

Bloor-Yorkville Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment

Heritage Focus Group Meeting #2

Tuesday, September 28th, 2021

Cisco Webex

6:00 – 8:00 pm

Meeting Summary

Attendance

Phillip Cote (Artist, Activist, Historian and Traditional Wisdom Keeper); Paul Farrelly (Toronto Preservation Board); Nicholas Jennings (Author); Alan Baker (GYRA); Mary-Helen Spence (ABCRA); Linda Brett (Bloor East Neighbourhood Association); Jonathan Demers (Toronto Public Library); Gee Chung (Bloor-Yorkville Heritage Conservationist)

City Planning Project Team: Gary Miedema (Heritage Planning); Samantha Giguere (Heritage Planning); Tamara Anson-Cartwright (Heritage Planning); Corinna Prior (Community Planning); David Driedger (Community Planning)

Common Bond Collective: Ellen Kowalchuk; David Deo

City Council: Councillor Mike Layton; Aviva Coopersmith (Constituency Assistant)

Meeting Purpose

Heritage Focus Groups are advisory in nature. This meeting was the second of two meetings to inform an understanding of the historical development of the Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment (CHRA) study area, including its social and community values. The focus of this meeting was on reviewing the updates to the Historic Context Statement and the preliminary results of the heritage survey.

Timeline

The meeting started at 6:00pm.

Gary Miedema welcomed participants and explained meeting procedures, and opened the meeting with a Land Acknowledgement.

After a round of introductions, Gary introduced the purpose of the meeting, the agenda, and the progress of the Bloor-Yorkville CHRA.

Gary explained what a CHRA is and how the results of the CHRA will be used.

Corinna provided an overview of the Bloor-Yorkville Secondary Plan. This included an overview of the process and timelines for this study as well as how Community Planning and Heritage Planning's projects work together.

Ellen Kowalchuk, Common Bond, then reviewed the Historic Context Statement and the preliminary findings of the heritage survey.

Gary facilitated a discussion (summarized below).

Discussion and Comments from HFG Members

Properties and Areas of Interest:

- Members discussed properties highlighted during the heritage survey results section of the presentation, as well as other properties and areas that have potential value.
- Members offered to find further information on properties highlighted in the presentation including 101 Yorkville Avenue, 1255 Bay Street.
- One member provided more information on 110-112 Yorkville Avenue as being where the Penny Farthing was for many years – being one of the important music venues in the Yorkville area. It was also noted that 174 Avenue Road has great significance in music history it is the site of the Village Corner club that was one of the first folk music venues in Toronto where people like Gordon Lightfoot got their start. The building at 102 Avenue Road was raised as being the site of the Night Owl coffee house club which featured jazz in the late 1950's. The property 39 Hazelton was the site of the Nimbus 9 recording studios where producer Jack Richardson worked in which the Guess Who and many others recorded there. It was noted that this building should have a heritage plaque. City staff note that 102 Avenue Road and 39 Hazelton Avenue are outside of the CHRA study area.
- One member suggested the CHRA team look into an older industrial building behind Davenport Road, referred to as Davenport Terrace. It may have been one of the original warehouse buildings in this area.
- The importance of Davenport Road was discussed in terms of it being the oldest road in Canada and its potential as a world historic site as a way of engaging people about the first peoples of the land. One member suggested the renaming of this road is something that could be considered.
- Members discussed the importance of creeks within the study area, including past creeks and ponds that are not identified on mapping from 1883. It was suggested by one member that a new map should be created with those missing creeks into the

new modern maps so people can more easily see what it might have looked like here 2000 or even 3000 years ago.

- One member requested further mapping showing development adjacent to the study area and how they all fit in respect to this study area. Lists that correspond to the heritage survey results were also requested.
- One member also requested information on the timeline for the Village of Yorkville Park being reviewed for heritage potential. Staff responded that we (Heritage Planning) have always had communications with the Parks department or these collaborations but we have not identified that as a shared goal in the study program.

Processes and Recommendations:

- Some members strongly desired an HCD being created based on the grouping of potential heritage properties, especially the old village of Yorkville.
- Members expressed their previous and ongoing requests to include Ramsden Park as part of this CHRA scope of work. City staff responded that including a fulsome review of Ramsden Park would be outside the scope of work and is not feasible for the consultants to complete as part of this CHRA work.
- One member asked about the process for notifying owners of any future listing of properties on the City's Heritage Register and owner's ability to object to any future listings. City staff responded that owners will be notified and as of July 1st owners can object to the listing but Council has the decision.

Planning Study:

- Some members had questions on the planning study scope and processes regarding the policy area plan and public realm plan. City staff explained that these components would be completed together by the consultants.
- Members discussed the name of the project being reflective of the study area as not all residents identify as being in Yorkville. City staff noted that while north 'midtown' was once used, it has been found that this is not necessarily the best to use as the Eglinton study also uses 'midtown in focus'.

Other Themes/Recommendations:

- One member asked about marker trees within the study area as they important in seeing how the land was used as portage routes, or council gatherings – and based on the age of the tree can tell when that happened.
- Some members noted there are missing creative/artistic themes and information in the materials presented such as the CBC production studio which was located in the pierce arrow building on corner of Yonge and Marlborough. Staff noted that they just brought that report to designate the site – and it is going ahead in advance of this study.

- One member introduced an opportunity for a new theme, Moccasin Identifier Project, to be integrated into this work. The Moccasin Identifier Project was adopted an indigenous element to raise awareness of indigenous culture. It would serve vital role in encapsulating the Indigenous narrative yet to be told. It was requested that the city consider the inclusion of the Moccasin Identifier Project in next steps in the CHRA

Written Feedback and Submissions:

Some participants followed up after the meeting with further information, feedback, and suggestions for properties to consider.

- Source materials for the CHRA Historic Context Statement were provided.
- Information was provided about the Route of Heroes along Bloor Street.
- There were follow-up questions regarding the status of adjacent heritage studies around the CHRA area that staff responded to.
- There were further questions about notice to property owners about the listing process and opportunities for owner objections.
- Further properties were recommended for having heritage potential that the CHRA should consider, including 100 Cumberland Street, 75 Yorkville and 55 Avenue Road.
- The desire to have the neighbourhoods included in the larger secondary plan process was noted.
- Further comments were received indicating that Ramsden Park should be a part of this CHRA work and the recommendations of the CHRA should include that Ramsden Park should be assessed.