

City of Toronto – Parks Development & Capital Projects

Wabash Community Recreation Centre Community Resource Group (CRG)

Meeting 5 Summary

March 2, 2022



Contents

- Attendees 3
- Introduction 4
- Meeting Goals..... 4
- Overview 4
- Key Themes of the Discussion 4
- Summary of Discussion 5
 - What participants said they liked 5
 - What participants said was missing..... 5
 - Suggestions to consider..... 5
 - Questions of clarification 7
- Next Steps..... 8
- Contact Us 8

- Appendix A – Meeting Agendai
- Appendix B – Participant Submission After the Meetingii

Attendees

Community Resource Group Members

The following organizations applied to participate in the Community Resource Group. All organizations that applied for membership on the CRG were accepted. Those who were able to attend are **bolded** below.

Organizations

Friends of Sorauren Park

Garden Avenue P.S. Parent Council

Mentoring Junior Kids Organization (MJKO Boxing)

Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre (PARC)

Parkdale Jr. / Sr. Public School

Parkdale Residents Association

Roncesvalles-Macdonell Residents Association

Sorauren Farmers' Market Association

St. Vincent De Paul Elementary School

West Lodge TCHC community

Youth Outreach Worker (Ex-Officio)

Elected Officials and Staff

Councillor Gord Perks, Ward 4 Parkdale-High Park

Sky Pepin, Office of Councillor Gord Perks

City of Toronto

Ashley Wilson, Senior Project Coordinator, Capital Projects

Alex Lavasidis, Senior Consultation Coordinator

Cheryl MacDonald, Manager, Community Recreation

Chris Clarke, Manager, Parks

Dan Nicholson, Manager, Community Planning

Donna Smith, Superintendent, Facilities

Eric To, Supervisor, Community Recreation

Keely Forth, Community Recreation Programmer Environmental

Laura Krische, Construction Coordinator, Capital Projects

Paulo Fetalvero, Supervisor, Capital Budget and Finance

Peter Didiano, Program Manager, Capital Projects

Ronda Murphy, Supervisor, Community Recreation

Travis Bailey, Supervisor, Aquatics

Consultant Team

Jarle Lovlin, Diamond Schmitt Architects

Marcin Sztaba, Diamond Schmitt Architects

Yulia Pak, Third Party Public

Khly Lamparero, Third Party Public

This summary is not intended to provide verbatim accounts of discussions. Rather, they summarize and document the key points made during the discussions, as well as the outcomes and actions arising from the CRG meeting.

Introduction

On Wednesday, March 2, 2022, the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division (PF&R) at the City of Toronto hosted the fifth Community Resource Group (CRG) Meeting for the new Wabash Community Recreation Centre. Representatives from seven local organizations, Councillor Gord Perks and a member of his staff, as well as members of the project team and a number of City staff attended and participated in the meeting.

Meeting Goals

The purpose of the fifth meeting was to debrief on feedback received in Phase 4 from local communities and other stakeholders and discuss proposed refinements to the draft preferred design presented at the last meeting. The meeting agenda is attached to this summary as Appendix A.

Overview

The summary is structured to reflect key topics of discussion:

1. Questions of clarification
2. What participants liked about the design
3. What participants disliked about the design
4. Suggestions to consider

This summary was written by Third Party Public, a third-party facilitation firm retained by the City to help support community engagement for this project. This summary is not intended to be a verbatim transcript; rather it summarizes key points of discussion shared by participants during the meeting. This summary is subject to participant review before being finalized.

Key Themes of the Discussion

The following key themes were shared by CRG members during the discussion. These key themes are intended to be read along with the more detailed feedback that follows in the remainder of the summary.

- **Overall, participants liked how the design has come together and acknowledged the difficulty of addressing many different “wants” from different audiences.** Participants said they liked the landscaping design and layout, the design and strategies to get to net zero emissions, and community safety considerations in design, particularly around the off-leash area and the parking lot.
- **No major concerns were raised and several interior design suggestions were shared.** The suggestions include: reconsidering the placement of the mechanical room in between the dance studios on the second floor, having a plan for indoor planting, making sure the height of the running track is high enough to allow people to run and not hit their heads, features in the kitchen that would allow it to be a teaching kitchen, considering an open concept plan for the changerooms, and an indoor-outdoor area contiguous with the pool area where people can sit in the sun and enjoy the outdoors in the warmer weather.
- **Preference for using lighter material tones for the building’s exterior.** Several participants echoed support for using lighter tones for the new building. Some participants suggested moving away from the grey coloured buildings commonly seen in new builds in Toronto and use materials that age well.

- **Questions, concerns, and advice about existing park uses and features during and after construction.** There was a strong desire to see the City find a suitable alternative location in the park for the Farmers' Market not to get displaced and continue operating during construction. There were also some concerns about and a desire to see a strategy for the relocation of mature and adopted trees, memorial benches, and storage for outdoor sports equipment.

Summary of Discussion

The following is a summary of questions, answers, and suggestions shared at the meeting. Responses from the project team (where provided) are noted in *italics*.

What participants said they liked

- **Use of materials that age well, particularly with patina.**
- **Plans for the landscape and outdoor layout.**
- **Concepts and strategies for getting to net zero emissions.**
- **Use of graphics in the presentation showing the different types of uses.**
- **The blind spots in the off-leash area and parking lot have been addressed.**

What participants said was missing

- **An outdoor component for the swimming pool.** Consider including an outdoor space contiguous with the pool area where people can sit in the sun. An outdoor space is especially important as part of the pool is below grade. *This has been considered by the design team but it is not possible because of the sloping topography (the pool deck will be below grade as the site slopes up towards the north) and pool supervision/sight lines (access needs to be controlled on the pool deck and staff needs to be able to see across the deck with no hidden views).*

Suggestions to consider

Interior

- **Compile a list of the lessons learned from the Canoe Landing Community Recreation Centre tour.** The CRG tour of the Canoe Landing CRC last year was helpful in thinking about what are the “dos” and “don’ts” that should be considered for the design of the new Wabash CRC. Some of the shared lessons learned at the tour include:
 - think about any potential health hazards related to an access point in the kitchen for putting food out;
 - outfit the kitchen with cameras and video monitors for teaching and cooking demonstrations.
 - it’s important to ensure there’s enough ceiling height for the running track so that people don’t hit their heads when they run;
 - *Regarding the running track height, we have plenty of clearance to avoid people from hitting their head when they run. The height is close to 10 feet or basketball rim height. Regarding the kitchen, we are thinking about the A/V system and demonstration opportunities in the kitchen.*

Members of the project design team were present at the tour and took detailed notes on the lessons learned.

- **Consider relocating the second-floor mechanical room not to be in between the dance studios.** It would be better if the two dance studios are next to each other. *The mechanical room has been placed in between the dance studios because it is the most efficient location for it as it serves the pool across and the fitness rooms on the side. However, it is not a done deal as we are still in the technical refinement stage. It is possible to move the mechanical room to the side so that the dance studios are side by side. We will investigate more possibilities.*
- **Create a thoughtful plan for indoor plants throughout the interior of the building.** It does not need to be a big green wall, but it should also not be a single plant in a corner.
- **Consider creating an open concept changeroom.** What this could look like is having the showers in the centre and locating the changerooms on the exterior walls. That would prevent small children from hiding and getting lost. *We are providing two Universal or Inclusive change rooms which have proven to provide the safest environment for all patrons. This includes individual, Universal and Family sized change stalls with lockers located directly adjacent for easy access, and showers at the entry to the natatorium, which are required.*

Exterior

- **Use lighter tones or a different colour besides grey for the exterior of the new building addition.** Several participants said they prefer the option with the lighter tone based on the different shade options presented. Others suggested using a different colour besides a shade of grey so that it doesn't continue Toronto's grey building period.
- **Keep in mind children's safety in the design and be mindful of areas where children can hide or be in danger.** Make sure that children cannot climb the crash wall. *Having good sightlines, safety and security are top of mind for us. Every project we do goes through a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) lens to make sure we're not creating unsafe areas like corridors or nooks with insufficient lighting. In terms of concerns about climbing the crash wall, we are required to build it 2.5 metres high, with a guard rail that is 1.1 metres high, so it is not climbable.*

Other

- **Carefully consider where the shipping container storing outdoor sports equipment will be located.** It contains equipment like rink boards and hockey nets that would be a lot to store in the new centre. *While, the shipping container is outside of the scope of the project, we will pass on this advice to our Parks and Facilities colleagues as we continue our discussions with them.*
- **Be mindful of the planned bridge along the West Toronto Railpath to Sorauren Park.** Think about how the flow of people arriving from that bridge will connect to the park and new centre. *The planned bridge is not in our jurisdiction and is an ongoing consideration between the City and Metrolinx. We are aware of it, but the proposed design of the new community recreation centre does not impact the future site of the bridge or connection to the bridge in the future.*

Questions of clarification

Questions about existing park uses and features

- **Will the Farmers' Market and Town Square be displaced for 2-3 years during the construction period? Can the Farmers' Market move to another greenspace in the park?** Note that the Farmers' Market cannot be located in the Fieldhouse or the back of the Fieldhouse because the Fieldhouse can only accommodate half of the Farmers' Market. *We are not yet in a place where we can identify the construction timeline, but it could potentially take 2-3 years to build. We will try our best to minimize disruption in the surrounding area, but the Town Square will be out of commission during construction. Alternative locations for the Farmers' Market during construction could be investigated in coordination with City staff and City Councillor's office.*
- **Can you explain why the existing trees in the park need to be moved drastically?** *The trees are currently planted together densely, so a plan for relocating the trees would give them room to grow and flourish.*
- **Where would the memorial benches go?** *We need to have a more detailed look at that. We will work with Chris Clarke, Parks Manager, to help us connect to the right people who are working on the bench park program and develop a plan for it.*

Questions about opportunities to work together

- **The Sorauren Farmers' Market received funding through the City of Toronto Climate Action Fund to start a Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) Initiative this year. Is there an opportunity for the Sorauren Farmers' Market to be part of conversation about the proposed rooftop garden at the new recreation centre, as this may be the right location for a medicine garden that can connect into this TEK Initiative?** *Since the rooftop garden is not considered a park, the plans for the rooftop garden fall under the purview of a different department – Recreation - Facilities. It will also require more coordination if the matter includes food production. The City will connect with you offline to figure out how we can move forward with this inquiry. Alex Lavasidis, the City Senior Consultation Coordinator who has been leading the Indigenous consultation, will also follow up with you on how the City can connect your Indigenous gardener with the Local Indigenous Advisory Circle we've been meeting with as part of our consultation for this new centre.*
- **When will the community get to hear about the feedback from the Indigenous engagement conversation?** *These conversations are happening separately from the CRG conversations, and it would be good to hear the kinds of conversations happening on that end. Local Indigenous Advisory Circle (LIAC) meetings are not open to the public and will continue to take place separately from the CRG meetings. Key points of feedback from the LIAC will be shared at the next public meeting, similar to the last public meeting.*

Questions about site constraints

- **Are there any anticipated problems related to the crash mitigation requirements from Metrolinx? Are there still hoops the City needs to get through to get Metrolinx approval?** *We are not anticipating any issues with Metrolinx as we have followed and complied with all of their requirements for crash mitigation.*

Questions about public process

- **Will there be a public art competition?** A local artist, Alfred Engerer, reached out to the Friends of Sorauren Park about an opportunity for his art at the new recreation centre. *There will be a public art competition. The City has a Public Art Office and we are in early discussions with them about this process. When the competition goes live, we will give plenty of notice to the public and post it on the project website. Jarle from Diamond Schmitt is familiar with Alfred and his art. Alfred Engerer also has reached out to the City in the early phases of consultation and has been informed that all public art commissioned by the City goes through a competitive process.*
- **When will the design images be shared with the public?** *We will share the designs with the public at the next public consultation. We ask CRG members not to share the images presented at this meetings with their network/ the public yet, as they are still in draft. As identified in the presentation, we will be meeting with a few more audiences after this CRG meeting and before we go out to the public in the next and final phase of this consultation. There may be changes based on the feedback received today and from the other audiences, including the Local Indigenous Advisory Circle and the City's Accessibility Committee, Design Review Panel, Technical Advisory Committee and Directors' Table.*

Next Steps

The project team thanked participants and committed to sharing a draft summary of the meeting before finalizing to ensure accurate reflection of feedback shared. They reminded participants to hold on sharing any presentation with their network as the contents of the presentation are still in draft and there may be changes to what will be presented to the public in the public consultation.

Contact Us

For questions or comments related to this project, please contact:

Ashley Wilson

Senior Project Coordinator

Telephone: 416-392-3592

Email: Ashley.Wilson2@toronto.ca

Alex Lavasidis

Senior Public Consultation Coordinator

Telephone: 416-318-1887

Email: Alex.lavasidis@toronto.ca

Appendix A – Meeting Agenda

Wabash Community Recreation Centre

Phase 4 – Draft Preferred Building and Landscape Design

Community Resource Group Meeting 2 of 2

Wednesday, March 2, 2022, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Via Zoom



Meeting purpose: To debrief on feedback received in Phase 4 from local communities and other stakeholders and discuss proposed refinements to the draft preferred design presented at the last meeting.

PROPOSED AGENDA

6:30 pm Land Acknowledgement, Welcome, Introductions & Agenda Review

Alex Lavasidis, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, City of Toronto

Councillor Gord Perks, Ward 4 Parkdale-High Park

Yulia Pak, Third Party Public (formerly Swerhun Inc.)

Ashley Wilson, Parks Development & Capital Projects, City of Toronto

6:40 Presentation: Draft Preferred Building and Landscape Design

Ashley Wilson, Parks Development & Capital Projects, City of Toronto

Yulia Pak, Third Party Public (formerly Swerhun Inc.)

Jarle Lovlin, Diamond Schmitt Architects

Marcin Sztaba, Diamond Schmitt Architects

- Overview of the project
- Overview of the consultation process to date and key feedback received
- Proposed refinements to the draft preferred design
- Timeline and next steps

Questions of clarification

7:10 Discussion

1. What are your thoughts on the proposed design?
2. Does anything in the presentation need to be explained in more depth for the final public meeting?
3. Do you have any additional feedback or advice for the project team?

8:20 Next steps

8:30 Adjourn

Appendix B – Participant Submission After the Meeting

After sharing a draft of the summary with CRG members for review, the project team has received additional feedback from a CRG member over email. The unedited feedback is included below, along with responses from the project team in *blue italics*.

Feedback from Friends of Sorauren Park:

The friends of Sorauren Park met on Thursday night and we had a chance to discuss the feedback.

We'd like to revisit these items which I know we've mentioned multiple times but are worth mentioning again.

Electrical bollards in town square - necessary for all our events as well as tie down points for our screen and tents. *The design team is working to incorporate electrical bollards throughout the landscaping. Tie down points will need to be recessed to facilitate snow removal and robust enough to hold down a tent / projection screen. Suitable locations for both features are being investigated and will be proposed in the next design phase.*

bicycle parking along wabash very important. *That area can facilitate bicycle parking. Proposed locations for bike parking will be shared in the next design phase.*

Storage for all our volunteer work is essential. - need space for this perhaps in new community centre. If not - in the fieldhouse hopefully. *Storage for non-community centre related activities is not being incorporated into the design of the new CRC. The container must continue to be used pending determination of long-term storage solution(s) for the west side of the park (see last comment below).*

Fire pit area should have electrical bollards - and a water spigot nearby too. *We will be designing the ceremonial space (which includes a sacred fire space) with input from Indigenous communities. An electrical bollard and a water filling station (multi-use) will be considered in the design of this space.*

The shipping container serves a vital function for us - need a suitable replacement for storage if the new path is to be located where it currently is. *We understand the usefulness of the container as a means of storage. Its location will need to be revisited as the new park path system will be impacted by its current location. An alternate location for the container will be proposed in the next design phase.*