

## PUBLIC MEETING #1

Monday, June 10, 2013

6.30-9.30 pm College Street United Church

425 College Street

Toronto, ON, M5T 1S9 Canada

## FINAL MEETING SUMMARY

*On June 10th, 2013, approximately 200 people participated in Public Meeting #1 for the Bathurst Land Use and Built Form Study. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the project, to present existing conditions, and to discuss participants' vision for Bathurst Street. The discussion focused on the street as a whole, as well as specific places within it. Councillors Mike Layton (Ward 19) and Adam Vaughan (Ward 20) provided opening remarks for the meeting. Prior to the discussion, there was a session of facilitated questions of clarification.*

*This draft summary report was written by Bianca Wylie and Ian Malczewski of Swerhun Facilitation & Decision Support. It summarizes the feedback received at the meeting and in the approximately 100 worksheets, emails, and phone calls received prior to and following the meeting. At the suggestion of some participants, the meeting's discussion questions were put online, with a **July 12, 2013** deadline for comment. This draft report does not include feedback collected online; the summary of online consultation will be prepared, shared, and appended to this report once the deadline for comment has passed.*

*This report summarizes the key themes discussed at the meeting and is not a verbatim transcript. Also, please note the following attachments: A. Meeting Agenda & Discussion Questions. B. Detailed Location-Specific Comments*

## DRAFT KEY MESSAGES FROM FEEDBACK RECEIVED

The following four key messages emerged from the discussion. Detailed feedback follows.

- 1. The meeting attracted such a high turnout because people care about Bathurst Street's future.** Participants expressed a keen interest in having a say about Bathurst Street's future land use, built form, and public realm. Suggestions to extend the consultation online, to the shape of future development, and to leverage Bathurst Street's unique character reinforced this message.
- 2. Bathurst is eclectic, and maintaining this eclecticism is important to the vision for the street.** Bathurst Street contains many different communities, places of interest, and destinations, and many participants felt that this was one of the street's most valuable assets. Most participants expressed a vision for Bathurst Street as a collection of villages or nodes, while others felt that each individual property and place expressed a distinct character.
- 3. Many participants felt that new development should respect the context of Bathurst Street.** Citing concerns about the proposed heights, scale of uses, and urban design of recent development proposals for Bathurst Street, participants felt that the vision for the street should respect and take cues from the existing context.
- 4. Land use, heritage / identity, built form, public realm, and transportation are the most important considerations for the vision for Bathurst Street.** Opinions varied on how each of these different areas could be addressed through the vision for Bathurst Street, but many of the comments revolved around these themes.

## QUESTIONS OF CLARIFICATION

Questions asked at the meeting are listed below. Answers from the City and their consultant team, where provided, are noted in *italics*. In some cases the team agreed to supply answers after the meeting – those are also included here. The questions are listed chronologically.

1. Why do the land use designation percentages and actual numbers differ on the land use slides?

*The two slides are describing different concepts. One is showing existing land use (what is currently housed in the building, e.g. residential, retail, institutional). The other is showing density (how much square footage is on the site).*

*Our analysis of land use shows that within the study area, nearly 70% of the properties are used for just residential purposes, and an additional 16% of properties are residential mixed with commercial. Our study of density determined that approximately 88% of the properties can be characterized as “low density,” where the square footage is less than two times the lot area. On Bathurst Street, these low density properties tend to take the form of 2 – 3 storey buildings, many of which are traditional houseform structures.*

2. What are the potential outcomes of this project? For example, will this project influence zoning and the Official Plan?

*Yes, those are potential outcomes. We want to hear what participants' thoughts are on the existing permissions in the area.*

3. What is the relationship of this study to the RioCan proposal?

*In part, this study emerged in response to the RioCan application, but that specific application is subject to its own public consultation process.*

4. Since the RioCan proposal is its own process, should we even be discussing it?

*Yes. In the event that the RioCan proposal does not go ahead or a new application is made for that land, that application will be subject to any new policies created through this study.*

5. To what degree is transportation being considered through this process?

*The study team does not include a transportation consultation as transportation is not part of this project's scope.*

6. Could you use numbers instead of percentages in communicating information? And make maps bigger so people can see them?

*Yes, the study team will do this for future materials.*

7. Is there a secondary plan for this area informing your work?

*No, there is no secondary plan for this study area.*

8. What is the effect of what we're doing tonight? How can we make it most significant?

*Tonight is the first step in advancing a vision for Bathurst Street. Planning staff will write recommendations to Council with potential changes to the Official Plan and zoning by-laws.*

## DRAFT DETAILED FEEDBACK

Draft detailed feedback is organized into three parts:

- things that participants like about Bathurst street **as a whole**;
- things that could be better about Bathurst Street **as a whole**;
- suggestions for things to keep and things to change in **specific places** on Bathurst Street.

### A. Things Participants Like about Bathurst Street as a whole

There are three key things that people really like about Bathurst Street:

- 1. Mix of uses, building types, and communities**
- 2. Community-oriented and context-sensitive development**
- 3. Heritage**

#### 1. Most participants said the thing they like best about Bathurst is the mix of uses, built forms, and communities within it. Specifically, they talked about Bathurst as:

- A destination due to its diversity; a series of “village” nodes which act as local destinations.
- Characterized by a moderate approach to accommodating commercial uses alongside or integrated with residential development.
- A place that is mixed and eclectic and not dominated by any single use development pattern.
- A multicultural community.
- A collection of good, various uses, including: a skating rink, Market 707 (Scadding Court) a library, a hospital, schools, churches, theatres, a park, and heritage buildings.

#### 2. Many participants said they like development that is community-oriented, context-sensitive, and independent.

- Low-density or lower-scale mid-rise development that features a mix of uses is part of the character of the street.
- The scale of most buildings generally fits well with the adjacent residential areas.
- Bathurst does not feel impersonal like some other major streets.
- Most of the business are independent, with stores run by local merchants, which gives the street a unique commercial identity

#### 3. Bathurst Street has a distinct heritage and identity that is worth preserving. Specifically, many participants felt that:

- The older, Victorian houses and buildings were “lovely” and should be preserved.
- The renovation and re-use of heritage buildings was an important part of the street’s identity.
- The designation of a few buildings in the area could be an important first step in recognizing the area’s heritage.

### B. Things That Could Be Better About Bathurst As a Whole

There were five areas where people identified challenges with Bathurst:

- 1. New Development Out-of-Scale With Existing Context**
- 2. Lack of Green Space**
- 3. Transportation Congestion**
- 4. Lack of Amenities in the Public Realm**
- 5. Poor Maintenance of Some Heritage Properties**

## 1. Some participants felt that some of the proposed new development does not respect the local context. Some suggestions to improve this issue were:

- Develop a range of maximum heights, dependent on their location. Many participants felt that “nodes” near major intersections could accommodate greater heights, while the spaces between these intersections could be of a lower density.
- Create a variety of maximum heights for the street, ranging from 2 – 3 stories, 4 – 6, and 7 – 8 (where appropriate).
- Limit the size of buildings to encourage small sizes and fewer mega-structures.
- Encourage independent businesses – instead of chains – to operate from the ground floor of new buildings.
- Ensure that all mixed use buildings were truly mixed use by requiring minimum square footages for each use.
- Encourage residential uses to go on top of ground floor retail.
- Use zoning to create maximum floor-plates and prevent big box stores.
- Prevent condominiums from coming to the area.
- Permit mid-rise condominiums, which create good intensification and respect the local context.
- Create incentives for developers who build within permitted zoning.
- Ensure the height of new development does not impact nearby residential neighbourhoods.
- Break up large development sites to create pedestrian interest and pathways.
- Restrict lot sizes.
- Minimize parking lots.
- Allow more laneway development, with accompanying standards.
- Ensure that at least 40% of the street is residential.

## 2. There is a lack of green space on Bathurst.

- There are very few trees along Bathurst Street, which several participants said creates an unpleasant walking environment.
- Many participants suggested more trees should be planted, especially native species.
- If street trees are not possible, green façades could transform Bathurst into a “green corridor.”
- Small-scale green spaces could provide outdoor amenity to pedestrians and residents along Bathurst.
- Some participants suggested deeper setbacks might encourage more tree plantings.
- Some participants suggested that encouraging green roofs would help green Bathurst, and that green roofs on new buildings should be accessible to the public.

## 3. Many participants identified transportation as an issue on Bathurst Street. These participants suggested a variety of solutions to addressing this issue, including:

- Explore alternatives to street parking to encourage traffic flow while finding more space to accommodate parking.
- Make the street more bike-friendly, either through bicycle lanes or sharrows Other participants suggested that Palmerston would make a safer bicycle route.
- Use streetcars to go all the way to St. Clair as opposed to transferring to busses at the subway station.
- Create a dedicated streetcar lane.
- Align the Queen / Bathurst intersection to remove the unsafe jog in the street. Northbound traffic is forced onto streetcar tracks by on-street parking on Bathurst north of Queen Street.
- Replace streetcars with busses.

- Add traffic lights to slow the flow of fast-moving traffic.
- Limit new development by evaluating the amount traffic it generates.
- Consider the operations of emergency vehicles, especially given the presence of a hospital.

#### 4. Lack of Amenities in the Public Realm.

Specific suggestions to address this lack of public realm amenities included:

- Widen sidewalks
- Plant street trees
- Bury cables, wires, and other visual clutter.
- Encourage more commercial uses along Bathurst to draw pedestrian traffic.
- Add street furniture such as benches.
- Develop small-scale piazzas or parkettes.
- Use lighting to create a safer pedestrian zone.
- Add bicycle post-and-rings to create more facilities for cyclists.
- Add flower pots
- Leverage public art, such as sidewalk mosaics.
- Consider children in the design of sidewalks since many children walk to school.

#### 5. Participants stated that some heritage buildings are in a state of poor repair.

While many participants appreciated the heritage buildings on Bathurst, some felt that:

- Due to poor maintenance, these buildings are an “eyesore.” As a result, some participants felt that the heritage was not worth preserving and that preservation resources should be channeled to other areas of the city.
- Buildings in a state of poor repair could be improved by allowing / encouraging commercial uses inside them, such as some of the newer commercial development between Dupont and Bloor.
- A façade improvement program could help restore some of the heritage buildings.
- Heritage buildings should be designated.

### C. Location -Specific Suggestions for Bathurst

1. **Using large-scale aerial photographs of the study area, participants identified specific places that they liked or felt could be improved on Bathurst.** A list of all place-specific comments is included in Appendix X. Moving from north to south, the following places attracted the most attention:

- **Dupont to Bloor Street:** Some participants encouraged maintaining and enhancing existing character, while others felt new, low to mid-rise development would improve the area. Some participants also liked the small, independent businesses along this stretch.
- **Bathurst Station:** Some participants felt Mirvish Parkette could be better designed and used.
- **Honest Ed’s:** Many participants felt preserving the identity of Honest Ed’s will be important if this site is redeveloped. Suggestions included adding a public space that incorporated elements of the site, such its iconic signage.
- **Central Tech School:** Many participants felt that the fencing was unpleasant and could be improved / removed. Some felt that the playing field could be used to host farmer’s markets or other events.
- **Lennox to College:** Given the prevalence of older buildings along this stretch, many participants suggested that this heritage be preserved and protected.
- **College & Bathurst:** Some participants like the small public space in front of College Street United church and felt this treatment of the corner would make sense on the southwest corner. Many participants identified the parking lot at the southwest corner as something they would like to see buried, either beneath new development and / or some kind of public space.

- **College & Nassau:** Participants identified this area was one with traffic congestion. Others felt this area would be an appropriate place for a mix of community-oriented uses along with some public space.
- **Dundas & Bathurst:** Discussing the southwest corner, some participants felt the parking lot could be replaced with more attractive development.
- **Bathurst & Carr / Robison / Wolseley:** Participants felt that it was important to protect the small lots sizes, and some expressed concern with the height of proposed new development in this area. Some also felt that the TTC turnaround loop at Wolseley could become a small, usable parkette.

## NEXT STEPS

Bianca Wylie let participants know that the deadline to submit comments was June 17 (a deadline which was later extended to July 12), and reminded participants that a second meeting, focused on testing ideas, was scheduled for June 23. She also told participants that a draft of the notes from the workshop would be distributed for their review prior to being finalized. The deadline for feedback on this draft report is July 1, but an appendix, which will collect feedback shared online, will be circulated for review prior to this report being finalized.

## Attachment A.      Agenda & Discussion Questions

### Bathurst Built Form and Land Use Study

Public Meeting #1

#### Proposed Agenda

Monday June 10, 2013

College Street United Church

452 College Street

6:30 – 9:30 PM

#### 6:30 Welcome & Agenda Review

Councillor Remarks

Bianca Wylie, Swerhun Facilitation

#### 6:40 Introduction to the Study

Liora Freedman, City of Toronto

Brent Raymond, DTAH

*- Bathurst: Past, Present, and Future*

### Questions of Clarification

#### 7:15 Facilitated Discussion

Bianca Wylie and Ian Malczewski, Swerhun Facilitation

*- Thinking about Bathurst Street as a whole*

*- Thinking about specific places on Bathurst Street.*

#### 9:15 Next Steps and Evaluation

#### 9:30 Adjourn

## Activity One: Thinking About Bathurst As a Whole

What do you like about the land use, built form, and public realm on Bathurst Street ***as a whole***?

What do you think could be better about the land use, built form, and public realm on Bathurst Street ***as a whole***?

## Activity Two: Thinking About Specific Places

Your table has a number of green and red dots and a large map of Bathurst Street. Use the **green dots** to identify **things that you like** about Bathurst. Use the **red dots** to indicate things that you think **could be different or better**. Using the markers on your table, write a few words beside the dots to describe what you're identifying. You can use the space below to brainstorm places if you like.



## Attachment B. Detailed Place-Specific Comments

These comments were collected from participants' annotated maps. The comments have been grouped together and are presented moving from north to south.

### Dupont Street – Bloor Street

- Dupont St – Bathurst St; just west of Bathurst, south side Dupont, two new terraced condos
- Dupont Ave – Bathurst St; green space/area needed
- Bloor St W – Dupont St; add trees, maintain and enhance the character of villages like the Annex and Seaton Village, BIA flowerpots with lighting on Bathurst, no buses, streetcars only, 4 storeys + penthouses
- Dupont St – Bathurst; 7-9 storeys
- Dupont; north, mixed commercial on both sides, only on one side now
- Dupont St, south to Olive Ave; low density, keep 3 or 4 storeys, bury cables
- Dupont St and Bathurst St; build a community node, currently a gas station and dead space
- Dupont Ave - Barton; small business appeal
- Dupont St – Follis; make a destination, struggling retail
- Bathurst south of Dupont: apply safety standards to abandoned houses/retail
- Bloor St W – Barton Ave; Karma co-op, local food co-op as focal point
- Run Bathurst streetcar north of Bloor, up to St. Clair, or even Eglinton LRT
- Bike path on Palmerston if Bathurst isn't practical
- Bike lanes on parallel side streets e.g. Palmerston Ave
- Heritage – Bloor to Dupont was largely west Judean; their contribution should be acknowledged
- Vermont Ave – Dupont St, south, east side of Bathurst; nice
- Green dot – Follis to Olive (Grapefruit Moon to Steven's) is a GREAT example of future vision
- Annex and Seaton Village; make the Karma food co-operative the focal point in this area
- Olive Ave; like Steven's grocery, neighbourhood focussed, Steven's builds community
- Olive Ave, north; how to limit mid-block density and height; Superior Hardware proposal, too big, out of scale
- Olive Ave – Follis; like recent changes and additions of 'Nerd Store'
- Follis Ave, east side Bathurst St; site beside Bateman's, out of context, style and form

### Bloor Street – College Street

- Mirvish Park; in front of Bathurst station, either improve the park with beautification or make better use of the space
- **Mirvish Parkette; enliven it; heritage designation Bathurst and Bloor; improve signage faster, no turns from Bathurst onto Bloor**
- Bathurst Station; mediocre green space
- Bathurst TTC Station; improve landscaping with lots of trees
- Bathurst TTC Station; clean up parkettes behind, add sculpture to park in front

- Bloor St W – Bathurst; build a community node, Honest Ed’s heritage building, like the TTC and the green space
- Bloor St W – Bathurst St, SW corner; Honest Ed’s redevelopment could add green space, needs an innovative redevelopment, turning it into a people place
- Bloor St W – Bathurst St, east side; build mews houses, do not turn tiny lanes into major streets
- Bloor St W – Bathurst St; lengthen areas for Heritage designation
- Honest Ed’s; keep sign at least
- Honest Ed’s; should be historic buildings
- Honest Ed’s development; what will happen here?
- Bloor and Bathurst; Honest Ed property: small retail stores; 4 storeys maximum
- **Bloor St W – Bathurst;, south to Lennox St, 7-9 storeys**
- Bloor St W - **Harbord St**; no high rises
- Bloor – Lennox; sustainable retail, preserve heritage/Historic Mirvish Village
- CSI Annex; like it
- Farmers markets on school fields on weekends
- Central Tech better fence, good green
- Central Technical School; like it
- **Central Tech School; pull fence back and add greenery and benches**
- Central Technical School; improve fencing
- Central Technical School; small unofficial park, just east of Bathurst
- Lennox St – Bathurst St, SW corner; Historic designation?
- **Harbord St – Bathurst St, Central Tech; make fence permeable, redevelop the field for shared public use**
- Harbord St – Bathurst St, SE corner; don’t do this again, ugly building; Stop n’ Shop
- Keep Harbord St lot green
- Harbord to College; keep heritage spaces
- King Edward Public School, north to Harbord St; shabby, add trees
- Ulster St – south to school area, north to Harbord St; solid, perfect, protect and keep as is
- Ulster St; north from College, make heritage designation

## College Street – Queen Street

- College St – Bathurst, SW corner; use parking lot for public space
- College St – Bathurst St, SW corner; piazza, park on top of parking
- College St – Bathurst, SW corner; No Wal-Mart, No Big Box, park, public space instead
- College St, SW corner; bury the parking lot, add a park?
- College St – Bathurst, SW corner; bury parking and make a public space
- College St; north on Bathurst, improve view from street
- College St – Bathurst, NW corner; thank you to the pastor for holding us
- College St – Bathurst, north on Bathurst; school area, scary for kids from school; traffic is too fast and the sidewalks are too narrow
- **College and Bathurst; bury parking lot, make micro-park on SW corner**
- College St – Bathurst St; 7-9 storeys

- College St – Bathurst, NW corner, like cut out in front of church, follow this example at the other four corners, use SW parking lot for smaller community spaces
- Bathurst/College; S/W corner: install a park
- College to Dundas, public space north of Dundas
- Traffic from College to Dundas; always very congested for some reason
- Nassau St; can Nassau St continue W from Bathurst with the blessing of homeowners? Or use housing to break up long lines?
- Nassau St, east side of Bathurst, across from Kromer site; nice town homes fit in here
- Kromer site turned into community centre with dance/art/comparable to Wychwood Barns and permaculture garden
- Nassau St, Kromer site, use a portion for green space, have a Mirvish type development with family and townhouses
- Nassau St, W side Bathurst, make a public square/park in the parking lot, small lot sizes, mixed-use residential, market geared toward hospital workers
- Toronto Western Hospital; more underground parking for TWH, more greenery around TWH
- Area near Kensington warrants special consideration
- Like shopping at Wal-Mart, bring it on, 1000s of people do
- Nassau St - north, just below College; major site of concern; housing concessions, (co-op? Parkland?)
- Market 707
- Dundas St W – Bathurst St, SW corner; public space
- Dundas St W – Bathurst St; advanced green going northbound
- Dundas St W – Bathurst, SW corner; ugly corner, underground parking for hospital? No can do! McDonald's property
- Dundas St W, SW corner, something green and pedestrian
- Like McDonald's because it's handy in my neighbourhood and I like it
- Bathurst and Carr; the condos are a reasonable height and size; plenty high enough, they are attractive as well
- Carr St, east; like redevelopment, like green space north of development
- Robinson St – Dundas St W; protect lot sizes, can area be bought up?
- Robinson St – Dundas St W; both sides; fix properties, help residents with trees
- Bathurst and Robinson (SW corner) is a barely used building, would make a lovely parkette
- Wolseley St – Robinson St; protect lot sizes, can area be bought up?
- Wolseley St, SW corner; red dot; too high for lot
- 202/204 Bathurst – red dot 7 storeys is too high
- Wolseley; the condo Project (Origami?) is not fair to the residents on Wolseley, the corner lot is far too small; Wolseley is a small narrow street with a shortage of parking; they don't need more congestion. **Streetcars turn there, there is just no room for more people.**