

**Jane Finch Initiative:  
Firgrove Tenant Advisory  
Group Meeting  
October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
6pm-7:30pm**

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**Summary Report by the Jane Finch Community and Family Centre**

## **BACKGROUND**

The [Jane Finch Initiative](#) is about planning for the future of the area and how best to leverage the investment in light rail transit (LRT) for the benefit of local communities. It is a collaborative community planning exercise in 'Neighbourhood 24 - Black Creek' and 'Neighbourhood 25 - Glenfield-Jane Heights' (see [Neighbourhood Profiles](#)), centred on the intersection of Jane Street and Finch Avenue West.

The initiative involves three integrated streams of work:

- 1) **Comprehensive engagement** (ongoing)
- 2) A **community development plan** including a local economic opportunity plan.
- 3) An update to the **land use planning framework**.

The city is working in collaboration with the Jane Finch Community and Family Centre who will support community engagement and facilitate different community consultations to collect feedback.

## **MEETING SUMMARY**

On Tuesday October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021, from 6pm to 7:30pm, the City of Toronto staff and Jane Finch Community and Family (JFCF) Centre staff were invited to present at the Firgrove Tenant Advisory Group (TAG) meeting to conduct a workshop. This presentation is part of the Jane Finch Initiative's comprehensive engagement stream, and it was held online over Zoom. The agenda can be viewed in Appendix 1 on page 9.

The purpose of the event was to:

- Introduce the Jane Finch Initiative (JFI) to the Tenant Advisory Group members.
- Provide a presentation from the City of Toronto and JFCF Centre staff to TAG members about our findings in phase 1 engagement thus far.
- Facilitate a workshop and hold a brief discussion with the TAG members, answering questions following the presentation.

## **ATTENDEES:**

- **1 JFCF Centre Staff:** Maymun Abukar (Jane Finch Initiative Coordinator).
- **2 City of Toronto Staff:** John Smith (Manager, Social Development Finance & Administration), Zahra Joseph-Wilson (Assistant Planner, City Planning).
- **2 Toronto Community Housing Corporation Staff:** Marveh Farhoodi and Sundus Balata (Manager, Revitalization and Renewal Communities)
- **6 Tenant Advisory Group Members**

## **MEETING SUMMARY**

- With the TAG meeting started at 5:30pm to discuss their internal agenda items, Sundus Balata welcomes John, Zahra and Maymun to the meeting at 6pm and introduces them to the TAG members.
- Following a round of introductions, Sundus opens the floor for John and Zahra to present to the TAG members.
- John, Zahra present the Jane Finch Initiative (JFI) and the up-to-date phase 1 findings to the TAG members.
- Following the presentation, Maymun facilitates the workshop with open-ended questions to the TAG members.
- Maymun, John and Zahra also open the floor for a Q & A discussion with the with the TAG members to answer questions about the Jane Finch Initiative.
- John and Zahra answer any follow up questions pertaining to the JFI presentation.
- Following the discussion, John, Zahra and Maymun are given thanks for attending the meeting and leave at 7:30pm.

## **WHAT WE HEARD**

This section includes the summaries of the feedback collected from the discussions during the Zoom meeting.

### **Presentation Questions/ Answers Summary:**

Following the presentation, TAG members had questions about the Initiative and City staff answered the questions. The questions asked to the city staff during the discussion include:

### **Firgrove Tenants Meeting Q&A**

**Q: What is the city's capacity to engage with Jane and Finch? Besides consultation and workshop discussions, is there room for 1-on-1 interviews?**

**A:** We have completed 1-on-1 interviews with the Arts and Culture consultations and plan to conduct interviews with the upcoming Heritage focus groups. The city will continue with engagement in phase 2 of the JFI. People wishing to give direct

input are welcome to connect with Maymun at the Jane Finch Centre (maymuna@janefinchcentre.org) directly or can contact City staff at janefinch@toronto.ca or 416-338-0775.

**Q: How is the city planning on making developers accountable regarding the master plan?**

**A:** The [Official Plan](#) - and associated Secondary Plans like the one that will be developed for the Jane Finch area - set out policies for how land should be developed. Landowners can submit applications for development that may or may not conform to the policies laid out in the Plan. Having an updated set of policies in the form of a Secondary Plan that is in full force and effect and is based on community input, puts City staff and City Council in a much stronger position to push for development that adheres to the Secondary Plan, along with a stronger position at the Ontario Land Tribunal if the decision around the proposed development application is appealed.

**Q: Will the plans support principles that people (residents of Jane and Finch) come up with?**

**A:** City staff will consider the advice, input, and feedback from the community engagement and from the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) when developing policy directions and making recommendations to City Council and have committed to provide updates to the CAC in advance as policy directions are developed. If recommendations or input from the CAC is not incorporated into staff recommendations, staff will provide the CAC with a clear rationale for why. Staff will also ensure that input from the CAC is collected, included, and accurately reflected in the public record. Only City Council can adopt public policy, and they do so based on their consideration of recommendations made by City staff. So, while there is no guarantee that the recommendations will change public policy, this process is intended to bring forward recommendations, input and advice from the communities of Jane and Finch so that the resulting Community Development Plan and Secondary Plan reflect community input.

**Q: How were Community Advisory Committee members recruited and selected?**

**A:** People were invited to indicate their interest in joining the Committee through an application and selection process that began in May 2021. The CAC formation and application process was announced during the May 11 and May 19 and 28 consultations. A flyer was sent to 18,000 addresses in the Jane Finch area inviting people to indicate their interest in joining the Community Advisory Committee in conjunction with targeted social media ads. The Jane Finch Centre received 50 responses from which 21 members were selected by the Jane Finch

Centre and City of Toronto staff to join the CAC. While the members were randomly selected, there were parameters in place to ensure Committee diversity, equity and representation of the broader Jane Finch community. Since the finalization of the CAC Committee, two members have since left and one has fallen victim to gun violence. Currently, the CAC is composed of 18 members. The Terms of Reference for the Community Advisory Committee gives more information about the Committee's role and procedures. It is available here: <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/9703-CityPlanning-2021-09-01CAC-Terms-of-Reference.pdf>.

**Q: How are people with lower levels of digital literacy or without access to technology being considered through this process? Will there be in-person design charrettes for example?**

**A:** Because of the ongoing Covid-10 pandemic, all engagement events have had to be held online. Once those restrictions are lifted, we aim to broaden the scope of engagement and offer in-person options for providing input to this process. During phase 1, we made these adaptations to the engagement process to attempt to provide equitable access:

- Left hard copies of meeting materials at libraries and community centres
- Provided phone-in numbers for virtual meetings
- Ensured that translation of meeting information was available through 311
- Extended "planner office hours" where the public to directly call a team member following virtual public meetings

Information on all of these options was included in the 18,000+ notices mailed to all households and businesses in the area ahead of public consultation events.

**Q: How will initiatives, such as Inclusionary Zoning, that currently exclude Jane**

**A:** At its meeting in November 2021, City Council adopted inclusionary zoning policy that will apply to the Jane and Finch area. However, before these mandatory affordable housing requirements can be implemented, the City must establish Protected Major Transit Station Area (PMTSA) planning frameworks. As part of the Jane Finch Initiative, the city will be advancing Official Plan amendments for the areas around four LRT stops within the study area (Norfinch Oakdale, Jane and Finch, Driftwood, and Tobermory). This additional step to establish the PMTSAs is required by the Province and must be approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Post-Meeting Follow Up: on November 9, 2021, City Council adopted an [Inclusionary Zoning policy](#), which would make it mandatory for certain new developments to provide affordable housing. Inclusionary zoning requirements will apply to transit station areas

within the Jane and Finch study boundary. More information on inclusionary zoning can be found here: [toronto.ca/inclusionaryzoning](https://toronto.ca/inclusionaryzoning).

**Q: Considering the many land uses throughout Jane and Finch what does the city anticipate the future land use composition to be?**

**A:** This hasn't been decided yet as we'll explore land use options in Phase 2 of the study. The areas close to the new LRT stops where new development is anticipated are already designated Mixed Use which allows for a range of uses including housing, shops, services, restaurants and offices. If changes to land uses are contemplated, staff will be consulting with the public and with the Community Advisory Committee before putting recommendations for any land use changes forward for consideration by City Council.

**Other comments from participants included:**

- One participant highlighted concern that Jane and Finch has been ignored because of how the neighbourhood and its residents are perceived and that it will continue to be ignored for the same reasons.
- Another participant noted that residents want what all people want for their children: safety, good facilities and equitable access to opportunities (e.g. mentorship for jobs) without having to sacrifice what the community already has, noting that outside influences take from the community and what the community receives in return is either of lesser quality or excludes existing residents.

**Workshop Discussion Summary:**

The workshop also provided a link to a google jam board, so that participants can interactively respond live. The main questions asked of the participants were the following:

To develop the Community Development Plan and the Land Use Plan, we want to know:

1. What do you value about your neighbourhood now?
2. What is your vision for the future of the area?

The responses were the following:

- What do you value about your neighbourhood now?
  - The walkability of the neighbourhood (Firgrove) and the neighbourhood design
  - The greenspaces in the area, like Firgrove Park

- Affordability of the area
- Cohesion of the community residents
- Convenience of the stores and plazas in the neighbourhood
- Shining stars and artists that emerge from Jane and Finch ex. Jully Black
- Community organization of Jane and Finch, the ability to organize collectively to advocate for change
- What is your vision for the future of the area?
  - Equitable access to parks and greenspaces
  - To preserve greenspaces in the area, and the emergence of larger parks rather than parkettes
  - Splash pads in parks for children
  - Job training and mentoring programs
  - Equitable access to jobs
  - For residents to be able to stay in Jane and Finch and not be rehoused (because of gentrification)
  - More programming, especially for the youth
  - Community services preserve their space
  - Safety from gun violence

## **DISCUSSION THEMES:**

Discussion themes that were noted from this meeting include:

- The use of public space in the community
- Community safety in Jane and Finch
- Programming and job opportunities
- Inclusionary zoning
- Affordability and redevelopment
- TCH involvement in the JFI

There will be continued discussion with the TAG in Phase 2 of the JFI.



## Appendix 1: Firgrove TAG Meeting – JFI Agenda Item Breakdown

<b>6:00 Introductions (Maymun, John and Zahra)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the purpose of this evening?</li> <li>• Overall structure of the workshop</li> <li>• Who to contact if you're having tech issues</li> </ul>
<b>6:05 City Presentation (John and Zahra)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro and BG on JFI</li> <li>• How we have engaged the community so far – e.g. meetings and partnership with JFC</li> <li>• What we've heard about Community Visions and Guiding Principles and key issues (Segue into workshop)</li> <li>• What feedback we need specifically from the group?</li> <li>• What is coming next?</li> </ul>
<b>6:15 Visioning Workshop/ Jamboard?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zahra to record comments/questions on <a href="#">Jamboard</a></li> <li>• Maymun to facilitate</li> <li>• John to answer Q's</li> </ul>
<b>6:55 Meeting Wrap Up</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All the ways people can connect with us if they have more questions/comments             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Email – <a href="mailto:janefinch@toronto.ca">janefinch@toronto.ca</a></li> <li>○ Phone Numbers: <b>John Smith</b> 416-397-4495; Zahra Joseph-Wilson 416-338-0775</li> <li>○ Social Media: <a href="#">#JaneFinch @CityPlanTO</a></li> <li>○ Virtual Engagement Platform - <a href="https://engage.toronto.ca/projects/city-planning/jane-finch-initiative-public-engagement/">https://engage.toronto.ca/projects/city-planning/jane-finch-initiative-public-engagement/</a></li> <li>○ Visit <a href="http://toronto.ca/janefinch">toronto.ca/janefinch</a> to sign up for E-updates to stay plugged in to the process and see when content is posted.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>7:00 Internal Staff Debrief</b>

<b>Roles</b>	
Facilitator	Maymun Abukar
Co-facilitator	Sundus Balata (TCHC)
In-meeting Tech support	Jane Finch Centre staff
Note-taker	Jane Finch Centre staff
City of Toronto presenter	John Smith Zahra Joseph-Wilson
Break-out room facilitators	Not applicable