Jane Finch Initiative Phase 1 Public Meeting #3 November 30th, 2021 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.



Summary Report by the Jane/Finch Community and Family Centre

BACKGROUND

The City of Toronto's <u>Jane Finch Initiative</u> (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 <u>Neighbourhood Profiles</u>), 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 opportunities 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 (Jane/Finch Centre or JFC) which is supporting community engagement and facilitating different community conversations to collect ideas and feedback. This includes facilitating monthly meetings of the Community Advisory Committee.

MEETING OVERVIEW

On Tuesday, November 30th, 2021, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., City of Toronto staff and Jane/Finch Centre staff, jointly hosted a Public Open House to report back on Phase 1 of the project and introduce early policy ideas for public input. This meeting was part of the Jane Finch Initiative's comprehensive engagement strategy, and it was held online over Zoom. The meeting agenda and the presentation deck can be viewed in Appendices 1 and 2.

The purpose of the event was to:

- Present the Jane Finch Initiative (JFI) Phase 1 findings to the members of the community.
- Provide a presentation from Jane Finch Centre and City staff about the engagement efforts to date and early policy ideas.
- Answer questions following the presentation segments.
- Hold interactive feedback discussions using tools such as polls, Zoom chat and Jamboard to receive public input.

ATTENDEES:

• **3 JFC staff;** Amadeo Ventura (Manager of Strategic Development), Clara Stewart- Robertson (Manager of Community Planning & 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). Additional City of Toronto staff was in attendance to respond to questions.
- 1 Resident Co-facilitator: Kemisha Thomas.
- 98 community participants.

MEETING SUMMARY

- Maymun welcomed everyone, read the Land Acknowledgement, and went over the evening's agenda. Maymun also read the Community Acknowledgement and Zahra read the Commitments from the City staff to the JFI.
- Maymun and Kemisha presented the JFI, and the community engagement partners of the JFI, which include the JFC and Community Advisory Committee (CAC).
- After this first part of the presentation, a feedback discussion period was held with the participants of the open house and facilitated by Kemisha (chat, polls and Jamboard were also available during these discussions).
- After the first discussion period, Zahra presented Policy Themes, Dan presented the Inclusive Economic Development component, and John presented the Social Development aspects of the JFI.
- After this portion of the presentation, Kemisha facilitated another feedback discussion period with participants of the open house,
- Following this discussion, Dan presented the Arts & Culture findings of the JFI. A brief feedback discussion period is held to answer questions and suggestions in the chat.
- After the brief discussion period, Zahra presented Mobility, Parks and Public Realm ideas, followed by another brief discussion segment.
- Following the discussion, Zahra presented on Housing programs and policies, followed by another brief discussion to answer participant questions.
- Zahra presented ideas on Community Services & Facilities and Urban Design, followed by another brief feedback discussion.
- Zahra presented the Heritage and Climate Action policy directions, followed by the last feedback discussion period facilitated by Kemisha.
- Following this discussion, Zahra explained the next steps of the JFI to participants, contact information, and the important upcoming dates in the new year.
- Councillor Perruzza's office provided some final remarks at the end of the meeting.

Public feedback by theme:

What are your favourite places around Jane and Finch?

- Yummies best poutine in the area!
- Black Creek community farm and the community gardens
- Favourite parts are parks. E.g. Rudy's Garden in Black Creek ravine!
- York Gate Mall parking lot is a beautiful place to catch a sunset. The corner of Jane and Finch is really a central spot to animate the community.
- Love the diversity, Black Creek community farm and trails.
- Participants indicated that their favourite places in Jane-Finch community are the parks and the walkable spaces as well as community facilities in the area including Black Creek Community Farm, Driftwood Parkette, San Romano Way, Yorkwoods Library etc.

Inclusive Economic Development

Ideas & Comments:

- Help businesses to be integrated into the digital space such as e-commerce.
- Have pop-up shops to promote local businesses in the Jane and Finch.
- A participant commented on the vision and the need for food security and community gardens in the area these must be mentioned and added to the vision statement.

Q&A:

1) Does the community benefits idea include the building of the Finch-LRT? There doesn't look to be many community members working on this new line.

Response from City staff: The Finch West LRT is being built by Metrolinx which is a provincial agency. Work is being done through a construction consortium called Mosaic. I think they have made some commitment to community benefits. All the public entities that have projects could potentially provide community benefits. The City cannot commit to community benefits for projects it is not leading or funding but that is not to say that we can't have a coordinated effort for community benefits through various projects.

2) How many projects do we have going on in Jane & Finch?

Response from City staff: As development applications come in they are publicly available online and can be viewed by address or by looking on a map here: <u>Development Applications (toronto.ca)</u>.

As part of developing a community development plan, we need to assess what is already happening. We know that there are a lot of initiatives happening but we need to map that out and that is ongoing. Whether it be seniors or older adults programs, there needs to be better awareness of those programs, as well as, looking at developing new creative initiatives created in partnership with the community.

3) I wonder if the downtown initiative at Dundas/Bathurst of shipping containers converted into mini-shops selling food, drinks, crafts, etc. Is that experiment working, and if so, could it be brought to Jane and Finch?

Regulations limit the locations where shipping containers can be installed, but they are sustainably hosting retail businesses in a few places in the city, including at Dundas/Bathurst. In general, the availability of adequate and affordable space for small businesses and retail has been identified as a Jane Finch Initiative policy direction, and shipping containers could be investigated as part of the policy and program mix.

4) I like the idea of providing entrepreneurship support and space. Is the plan to prioritize local residents? If not, I think that would make sense considering the community's history

Any entrepreneurship and business support policies and programs to be included in the Jane Finch Initiative plans would prioritize a goal of benefiting local residents, both in terms of supporting local entrepreneurs and ensuring access for local residents to various goods and services.

Social Development

Ideas & Comments:

- The thing lacking here is things for older age groups, 50 and up, and the children.
- Public gardening turn unused Bocce Courts into local food gardens.
- Many seniors need access to these kinds of spaces, especially indoor gym space and day programs.
- Consider including day programs for seniors for indoors, especially winter, but also in summer, to utilize green spaces for hosting Zumba classes and community gardens and the farm – gardening is great for seniors
- A fruit and vegetable garden dome would be nice that run all year round like Allen Gardens (at 160 Gerrard Street) focused on farming and organic food.
- Mention food security directly in the vision statements.
- Partner with Employment Ontario organizations to provide skills development programs (not only with employment skills or search skills).
- Would be great to get a plethora of pilot programs with long term sustainability in the Northwest. Would be so great.

• Partner with local schools and restaurants or businesses and cooks to provide training e.g.: Food prep, cooking skills, mentorship, co-op and future employment.

Q&A:

1) How are you going to address the crime level in the area? How are you going to deal with shooting, drug addiction and selling in the area?

Response from City staff: Part of the process that we look at when we work with any community is engaging the community with the specifics of their safety-related concerns. Often we work with a number of different groups for example the police and grassroots groups. We try to bring all parties together and ideas for how to do that better are always welcome.

Arts & Culture

Ideas & Comments:

- Nuit Blanche installations in Finch would be really cool.
- We need City-supported art spaces in the community for our local artists to showcase art would be awesome too.
- Need to make Jane and Finch a safe space for tourists to come during the time of Nuit Blanche.
- Art gallery featuring primarily local artists.
- Art installations in community spaces and malls.... similar to the Baycrest's "The Brain Project"
- Audit past arts-related programmes identify what worked and what didn't, what's redundant, what local artists have been advocating for and how far that went and why it succeeded or failed
- Grants and other supports/resources make it accessible and simpler.
- The murals and art must be "Instagram worthy".
- Prior to creating physical spaces, the city could start by creating a community-led online space for artists to network, connect, share ideas, work together etc., to slowly build up to a physical space.

Q&A:

1) Food is culture – can we do a farmer's market or neighbourhood market showcasing culturally relevant food.

Response from City staff: These are great ideas. We've heard input about food and food markets before but the integration into celebrating local arts and culture is a new link to consider.

Parks & Public Realm

Ideas & Comments:

- Public infrastructure for public gatherings
- Improve tennis courts.
- More tennis courts.
- Consider building splash pads for children in the community.
- Winter programmes and resources.
- Outdoor and indoor tracks and sports equipment.
- There are diseased trees in the ravine at the end of Lomdon Green Court, which is at Driftwood and York Woods Gate.
- Make our parks more secure and address vandalism
- Add washrooms, drinking water stations in the park.
- Accessibility for PWDs (persons with disabilities) to parks. I'm sure they'd love to use the parks independently or with support.
- At Northwoods Park near the community centre, where the bridge is, some parts of the wood have holes and are dangerous for little kids that can get their feet stuck. Don't know if they fixed it or not.

Q&A:

1) Safety in the Black Creek Trail is a concern. Not a lot of people are using it compared to other ravine trails. Two occasions when a toilet has been burned down and vandalized. How do we make our parks more secure?

Response from City staff: The importance of community safety, access to green space and access to indoor and outdoor recreational activities has been identified in Jane Finch Initiative focus groups. We are interested in exploring actions that the community is supportive of in the next phase of the Jane Finch Initiative.

2) Focus on the use of parks all year – Can you increase hours/access to washrooms and water in a safe, secure way. Hoping that this new initiative leads to a city-wide reform when it comes to the use of parks. Sometimes there is no accessibility to parks in the community.

Response from City staff: This is something we are going to look closely at. We have heard issues of maintenance and state of good repair. We will listen closely to people when it comes, not only to the state of facilities but also where there is a need for new facilities.

Getting Around

Ideas & Comments:

- Need to reduce traffic times during traffic hour
- Bike Share TO Need to have bikes stationed in Jane and Finch
- This neighbourhood is one of the few without an ice-skating rink. The city can partner with partners to ensure this activity is accessible (providing skates).

- City needs to look at stop signs where there are trees that cover it. You don't see them until you get really close and it can be too late to put on the brakes, especially where there are big trees in full bloom.
- Mobility and transit for seniors doing grocery shopping especially winter where grocery stores are not walking distance TTC buses sometimes are delayed and far between and seniors wait long at bus stops.

Q&A:

1) Are you planning to add more lanes around the area Highway 401 and Finch Ave West?

Response from City staff: Adding more lanes to existing roads is not the City's primary approach for dealing with traffic congestion. As part of ongoing work, the Finch West Goods Movement Transportation Master Plan (<u>https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/get-involved/public-consultations/infrastructure-projects/finch-west-goods-movement-study/</u>) is investigating where roadway improvements can be made at select locations in northwest Toronto to help move freight to and from employment areas to 400 series highways.

Housing

Ideas & Comments:

- In the vision statement it would be more impactful to say "Decent housing" instead of "good housing".
- A participant suggested the City intervene with discussions regarding the condominium corporations in the area and what to do in terms of beautifying the area.

Q&A:

1) Affordable options for first time home buyers, are there any?

Response from City staff: The City has a City-wide program that offers land transfer tax exceptions or rebates for first time home buyers. I also want to mention inclusionary zoning, it's a new tool that we are looking to implement in the City. It would require new developments to provide either affordable rental housing or affordable ownership housing.

Inclusionary Zoning can be applied in the vicinity of major transit station areas that have undergone a provincially required planning process to establish minimum densities in a designated area. This process is underway for the areas around the LRT stations on Finch Avenue.

2) What about rent-to-own? If rent-to-own was successful before, why is there no more initiative now?

Response from City staff: the City is focusing on other opportunities to support first-time homebuyers through maintaining the Municipal Land Transfer Tax Rebate Program and targeting the creation of 4,000 new non-profit affordable ownership opportunities for residents.

There may be federal initiatives underway to support rent-to-own opportunities. In December 2021, the federal government issued its Mandate Letter for the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion that includes the following commitment: "To help make it easier for renters to get on the path to home ownership, create a fund to test, develop and scale up rent-to-own projects across the country."

3) What is TCHC plan for Edgeley Village (Driftwood and Shoreham) for revitalizing the aging townhouse infrastructure? Also, what options are there for residents to put forth their ideas for zero displacement?

There are no plans for Edgeley Village at the moment. Should there be plans in the future, there will be a comprehensive tenant consultation process with opportunities to engage with other tenants from other revitalization sites including Lawrence Heights and Alexandra Park (where zero displacement revitalization takes place). The City's official plan policy 3.2.1.7 requires redevelopment of social housing to secure a) full replacement of the units, b) replacement of the units at rents similar to those at the time of the application, and c) an acceptable tenant relocation and assistance implementation plan.

In order for zero displacement to work, revitalization would need to happen in phases, meaning that there are a number of TCH units that would be maintained while the first group of replacement units are constructed. Tenants from the first phase would be able to move to empty units that are still on the site. For this to happen, TCH needs to have enough units available that they can hold empty and ready for a tenant to temporarily move into.

As mentioned above, there are no plans to revitalize Edgeley. TCH now has a capital repairs budget to conduct the necessary maintenance on all its properties to ensure it is in a decent state of repair.

4) Is there going to be affordable housing at Firgrove Crescent?

Response from City staff: There is a development application by TCH, they are seeking to revitalize that entire site. 107 net new affordable rental units are anticipated for this site.

Community Services & Facilities

Ideas & Comments:

- Community services to be accessible online.
- Consider putting a mailbox put at the entrance of Clubhouse Court because in the winter, when it is slippery out, we have to walk either down Spenvalley to mail a letter or down Arletta.
- Ensure that the hub community centre is built as promised beside the LRT station at Yorkgate mall.

Urban Design

Ideas & Comments:

- Accessible charging stations where you can charge your phone.
- I think it is also nice when designing buildings to have a rooftop garden for the people in the building to be part of a summer garden.

Q&A:

1) What protections are in place/will be that some of the design principles are met and not simply trumped by private developers (with every high-rise unit)?

Response from City staff: <u>Official Plan</u> policy is complemented by <u>design guidelines</u> to guide growth and change by promoting a desired type and form of physical development that will result in functional and attractive complete communities with an appropriate transition in scale and activity between neighbouring districts. The Jane Finch Initiative is developing a Secondary Plan for the area which, when adopted by City Council, will form part of the Official Plan. Secondary Plans establish local development policies that guide the development while ensuring adequate public infrastructure and environmental protection. The Secondary Plan for Jane and Finch, and any associated urban design guidelines and community input received, will be used by community planners and urban design staff to provide feedback on applications and inform recommendations to Committee/City Council. Ultimately, City Council decides whether to approve development applications. Developers and community members may choose to appeal City Council decisions to the <u>Ontario Land Tribunal</u>.

2) Is there somewhere on the website where people can access resources (and read cited works) to learn more about "urban design" and what is being proposed?

Response from City staff: Design guidelines can be found on the city's planning website here: <u>https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/design-guidelines/</u>

Climate Action

Ideas & Comments:

• Support bike repair services.

• Charging stations for public spaces.

Q&A:

1) Are there areas where we can decompose waste?

Response from City staff: The City has guidelines for providing garbage, recycling and green bin pick-up and bin storage. New buildings must be designed to meet these guidelines so that the residents can easily participate in waste diversion.

Appendix 1: Meeting Agenda

Public Open House Agenda

6:00 Introductions (Maymun, John and Zahra)

- Welcome and Land Acknowledgement
- What is the purpose of this evening?
- Overall structure of the workshop
- Who to contact if you're having tech issues

6:05 JFI Phase 1 Presentation (Maymun, Kemisha, John, Dan, and Zahra)

• Time for Jamboard and feedback discussion periods in-between the overall presentation.

7:25 Meeting Wrap Up

- What is coming next?
- All the ways people can connect with us if they have more questions/comments
 - Email janefinch@toronto.ca
 - Zahra Joseph-Wilson 416-338-0775 Planner office hours: speak to a member of the project team during office hours December 1, 2, and 3 from 4:00-6:00pm. If we miss your call, please leave a message. All voicemails will be returned in the following days.
 - Social Media: <u>#JaneFinch</u> @CityPlanTO
 - Virtual Engagement Platform <u>https://engage.toronto.ca/projects/city-planning/jane-finch-initiative-public-engagement/</u>
 - Visit toronto.ca/janefinch to sign up for E-updates to stay plugged in to the process and see when content is posted. (open until Dec 5th)

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7:30 Internal Staff Debrief

Appendix 2: Jamboard Responses



Inclusive Economic Development

- Maintaining and supporting community-serving businesses
- · Community benefits and social procurement
- Engaging large employers
- Workforce development supports
- · Entrepreneurship support, social enterprise and space
- Ongoing partnerships and resources required to realize inclusive economic development opportunities



Help business

to be integrated in the digital

space such as e-commerce From Nov. 30th chat: Does the community benefits currently include the building of the Finch LRT? There doesn't look to be many community members working on this new line Did we get it right?

From Nov. 30th Chat: I wonder if the downtown initiative at Dundas/Bathurst of shipping containers converted into mini-shops selling food, drinks, crafts, etc. Is that experiment working, and if so, could it be brought to

providing entrepreneurship support and space. Is the plan to prioritize local residents? If not I think that would make sense considering the community's history and since I assume

I like the idea of











times during traffic hour?

Create Complete Streets

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Getting Around

- Make walking and cycling infrastructure safer and more accessible
- Provide more mobility choices and improve multi-modal connectivity
- New development should support direct and safe walking and cycling connections to transit, shopping, services, and local destinations.

Mobility and transit for seniors doing grocery shopping esp winter where grocery stores are not walking distance-TTC buses sometimes are delayed and far Are you planning to add more lanes Highway 401 and the area Highway 401 and Finch Ave W? is one of the few without an ice skating rink. The city can partner with partners to ensure this activity is accessible stop s	y needs to look at p signs where ere are trees that ver it and you don't t them until you get illy close and it can too late to put on e breaks, especially ere there are big es in full bloom in
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have stationed in

Jane and Finch?

think!

Housing What about rent to own?

Use the suite of existing and new policies and programs to address **displacement**, improve and **protect existing rental housing** and create new **affordable housing**



Community Services & Facilities

- · Maintain and enhance existing community service facilities
- Create new community service facilities to meet existing needs and accommodate growth
- Introduce new active recreation facilities in new or existing parks within or close to the study area
- · Leverage development to achieve community benefits
- Encourage partnerships and co-location opportunities between the public, private and non-profit sectors.

Do you like what you see? Community Services to be accessible online

From Nov. 30th chat: Can we have a mailbox put at the entrance of Clubhouse Court because in the winter when it is slippery out we have to walk either down Spenvalley to mail a letter or down Arleta

Ensure community centre is built as promised beside the LRT station at yorkgate





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