

**Jane Finch Initiative:
Community Advisory
Committee Meeting
June 21st, 2022
6-8pm**



Summary Report by the Jane Finch Community and Family Centre

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 SUMMARY

On June 21st, 2022 from 6-8pm, the Jane Finch Initiative Community Advisory Committee Meeting was hosted by the Jane Finch Community and Family (JFCF) Centre with support from the City of Toronto. This consultation is part of the Jane Finch Initiative's comprehensive engagement stream and it was held online over Zoom. The agenda and event materials can be viewed in Appendix 1 and 2 on page 7 to 9.

The purpose of the event was to:

- Inform members of the development approvals process.
- Receive input on the inclusive economic development engagement stream.
- Receive input on the arts and culture engagement stream
- Inform members of the planned pop-up engagement events, and receive input on hosting in-person engagement events

ATTENDEES:

- 1 JFCF centre staff: Denelle Carvalho
- 4 City of Toronto Staff: Leah Birnbaum, Dan Rosen, Andrea Raymond Wong, John Smith

- 12 Community Advisory Committee members: William Lopez, Kayzie Sutton, Christine Le, Devayani Chitnis, Kemisha Thomas, Maria B., Sharon Taylor, Terryl Knox, Troy Budhu, Veronica Eastman, Maize Blanchard, and Allan Ramsarran

MEETING SUMMARY

- Denelle Carvalho shared welcoming remarks and a land acknowledgement
- Leah Birnbaum shared a presentation on the development approvals process and the online [Application Information Centre](#)
- Members were oriented to where information about planning applications can be found and how they can make their views known to City staff and City Councillors.
- Denelle Carvalho updated members on the breakout room model for the remainder of the meeting.
 - The present meeting and future Community Advisory Committee meetings will include multiple parallel breakout room sessions on different topics, to allow for deeper small-group discussion on more specific topics.
- All attendees were divided into breakout rooms.
 - Breakout room facilitators Dan Rosen, Andrea Raymond Wong, and John Smith introduced the exercise and the Jamboard medium.
 - Members were invited to share ideas and suggestions in response to prompts.
 - Breakout room facilitators ensured that all comments were noted on the Jamboard.
- Members returned to the main Zoom meeting room for the meeting wrap-up.

WHAT WE HEARD

This section includes the summaries of the feedback collected from the discussions during the Zoom meeting. City staff responded to the questions asked in this section

- Question: What is the obligation from the city to retrieve feedback from community members on development applications?
 - Response from Leah Birnbaum: Under the Planning Act, we are required to send notices to people living within a set distance from the impacted property. There are limits to how effective these notices are; for example, notices are sent through mail, and notices are only directed at the property owner. Having community members provide input on how this outreach can be improved is useful. There has been progress in this area, such as adding posters on the impacted property with images and contact information.
- Comment: Hoping not to be stunned by development like the residents at Eglinton Flats or residents living near the power wires north of Finch on Jane.

- Response by Leah Birnbaum: Note that when the province owns land, they don't necessarily need to go through the same municipal process because jurisdictionally they have higher authority. Metrolinx's process is different from that of a private landowner.
- Response from Dan Rosen: As long as a development aligns with the secondary plan, there is a limited amount that city planners can do about it. Through the Jane Finch Initiative, that higher level secondary plan is being determined, so this is where we can set the higher level guidelines on future development, after which there will be opportunity to comment on specific developments' designs.
- Comment: Note that the Applicant Information Centre is not a well-known tool, and this could be a better way to arm our community to advocate for ourselves.
 - Response from Leah Birnbaum: The City is trying to make things more transparent, but it is always an option to directly reach out to the contact person listed on the Applicant Information Centre to share more information about the specific development.

The comments from each breakout room are listed below, along with the main discussion prompts. Please see Appendix 2 to view the Jamboard slides.

Inclusive Economic Opportunities Breakout Room

Main ideas included capacity building for entrepreneurs and small businesses, prioritizing youth employment, and recognizing how economic opportunities intersect with other aspects of social development.

- Prompt: What went well in Phase 1 inclusive economic opportunity engagements, and what can be done better in this round?
 - Need to better address employment opportunities head-on, including co-working spaces.
 - Need to make sure that economic ideas are connected to social ideas. For example, employment relies on child care options
 - Ideas report booklets should be connected to one another
 - Need a bridge to employment for high school students, including connecting high school students to trades.
- Prompt: Which groups and organizations should we meet with, and how should meetings be executed?
 - Meet with Seamission.org
 - Include neurodiverse people, and people with mental health challenges
 - Meet with local businesses. Find ways to encourage local businesses to hire locally.
 - Inclusive social opportunity needs to include good paying jobs for women, young people, people with disabilities, and people with mental health challenges.
- Prompt: How can we reach underrepresented demographic groups in our engagement?

- The launch of new TTC stations provides an opportunity for community engagement
- We can engage with youth directly with visits to schools and/ or by talking to guidance counselors.
- Prompt: How can we balance engaging with “expert” groups (such as the roundtable) and the wider community?
 - There is a preference for small groups in decision making, and large groups for information sharing.
- Additional comments:
 - There are many people who don’t stay in the neighbourhood because of a lack of opportunity
 - Need co-op spaces that could teach employment skills, financial literacy, etc.
 - Small business owners may need help from incubation to more stable businesses
 - Ask current residents what opportunities need to be available to stay in the area.
 - It would be great if the CAC could hear from local employers.

Arts and Culture Breakout Room

Main ideas included mentorship and networking opportunities for artists, resources and programming for youth interested in the arts, and affordability of available programming and operational costs for artists.

- Prompt: What went well in Phase 1 Arts and Culture engagements, and what could be done better in this round?
- Prompt: Which groups and organizations should we meet with, and how should meetings be executed?
 - We should connect with any mentorship programs, or any organizations interested in creating a mentorship program in the future. For example, filmmaker support groups, music label mentorship programs, and connecting young chefs and established restaurants.
 - Connect with Troy Budhu to involve other music groups in JF.
 - Talk with Clara and Ernestine about the artists residency program
 - Meet with Flaunt it
- Prompt: How can we reach underrepresented demographic groups in our engagement?
 - Food can be a medium to get people involved (for example, offering food at engagement events). There is a desire to share minority food cultures.
 - Youth should be more involved in the engagement process, as youth involvement in the arts and improve overall well-being. We should also find ways to engage school-aged children in the arts
 - Connect with Indigenous artists through pioneer village (host an event)
- Additional Comments
 - Indigenous place names should be used

- There should be more opportunities from community members to engage in the arts, especially by providing affordable lessons in dance and music..
- Affordability is a major concern
- Jane and Finch should have a community kitchen.

Summer Pop-ups Breakout Room

Main ideas included prioritizing equity and inclusion for underrepresented demographics, involving CAC members and other community members as animators, and practicing a diversity of in-person and virtual promotion and engagement strategies.

- Prompt: How can we make these pop-ups more accessible for underrepresented demographics
 - Host pop-ups where people naturally gather, particularly for seniors.
 - Complete a survey of predominant secondary languages in the community and distribute materials to the above events tailored to those languages, similarly to how the CAC outreach was done.
 - Connect to international students studying at universities and colleges in the area through international student offices and faculty.
 - Offer childcare at in-person engagement events.
 - Offer food to share
 - Social media and emails are limited because not everyone has a computer or social media.
- Prompt: How can CAC members be more involved in these pop-ups and similar events over the summer
 - CAC members can act as community animators at community events. Members with some marketing training can help reach particular demographics like youth - trust-building to have people who reflect the diversity of the area. CAC members can also connect the team with people who can be good ambassadors and animators.
 - CAC members can help hand out flyers to let people know about the events
 - Engage CAC members on how to share “follow-ups” and progress reports for the community.
- Prompt: Is there anything we should be mindful of when hosting a pop-up in a community space
 - Be responsive to the process- if certain part of the population aren't coming out, adjust the techniques accordingly
 - Reflect back to people that their ideas are being recognized
- Additional comments
 - The booklets are not always clear. It is hard to see how topics in the booklets are connected to one another, and where someone might find a topic they are looking for.
 - The best way to reach people is through door-to-door engagement. Put flyers on bus stops and community bulletin boards (also No-Frills)
 - Virtual engagement is important

- For the upcoming pop-up events, post signage on the pedestrian routes towards the venue, and in several places along the way.
- Bland engagement materials don't work. Materials should be geared to the audience we want to reach.
- Be mindful of creating waste, and reduce as much as possible
- Convey openness, safety and modernization (evolution) of community engagement processes.

APPENDIX 1: AGENDA

6:00 Participants Join
6:05 Welcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introductions, land acknowledgement, agenda [Denelle] <p>*Begin recording</p>
6:10 Development Approvals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10 minutes: Presentation on development approvals process and the online Application Information Centre [Leah] ● 10 min: Q&A and discussion on public input in the development process [All]
6:30 CAC Updates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10 minutes: Denelle to update on breakout room model, responses to feedback survey and roundtable discussion [Denelle]
6:40 Enter Breakout Rooms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inclusive economies breakout room [hosted by Dan] ● Arts and Culture breakout room [hosted by Andrea] ● Corner Commons/ Summer pop-ups [hosted by John]
7:40 Meeting Wrap Up

Roles	
Facilitator	Denelle Carvalho
City staff attending	Leah Birnbaum, Dan Rosen, Andrea Raymond Wong, John Smith
CAC members	William Lopez, Kayzie Sutton, Christine Le, Devayani Chitnis, Kemisha Thomas, Maria B., Sharon Taylor, Terryl Knox, Troy Budhu, Veronica Eastman, Maize Blanchard, and Allan Ramsarran

APPENDIX 2: Jamboard

Inclusive Economic Opportunities

What went well in Phase 1 inclusive economic opportunity engagements, and what could be done better in this round

- Need to address employment opportunities head-on, eg. may need co-working spaces
- Need to make sure that 'economic' ideas are connected to 'social' ideas, eg. employment relies on child care options
- Link ideas report booklets to each other
- Need a bridge to employment for high school students - maybe into trades

Which groups/ organizations should we meet with, and how should meetings be executed

- Need to include neuro-divers and people with mental health challenges
- How can we engage local businesses to hire locally
- Inclusive economic opportunity needs to include women, young people, people with disabilities, people with mental health challenges - need good paying jobs
- There are many people who don't stay in the neighbourhood because of a lack of opportunity

How can we reach underrepresented demographic groups in engagement

- Need co-op spaces that could teach employment skills, financial literacy etc.
- Can engage youth directly with visits to schools and/or by talking to guidance counsellors
- Launch of new TTC stations provides an opportunity for community engagement

How can we balance engaging with "expert" groups (such as the roundtable) and the wider community

- Preference for small groups in decision making, large groups for info sharing
- Small business owners may need help from incubation to more stable business
- Ask current residents what opportunities need to be available to stay in the area
- It would be great if the CAC could hear from local employers

Seamission.org

Arts and Culture

What went well in Phase 1 Arts & Culture engagements, and what could be done better in this round?

- Opportunities for community members to engage in dance.
- Indigenous placenames
- Music labels working at grassroots levels to mentor young artists
- Filmmaker support groups (TIFF) to mentor at grassroots level

Which groups/ organizations should we meet with, and how should meetings be executed?

- large entertainment brands; high end restaurant labels could mentor young chefs
- "Lessons4Life" - join a class day serving a spectrum of demographics from free programs to paid programs.
- Music groups - talk to Troy
- Corner Commons - talk to Clara & Ernestine about the artists residency program
- Flaunt It

How can we reach underrepresented demographic groups in Arts and Culture engagement?

- Food as a medium to get people involved
- Desire to share food cultures- West Indian & other minorities
- mentorship hub by medium (ex. for artists, chefs)
- Connect with indigenous artists - potentially through Pioneer Village (host an annual event)
- Youth involvement in the arts can improve overall wellbeing
- Community kitchen
- Affordability
- Need affordable piano lessons, opportunities for youth to get involved in the arts
- Find ways to engage school aged children in the arts

June 24 at the Corner Commons 2-6pm

July 6 at Oakdale Community Centre 2-6pm

July 21 at Driftwood Community Centre 2-6pm

June 30th BIA is doing event at Fountainhead park

facilitator / animator don't need to be the same job. Animator is the connector - doesn't have to have all the info themselves.

Have CAC members convey who they are working for... the future of JF in their mind.

an idea about recognition of contribution - I've contributed to the development... theory sort of thing

How members be more involved in these pop-ups & similar events over the summer

booklet topics aren't always clear - need some guidance on where to find the elements someone might be interested in

How can we make these pop-ups more accessible for underrepresented demographics?

offer people some recognition for their contribution (pull-quotes on a wall, stickers) Reflect back to people that their ideas are being recognized

CAC members could hand out flyers to let people know about the

Social media/emails limited because not everyone has a computer or social media.

CAC members can connect the team with people who would be good ambassadors/animator

Engage CAC members on how to share "follow-ups" and progress reports for the community.

Community animators (with some marketing training) can reach particular demographics like youth - trust-building to have people who reflect the diversity of the area

CAC members could be the animators at community events (playgrounds, soccer fields, events they might already attend)

offer food to share!

Go to existing programs where people gather (seniors)

Get in touch with schools and parent councils -

Best way to reach people is door to door. Put flyers on busstops and community bulletin boards (also No Prills)

post signage on the pedestrian routes towards the venue - in several places along the way

Be responsive to the process - if certain part of the population isn't coming out, adjust the techniques

Is there anything that we should be mindful of when hosting a pop-up in a community space

Proper survey of predominant secondary languages in the community and distributing materials to the above events tailored to those languages, similarly to CAC outreach.

Embrace international students in the area studying at universities/colleges that are residing in the area via international student offices/faculty.

Go virtual!

Bland engagement materials don't work. Make them geared of the audience you want to reach

be mindful of creating waste - reduce as much as possible

Convey openness, safety, and modernization (evolution) of community involvement processes.

Need to offer childcare if we want to reach parents of young children - or host in an area where kids can play while adults talk (parachutes - arts & crafts, games, supervision, with snacks!)

Summer Pop-ups