

QUEEN STREET EAST/LESLIEVILLE PLANNING STUDY



COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #3 MEETING SUMMARY
February 12, 2014

This Meeting Summary was prepared by Lura Consulting. Lura is providing third-party consultation services for the City of Toronto. These minutes are not intended to provide verbatim accounts of the Queen Street East/Leslieville Planning Study discussions. Rather, they summarize and document the key points made during the discussions, as well as the outcomes and actions arising from meeting. If you have any questions or comments regarding the Meeting Summary, please contact either:

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1. INTRODUCTION

Facilitator Jim Faught of Lura Consulting welcomed community members to the third Queen Street East/Leslieville Planning Study Community Workshop. Mr. Faught led the workshop by introducing the City of Toronto Staff and Lura Consulting Staff before reviewing the agenda (Appendix A). He noted that the purpose of the meeting is to:

- Review trends in community feedback received to date;
- Provide background information on urban design elements and review the existing built form and character of the study area;
- Provide a lots of Leslieville streetscape analysis;
- Outline and discuss the proposed massing options for new buildings on Queen Street East; and
- Review the planning policy framework and status of the study.

2. PRESENTATION

A project overview presentation and summary of community feedback received to date was provided by Emily Caldwell (Community Planning, City of Toronto), providing background context on the project and a review of main themes identified from community feedback. James Parakh (Urban Design, City of Toronto) presented on the existing character of the area through an analysis of the lots of Leslieville and streetscape in the study area, and presented the proposed massing options for new buildings on Queen Street East. A copy of the presentation can be found on the City's Community Planning webpage for Queen Street East at

<http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vnextoid=a86dc63560a02410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD&vnextfmt=default>.

3. QUESTIONS OF CLARIFICATION

Workshop participants were given an opportunity to ask questions of clarification following the presentation. A summary of the discussion is provided below. Questions are noted with Q, Answers are noted by A, and comments are noted by C.

Q: What would the buildings shown in the cross-sections be?

A: The massing option would apply to any development proposal.

Q: Can we have a say on building appearance? Can we say it has to fit in with the style of the neighbourhood. For example, have a brick frontage, not concrete.

A: Yes. We are thinking of scale and rhythm, as well as materials. Brick and stone are seen a lot in the neighbourhood.

C: Quite surprised to see the 20M height as what the planning department recommends. Anyone who thinks you can put 500 more units between Booth Avenue and Leslie Street has not been on the Queen Street car at peak hour.

Q: Where did the 20M come from? We all know developers can then go to the OMB and get 2 or more stories added. I agree with intensification, but where did 20M come from? How are these decisions made?

A: 20M is not a decision, but an option being put forward. We do have policies in city that promote intensification and outline where it should occur. The Official Plan outlines why Queen Street is an area for intensification. The Official Plan anticipates intensification of buildings higher than 14M along Queen Street. Apart from policies, there are good reasons why we think that intensification makes sense. Intensification allows Leslieville to continue to grow and be a vibrant place. The massing options are a strategy where we can have buildings taller than 14M, but still consider the special and unique character of Leslieville. The next step is to come back and talk specifically about how many more people, and units that will mean. It will provide a better sense of how widespread you would expect this development to happen. Based on analysis, we are not expecting a wholesale change. When we think about good heights along a main street we look at a 1:1 ratio and Queen Street is 20M wide.

Q: How does the urban design plan connect with planning for transit?

A: We know transit is a huge issue in the city. Queen Street is identified as an avenue in the Official Plan because the streetcar runs down Queen, and the policies suggest that intensification should occur near transit. We can't solve the issue of how transit can meet the needs of a growing city in just a Leslieville discussion, but we can outline what future transit will be required.

Q: Are there tools we can include in the plan to support the community objective of having affordable housing and affordable places to set up shop?

A: We are trying to reach out to social agencies in the neighbourhood to see if this planning study can deal with this issue and we are hoping the answer is yes. If not, it will be flagged for further study.

Q: Are there any planning tools?

A: There are housing planning tools in the Official Plan. Housing is an issue. The strongest tools are in cases where we have large developments, and can require that developers provide a portion of affordable housing. We are not going to experience that kind of development here, but new development does create opportunities for that kind of development. We have the opportunity to work with developers and take advantage of funding opportunities from Federal and Provincial housing programs.

Q: You asked at the beginning of the presentation if guidelines are enough or if we need an Official Plan Amendment. So is this a bylaw or just a guideline?

A: We want the guidelines to have as much teeth as possible in order to send a clear message to potential developers that the city and community want to see the character of Leslieville maintained. In terms of an Official Plan Amendment, we are considering it because of an OMB case that occurred after the Beach design study was put in place. We still need to research if an Official Plan Amendment is the way to go. We will make the decision before the next community meeting based on today's discussion.

C: I have lived here all my life and come back and see all these changes. It used to be called the east end, and had character. What I saw growing up was poor people and middle-income families. People knew each other, and everyone worked in the area. This was all changed and replaced by condos, forcing people to move elsewhere because they can't afford it. Now I hear you are going to remove affordable housing? What are you doing with this area? I don't like what I'm seeing.

A: Just want to clarify, that we are not planning on removing any affordable housing.

4. SMALL TABLE WORKSHOP DISCUSSION

Participants broke into three small groups to discuss the proposed options for new building massing. A summary of the feedback and key points identified by each group is provided below.

Do the proposed options respect the character of Leslieville?

- Yes, the most important aspect to consider is streetscape and rhythm
- If we have to go 20M, we want a setback
- Do not like the angular plain because it makes everything homogeneous
- Like the detailing of storefronts
- Do not want to see 2-storey big-box stores
- Do not want to see too much glass
- Would like a more modern glass top
- Yes, but wouldn't mind seeing some well-designed glass-steel buildings
- Pronounced ground floor retail is good
- Setbacks above a 14M façade datum line is good
- Building even at 14M ruins the character of the area
- Do not make the mistake of accepting that the character of Leslieville is stagnant, and let it evolve without too much 'planning and urban design' controls. Do not mandate brick and brick only as a preferred façade material. Diversity means accepting modern materials.
- 20M seems like a given as not much choice is being offered
- Buildings that setback from the street need to consider both the scale and proportions of the current architecture.
- Material of the building façades should show a continuation of the existing brick facades
- Need to maintain fine-grain storefronts, diversity of buildings and preserve the existing rhythm of the street

Which of the proposed massing options best support our community vision/direction?

- No problem with the 1:1 if there are appropriate setbacks and if it is a rule that will not be changed
- 11M with setback of 3M at 14M
- Mid-block – 20M total height with setback of 3M at 14M (2 Vote)
- Corner lot – 20M total height with setback of 3M at 14M (1 Vote)
- Mid-Block – 20M total height with setback of 3M at 14M & 17M (1 Vote)
- Mid-Block – 20M total height with setback of 3M at 14M & 17M (45° angle) (1 Vote)
- 20M total height with setback of 1.5 at 14M and 17M (2 votes)
- 20M total height with setback of 3M at 14M (1 Vote)
- 20M on corner

- 4 stories total with a 1 storey setback
- Whatever option allows the most sunlight
- Corner lots should be set back further to allow a wider sidewalk
- Setback option, however 4 stories is too high for street façade. No examples shown explored what a building with 3 stories at street front would look like

Are there any other elements that should be considered to support our community vision/direction?

- Consider gradual stagger approach of setbacks
- Materials – brick not concrete
- Setbacks to have green space/ green roofs/ solar panels/ gardens/ balconies
- Build a connection to nature in the plan
- Take advantage of the sun through solar heating of water
- Smaller store fronts
- Would like to see small restaurants
- Corner blocks could be reinforced by raising façade datum line to 20M for 10M along both streets – look at ‘Jillys’ corner treatment
- Consider no setback to 20M for 10M width both directions from corner and 26M total height in keeping with the City’s Avenues study
- Like the scale of 1:1 20M street and should be flanked by 20M high streetscape
- Plant more trees
- Need for affordable shops/retail
- All new apartment blocks should have a percentage of apartments as affordable housing and/or rent geared to income
- Need for transit to support the density increase
- Need for improved cycling
- Architecture needs to represent the charm of the community
- Public art program should be integrated into the new buildings
- Commercial outlets that encourage mixed retail business
- Family-friendly
- Encourage walkability
- Streetscape that could accommodate sidewalks fruit markets
- Flank corners with strong heights
- Corner building landmark to frame block
- New, large public parks/gardens need to be created

Comments/thoughts on the community vision/direction?

- The OPA makes sense with regards to density for Queen Street
- Planning embracing intensification is good for the vibrancy of Leslieville, encouraging optimal delivery of city services through deeper tax base, while maintaining inclusive, diverse, mixed-income community with affordable housing, shops and local pubs.
- Leave some space for ‘creativity’ by not mandating too much as ‘must-do’
- Be bold and visionary
- Nearly every neighbourhood in Toronto has been destroyed by this type of development (i.e. King West)
- Be more forthcoming about the limitations of this type of guideline
- Each of the buildings discussed do not consider parking as a concern

- Ensure all new buildings adhere to AODA regulations
- Good job, looks great
- I love it
- Cash-in-lieu is a poor plan for green space
- Is 5 hours of sunlight enough?
- Analysis of average cost/sq. ft of retail before vs. after development
- Analysis of number of rental units before development vs. after

Appendix A- Community Workshop Agenda

Queen Street East/Leslieville Planning Study

Community Workshop #3

Wednesday, February 12, 2014

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Morse Street Public School, 180 Carlaw Avenue

AGENDA

- 7:00 pm **Open House**
Opportunity to view informational panels and speak to members of the project team.
- 7:20 pm **Welcome and Introductions**
*Councillor Paula Fletcher, Ward 30 – City of Toronto
Jim Faught, Facilitator – Lura Consulting*
- 7:25 pm **Presentation – Project Overview, Community Vision/Direction, Proposed Massing Options for New Buildings on Queen St E**
*Emily Caldwell, Community Planning – City of Toronto
James Parakh, Urban Design – City of Toronto
Caroline Kim, Urban Design – City of Toronto*
- Discussion Questions:*
- 1. Does the community vision/direction capture what we value about Leslieville?*
 - 2. Does it capture the direction we want to go?*
- 8:00 pm **Questions of Clarification**
Jim Faught, Facilitator – Lura Consulting
- 8:10 pm **Small Table Exercise – Proposed Massing Options for New Buildings**
Discussion Questions:
- 1. Do the proposed options respect the character of Leslieville?*
 - 2. Which of the proposed massing options best support our community vision/direction?*
 - 3. Are there any other elements that should be considered to support our community vision/direction?*
- 8:50 pm **Wrap-Up and Next Steps**
- 9:00 pm **Adjourn**