

The Quilt on Weston Road Project

The Learning Enrichment Foundation (LEF) has been part of the Mount Dennis community for over 40 years. Recently, LEF purchased two properties at 1240, 1246, and 1250 Weston Road, with hopes of redeveloping them and one day calling them home.

Today we are able to present in more concrete terms the vision established by community for a multi-use building, which will offer a vibrant streetscape as well as community space on both the ground level and the first few floors. Above that, we'll be building affordable residences, many of which will have access to much needed supports through other community partners. We are in the early stages of our project and are working to develop initial concept plans to submit to the City of Toronto.

First and foremost, we have been engaging the Mount Dennis community to generate ideas to ensure the project reflects our joint aspirations for a vibrant Weston Road and reflects the community needs.

Neighbourhood Meetings

On October 6, 2021, LEF hosted the third virtual neighbourhood discussion on the Quilt on Weston Road Project and presented various design concept elements. LEF's Executive Director, Peter Frampton, hosted the event and was joined by Ward 5 City of Toronto Councillor, Frances Nunziata. Based on feedback provided from the first and second community consultations, LEF's architect, LGA Architectural Partners, and planners, Gladki Planning Associates, have been working to prepare a number of design concepts.

After presenting the design options and elements, community participants were divided into breakout rooms where they were able to share feedback and open discussion amongst a smaller group. After breakout sessions concluded, the full group gathered again to hold open discussion.

Future sessions will be hosted to continue gathering community feedback. To share your ideas or to be on the contact list for a future neighbourhood discussion, complete the poll available on the [Quilt on Weston Road Project webpage](#), or call (416) 760-2808 to leave a voicemail.

Design Concept Discussions

In the first and second consultations, the community identified priorities and determined a vision for what the Quilt on Weston Road Project could do to build a vibrant and lively community. The below information was gathered via poll during the virtual conversations and email/telephone feedback;

	COMMUNITY SERVICES	EVENT SPACE	RETAIL	CASUAL GATHERING SPACE	AFFORDABLE HOUSING	VIBRANCY OF STREETScape
NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT		2		1	3	1
SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT			1	1		1
NEITHER IMPORTANT NOR UNIMPORTANT		2	1	2	2	2
IMPORTANT	6	6	6	7	2	7
VERY IMPORTANT	8	4	6	3	7	3

LGA and Gladki Planning Associates created 3 design concept options based on what would best serve the communities vision. Certain design aspects contribute to the feasibility of offering various design elements, such as streetscape, community space, retail space, etc

Option 1

The First Option proposes 9 storeys with a total gross floor area of just under 80,000 square feet with 30% non-residential area and 70% residential. This option would have approximately 71 residential units. This option presents a moderate amount of affordability, streetscape, and greenspace, but ultimately doesn't present sufficient diversity of use. Due to the space requirements for the residential units, this option has the lowest amount of useable indoor and outdoor community space.



Option 2

The second option is 11 storeys with a gross floor area of 114,000 square feet. This option offers a 30% non-residential, 70% residential mix but due to the additional storeys it is able to offer around 102 residential units. It would present a better offering of affordability, vibrancy on streetscape, greenery on the streets, and a better diversity of use. With more workable space for residential units in the upper storeys, this option presents some opportunities for indoor and outdoor community space, however it does not meet all the priorities set by the community during past community meetings, such as community services, retail, affordable housing, and more.



Option 3

The third option has a range of 17-19 storeys, offering between 136,500 square feet and 147,000 square feet. This option would propose a 30% non-residential, 70% residential mix, but with the increased storeys the options would propose between 122 to 132 total units. This option presents the highest number of community priorities, by offering the best amount of affordability, vibrancy, greenspace, and diversity of use. With the added square footage, the design can incorporate more community areas by opening a rooftop terrace on the north side of the building. By using the additional square footage, the design is also able to add more community space and streetscape options on the ground floor.



DISCUSSION NOTES

Accessibility/ Affordability

Many participants in the Community Consultation encouraged the Quilt on Weston team to provide a higher number of affordable housing units within the building and expressed concerns about the depth of affordability that will be offered. LEF was encouraged to supply more affordable housing, below average market rent as much as possible.

At the time of the consultation, the Quilt on Weston project envisioned a minimum of 30% of residential units to be offered at an affordable rate (below average market rent); however, following the feedback received from the community, our team has decided to further explore options to ensure that the highest amount of affordable housing is offered. The Quilt on Weston is working to build affordable units for a variety of community groups (i.e., seniors, fixed income, vulnerable populations, etc.).

Participants also expressed interest in the design measures incorporated to ensure accessibility. While the project is in the early stages of design to confirm specific details, there will be design elements including accessible gardens, height of elevator buttons, and unit design.

Protection of Current Tenants and Replacement Housing Units

Many participants voiced the importance of ensuring that the residents currently living on the three properties receive housing and are not displaced by the new build. The Quilt on Weston Project team reassured the participants that tenants will be included in planning of the replacement units and relocation.

*It is important to note that both the Province of Ontario and the City of Toronto have strong policies to protect existing rental housing. In the case of redevelopment applications involving demolition, as is the case for the Quilt on Weston, these policies provide that the City may approve demolition **on condition** that the rental unit are replaced, tenants receive assistance with relocation and the right to return to the rebuilt housing project at similar rents.

Streetscape & Community Space

Participants were comforted to hear that LEF would maintain management of the property and would continue to advocate for the community. LEF's ownership will make the facilities and programs of a many community partners more accessible in the area.

Participants reiterated the importance of community services and greenspace in the heart of Mount Dennis. They expressed hope that LEF will provide facilities and opportunities to the community that would not be possible if the project were designed by a large developer.

Preserving Mount Dennis Lifestyle, History and Character

There was discussion amongst participants on preserving the historic elements of the streetscape, such as the home currently located at 1250 Weston Road. It was also noted that while this current structure provides 3 rental units, the new building would be able to provide a significantly higher number of rental units on the same lot.

Other conversations included finding ways to help support existing retail, which should benefit from re-invigorating the street and bringing more foot traffic to the area. Participants also mentioned a preference for additional streetscape options and were surprised to see that this was only viable with additional height.

Vehicles will access the Quilt on Weston via a rear laneway off of Somerville Avenue. We expect traffic coming to the site will approach from Weston Road, turn onto Somerville Avenue and then immediately enter the rear laneway. While meetings with the City Transportation department are still to happen, our team is very mindful of the residential area behind Quilt on Weston properties.