

Park People (www.parkpeople.ca)

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**UNDER GARDINER WALKSHOP
COMMUNITY CONSULTATION NOTES
June 22, 2016**

C = Participant Comments

Q = Questions

A = Answers

➤ **Areas participants are from:**

King/Strachan, Beaches, Bathurst/Harbord, Midtown, Davisville, Yonge/Sheppard

➤ **Why participants are interested in project:**

- Want more information, a different project
- Want to know timelines and when it is expected space is available to use
- To see the ideas that they've read about, to see the area
- Involved with other organizations that focus on climate change and the environment, want to see how the project tackles sustainability
- Want to know how project connects to neighbourhoods
- Previously went to Gardiner consultations and want to see the differences between the public space idea vs. Gardiner East

➤ Project is 1.75km of linear public space

➤ There are areas of Pulse: activity areas

➤ Three sections: (1) Creative Action Hub – performance space, (2) Liquid Landscape – grassier area, (3) Community Link/Amenities – nearby residents

➤ Naming campaign in March that brainstormed new names for the project, over 900 submission, shortlist of 4 names that went through online voting. The result: “The Bentway” – refers to the bents of the Gardiner – the brand will be the focus of wayfinding and programming

➤ **Preliminary Questions (pre-walk)**

Q: When can we expect to use the space? **A:** Summer 2017. 1st phase is Strachan Ave.

Q: Who owns under the Gardiner? Will there be a change of ‘right of way’? **A:** City. Part of National Historic Site. Will become hybrid public space, public plazas. Some areas also owned by developer.

Q: Is there a city division decided to operate this project? **A:** Report to City Council about maintenance and opportunity of space to form a new not-profit collaboration to maintain/operate/fundraise. Expectations of a city park. Online report is available.

Q: How will the noise be addressed? **A:** Majority of noise heard today is due to the construction and extension joints. On previous walks it was not as loud – eventually will be softer. Potential noise mitigation. Locating different activities that will fit noise levels

Q: Was ‘Under Gardiner’ name considered? **A:** Yes but wanted it to be more community-involved, thus the naming campaign. There will be a branding exercise to promote “the Bentway”

Stop 1 – Strachan Gate

Creative Action Hub – propose for action/noise activities, furthers away from residential, one of the main gateways to project, accessibility is incorporated into design – ramp

Q: Is there bike access? **A:** Yes. Design is stairs with ramps.

Q: How many parts intersect with transit? **A:** Trail connects to Exhibition, Bathurst, Spadina, Streetcar on Queens Quay, new TTC bus route on Fort York, Fort York Pedestrian/Cycling bridge – also connects Garisson Common to Stanley Park (will be finished in 2018), Triangular view cone

Q: Are there restrictions on height? Such as restrictions on what can be attached on Bents?

Q: Should we consider activities in winter vs. summer? **A:** Yes, think about what can be done in winter – such as firepits, skating trails, etc.

Q: Would the trees along this side stay? **A:** Yes. The intent is to have the creative action hub on the west side of Strachan area

Q: The entrance will have a stairway? **A:** Yes. Widening sidewalk, building a wall. This will be an event space so people would move towards Strachan. There will be protective barriers.

Q: When would this area be cleared so the construction of stairs could begin? **A:** Area being referred to is actually not part of construction for project but the regeneration of the Gardiner

Stop 2 – Parking Lot west of Fort York Armoury

Q: What is the zoning of the parking lot? Would it change? It's usually used as Exhibition Place parking. **A:** Not sure what original zoning would be but some greenspaces would go towards the parking lot

Q: Is there a way to make the crossing area more porous? **A:** Gateway into project would not have fence currently here and there would be a larger walkway

C: They could use a 3D sound system to surround the performance space to project sound /none leaking out of space. Some cities have used this and makes the area more quiet too.

C: Strachan Ave is very busy and noisy, this creates a safety issue of pushing people off to the sidewalk. Would there be a safety barrier? **A:** Lauren from Public Works mentioned on past walks that there would be a guardrail to protect that area

C: Skateparks and similar should be used in the space as well. **A:** Flexibility is key for this project's design and usage of space.

Q: Skating rink or trail part of the design? Could it be stretched out in length – having a hard time imagining activity and management of flow of people. **A:** Yes. The organic form of space will be used to guide this design.

C: The skating trail could be water in the summer – storm water collection

C: Designing the space so pedestrians go onto sidewalk vs. a stop. Enable moving safely from event space to street. **A:** Should note that not all people would be exiting here.

C: Any washrooms located here? **A:** None planned in this area. There are washrooms at Fort York Visitors Centre and there will be temporary/portable available during events.

C: Opportunity for food vendors? Permanent? **A:** Pop-Ups and temporary are incorporated in the design

C: Thinking about how to light the spaces. Solar power? Other sustainable methods?

Stop 3 – Fort York Visitor Centre

Liquid Landscape – part of the Gardiner that is 5 storeys tall, highest portion, most light, softest landscape proposed. Fort York has ideas of programming for the space and there have been performances here before.

C: Bents are like portals – each could signify different periods – travel through time periods

C: Possibly adding art and banners to pillars

C: if it is part of the original shoreline it would be a good teaching moment that should be incorporated – educational platform of development. Can bring in native plants. Linking up with post-secondary institutions to do programming (i.e. Geology programs at universities). The Native Child and Family Education Centre's rooftop could be used as inspiration for the space.

C: Street furniture representing shoreline/etc – raw materials used in space that relates to the geology of the area (i.e. stones found on shoreline can be used)

Q: Is this the original area of Garisson Creek? **A:** Yes.

C: A way there could actually be water - used as a calming feature for noise, greening, etc.

C: How the space can be used when it is raining (i.e. storm water) – create a water feature that comes alive during the rain only? Also a good space to hide under when it rains

Q: Opportunity for people to climb up and look out? **A:** People want ability to go on platform, opportunity to see from bridge.

C: Incorporate height and the pillars – rock-climbing wall?

C: Have totems on pillars, other education features – Aboriginal history

Q: Was Fleet St. busy last year? **A:** Unsure.

Stop 4 – Fort York Boulevard

Middle point – first interruption – challenge is how to bridge these two sides?

Environmental assessment of site, consultation, etc. re: deciding on the best pedestrian bridge option. What to consider – curve of street, concrete barriers, speed of cars. This bridge will allow people to see the project from above.

Q: It would go over Fort York and intersection. Width of bridge? **A:** 4 meters.

Accommodating pedestrians and bike lanes. Included in phase 1.

C: Set of stairs? There would be stairs for direct access? **A:** Re: Ryerson SLC stairs where people use as a meeting place.

Q: Any seating on bridge? Incorporation of chairs like on the Highline (NY)? Moveable chairs?

Q: Suspension vs. Footing bridge = height is same? **A:** Yes, same. **C:** Gardiner is close, what happens to condos privacy? **A:** Potential for one side to be higher or chairs only on one side.

Q: Expense between bridges? **A:** same. Grounded has more potential to disturb ground, destabilize Gardiner footing. Suspension is harder for maintenance work but benefit is that most can be constructed off-site.

C: I like the suspension idea because there is too much stuff on the street already.

C: The bridge should be something beautiful, cultural is more valuable.

C: Suspension creates a link from Gardiner to park and makes people think “we can do things WITH the Gardiner” – putting more focus on incorporating Gardiner with design

C: Don't want to take away from aesthetic of “Bentway” therefore Suspension is good.

C: Lots happening on street – biking, driving – so Footing bridge will add more. Suspension would be better.

Q: Are there other access points on bridge? Can you exit quickly? **A:** No. **C:** There should be more points of access especially on the west side. Suspension, but *not* rope bridge, is best, though a rope bridge would be more fun.

C: Will this area be continuous? Fence will remain because of Fort York? If needs to remain, there should be a nicer fence.

Q: Towards the Bathurst bridge – is that a dead end? **A:** No, condos will go up and there should be linkages.

C: Zipline?

Stop 5 – Bathurst Street / Condo Courtyard

Most urban feeling part of the Gardiner. Space owned/maintained by Condo Board and the other side is owned by another developer and will be a lofts. This portion will be future plans, except for the trail, which connects to CityPlace, a new school, dogpark, etc. The idea here is to think about the kinds of amenity space there could be for nearby residents.

C: Area is a wind tunnel, now it's calm but can get very bad.

C: Could use wind for power/electricity and lighting

C: Well shaded – good area for farmers market (though windy)

C: There are two other farmers markets nearby – Spadina/Bremner, Spadina/Front

C: What if we had a pop up space similar to the one outside of Club Monaco in Yorkville? It would make it into a destination to go to in the area. Perhaps something smaller, trendy that attracts people

C: TO Flower Market in west end with live bands once a month – something similar would be nice

C: Structure that could expand, a flexible space for many things – such as Market 707 on Dundas/Bathurst. Shipping container markets for entrepreneurs and newcomers. This would provide flexibility.

C: Bike Parking and Bike Share on different points of the project

C: Water sources? Water fountains to refill bottles? But distinctive fountains with an interesting design to attract people

Q: Are condos comfortable with wayfinding signs and signage because it is a private space?

A: Waterfront TO has held stakeholder committee meetings, ongoing negotiations – so far all positive

C: Haven't talked much about art installations – one space just for artists that is constantly changing? Rotating public art. If people knew it was the “art gallery” there could be more attraction to go there

C: What about harnessing the kinetic energy? Using cars driving by to have lighting art. Using vibrations to power something?

C: People will use this as throughway – how to make it safe at all times of the day? Floor lighting, specifically for trail portion?

C: Motion censored lighting – when cyclists pass by

C: There's a type of paint that can be used to remove CO2 – method to improve air quality

C: Important to recognize area is diverse and spaces should be used creatively