

**Jane Finch Initiative:  
Community Advisory  
Committee Meeting #6  
November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
6pm-8pm**

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

## **BACKGROUND**

The City of Toronto's [Jane Finch Initiative \(JFI\)](#) is a resident-informed 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 November 16<sup>th</sup>, 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 8-9.

The purpose of the event was to:

- Address housekeeping items on the agenda, including the October 19 CAC meeting minutes and honoraria.
- Inform CAC members about an upcoming meeting regarding the external engagement of on the Jane Finch Mall.
- Updates of City policies and reports.
- Present and discuss the Equitable Engagement Co-design to the CAC members.
- Provide a preview of the presentation materials for the November 30 Public Open House, followed with a discussion.
- Discuss next steps for 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).
- **16 Community Advisory Committee (CAC) members;** Allan Ramsarran, Christine Le, Devayani Chitnis, Jennifer Boakye, John Romano, Kayzie Sutton, Kemisha Thomas, Maize Blanchard, Maria B., Mena Hervieux, Sharon Taylor, Terryl Knox Magbanua, Troy Budhu, Veronica Eastman, William (John) Ballard, William Lopez.

GUEST for the first two items on the agenda:

- **1 Convene Toronto/Ontario For All staff:** Sean Maegher (Coordinator).

## MEETING SUMMARY

- Maymun welcomes everyone, reads the Land Acknowledgement, and goes over the evening agenda.
- Maymun and Leah go over housekeeping items on the agenda, including the decision to have the upcoming December 14 meeting.
- CAC members confirm the previous meeting minutes from October 19, 2021.
- Sean briefly discusses the future Jane Finch Mall plans, separate from the JFI, and invites the CAC to the upcoming mall discussion meeting on November 22, 2021.
- Zahra updates the CAC members on the City policies and reports: development applications, Inclusionary Zoning and Multi-Unit Residential Acquisition (MURA) to protect existing affordable homes.
- John presents the Equitable Engagement Co-design to the CAC members and follows with a brief discussion.
  - A link to the **Confronting Anti-Black Racism Action Plan**: <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2017/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-109127.pdf>
- JFC and City staff present a preview of materials for the November 30 Open House and follow up with a discussion period.
  - Details about **the November 30<sup>th</sup> meeting**: A link to the Zoom meeting is posted at [www.toronto.ca/janefinch](http://www.toronto.ca/janefinch). The meeting is taking place on Tuesday November 30<sup>th</sup> from 6-8pm online.

## 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.

### Jane Finch Mall Q&A

- Q: What is your (the Mall's) perceived impact with the development that is happening in Jane Finch?
  - Response from Sean: Building on what the community has told us (the Mall), there are perceptions that go both ways: Some are enthusiastic and believe that development is a lever for good things to happen to the community, while some find the development disruptive and has negative consequences. Therefore, we want to have these conversations – finding themes that link these points raised by the community.

## Updated City Policies and Reports Q&A

- More information about **Inclusionary Zoning**: here's a link to a press release: <https://www.toronto.ca/news/toronto-city-council-adopts-new-inclusionary-zoning-policy-to-get-more-affordable-housing-built/> and the staff report: <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2020/ph/bqrd/backgroundfile-156401.pdf>
- More information about **other City policies impacting housing** and housing affordability: <https://www.toronto.ca/news/city-of-toronto-announces-new-initiatives-and-programs-to-expedite-the-creation-and-protection-of-affordable-housing/>

## Equitable Engagement Co-design Discussion

- Comment: Glad to see this work and hearing the community voices and the voices of Black leaders are reflected through city policies. Also, glad to see the partnership with Black non-profit organizations in the neighbourhood.
  - Response from City staff: As we move through the visioning phase, gathering main ideas and moving into phase 2, there is a need to have a wider engagement connection. A few actions and principles embedded in the presentation that can be utilized, including how we partner in different ways with different communities, and how we ensure the voices that have historically not been heard are engaged. We (the City) must commit to that in a real way, with real resources and partnerships for that to work. In terms of this work, it is uncharted area because we have to co-design with Jane Finch in mind.
- Q: Is the co-design specific for Jane Finch, or is it Toronto or Ontario-wide? Will we have a CABR (Confronting Anti- Black Racism) voice present on all concepts to discuss and is that embedded in the CAC or a third party?
  - Response from City staff: Toronto is the first municipality to approve a CABR Action Plan and designate a unit. A lot of the unit's work is internal with the City – it's about practices, principles, and training, but also work externally with community partners and resident leads. An effort to ensure that when we look at Initiatives, like the JFI, we are ensuring those principles and actions are embedded in past practices – those plans were initiated in advance. In this process, we (the JFI), visited with the Partnership and Accountability Circle (PAC) as part of the CABR, which is made up of residents across the city. We talked about following up with a working group that they have developed, to integrate with the work that is happening here. This is a part of the City but will help to create a platform for other community partners in Jane Finch.
- Q: Do you see anti-racism workshops and training implemented in workplaces and will it be enforced?
  - Response from City staff: I see it at the City. The CABR unit is asked by different agencies to do this work and help city divisions and agencies to support the development of these Anti-Black Racism approach, and

overall forms of oppression – specifically ones that impact residents at the policy level. Also working with partners in the community coordination plan who are interested in training non-profit organizations and to sometimes work within communities with local experts. This work is well overdue and has a long way to go.

### **Open House Materials Feedback Discussion**

- Feedback from 2 CAC members: A Glossary of terms and mandates for referenced groups, reports, committees, acronyms, and abbreviations used in the presentation would be useful information for the general public.
- Q: Has the city done any consultation with CHFT regarding building more Co-operative Housing in the Jane Finch Community?
  - Response from City staff: No, we have not. We have been speaking to some community activists about land trust modals – nothing concrete has been discussed. Open to all conversations about housing that the City can support.
- Feedback: Glad to see a reflection of the community in these reports. Also agree that coops are interesting, we should also be thinking about coop businesses and how to support them. Finally, this project (the JFI) is more resident-informed than resident-led, community activists may be critical about this notion.
  - Response from City staff: We will edit this point to describe the project as being community- and resident-informed
- Q: In regard to the frequent car robberies in the community, is there any way to bring this up to city council, specifically on community safety and on holding landlords accountable to tenants.
  - Response from City staff: At this point, we (the City) will talk internally and see what can be done about this. There is no direct line to city council for specific questions, but we can gather some more information about these concerns.
- Q: Regarding the legal issues people have to deal with when this type of situation occurs, where do we (the community) go to figure out what is in our insurance plan? Where can we turn to in order to help residents navigate through this legal process?
  - Response from City staff: This is a huge issue that impacts everyone across the city, especially low-income residents. We need to do research on what legal supports are available and if they fall under the scope of legal services.
- Feedback: Ensuring that when development applications are submitted to the city, that they can include carbon emission reductions and greenhouse gas reductions is something that needs to be discussed with the community and building its future.
  - Yes, we do have policies that require buildings to be built to a certain standard, in terms of carbon footprint. Not sure about solar panels, but we (the city) can find more information. We also have incentives for developers in the approval process and have the Toronto Green Standard and Ontario Building Code.

- Feedback: For the public meeting, we need accessibility for immigrant and newcomer services. There needs to be more immigrant and newcomer integration in the JFI engagement process. There was also not much follow up on community safety and work with the police. The negative stigmas around the community's reputation affects the insurance rates. There also needs to be some sort of legal aid services for residents in the neighbourhood.
  - Response from City staff: The City is receiving this information for input. Translations for newcomers is available at 311, but there needs to be more work done around immigrant and newcomer engagement.

### **Discussion Theme**

Discussion themes that were noted from this meeting include:

- Jane Finch Mall development and engagement strategies.
- Affordable housing updates in the updated city policies and reports.
- Anti-Racism principles, tools, discussions and workshops in workplaces and communities.
- Information accessibility for the community (for the Public Meeting).
  - Glossary, policy references and translation services.
- Community safety and landlord accountability for residents.
- Legal services for residents.

## **APPENDIX 1: Meeting Agenda**

<b>5:55 Pre-meeting Huddle/Tech Check</b>
<b>6:05 Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions (Maymun)</b>
<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>
<b>6:10: Housekeeping (Maymun)</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meeting minutes from October 19th meeting were circulated on November 10<sup>th</sup>. Any changes?</li> <li>2. Other items</li> </ol>
<b>6:20: External Engagement on Jane Finch Mall (Troy)</b>
<b>6:20: Updates of City Policies and Reports (City staff)</b>
<b>6:30: Equitable Engagement Co-Design (John)</b>
<b>6:50: Nov 30<sup>th</sup> Public Meeting Material Preview (Leah/Zahra)</b>
<b>7:30 Next Steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nov 30<sup>th</sup> Public Meeting</li> <li>• Dec 14<sup>th</sup> next CAC meeting – do we want to have another meeting?</li> </ul>
<b>7:40 Meeting Wrap Up</b>
<b>7:45 Internal Staff Debrief</b>

<b>Roles</b>	
Facilitator	Maymun Abukar
JFC staff attending	Amadeo Ventura
City staff attending	Leah Birnbaum, City Planning Zahra Joseph-Wilson, City Planning John Smith, SDFA



## **APPENDIX 2: Post-Meeting Feedback from CAC Members**

- Confronting-Anti Black Racism Action Plan: Appears to me to have a great motivation behind it. In other words, I am in support of this movement.
- Equitable Engagement Co-Design Discussion: I am also very happy to see the collaboration between Black non-profit organizations. However, reaching out to other communities that experience similar concerns such as racism, would also help the community grow as a whole.
- I am also happy to hear and note that other community members are getting involved in the growth processes of Jane and Finch, such as the PAC which takes part in the CABR.
- Open House Materials Feedback Discussion:
- I strongly agree with the idea of implementing a source of legal support the the Jane and Finch Community. We can possibly have student volunteers that are currently studying law to help educate those in our communities about our legal rights and entitlements.
- I would also agree to the request of more immigrant and newcomer services. Our community is a prime area for these individuals and more help needs to be directed to them. We can also begin this initiative as part of the community centers, and have volunteers, or even paid positions to run these types of organizations.