

**Jane Finch Initiative:
Community Advisory
Committee Meeting #5
October 19th, 2021
6pm-8pm**



Summary Report by the Jane Finch Community and Family Centre

BACKGROUND

The [Jane Finch Initiative \(JFI\)](#) is a City of Toronto and resident-led project to plan for the future of the Jane and Finch area. Together, we are developing a community development plan and a land use plan so that residents and businesses are supported as the area changes over time with the opening of the Finch West LRT. 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**.

Community engagement is at the heart of the Jane Finch Initiative. The City is working in collaboration with the Jane Finch Community and Family Centre, which is supporting community engagement and facilitating different community conversations to collect ideas and feedback. This includes facilitating monthly meetings of a Community Advisory Committee (CAC).

MEETING SUMMARY

On Tuesday October 19th, 2021, from 6pm to 8pm, the Jane Finch Initiative (JFI) Community Advisory Committee (CAC) monthly meeting was hosted by the Jane Finch Community and Family (JFCF) Centre with support from the City of Toronto. This consultation 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 7.

The purpose of the event was to:

- Address housekeeping items on the agenda, including the September 21 meeting minutes, the Terms of Reference, CAC member bios and honoraria.
- Present the JFI Interim Engagement Report to the CAC members.
- Hold a discussion with members of the CAC to discuss the Interim Engagement report.
- Discuss next steps for the next CAC meeting on November 16, and the November 30 Public Open House.

ATTENDEES:

- **2 JFCF centre Staff;** Amadeo Ventura (Manager of Strategic Development), Maymun Abukar (Jane Finch Initiative Coordinator).
- **4 City of Toronto Staff;** Dan Rosen (Senior Policy Advisor, Economic Development & Culture), John Smith (Manager, Social Development Finance & Administration), Leah Birnbaum (Senior Planner, City Planning), Zahra Joseph-Wilson (Assistant Planner, City Planning).
- **17 Community Members;** Allan Ramsarran, Christine Le, Devayani Chitnis, Edna Cofles Gualtero (Stephanie), Jennifer Boakye, John Romano, Kayzie Sutton, Maize Blanchard, Maria B., Mena Hervieux, Sharon Taylor, Susel Munoz, Terryl Knox Magbanua, Troy Budhu, Veronica Eastman, William Ballard, William Lopez.

MEETING SUMMARY

- Maymun welcomes everyone, reads the Land Acknowledgement, and goes over the evening agenda.
- City staff and the Jane Finch Community & Family Centre staff briefly re-introduce themselves.
- Maymun and Leah go over housekeeping items on the agenda.
- Leah and CAC members confirm the previous meeting minutes, the updated Terms of Reference, bios for the website and honoraria.
- Amadeo presents the Interim Engagement Report to the CAC members.
- A discussion period was held to answer questions pertaining to the interim engagement report presentation.
- Leah, Zahra, and John answer any follow-up questions pertaining to the presentation and the JFI.
- Leah and Maymun discuss the other items with the CAC, which include the Public Meeting on November 30, updates on the Heritage focus groups, and phases 2 and 3 of the JFI.

WHAT WE HEARD

This section includes the summaries of the feedback, questions and answers collected from the discussions during the Zoom meeting. City staff responded to the questions asked in this section.

JFI Interim Engagement Report

- Q: Seeing the feedback from other meetings where a lot of consultations are happening (on the report), would we be able to weigh in on some of the discussions like green spaces? Would be glad to be a part of reports that get sent back to city council.
 - Response from City staff: We (City staff) will present early policy ideas to the CAC for feedback before any proposed policy ideas are submitted to City Council. We will also include themed sessions on what staff are working on – with topics like housing, mobility, parks, social development etc...
- Q: Things that are missing in the report or upcoming consultations, including school-aged children and afterschool programs. If we are discussing equity in the JFI, we need to address community needs for children of all ages – there are limited afterschool services, and often those programs get cancelled.
 - Response from City staff: Thank you. The need for after school and other programs for school-aged children has been added to the input received during consultations.
- Q: Is it guaranteed that our recommendations will change public policy at the City of Toronto?

- Response from City staff: City staff will consider the advice, input and feedback from the Community Advisory Committee 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 are 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 CAC so that the resulting Community Development Plan and Secondary Plan reflect community input.
- Q: Has there been any discussions on any local Indigenous healing circle spaces in the development plan process?
 - Response from City staff: The City has developed an Indigenous Engagement Strategy for the project and has initiated consultation with treaty and rights holders. The next steps in the strategy include partnering with an Indigenous (First Nations, Métis or Inuit) facilitator and engaging Indigenous residents of Jane and Finch as well as Indigenous-serving organizations in the study area and the broader city. They will tell us how they would like to be engaged. Healing circles are something we are thinking about but no decisions have been made on our end. We are just listening and hear from the First Nations and service providers themselves.
- Q: Can someone expand on next steps and the mention of Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR)? Considering the stigmatization of Jane Finch from political figures and decision-makers in this process.
 - Response from City staff: There needs to be accountability on all partners, both current and future, and ensure that they will not continue the stigmas embedded in this process. City-approved plans will recognize the history of stigma and have the recommendations and actions that the community has put forward. In the city, we've seen the first CABR+PAC and Black Food Sovereignty program, so that we can change and implement policies and actions to prioritize those greatly impacted.
- Comment from CAC member: Community organizing for political action from hateful rhetoric said by politicians. We (the CAC and residents of Jane Finch) need to keep our voices heard in the political arena.
- Comment from CAC member: In respect to the CABR discussions that took place before the JFI, we need to circle back to those conversations and with those individuals (referencing the Equitable Engagement Framework facilitated by Jay Pitter with a group of City staff and residents from the Jane and Finch area)

- Response from City staff: The Equitable Engagement Strategy will be presented to the CAC for input at the next meeting in November.
- Comment from CAC member: Considering the political organizing and hateful rhetoric, we (the CAC) need keep focused on Jane Finch and pick our battles for community development. We are losing affordable housing and rent increases in the area – this is a current crisis that needs to be addressed.
- Q: What is happening with the development application at 41-75 Four Winds Drive?
 - Response from City staff: There is a preliminary staff report about the development available here: <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/ey/bqrd/backgroundfile-163393.pdf>. The application was appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal. A virtual community consultation was held on May 18th. Link to the recorded virtual meeting is here: <https://toronto.webex.com/toronto/lr.php?RCID=896cfd741b8744f0b26e6fc96253ad32>

Discussion Theme

Discussion themes that were noted from this meeting include:

- CAC inclusion in consultations
- Childcare and afterschool programs
- Public policy and change
- Indigenous engagement
- Race and the CABR-PAC
- Political action and community organization
- Housing affordability
- Increases in rent

The next meeting is scheduled for November 16th, 2021, at 6pm by Zoom.

APPENDIX 1: Meeting Agenda

5:55 Pre-meeting Huddle/Tech Check	
6:05 Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions (Maymun)	
<p>I would like to provide a land acknowledgement at the beginning of this meeting as a way to give us a moment for reflection and to demonstrate our recognition of Indigenous lands, treaties and peoples. Let us think about what happened in the past and what changes can be made going forward in order to further the reconciliation process and address the injustices of the past and present.</p> <p>We acknowledge the land we are meeting on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit and is within the territory of the Dish With One Spoon treaty.</p> <p>We are all Treaty people. Many of us have come here as settlers, immigrants, newcomers in this generation or generations past. We'd like to also acknowledge and honour those who came here involuntarily, particularly those who are descended from those brought here through enslavement.</p>	
6:10: Housekeeping (Maymun)	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meeting minutes from September 21st meeting were circulated on October 1st. They'll be posted online shortly. 2. Has everyone seen and signed the Terms of Reference? Send an email to Maymun to say you agree – let us know if you want a hard copy mailed to you. 3. Bios received from CAC members 4. Bios still needed from: Kemisha Thomas, Terryl Knox Magbanua 5. Anything else? Honoraria? 	
6:30: Interim Engagement Report (Amadeo)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by Amadeo • Discussion of Interim Report – what we learned, what we can improve, ideas for running engagement in Phase 2 	
7:30 Next Steps	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nov 16th next CAC meeting • Nov 30th Public Meeting 	
7:40 Meeting Wrap Up	
7:45 Internal Staff Debrief	
Roles	
Facilitator	Maymun Abukar

JFC staff attending	Amadeo Ventura
City staff attending	Leah Birnbaum Zahra Joseph-Wilson John Smith, SDFA Dan Rosen, EDC