

Topic: Community Advisory Committee (CAC) First Meeting

Date: June 24th, 2021

CAC members: Allan B.B. Ramsarran, Edna Cofles Gualtero, Jennifer Boakye, Kayzie Sutton, Kemisha Thomas, Maize Blanchard, Maria B., Mena Hervieux, Devayani Chitnis, Rosie Mensah, SAM Asamoah Boakye, Sharon Taylor, Susel Munoz Plasencia, Terryl Knox, Tracy Nguyen, Troy Budhu, William Ballard, William Lopez, Veronica Eastman, Christine Le, John Romano

Facilitators:

Jane Finch Community & Family Centre Staff: Berta Kaisr (Jane Finch Initiative Coordinator), Amadeo Venutra (Manager of Strategic Development)

Observers:

City Staff: John Smith (Manager of Community Development, SDFA) , Dan Rosen (Policy Advisor, Economic and Cultural Division), Leah Birnbaum (Senior Planner, City Planning Division) Henry Tang (Planner, City Planning), Lillian D'Souza (Planner, City Planning Division), Zahra Joseph-Wilson (Assistant Planner, City Planning Division)

Councillor's Office: Councillor Anthony Perruza, JP (Jessica Pointon), Ayesha Khan

Agenda

1. Welcome, Land Acknowledgement
1. Icebreaker and Introductions
2. City of Toronto Presentation
3. Discussion
4. Other Matters Discussed

1. Welcome, Land Acknowledgement

Berta welcomes everyone and goes over the overall agenda.

2. Icebreaker and Introductions (CAC/ JFCF/ City Staff/ Councillor Perruza & Staff)

City staff, Jane Finch Community & Family Centre staff and the Community Advisory Committee staff introduce themselves and answer these two questions:

- What is something you're looking forward to with this committee?
- Covid permitting, if you could go anywhere right now, where would you like to travel to?

Councillor Anthony Peruzza's Remarks

- Councillor Anthony Peruzza welcomes everyone to the Community Advisory Committee and provides a brief description of the Jane Finch Initiative.

3. City of Toronto Presentation

- Lillian D'Souza provides a 10 minute presentation about the Jane Finch Initiative and the role of the CAC. See presentation here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1k-DucQwDwisY8QV7rZRMtUoK4ZoVoikM/view?usp=sharing>
- Lillian also mentions that we will be seeking feedback on the engagement framework co-designed with the Confronting Anti-Black Racism unit at the City of Toronto and Jane and Finch community leaders.

Lillian D'Souza checks in with the CAC members and asks if there are any questions for the City at this point.

- A CAC member points out that it's important to remember the purpose of the CAC centering around the residents.
- City Staff response: An important next step is to draft a Terms of Reference for the Committee to review. We will be working together on the Terms of Reference and City staff will provide a template and examples that the CAC members can amend as needed. The Terms of Reference would include items such as membership logistics, vision statement, goals, meeting attendance, etc.

4. Discussion

Question: Who exactly is on the committee?

- **Answer:** To clarify, no City, JFCF, or Councillor's office staff are on the Committee. Please see the first page of this document for a full list of all members.

Question: When you send the agenda, can we please have additional information so we can be better prepared? Also, in regards to housing, what are we looking at in terms of this project?

- **Answer:** Yes, project materials and the agenda will be circulated in advance so members can review in advance of the meetings. The Jane Finch Initiative is aligned with ongoing housing initiatives both locally, like the Firgrove revitalization and city-wide, like inclusionary zoning.

Question: What is the timeline of the project and the CAC?

- **Answer:** We are currently in phase #1 of 3 phases of the Jane Finch Initiative. We are asking that you remain on the Community Advisory Committee from now until December 2022. You will be meeting about once a month as part of the CAC to advise on the progress of the Jane Finch Initiative.

Question: Can you explain the honorarium process?

- **Answer:** Each member will receive \$50 for their participation in CAC meetings. If you're unable to attend meetings, but still send in your feedback and thoughts through email, you are still able to receive the honorarium. You can choose direct deposit, mailed cheque, or gift card format. If you have yet to fill the form to indicate your preference, please do so here:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSccQPZyhkiO1rv7jOwyNY2_Twq-kMHwz0KpFRc8SPmmXO3AoQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

Question: How much impact does this committee have on the Jane Finch Initiative?

- **Answer:** The hope is to understand from your feedback what the community needs and wants. What you will understand from the City is the extent to which we can influence change through municipal policy. We will be figuring it out together.
- The Jane Finch Initiative has a number of components and we're trying to ensure the components are advised on by this committee. There are community development plans and social development plans that haven't been done on this scale before. How we move forward is important in terms of ensuring residents are informing and advising the entire process.

Question: I'm all for change and moving forward, but I am concerned about people being displaced and repeating patterns of areas such as Cabbagetown. So I want to make sure we are here to actually impact change and not just to "show face" that the community is involved.

- **Answer:** We agree. That means there is some work on both of our ends to figure out how this advisory committee will work and how it will run collaboratively.

Question: One thing about this committee is that it's purpose was for accountability to ensure that the community is involved in the decision making process because that hasn't been the case in the past with other city-run projects. My question to the City would be to consider your role/responsibility and the different options for your role within the CAC and that includes the Councillor and his office.

- **Answer:** Together, we will be clarifying roles and responsibilities in the Terms and Reference. We can definitely discuss the different roles and provide a draft for the CAC members to shape and provide feedback on. We want to make sure that the resident voice is taking priority.

Question: Will this committee aim to do similar work to what was done at Regent Park and Alexandra Park? There was a lot of information being shared and topic mixing so we need to have as much of the information available beforehand to make informed decisions.

- **Answer:** We will circulate meeting materials in advance so that Committee members have time to review things before coming together to discuss them.

Question: When will the next meeting be?

- The date mentioned in the meeting was July 15th, but has since been switched to July 13th at 6pm.

5. Other Matters Discussed :

Questions posed to Councillor Peruzza and to City Staff:

Question: How involved will the Councillor's office be within the CAC?

- **Councillor's answer:** The councillor might not attend all meetings, but he will keep in touch and have access to the feedback that the Committee provides to staff.

Question: Are there plans for mitigating gentrification especially for low-income residents in terms of the private properties in the area?

- **Councillor's answer:** This is an understandable concern as property values in the area were stagnant and have increased over the last few years. An example is the TCHC's Firgrove-Grassways Revitalization project where subsidized units must be which have TCHC components and will be replaced by "like for like" - a requirement from the City.
- Rental housing that is being built in the area has specific policies around affordable units. Anyone building housing will have to provide a number of affordable units. What affordable means is at 80% of average rent city wide.

Question: The issue is we're taking away housing and bringing up privatized housing when there is already a housing issue.

- **Councillor's answer:** Any demolished housing will be replaced like for like. The key is in how to replace it. More dense buildings will be built and there will also be market private housing and the market private housing will help pay for the affordable, rent-geared-to-income housing such as the TCHC properties.

Questions: So there will be more buildings?

- **Councillor's answer:** There will be more housing and housing opportunities with more affordable housing.

Question: The Councillor mentioned Edgeley Park as well as private housing and subsidized housing, can you provide more information?

- **Answer:** City staff suggested inviting TCHC representatives to answer questions as City Planning is only engaged on the development application side of Toronto Community Housing properties, and cannot speak to the business decisions by Toronto Community Housing. There are no development applications for Edgeley Park.

Question: How much of this initiative would influence the Firgrove Revitalization? There are many organizations and residents involved in the Firgrove Revitalization project

- **Answer:** The Firgrove development is part of TCHC's plan to redevelop the land. The Jane Finch Initiative process and the community development and land use plans will be informed by the development at Firgrove. The rezoning application for Firgrove was submitted last year and it's still under review.

Question: Follow up - Am I wrong to ask that Firgrove revitalization was initiated because the units were unsafe to live in?

- **Answer:** There was an initial development proposal that was presented to Toronto City Council by City staff and that is the understanding of why this plan has been moving forward. One of the requirements for that Council-adopted proposal was for Toronto Community Housing to submit a rezoning application on the Firgrove lands to ensure future development is sound.

Meeting Wrap Up and Next Steps

Berta and City staff thank everyone for their time and wrap up the meeting.