

**Jane Finch Initiative:
Community Advisory
Committee Meeting
January 17th, 2023
6:00-8:00pm**



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 are supporting community engagement and facilitating community consultations to collect feedback.

MEETING SUMMARY

On January 17th, 2022, 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 can be viewed in Appendix 1 on page 6 of this document.

The purpose of the event was to:

- Update CAC members on planning work being done on the parks and public realm plan, the mobility plan, and future development in the study area.
- Receive feedback on the initial maps showing proposed changes to the parks, public realm, and mobility networks

ATTENDEES:

- 3 JFCF centre staff, Amadeo Ventura, Clara Stewart Robertson, and Denelle Carvalho.
- 7 City of Toronto staff, Zahra Joseph Wilson, Dan Rosen, Hania Butter, Heather Oliver, Matt Bentley.
- Perkins+Will consultants: Eunice Wong and Paul Kulig.
- 16 Community Advisory Committee (CAC) members, Kemisha Thomas, Veronica Eastman, Devayani Chitnis, Susel Munoz, Sharon Taylor, William Lopez, Maria

B., Maize Blanchard, Kayzie Sutton, Edna Cofles Gualtero, Terryl Knox, Mena Hervieux, Troy Budhu, William Ballard, Allan Ramsarran, Christine Le.

HOW WE ENGAGED

- Denelle Carvalho shared welcoming remarks and a land acknowledgement.
- Zahra-Joseph Wilson shared an update on the work being done by Perkins+Will and Access Planning. CAC members were encouraged to attend the Design Review Panel meeting on January 26th, where the representatives from Perkins+Will will be presenting to a panel of private sector experts in land use, architecture, urban design, and related information.
- Paul Kulig and Eunice Wong shared a presentation on parks and public realm, transportation, and high-level modelling of future land use.
- Time was allotted for questions.
- Time was allotted for discussion, and feedback was documented on a Miro board.

WHAT WE HEARD

This section includes the summaries of the feedback collected from the discussions during the Zoom meeting.

- Question: Loud religious speech at the corner of Jane and Finch near Corner Commons has become disruptive, and often discriminatory. How can this be addressed?
 - Response from Jane Finch Centre staff: This has been an ongoing issue at Corner Commons, and staff have tried to find ways to compromise with the groups. The Jane Finch Mall cannot intervene because the speakers are technically on public property.
- Discussion Prompt: What types of shops and amenities do you want to see remain in Jane Finch? What new shops and amenities should be included in future development?
 - It is important to ensure that retail spaces for small businesses from the community are preserved.
 - Healthy food options in malls and plazas.
 - Existing plazas should upgrade signs and renovate areas that feel unsafe. Several areas around Jane and Finch, Eddystone, and Stanley feel unsafe.
- How can we improve the green character along Jane and Finch?
 - Preserve trees. Some trees have been removed at Trout Brook and Jane.

- Better maintenance of greenspace at the Jane and Finch intersection. Much of the grass is destroyed or dead, and maintenance after the winter season is often delayed.
- TCHC exteriors can be improved with flower beds.
- There is a need to prioritize maintenance along with design. How can we ensure that “green spines” will actually be maintained in the future?
- The front of the Driftwood Community Centre can be converted to a beautiful garden with a sitting area that might enhance the beauty of Jane street.
- Widening sidewalks is a necessary accessibility improvement. At least two people in wheelchairs should be able to walk side-by-side.
- Lighting, flowers, trees, benches, and frequently-maintained garbage cans should be added to streets.
- Where should new parks go? What should new parks include?
 - Edgeley Park is underutilized. This space should be better maintained and better utilized as an accessible public space.
 - Improved lighting in parks and greenspace.
 - Splash pads can be added to some parks, including Topcliff park, Firgrove park and the park at Laura Rd. could use a splash pad.
 - There is a need for more dog off-leash areas (DOLAs) and amenities for dog owners, such as waste bags and dog water fountains.
- What will make the hydro corridor and ravine more accessible and usable?
 - We need to consider accessibility in the creek.
 - Better connections from community housing complexes and residential areas. For example, the Shoreham TCHC site doesn't have an entry to the ravine that is accessible, or even friendly to the average user.
- What cycling connections are we missing today?
 - Cyclists often ride on the sidewalks on Driftwood between Grandravine and Yorkwoods due to parked cars on both sides along Driftwood. There have been many occasions where pedestrians are pushed off the sidewalks because the cyclists refuse to allow pedestrians to pass through. Parking needs to be removed along this area and better bike lanes are needed.
 - Bike connections are missing from residential areas to get to the current and proposed bike lanes. The mobility strategy needs to consider door to door journeys. Some residential areas are lacking proper sidewalks and are very narrow.
 - Appreciate that gaps in cycling routes are highlighted, but we should also identify gaps between residential areas and cycling pathways. Crossing major streets is especially dangerous.

- What makes a comfortable and safe street? How can safety improve at intersections?
 - Need for more space between the sidewalk and the curb, to provide a buffer between pedestrians and cyclists/ cars.
 - Sidewalks should be able to fit at least two standard sized wheelchairs or wide strollers.
 - We need to prioritize accessibility while construction is ongoing, as well as in the design.
 - The exit from FreshCo to Jane Street is highly unsafe as you have cars coming out on very tight spaces since Metrolinx has placed equipment there.
 - When leaving the Jane/Finch mall parking lot, there was a large hole between the road and the sidewalk of the mall cut out by Metrolinx.
- Additional comments
 - New parks and plazas should include spaces that are youth friendly and welcoming for youth to hang out in.
 - Improving bike lanes and cycling connections is pivotal for pedestrian safety. It is very unsafe walking on the sidewalk due to bikes using the sidewalks.
 - Accessibility should be prioritized in planning streets.
 - Wider sidewalks are necessary to encourage conversational walking for people with disabilities.
 - Many main streets have structural issues and lack ramps where they are necessary. Gradients from streets to sidewalks.
 - Safety around schools is a priority.
 - Information on school development plans should be shared for consultation.
 - The Finch LRT from Jane and Finch all the way to James Cardinal McGuigan; especially that school area is very concerning.
 - Prioritize safe access points to schools, and create buffers between busy streets and students entering and exiting schools.
 - Long-term maintenance is a priority, so that there is not just the delivery of amenities, but consistent upkeep so that the community can make proper use of amenities. How can maintenance be addressed through the Jane Finch Initiative?
 - Presenters and facilitators should review relevant meeting summaries from previous CAC engagement sessions to avoid redundancies. For example, feedback on these parks and streetscape improvements was shared in the August walking engagement session.

APPENDIX 1: AGENDA

6:00 Participants Join
6:05 Welcome
<p>*Begin recording</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions, land acknowledgement, agenda [Denelle]
6:10 Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Minutes: Context and update on status of work [Zahra]
6:15 Presentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 minutes: Perkins+Will presentation [Eunice and Paul]
6:30 Q&A and Discussion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remainder of session: Discussion and Miro board exercise [All]
7:50 Closing Notes
Closing notes TBD [Denelle]

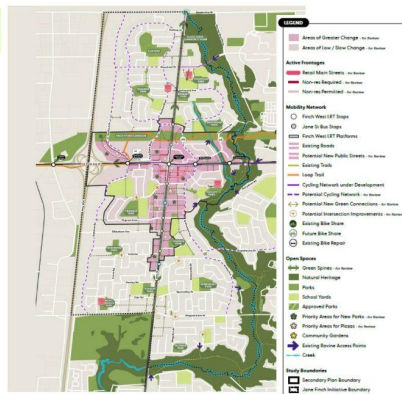
APPENDIX 2: MIRO BOARD

Sticky notes content:

- Some parks can be added to some parks, including rooftop parks.
- Need to promote maintenance along with design.
- There is a need for a park along the lake at the school.
- Some trees can be removed in some areas and replaced with new ones.
- Need to consider the impact of trees on the environment.
- Need to consider the impact of trees on the community.
- Need to consider the impact of trees on the economy.
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- Need to consider the impact of trees on the culture.

Greening:

1. How can we improve the green character along Jane and Finch?
2. Where should new parks go? What should new parks include?
3. Where should new plazas go? What should new plazas include? (E.g. what do folks like about Corner Commons?)
4. Should there be more community gardens? Where? Should existing gardens expand?
5. What will make the hydro corridor and ravine more accessible and usable?



Building:

1. What types of shops and amenities do you want to see remain in Jane Finch? What new shops and amenities should be included in future development?

Moving:

1. What street connections are we missing today?
2. What cycling connections are we missing today?
3. What makes a comfortable and safe street? How can safety improve at intersections?