

City of Toronto – Parks Development & Capital Projects

Newtonbrook Community Recreation Centre

Virtual Public Meeting #2 Meeting Summary

Wednesday, September 22, 2021, 7:00 – 8:30 pm
Via Zoom Webinar (online and by phone)

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Introduction & Project Background

The City is planning to build a new two-storey multi-use community centre, located within the base of the Newtonbrook Plaza Redevelopment, M2M community, at Yonge Street and Cummer Avenue in North York.

The new community centre will be a two-storey facility accessed from a new street (Olympic Garden Drive), east of Yonge Street and across from a proposed new public park. The Newtonbrook Community Recreation Centre (CRC) will be owned and operated by the City of Toronto and will be open to the public.

The new CRC will be accessible and is planned to include:

- A 12,300 square foot gymnasium
- A 15,500 square foot multi-purpose space
- A community kitchen
- Community multi-use space
- Common area multi-purpose space
- Free public WiFi
- Gender-neutral washrooms and change rooms
- Storage and staff office space

This document provides a summary of the Newtonbrook CRC Virtual Public Meeting #2 that was held on September 22, 2021, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

More information about the project can be found on the City of Toronto webpage at www.toronto.ca/NewtonbrookCRC

Meeting Overview

On Wednesday, September 22, 2021, the City's Parks, Forestry & Recreation (PF&R Division) hosted a virtual public meeting for the new Newtonbrook Community Recreation Centre (CRC). The purpose of this second virtual public meeting was to:

- Follow up and report back on the comments received at Public Meeting #1
- Share how feedback has been incorporated into the CRC's latest designs and future programming
- Provide an additional opportunity for comments and questions
- Provide an update on project progress and next steps

Given the COVID-19 health pandemic, this meeting was held online and by phone in an effort to protect the health and safety of Toronto residents and City staff.

Over 33 people participated online and/or called in over the course of the virtual public meeting held on Zoom Webinar. The presentation is available on the project website at www.toronto.ca/NewtonbrookCRC.

Councillor John Filion provided opening remarks and welcomed participants. Ashley Wilson, Senior Project Coordinator with the PF&R Division at the City of Toronto, Jocelyn Deeks, Partner in Community Engagement at Bousfields Inc., and Vladimiro

Carelli, Senior Associate at Wallman Architects provided an overview presentation. Jocelyn Deeks also acted as third-party facilitator and facilitated the Q&A period following the presentation. Additional representatives from City Planning, City Parks, Forestry & Recreation, and Aoyuan Group, were also in attendance to respond to questions and comments.

This summary was prepared by Bousfields Inc. Please note that it is not intended to be a verbatim transcript, rather it is intended to capture key discussion points shared by participants at the meeting.

This summary does not assess the merit or accuracy of any of these perspectives, nor does it indicate an endorsement of any of these perspectives on the part of the City of Toronto.

Public Meeting Advertisement

This virtual public meeting was advertised both via mail and online. Mailed flyers advertising the meeting went out to residential and commercial addresses within 1.5 km of the new community centre, which amounted to approximately 18,000 flyers. An e-flyer was also prepared for online distribution via the following social media platforms and PF&R social media accounts: Instagram, Facebook & Twitter.

Feedback Summary

Project staff provided a summary of the project to the community and followed up on questions and ideas presented by the public during the first community meeting in May 2021. Participants provided questions and comments throughout the meeting. These questions (Q) and responses (R) from Staff, the Councillor or other members of the Project Team are presented below, by discussion theme:

1. Planning of the CRC

Q: I'm curious if the Goulding Community Centre not far from here was considered for expansion before the decision was taken to build this brand new facility.

R: We have a Facilities Master Plan that was developed and approved by City Council back in 2019 and it identified the need for a new community centre in the Newtonbrook area. We have what are called service improvement projects and state of good repair projects. Existing facilities such as Goulding oftentimes come under the state of good repair category. But when there's an opportunity to build something new, and particularly if we see a gap in a particular neighbourhood, we go ahead and implement something new as a service improvement project. This is a case where the opportunity presented itself as we saw a service gap and are taking the initiative to address that need.

2. Overall Design & Programming

Q: Your design has extensive usage of glass. How will you design the Community Centre and Daycare to be designed to be vandal proof? Currently, nearby Finch GO Regional Bus Terminal sees lots of vandalism and broken windows from the nearby "temporary" Homeless Shelter. Now City plans for "permanent" Modular Supportive Housing at 175 Cummer.

R: In terms of vandal proof, there is a certain level of durability that we have to design the building to. In terms of the ground floor, this is designed with large scale commercial glazing so it's very difficult to actually break this stuff. We haven't really considered moving to solid elements or anything like that, simply because we want that visual connection from the inside to the outside.

Most of the glass that forms the community centre is going to be on the upper levels that can't be reached. So, what we're really talking about is what we're doing at the ground floor. That's something we can certainly look at and consider in terms of other aspects of vandalism, whether it's graffiti or things of that nature. Creating a surface that's easily washable kind of limits the material palette that you can work with.

Also, in terms of our security, the infrastructure includes CCTV cameras surveillance which are intended as a deterrent. Lighting is also important and the lighting aspect to uplift the visual security aspect of the facility and the immediate area, including the park. This is where the park design and the community centre design are kind of integrated - security will be very important for both.

Q: Has or can a pottery room with a kiln be considered to be accommodated in the area to be designated for arts?

R: We can put kilns in arts and crafts rooms. We don't dedicate them as pottery rooms, but we can add a kiln to a room, and we can add storage and shelving in to support that use as well.

3. Environmental Sustainability

Q: Earlier you mentioned the sustainability of the building. Can you speak a bit to the plans around that?

R: Overall the facility has to adhere to the City of Toronto requirements (or Green Standards) and we're currently pursuing Tier 1. This means that the building has to adhere to certain levels of energy efficiency, which comes down to how we design the exterior or below levels of insulation, as well as the types of mechanical systems that we're utilizing. In terms of a community centre, the City of Toronto itself has specific requirements over things like lighting, and essentially how much energy the facility uses. We're looking very closely at things like specifications for lighting, such as LED versus fluorescent and things like that to save a lot of energy.

In terms of other sustainability measures that also tie into some of the feedback that we heard through the survey, we will be looking at those ideas. For example, we're going to be looking at potentially doing some green walls and things like that that will liven up the space. Other sustainability measures are going to be explored as we progress into working drawings, and that'll come down to for example, what kind of glazing that we're using to create these big, beautiful kinds of forms. Glass is not necessarily the best insulator so as we develop the building, we have to really think about how we're trying to achieve this beautiful glass box design but, at the same time, we can't just make it all glass because it's not particularly energy efficient.

Q: Any plans for the building maybe having systems that could help support energy generation?

R: Currently we don't really have any of those kinds of things planned for the building. Generally, we have projects across the city that are, for example, on district energy programs and things like that. We're not really utilizing a whole lot of solar panels, simply because for the size of the building and the sheer consumption of energy, solar panels typically aren't really all that effective. We do have things like the below grade parking garage is going to feature EV charging stations, as well as 'rough-ins' for things like car charging stations. This way if you are visiting the grocery store or the community centre, you could charge your car potentially or if you're a resident of the building, you could implement a car charge.

Q: Wondering if there are plans for possible programs like community composting to be facilitated through this community centre.

R: It isn't something we couldn't do. We have to work with our partners in Parks to see if there's something we could do on that site.

4. Parking Considerations

Q: What are the plans for parking? Will free parking be available? If so, how many spots allocated?

R: The actual parking itself is dedicated to the Staff, but the entire facility does sit on top of the entire P1 level of both the first phase and second phase of the development which has a paid commercial parking garage. There won't be actual any public parking for the community centre itself or free parking dedicated for the community centre, other than the eight stalls for Staff.

Q: Is there a way to provide free parking for 2-hour limit or something similar to avoid people using it to park for longer term and abusing it?

R: That is certainly something we can take back and have further discussions with the City on. As it stands right now the plan is for paid parking but we're hearing what the comments are saying tonight, so it's certainly something we'll take back and give some consideration.

Q: Is there a lot of free bicycle parking?

R: In Phase 1 and Phase 2, there is ample bike parking that's allocated for the residents as well as office and visitors. The site itself has bike rings that will be located all along Yonge Street, up and down the Private Drive, as well as on portions of Olympic Drive, which will be used specifically for things like the community centre. At least between Phase 1 and Phase 2, what we're looking at is likely well over 100 stalls. This is above and beyond what residents will be using, what the office occupants will be using, or any of the retail since there is separate bike parking for each one of those.

5. Future Public Park Design Process

Q: Is there an outdoor sports field across Olympic Garden Drive?

R: The Park is currently under design, and it is having its own separate public consultation as was mentioned earlier. That public consultation will occur a little later this fall, sometime around November. I'd encourage you to keep your eye out on the project website for information about the park design process. We'll also have a link to the park design website on this project website, so you'll be able to navigate and find them both.

Next Steps

The Project Team thanked participants for their participation and interest in the process and encouraged them to visit the City's website to access this meeting summary and the presentation at www.toronto.ca/NewtonbrookCRC.

The feedback gathered during this meeting and prior consultations (Virtual Public Meeting #1 and the online survey) will be used to update the design, programming and features of the Newtonbrook CRC. The revised findings will be posted on the City's Website at www.toronto.ca/NewtonbrookCRC.

Contact Us

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

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