

**Jane Finch Initiative:
Community Advisory
Committee Meeting No.7**

**January 18th, 2022
6:00-8:00p.m.**

BACKGROUND

The [Jane Finch Initiative](#) is about planning for the future of the area and how best to leverage the investment in light rail transit (LRT) for the benefit of local communities. It is a collaborative community planning exercise in 'Neighbourhood 24 - Black Creek' and 'Neighbourhood 25 - Glenfield-Jane Heights' (see [Neighbourhood Profiles](#)), 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**.

The City is working in collaboration with the Jane Finch Community and Family Centre who will support community engagement and facilitate different community consultations to collect feedback.

MEETING OVERVIEW

On January 18, 2022 from 6:00 to 8:00pm the Jane Finch Initiative Community Advisory Committee (CAC) gathered for its seventh meeting. This consultation is part of the Jane Finch Initiative's comprehensive engagement stream and was held online over Zoom. The agenda can be viewed in Appendix 1.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the event was to:

- Present the research conducted by the heritage consultant team to date and help to identify and fill research gaps,
- Plan for future workshop topics and meetings, and
- Update the CAC members on city policies of interest.

ATTENDEES

The meeting was attended by:

- **1 JFCF centre staff member**, Amadeo Ventura

- **4 City of Toronto Staff**, John Smith (Social Development Finance & Administration), Tatum Taylor Chaubal and Gary Miedema (Heritage Preservation Services, City Planning), Zahra Joseph-Wilson (City Planning)
- **12 Community Advisory Committee (CAC) members**: Allan Ramsarran, Christine Le, Devayani Chitnis, Edna (Stephanie) Cofles Gualtero, Jennifer Boakye, John Romano, Kayzie Sutton, Maize Blanchard, Maria B., Mena Hervieux, Terryl Knox, Troy Budhu, Veronica Eastman, William (John) Ballard
- **Heritage Consultant Team**: Sam Tecle; Ellen Kowalchuk and David Deo (Common Bond Collective)

MEETING SUMMARY

- Following a land acknowledgement and welcoming remarks, Zahra provided the CAC with policy updates, including:
 - A [motion](#) to better address car theft in Toronto adopted by Council in December 2021
 - As this motion has been adopted, comments regarding language and questions on reporting, monitoring and budget approval should be directed to the Councillors that advanced the motion and the Toronto Police Services Board.
 - An announcement that City Staff will seek direction from Planning and Housing Committee in March to engage the public on [draft PMTSA boundaries](#), which will come with policy that can help secure more affordable housing in the Jane Finch Secondary Plan through Inclusionary Zoning.
 - An announcement that a Request for Proposals for Jane Finch Initiative urban design consultants has been released.
 - Notification of upcoming community consultation meetings for local development applications.
 - For snow removal requests, residents should contact 311.
 - When available, free rapid antigen test kits can be sought at [Black Creek Community Health Centre](#).
- Zahra discussed the proposed approach to the February CAC meeting, to be attended by the Mayor and local Councillor and asked members to share their questions for the Mayor in advance of the meeting.
- The CAC members were asked to tell Zahra about their priority topics for discussion in the coming months for future CAC workshops.
- The Heritage team presented their research findings, summarized input from the Heritage Focus Groups held in 2021 and conducted a heritage focused workshop with the CAC members.
- The meeting concluded at 8:05pm.

WHAT WE HEARD

This section includes a summary of the feedback collected from the discussions during the Zoom meeting. Please refer to Appendix 2 to view the input and a detailed list of the questions asked and answers provided during the discussion.

The main questions asked of the CAC members are listed below with a summary of their responses:

1. We understand that places are shaped by their histories. What parts of Jane & Finch's past have made it what it is today?

The most commonly cited places of importance included:

- Yorkwoods Library;
- Sporting facilities often located within schools and community centres, such as cricket pitches and John Booth Arena;
- Parks and their amenities (e.g. fire pits), the ravine, and trails like the Humber River Recreation Trail; and
- The two major commercial malls in the area, Jane Finch Mall and Yorkgate Mall.

Other assets included the hallways and courtyards of Toronto Community Housing communities, Black Creek Community Farm, local churches, Humber River Hospital and York University. One CAC member highlighted that while the organization Action for Neighbourhood Change had meetings at the local golf club, the club itself did not establish strong relationships with the community.

Many of the locations discussed offered important space for gathering, sharing information and building social capital. For example, cricket leagues (which are less common at present) that met weekly at Oakdale and Brookview Public Schools were a key opportunity for people to share job opportunities and hear about opportunities outside their current profession or immediate network.

2. Are there any major time periods or important milestones that help define the story of the Jane & Finch area?

- LGBTQ+ histories, especially their intersections with class, migration, race/ethnicity, and policing.
- Caribbana Festivals
- The story of political activism and social movements is missing. The areas institutions, like the Jane Finch Centre, are all resident-made
- Plazas and parking lots as gathering spaces for sharing music and political ideas for people of all ages
- Informal gathering spaces for socializing have started to disappear
- Fun City amusement park

- Eddystone has several restaurants and food manufacturers that are considered local staples, including a samosa shop and the adjacent pizza shop, as well as a butchers shop and an Italian bakery
- Local food businesses of importance such as Debe's Roti, Mesha's, Montego Bay, and the fish shop at Shoreham and Driftwood
- Impacts of COVID, such as more birthday parties held in parks
- Negative perceptions of the community in the media

3. What key moments, milestones, movements in Jane and Finch's past do you think are important?

Perceptions of Jane and Finch and Community Safety

- The police station when it came in and it's direct impact on youth
- When Councillor Mammoliti wore a bullet proof vest in the community
- Gun violence, policing and carding
- Police working to build positive relationship with community youth
- Opportunity to rebrand

Arts and Culture

- Movie Saturdays at Yorkwoods library
- The important influence of music, such as Panfantasy and a rich history of steel pan in the area; Baby Blue Soundcrew and jamrock; music and cultural festivals
- Gatherings linked to film - Yorkwoods Library had free movies every Saturday, Downsview Summer Movie Nights

Local Institutions, Access to Infrastructure and Resources

- The loss of Information Downsview
- Struggle to bring the subway to Jane Finch
- The local hospital moving away and the opening of Black Creek Community Health Centre
- Establishment of York University

Other

- Annual Jane's Walks
- Tennis games at York
- End of Summer BBQ for kids
- Other iconic business that shaped the area include Towers (department store) and Food City.

4. What other materials should we be looking at as we continue to research the history of the Jane & Finch area?

- How can the story of the community's resilience be told through the lens of health indicators, especially in light of historical disparities in access to adequate health care facilities?

- The City has done some research on healthy communities through the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy and produces the Wellbeing Toronto tool, which provides a number of resources including health data. Additionally, [research on social capital](#) (in this case how communities experiencing greater challenges come together to create healthy lifestyles and supports for themselves) will be shared with the Heritage consultant team.
- Consult [the arQuives](#) for queer historical photos and resources
- Jane Finch Centre staff may have access to photos and the history of the area's advocacy work
- Wanda McNevin may have resources that the team has not yet accessed as she is currently writing a book on the area

Other Topics of Interest

- Affordable housing
- Levels of educational attainment and success stories of Jane and Finch as well as the occurrence of brain-drain in the area as residents are unable to grow in place. Some of this information is available through [Neighbourhood Profiles](#), however it was noted that these may not be accurate reflections given the number of residents who leave in pursuit of and following their education.
- Local entrepreneurship levels, especially among newcomers to Canada
- Finding ways to help further support community staples like farmers markets stalls in parking lots
- Increased prevalence of money lending institutions and their replacement of banks in the area
- Opportunities for urban agriculture and local food selling/access, similar to the co-op at Jane and Weston Road. Many people do urban agriculture at York, and it would be great to have something similar at Yorkwoods library.

APPENDIX 1: AGENDA

| | |
|--|--|
| 5:55 Pre-meeting Huddle/Tech Check | |
| 6:05 Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, and Introductions (Zahra) | |
| <p>We acknowledge the land we are meeting on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit and is within the territory of the Dish With One Spoon treaty.</p> <p>We are all Treaty people. Many of us of have come here as settlers, immigrants, newcomers in this generation or generations past. We'd like to also acknowledge and honour those who came here involuntarily, particularly those who are descended from those brought here through enslavement.</p> | |
| 6:10 Housekeeping (Zahra) | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting minutes from November 16th meeting and the November public meeting are available online. Prep for February 15th CAC Policy updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motion to better address car theft in Toronto was adopted at Council in December: http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.MM38.25 City Staff will report to PHC in March seeking direction to engage the public on draft PMTSA boundaries, which will come with policy that will help us to secure more affordable housing in the Jane Finch Secondary Plan through Inclusionary Zoning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A presentation on the process and progress on delineating the areas can be read here: https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2022/ph/bgrd/backgroundfile-175051.pdf RFP for urban design consultants has been released: https://wx.toronto.ca/inter/pmmmd/calls.nsf/0/074AAE182DA959E8852587BB004C502D?OpenDocument Community consultation meeting for a development application at 4500 Jane St. will be held January 26 at 7pm. Sign up for the meeting here: https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/get-involved/public-consultations/city-planning-consultations/ Details of the application are here: http://app.toronto.ca/AIC/index.do?folderRsn=gJ8gM7F0FVoYSqLjs40leg%3D%3D What would members like to have workshops on next? | |
| 6:20 Heritage Presentation and Workshop (built and cultural heritage consultants and City staff) | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background Overview of research completed What was heard in the Focus Groups Workshop portion using Jamboard | |
| 7:30 Next Steps and Meeting Wrap Up | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send Zahra questions that you would like to ask at the Feb 15th CAC by Feb. 8th | |
| 7:45 Internal Staff Debrief | |

| Roles | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Facilitator | Zahra Joseph-Wilson |
| JFC staff attending | Amadeo Ventura |
| City staff attending | Tatum Taylor Chaubal, Gary Miedema |
| Heritage Consultant Team | Sam Teclé Common Bond: Ellen Kowalchuk, David Deo |

APPENDIX 2: Workshop Jamboards

We understand that places are shaped by their histories.
What parts of Jane & Finch's past have made it what it is today?



Jamboard 1: We understand that places are shaped by their histories. What parts of Jane & Finch's past have made it what it is today?

- Grandravine Community Centre
- Driftwood Community Centre
- Jane and Finch Mall
- The Ravine
- Schools
- Hallways and courtyards esp. in TCHC communities
- Yorkgate Mall
- School cricket fields – social space, important for building social capital
- Green space and parks
- Library
- Churches
- Canlan Sports (hockey rink)
- Aviva Centre (York)
- UCRU/the Y (was at finch and sentinel)
- York Finch Hospital (now Humber River Hospital)
- Humber River Hospital
- Humber River Recreation Trail
- The Church that met for 20+ years in 15 Tobermory's community space
- Jane and Shepard Mall
- The farm
- Downsview park
- Yorkwoods library
- Local cultural restaurants
- York University
- The fire pit in the ravine behind the library
- Hullmar park
- Christian Centre Church
- No relationship with the golf course and the community
- John Booth Arena
- Pioneer Village
- Tobermory rec rooms

What topics related to Jane and Finch's history and identity were not captured at the last meeting?

Is there anything further you want to add about any of the topics?

lgbtq+ histories, esp intersection w class, migration, race/ethnicity, and policing. i mention coz i remember the arQuives but idk what they have - very silent and hushed history

The negative press that was made regarding the safety in the Jane and Finch area and the effect that has had to the community

educational background - would be interesting to know some of the success stories and stats

Jane and Finch has a strong influx of immigrants. What is the correlation to people who leave the community as they become more successful? How many people once they achieve success stay in the community.

caribana festivals

community advocacy work needs to be included in this documentation

parking lots and lots of informal spaces for sharing music and stories, with people of all ages - why did these stop being social spaces?

debbies roti, mesha's, Montego Bay, fish shop at shoreham and driftwood,

there was an amusement park - Fun City at Yorkgate mall, important for youth

Samosa shop on eddystone + the pizza shop right beside it

Italian bakery on eddy stone with amazing bread

the butcher shop on Eddystone

bday party at parks in the summer are more common i find since the pandemic

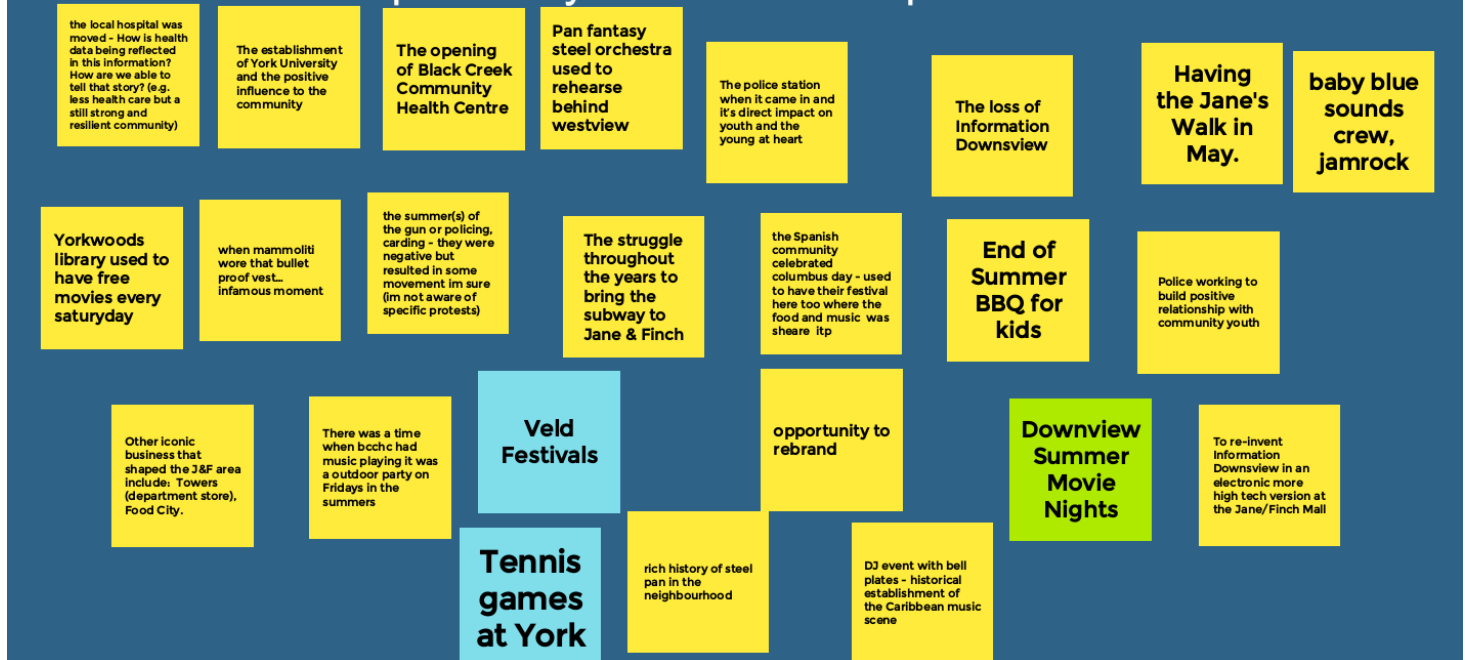
Not sure where this would fit. But the fact that banks have been leaving the area and are replaced with "money mart" type businesses

co-op at Jane and Weston road -> many people do urban agriculture at York, would be great to have something similar at Yorkwoods library

Jamboard 2: What topics related to Jane and Finch's history and identity were not captured at the last meeting? Is there anything further you want to add about any of the topics?

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What key moments, milestones, movements in Jane and Finch's past do you think are important?



Jamboard 3: What key moments, milestones, movements in Jane and Finch's past do you think are important?

- the local hospital was moved - How is health data being reflected in this information? How are we able to tell that story? (e.g. less health care but a still strong and resilient community)
- The establishment of York University and the positive influence to the community
- The opening of Black Creek Community Health Centre
- The police station when it came in and it's direct impact on youth and the young at heart
- The loss of Information Downsview
- Having the Jane's Walk in May.
- baby blue sounds crew, jamrock
- Yorkwoods library used to have free movies every saturday
- when mammoliti wore that bullet proof vest... infamous moment
- Veld Festivals
- Tennis games at York
- Opportunity to rebrand
- Rich history of steel pan in the neighbourhood
- the summer(s) of the gun or policing, carding - they were negative but resulted in some movement im sure (im not aware of specific protests)
- The struggle throughout the years to bring the subway to Jane & Finch
- the Spanish community celebrated columbus day - used to have their festival here too where the food and music was sheare itp
- End of Summer BBQ for kids
- Police working to build positive relationship with community youth
- Other iconic business that shaped the J&F area include: Towers (department store), Food City.
- There was a time when bcchc had music playing it was a outdoor party on Fridays in the summers
- Downview Summer Movie Nights
- To re-invent Information Downsview in an electronic more high tech version at the Jane/Finch Mall