

January 5, 2022

TO: Ms. Nancy Chater
Senior Project Coordinator
Parks, Forestry & Recreation - Capital Projects
City of Toronto

RE: Market Lane Park Improvements – Comments on Design Proposals

Dear Nancy,

Please find below comments and input from the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association regarding the design proposals for the revitalization of Market Lane Park which were presented at the public meeting on November 10, 2021

St. Lawrence Market Precinct and SLMPAC – Historical context

- original design/usage concept for the park (beginning in 1967) was as a supporting space for the St. Lawrence Market (and its market vendors) and the St. Lawrence Hall
- the park is (and will be) managed under auspices of the St. Lawrence Market Precinct
- SLMPAC Strategic Plan (in preparation) will add further context to future uses for Park
- previous uses of Park:
 - farmer's market spilled into the park
 - antique market spilled into the park
 - south end used for small local food festivals, i.e., cornfest and ribfest
 - SLNA customarily used the park for its Canada Day celebration (which allowed access to indoor facilities)

Heritage themes (from presentation):

- This site has been a place of gathering for thousands of years, including through the pre-settlement era of Toronto. [Agree]
- The site is located on the former dynamic shoreline of Lake Ontario, which has been changing for millennia. [But, not clear that there is an historical shoreline through the park itself?]
- The design of the park should respond to maintain the gathering function interpreted for contemporary needs. It will reflect its former shoreline adjacency through the treatment of water in the park. [Agree]

HCD Considerations (from presentation) – [SLNA has no issue with these]

- protect the view of St. Lawrence Market from the south end of Market Lane Park
- protect the view of the Flatiron Building from the Front Street sidewalk
- the pedestrian circulation system through Market Lane Park is maintained
- park enhancements will protect the historical significant, and social/community value including maintaining circulation patterns, visual relationships, vegetation, and seating

Common Elements of the design themes (from presentation):

- maintain the existing trees – [are they as healthy as claimed?](#)
- strong Indigenous Place-Keeping presence – [agree](#)
- provide space for gathering – [agree](#)
- direct rainwater to the tree roots – [agree, see bullet 1](#)
- plenty of accessible, comfortable seating – [agree](#)
- new, level paving including an accessible route through the park – [agree](#)
- water feature – [agree](#)
- new park lighting – [agree](#)
- accommodate outdoor tents for Farmer's Market and Antique Market; as well as occasional private events – [agree, but should include public events](#)
- accommodate a service route for small vehicles (vans/pickup trucks) for market deliveries and park maintenance - not for traffic – [usage as a delivery driveway must be restricted to off-hours only](#)
- decommission the existing public art feature Return of the Magri-Stecchi – [explore opportunities to reuse/repurpose materials in the park; maintain recognition of original "well" site](#)

The Options [SLNA Commentary]:

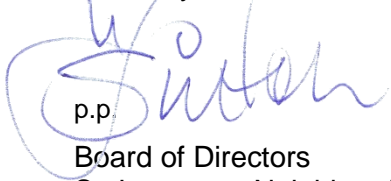
- less is more; this is a small space, start modestly
 - potential to add to the base design in phased modules
 - ensure funding identified for ongoing maintenance
- trees/plantings
 - question whether the existing trees are as healthy as claimed
 - need a solution for replacement of the few that aren't healthy, and future replacements
 - include flexible/moveable "planters"; flowers, vegetables, herbs, ...
 - incorporate seating into planter design
 - rainwater capture is important
- Indigenous place-keeping – include physical demarcation of "interpretive circle" – drum, medicine wheel, ...
 - recommend at north end; no overlap with residential face of west building
 - opportunity for indigenous public art
- water feature integrates indigenous references – prefer at south end
 - is there an historical shoreline through the park??
 - opportunity for indigenous public art
- paving – simple, consistent with Market Street; can be supportive/indicative of activity zones
- seating – flexible/movable/universal; fixed seating, if any, must allow for a wide variety of park activities
 - able to be moved into / used inside the north market
 - discourage north-south row seating

- lighting – dark sky; flexible, again to support various park activities
 - suggest catenary and pedestrian level options
 - take cues from / mirror St. James Park
- range of programmable activities
 - spill out of market/antique stalls/tents; 30 is a good benchmark
 - larger gatherings – ±100 is appropriate; design to accommodate 380 people is unnecessary
 - winter programming flexibility is important
 - permanent/flexible fire pit(s)
- wayfinding/signage
 - reflect that the park, and adjacent “attractions” are contained within, and are part of the St. Lawrence *Heritage Conservation District*

Finally, SLNA encourages and supports the involvement and co-operation of your colleagues in Urban Design and Transportation Services (and possibly others) to ensure collaboration and the maximum integration of this initiative with other related district initiatives – proposed and/or contemplated (the redesign of Front St. is one that comes to mind).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this input. If you feel that additional commentary would be helpful as this work proceeds, SLNA is more than willing to continue to engage with you.

Sincerely,



p.p.

Board of Directors
St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association



Suzanne Kavanagh
SLNA Representative for SLMPAC

cc: SLNA Board of Directors:

Ms. S. Fishleigh Mr. S. Linton
Ms. D. Patterson Ms. G. Siciliano
Ms. R. Tilson

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