

Draft Meeting Summary

Parkdale LAC Meeting #2

Parkdale Main Street Heritage Conservation District Plan

April 5, 2022, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Online and by phone via WebEx



Overview

On Tuesday April 5, 2022, the City of Toronto hosted the second Local Advisory Committee (LAC) meeting focused on the Parkdale Main Street Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Plan. The purpose of the meeting was to: provide an update on the HCD Plan project timeline and activities; share refinements made to the draft Plan; share and seek feedback on the details of the proposed policies and guidelines on contributing and non-contributing properties as well as parks and public realm, and; seek feedback on the Community Engagement approach. (see Appendix A for agenda). Due to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting took place on WebEx.

9 out of the 12 invited organizations participated in the meeting (see Appendix B for the participant list). Other participants included City of Toronto staff from Heritage Planning and Community Planning as well as Councillor Gord Perks.

Following a land acknowledgement from Councillor Perks, Ian Malczewski from the independent facilitation team Third Party Public reviewed the agenda and facilitated a round of introductions. Pourya Nazemi and Megan Albinger from the City Planning Division then presented an HCD Plan update and reviewed draft key policies and guidelines. The City divided its presentation into two parts, each of which was followed by questions of clarification and a plenary discussion.

Third Party Public, facilitated the meeting and prepared this meeting sharing and shared it with participants in draft for review prior to being finalized. This summary summarizes feedback shared during the meeting – both during the discussions and through the chat box – as well as feedback shared afterwards. It is not intended to be a verbatim transcript.

What we heard overall

This section summarizes key points we heard in the meeting. They are high-level takeaways only – readers should review them in the context of the broader, more detailed feedback that follows.

Overall, the policies around contributing and non-contributing properties do not raise any major concerns. LAC members suggested some refinements to the policies

around contributing and non-contributing properties, including suggestions to consider polices and guidelines around “ghost signs,” roof materials, window type, transitions, shadowing, and public art.

The HCD Plan’s parks and public realm policies should balance protecting and conserving Parkdale’s heritage with providing flexibility. The language in the policies and guidelines should not be overly prescriptive and avoid turning Parkdale into a “themed” area. There should be flexible language that allows contemporary and dynamic public art and spaces (like laneways) change over time.

Making the information accessible and reaching out to a broad cross-section of Parkdale will help with community engagement. The City should avoid overly technical or text heavy presentations and should promote community engagement opportunities through the Parkdale Library, non-profit organizations, and on phone poles in the community.

Questions of clarification

Throughout the meeting, participants asked questions of clarification. Questions from participants are in **bold** text, responses from the project team follow each question in *italicized* text.

- **Will both signage stuck to the wall and signage that sticks out over the street be allowed under the HCD plan?** *Yes, a wide range of signage is permitted under the guidelines.*
- **Are you contacting property and business owners about the Draft HCD Plan? How have they been responding?** *Yes, the City mailed them notice last week. We have not heard feedback from them yet.*

Detailed summary of feedback

The discussion in the meeting covered three topics:

1. Key policies and guidelines for contributing and non-contributing properties
2. Key polices and guidelines on parks and public realm
3. Community engagement and process feedback
4. Other feedback

The summary below is organized under these four topics. Participant feedback and suggestions are included first. Responses from the project team, where provided, follow in *italicized text*.

Feedback about draft policies and guidelines on contributing and non-contributing properties

In the first part of the meeting, the City shared draft policies and guidelines for contributing and non-contributing properties, including policies around alterations, massing, roofs, signage, and more. The City asked LAC members if there were specific policies and guidelines they liked and for any suggested changes/additions to the proposed language in the policies and guidelines.

LAC members did not raise any strong concerns or objections to the policies. The bulk of LAC members' feedback focused on suggesting additional considerations to include in these policies, including:

- **"Ghost signs."** The remnants of signs painted on to the sides of buildings help contribute to Parkdale's heritage character and should be considered in the HCD Plan. There should be guidelines on how to incorporate them, restore them, and/or protect them if a property owner wants to cover them up.
- **Roof materials and types of windows.** There are a number of buildings with original ornate materials that are getting replaced with other, less ornate materials. The HCD Plan should include policies and guidelines to require property owners to maintain the same type of windows or roof materials. It's more important that replacement windows or materials look consistent with the area's character than that they use the exact same materials. *The City responded that the overall direction in the HCD Plan is for property owners to replace or restore roof features that are damaged or deteriorated. To approve any alterations in general, the City will require a Heritage Impact Assessment. If a replacement is needed, the City will look to replicate the materials or replace the quality. If a repair is needed, the City would look for original materials to be used. When a property owner wants to alter windows, the City considers the history of the building and encourages the applicant to provide authenticity while conforming with building and fire codes.*
- **Transitions.** For corner heritage buildings with new development, there is an opportunity to take advantage of new, contemporary architecture (incorporated with heritage components) and transition buildings from the main street to the residential neighbourhood in a way that works for both environments.
- **Shadowing on and uses of public realm.** The space next to buildings at corners may be used as amenities for residents (like playgrounds), so consider limiting shadowing on them.
- **Public art.** Consider including policies and guidelines that encourage placing public art on buildings (in addition to the public art policies in the parks and public realm section).

Feedback about draft policies and guidelines on parks and public realm

In the second part of the meeting, the City shared an overview of draft policies and guidelines focused on parks and public realm (historic nodes, parks and open spaces, streetscape and laneway, public art, and others). LAC members generally liked these policies, with some suggested additions and refinements, including:

- **Protect flexibility for public spaces.** The HCD Plan should avoid limiting the adaptation and change of public spaces over time. For example, laneways can include housing (such as laneway suites) and could potentially host retail.
- **Reconsider the language on the inclusion of art.** Some LAC members felt the language in the public art policies and guidelines was overly prescriptive, particularly the language saying public art should “reinforce and enhance historic identity.” They were concerned this language could inadvertently lead to Parkdale becoming a “themed” place and suggested more flexible language that allows for contemporary art and intentionally encourages dynamic art. *The City said the HCD plan does not specify what types of art should be included and that art won’t only be required to relate to the history of Parkdale.*
- **Feedback about Milky Way.** LAC members said Milky Way is an important community space — especially its flexibility and industrial character — but were unsure of what (if anything) could be considered heritage and be protected. Some suggested extending it to accommodate more use. *The City said a challenge with Milky Way is that only the north side is included in the HCD Plan so the team is tasked considering only one side of the laneway.*

Engagement and process feedback

In the last part of the meeting, LAC members shared feedback on how to best approach the upcoming community meeting and public engagement on the Draft HCD Plan. LAC members said:

- **The HCD Plan has been off the community’s radars for a long time, so a lot of the information that will be shared is brand new.** It is important that the team share a broad overview of what an HCD Plan is, explain how it will affect their community, and include visuals (as opposed to detailed information about each policy).
- **Outreach to the Parkdale community should be done at community focal points such as the Parkdale Library.** Many people from different backgrounds use the library and it is an opportunity to get information about the HCD Plan out to them. Information about the upcoming Community Meeting could also be shared via posters on phone polls around the neighbourhood, a way to communicate with the Parkdale community.
- **Reach out to the many non-profit organizations in the community to help promote the meeting.** These organizations can be given a chance to provide early

feedback as well as can help spread information about the community meeting to their members.

Other feedback about the Draft HCD Plan

In a discussion about the Draft Statement of Objectives, several LAC members suggested the City include language around achieving “deeply affordable housing.” *The City responded that HCD Plans generally do not have affordable housing policies and do not identify affordability as a heritage attribute. Other City policies, such as the recently adopted Official Plan Amendment 445, do speak to affordable housing as an overall objective for Parkdale.*

Feedback shared outside of the meeting

Additional feedback was shared via emails before and after the meeting. This section provides a high-level summary of this feedback – for the original, detailed feedback see Appendix C.

Feedback about the statement of cultural heritage value

Additional detailed suggestions were shared about the statement of cultural heritage value, including suggestions to: clarify naming (for example, Brock Street used to be called Brockton Road); be more inclusive about the different communities that have called Parkdale home (including Maritime and West Indian immigrants), and; reconsider Parkdale’s “starting point” to be earlier than the 1850s (since some buildings precede this decade).

Feedback about the draft policies and guidelines for contributing and non-contributing properties

Additional feedback about these policies and guidelines included suggestions to consider:

- Identifying additional contributing property, including: 1429-1433 Queen Street West / 223 Jameson Avenue (known as the Connaught Apartments, one of Parkdale’s very first apartment buildings);
- Include policies around preserving heritage-sensitive lighting (such as those at Queen and Cowan and BIA-maintained bell-shaped lights along Queen)
- Include the design of doors within the policy relating to entrances (as there are only a few historic doors remaining in the District, such as those as 1274-1276 Queen Street West).

Parks and public realm

Additional feedback about the parks and public realm policies and guidelines included suggestions to:

- Identify additional nodes at: Lansdowne, Jameson, and Queen Street West intersection (one of the busier intersections); the southwest corner of Gwynne and Queen Street West (in front of the Community Health Centre), and; Elm Grove Avenue and Queen Street West.

- Identify additional views at: 1496 Queen Street West (which anchors the western edge of the HCD) and 1482-1486 Queen Street West (which partially anchors the Queen-Jameson intersection).
 - Include policies to maintain existing art (including the Parkdale World Peace Monument and the *Miss Toronto* mural on 1249 Queen Street West) and preserve/document art that is about to be lost due to development (like the women empowerment focused art in the laneway running between Lansdowne and Macdonell Avenue).
 - Consider recommending that names for currently unnamed laneways be drawn from area history in the future
 - Identify night-time lighting as needed in the laneway running south from Milky Way between Dufferin and Gwynn.
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Other feedback

Feedback about the other topics, include:

- Support for policies that acknowledge the problem of demolition by neglect and the importance of maintenance.
 - Concern with language in the heritage attributes that describes “main street commercial buildings from the period of the independent Town of Parkdale.” While these buildings are important, this language may preclude other important heritage assets, such as buildings from the 1890s and early 20th century, from being protected.
 - Interest in understanding whether accessibility considerations or heritage considerations take priority during renovations.
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Next steps

City staff and the Councillor thanked members of the LAC for attending the meeting and sharing their feedback. The City committed to sharing the presentation with LAC members the next day and explained that there would be a public meeting on April 20. Ian reminded LAC members to share any additional feedback by email by April 12 and explained that a draft summary of the meeting would be shared with participating LAC members in draft before it is finalized.

Appendix A: Agenda

Parkdale Main Street HCD Plan

Local Advisory Committee (LAC) Meeting #2 of 2

April 5, 2022

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Online and by phone

Meeting purpose:

To provide an update on the HCD Plan project timeline and activities; share refinements made to the draft Plan; share and seek feedback on the details of the proposed policies and guidelines on contributing and non-contributing properties as well as parks and public realm, and; seek feedback on the Community Engagement approach.

Proposed Agenda

6:00 Welcome, introductions, land acknowledgement, and agenda review

Councillor Perks, City staff, and Third Party Public

6:10 HCD Plan update and review of draft contributing and non-contributing properties policies and guidelines

City Planning (Heritage Planning)

6:40 Discussion: draft contributing and non-contributing properties policies and guidelines

Questions of clarification

Discussion Questions:

Thinking of the draft contributing and non-contributing properties policies and guidelines:

1. Are there specific policies and guidelines and/or specific language you particularly like? If so, what are they?
2. Do you have any suggested changes and/or additions to the proposed language in the policies and guidelines around contributing and non-contributing properties?

7:15 Review of draft parks and public realm policies and guidelines

City Planning (Heritage Planning)

7:25 Discussion: draft parks and public realm policies and guidelines (draft)

Questions of clarification

Discussion Questions:

Thinking of the draft parks and public realm policies and guidelines:

1. Are there specific policies and guidelines and/or specific language in that you particularly like? If so, what are they?
2. Do you have any suggested changes and/or additions to the proposed language for the parks and public realm policies and guidelines?

7:45 Discussion: Community Engagement

Discussion Questions:

1. Do you have any advice on what topic(s) from the HCD Plan would be most relevant / interesting to the broader Parkdale community and should be presented for feedback at the Community Meeting?
2. Do you have any advice on how to present the material at the Community Meeting in a way that is accessible to the broader community?

7:55 Wrap up and next steps

- Please share any additional comments with Stephanie (stephanie@thirdpartypublic.ca) by **Tuesday, April 12th**.
- Community Consultation Meeting will be held on Wednesday April 20th, 6 – 8 p.m.
- Comment period to collect public feedback on the draft HCD Plan following the Community Meeting (dates TBC).

8:00 Adjourn

Appendix B: Participant List

The following organizations were invited to apply for LAC membership. The organizations that attended the first LAC meeting are in **bold** text.

Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre (PARC)

Parkdale Village BIA

Parkdale Residents Association

Sunnyside Historical Society

Kababayan Multicultural Centre (KMC)

Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust

Parkdale Community Economic Development Project/People's Economy

Gallery 1313

Toronto and East York Community Preservation Panel (TEYCPP)

Unlawful Development

West Neighbourhood House:

Artscape - Parkdale Arts and Cultural Centre

Appendix C: Feedback shared outside the meeting

Before and after the meeting, LAC members shared questions and feedback. The emails have been included in their entirety below.

Email 1

Attached below is some very preliminary feedback regarding the 7-page statement objectives (draft) that was circulated earlier today.

Page 1:

- "located immediately to the west of the new railway station at Queen Street West and Dufferin Street." would be more accurate as "located a short distance to the west of the new railway station at Queen Street West and Dufferin Street." Cowan Avenue and Dufferin Street are 200 meters apart.

Page 2:

- It would be beneficial to clarify that Brock Avenue was formerly known as Brockton Road in the section discussing the Brock Estate and Brock Village. On a side note: prior to the 1880s, the south section of Spadina Avenue was also known as Brock Street and this can lead to confusion.
- Should there be a comma between *Fire Hall* and *Curling Club*?

Page 3:

- Alongside the rural, Polish, and Tibetan communities, Parkdale had a large influx of East Coast / Maritime and West Indian migrants during the 1970s/1980s.

Page 6:

- Regarding objective #2, why was the 1850s picked as a starting point rather than 1830s (or another decade)? The earliest estates — such as *Elm Grove* and *West Lodge* — were built in 1833-1835.

General:

- Have any sites been identified as having archaeological potential within the Parkdale Main Street HCD? (What about the library parking lot, which was the former site of the community meeting hall / society hall and/or sections of the West Lodge estate grounds?)

Email 2

Is it possible to consider 1429-1433 Queen Street West / 223 Jameson Avenue (known as

"The Connaught" / "Connaught Apartments") as a contributing heritage property within the Parkdale Main Street HCD. It is presently non-contributing.

- Constructed in c. 1911, 1429-1433 Queen Street West / 223 Jameson Avenue was one of Parkdale's very first apartment buildings.
- The south side of Queen Street West between Close Avenue and Jameson Avenue is unique within the HCD in that it is an entirely intact Edwardian block. The entire block contains the same type of building typology. 1429-1433 Queen Street West / 223 Jameson Avenue anchors the western edge / corner of the block and the southwest corner of the HCD.
- There's also an interesting Edwardian building at 221 Jameson Avenue, albeit this is not within the HCD.
- A number of contributing properties have had alterations to their windows, such as: 1336 Queen Street West— which had its second floor window enlarged; and 1400-1402 Queen Street West — a 19th century building that underwent significant window-related modifications in 1940. While the bay windows have been removed from 1429-1433 Queen Street West / 223 Jameson Avenue, it could theoretically be possible to reconstruct these based on historical photographs (see attached).

Email 3

- Please find below my comments regarding LAC Presentation #2 and the Parkdale Main Street HCD.
- The presentation for LAC #2 was very thorough.
- While a very important element of the HCD, I am concerned that the phrasing of the key attribute "main street commercial buildings from the period of the independent Town of Parkdale" may preclude other important heritage assets, such as buildings from the 1890s and early 20th century. Is it possible to include these buildings too?
- It is great to see the HCD Plan acknowledge the problem of demolition by neglect and the importance of maintenance. A number of contributing buildings in Parkdale are in a deteriorating state. Previously, MLS has appeared to only issue property standard orders if public safety was at immediate risk.
- Does accessibility or heritage take priority during renovations? Some of the entrances to buildings are elevated, which would not meet accessibility guidelines if the building was renovated. I am curious how this will be approached via the HCD Plan. \
- It would be great to have door and door design specifically identified as an element within the entrances section. There are only a handful of historic doors left in the HCD, such as those at 1274-1276 Queen Street West.
- I am wondering whether carriageways are classified as entrances or windows. There are at least three extant examples of carriageways in the Parkdale Main Street HCD. 2 of the 3

have been converted to contemporary doors/windows. These are located at 1233 Queen Street West (side elevation, now a window); 1291 Queen Street West (front elevation, now a door & window); and 1300-1308 Queen Street West (front elevation).

- Section 6.18 (Lighting) was omitted from the presentation. I would like to see heritage-sensitive lighting included for the district. For example: the Cowan Avenue and Queen Street West hub has black metal street lamps which add a nice ambience to the streetscape. Queen Street West also has the bell-shaped lights maintained by the BIA. These should be preserved where possible.
- The map on Slide 62 is missing the Elm Grove Avenue and Queen Street West node.
- Gwynne Avenue and Queen Street West (southwest corner) could also be considered a node, particularly with the greenspace in front of the Community Health Centre which is used by the public and for numerous events (such as health bus visits, historic walking tour starting points, etc.).
- Lansdowne Avenue / Jameson Avenue / Queen Street West is another potential node and one of the busiest intersections in Parkdale. However, the high traffic volume limit renders it a more liminal space.
- The *View and Gateway* map on slide 65 appears to be missing 1496 Queen Street West (which anchors the western edge of the HCD) and 1482-1486 Queen Street West (which partially anchors the Queen-Jameson intersection).
- The laneway running between Lansdowne Avenue and Macdonell Avenue has some great art by Indigenous, Black, and Latina artists. Much of the artwork is about the empowerment of women. Some of this is at risk with the proposed demolition of 1488 Queen Street West. This should be documented before removal.
- Existing public art should be maintained. For example: the Parkdale World Peace Monument in front of the library has been in disrepair for a number of years. The *Miss Toronto* mural on the side of 1245 Queen Street West — which references a 1920s beauty contest at Sunnyside — has also been in disrepair.
- Is there the possibility for future laneway names (of presently unnamed laneways in the HCD) to be drawn from area history?
- On a related note to laneways: The laneway running south from Milky Way between Dufferin Street and Gwynne Avenue (adjacent to the HCD) has been owned by *The Dominion Radiator Company* since 1901. *The Dominion Radiator Company* has been a defunct corporation name since 1924 (the company later merged with several others). This laneway presently has no night-time lighting.