



1631 Queen Street East
Community Meeting #2 (of 2)
MEETING SUMMARY
Thursday, June 10, 2021
6:30 - 8:30 pm, Online Meeting

Meeting Overview

On Thursday, June 10, 2021, the City of Toronto and CreateTO hosted the second Community Meeting for the proposed redevelopment of 1631 Queen Street East, part of the Housing Now Initiative. The purpose of the meeting was to share and seek feedback on the revised development proposal for the site. Approximately 115 members of the public joined the meeting. Other participants included City Councillors Brad Bradford and Paula Fletcher, 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 the following methods: a mailed notice to residents and businesses surrounding the site (approximately 3,500 notices mailed); emails sent to individuals who signed up for updates on the Housing Now website (www.createto.ca/housingnow) and through the first Community Meeting; posters put up in the community; information on the project webpage (www.createto.ca/1631queen); City Councillor Brad Bradford's Newsletter; and via CreateTO's social media channels.

The presentation and a recording of the meeting are available on the project webpage and CreateTO's Youtube Channel.

- [View the presentation slides](#)
- [Watch the recording with captions](#)

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

Overall Summary of Feedback

Representatives from City Planning, CreateTO and their consultant team presented information about the Housing Now Initiative and the revised development proposal for the site, including the context and planning framework for the area (including the Queen Street East Urban Design Guidelines and Site Ann Area Specific Policy 466), project objectives and timeline, Indigenous engagement and placekeeping for Kishigo Lane, the revised development concept, and information about traffic and vehicular circulation for the site.

Following the presentation, members of the public shared feedback and asked questions of clarification. Most of the feedback focused on the proposed heights of the building and the Queen Street East Urban Design Guidelines. A total of 15 people shared feedback and/or asked questions. Many people had their hands raised and not all were able to speak at the meeting to share their opinions of the proposal due to time. At the general consensus of the participants and project team, the length of the meeting was extended to hear from as many people as possible. Of the 15 people who spoke, nine said they were opposed to the proposed heights above six-storeys and/or shared concerns about setting a precedent for future developments

along Queen Street East; four people said they supported the proposed heights, two of whom advocated for additional height to support additional affordable housing; two participants did not share an opinion about the height and asked questions of clarification.

Several participants said they supported affordable housing on the site and in the area; there was no opposition to affordable housing shared at the meeting. However, there were differences of opinions about how the affordable housing could be achieved. Some of the participants disagreed that heights above six-storeys are needed to achieve affordable housing and suggested alternative ways to do so, including the City adopting Inclusionary Zoning policies, and/or selling off the portion of the site fronting on Eastern Avenue to fund 100 percent affordable housing in a six-storey building on Queen Street East.

Detailed Summary of Feedback

As noted above, most of the feedback shared at the meeting focused on the proposed heights of the building and the Queen Street East Urban Design Guidelines. The following section of this report includes a more detailed summary of the concerns, suggestions, and support for the revised development concept. Participant feedback appears first, followed by comments and responses shared by the project team in *italics*. The questions of clarifications and responses are included in the following section of this report.

Concerns and opposition to the proposed 18-storey building on Eastern Avenue. Several participants said they were opposed to building heights above six-storeys, especially the 18-storey portion of the building fronting on Eastern Avenue. Participants said that heights above six-storeys, despite maintaining a 45-degree angular, do not align with the Queen Street East Urban Design Guidelines (UDGs), which were established through an extensive and collaborative process with local residents and the former ward Councillor. One participant questioned the density / Floor Space Index (FSI) being proposed for the site. They said that it is less than other buildings in the area and suggested that increasing it could allow for more units while maintaining a six-storey building across the site. Another participant said the proposal, specifically the height, does not represent responsible development, does not meet reasonable urban design principles, and is not compatible with the character of the neighbourhood. The also discussed heights on Eastern Avenue, saying they don't think there are any buildings above six-storeys on Eastern Avenue between Broadview going up to Main and even beyond to Kingston Road. *Councillor Bradford and members of the project team explained that building height on Queen Street East is proposed to be six-storeys to align with the intent of the UDGs. They also explained that the UDGs include angular plane requirements from Queen Street East, and that the development is meeting the intention of that standard from the perspective of the City. City staff explained that the site has limitations, and the FSI is calculated including the area of the publicly accessible open space along Kishigo Lane. The developable area above Kishigo Lane is limited due to the significant underground infrastructure. This and the site's unique shape limits where the building can be located. The approved redevelopment off Don Summerville includes two new buildings, one at 17-storeys and one at 10-storeys, with frontages on Coxwell Ave, Queen St E, and Eastern Ave.*

Support for the proposed heights and proposed development overall. Some participants said they strongly support the proposed development, including the proposed heights. One participant said they understood there are concerns about height but felt that a reasonable compromise was being made by having the six-storey portion of the building front on Queen Street and the 18-storey portion of the building front on Eastern Avenue. Those that supported the proposed height discussed a need for affordable housing and desire to see City-owned sites used efficiently to meet this need and provide as much affordable housing as possible. Some said they supported additional height if it meant more affordable housing. One participant said

they support additional floors on Queen Street East so that the tower floor plate could be leveraged as much as possible to provide accessible and family-sized units.

Divisions related to height, not use. A few participants shared concerns that this process is creating a divide in the community where people are being positioned as either for affordable housing through additional height or against increased height and density and therefore against affordable housing. One participant said it is a false notion that extra height and density brings more affordable housing. This person said that the City needs to adopt Inclusionary Zoning policies to provide and require affordable housing.

Proposed heights and process could set unwanted precedents for future developments in the area. Some participants shared concerns that the proposed heights could set a precedent that private developers will be able to use to justify developments with heights greater than six-storeys in the area. One participant noted that the Community Planner explained in the presentation how this site is different from any other site on Queen Street East and why the City believes it will not set a precedent. They suggested that a complete explanation be included in this meeting summary and in the staff report, which holds the weight of being signed by the City's Chief Planner. *During the presentation, City Planning discussed the Queen Street East Urban Design Guidelines including aspects of the guidelines that relate to height along Queen Street East. City Planning explained that Guidelines limit building heights on the Queen Street East frontage to 12.5 metres or 4-storeys or where a site is large enough up to 6-storeys; massing above the 4th storey on Queen Street East must be within a 45 degree angular plane.*

City Planning also identified unique site characteristics that they said provide an opportunity to add density on Eastern Avenue while meeting the intent of the UDGs and not setting a precedent for future developments, including: a lot depth of approximately 80 metres (making it the deepest lot in the entire UDG study area), frontage on two major streets, and no adjacent low-rise residential buildings. The City Planning staff report for the 1631 Queen Street E development will include an explanation of the uniqueness of the site and why the development should not set a precedent for the rest of the Queen Street East UDG study area, and how the proposal meets the intent of the UDGs.

Another participant, representing The Beach East Toronto Historical Society, explained that their concern about setting a precedent is not related to height but rather process; further explaining that if the City deviates from the UDGs when approving this development, private developers could use this as a precedent to propose and have developments approved that deviate from the UDGs. They suggested that the City demonstrate how they would defend the UDGs at the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (now known as the Ontario Land Tribunal) if this development is excluded.

Difference of opinion about how affordable housing could / should be achieved. There was no opposition to affordable housing shared at the meeting. Rather, there was significant support shared for the inclusion of affordable housing on the site. There were, however, differences of opinions about how affordable housing should / could be achieved at this site and across the city. Some participants disagreed with the rationale that heights greater than six-storeys are needed to support affordable housing on the site and suggested the building be six-storeys with 100 per cent affordable housing. One participant suggested the City and CreateTO provide a pro forma to further explain the math / rationale for this site. There was a suggestion to sell off the portion of the site fronting on Eastern Avenue to fund a six-storey building with all affordable units. *City staff and Councillor Bradford explained that the City uses a cross-subsidy model to provide affordable housing on City-owned Housing Now sites. Further explaining that this means market units are used to subsidize/offset the costs of constructing and operating the affordable units.*

Interest in understanding the distribution of affordable and market based units in the development. A participant inquired as to whether the affordable units would be located on the lower floors of the buildings because the units on the higher floors will have a better view of the lake and therefore could achieve a higher sale value. *City staff explained that all units will be rental units, the affordable units will be mixed throughout the entire building, and there will not be separate entrances for affordable and market units.*

Concern about impacts to 1080 Eastern Avenue. A resident of 1080 Eastern Avenue, the building located directly west of the site, shared specific concerns about the proposed development including: the driveway and underground parking that is proposed to be located on the 1080 Eastern Avenue property; and removal of the existing open space / community garden on the 1080 Eastern Avenue property. *CreateTO explained that they are proposing to replace the existing community garden on the 1080 Eastern Avenue site and provide additional public open space on Kishigo Lane. They also explained that they will be having a second tenant meeting on June 23rd specifically for the residents of 1080 Eastern Avenue.*

Eastern Avenue needs more attention. A participant asked if the City has a vision for how Eastern Avenue is meant to develop, noting that at the moment it feels like an orphan. They also said that the side of the building on Eastern Avenue is not a back or rear of the building on a street that does not matter, rather it will be the new north façade for Woodbine Park. They said Eastern Avenue is rapidly transforming from a vehicular artery into another walkable ridable east end community. They also said that Eastern Avenue is wider than Queen Street East and therefore could support a mid-rise building but not an 18-storey tower as proposed. They further suggested that the City's Mid-Rise Guidelines should recognize different street widths and provide direction on how this should impact building heights. *City staff explained that Eastern Avenue is not subject to the Queen Street East UDGs and does not currently have its own UDGs, but the Official Plan policies apply to the site and would be used in any review of proposals. They said Eastern Avenue does have a mismatch of lot sizes as well as non-residential uses and that part of the way they plan for Eastern Avenue in this area is guided by mitigating impacts on Queen Street East. The City also explained that the residential entrance to this development is proposed along the Eastern Avenue portion of the building and that the proposal includes trees in planting beds, and pedestrianized public realm space.*

Support for Indigenous placekeeping on Kishigo Lane. There was support for the efforts being made to create placekeeping on Kishigo Lane as well as a suggestion to expand the design into Woodbine Park.

Consider increasing bike parking. A participant suggested increasing bike parking on the site, beyond what is proposed, if possible.

Questions of Clarification

As part of the discussion, there were participants who asked questions of clarification. Participant questions appear first in bold text, followed by responses and comments shared by the project team in *italics*.

Is this planned to be one building or three separate buildings, i.e., one six-storeys, one 12-storeys, and one 18-storeys? *It will be one building connected by corridors.*

How will snow clearing work on Kishigo Lane? *The maintenance plan will be worked out through the project agreement. At this time, maintenance is anticipated to be the responsibility of the developer partner selected for the site.*

Good to see two- and three-bedroom units being planned to accommodate families. Which schools would the students attend / how are the existing enrollment numbers of local schools being considered? *The application has been circulated to the local school boards so that they are aware of the anticipated population growth and can plan accordingly.*

There is a large parking lot nearby on Eastern Avenue. Is this being considered for a Housing Now project? *This site is not part of any current plans for Housing Now.*

There is another Housing Now site within the Cabbagetown Heritage Conservation District that is being built next to Victorian style homes. How tall is this development on Sherbourne Street? *The development at 405 Sherbourne Street is planned to be a 26-storey building.*

How many accessible units will this development include? *Council direction for all housing now sites requires that a minimum of twenty percent (20%) of the affordable rental housing units and a minimum of fifteen (15%) of the market rental units are accessible and that all common areas are fully barrier-free, as defined by AODA. Based on a target of providing 50 percent affordable rental units, the development would include a total of 49 accessible units; 28 of which will be affordable and 21 will be market rent.*

The Phase 2 Housing Now report included a target of 100 affordable rental units for this site. The current plan shows 139 affordable rental units; what was the reason for increasing the number of units? *When the Phase 2 report was written it was anticipated that this site may also include some market ownership units. This development is now being planned as 100 percent rental, so the ratios have changed.*

Next Steps

Councillors Bradford and Fletcher thanked everyone for contributing their time and ideas to the process. The project team also thanked participants for attending and sharing their feedback and committed to sharing a draft meeting summary in the coming weeks. The team explained the meeting materials will be made available on the project website at www.createto.ca/1631queen including the presentation, a recording of the meeting. Participants can also contact the Community Planner, Mladen Kukic at 416-392-9434 or mladen.kukic@toronto.ca.

Attachment A. Agenda

Housing Now

1631 Queen Street East Community Meeting #2

Thursday, June 10, 2021

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Online and by phone

Meeting Purpose

To share and seek feedback on the revised development proposal for 1631 Queen Street East.

Agenda

6:30 Welcome, land acknowledgement, introductions, agenda review

6:40 Overview of the revised development proposal

Questions of Clarification

7:15 Discussion

Discussion Questions

- What do you like, if anything, about the revised development proposal?
- Do you have any suggested refinements to the revised development proposal? If so, what are they?
- Do you have any other comments for the Housing Now team?

8:25 Wrap-up and Next Steps

8:30 Adjourn