



150 Queens Wharf Road
Community Consultation Meeting #1
MEETING SUMMARY
Monday, March 8, 2021
7:00 – 9:00 pm, Virtual Meeting

Meeting Overview

On Monday, March 8, 2021, the City of Toronto and CreateTO hosted a virtual Community Consultation Meeting for the proposed redevelopment of 150 Queens Wharf Road as part of the Housing Now Initiative. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the Housing Now Initiative, discuss the area context, and answer questions about the preliminary development concept for the site. Approximately 120 people participated, including just over 100 members of the public. Other participants included City Councillor Joe Cressy, staff from the City of Toronto and CreateTO, and members of the project consultant team (see Attachment A for the meeting agenda).

The meeting was advertised through a variety of mechanisms including: mailed notice to residents and businesses surrounding the site (approximately 7,500 notices mailed); emails sent to local organizations and individuals that signed up for updates on the Housing Now website (createto.ca/housingnow); information on the project webpage (www.createto.ca/150queenswharf) Councillor Joe Cressy's Newsletter; and via CreateTO's social media channels.

A recording of the full meeting is available on CreateTO's YouTube channel.

- [Watch the recording](#)

Swerhun Inc., the independent facilitation team retained by CreateTO, facilitated the meeting and prepared this meeting summary and shared it with participants in draft for review prior to it being finalized. The summary is intended to reflect key discussion points from the meeting and is not intended to be a verbatim transcript.

Key Themes

These key themes highlight topics raised consistently at the meeting. More detail on each of these themes is provided in the remainder of this summary report.

Many participants focused their comments and questions on the impacts that additional residents would have on the area. They raised concerns that the development would increase car traffic, potentially creating pedestrian safety concerns and trouble finding parking. In response to the fact that the development will accommodate fewer cars, participants were keen to understand how pedestrian, cycling, and transit services would be improved to support other modes of travel. For example, they would like to see adequate bike parking, additional bike lanes (including separated lanes), pedestrian paths connecting to adjacent areas (including Bathurst Street), and discussions with the TTC to ensure there's enough capacity on local transit routes.

Many participants expressed support for affordable housing. They said that they support the Housing Now development proposed at 150 Queens Wharf Road and the Housing Now Initiative overall. A few participants advocated for the project team to build taller and/or provide more flexibility in planning policies (e.g. tower floor plate size, step-backs) to attain more available residential floor-space and add more affordable units.

Some participants expressed concern about the proposed building design, including the lack of balconies. Balconies have provided important outdoor space to many residents during the pandemic, and support for balconies was expressed by a few participants. The fact that there remains flexibility to revisit the preliminary development concept was well received by some participants.

Some participants expressed strong support for the inclusion and use of the Community Benefits Framework recently supported by Toronto City Council as part of the 150 Queens Wharf Road development. These participants said that they would like to see Housing Now's commitment to providing Community Benefits included in the presentation, including how those commitments will be implemented.

Some participants had questions about surrounding park lands, including interest in receiving updates about Lower Garrison Creek and Rail Deck Park's development.

Questions of clarification

Following the presentation, participants asked questions of clarification. Participant questions appear first in bold, followed by responses and comments shared by the project team in italics.

Questions about the preliminary development concept overall

What is the expected date of completion for this project? *We anticipate a two-year construction period with first occupancy expected for 2024-2025.*

Will the selected development partner be obligated to use this architectural and landscape team and build the same form presented to the public, or can the developer make changes to it? *The final design has to be the same general shape and have the same impact to the public realm as the preliminary development concept, but the exact treatment is going to be up to the future developer. The preliminary design is a concept that has to go through a rezoning process and is not yet the final concept that will be part of the zoning by-law. When the developer comes on board, they are required to design a building that meets the directions in the design brief. The design brief is a document that goes along with the zoning that sets out some of the landscape and architectural components presented to the public, but*

also enables the developer to bring on their own creativity and design considerations to the building. We need to test an appropriate built form that can meet the needs of the program, meet the urban design objectives of the City and still enables some flexibility for the future developer to come on board. This will then be presented to the public in another round of public consultation.

How can the public be part of the decision making for these types of projects? *This site was directed by City Council to be an affordable housing block and will be so. The decision that it is going to be a Housing Now site has been made, but input into decisions related to the design of the development are open through a follow up discussion with the developer. Once the developer is selected, there will be another consultation after the zoning is in place to share with the community what the new revised urban design elements are.*

What percentage of this building will have a senior population? *The Housing Secretariat has not directed for this file to incorporate seniors' housing.*

If the rezoning application is unsuccessful, what will the future of this project look like? *This is a City-initiated rezoning application and so we anticipate the City will be supportive of this application. There is a potential for an appeal of the rezoning, but we have mechanisms to deal with this should it happen.*

Questions about affordable units

How can one apply for the affordable housing units? *Applications will be available about six months prior to construction completion. The City will be managing a fair and transparent process for access to the units that addresses issues such as income qualification. We will maintain contact with the public through the website and make sure it is marketed as broadly as possible.*

Will people who are on Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) or Ontario Works (OW) be eligible for the affordable units? How would their rental rate be considered? *This program is different from Rent Geared to Income (RGI) housing which is housing that is managed by Toronto Community Housing Corporation or another social housing operator. These units won't have rents tailored to income but there will be eligibility requirements so that the deeply affordable units are targeted to people with the deepest need. The Housing Now program is focused on targeting 80 per cent of average market rent, where 10 per cent of the units can be offered at 40 per cent of average market rent.*

What is the difference between these affordable housing rentals and the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) building across the road? *This is a block that has been allocated as affordable housing since the planning for the neighbourhood began back in the 1990s and will not be operated by Toronto Community Housing. The affordable rental units in Housing Now projects are higher and there isn't an associated housing benefit with these units, while TCHC has Rent Geared to Income (RGI) units. Housing on this site will be operated by a developer, with the affordable rental units secured with a 99-year lease by the City.*

Questions about surrounding public areas (parks and paths)

Will the Lower Garrison Creek park be developed in combination with 150 Queens Wharf Road? *The affordable housing component will be completed before the park is completed. The architect team has looked at the approved designs for the park to ensure there is a seamless transition between the development and the park, however they are two different parcels. The park will be a staging area for Metrolinx's upgrading of the rail lines for a period of time. Once vacated, that land will be turned over for construction of the park, which has been subject to*

public consultation. There is no plan to revise that design - what is included in the presentation is the most current design for that area.

Will there be a path under the bridge, or will there be a connection to the Bathurst Street Bridge? *There will be two paths under the bridge. The north path that is close to the railway will be a multi-use pathway extension from the north linear park, going under Bathurst and linking all the way through the north side of Fort York and connecting to the new Garrison Crossing. There will also be another path under the bridge at the south end that will take you to the south side of Fort York. There won't be connections from the lower part of the park up to the Bathurst Street Bridge, but you will be able to get to the existing pedestrian routes that are on each side of the library, up to the terrace that will connect into the upper part of the park. You will be able to short cut through the site to get to the corner of Fort York Blvd and the Bathurst Street Bridge.*

Are there any updates on the proposed Rail Deck Park development? *City Council approved the official plan amendment for Rail Deck Park (RDP). The geography of the RDP was subject to an appeal of the official plan amendment by the owner of the air rights over the rail corridor. That hearing just concluded in March and there has been no decision issued by the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) just yet. It is a matter for the LPAT - a tribunal where there are appeals of City policy zoning decisions. We are awaiting the results of that appeal.*

Questions about hard and soft infrastructure

Will the affordable units and market rental units have a difference in structure and layout? *There will be no visible difference or differences in the layout or finishes. There will be legal agreements in place which will require the development partner to construct the units to look and act the same.*

Can you consider townhouses on the ground level of the development? *We do like the idea of grade related units - it really helps to animate the streets. However, we are challenged with the site because of its small size. A building needs a lobby, bike parking, garbage disposal, etc. and we're hoping to create community amenity space at the ground level. Taking all of that into consideration, it becomes difficult to offer townhouses in a limited amount of space.*

Summary of Feedback

Participants shared feedback on a variety of topics through a facilitated discussion, summarized below. Participant feedback is included first, while comments and responses shared by the project team are in *italics*.

Feedback about the preliminary development concept overall

One participant expressed their interest in having community amenity space (specifically a daycare) on the ground floor of the site. *We did offer the ground floor for daycare space, but unfortunately due to the small size it was not adequate for Child Services. We are working with an Early On childhood program to potentially have a program that caters from infants to six-years old to attend with their parents.*

Feedback related to safety

A few participants expressed concerns related to the potential for increased criminal activity in the CityPlace area as a result of this development and would like to know what the plans for community safety are. Other participants strongly objected to this assertion, noting that there is no evidence linking safety issues to housing affordability. *Councillor Cressy – When we look at the week-by-week data from Toronto Police Services, there is zero correlation between affordable housing projects and crime. We would like to dispel any notion that increased crime rates are coming from the affordable housing projects. A lot of*

the increased crime in CityPlace area comes from the Airbnb units and ghost hotel units. This has led the City to endorse a strong policy to restrict Airbnb ghost hotel operations and to work with Toronto Police Services to scale up and enforce community-based policing.

Feedback about affordable housing and Council's direction on the use of the Community Benefits Framework

Support for affordable housing. Several participants supported the focus on providing affordable housing at 150 Queens Wharf Road and support for the Housing Now Initiative.

Support and suggestions surrounding the use of the Community Benefits Framework for the Housing Now projects. One participant advised the project team to include an overview of Council's direction to use the Community Benefits Framework in future Housing Now presentations. Another participant suggested that the Housing Now projects should include racialized, Indigenous, women, and young people marginalized by the system, and give them the opportunity to work with this development through a community benefits agreement-particularly through construction and trades employment. Another participant suggested giving extra points to BIPOC developers as a natural extension of the Community Benefits Framework. *Council did approve a document that directed Housing Now to include the Community Benefits Framework in our projects. This includes local and social hiring and apprenticeship programs through the construction and development period of the project. It is our intention to include those requirements in the market offering for this project. When we choose a developer, the requirements of the agreement will include the Council direction that speaks to the inclusion of potential trades for the BIPOC community - our mechanism will be to include it not only through Council direction but also through the agreement with the potential developer. To date, our RFPs have not given extra points to BIPOC developers, but we have favoured non-profit developers, especially those that have brought their own equity into the project so we can sustain the affordability aspect for the 99 years as is required by the RFP. The project team will take these suggestions as advice and would be happy to work in consultation with the Toronto Community Benefits Network.*

Feedback about parking, vehicular traffic, and impacts on the local street network

Concern with the added density impacting parking, traffic flow and pedestrian safety in an already vehicle-dense area. Participants were concerned that there isn't an available parking space for every rental unit, which can impact the surrounding public parking infrastructure. Particular concern was expressed about the existing dense level of street parking in the neighbourhood that affects pedestrian and vehicle safety as well as traffic congestion. One participant asked how the parking units will be divided between the affordable units and market rental units. *Given the large number of bicycle parking spots and the site's location next to new higher order transit and existing streetcar lines, this building is orientated towards non-private vehicle ownership tenants and meeting a high standard of green development. With the submission for the rezoning application, traffic impact studies will be conducted and then reviewed by City engineers to determine if more parking is needed to accommodate more units in the building. The parking units will be evenly shared between the market rent and affordable rent units.*

A few participants are concerned with the added density affecting an already busy TTC route. They would like to know if the Toronto Transit Control is aware of the incoming density and if there are systems in place to address the added density. *The site is designated in the Official Plan as Mixed-Use Areas 1. The TTC is already aware of this and they have planned*

ahead of time. Once the rezoning application is submitted, it is also given to the TTC for review so they can update their data according to the added density.

One participant expressed concern about the impact construction will have on the surrounding neighbourhood. *There will be an agreement with the future developer to make sure that the impacts of construction are managed as best as possible. The City will review construction management plans to make sure the appropriate steps are taken around dust, noise and hours of construction so the impacts are limited to the extent they can be.*

Feedback about hard and soft infrastructure

One participant expressed concern with the biking infrastructure in and around the development. It was suggested that more than one bike parking spot per unit be provided, as some family units may need more bike space. There was also a suggestion to protect bike lanes in the surrounding neighbourhood by separating them from vehicle traffic for biker's safety. *One bicycle parking space per unit comes from the zoning by-law requirement. Because it is a small site, there is only a certain amount of space we can offer for above grade bike parking. We will need to look at providing bicycle parking below grade level, which is not as accessible but if designed properly, it could be. Protected bike lanes are a city-wide issue and City staff is looking into not only expanding bike lanes but improving the safety.*

A few participants shared concerns that with the added density, the infrastructure in and around the building will not be able to support it. Clarity was requested on the permitted maximum density for this project. *The current zoning by-law allows for 6100 square meters of residential space, with 20 meters in height which is about eight or nine storeys. With this development, we are submitting a rezoning application to rezone the property to allow for more density and more height. With the final submission, we are required to submit certain impact studies such as: traffic studies, storm water and servicing reports. These will be submitted with the rezoning application and reviewed by City engineers to determine whether there is enough servicing capacity in the area to support such a rezoning.*

One participant expressed their concern with the height of the building citing the shadow impact of the building on surrounding neighbors as concerning. *We look at the impacts of the proposed building on the public realm and on adjacent buildings to find a degree of tolerable impact. We will continue to consider these impacts closely as the application develops. The shadow impact on townhouses facing Queens Wharf Road will be much later in the afternoon. We also look at the impact of shadows on public park land. This building is east of the new Lower Garrison Creek Park- after ten in the morning there is very little shadow on this important park area. These shadow impacts will be part of the application and available for the public to see.*

A few participants would like for the project team to consider adding balconies as a requirement in the design brief. One participant cited that personal outdoor space is essential to one's quality of life, especially during COVID-19. *There are two options for balcony features with this building; to thermally isolate balconies in order to reduce heating energy consumption (a key sustainability objective), or to eliminate them all together. Given the Toronto Green Standard objectives that this envelope will meet, the designers will have to be thoughtful on how to handle balconies. With good design, we think there is an opportunity to provide balconies to provide access to outdoor space, provide shade on the western side of the building and reduce a repetitive design. We will look at the extent to which we include balconies in the design brief for the flexibility of future designers.*

Next Steps

The project team thanked participants for attending and sharing their feedback. Participants who would like to further share feedback or have additional questions can head to the Housing Now project website (www.createto.ca/150queenswharf) to submit an online feedback form. The meeting materials will also be made available on the project website- including the presentation, a recording of the meeting and a summary report of this meeting. Participants can also contact the Community Planner, Mladen Kucic (mladen.kucic@toronto.ca) if they have any further questions.

Attachment A. Meeting Agenda

Housing Now

150 Queens Wharf

Community Consultation Meeting #1

Monday, March 8, 2021

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Online and by phone

Meeting Purpose

To introduce the Housing Now Initiative and present and answer questions about the preliminary development concept for the site.

Agenda

7:00 Welcome, Introductions & Agenda Review

Councillor Joe Cressy & Swerhun Inc.

7:10 Presentation

City Planning, CreateTO, DTAH

- Introduction to Housing Now and Program Requirements
- 150 Queens Wharf Road Site Context
- Preliminary Development Concept
- Project Schedule

Questions of Clarification

7:50 Discussion

Discussion Questions

- What are some important features of the existing neighbourhood that should be considered when redeveloping the site?
- What do you like about the development of the site?
- Do you have any concerns about the development of the site? What suggestion do you have, if any, on how these concerns could be addressed?
- Do you have any other comments or feedback for the Housing Now team?

8:55 Wrap-up and Next Steps

9:00 Adjourn