

Overview

On Thursday, May 27, 2021, CreateTO hosted a virtual Community Meeting about the Parkdale Hub project. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce Phase 2 of the project and share and seek feedback on a demonstration plan for the Parkdale Hub. Councillor Gord Perks, staff from the City’s Housing Secretariat, Heritage Preservation Services, Parks, Forestry & Recreation, Toronto Public Library, Corporate Real Estate Management, Artscape, and members of the project consultant team participated in the meeting along with approximately 85 members of the public.

Following introductions and welcoming remarks from Councillor Gord Perks, staff from the City’s Housing Secretariat, CreateTO, and DTAH (consultants leading the design of the demonstration plan) re-introduced the Parkdale Hub project, providing an overview of its program model, the Housing Now initiative, and a demonstration plan. Participants then asked questions of clarification and provided feedback through a facilitated, plenary discussion (*See attachment A for the meeting agenda*). Feedback was also received after the meeting through an online feedback form and by email (*See attachment B for the post-meeting feedback received*).

A recording of the full meeting is available on CreateTO’s YouTube channel:

- [Watch the recording](#)

Swerhun Inc., an 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. This summary is intended to reflect key themes from the feedback shared at and following the meeting; it is not intended to be a verbatim transcript.

Key themes

Excitement about the Parkdale Hub. Participants were generally happy with the progress made on the project and excited about the preliminary design concept. They especially liked the thought given to connecting the Hub to the existing community, its architectural design, and the proposed approach to animating Milky Way Lane. They said they would like the Hub’s design to reflect the idea that “Parkdale is for everyone.”

Support for affordable housing. Many supported the inclusion of affordable housing through the Housing Now initiative, with a few saying they would like some of the affordable units to be deeply affordable and welcome a range of people (including seniors, families, artists). Many supported providing as much affordable housing as possible.

Minimize disruption from redevelopment to existing tenants, programs, and services, including Gallery 1313, live-work tenants, Masaryk Cowan Community Recreation Centre programming, and Parkdale Library programming.

Strong support for Gallery 1313. Both in and after the meeting, participants said Gallery 1313 is very important to the Parkdale community and said it must be maintained, protected, and enhanced through this Hub project.

Questions of clarification

Following the presentation, participants asked questions of clarification, summarized below in **bold**. Responses from project team members follow each question in *italics*.

What will happen to the World Peace Monument during redevelopment? *The monument could be temporarily relocated if it needs to be repaired or protected during construction. After construction, it could be kept in the same location or moved somewhere else – the project team is open to suggestions on its future location.*

Will there be any impacts on the community garden in Masaryk Park as a result of this project? *The team's intent is to have no impact on the community garden. Note added after the meeting: The site area included in this work does not extend as far south as the existing community gardens, and so they will not be impacted directly. The proposal does suggest the addition of a new one storey glazed 'porch' to the existing south face of the community centre to improve the relationship and potential connectivity between the community centre and the park / community garden.*

Is the decision to have 10% of the residential units be 40% of average market rent specific to the Parkdale Hub? Or is that target from the Housing Now program? *The 10% commitment is an obligation of the Housing Now program. If possible, we will work to include more deeply affordable rental units.*

What type of affordable housing is being proposed here (co-op, artists housing, or other)? Who do you see living here? *It is too early in the process to have specific details on who will be living here, but the City has experience in housing a broad range of people. Councillor Perks added that the housing component will be run by a non-profit developer, that there won't be privately owned units, and that there is an obligation to continue to house the artists currently living at 1313 Queen St. W. He added he would like to maximize deeply affordable housing units, which would require City Council direction.*

Is there an exact date for the start of construction? Is there a construction plan for the groups that are transitioning on the site? *There is no exact construction date yet, but it won't be sooner than 2024. There will be a construction phasing plan to allow tenants to move to new sites with minimal disruption.*

What will happen to Gallery 1313? Is there a designated space for Gallery 1313 in the Hub? *Yes, there will be space dedicated to Gallery 1313 in the future Hub. The project team is working closely with Artscape and its tenants on how to manage relocation. The current recommendation is to accommodate Gallery 1313 at the base of the current library site. Gallery 1313 is part of the Local Advisory Committee and will also have separate meetings with the project team about the details of construction in a future phase of the project.*

Why is this concept's proposed number of units (57) so much lower than options presented in Phase 1 (180)? *Previous options shown with over 100 affordable units went beyond City-owned land. In 2019, Council directed the City to explore strategic acquisition of new properties to help increase affordable housing, which is currently under review. Note added after the meeting: There was an investigation of the potential to add residential development above the newly revitalized library and community centre in Phase 1 of this work. While this would add a modest number of additional residential units to the hub, they would come at significant cost, and require valuable ground floor space impacting the planning of the lower levels of the library/community centre.*

Would it be possible to share information on how much more affordable housing could be created if this building were not subject to the West Queen West Design Guidelines? *We do not have this information on-hand, but the team is working within the Guidelines, which were finalized before this phase of work. We want to create something efficient, affordable, in*

line with the characteristics of Queen Street West and that delivers a diversity of unit types and sizes. *Note added after the meeting:* The guidelines allow for an overall building height of 20m or 6 storeys in height but require a variety of setbacks at the upper levels of development, depending upon the frontage. This results in the following preliminary approximate typical floor area estimates as illustrated in this Demonstration Plan – Floors 2-4 - +/- 1,100 m2 per floor, Floors 5,6 - +/- 850 m2 per floor. The upper two levels are reduced in floor area by approximately 500 m2 to accommodate the setbacks required.

Understanding that previous concepts included more affordable units because they included more land, is there a drop-dead date for acquiring the Dollarama site and including it in the project? *There is no drop-dead date, but the project team is working with City of Toronto partners for clarity on whether an additional property would be available.*

What is the relationship between the preferred option presented in Phase 1 and the new design concept? Who chose the preferred option in the first phase? *In Phase 1, Option 3 was the preferred option in feedback from the community, stakeholders, technical working groups, and City of Toronto consultants. City staff presented this preferred option to City Council, outlining a number of factors, including the feedback from these groups. City Council then directed CreateTO to advance the preferred option through Phase 2.*

Are LAC memberships still being accepted? *Yes, please contact us by email at parkdalehub@createto.ca for the Terms of Reference and application form.*

Detailed summary of feedback

Participants shared feedback on a variety of topics through a facilitated discussion, summarized below. Participants also shared feedback following the meeting by email and through an online feedback form.

What participants liked about the Parkdale Hub demonstration plan

Participants were generally very excited about the Parkdale Hub and the demonstration plan, using words like “spectacular” and “lovely” to describe it. Specific things they liked included:

Elements of the proposed design. Participants liked several elements of the proposed design, including its glass walls and curving architecture. They supported the proposed density, with one participant saying it was appropriate and provided “breathing space.” Others encouraged the project team to consider even more density as long as it resulted in more affordable housing.

The inclusion of affordable housing. Many appreciated that the Parkdale Hub project would be included in the City’s Housing Now Initiative, saying keeping Parkdale a diverse, mixed income community is very important. They said they would like to see more deeply affordable units and units targeting different types of people in Parkdale (including seniors, artists, and families). A few said they would support the City acquiring more properties if it would help increase the number of affordable units.

Efforts to connect to and animate the surrounding neighbourhood. Including providing a new “welcoming point” to Parkdale, co-locating multiple organizations in one place, animating Milky Way Lane with community programming and activities, and protecting the existing community garden.

Participants’ suggestions about the Parkdale Hub

Participants’ suggestions about the Parkdale Hub focused on advice about programming and use of space; expanding the Hub and affordable housing; environmental design; accessibility, connections, and servicing; and, transition and construction.

Programming and use of space

In terms of programming, use of space, and servicing, participants said the team should:

- ensure there is dedicated space for Gallery 1313 in the future Hub
- provide childcare and programming for youth and school-age children
- use the basement for programming or as artist space (instead of underground parking)
- strive for a net increase in commercial space in the Hub (beyond just re-locating the existing programs), potentially dedicated to non-profit programs that have connections with the Parkdale community. *The project team said that the spaces in the new Hub will be flexible and there will be opportunity for new programs. Councillor Perks added that both the library and community centre are getting more gross floor area, and the community will be informed as work progresses on how it could be programmed.*
- ensure there is on-going programming of the public space at Queen and Cowan, such as through community street theatre
- prioritize space for books and programs (as opposed to inspiring but empty open space)
- protect space for spectators in the gym — many people use the stands in the current gym to watch and support community tournaments.

Expanding the Hub and affordable housing

Suggestions on ways to increase the amount of affordable housing included:

- exempt this site from the West Queen West Design Guidelines to have a smaller step backs and allow for more affordable housing.
- explore purchasing 207 Cowan, which is currently for sale and could include community space in front and housing in the back

Environmental design

Participants' suggestions about environmental design included:

- create habitat and a protection plan for Chimney Swifts, an endangered bird nesting in Parkdale;
- include a rooftop garden on the green roof;
- minimize (or include no) underground parking to: reduce the need for concrete and its large carbon footprint, make good use of the available transit, and make this a place for people, not cars.

Accessibility, connections, servicing, and public safety

Several participants' suggestions focused on accessibility and connections, including:

- ensure the building is fully accessible, including elevators and ramps. *The Project Team said the buildings will be fully accessible.*
- consider adding mid-block connection from Queen to Milky Way Lane. *The project team said that, due to site's size and the need to accommodate programming and housing, it would be difficult to accommodate a dedicated mid-block connection. However, since the building will have entrances on both Queen and Milky Way, people may be able to connect through the building itself.*
- Consider adding an accessible pick-up and drop-off area to (or expanding) Cowan Avenue.
- Explore ways to improve public safety in the area, especially on Cowan Avenue. Cowan is currently a crowded and dangerous street due to traffic, and Milky Way Lane is not big enough to host delivery trucks. Since some programming depends on trucks (bringing food, for example), it is important to accommodate delivery vehicles and make sure this intersection is safe for pedestrians, children, and people in mobility devices.
- Prohibit parking on Milky Way Lane. Adding parking to Milky Way Lane would not be safe as it would add more traffic to an already busy area.

Transition and construction

Participants suggested that the team ensure construction areas are well-lit and have security for dark and empty areas. They also said the transition of existing library programs during the construction period should be seamless so programming is uninterrupted. The Parkdale library is vital to the community and should continue to function through an interim hub. *The Library won't close down for a prolonged period during construction: the team is currently looking at options for an interim space for programming, which will be included in the construction phasing plan. In previous similar efforts, the library has opened pop-up locations to provide on-going service during construction.*

Feedback about process

Participants suggested the team consider offering incentives for local organizations to join and participate in the Local Advisory Committee.

Post-meeting feedback about Gallery 1313

The project team received emails following the meeting with feedback, comments, and advice on the future of Gallery 1313.

Strong support for Gallery 1313 to remain present in the Parkdale community.

Respondents from Gallery 1313, members of the public, and members of school communities wrote to express the importance of Gallery 1313 to the Parkdale community, art students, artists, and the general public. Some respondents suggested Gallery 1313 be treated separately from the Parkdale Arts and Cultural Centre (PACC).

Concern with proposed relocation of Gallery 1313 and the new entrance into the Gallery from Queen Street. Some respondents shared opposition to relocating Gallery 1313 to the existing library site and the proposed new entrance as discussed at the meeting. It was noted that the current entrance to Gallery 1313, with a courtyard serves as a ceremonial entrance and creates a pause from the busy streets, before entering the Gallery. The current entrance is not hidden, but purposeful in providing more than a front door to the Gallery. Some suggested including a double-wide passage into the Gallery with branding and signage available for the public to see.

There were suggestions to consider Gallery 1313 separately from other uses in the planning process, retain its existing location at 1313 Queen Street West and incorporate it into the future library/recreation building while maintaining some of the Gallery's existing architecture and sightlines.

Ensure there is a smooth transition for Gallery 1313 when moving into the new space.

Gallery 1313's revenue relies on licensing the space to artists — an interruption in programming can be harmful to the Gallery. Respondents asked for regular consultations and opportunities to provide feedback be available during the design and construction phase. They also asked for a stable and affordable lease for the Gallery.

Other comments and suggestions for the design Gallery 1313:

Suggestions about the design of Gallery 1313 included:

- a large main space gallery with ample vertical and horizontal space for large canvases;
- a medium sized gallery cordoned away from the main space gallery that can be darkened for mixed-media and sound isolation;
- a fine art exhibit space to enhance the library or community centre;
- productive backspace, including an administrative office, shelving and storage;
- a kitchenette with fridge, sink and cupboards;

- two fully accessible washrooms;
- a modern HVAC system to regulate temperatures;
- windows that can be darkened and are UV treated;
- plywood-backed walls that are durable for art pieces;
- retaining similar architecture from the current Gallery 1313, including the concrete floors;
- Retain Gallery 1313's current location and incorporate it into the future library / recreation building; and
- Retain and incorporate some of Gallery 1313's current architecture and sightlines to provide a dedicated space for the gallery to allow it to continue to focus making art part of life in the city.

Next steps

The project team thanked participants for attending and sharing their feedback and committed to sharing a draft meeting summary in the coming weeks. Participants were also encouraged to share any further feedback by emailing the project team, mailing in hardcopy feedback forms or via an online feedback form (found on the project website) by June 17th, 2021. Feedback received after this date will continue to be shared with the project team.

The meeting materials, including the presentation, recording and summary will be posted to the project website at www.parkdalehub.ca. Participants can contact the project team at parkdalehub@createto.ca.

Attachment A. Meeting Agenda

Parkdale Hub - Phase 2 Community Meeting

Thursday, May 27th, 2021

6:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.

Meeting Purpose

To introduce Phase 2 of the Parkdale Hub to the public and share and seek feedback on the demonstration plan.

Proposed agenda

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

Cllr. Perks, CreateTO, Swerhun Inc.

6:40 Parkdale Hub background and overview

CreateTO, Housing Secretariat, DTAH

Questions of clarification

7:20 Discussion

Thinking about the **key features of the demonstration plan** for the Parkdale Hub project:

1. What, if anything, do you particularly **like**?
2. What, if anything do you **find concerning**? What suggestions (if any) do you have to address those concerns?
3. Do you have any other comments or advice?

8:25 Wrap up and next steps

8:30 Adjourn

Attachment B. Post Meeting Feedback

Personal identifying information has been removed from personal emails submitted and personal contact information included in submissions received on official letterhead from representatives of institutions have been removed. Otherwise, the submissions have been included as submitted.

Online Feedback Form: 1

Q1

What, if anything, do you particularly like?

In terms of city agreements of public usage facilitation, the function and heritage friendly suggestion drawings and explanations.

Q2

What, if anything, do you find concerning? What suggestions (if any) do you have to address those concerns?

In terms of being a private citizen, the private ownership vs city ownership clarity, (Sponson we did not capitulate.)

Q3

Do you have any other comments or advice for the Parkdale Hub team?

Keep up the good work.

Q4

Received meeting notice in mail

How did you hear about this process

Online Feedback Form: 2

Q1

What, if anything, do you particularly like?

The expansion and improvement of the library is great.

Q2

Respondent skipped this question

What, if anything, do you find concerning? What suggestions (if any) do you have to address those concerns?

Q3

Do you have any other comments or advice for the Parkdale Hub team?

One thing that I would really like to see is additional connectivity between blocks. The Milky Way is wonderful (although narrow for pedestrians & cars to coexist), but there are very few east-west connections between Queen and King. If the Hub could include a connection between Cowan and Dunn that would be a nice feature.

Q4

Poster in the community

How did you hear about this process

Online Feedback Form: 3

Q1

What, if anything, do you particularly like?

I like the effort to create as much affordable housing as possible.

Q2

What, if anything, do you find concerning? What suggestions (if any) do you have to address those concerns?

There was almost no mention of Gallery 1313 during the meeting. It does not seem to be included in the current plans for 1313 Queen but it was not specifically mentioned at 1305 Queen. A typical retail space as proposed for the ground floor of 1305 would not be suitable for a gallery such as Gallery 1313. It requires a space that is at least as big as what it has now (1600 sq ft with 14 ft ceilings) to accommodate the various needs of its communities. The design team should start to discuss the placement of the gallery within the redevelopment.

Q3

Do you have any other comments or advice for the Parkdale Hub team?

Overall it looks like an amazing project! Particularly if Gallery 1313 will have a new and enhanced exhibition space!

Q4

Other (please specify):

How did you hear about this process

Gallery 1313

Email 1

Dear Councillor Perks,

I'm writing to express how important it is that Gallery 1313, Parkdale's oldest artist-run centre remains in its current location, 1313A Queen Street West. I understand that a meeting for this decision is taking place next week, but I thoroughly wanted to explain.

Gallery 1313 was started in 1994, as an artist collective built by passionate individuals that transformed the Parkdale community into the cultural hub it is known as today, recognized both within Toronto and beyond. Over the years, gentrification, a recession and pandemic have taken place that have torn the Parkdale arts community down. Gallery 1313 is the only original structure from that era that remains. Through it all, Gallery 1313 has hung on. Any change to its existing structure would be detrimental to its existence.

The Parkdale community does not want to lose another arts hub, or have it washed down to some remnants of what it had been before. Over the course of the last 25 years, even during the pandemic, Gallery 1313 has run programs, exhibitions, and mentorships for emerging artists, started new projects for the community and been on the news and front pages for its innovative ability. I can't say that the gallery would continue with this momentum if it were to be so interrupted by being moved, or even survive the change for that matter.

Gallery 1313 celebrates its history, which very much includes celebrating the building itself. Consecutively, Gallery 1313 have run exhibitions dedicated to providing the public with history on how the gallery came to be, and the incredibly interesting past the building had before, such as being an old jail holding cell. Well, now this building has been an art gallery and arts centre for longer than it has been anything else- for that to change would be a real shame.

Gallery 1313 didn't just name the gallery after its street location out of convenience, it did it because it recognizes and respects the importance of the building, as well as the sense of identity for the Parkdale community that being in that location holds.

With that being said, what WOULD we call the gallery after it's moved? It wouldn't be on 1313A Queen Street West anymore, without a recognizable identity it would be lost. Therefore, it wouldn't survive.

This decision is on you. Please consider keeping the gallery space where it is. If you are looking for an alternative plan to expand the Parkdale library, please get in touch and consider other options.

I have personally been impacted by Gallery 1313, as it has, and continues to really help my professional career, building opportunities for arts workers from all over Toronto. I just want to make sure Gallery 1313 continues to get the support it needs to survive.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely, a concerned arts enthusiast and lover of Parkdale,

Email 2

For the attention of Councillor Gord Perks, Ward 4-Parkdale- High Park

The intent of my message is to remind planners of the new community hub the importance that Gallery1313 has for the Toronto arts community, for artists like myself and for the Parkdale community .

I attended the Thursday May 27 meeting to be as informed on the progress being made in the Parkdale Community Hub project and in particular the future of Gallery1313.

I am of a fan of your advocacy and work in Parkdale – High Park.

Gallery1313 is one of an extremely limited number of gallery spaces in our city where individuals and groups may apply to have their work shown. It also supports a space for many art collectives

who can present their work in an accessible and space and bring large numbers of the public to the space.

The gallery signed its lease in 1997 and in 2022 will achieve a twenty-five-year anniversary.

There have been seventy exhibits a year and over 1400 exhibits to date presenting work from over 6,000 artists with over 350,000 visitors. The space is not for -profit artist run centre .

The gallery operates with support from mixed and limited sources of revenue, including memberships, sponsors, donations, fundraising, and gallery rentals for exhibitions and events. I understand that it annually operates on a budget of less than \$80,000. The gallery rents its space to artists at special rates and to other exhibition clients as it does not receive operational funding. It has received project funding from TAC or OAC on occasion.

The gallery has four unique exhibition spaces, exhibitions and many cultural events each year. Gallery 1313 supports emerging artists with professional development and career building opportunities, offers members a welcoming space to connect with colleagues, develop their practice, and contribute to the operations of the gallery, and engages the public with contemporary art exhibitions and cultural events through community outreach.

I have been a member of the gallery and exhibited there many times. I just wanted the people who are planning this new community hub to realize its place in the community and how much it means to artists. Parkdale can be proud to have Gallery 1313 for future years to come.

Email 3

I attended the meeting using an iPad and found that I was not able to access some of the options like leaving notes during the meeting. Sometimes it's quite important to leave notes. So I want to do that. I also want to comment on how polite everyone was and wish that I had fit into that culture better.

One concern about the library is that a lot of space is being used for large central stairway that appears to be three stories high and very very wide. I would recommend making an ordinary stairway leading up two floors and alternately using that space for Rows and rows of bookshelves and reading space. A good example is the library on Roncesvalles Avenue. A wealthy billionaire paid for libraries all over North America and as part of the process he worked out carefully what characteristics make a good library. The Roncesvalles library Design seems to be very functional. I recommend you have a look at it.

Another concern. I've never managed a library but usually there is one way to leave and you have to make sure you check out your books before you go. If you have many entrances and exits from the library how will that be managed?

The Hub will be a wonderful addition for Parkdale. I greatly appreciate the work that you've all done to put together this beautiful plan.

Thank you. 😊

Email 4

Dear Gord, I am writing in response the the proposed changes to Gallery 1313. Here are my thoughts as a gallery member. "Given the sketch provided, making the gallery 'visible, appears

limited to making sure it has a window facing outside, with no concept of making it a gathering place or a place one would choose to visit regularly as Parkdale residents do now.”

This is not a commercial gallery but a social and cultural part of the community and Toronto's history. The heart is certainly its members but the link to the architectural space allows for the community to make a belonging and ownership of the space.

I love the courtyard as a meeting space, a breathing space in the middle of a city. Like a mini parkland .

I found this quote “

“ A town is a tool. Towns no longer fulfil this function. They are ineffectual, they use up our bodies, they thwart our souls. The lack of order to be found everywhere in them offends us; their degradation wounds our self-esteem and humiliates our sense of dignity. They are no longer worthy of age. They are no longer worthy of us. (Corbusier 1929) ’

A city! It is a grip of man upon nature. It is a human operation directed against nature, a human organism both for protection and work. It is a creation. Poetry also is a human act- the harmonious relationships between perceived images. All the poetry we find in nature is but the creating of Our own spirit. A town is a mighty image, which stirs our minds. Why should not the town be even today a source of poetry?

Email 5

Dear Councillor Perks, Ms. Corey, and Mr. Miller,

I was not able to attend the above meeting but watched the recorded version and am writing to express my concern about the interpretation given to Gallery 1313 in the CreateTO plans.

Gallery 1313 has not been 'hidden' as you suggest in its current location but enhanced by it. The courtyard entry serves as a welcome pause from street commerce and bustle, leaving room for the transition to appreciation of the art and the lives of the artists who populate it through membership fees, hanging fees and calls for submissions and the many artists from across the city and world who exhibit there on a rental basis every two weeks.

As a member of Gallery 1313 for many years who has hosted several solo shows there and presided over the gallery during them, I can attest to the effect having that entry space and physical remove has on visitors when combined with the character of the three gallery spaces inside. As a member-run venue, there are no sales staff lurking, judging or pressuring visitors, only artists happy to sit quietly after welcoming them or to engage in discussions initiated by them about art, whether they be artists, art buffs, residents just out for a walk, or visitors who are in Parkdale for the afternoon and liked what they saw on exhibit notices at the gate. With new work every two weeks, visitors know they can return and see something new on the walls, floors or screens.

Gallery 1313 does not need a window in a box retail space to make it 'visible'. Its value and visibility comes from being something outside such boxes. Its mission over almost 25 years of making art not a commodity but part of a life in the city has blended well with the character and history of the 1313 building, with its high-ceiling rustic space for art openings, events and gatherings and the ability to enjoy nature in the courtyard during them.

The housing building with its first floor retail/office/drop-in space equivalents might well serve the other community aspects of PAAC but not Gallery 1313. I realize that the plans presented and discussed at the meeting are largely aspirational and subject to many future influences but

if the words Parkdale Hub and CreateTO are to have meaning going forward, the Gallery 1313 portion of PAAC has to be considered separately.

Retaining and incorporating some of 1313's current architecture with sightlines to it in similar fashion to that between library and rec building would provide a separate and dedicated space for the gallery and complement the broader purposes of the community/library/rec building surrounding it. Preserving some of the actual 1313 building as an interior with art as its sole focus would keep the building's history alive and again make Gallery 1313 a community destination, an oasis, not an add-on afterthought.

Architecture for housing has its own demands and these were addressed at length in the meeting, as were the architectural, environmental and community aspects of the library/rec hub. These are all very important but it must be recognized that art has its own distinct and separate contributory role in making cities and communities work and their residents thrive. This seems to have been lost in the discussions at the meeting and planning to date.

In summary, architecture in a city for creatives and appreciation of the role art and artists play and have played at the intersection of Queen and Cowan must be a vital part of the project planning. It is best addressed by not reducing the 1313 building to a facade but incorporating it into the library/rec building and making it the new home for Gallery 1313.

Thank you.

Email 6

To Fellow Stakeholders:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the presentation of May 29, 2021, regarding progress toward the redevelopment of the Parkdale Community Hub. Please accept this letter on behalf the Board of Directors of Gallery1313, in which we've tried to summarize the perspective of our Membership in relation to the evolving plan and the Gallery's role within it.

"Gallery1313" is the Trade name of the "Parkdale Village Arts Collective," a registered Canadian charity which, in 2022, will celebrate its 25th anniversary. Our home for the past two decades has been the historic jailhouse of the former police station at the corner of Queen St. West and Cowan Ave. To reach the Gallery, one must leave the busy sidewalk by passing through a large, decorative metal gate. Beyond a small garden is an unassuming entranceway, which opens into the cavernous exhibition space. The nestled entry and its surprising, unadorned interior is a big part of what has made the G1313 experience memorable for the thousands of visitors who have come to appreciate the ever-churning rotation of work upon our walls.

Here's what makes Gallery1313 special, and why our model works: Our Executive Director, Phil Anderson, has built G1313's programming around its mission - to promote creativity, learning and growth in the careers of artists, and to inspire passion and appreciation for arts and culture in the public. We have four separate exhibition areas — one Mainspace, two smaller rooms, and an outward-facing Windowbox. The trio of indoor

spaces lets us program three new shows for every 2-week exhibition cycle. That works out to a blistering 75 exhibitions per year — all free to the Public. Much of our operating revenue comes from our ability to rent one or more of these spaces to a wide range of exhibitors with a broad diversity of needs. Phil makes sure they're happy: several Toronto art schools use our walls for annual graduate thesis shows; international artists book our galleries with help from their consulates; our Members receive regular spotlights; and independent collectives will reserve up to 18 months in advance to ensure their preferred dates are locked in. This year-round, multi-exhibition calendar keeps our traffic flowing and our lights on. Our rental rates are geared to Parkdale — we work hard to keep our prices affordable so that our exhibition space is accessible to the artists in our community. The locals know where to find us, and they keep coming back. Phil welcomes an annual crop of home-grown and international student interns to learn the ropes of gallery life, and he is constantly pinging the press to tell them about relevant and timely shows. Our Membership is made up of youthful newbies and seasoned masters alike. Our alumni are all over the world.

As we assess the most recent sketches that have emerged from the preferred massing option, what most stands out to us is the absence of 1) our ceremonial entrance, and 2) our rugged, cavernous space — the two features that have made G1313 one of Toronto's most desirable venues at which to exhibit. We are saddened by the suggested removal of the historic jailhouse, a space that we've worked hard to renovate, maintain, and improve over the past 20 years. Despite this, we remain optimistic that good things lie ahead, and we trust that the development team is cognizant of how a dedicated fine-art exhibition space can enhance the functional and thematic roles of both a library and a recreation centre. As a result, we welcome this opportunity to present some ideas regarding how G1313 might one day reconstitute itself in the new configuration. We hope the emerging plans will accommodate many of the beloved features of our existing gallery, while also incorporating some aspirational improvements that promise to enhance our future success. These ideas are summarized below:

1) A BOLD AND CEREMONIAL ENTRANCE

Interesting spaces announce themselves with the promise to transition visitors across a threshold and into a sanctum. This requires more than a simple front door. Instead, we imagine a liminal space; a passage into our gallery. We hope for an entryway that allows our guests to acclimatize — mentally and spiritually — from the bustling street into the space that will transport them even further elsewhere by the art itself.

Ideally, our new entryway will be double-wide, beautiful to behold, and thoughtfully tailored to the surrounding exterior. Somewhere nearby and relevant, we envision some high-quality branded signage that lets people know how to find us. This wayfinding signage would also allow us to

easily change our programming information as often as required.

2) A GENEROUS AND CAVERNOUS EXHIBITION SPACE

Once arrived, we hope our visitors will be enchanted and embraced by an attractive interior that's purpose-built to show off brilliant, provocative, and disruptive art. Specifically, this includes:

- A large Mainspace Gallery with ample horizontal and vertical linear feet of wall space. Our current Mainspace boasts soaring high walls which are perfect for epic canvasses. In our new space, we hope to continue to present such oversized work.
- A medium-sized Process Gallery and a more intimate Cell Gallery. It would be ideal if these two smaller spaces could be optionally opened to or cordoned from the Mainspace, such that they become darkable for mixed-media and sound isolations.
- We ask for plywood-backed walls throughout. Nails and screws and hanging brackets take a heavy toll on drywall. As is standard in many other galleries, we hope our walls will be backed by a more substantial layer of plywood, making it much more durable, and much easier to quickly reset for the next exhibition.
- We imagine a lighting apparatus that is energy efficient, safely adjustable, and dimmable.
- Our existing concrete floors have been called the ideal foundation upon which to showcase sculpture. We'd love to offer similar floors throughout the new space as well.
- If windows are anywhere to be part of the plan, we'd be grateful if they can be darkable and UV treated.

3) A PRODUCTIVE BACK-SPACE

Successful galleries benefit from additional, behind-the-curtain support areas that help run the show. We've often wished for all kinds of useful upgrades to our existing space:

- An administrative office for operations and archiving functions.
- A dedicated workshop for art handling, with ample shelving for storage of tools, shipping materials, presentation and display equipment.
- A small kitchenette with light food-handling amenities including faucet & sink, cupboards, and a recess for a refrigerator. G1313 hosts about 25 food-and-drink receptions per year, and they're an integral part of our community-building mission.
- Two fully-accessible washrooms.
- A modern HVAC system to keep air moving and temperatures regulated.

4) A SMOOTH AND RESPECTFUL TRANSITION

As the process rumbles forward, we're asking for regular consultations regarding emerging plans for the gallery, and ample opportunities to offer constructive feedback and response.

When the time comes, it's vital that we experience a smooth transition into our new space. As sub-leasing accounts for a substantial part of our operating revenue, any interruption in programming would be catastrophic to our mission. We hope for a phased construction plan that will ensure our lights stay on without disruption.

Once the dust settles, we request a stable and affordable lease that allows us to build reliable budgets, and continue to offer accessible gallery sub-leases to the community.

In general, we enthusiastically support architect Joe Lobko's proposal to make the new building at 1303 Queen West entirely car-free. We very much like the idea of allocating the basement spaces to community-use programming, rather than parking. Additionally, we're very supportive of the architect's thoughtful treatment of the corner at Queen West and Cowan, which opens sight-lines southward to reveal the historic fire-hall.

Thanks again for the opportunity to respond to the emerging plans, and congratulations on the progress achieved to date. We look forward to working with you in the months ahead to ensure the success of this ambitious project.

Email 7

I just wanted to follow up on your Zoom presentation of May 27 on your plans for the Parkdale Community Hub.

First of all, it's very exciting that you are involved in the project, I'm a fan and frequent user of some of your other projects, the Brickworks and Wychwood Barns, so I'm very happy that you will also be bringing your vision to Parkdale. The plans you showed on the 27th looked great, and I was very happy to hear that natural light will be a big focus, not to mention affordable housing.

You may recall, at the meeting I raised the point about the current chimney swift population that makes use of the chimneys in the existing buildings at 1313 Queen St. West and at the community centre at 220 Cowan Avenue. As a volunteer for Birds Canada I have been monitoring these particular chimneys for several years and I can verify that during that time they have been consistently occupied by swifts.

I've attached a few links that outline some of the legal obligations around altering chimney swift habitat. I've also attached a link to an article about a Kohn/Shnier project that was interrupted by chimney swifts a couple of years ago in the Christie Pits area of Toronto.

I'm c.c.ing Megan Hiebert at Birds Canada. She is the co-ordinator of the Ontario Swiftwatch program. If you have any questions about swifts I'm sure Megan will be able to answer them.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Email 8

About the importance of Gallery 1313, Toronto

Hello. My name is ---, and I am a visual artist from Iceland. In October 2021 I will be opening my first big exhibition away from Iceland, in Gallery 1313. I know there are some changes being planned to the area around the gallery and I wanted to write to you about Gallery 1313's significance to me, as an artist from abroad.

I got a Fine Arts Degree from the Akureyri School of Visual Arts in the North of Iceland in 2015 and have been working on my art ever since, with six solo shows in Iceland. I have participated in group exhibitions in Paris, Denmark and other places abroad but this exhibition in Gallery 1313 will be a significant point in my career as I will get to show a whole collection of work in this wonderful large gallery. A few other artists will exhibit with me and I am especially happy with how Gallery 1313 has three distinct rooms within the gallery, where different shows open on the same day. This means that there will be a great mix of people on opening day, allowing myself and the other exhibiting artists to create bonds with whole groups of new, like-minded people and get a large audience as well. It also gives viewers a good and comprehensive look at the point of view of three different artists. This is a great platform for an artist like me to have as my first big exhibition abroad. I believe it will link me very well into the Toronto art scene and create new opportunities for me to exhibit in other places, work with some interesting new people and reach a new audience. For the artists that I meet, it might bring some new opportunities as well as I am also a project manager of art projects in Iceland.

For me, Gallery 1313 will be the perfect place to take this next step in my career. I'm sure you know of its importance; I just wanted you to know its importance to an outside artist like me.

Kind regards

Email 9

Dear Councillor Perks, Ms. Corey and Mr. Miller,

I listened to the May 27 meeting concerning the Parkdale Hub. As a member of Gallery 1313 I would like to express my support for the importance of Gallery 1313 in the community and within the redevelopment plans.

I was disappointed that there was so little attention given to Gallery 1313 during the meeting and no acknowledgement of its 25 year history within the Parkdale community and the Toronto arts community. It is a unique and accessible space accommodating large exhibits in its main exhibition hall and smaller more intimate exhibits in 2 smaller gallery spaces. Every 2 weeks there are at least 3 new exhibits, ensuring exhibition possibilities for diverse communities. It is not "hidden" as was suggested in the meeting, but is a well known destination with a welcoming green space at its entrance, a respite from the hectic life on Queen Street West. Gallery 1313 is a community hub already and should be maintained as such!

This is a letter of support for a new and enhanced Gallery 1313 to be an essential part of the new Parkdale Community Hub.

Regards

Email 10

Good day Sarah and Patrick,

I participated in your recent presentations regarding your redevelopment visions for the city-owned properties of which Gallery 1313 is part. I asked a question about how the designs would incorporate the gallery, as the presentations made reference to "community spaces". They never mentioned the gallery by name. I encourage you to work closely with the director and membership of Gallery 1313 to develop an in-depth understanding of the gallery's contributions

to the city's cultural environment, to Parkdale, to the various artistic communities, including emerging artists, non-profit arts organizations, and art educational institutions. Its impact is widespread within Toronto and beyond and it has visions for the future. Given the specific design requirements for gallery and arts spaces, I urge you to establish or work closely with a sub-committee tasked with developing a programme for the construction of a new gallery space.

Email 11

Hello Sarah ,

I think last night's meeting was very good. I had a few computer problems but finally got things sorted . Good to hear Gallery 1313 will have a good place in the new development . I was hoping for more live work studios but in light of the concern about the number of affordable units especially at the 40 per cent level of rent perhaps some work studios in the basement of 1303 . I was going to inquire about the parcel of land on 11 Brock St. that was acquired by the city from the province and I believe Gord was going to have a meeting this Spring to talk about the social housing from the city that would go on that site .. it is off Queen St. W . and could be 6-7 stories with many units ... this would take some pressure off 1303 . The land is about 11,000 sq ft. at the old LCBO site on Brock .

I also wondered about the clock at 1313 above the door .. don't think I saw it in the mock up . I can't count the times people have asked me when it will be fixed .

Years ago I tried to ask the Community Board to fix it . Finally I called the Fixer in the Toronto Star . They ran a piece and called Artscape. I was on the Artscape Board and got myself in a little trouble but the Parkdale Arts and Culture Centre Community Board changed their tune and \$17,000 later the clock was fixed . Don't know if there is a warranty on that work .

Also wondering about the Gates at Gallery 1313 .. wondering if there is a possibility to take them to our new site if they have use .. Have to talk to my Board and not sure how they would be used in a new design if at all.

Curious about the safe in the basement of 1313 .. perhaps there could be grand re opening of it .. nobody knows what could be in there .

Might be nice if there were some pics or history of the old police station in the new library site .

cheers



Email 12



School of Image Arts
Faculty of Communication & Design

June 10, 2021

To: Whom it may Concern

Re: Attestation for Gallery 1313, Parkdale Hub

Dear Mr. Patrick Miller,

I am writing on behalf of Gallery 1313, which has been a steady partner of the School of Image arts at Ryerson University, especially as regards the Master's of Fine Arts Documentary Media program. Mr. Anderson and Gallery 1313 have provided our graduate student community and the larger Toronto Community, as safe space for the exchange of ideas and the telling of important stories often obscured in the larger media landscape. Most importantly, for emerging artists, Gallery 1313's contributions have been priceless: emerging artists need access to spaces that are accessible and affordable, while still offering professional standards. Gallery 1313 is such a place. We treasure this gallery in our communities and hope, and even insist, that it be given its rightful place in our city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katy McCormick".

Katy McCormick
Associate Professor / Co-director DMRC
School of Image Arts
Ryerson University

Email 13



OCAD UNIVERSITY
100 McCaul Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5T 1W1

T. 416 977 6000
F. 416 977 6006

June 15, 2021

Attn: Sarah Corey, Councillor Perks, Patrick Miller

RE: GALLERY 1313 REPLANNING

I am writing this letter to you as you begin replanning of the Queen Street West and Cowan corner in Toronto, which includes the current site of the Gallery 1313.

As you begin these plans, we hope that you will take into consideration the significant and long-standing role the gallery has played both for the Parkdale community and the broader arts community.

I have been a member of the Sculpture/ Installation faculty at OCAD University for the past ten years. During that time (and for many years prior) Gallery 1313 has played a critical role in our program as both a showcase and launchpad for our graduating students. (A role they provide for many arts education programs in the city). Each year, Gallery 1313 hosts a number of our graduating exhibitions, offering students what is often the first public exhibition of their work. The gallery director, Phil Anderson, helps to guide them through the process of mounting an exhibition in a public gallery with all of its logistical and social considerations. This experience is not only a crucial part of their education at OCAD U but, key to their successful transition into professional practice. Gallery 1313 provides them with a professional, public exhibition space, installation support, and a public opening event where they meet and begin relationships with other artists, curators, and the community. Our students richly benefit from the gallery's deep investment in the arts and commitment to community engagement, as well as their mentorship of new artistic voices.

For over two decades Gallery 1313 has been an active and critical part of the academic, arts, and local community. We trust that you will honour their significant contributions within your new plans to enable the continuation of their vital cultural work going forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nina Leo".

Nina Leo
Associate Professor,
Faculty of Art, Sculpture/ Installation
Graduate Studies Faculty

OCAD University
100 McCaul Street, Toronto ON M5T 1W1

www.ocadu.ca

Email 14



14 Harriet St, Toronto, Ontario M4L 2E9 – Tel: 647-824-6927

June 9, 2021

Councillor Perks

Email: councillor_perks@toronto.ca

Dear Councillor Perks,

It is my pleasure to provide this letter of reference for the Gallery 1313.

The Gallery 1313 has been very important for the Latino Canadian Cultural Association from the time we started to work as non-profit Arts association in 2004. We presented our first Visual Arts Exhibition “Ebb & Flow” with Grants from the Toronto and Ontario Arts Councils, curated by Amelia Jimenez and great help with the set up from Phil Anderson, Director of the Gallery.

Since then our organization has presented these exhibitions at the Gallery 1313 :

- . “Alter Toronto” (2007) – Grant from the Toronto Arts Council
- . “Hands On”, part of the Latin-Afro Fest II, in partnership with the African association CANORAA (2008) – Grants from the Toronto Arts Council and Ontario Trillium Foundation.
- . “Beyond our Roots” (June 2011) – Grant from the Ontario Arts Council.
- . “Rhythms of the Earth”, part of the Latin-Afro-South Asian Festival (October 2011) – Grant from the Ontario Arts Council.
- . “Beyond our Roots” (May 2014) – Grant from the Toronto Arts Council
- . “Beyond our Roots”, part of the Latin-Afro-South Asian Festival (October 2014) – Grant from the Toronto Arts Council.
- . “Our Roots & Beyond” (2021) – Grant from the Canada Council for the Arts

This shows how important the Gallery 1313 has been throughout the years in the development of our organization, that was co-founded by old students from the Ontario College of Art & Design. That’s why the Gallery 1313 must continue to work as a great venue for individual artists, Arts organizations and students, allowing the community a great access to different Visual Art expressions.

Any further questions you may have, please do not hesitate to contact me at sbaf98@yahoo.ca

Sincerely,

Alejandro Freeland
Executive Director
Latino Canadian Cultural Association
647-824-6927
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