

Community-based planning

PARKDALE PLAN LAUNCH

By Andrew Cohrs

Faced with a quickly changing neighbourhood that some residents feel they have little control over, **Parkdale Community Economic Development** is releasing Saturday a neighbourhood plan that brings community groups together to address rapid gentrification, displacement and equity where city policy has been lacking.

Ward 14 Parkdale-High Park councillor **Gord Perks** talked to *NRU* about the challenges faced by residents of a growing city.

“Since amalgamation the quality of the city-led conversation about how we manage growth has declined sharply... our engagement is not as good as it once was, couple that with the pressures placed on neighbourhoods by the *Places to Grow Act* and you have a circumstance where there is massive change and only very limited opportunity for the public to sculpt that growth in a way that benefits everybody.”

The product of an 18-month planning exercise, the neighbourhood plan was created by representatives of 26 organizations. Led by the **Parkdale Activity-Recreation Centre**, the initiative is a collaboration among **Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust**, housing and health advocates, local BIAs and the city.

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Matching jobs and job seekers

SKILLS GAP

By Leah Wong

While there continues to be a high volume of jobs available in Toronto, employers are struggling to find workers with the skillsets they require. In an attempt to address this gap the city and social service agencies are developing new approaches for matching jobs and workers.

On Monday the economic development committee heard about the challenges facing Toronto employers and job seekers from Toronto employment and social services general manager **Patricia Walcott** and representatives from social service agencies. Employers are struggling to find suitable candidates to fill positions, while job seekers, assisted by social service agencies, are taking longer to find jobs.

“We have rapidly changing labour markets that place a premium on skills, knowledge and adaptability,” **Toronto Workforce Innovation Group** policy and planning director **John MacLaughlin** told committee. “Our system is not yielding optimal results for employers. There are skill mismatches and we know that employers are not entirely satisfied with the potential workers they have.”

Many sectors in Ontario are struggling to find skilled workers to fill vacancies. A 2012 **Conference Board of Canada** report listed the occupations employers anticipate having difficulty filling. These included engineering occupations, followed by electrical trades and professions, information and network technology professions and skilled labour and trades.

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COLLABORATING WITH DEVELOPERS & PLANNERS SINCE 1999

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UPCOMING DATES

- OCTOBER 31**
Board of Health, 1:00 p.m., committee room 1
- NOVEMBER 1**
Affordable Housing Committee, 1:30 p.m., committee room 2
- NOVEMBER 2**
Toronto Public Art Commission, 5:30 p.m., committee room 1
- NOVEMBER 4**
Budget Committee, 9:30 a.m., committee room 2
- City of Toronto Design Review Panel**, CANCELLED
- NOVEMBER 8-9**
Council, 9:30 a.m., committee room 1
- NOVEMBER 14**
Government Management Committee, 9:30 a.m., committee room 1
- NOVEMBER 15**
Etobicoke York Community Council, 9:30 a.m., council chamber, Etobicoke Civic Centre
- North York Community Council**, 9:30 a.m., council chamber, North York Civic Centre
- Scarborough Community Council**, 9:30 a.m., council chamber, Scarborough Civic Centre
- Toronto & East York Community Council**, 9:30 a.m., committee room 1
- NOVEMBER 16**
Planning & Growth Management Committee, 9:30 a.m., committee room 1
- NOVEMBER 17**
Parks & Environment Committee, 9:30 a.m., committee room 1



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ROUND-UP

Deputants support Expo

Executive committee recommends that council not support the development of a bid for Expo 2025, though it has left the door open to a future Expo bid. Many exec members cited concerns about Expo taking funding away from other city priorities such as housing and transit.

The decision not to support a bid came after committee heard 35 deputations from individuals representing a range of sectors including construction, business, tourism and cultural. Here's what some of the deputants had to say about the potential benefits of hosting Expo:

"What is truly remarkable about the Expo 2025 movement is how it is creating common cause between business, labour and not-for-profit sectors," **Toronto Arts Foundation** director and CEO **Claire Hopkinson** told committee. "Hundreds of individuals from every industry, every corner of the city and all walks of life are coming together emboldened by a vision of One Toronto."

Hopkinson said council has the opportunity to harness this movement and continue the conversation it has started. If the city chooses not to bid for 2025, she suggested it should signal interest in a future bid because there will

be disenchantment within the movement if momentum is stopped.

"Global momentum for Canada, and our city in particular, has never been so strong," **Design Exchange** president and CEO **Shauna Levy** told committee. "The time to capitalize this is now. There is no better way than an event that would be attended by millions and read about by exponentially more [people] the world over."

Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation chief **Stacey Laforme** told committee that Expo can support the country's priority of reconciliation, while also celebrating Toronto's diversity. "I believe we are ready to show that Toronto is not only a diverse and successful city, but also that Toronto is an example of what can be accomplished when those diversities and cultures unit together."

Millennial and recruiter **Walter Lytasz** said that Expo is an opportunity to let young people get valuable short-term work experience. He noted that since the 2015 Pan Am games ended, he has helped 11 people get jobs based primarily on their work experience from the games.

Louie Naccarato from the **Union for Hospitality Workers in the Greater Toronto Area** raised concern that if Toronto does not target CONTINUED PAGE 4

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Galleria mall redevelopment

CONSULTATION EASES CONCERNS

By Andrew Cohrs

The development proposal for the landmark Galleria Mall was created through a grassroots engagement process that resulted in enhanced local amenities—community centre, affordable housing, parkland. But the proposed built form is causing some concern.

The proposal to redevelop the 4.9-ha Galleria Mall site, located on the southwest corner of Dupont Street and Dufferin Street, is structured around six blocks with 11 towers, ranging in height from 12 to 42 storeys and a new diagonal street connecting Dupont and Dufferin. With an overall density of 5.37 fsi, the proposal includes 3,416 residential units, 150 affordable housing units, 29,912 m² of retail gross floor area and 6,391 m² of office gross floor area. A new and larger community centre is proposed and an additional 9,762 m² of parkland. Parking spaces for 3,280 vehicles and 3,602 bicycle are to be provided.

A joint venture between **ELAD Canada** and **Freed Developments**, **Galleria Developments'** development director **Joe Svec** told *NRU* that the Galleria site offers an exciting opportunity to reinvest in an established community.

“This is the actual live, work, play model come to life, we’ve got places for everything... it was developed to kind of mimic a city growing organically over time.”

He said the team used a different approach when preparing its proposal for the site. It asked for community input before coming up with the concept.

“We pursued an unprecedented community engagement program, we worked with local stakeholders since we acquired the site in 2015 and it was really in an effort to better inform the proposed vision for the site so we’ve had three community open houses which drew several hundred people... six working group meetings with neighbourhood residents that was organized by the local councillor... They helped us out step by step throughout the process.”

Bloorcourt BIA chair **Liza Lukashovsky**, who was a member of one of the Galleria working groups, told *NRU* she was encouraged by the consultation process.



SOURCE: URBAN STRATEGIES

Rendering of Galleria Developments' proposal showing increased density in the form of mid- and high-rise buildings, as well as a new community centre with affordable housing above



SOURCE: URBAN STRATEGIES

Galleria Developments' proposed development of the Galleria site features a new diagonal street that separates mixed-use blocks with park space and a new community centre

“[The meetings] were much better than I thought, I went in very cynical about development and I was very happy with how the process went... there was so many stakeholders... It was really good... If what happened here could happen for every new development that would be great.”

But Ward 18 Davenport councillor **Ana Bailao** has expressed concern over the density and height of

CONSULTATION EASES CONCERNS

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the proposal, noting in her October newsletter that she will continue to advocate for more affordable housing and for a development that fits the scale and needs of the community.

However, Lukashewsky said that as long as the design was good and addressed shade and massing issues, height is not a problem.

“[At the working group,] we all agreed that height was not a big issue, we had so many other priorities... I think we are all on the same page as far as [having] density downtown. As long as the design is good, it’s fine and as long as the community is kept in mind in terms of bike baths, accessibility issues, independent businesses.”

Svec said the development team has heard the concerns about the proposed height of some buildings, noting that the three highest towers, proposed to be 34, 36 and 42 storeys, are located in the northern sector of the property closest to employment lands and the railway. The lower towers are located in the south, east and west portions of the site and

provide transitioning to the adjacent neighbourhoods.

Galleria Developments proposes to demolish the Wallace-Emerson Community Centre that fronts onto Dufferin Street and construct a larger community centre, with 150 affordable housing units above it, on the west side of the property. In place of the current community centre, a mixed-use building containing retail and residential uses is proposed.

The proposal requires amendments to the official plan and the zoning by-law to accommodate the proposed expanded park and permit additional height, density and non-residential uses. Currently only 1,600 residential units in buildings up-to-19 storeys are permitted.

Galleria Developments maintains a space in the Galleria Mall where community members are encouraged to learn about the proposal and offer feedback. A preliminary staff report is expected to be on the Toronto and East York Community Council agenda early in 2017. [nru](#)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ROUND-UP

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a major event such as Expo the hotel industry will suffer. He said the city is losing mid-grade hotel rooms, which has resulted in a loss of jobs throughout the industry.

“Our hotels are under attack. They are being converted to condos at a rapid rate,” he said. “By having Expo on the horizon I believe ... that the business people, who are sitting there and debating [whether] to convert certain properties, will think long and hard because there is money to be made operating a hotel in that period. That may put the conversions on hold.”

Three new wards

The ward boundary review consulting team—**Canadian Urban Institute, Beate Bowron Etcetera, The Davidson Group and Thomas Ostler**—returned to committee following an additional round of public consultation on the potential ward boundary options. The consultants recommend the city adopt a 47-ward structure to ensure effective representation as the city grows.

Staff told committee that it is assuming whichever structure

council approves will be appealed to the **Ontario Municipal Board**. While an eight-to-10-month timeframe was built into the review workplan to allow for the appeal process, staff said it will be challenging to implement the new structure in time for the 2018 election.

In the end committee narrowly supported the consultant’s recommended 47-ward structure, with a 7-6 vote in support: councillors **Paul Ainslie, Ana Bailão, Michelle Holland, Frank DiGiorgio, James Pasternak and David Shiner** for and Mayor **John Tory** and councillors **Gary Crawford, Denzil Minnan-Wong, Cesar Palacio, Jaye Robinson and Michael Thompson** against. Council will consider the matter at its next meeting. [nru](#)

Clarification

In the Greener City article in the October 21 issue of NRU we should have indicated that annually 314,000 trees need to be planted on private land for the city to meet its canopy coverage target.

PARKDALE PLAN LAUNCH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Parkdale Activity-Recreation Centre planning advisor **Kuni Kamizaki** told *NRU* about the effect recent development has had on the Parkdale community.

“Parkdale has seen an intensified pace and degree of gentrification and displacement for the past few years... great investment is being made in Parkdale but the benefit of that re-investment has not been really shared in an equitable way... Wealth is being created but how can we create more shared wealth? ... We’re not necessarily against development, we would like more equitable development to take place without the displacement.”

To take some measure of control over the quality of life in their neighbourhood the group based the plan on four guiding values: diversity, affordability, inclusion and equity.

“[The plan is] not really about physical structures, it’s more about a vision for the neighbourhood’s future... There are significant changes happening and we thought that some sort of action was needed... We need some sort of neighbourhood plan so we know what kind of future we would like to have in Parkdale,” Kamizaki explained.

Through an ongoing consultation process, the group created a shared vision and identified seven areas for community action and 37 implementation strategies. Some actions have already been initiated and others are proposed. Kamizaki

said that this type of plan helps identify gaps in community initiatives.

“That’s the beauty of having this kind of neighbourhood plan. So that we make sure we know what is going on and how we’re doing right now, but also what needs to be done in the future... so we can make linkages between short- and medium-term strategies and long-term goals.”

Perks says the plan will help guide Parkdale residents’ aspirations for the future, but a strong financial commitment is needed from the city.

“They are putting demands on [the city] which are appropriate and good demands but until we get leadership at the city that is prepared to make real financial investments in housing and community spaces it’s going to be difficult to realize those goals... What my role needs to be is to try to persuade members of city council that this is the kind of investment we need to make.”

Parkdale Community Economic Development continues to explore ways to communicate the plan, but aims to share it throughout the neighbourhood by making copies available online, at the local library and other community hubs. The group also hopes the city will formally recognize the plan.

The neighbourhood plan will be launched this Saturday at Bonar Presbyterian Church at 1:30 p.m. [nru](#)

TORONTO IN BRIEF

[Toronto Atmospheric Fund gets \\$17M boost](#)

October 25 municipal affairs minister **Bill Mauro** announced \$17-million in new provincial funding for the Toronto Atmospheric Fund—Toronto’s climate agency—to expand its

services into the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. The investment, announced on the eve of TAF’s 25th anniversary, will help support urban climate change solutions in the GTHA. TAF is currently funded by investment proceeds from a \$23-million

endowment provided by the **City of Toronto** in 1991. [nru](#)

Erratum

In last week’s *NRU* article *Hitting Targets*, it should have said that “units already built plus those approved and under construction but not yet built in the city account for 80 per cent of the forecasted growth in the provincial Growth Plan.” *NRU* regrets the error.

SKILLS GAP

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

While there is a large pool of potential workers in Toronto, MacLaughlin said the changing labour market requires social service agencies to take a different approach to assisting clients in finding jobs. Replacing programs that simply assist with job searches, are integrated and hybrid programs that focus on a combination of skills development, job searches and mentoring.

One of the ways agencies are responding to the skills gap in Toronto is through sector programs that focus on the needs of specific industries.

Emerging from the community benefits framework, the **Social Research and Demonstration Corporation** created the construction sector pathway. This initiative seeks to leverage public infrastructure investments to produce community benefits. It does this by helping to connect job seekers with both trade and non-trade opportunities in the construction industry.

SRDC research director **Karen Meyers** told committee that the pathway serves both employers and job seekers. Simply put, it determines the skillsets needed in the construction industry and offers assistance to job seekers in acquiring these skillsets.

“People know that there are good jobs in the construction sector, but it’s complicated,” said Meyers. Given the nuances of the industry and the number of unions involved, it can be hard to get information about construction careers. One of the goals of the pathway is to provide one-stop access to career information.

As Toronto integrates community benefits agreements into infrastructure projects, construction teams will be required to hire individuals that are economically disadvantaged or experience discrimination. Meyers said that the pathway will help employers connect with individuals that fit this criteria.

Metcalf Foundation president and CEO **Sandy Houston** told committee that social service agencies needs to adapt their programs if they are to successfully aid disadvantaged clients in their job search.

Based on a model from the **Aspen Institute** in Washington, D.C., Metcalf has created the Toronto Sector Skills Academy that trains senior managers from employment and social service agencies to adapt their organizations to better respond to workforce realities. **nru**

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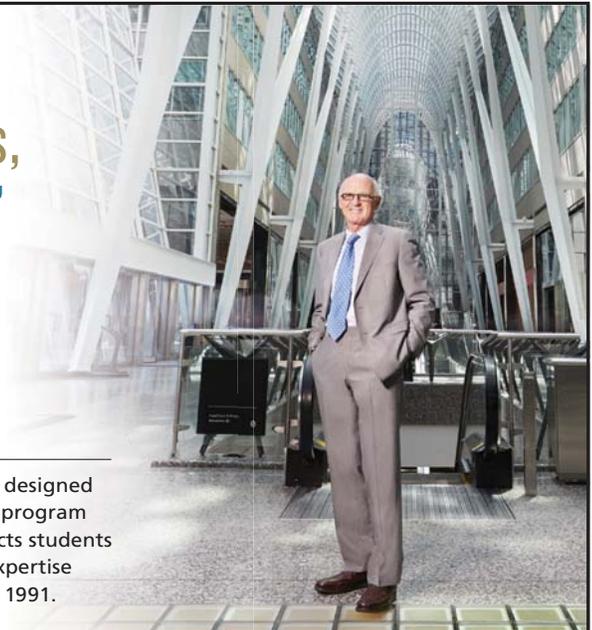
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TORONTO OMB NEWS

Settlement nearly completed for 1 Yonge

In an October 21 decision, board member **Justin Duncan** set a November 3 settlement hearing in regards to an appeal by **Pinnacle International** against the **City of Toronto's** failure to make a decision on official plan and zoning by-law amendment applications for 1-7 Yonge Street.

Pinnacle proposes to develop three residential towers of 65, 70 and 95 storeys, containing approximately 3,000 units, and two office towers of 37 and 22 storeys on the southern portion of the property.

Pinnacle solicitor **Patrick Devine (Devine Park)** advised the board that his client has nearly finalized a settlement with the city, conditional on Pinnacle meeting certain requirements, including parkland dedication. Devine said that an agreement will be executed with neighbouring landowner **Menkes 55 Lakeshore** to have parkland created on the southerly portion of Menkes' site.

The board ordered Pinnacle to circulate the settlement to other parties and participants by October 17, and scheduled a settlement hearing beginning November 3.

Solicitors involved in this decision were Patrick Devine (Devine Park) representing Pinnacle International Ltd., **Ian Beverley (Waterfront Toronto)** representing Waterfront Toronto, **Calvin Lantz (Stikeman Elliott)** representing Redpath Sugar Ltd., **Mark Flower (Davies Howe)** representing Daniels Waterfront Ltd. and

Daniels QQE 162 Inc., **Chris Tanzola (Overland)** representing **Pier 27 Toronto (North) Inc.**, **Barnett Kussner (WeirFoulds)** representing **Liquor Control Board of Ontario**, **Adam Brown (Sherman Brown)** representing Menkes 55 Lakeshore Inc., **Jared Schwartz (Fogler Rubinoff)** representing **TorStar Corporation** and city solicitor **Sarah Rogers** representing the City of Toronto. [See OMB Case No. PL140008.]

Long Branch industrial building refused

In an October 3 decision, board member **Laurie Bruce** allowed an appeal by **Margaret Laidley** and **John Wolwicz** against the **City of Toronto** committee of adjustment's approval of a minor variance application by **Armando Carreiro**. Carreiro sought variances to construct a two-storey industrial building for vehicle storage and offices at 0 Carson Street.

Planner **Franco Romano (Action Planning Consultants)** provided evidence on behalf of Carreiro

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SOURCE: CITY OF TORONTO

Rendering of Pinnacle International's development proposal for 1 & 7 Yonge Street by Hariri Pontarini Architects



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TORONTO VS THE WORLD!
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TORONTO OMB NEWS

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in opposition to the appeal. He testified the area is almost exclusively comprised of employment uses and the proposed building would be sited so as to direct industrial activity to the front of the building, away from the abutting residences.

Romano said the development, which would replace a vacant lot used for car and boat storage with a new building, represented an improvement over existing conditions. He stated the building would have no rear-facing windows or access and would not create overlook or shadowing impacts.

Planner **David Capper (Weston Consulting)** provided evidence on behalf of Laidley and Wolwowicz in support of their appeal. He testified the proposed 1.25-metre setback from the rear-property line, adjacent to Laidley and Wolwowicz's backyard, did not provide an appropriate transition.

Capper said that the proposed building would have significantly worse shadow impacts on Laidley and Wolwowicz's backyard than would be the case with an as-of-right setback.

The board preferred Capper's evidence and allowed the appeal, refusing the variances.

Solicitor **John Inglis (O'Connor MacLeod Hanna)** representing John Wolwowicz and Margaret Laidley was involved in this decision. [See OMB Case No. PL151272.]

Appeal against Kingsway variances dismissed

In a September 26 decision, board member **Sharyn Vincent** dismissed an appeal by **Michael Ferrabee** against the **City of Toronto** committee of adjustment's approval of a minor variance application by **Michael Walton**. Walton sought variances to build an addition onto his home at 84 Willingdon Boulevard. In particular, the requested variances will allow a portion of the area contained within the existing roof structure to be converted to a habitable third floor.

Planner **Lorelei Jones (Macaulay Shiomi Howson)** provided evidence on behalf of Walton in opposition to the appeal. She testified the proposal will create additional FSI within the existing structure and will not result in any shadowing or overlook impacts. She said there will only be small windows to the north and south, with no views into Ferrabee's westerly-abutting backyard.

Ferrabee expressed concern that the requested variances were of excessive magnitude and should be refused.

Agreeing with Jones's evidence that the addition will be

imperceptible from outside the home, the board dismissed Ferrabee's appeal.

Solicitor **Mary Flynn-Guglietti (McMillan)** representing Michael Walton was involved in this decision. [See OMB Case No. PL160180.]

Woodbine-Cosburn variances approved

In a September 30 decision, board members **Blair Taylor** and **Stefan Krzeczunowicz** allowed an appeal, in part, by **Andrew Corkill** against the **City of Toronto** committee of adjustment's refusal of his minor variance application. Corkill sought variances to construct an addition on his home at 820 Cosburn Avenue, to create a three-storey flat-roofed dwelling with a third-floor rear deck.

Prior to the hearing Corkill and the city reached a settlement involving conditions of approval requiring a 1.5-metre opaque screen around the east and west sides of the third-floor deck, standard tree permit requirements and construction substantially in accordance with plans filed with the board.

Planner **Martin Rendl (Martin Rendl Associates)** provided evidence on behalf of Corkill in support of his appeal. He testified there are examples of similar three-storey flat-roofed houses within very close proximity to Corkill's property and the requested variances are within the range of other approvals already granted in the neighbourhood. Overall, Rendl said the application met the four required *Planning Act* tests.

Neighbours **James Yakimovich**, **Francis Wong**, **Peter McHugh** and **Yvonne Schiks** attended the hearing in opposition to the appeal. They expressed a range of concerns with the proposed development including height, massing, loss of privacy, multi-family occupation, flooding and overlook.

The board agreed with the neighbour's concerns regarding the third floor deck, finding it will be neither desirable nor minor in nature. Consequently, the board refused this variance.

The board agreed with Rendl's evidence that there was ample precedence within the neighbourhood supporting the remainder of the requested variances, and allowed Corkill's appeal in part, with conditions.

Solicitors involved in this decision were **Ian Flett (Eric K. Gillespie Professional Corporation)** representing Andrew Corkill and city solicitor **Tom Wall** representing the City of Toronto. [See OMB Case No. PL160412.] [nru](#)