-off between space efficiency and being able to organize groups by cluster and knowing where their things are, was worth it. One participant pointed out that a visually impaired friend prefers smaller areas to navigate which the clusters would provide, because it is easier to orient oneself in a smaller space.

Note: A representative from Anya Moryoussef Architects said that the pods currently shown in the design include 4 wheelchair accessible change rooms and 10-15 lockers and the pod area could accommodate 5-10 people at one time.

A City of Toronto representative asked the group if they had any preferences on change room layout with regard to sight lines into the change area and being able to see children to supervise them while in the change area. Participants recognized that Concept A and C might provide better sight lines but the group did not feel that this was an issue saying that it is possible to sit in different locations in the park to improve sight lines, and still preferred Concept B (Clusters). A PMA Architects representative pointed out that the linear layouts in Concepts A and C are more space efficient and asked the group if they had an idea of the size of groups typically using the park and whether people come ready to go or need change facilities. One participant felt that larger families and groups typically come ready to go.

Signage

Some participants felt that there were opportunities to begin discussing the signage in the park to ensure that it is consistent with the design objectives. Suggestions included bright colourful, clear signage, signs to delineate zones like “bear” “deer” zones, the use of symbols, or animals and in consultation with members of the Huron-Wendat nation.

Picnic Area

One participant noted that larger groups and summer camps often need a place to eat lunch but might not necessarily want to purchase something from the concession stand.

Note: A representative from PMA Architects said that the concession area will include tables and chairs for groups to sit. A representative from Words and Deeds pointed out that the seating area inside the park that is shown in each of the design options would accommodate larger groups and function as a picnic area or permit area.

Next Steps

Participants were asked to provide any additional email feedback and comments to Jane Farrow, facilitator, until December 5, 2020 at jane@janefarrow.ca

Participants were also asked to publicize the upcoming public meeting, survey and project website through their local networks.