

Summary of Heritage Meetings

Heritage Focus Group - Meeting 1

Date: November 17, 2020

Time: 7:00 pm

Location: Cisco Webex

Attendance

- Heritage Focus Group Members: *Heritage Team to Provide*
- City Planning Project Team: Gary Miedema (Project Team Lead, Heritage Planning); Loryssa Quattrociochi (Heritage Planning); Zoi de la Peña (Heritage Planning).

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of this meeting was to establish and contextualize the Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment process, introduce the Danforth Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment (CHRA) process and project team, review roles and the focus group, and the processes criteria for the cultural heritage value.

Meeting Outline

Participants were welcomed and explained meeting procedures, followed by a land acknowledgement.

A round of introductions were held, and then the Heritage team introduced the purpose of the meeting, the agenda, and the roles & responsibilities of the Heritage Focus Group. The Heritage team shared the background about Destination Danforth and the cultural Heritage Resource Assessment.

Survey Submissions

After Heritage Meeting #1, members of the Heritage Focus Group were sent an online survey asking about key heritage and cultural themes and specific properties. The responses collected in this survey were used to prompt discussion in Meeting #2 and are included in the summary of that meeting.

Heritage Focus Group - Meeting 2

Date: December 8, 2020

Time: 7:00pm

Location: Cisco Webex

Attendance

- Heritage Focus Group Members: *Heritage Team to Provide*
- City Planning Project Team: Gary Miedema (Project Team Lead, Heritage Planning); Loryssa Quattrociocchi (Heritage Planning); Zoi de la Peña (Heritage Planning).
- Overlap Associates: Kyrie Vala-Webb (Facilitator); Steve Krysak (Facilitator).

Meeting Purpose

This meeting was set to clarify any outstanding questions on what a CHRA is, to provide a brief presentation of the historic overview that was circulated, discuss responses to the survey questions circulated and to address any comments or questions on the materials presented.

This meeting also focused on a discussion of the historical overview and aimed to hear from participants about Danforth properties that the team should be aware of.

Meeting Outline

A round of introductions were held, and the Heritage team introduced the purpose of the meeting, the agenda, and the roles & responsibilities of the Heritage Focus Group.

Participants engaged in a discussion about the process of being listed on the heritage register, the value of having a list and what it means in tangent with the Heritage Act.

The heritage team provided input on properties that should be considered for the heritage evaluation and the importance construction boom.

The team engaged in detailed guided discussions and survey questions, facilitated by members of the Overlap Associates team.

Discussion, Questions and Comments from HFG Members

Heritage Focus Group participants identified the themes, rooms for improvement, properties for consideration. In particular, participants provided the following key points:

1. What did you like about the presentation?

- Gives a long view of the history of the Danforth
- Highlighting buildings as historical from above the first floor
- Good to acknowledge what happened before the Greek population
- Raised that research has found that the Greek population was exaggerated (Not much data available though)
- Good to acknowledge the other cultures that are currently and have been present on the Danforth

2. What can be improved?

- Not much emphasis on individual buildings at this point of the study
- Hard to see maps in the presentation because of scale
- Didn't capture the everyday story of the Danforth
- Sights, sounds, smells don't come through in maps and development progress
- Need to capture personal and community stories from everyday life of the Danforth
- Talk of the smells of the Danforth - Lulu Walker's floral shop & Chambers fish store - women's shops (before women owned shops)
- Personal stories about people who lived on the Danforth in the past, still live there or were close to the Danforth. People will connect with these stories.

3. What new ideas do you have?

- Noticing that a lot of existing buildings have been altered in such a way you can't tell they are historic unless you look above the main floor
- Built with bricks from the Don Valley
- Car dealerships almost took over the whole Danforth when cars were taking off (big part of modernization of the Danforth)
- Where can we build in a focus on religion, gender, community events? Is this significant?
- Restaurants allowed new Canadians to land in the Danforth and thrive

DANFORTH AVENUE COMPLETE STREET AND PLANNING STUDY

Draft Terms of Reference

- Inmates of the Don Jail worked in fields outside the prison. Any connection to markets on the Danforth?
- Where did the markets get their produce from?
- There used to be a lot more creeks, and many had gardens for the markets.
- Are there particular restaurants we should know about?
- Where do cultural events intersect with the properties?
- Document history of Greek businesses in Toronto - use phonebook information to gather

4. What specific people, themes, or aspects of the Danforth's history do you think are important to understand as part of the Cultural Heritage Resources Assessment?

- Connections especially after the construction of the Bloor Viaduct as transit was able to be put in place all the way out to almost Victoria Park. Development of the strip really took off following that.
- The Danforth's connection to Greekness is a significant feature of this neighbourhood (Chester to Jones). While this is a modern (post-World War II) development, it nevertheless has served as a significant point of arrival for Greeks in Canada. For many, it offered a sense of familiarity when migrating to Canada, but many Greek families have moved out of the neighbourhood to achieve the suburban dream.
- Pioneers, immigrants - British, Irish, Greek, Italian, various people
- Irrespective of this evolution, the Danforth was the epicentre of Greek restaurants, entertainment, and staples (baptismal, wedding, confectionary goods, etc.). The largest street festival in the city was also predicated on sharing Greek culture with other Torontonians, which is an emblem of success for the neighbourhood.
- Chilean refugees

5. What else should we know about the Danforth as we complete a heritage survey?

- The Greek population was not as large as rumoured.
- The feel of the neighbourhood would be enhanced by leaving as many historic buildings as possible
- A long stretch of the Danforth is now known as Greektown, but there is a history that predates this branding. The Greek flavour of the Danforth has to be contextualized in this manner. Of course, the importance of this space and its tie to Greek culture cannot be overlooked. Its implications in helping thousands of Greek immigrants in Canada transition to life in this country is salient and ought to be remembered. Finally, the Jones to Chester stretch has been host to annual parades for the Greek community, which commemorate two separate events of national significance in Greece (Independence Day in March and OXI Day in October).

6. Are there any buildings along Danforth Avenue Between Broadview and Coxwell Avenues that are associated with important events or people that have helped shape this neighbourhood?

- The Playters - several buildings in the western part sw corner
- Theatres
- 1435 – Andene Apartments
- 1361 -1331- The block between Gillard and Lamb Avenues – character block – fair number of the buildings have retained the original character of the street
- 710 – Eton House
- Bowling alley (was the Globe restaurant)
- Places where women had businesses - Lulu Waters, Chambers (now 7 numbers)
- 1426 – Sarah’s
- 1298 – The Linsmore Tavern
- Danforth Music Hall - 147 Danforth Ave.
- Several churches, United, Anglican, Baptist, R.C., Greek Orthodox, mosque
- The public toilet (just west of Broadview)

DANFORTH AVENUE COMPLETE STREET AND PLANNING STUDY

Draft Terms of Reference

- 1414 - Money Mart – former bank
- 249 – 239 – another stretch of historical buildings
- 181 Danforth - Former Trojan Horse Cafe. The Trojan Horse was a coffee shop opened by Nikos Tsingos and his Toronto-born wife, poet Gwendolyn MacEwen.
- Parkette
- The first car dealerships
- 1654 - now A & W but was formerly a bank, a further building just north of the corner, east side of Greenwood.
- Also, north of Danforth - 778 Broadview

7. Tell us about a specific property?

Trojan Horse Café (179 Danforth Avenue)

- Currently Urban Nails
- Young and politicized Greeks attracted here
- Mingling of sounds between Greek and Chilean music (and Canadian)
- On the fringes in some respects, but also very significant
- Outside of the norms for Greek cafes (music, ideology)
- Hippies, radicals, students, writers, musicians
- Birthed popular band from the area - Companeros
- Key space for youth and counterculture in the 1960s

Danforth Music Hall - 147 Danforth Ave.

- Greek movies, films and other productions would play all night long
- Music Hall held very significant political events - anti-dictatorship artists and events
- Greeks would come from all over to take in culture right from Greece
- Connection to Chilean and Greek people in the community and politics back home

Astoria

- Multigenerational restaurant
- Worth interviewing someone related to it for background and history

Other movie theatres along the Danforth - The Roxy

- Pape and Danforth theatre
- Palace Theatre, 664 Danforth Avenue, Toronto, ON M4K 1R3 - Demolished

"Closest Subdivision to Toronto" - 1912 Monarch Park development ad

The Globe restaurant (Playters)

Heritage Focus Group - Meeting 3

Date: April 1, 2020

Time: 7:00pm

Location: Cisco Webex

Attendance

- Heritage Focus Group Members: *Heritage Team to Provide*
- City Planning Project Team: Gary Miedema (Project Team Lead, Heritage Planning); Loryssa Quattrociocchi (Heritage Planning); Zoi de la Peña (Heritage Planning).

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of this meeting was to share updates on the process and aid in the discussions around additional properties and preparation for the analysis.

Meeting Outline

The Heritage team welcomed participants and explained meeting procedures, followed by the land acknowledgement. A round of introductions were held, and the Heritage team introduced the purpose of the meeting, the agenda, and the roles & responsibilities of the Heritage Focus Group.

The Heritage team invited HFG members to submit written feedback on the Historical Overview, as well as supplementary materials following the meeting. The team led discussions around what the next steps are and how they will be incorporated into the final analysis.

Participants had discussions about the process of being listed on the Heritage Register and what it means in respect to the Heritage Act.

The Heritage team reviewed historical review, properties constructed in between 1910 - 1929, their importance and significant review on building typologies.

The Heritage team thanked participants for their contribution to helping them with the preservation of our heritage.

Discussion Questions and Comments from HFG Members**What kinds of teeth are there on the regulations?**

- Clarity was provided by the Heritage team on the fact that there are rules and listing means that approval has to take place.
- With all the changes that are taking place, if someone wants to demolish, and /or renovate they have to submit a planning application that has to be reviewed.
- All heritage properties will have to be reviewed by planning staff.

We have realized that there are a number of Pre-World War 2 apartment buildings between Coxwell Avenue and Donlands Avenue. Do they contribute to the historic contexts? Do you view these as a grouping or not? Are they of any significant value into the historical grouping?

- It was concluded that these apartments were significant and should be grouped.
- A significant memory was that there was a sign with a bachelor for rent in the windows for years.
- The building has significant value to the art community, the Art Deco period and style is highlighted in the Architecture.

Other Comments:

- The importance of putting historical plaques on the building and it will help to tell the story and will further inform the process for City planning team members.
- It is important to look for businesses that were once owned by women - that kind of association will prove valuable and help to enhance the story.
- There was a great store on the Danforth by the name of Thuna's - which was a herbalist store in the 1800's. Indigenous people used to go to the Thuna's for medicine - as they were still using their traditional practices and Thuna's had the raw materials. (3 or 9 Danforth Ave.)
- 578-582 Danforth Ave. (the building with the costa blue sign) played an important role for baptisms, weddings, and religious ceremonies particularly for Greeks who lived outside the Danforth area – noted as a building of significance for the community at large.

DANFORTH AVENUE COMPLETE STREET AND PLANNING STUDY

Draft Terms of Reference

- Carrot Common was constructed in 1987 replacing a car dealership. It was transformed into a neighbourhood shopping center which still exists and is valued as a community landmark and as a gathering area.
- It would be interesting to see the historic value of the Sunkist Fruit Market (later known as Sunland Fruit Market) being brought back, however concerns about how ownership may affect the ability to do so. Long-standing history of it being the first fruit market back in 1934 at 561 Danforth Avenue. Considerations should be made around using a plaque to say that it was the original fruit market – acknowledging that it was something of value to the community.
- It was highlighted that it is important that we don't overdo the row houses, a few of the properties will add value unless there is a particular reason to highlight all of them.