

**FIRST MEETING OF THE JOINT CORRIDOR DESIGN EXCELLENCE WORKING GROUP**

**Monday, January 24, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.**

**Participants**

**Community**

Councillor Paula Fletcher  
MP Julie Dabrusin  
MPP Peter Tabuns

**Lakeshore East**

**Community Advisory  
Committee**

Shelley Kline  
Rosemary Waterston  
Paul Backewich

**Tiverton Avenue**

**Community Advocate**  
Alex Bielecki

**City of Toronto**

Richard Borbridge  
David Burns  
Renita D'Souza  
Josephine Yung

**Ontario Line**

**Technical Advisors  
(OLTA) / LURA**

Celia Johnstone  
Klaudia Biala  
Paulo Faria

**Metrolinx**

Malcolm McKay  
John Potter  
Mark Clancy  
Andre Marois

**Other Participants**

Rachel Jorritsma  
Katiana Moussa  
Rob Kaufman  
Kyle Poole  
Liz McHardy  
Sayan Sivanesan  
Jennifer Ujimoto  
Anthony Irving  
Greg Barley  
Josette Chen  
Daniel Cicero  
Daryl Finlayson  
Catherine Deegan  
Jenan Nasser  
Douglas Jackson  
Julia Murnaghan  
Michael Bielecki  
Jennifer Storey  
Tina Fernandes  
Norando Brown  
M. Quinn  
Jennifer

**AGENDA**

Welcome - Mark Clancy  
Land Acknowledgement - Mark Clancy  
Safety Moment - Mark Clancy

**Metrolinx Presentation to Committee Members**

- Joint Corridor Procurement Packages - John Potter
- Design Excellence - Andre Marois
- Joint Corridor Design Principles - LURA Consulting

- On-Line Survey Results
  - Retaining walls, noise barriers and landscape design proposals
  - Metrolinx Graffiti Management Strategies

Round Table (All)

## **Metrolinx Presentation Highlights**

### **Rosemary Waterson's CAC Opening Statement:**

" According to the terms of reference agreed to by Metrolinx, our Community Advisory Committee is supposed to provide input on elements along the rail corridor that will affect our community. We've been meeting with MX for four years about the RER and, more recently, about the OL. The CAC wants to be on the record as continuing to object to building the Ontario Line along the elevated rail corridor through Leslieville/Riverside. Metrolinx has not fulfilled the promise made to our community or multiple requests from Toronto City Council to sincerely consider the option of putting this 1.5 km section of the Ontario Line underground. The Ontario Line will have an enormous impact on our community's health, safety and well-being. Our CAC is ready to provide meaningful input into the Ontario Line design. It is extremely frustrating that we are being asked to 'consult' on the design of walls rather than the bigger picture of how this transit line could run through our community with the least amount of disruption. Metrolinx should fulfill its promise to cost out the underground route that the CAC endorses. Once given serious consideration, the benefits of this route will be obvious and well worth any minimal additional upfront expense"

- Metrolinx highlighted that they understood the construction of new transit could have both short- and long-term impact on communities.
- The working group was initiated because Metrolinx understood the benefit of insight provided by municipal staff and community groups who have knowledge of the local areas, when Metrolinx was trying to stitch a new transit infrastructure into an existing urban fabric.
- Metrolinx's objective is to apply principles of design excellence to develop a series of creative solutions for the challenges presented by the work being undertaken through the Riverside and Leslieville neighbourhoods.
- Metrolinx has worked with the City of Toronto to develop a series of design concepts for retaining walls, noise barriers and landscape into the detailed design proposals.
- Three (3) procurement packages are involved in this part of the work:
- Package One
  - DXWG to review retaining wall and bridge abutment surface finishes, noise barrier specifications, and underpass lighting.
  - DXWG to determine extent of removals (existing retaining walls/infrastructure etc) along the existing parks/playgrounds.
  - The deadline for DXWG input into the package one design is February 21, 2022.
- Package Two
  - DXWG to determine design for park remediation, underpass and streetscape enhancement, tree and vegetation strategies, embankments, terraces and park furniture.

The deadline for the finalization of the package two design scope is mid 2022.

- Package Three
  - The scope includes the construction of the new stations at Queen Street and Gerrard.

DXWG input will be sought to achieve the following design objectives:

- Minimize sound impact of passing trains
- Minimize visual impacts of noise and retaining walls
- Protect existing trees
- Start planting early to accelerate benefits
- Maximize vegetative screening
- Focus on low-maintenance, all-season vegetation
- Consider connections
- Enhance safety and security
- Enhance existing character of neighbourhood
- Establish a visually cohesive identity for the Ontario Line

### **Discussion Highlights**

- Councillor Fletcher noted that people in the community clearly wanted an underground solution. She requested that retaining walls and noise walls meet City standards. Her second request was to ensure that residents are consulted and their expertise was made use of.
- Rosemary Waterston stated that the community should be able to hear the meetings. She also wanted Metrolinx to understand the community objected to the Ontario Line running above ground through Leslieville. The residents want very much to be part of the process.
- Shelley Kline expressed her opinion that the DXWG group should be open to the community, not just to invited guests. She believed that the community should be asked what it wants and what are the larger goals of the community. The community needs livability at the end of the day.
- John Potter explained that the committee is designed as a working group and in order for people to be involved in that way, the numbers need to be limited. Metrolinx wants the members to be fulsomely integrated into the process.
- The purpose of the questionnaire was to create a starting point for these workshops.
- Councillor Fletcher requested the City to review the design to see if it is the most creative look for a city design.
- Members asked about the budget for the project. They stated there was not much point in the committee making suggestions if the budget would not allow it. If there were limits to the budget, they should be known at the beginning.
- MPP Peter Tabuns asked for confirmation that the slide deck would be made available to the community. He added that if the budget was low, it would not be very promising. He requested there be flexibility built into the budget.
- Catherine Deegan expressed concern that they were already at the design stage when other things were not worked out yet. The design survey did not reflect what people think. There was not enough time for the survey. The process did not feel right.
- Councillor Fletcher stated the need to know the specifics of the materials, how they hold up to noise and wondered if that information was available.

- John Potter advised that information could be given. He suggested Councillor Fletcher send him an email to ensure it would be done.
- Counsellor Fletcher responded her verbal request should result in receipt of the information.
- John Potter responded the specs could be provided for the group to consider. Metrolinx is looking for ideas to be brought forward about how the ordinary could be made better, from a design standpoint.
- Rosemary Waterston stated the committee should be looking at many designs because the areas are very different. From a noise standpoint, they want the very best possible.
- John Potter stated the point that decisions should be made about the retaining walls first, because they are associated with deadlines. He added it was important for the committee to think about how they could include the thoughts of residents who would be affected.
- Alex Bialek stated the importance of working backward from the budget numbers.
- Rosemary Waterston stated they could not liaison to all in the community.
- John Potter reiterated that a small group was best for the work to be manageable, but he saw the small group as the community representatives. He recommended that when weather permitted, they could do a walking tour with the stakeholders. Metrolinx has done a lot of research into noise remediation. They have specs for noise barriers along parks and retaining walls. He noted the importance of landscaping to hide the wall. He saw the appearance of the sound walls and the retaining walls as what needed to be focused on for the February 21 deadline.
- Richard Borbridge stated he saw his role as being to engage and to challenge the decisions made by Metrolinx. He expected to bring to the group a lot of perspective and would be looking for best practices and seeking the best solutions. He was also here to listen and to push Metrolinx to achieve those ends.
- John Potter advised that the package one work has deadlines that must be met. The package two work would be less constrained. He continued that the committee could not determine the height of the walls but would focus on their look and feel. The noise and vibration mitigation as well as the visual impacts were important.
- Rosemary Waterston noted that people go to park and no one wants to see the trains.
- John Potter answered that was the point of building the walls higher. Planting of vegetation was a strategy to assist with adding to the visual impact.
- Mark Clancy suggested setting weekly or bi-weekly meetings and recognized it was a large commitment for the group members.
- A group member suggested holding the meetings later in the day than 4:00 p.m.
- Mark Clancy agreed the meetings could be held at 5:00 or 6:00 p.m.
- Rosemary Waterston requested the committee be engaged more in discussion at the next meeting.
- John Potter responded that the committee would be asked to share their design ideas with Metrolinx and design consultants would help the committee give form to their thoughts.
- Shelley Kline expressed concern about Metrolinx's lack of knowledge of what the community wants and saw this process as exacerbating the problem. She believed experts in the community should be allowed to join the committee to know what the community thinks.
- Rosemary Waterston added that the committee would not be the scapegoat for Metrolinx.

- Mark Clancy invited committee members to send him suggestions.

In closing, John Potter introduced members of the technical advisory team that the committee would be working with:

Urban designer Klaudia Biala, architect Celia Johnstone, Jennifer Ujimodo and Paulo Faria, a talented transit designer. He added that the group represents fine talent that have been working with Metrolinx on this project.

### **Next Steps**

The next meeting was scheduled to commence on Monday, January 31 at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting will focus on how to meet the February deadlines and how to take information back to the wider community.

The meeting was terminated at 5:51 p.m.