

Indigenous Community Sharing Meeting

Housing Now - Placekeeping at 1631 Queen Street East and Kishigo Lane
Tuesday, June 29, 2021, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting Overview

On Tuesday, June 29, 2021 CreateTO and the City of Toronto hosted the third Indigenous Community Sharing Meeting to continue discussions and provide an update on Indigenous placekeeping. Preliminary design concepts for Kishigo Lane were shared as well as the development concept to seek further input and feedback from Indigenous communities to further refine the design concept. The meeting brought together Indigenous peoples as well as Councillor Brad Bradford, the City of Toronto's Indigenous Affairs Office, City Planning, CreateTO and consultants retained by CreateTO including SvN Architects + Planners, Two Row Architect, Swerhun Inc, and Nbsiing Consulting.



Elder Shelley Charles provided the opening and closing invocation and thanksgiving. Councillor Brad Bradford participated in the meeting, sharing opening remarks. A brief overview and update on the Housing Now Initiative and the 1631 Queen Street East site was shared by Anna Procopio (City Planning) and Chantelle Burgess (CreateTO). Audrey Fung and Sony Rai (SvN) provided an update on the revised development concept and landscape plan for the 1631 Queen Street East site. Matthew Hickey (Two Row) reviewed the feedback from the first two Indigenous Community Sharing meetings in December 2020 and March 2021 and presented an update on the Indigenous Design Guidelines for Kishigo Lane, including existing below grade utility services and flexibility of the site, key design aspects, an overall narrative for Kishigo Lane, and opportunities for place markers through planters, pavers, and plantings.

The meeting was facilitated by Bob Goulais of Nbsiing Consulting with support from Matthew Wheatley of Swerhun Inc. Matthew delivered the Land Acknowledgement on behalf of the CreateTO and City of Toronto's Housing Now team. The facilitators do not advocate for any particular outcome of the project. The intent of this summary is to capture the perspectives shared during the discussion. This meeting summary is being shared in draft with participants prior to being finalized.

Quick Snapshot of Feedback

Participants shared the following feedback in response to the materials shared:

1. Many ideas were shared about the design features. Several of the ideas shared related to opportunities to recognize and teach Indigenous histories, stories, and practices.
2. It is important to consider how the proposed housing can serve Indigenous peoples.
3. Think about ways to connect Kishigo Lane to other locations with opportunities for placekeeping.
4. It is important to plan for the maintenance and management of Kishigo Lane, including providing clarity on who will be responsible for implementing and sustaining the vision for many years to come.
5. Think about food security and food sovereignty and include features that allow for the growing of food and medicine.

More detail on each of these points is provided in the rest of the summary.

More Detailed Feedback Summary

- 1. Many ideas were shared about the design features. Several of the ideas shared related to opportunities to recognize and teach Indigenous histories, stories, and practices,** including:
 - Etching stories and landscapes in planters.
 - Incorporating the teachings of the 13 moons into the design and using it as a tool to teach children and people of all ages.
 - Recognition of local and overlapping treaties, including the Treaty of Niagara, signed in 1764.
 - Places for speakers to tell stories with QR codes that link to the audio to additional information.
 - Include shade and rest areas.
 - Take inspiration from the Thunder Woman Healing Lodge in Scarborough, which includes pavers that are hydrophobic. When it rains beautiful images appear on the pavers.
- 2. It is important to consider how the future housing can serve Indigenous peoples.**
 - There was discussion about the level of affordability that will be offered at this site. A participant noted that the greatest need for housing in the Indigenous community is deeply affordable housing. They said having 10 per cent of the units being 40 per cent at Average Market Rent (AMR) and the remainder of the affordable units averaging 80 per cent AMR would not serve the need of Indigenous peoples.
 - There was discussion about opportunities for an Indigenous housing provider to be involved in the development and management of the site. A participant suggested exploring ways to legally sever the building blocks to allow an Indigenous provider partnership or consortium to develop and manage distinct areas of the building as it is unlikely that one Indigenous housing provider would have the capacity to develop and manage all of the 279 proposed units.
 - There was a suggestion to consider how the housing could accommodate Indigenous students coming into the Greater Toronto Area.
 - *The project team thanked the participants for this feedback and advice and said they would have further conversations internally at CreateTO and with the Housing Secretariat to continue to explore these opportunities.*
- 3. Think about ways to connect Kishigo Lane to other locations with opportunities for placekeeping.** There was a suggestion to connect Kishigo Lane with placekeeping in Woodbine Park, in particular space for gathering and ceremony including dedicated space for sacred fires. There was another suggestion to use the Moccasin Identifier project to connect placekeeping at Kishigo Lane to other locations with placekeeping.

4. **It is important to plan for the maintenance and management of Kishigo Lane, including providing clarity on who will be responsible for implementing and sustaining the vision for many years to come.**
 - There was discussion about who will be responsible for the maintenance of Kishigo Lane. As it is currently proposed ongoing maintenance of this space by the proponent is a big responsibility for some housing providers. A participant said having clarity on who is responsible for maintenance and exploring partnership opportunities with the selected development partner is crucial to maintain the vision for the space. Without this clarity and collaboration, the vision developed for the space can easily be lost.
 - There was a suggestion to look into the co-management agreement between the City and Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre at Nathan Phillip Square to see if anything could be learned and applied to the management of Kishigo Lane.
5. **Think about food security and food sovereignty and include features that allow for the growing of food and medicine.** There was discussion about using planters, gazebos and rooftop gardens to grow food and medicine, not only for consumption but also teaching people what they are used for. *The project team said they agreed this is an important opportunity that they will continue to explore for the site. They also agreed that plantings should be done for nourishment, not simply aesthetics.*

Next Steps

The project team wrapped up the meeting by thanking people for joining the meeting and sharing their ideas. Bob encouraged participants to share any additional feedback with him and said he would share a draft summary of the meeting in the coming weeks.

Elder Shelley Charles delivered the closing invocation/Thanksgiving.