



Bloor-Dufferin TDSB Lands Community Meeting

Monday, June 20, 2016

Bloor Collegiate Institute, 1141 Bloor St. W.

7:00 – 9:30 pm

MEETING SUMMARY – For Participant Review

FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTS

On Monday June 20, 2016, the Province of Ontario, the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), Toronto Lands Corporation (TLC) and the City of Toronto hosted a Community Meeting to provide a coordinated update on work done to date on the Bloor-Dufferin TDSB Lands and seek feedback. Approximately 125 people attended the meeting, and 109 completed worksheets and emails were received at or after the meeting.

Here's a quick overview of what participants said - please review the full summary (9 pages) and attachments (86 pages) for additional details:

1. **There is concern that the sale of this 7.3 acre public asset will result in the site being largely privatized, with proceeds of the sale leaving the community.** There is also concern that students from Bloor CI and ALPHA II Alternative School will be in a sub-standard building when they move to the renovated Brockton.
2. Based on the above concerns, **participants expressed significant interest in seeing a meaningful process for community participation in decisions** related to the future development of the 7.3 acres of surplus lands, the community hub and public spaces, and the renovation of Brockton.
3. Participants also expressed **significant interest in seeing the redevelopment include a wide range of uses that would benefit the local community**, including community uses, affordable housing, affordable community space, better connections, green and park space, safety for pedestrians and cyclists, maintenance of heritage, thriving small businesses, and a mix of uses.

This Meeting Summary (9 pages), including the attachments (86 pages, under separate cover), was written and compiled by the independent facilitation team for the meeting – Swerhun Facilitation and was shared with participants for their review prior to being finalized.

Photo from Opening Plenary, Bloor CI Auditorium



Photo Credit: Ashley Haines, Swerhun Facilitation Team

MEETING OVERVIEW

On Monday June 20, 2016, the Province of Ontario, the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), Toronto Lands Corporation (TLC) and the City of Toronto hosted a Community Meeting to provide a coordinated update on work done to date on the Bloor-Dufferin TDSB Lands and seek feedback. More detailed information is contained within the Community Update, which was distributed at the meeting and is included in this summary as Attachment A

Approximately 125 people attended the meeting, including but not limited to school staff, students, parents, members of neighbourhood associations, tenants at Kent and Brockton, community groups, and local service providers. Toronto District School Board Trustee Marit Stiles, Councillor Ana Bailao, and MPP Christina Martins also participated.

In addition to the discussion held during the meeting (see the Meeting Agenda included as Attachment B), completed worksheets and/or other written feedback was received by 109 people (including 104 completed worksheets submitted at or after the meeting and 5 people who send written submissions). The deadline for feedback to be included in this Summary Report was Monday, June 27, 2016.

Following welcoming remarks and introductions from all three elected officials, staff representatives from the Province, the TDSB, TLC and the City gave a series of update presentations, including:

- Overview – Karen Pitre, Province of Ontario, Community Hubs
- Sale Process – Daryl Sage, Toronto Lands Corporation
- City Regulatory Role – Lynda Macdonald, City Planning
- Community Services & Facilities – Chris Brillinger, City of Toronto
- Brockton Renovation – David Percival, TDSB

After the presentations three concurrent breakout sessions were held to discuss three different topics, including: development of TDSB surplus lands; community space and services on the TDSB surplus lands; and renovation of Brockton. There were two rotations of breakout session discussions, and participants had the option to move between breakout sessions or to stay in the same room. The meeting wrapped up with a report back on the breakout room sessions and a plenary discussion.

Please review the Attachments (under separate cover) for more information, including:

Attachment A: Community Update

Attachment B: Meeting Agenda

Attachment C: Overview Presentation

Attachment D: Breakout Summary - Development of TDSB Surplus Lands

Attachment E: Breakout Summary - Community Space & Services on TDSB Surplus Lands

Attachment F: Breakout Summary - Renovation of Brockton

Attachment G: Brockton Floor Plans

Attachment H: Completed Feedback Forms (104 in total)

Attachment I: Written Submissions (5 in total)

Attachment I: Meeting Evaluation

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK RECEIVED

Participants provided extensive and comprehensive feedback on all three of the core topics covered at the meeting, including:

- Development of TDSB Surplus Lands
- Community Space & Services on TDSB Surplus Lands
- Renovation of Brockton

A summary of the feedback received on each of these three topics is provided here, including a summary of the key points raised at the meeting during discussion in each of the three breakout rooms (for full summaries from each breakout room, see Attachments D, E, and F), as well as written feedback received (for all written feedback, see Attachment H).

Development of TDSB Surplus Lands

The following points summarize the key feedback received during the two breakout session discussions at the meeting:

1. The consultation process and its connection to the RFP is unclear and the timing to implement community feedback to be part of the RFP requirements is too short. Other process concerns and suggestions included:
 - Increased transparency in how the entire consultation process works.
 - A better understanding of the timeline for the work.
 - An option to have the RFP select 3 potential development partners in the first stage, so they would continue to work with the community in their planning process.
2. Create explicit details around the requirement for affordable housing in the RFP. Participants were glad to know it was included as part of the RFP but felt that it was too vague and would ideally include a commitment on number of units, affordability of the units, etc.
3. Maximize green space and park space in the site design. As the City gets more dense, it's vital to protect and expand green spaces, particularly in the downtown.
4. Protect and support spaces for the Arts. There is a strong tradition of artist run spaces and programs in the neighbourhood and these need to be maintained and supported in planning efforts.
5. Create an environment for small business to continue to thrive. The community is built around smaller stores and shops and Dufferin Mall serves the larger big box needs. Plan the site so it integrates well with human-scale places and services.
6. Be clear on how particular programs that are operating currently on the site will be impacted and could be either maintained or supported during the transition times for the schools, particularly for the Kent school.

The written feedback reinforced these messages. A summary of the key points raised in completed worksheets and emails are reflected below (with considerable more detail in Attachment H):

- The process used for the selection of the developer must be transparent, must use input from community consultation and should consider the value of the land as a public good, not simply for highest market value.
- The features of the site that the community values highly include:
 - the fact that it is publicly owned space that belongs to the public and the community, and particularly the green space, the fields, the basketball courts, the school, the existing groups operating out of the site, including the daycare;
 - the architecture of Kent, and the low-rise building heights;
 - the schools, including Bloor CI, the Toronto School of Art (in Kent), the German International School (also in Kent);
 - access and proximity of the site to the subway, parkland and mall.
- The community identified several short-cuts that are used frequently in making connections through the site, and ways these could be improved and formalized. For the future, people said that they are looking for:
 - Safe connections between the site and surrounding areas, especially for pedestrians and cyclists; and
 - Consider an underground connection to the Dufferin subway and/or improving the pedestrian connection from the subway to Dufferin mall to avoid overcrowding on the 29 Dufferin bus.
- Desired uses for the site included a wide range of suggestions, including:
 - expanded park space, space for indoor and outdoor play, including water features;
 - public realm improvements such as benches and landscaping;
 - community and art space for all ages;
 - support for small business incubation; and
 - low-density residential, with affordable housing.
- The overriding principle participants said they would like to see inform future development of the site was a focus on the local community. They would like to see the process community-driven, resulting in community uses and enhancements to the neighbourhood. There was also interest in seeing space for the arts space, mixed-use development, sustainable green development, affordable housing, community uses for a diverse population, accessibility and safety, and design for connectivity and context.

Community Space & Services on TDSB Surplus Lands

The following points summarize the key feedback received during the two breakout session discussions at the meeting:

1. The entire block is community space now, and losing the surplus lands means the community is losing community lands to a private developer who will develop something private. Whatever ends up happening here, it has to be better for the community. Comments included:
 - It's important to consider who is already operating on the site and in the neighbourhood, and in many ways already serving as a community hub, including the existing tenants at Kent (there are a number of great community assets already on the site, including daycare).
 - Recognize that there's a soccer league with a lease agreement for use of the TDSB Brockton field.
 - Consider family sized units, family rental.
 - Whatever happens on this site should be complementary to what's provided at Dufferin Grove, not duplicative.
2. The community wants success here, and there's a significant worry that the students will be worse off because of the bare retrofit being completed at Brockton. There's concern that the move from Bloor into the renovated Brockton is not a good decision, and that the community is losing an asset. Don't rush it. Consider getting the developer to build a new school on the Brockton site.
3. The physical attributes of any community space are very important, as is the location of the community space on the site.
 - It's important to build the space so that it's flexible and can accommodate a number of uses. That way one program can use the space for some time, and then if the organization changes, other uses are also possible in the space.
 - Important to have a prominent, civic location for any community use (e.g. right at the corner of Bloor and Dufferin and/or linked to the street). Do not locate them in a hard-to-find corner or pocket of the site.
4. It's important to get guarantees from the developer. Suggested approaches included:
 - Identify "must haves" and "like to haves" for the developer.
 - Need a guarantee of development commitment.
 - Identify principles that developer needs to follow, including how they have to work with the community. Meeting the principles will very likely cost the developer more, and those costs need to be clear and mandatory.
 - Provide the community an opportunity to have input into the RFP.
 - Considering adding a requirement that the developer add an exit from Dufferin subway station to the redevelopment site.

5. Having an up-front public initiative to support construction of the space is great, however it also needs ongoing public investment. There needs to be resources to support operations at the space after it is build (e.g. programming of the space, fees associated with occupying the space, etc.).
6. Look at functions the space needs to support rather than specific organizations.
 - For example, could the focus be on arts and community food? Or on arts and community food and employment?
 - If there will be affordable housing on the site, connect that to the provision of community services
 - This site is already a hub for youth. Consider the opportunity to improve inclusivity for the youth community, especially LGBTQ youth.
7. Do research, learn from others, share the results with the community.
 - Look to other places for best practices – like Barcelona Activa which supports local business start-ups, which would help keep businesses here in Davenport. The more social innovation the better.
 - Do research into successful models of community hubs.
 - Organize tour so people from Bloor-Dufferin community can visit hubs in other locations

The written feedback reinforced these messages. Points raised in completed worksheets and emails are reflected below (with considerable more detail in Attachment H):

- Public and community consultations are critical to the development of a community hub for this site and seek meaningful community input. Have a process that is participatory, involves a wide range of interests, including working closely with residents and those organizations already using the space and in the neighbourhood. Base it in an understanding of the community's needs.
- Include consultations with other successful hubs in Toronto, follow best practices.
- Keep the successful developer connected to and held responsible by the community throughout the process.
- Community hubs to be considered as models include: Artscape, Wychwood Barns, Brickworks, Dufferin Grove, Centre for Social Innovation, Daniels Spectrum at Regent Park, Perth Davenport, Rexdale community hub, the United Way hubs, Sorauren Park, Scadding Court, 401 Richmond and others. The existing use of the site is also a model of a community hub.
- Base the work on good data. The neighbourhood is evolving and changing at a rate that no one anticipated. There are young families moving in every day and an aging population of current residents. Statistics for projected growth need to be updated.

Renovation of Brockton

The following points summarize the key feedback received during the two breakout session discussions at the meeting:

1. Ensure classrooms at Brockton are large enough to accommodate current Bloor CI class sizes. Several participants, in both sessions, had questions and comments about the size of the rooms at Brockton, specifically how they will be modified to fit large class sizes of up to 32 students. Participants also wanted to know how the size of classrooms will impact the number of teachers needed and if there is funding for additional teachers, should they be required.
2. Students from Bloor CI and ALPHA II should receive significant benefits from the sale of the 7.3-acre site. Participants said that the TDSB stands to make a lot of money from the sale of the 7.3-acre site and they would like to see a significant portion of that money spent on the Brockton site to benefit the students from Bloor CI and ALPHA II.
3. Students and staff from Bloor CI and ALPHA II should be given a high quality school facility. One participant said, and several others agreed, that the renovations at Brockton should make it as good or better than Bloor CI. Another participant said that the sale Bloor CI presents a real opportunity to relocate students to a new and innovative school.
4. Consultation should start early, be ongoing and include the perspectives of students, teachers, parents and the local community. A participant suggested creating an advisory group made up of students, teachers and parents to ensure Brockton meets their needs. Another participant said that consultation should start right away (before renovations begin) because the limited budget means things have to be done right the first time.
5. Provide additional detail about the Brockton renovations. Several participants had specific questions about the planned renovations to Brockton and some said they would like to have seen more detailed designs at this meeting.
6. Share a detailed breakdown of the renovation budget and whether it can be expanded. There were a number of specific questions on how the \$20 million will be spent, e.g. the expected cost of the elevator, moving from Bloor CI to Brockton and the new science labs. Participants also wanted to know if the budget could be increased should essential renovations require more money. One participant suggested applying for additional money from the Province related to climate change.

The written feedback reinforced these messages. Points raised in completed worksheets and emails included (with considerable more detail in Attachment H):

- Significant concern that students at Bloor CI and ALPHA II are being pushed out of their school into a third rate nearby building, and selling their land to fund other schools.
- The existing plan and budget is unacceptable to the community. There needs to be a lot more done to make the building suitable for 21st century learning.
- Consultation is key – the renovation needs to be informed by an understanding of the nature of the schools (Bloor CI and ALPHA II).
- The school needs to be modernized and designed in collaboration with staff and students.

NEXT STEPS

As discussed at the meeting, the Province, TDSB, TLC, and the City of Toronto will also be drawing on the feedback in this summary report to inform their next steps:

- The Toronto Lands Corporation will be moving forward with the release of a Request for Proposal (RFP) on the sale of the 7.3 acres of TDSB surplus lands;
- The Province and the City of Toronto will be working together to work with interested community members and stakeholders to further develop ideas on how a community hub could be integrated into the redevelopment of the 7.3 acres of surplus lands; and
- The TDSB will be moving forward to retain the support it needs to complete the renovation of Brockton to enable the relocation of Bloor CI and ALPHA II into their new location in the 2018 school year.

If you are interested in staying connected to the various processes as they unfold, here are the people to be in touch with:

Elected Officials:

TDSB Trustee Marit Stiles, Marit.Stiles@tdsb.on.ca or (416) 395-8787

Toronto City Councillor Ana Bailao, councillor_bailao@toronto.ca or (416) 392-7012

MPP Christina Martins, cmartins.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org or (416) 535-3158

Staff:

TDSB – Brockton Renovation

David Percival, Senior Manager, Building Design and Renewal

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TLC – Sale of 7.3 Acres

Daryl Sage, CEO

(416) 393-0575 or Dsage.TLC@tdsb.on.ca

City of Toronto Planning

Lynda Macdonald, Manager, City Planning Division

(416) 392-7618 or Imacdon1@toronto.ca

City of Toronto Social Development, Finance and Administration

Kelly Murphy, Policy Development

(416) 338-8368 or kmurphy@toronto.ca

Province of Ontario – Community Hubs

Karen Pitre, Premier's Special Advisor on Community Hubs

(416) 325-4039 or Karen.Pitre@Ontario.ca