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Date: December 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021

To: Liberty Village Public Realm and Community Services Study  
From: Aviva Pelt, Senior Planner

Re: Notes from Community Consultation Meetings held on December 7th and 8th, 2021  
Meeting Time: December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (7pm – 8:30pm) &  
December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (12pm-1:30pm)  
Meeting Location: WebEx Events

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Attendees: Members from:

- City Planning
  - Community Planning
  - Urban Design
  - Transportation Planning
  - Policy
- Parks, Forestry and Recreation
- Transportation Services
- Councillor's Office
- CreateTO

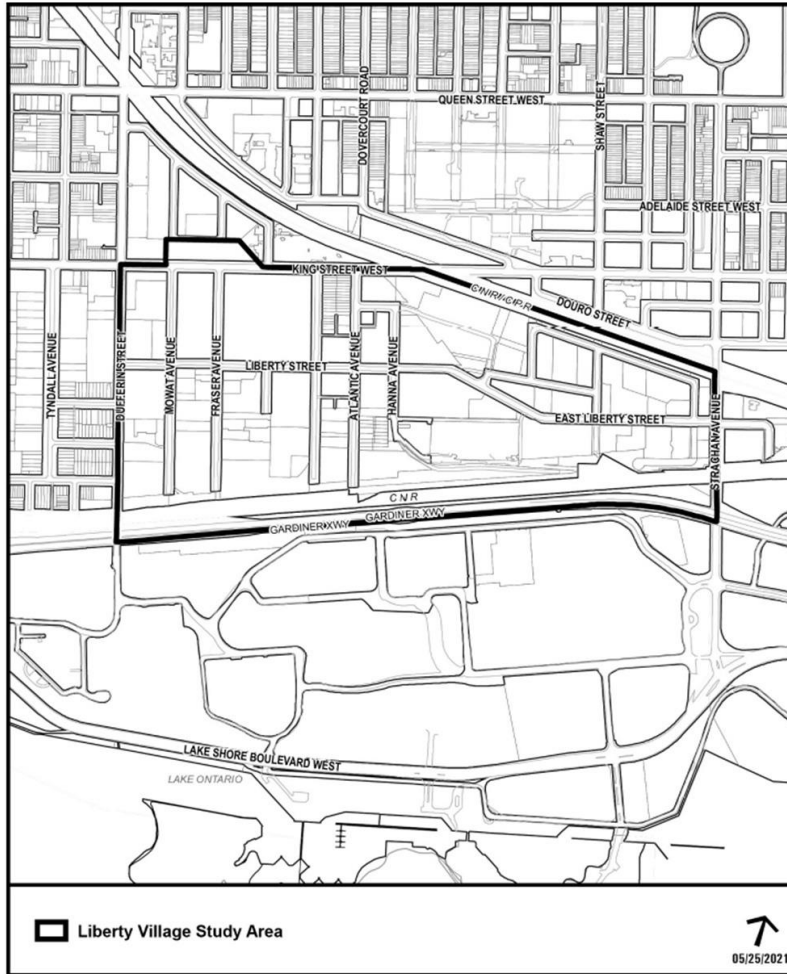
Approximately 50 members of the public attended on December 7<sup>th</sup> and 15 members of the public attended on December 8<sup>th</sup>

## **Introduction**

The City is undertaking a study to address the need for more open space and community services and facilities in Liberty Village. The Study will help formulate a Public Realm and Community Services Plan that will include principles, guidelines and an implementation strategy that can be achieved for future public realm improvements, help address the community service needs for the Liberty Village study area and provide direction for future development applications.

## **Study Area**

Liberty Village was historically an industrial/manufacturing district. The study area has two distinct areas. Over the last two decades the overall study area has transitioned away from industrial and employment uses with the construction of a number of residential buildings on the east side of Liberty Village between Hanna Avenue and Strachan Avenue, and the adaptive reuse of existing buildings as new office, creative and information technology spaces, primarily on the west side of the study area, between Dufferin Street to Hanna Avenue.



## Purpose of the Meetings

City Staff hosted two kick-off sessions on December 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> that included the same content and presentation. The purpose of the meeting was to launch the study process with a staff presentation followed by a facilitated discussion with the community to gain feedback.

## Summary of Feedback

Following the presentations delivered by Aviva Pelt from Community Planning, the following issues were raised (combined discussion from both meetings):

### 1.0 Parks

1. Question: Do we have any information on how Liberty Village Park is going to be restructured and what the City is planning for children in that area?

Response: The redeveloped park will include a senior parkour area, more seating as well as a splash pad. The existing junior playground will remain. Parks Planning added that they are trying to secure more parkland in Liberty Village. The City will undergo public consultation and make sure the community is informed and input is received before plans are finalized.

2. Comment: Support for keeping Lamport Stadium and not torn down. If reimagined, it should be kept as a stadium with an updated look.

Response: We have seen many comments on the Lamport block through the social pinpoint exercise and we are aware of previous ideas and comments. There are a number of issues as the field is well used, it is a great resource for the community and beyond. At the same time, the property overall is quite large in terms of properties within Liberty Village and has a lot more potential than what is being achieved right now. We are looking for opportunities in and around the stadium to do more with that land and creating a true park space out of it, so it is useful for workers, employees, residents and visitors of Liberty Village.

3. Question: Is there an opportunity to install a small outdoor gym (Stadium R. Park used an example).

Response: Planning Staff noted that the comment had been raised a number of times on social pinpoint and it is something that they would look into.

## **2.0 Community Services**

1. Question: Is there a plan to have more Community Services and Facilities within the study boundary of Liberty Village?

Response: This is a key component of the study. A review is currently underway to make a determination on services in the area.

## **3.0 Public Realm**

1. Question: While this study is going on, what is the plan to address the residents' immediate needs? Boulevard are not been maintained and have turned into a mud pit. The sidewalks are not wide enough to accommodate traffic and are unsafe. Does the City have any short-term solutions/plans?

Response: Planning Staff noted that Councillor Cressy had requested a number of quick wins for the Study Area. Planning Staff acknowledged that there are concerns and it could take a bit of time to put together on their end. Staff is trying to see what improvements can be made right away and what will take longer.

We realize there are problem areas, and we are trying to find solutions through streetscaping, sidewalks and everything that we can achieve.

3. Question: Is there an opportunity through this study to remove the billboards just north of the railway tracks (along Liberty New Street)? The billboards are a detriment to the public realm, contribute to light pollution, and are not compatible with the residential uses. They serve the drivers on the Gardiner and not the people who live in Liberty Village.

Response: Planning Staff acknowledged that there are quite a few large billboards within the Study Area. The billboards will likely be impacted by Liberty New Street, however staff do not know to what extent. Staff noted that they would look into this further.

4. Question: Two years ago the City was supposed to widen the sidewalk along East Liberty from the Liberty Village Park west to CIBC (Lynn Williams intersection) by adding pavers between the street and sidewalk. Can we get an update on this project?

Response: Staff noted that they did not have an answer put would follow-up.

Follow-up Response: Transportation Services has confirmed that streetscape improvements will be undertaken along the north side of the boulevard along East Liberty Street west of Liberty Village Park to Lynn Williams Street.

5. Question: Is a coordinated streetlighting strategy with improved types of lights possible for the entire study area as there are a number of dark spaces in Liberty Village, especially west of Atlantic and with the dead end streets. There is a plan for the dead end streets to be animated at some point. It would be nice to have a coordinated lighting strategy with improved types of lighting.

Response: Staff note that a lighting strategy is a good suggestion and there are many comments on social pinpoint that point to dark spots around Lamport Stadium and Jefferson and Fraser.

## **4.0 Transportation**

### **1. New Liberty Street**

a. Question: Can you provide an update regarding the development of Liberty New Street (anticipated start/completion timelines)? How is this new street planned to connect to Strachan & Dufferin?

Response: Staff from Transportation Planning noted that they are coordinating with Metrolinx to deliver the Ontario Line as well as other lines in their portfolio. The Ontario Line is set to open in 2029 and the street connecting to the station is likely to be built by then as a result. It was noted that Staff do not have updates on the other portions to the east and west.

b. Question: Does the city own the land for the proposed New Liberty Street?

Response: There is a currently a mixture of ownership, some lands are owned by private land owners, the City owns some lands, and Metrolinx owns lands against the rail corridor. The City is working with Metrolinx to sort through the issues of building out Liberty New Street.

c. Question: The Liberty New Street webpage has been removed from the City's website.

Response: Staff are following up with the Divisional responsible for the webpage for an update.

## 2. Traffic

a. Question: There's been a lot of development in Liberty recently but the infrastructure (roads, bikeways etc.) haven't kept up. Are there plans to address this?

The intersection at Strachan and East Liberty is starting to become a huge bottle neck to get into and out of Liberty Village.

Response: Planning Staff noted that the Study will seek to address the need for infrastructure resulting from growth and development. Issues related to streets and sidewalks, the functionality of infrastructure, and the potential for intersection improvements will all be looked at. Signal timing review and other technical assessments will be completed. Staff will also look into impacts of the developments and ensure that new growth is accounted for in the road network.

b. Question: What are the plans for traffic on Strachan? Non-synchronization of lights and line-ups from Fleet to King Street. Are there any plans to divert traffic or make another road underneath the Gardiner?

Response: The City has completed an Environmental Assessment to add a new road (Liberty New Street), which will alleviate some of the traffic. As part of the study, Transportation Services will do an assessment of the traffic issues. Right now we are at the stage of information gathering. Signal timing review and other technical assessments will be completed. We will also be looking at the impacts of the developments in the area, making sure that we account for new growth in the road network.

c. Question: Are there any guidelines that are in place for future buildings/re-developments that make it mandatory for developers to have designated parking spots/drop-off spots for uber/packages/etc., to limit traffic overflow on the street these buildings are on?

Response: During the development review process, parking designation spots and drop-off areas are items that are reviewed.

Transportation Planning staff noted that traffic overflow resulting from delivery services is an emerging issue and they are thinking about amount of short term parking. One issue is that even if we do designate parking spot for deliveries, it is a challenge to get drivers to use them.

d. Question: Are there any plans on making Liberty Village less car focused and more pedestrian/cyclist friendly? Wondering if there's any potential design considerations for changing the current East Liberty Street to be feature a more

challenging road design so that people aren't compelled to speed. Can the new Liberty Street be used as the thoroughfare?

Response: Planning staff noted that they are analyzing the functionality of streets and parking and taking these issues into consideration. Transportation Planning Staff added that Liberty New Street increases the road capacity and might help with congestion. It will have a multi-use trail on the south side for cyclists and a sidewalk as well. There will be a fair bit of capacity for pedestrian and cyclists as well as vehicles. It was also noted that it is City policy to make streets less car focussed. Staff will look at whether streets would be safer with bike lanes and wider sidewalks.

e. Question: There is a lot of congestion on Western Battery, and issues with cars crossing at East Liberty which creates problems at Strachan. Has there been any consideration to change Western Battery into a one-way street?

Response: Staff noted that they have received many comments to date on making Western Battery one-way. Transportation Services is looking at the comment and the possibility of changing direction and the impacts that would have on the broader network.

f. Comment: To open up Liberty Village and bridge the areas together with community events where Liberty Street should be closed on Sundays through the summer.

Response: Thank you for the suggestion, something staff will take back to review

### **3. Sidewalks and Pedestrian Safety**

a. Question: Is there a plan to make the sidewalks wider? The problem is not just landscaping but having enough space for people to walk.

Response: This is something that we will be reviewing

b. Question - Are there any plans to improve pedestrian safety at East Liberty and Pirandello?

Response – This has been flagged to staff, who are aware there are issues of safety on many streets and we are looking at the entire area. Transportation Services staff noted that they are looking at existing data and counts, collision history and have conducted multiple site visits to get a better understanding of the issues and how to address them. It was also noted that the public can add their comments to social pinpoint and bring some of the challenging and unsafe areas to staff's attention.

c. Question: Is it possible to loosen up restrictions about crosswalks in order to implement creative pedestrian crosswalks that are artistic in nature that we see in many other cities around the world. I've been told there are strict rules around that, and if the City can look into something like that.

Response: Planning Staff noted that it has been done in other places and don't have an

answer now, but will review it to see if it is something that is possible.

## **5.0 34 Hanna/TPA Lot**

1. Question: Will the Green P be repurposed? If so, how will it be determined what the new space will become?

Response: Staff are reviewing the property to see what the best uses and option for the site are. CreateTO is working with Toronto Parking Authority (TPA) to see what their needs are and alternate options for where the parking could relocate. CreateTO Staff noted that the TPA owned property would need board approval to declare surplus as well as a study of parking in the area. Staff are working on their due diligence before going to TPA board to make sure everything is in place. After going through the TPA board, the City would present a business case and suitable options for the property.

2. Comment: Support for a park where the Green P parking lot is on Atlantic Avenue. There is little green space in this community, so the larger the park here, the better.
3. Comment: Support for a park at Liberty and Hanna, which has to be implemented quickly. What would the timeline be for this park to be done or other community events to open up the village?

Response: This has been suggested as a comment on Social Pinpoint to close down the Liberty Street on Sundays, and will be reviewed. In terms of timelines, the study is in the early stages, and soon we will have an understanding of the short and long term implementation items

## **6.0 Metrolinx/Transit-Oriented Communities**

1. Question: Will the consultation feedback and outcome of this study be shared with the Province as part of the Exhibition Station/Transit Oriented Communities project? It seems like a good opportunity to leverage public lands to deliver on needed community facilities identified through this study.

Response: Planning Staff noted that they will be sharing feedback with Metrolinx and Infrastructure Ontario, and will be working to secure community services with the future developments. Transportation Planning Staff reiterated that they are reviewing the Exhibition proposal and have brought this Study to their attention.

## **7.0 Miscellaneous Items**

1. Question: For the development proposal at Hanna and Lynn Williams and the proposed park at 75 Hanna. I am not opposed to the park, but at the community consultation meeting for the development, the community was not in support of the development, so I am curious, what is the status of the development? We have

enough buildings and putting up more buildings before anything else gets done.

Response: To give context, the proposed park that I showed in the Parks slide is proposed by First Capital with their development at 75 Hanna and 120 Lynn Williams for 3 towers and part of that is a proposed future parkland dedication. The City is currently reviewing the application and working with the applicant through staff comments. It was discussed at the Community Consultation meeting this past April that we would host a second community consultation meeting, but at the moment there are no updated plans to show to the community. No formal decisions have been made yet on this application.

2. Question: Concerns that only a portion of the building between Atlantic Avenue and Jefferson will be maintained in the new development, what is the status.

Response: The zoning application at the property at 25 Liberty Avenue/58 Atlantic Avenue has been approved at City Council, subject to a number of conditions to be fulfilled. The heritage approvals are for the portion of the building at the southwest corner of Liberty and Atlantic to be retained. At this time there is no site plan application.

3. Question: Has the police station been sold to developers and is there a plan to build condos there?

Response: The property at 9 Hanna Avenue is owned by Toronto Police Services and the plan to continue to stay there. CreateTO, the City's real estate agency are re-evaluating and will come back with additional information if there are any changes.

4. Question: What comments have you received for the City Work's property north of King Street?

Response: The Transportation Services Facility property on King Street West is being evaluated through the inventory of City-owned assets as part of the study to see if there are ways that we can either better repurpose or other ways to improve the properties. At this time there are no further details.