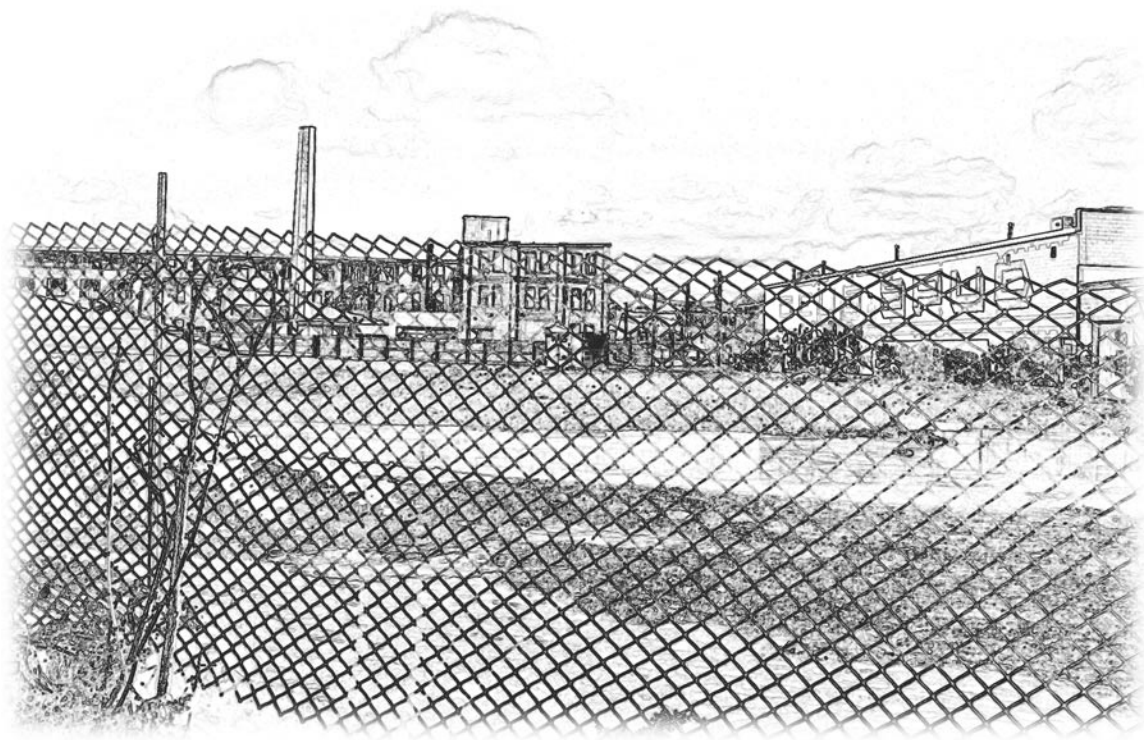




5 March 2006

The Gladstone Hotel





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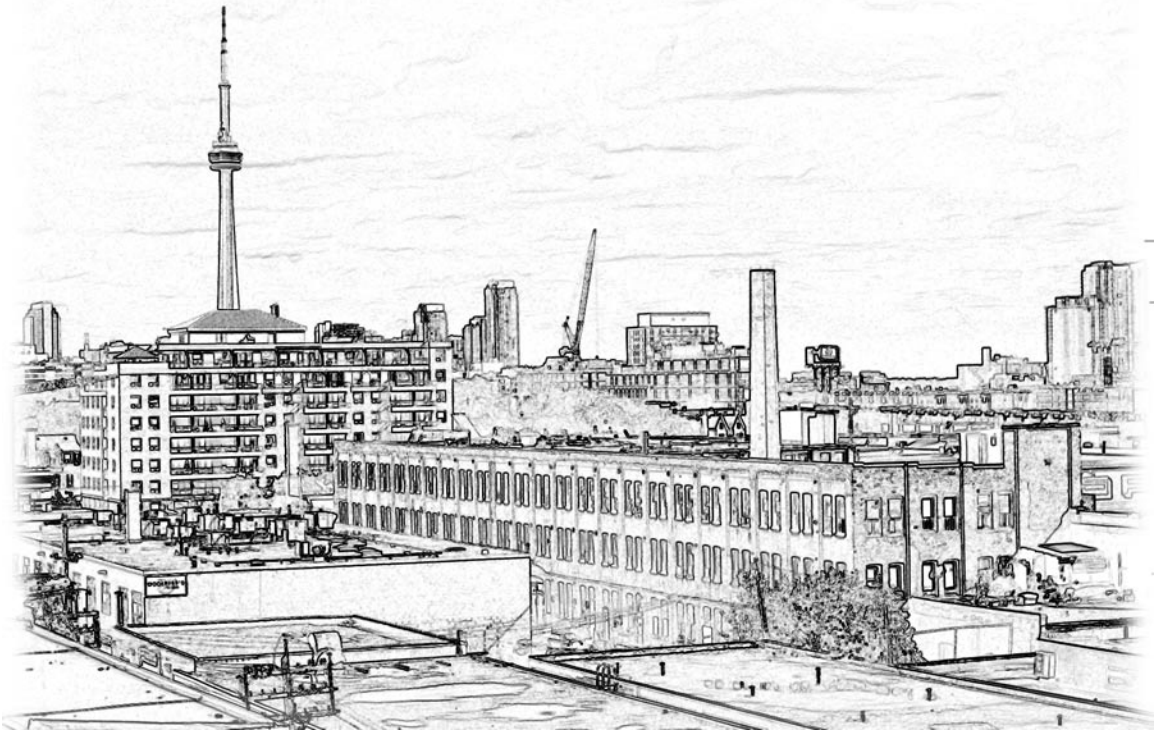
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The redevelopment of approximately 20 acres of former industrial land in the downtown of any city requires very careful consideration and planning — especially when it fronts onto what is surely that city's most important cultural street containing one of the country's most dense concentrations of artists and cultural producers.

Discouraged by the plans for the site being proposed by three developers in the Queen West Triangle, as well as with the City's alternative presented at a community meeting November 2005, a group of citizens decided to take matters into their own hands and come up with their own plan for the site.

The community design Charrette held on 5 March 2006, led by architect and urban designer Ken Greenberg (until recently serving as Interim Chief Planner for the City of Boston), was the culmination of months of meetings and community consultations and hundreds of hours of *pro bono* assistance from a stellar cast of urban planners, designers, architects, development economists, landscape architects and cultural producers across the city. This report outlines the discussions which took place over the course of that day. There was a remarkable amount of crossover and consensus which emerged among the seven groups which examined different aspects of site. Active 18 is encouraged by this outcome and will now work with architects to put these ideas into a master plan format.

Queen West Triangle Charrette

Executive Summary

Eight important ideas emerged as crucial elements to any master plan being developed for the area:

1. 48 Abell should be retained:

This historic building, currently containing 100 live/work studios, is the anchor and will set the tone for the whole redevelopment of the West Queen West Triangle lands architecturally, culturally and socially. It is the best of the industrial buildings left on the redevelopment parcels in the Triangle. It frames a remarkable south facing 'courtyard' which has the potential to become a great new public space.

2. Respect for scale and nature of Queen Street:

Queen Street along its entire length (with the exception of a few blocks in the downtown core) has a distinctive scale and character, which should be maintained. The buildings along Queen between Spadina and Roncesvalles are consistent in scale — two to four storeys high — due to a 13-meter height limit which developers have been forced to respect for decades. This also has the effect of allowing sun to penetrate for much of the year on the north sidewalk making Queen a great walking street.

Why should an exception be made on this particular stretch of Queen Street? An exemption to the existing scale would set a dangerous precedent that other developers could use as an argument to erode the nature of the street.

The fine-grain retail pattern of small storefront widths is also consistent along Queen Street, with few exceptions. This is what makes the street vibrant, diverse, and safe. It is important to preserve this scale and character on Queen in new construction. However, the community is willing to consider carefully placed higher elements — small footprint towers — in the context of a comprehensive well-thought-out Neighbourhood Plan. Unique strategies and tools must be employed (as they have been in other cities) to ensure that these characteristics are not lost when new development takes place.

3. The establishment of truly mixed-use zoning:

The zoning of the Triangle, currently light industrial with the exception of Queen Street which is mixed commercial/residential, is the foundation for the what makes this community unique: Light industrial zoning fosters the production of contemporary art & new media, commercial on Queen promotes it through galleries and performance spaces, while nearby residential provides living spaces to those who create and appreciate it. All proposed developments ask for a rezoning of this area into residential to build a homogenous mass of largely 1- and 2-bedroom condominium units. In order to promote this area's distinct character, it must be mixed-use zoning (residential, commercial, *and* light industrial). In addition, all efforts should be made to encourage mixed income residents and mixed unit sizes for a variety of resident demographics.

4. Streets and Blocks must be introduced into the site:

Now that different uses are being contemplated for these industrial lands and intensification of the site is being proposed, it is essential that a system of public streets and laneways are introduced into the site. A network hierarchy with narrow streets with a strong pedestrian character is appropriate

5. The need for green space:

A large public park, along with extensive subsidiary green-space, was identified by all and several creative solutions discussed built around the 'greenway' and multipurpose trail along the rail corridor and the south-facing courtyard behind 48 Abell.

6. A pedestrian/cycle link to the areas south of the tracks:

A public pedestrian/bicycle bridge going over the railroad tracks which would link the Queen West Triangle to King Street and Liberty Village to the south would knit these two vibrant areas together and provide a link to the waterfront. (Plans are currently underway further south for a pedestrian bridge over Lakeshore Boulevard to Ontario Place on the Jefferson axis).

7. A sustainability strategy for the precinct must be developed:

Our world and our city are currently facing an environmental crisis. There is a tremendous opportunity through economies of scale (many developers building at one time) to employ a bold sustainability strategy for the site. Such a strategy was recently employed in the Quartier International, in Montreal.

8. A high quality of design:

Could the Triangle be one of the City's test sites for the proposed Design Review Panels? This would ensure that the architectural quality of this historic neighbourhood would be enhanced by contemporary buildings that future generations will want to preserve.

Active 18 revels in the cultural, social, and economic diversity of the existing neighbourhood. But we are in danger of losing what makes the area special. Gentrification has become vicious. Three galleries have closed in the last few months along the stretch between Dufferin and Dovercourt (one replaced by a Starbucks) due to skyrocketing rents. Cultural workers are being priced out of the rental market. The tragedy is that the ultimate losers will be the people who move into the overly dense condominiums we are fighting. They are attracted to this neighbourhood by its current vibrancy. That vibrancy will be gone by the time they arrive.

Active 18 supports and welcomes new development and intensification in the Triangle, but let's make sure that what is built does not destroy this special part of Toronto.

Queen West Triangle Charrette

Organisers and Speakers

Active 18 Association

Active 18 formed in the early fall 2005 to consolidate a community voice with regard to the future of our neighbourhood. It is composed primarily of local residents and business owners. It is *not* a ratepayers association. It adopted its own constitution in January 2006 (available on our website) It currently consists of some 200 people. We are not a collective singular voice but, rather, a forum for collective voices.

Active 18 aims to reflect and focus citizen participation in urban development in Ward 18. We inform the community of its rights with the intent to steer development toward a liveable and sustainable environment that responds to the needs of the local area and the greater city at large.

We are not NIMBYS, opposed to any and all intensification and development within the area. On the contrary, we welcome creative and thoughtful development and we look forward to engaging in a thoughtful dialogue with developers and planners alike. We aim to achieve mutually beneficial results that respect return on investment while maintaining and enhancing existing cultural dynamics. As such, we insist that any development within the neighbourhood be both thoughtful and balanced and that it respects the needs and desires of *current* residents. We believe that any and all development should take into consideration the fabric, history, and current demography of the neighbourhood and, further, that planning policies should take into consideration the development of the area as a whole.

Active 18 Association Steering committee:

Charles Campbell
Brad Doner
John Ely
Jane Farrow
Michelle Gay
Dina Graser
Harry Klaczkowski
Michael Maranda
Bill Simpson
Steven Wood
Jessica Wyman
Margie Zeidler
Michel Caron (consultant)



Ken Greenberg, Greenberg Consulting

Architect and Urban Designer Ken Greenberg has played a leading role on a broad range of assignments in highly diverse urban settings in North America, and Europe. Much of his work focuses on the rejuvenation of downtowns, waterfronts, neighborhoods, and campus master planning. His projects include the award-winning Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework, the Brooklyn Bridge Park on the East River in New York, the East River waterfront in Lower Manhattan, the Vision Plan for Washington DC, Kendall Square and North Point/Lechmere Square in Cambridge, the Downtown Hartford Economic and Urban Design Action Strategy and the Downtown Master Plan for Fort Lauderdale. In each city, with each project, his strategic, consensus-building approach has led to coordinated planning and a renewed focus on urban design.

Janna Levitt, Levitt Goodman Architects

Janna Levitt, an award-winning architect, has a strong commitment to the cultural resources which her projects facilitate. She is an adjunct professor at the University of Waterloo School of Architecture and a member of the City of Toronto Public Art Commission.

Debbie Adams, Adams + Associates Design Consultants, Inc

Debbie Adams is a graphic designer with experience ranging from brand identity and print communications to environmental graphics. She is a professor of Graphic Design at the Ontario College of Art & Design., and was elected to the RCA in 2000.

Greg Allen, Sustainable Edge Ltd.

Trained at the University of Toronto and UBC, Greg Allen is at the forefront of sustainable technologies. An expert in sustainable community development, he is a provider of not only of vision, but also capacity to bring that vision to fruition.

Other resource people in attendance

David Leinster (The Planning Partnership), Michael McLelland (ERA Architects), Alex Spiegel (Context Development), Robert Sirman (National Ballet School), Vera Frenkel (Artist), and Tim Jones (Artscape).

A note of interest: All our presenters and facilitators (including the pre-Charrette SWOT assessment team) worked with us entirely pro bono. We appreciate immensely their commitment to this project. Like us, they believe that something truly extraordinary could happen in this area.



The Active 18 Charrette was the culmination of months of effort amid concerns by members of the Community related to recent development proposals.

The Charrette served as a visioning exercise for the local community to express its own expectations. The development proposals that have been submitted serve to impose a new neighbourhood into an established neighbourhood with a distinct cultural character. The Charrette was an opportunity to facilitate, shape, enhance and integrate the whole neighbourhood, not to serve as a barrier to development. The entire membership of Active 18 looks forward to future dialogue with both developers and the City.

The Lands

The lands under consideration, known as the Queen West Triangle (Triangle, for brevity) consist of approximately seven hectares of typical nineteenth and early twentieth century railway-related industrial lands. The properties within the Triangle are primarily privately owned. The lands, which lie along the south side of Queen Street West, are adjacent to a vibrant, well established neighbourhood to the north of this major cultural artery in the core of the City of Toronto.

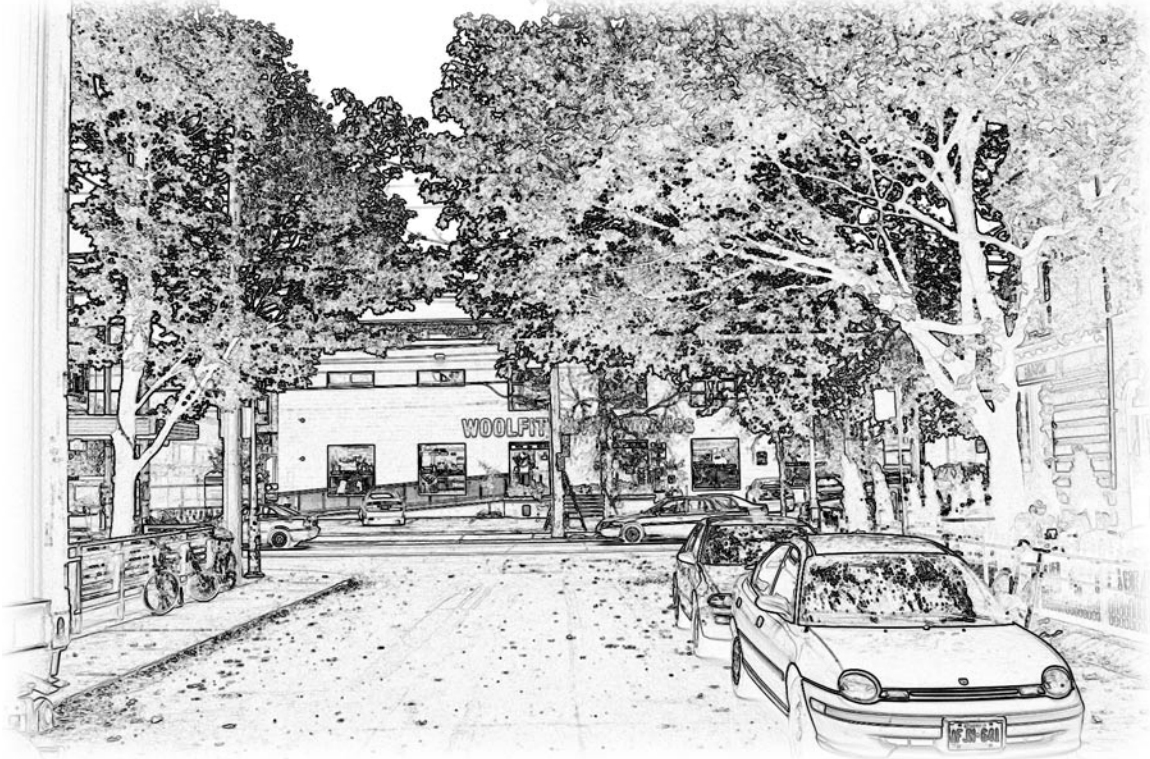
Within the Triangle itself is at least one building that houses around 100 live/work spaces (48 Abell) and several contemporary arts and culture spaces (including Mercer Union Gallery, the Toronto Fashion Incubator, and The Theatre Centre).

Proposals

Three contiguous property owners within the Triangle have now formally applied to the city for rezoning and official plan amendments. Two of the proposals are currently scheduled for pre-hearings before the Ontario Municipal Board. A number of adjacent property owners have also shown interest in developing their lands in a similar fashion.

These residential condominium-intensive proposals are seeking heights and densities much in excess of current zoning.





10:00 — Introduction

10:05 — Presentations

An Overview of Redevelopment: News from elsewhere

Ken Greenberg, Greenberg Consulting

(presentation available on the Active 18 website [www.active18.org])

Reinvention by Design: the role of design in the evolution of Queen Street

Janna Levitt and Debbie Adams, Levitt Goodman Architects

(presentation available on the Active 18 website)

How could this site become a model for sustainable development?

Greg Allen, President, Sustainable Edge Ltd.

(presentation available on the Active 18 website)

11:00 — Presentation of swot analysis

Facilitated by Ken Greenberg

(presentation available on the Active 18 website)

11:30 — Walking tour of Triangle

Facilitated by Ken Greenberg

13:00 — Brainstorming/Design Sessions

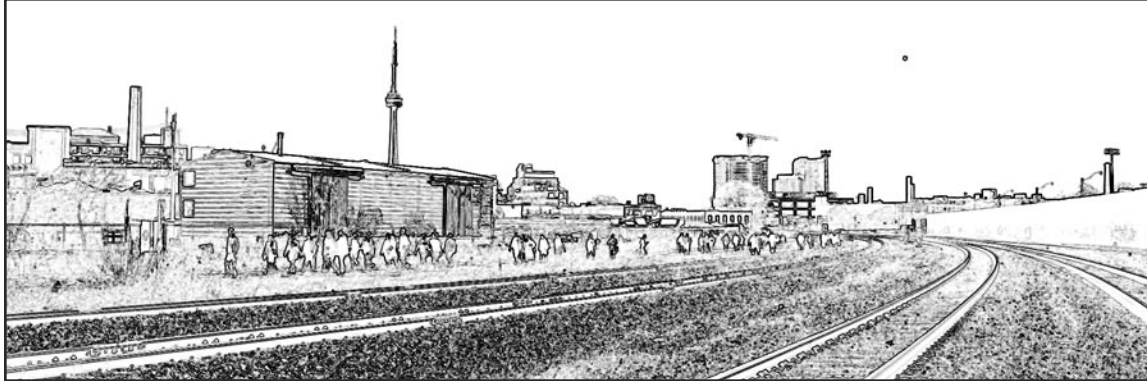
16:00 — Summary of Days proceedings

Ken Greenberg



Queen West Triangle Charrette

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Pre-Charrette swot Analyses

On 8 January 2006, a team was formed to deliberate for a whole day on the possibilities and potential of the Triangle. Led by Ken Greenberg, with additional facilitation from Active 18 member Margie Zeidler and Active 18 consultant Michel Caron, the participants of this preliminary brainstorming session included:

Ken Greenberg, Greenberg Consulting (facilitator)
Greg Allen, President, Sustainable Edge, Ltd.
Stephen Bulger, Stephen Bulger Gallery
Vera Frenkel, Artist, community resident
Siamak Hariri, Hariri Ponterini Architects
David Leinster, The Planning Partnership
Don Schmidt, A.J. Diamond and Schmidt & Co. Architects
Jeff Seider, Principal MKI (Economics)
Deanne Taylor, Video Cabaret, The Cameron House
Eberhard Zeidler, Zeidler Partnership Architects

Following an introduction to proposed developments, placed within the context of current and proposed planning policy, a team assessment of the site's characteristics was made in accordance with the area's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (swot). From this analysis, a framework for the Charrette's discussion was articulated.

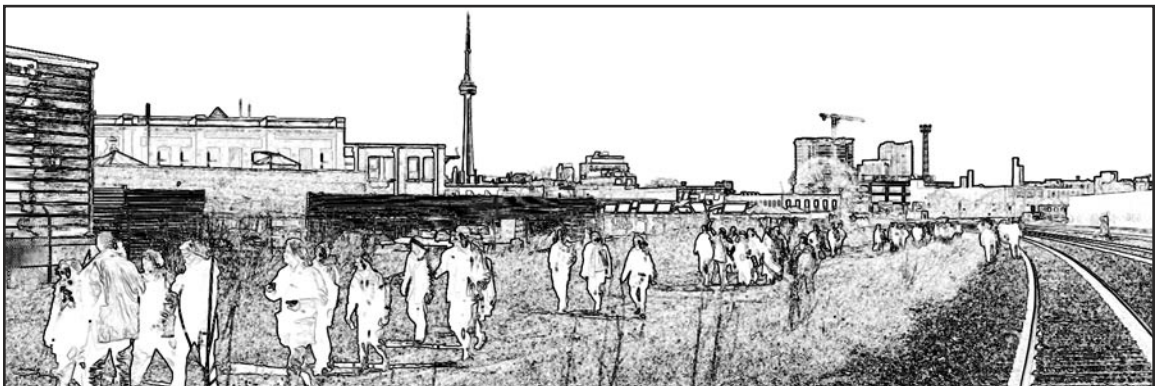
Charrette Presentation

Following morning presentations at the Charrette, the swot analysis was embodied in a presentation by Ken Greenberg. This presentation allowed participants to quickly

pick up essential notions about the site, and to immediately engage the ideas and issues considered relevant in the making of a Triangle area plan. [please refer to our website for an abbreviated version of the swot analysis]. A walking tour of the site was conducted immediately following this presentation.

Seven key themes from the swot analysis were selected as comprising the main concerns for appropriate sustainable development within the Triangle. Using these themes as organising principles, participants in the full Charrette were subdivided into seven tables to fully investigate the subtleties of the themes.

The core of the Charette was these group discussions and the subsequent development of a collective view for the area, as summarised below. Each focus group presented their primary issues to the larger group. Following each individual presentation, a larger discussion between all participants occurred.



Group 1 :: Built Form

a) Considerations of the site in full

The primary conclusion of the Built Form discussion was that a design review panel for the entire area is required.



Any development should not think of just individual sites, nor just the Triangle, but the entire area encompassing the neighbourhoods located to the north. The Triangle should not be cut off/ghetto-ized from surrounding areas.

All development should incorporate appropriate infrastructure systems.

Zoning and planning should consider the scale and overall fit of proposed developments, and not be decided solely according to density numbers. A balanced distribution of density should be located strategically towards the southern end of the site, along the railway track.

b) Development of Street Plan

Linear pedestrian pathways should be developed throughout the site, possibly using a new east-west street/lane as location from which to increase building heights. This laneway could become a 'cultural passageway' reflecting and ensuring the continuity of the creative fabric of the existing community.

There should be a distinction between a variety of streets and lanes, with distinct usages. All efforts should be made to ensure that some side streets are car-free (or car restricted), perhaps utilising cobblestones or other paving bricks that bring in the 'feel' of foot traffic. The railway greenbelt zone should be extended into the 48 Abell courtyard. Consideration should be given to the possibilities of any new intersections that are created by the extending/creation of streets.

A pedestrian bridge connecting to the waterfront along Lisgar would be really nice. Wind tunnels aren't.

Any extension of Sudbury St to Gladstone must be done in conjunction with the elimination of the Dufferin St jog. Sudbury, along the tracks, should be developed as a tree lined boulevard.

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c) Relationship of streetscape to built form

Deep building set-backs should be aimed for in order to avoid overwhelming the streetscape and casting too much shadow. Greenspaces should receive similar treatment, especially for 'signature' parks, et cetera. Queen Street frontage should relate to existing heights and grain of the northern side.

Massing should be distributed to avoid over-clustering. Transitions in scale should be a key consideration. Taller buildings should be sited strategically (see drawing, pg. 14 for proposed heights/massing).

Development of multiple points of safe access for each building/individual site (to counter a potential siege mentality on behalf of or directed towards new residents.)

Consideration should be given to elevating some buildings to allow parks, parking and/or pedestrian traffic underneath.

150 Sudbury site should not be filled-in completely, instead using spaces of varying shape to make more interesting urban spaces and allow linkages between green spaces.

d) Usage within Site

Ensure not just condominium residences — mixed use throughout site (residential, retail, and light industrial). Mixed densities within the site would also be a good thing (adding small-scale housing to taller towers).

1 to 2 storey live/work and commercial spaces down lanes and side streets would enhance networks of access thus increasing the urban neighbourhood feel. They would also reduce the impact of higher towers.

While some buildings should be preserved, new construction should not attempt to reproduce styles of the surrounding historical architecture. Architecture should be contemporary, paying homage in scale to the historic nature of Queen St W and surrounding neighbourhood.

e) One other general considerations

The creation (or retention) of practice space for performing artists would be highly desirable.

Group 2 :: Designing for Good Retail

a). Retail on Queen Street West

Queen Street already a successful retail street. Any developments should be sympathetic to the existing character, mirroring what is happening on north side of street.

Queen Street works because:

- it is a diverse collection of small commercial frontages, usually 12 to 25 feet wide. This fine-grained retail means many doors onto the street, and a variety of inviting spaces inside.
- It supports a diverse group of retailers, offering many types of spaces to inhabit and a mixture of ownership and rental opportunities.
- It is mostly independent, local businesses, a factor which adds significantly to the unique nature of Queen Street West.
- It provides frequent surprises as you walk down the sidewalk, seen in the eclectic storefronts and signage (See Levitt/Adams' presentation).



Potential threats to Queen Street included the influx of large, multi-national retailers that would take up long sections of the street. There were general concerns that the developments would cause a deterioration of the character of the street.

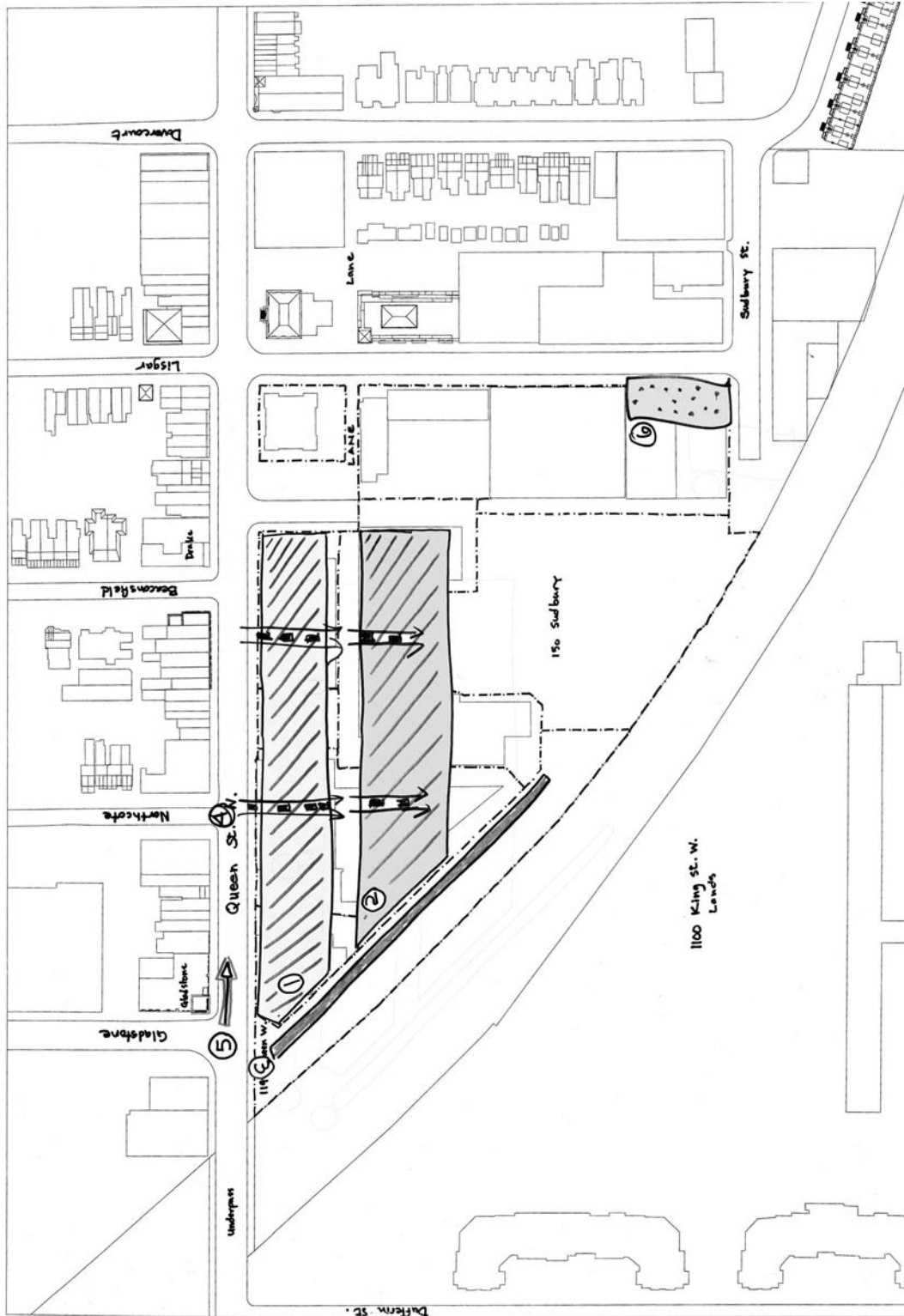
There were also concerns expressed about the integration of retail spaces into recent condominium developments across the city — here, retail gets lost in the façade of the condo, and the shops are too restricted, unable to put up interesting signage or have interesting storefronts. Retail at the bottom of condos tends to be convenience stores and dry-cleaners, amenities which service immediate condo newcomers, not neighbourhood residents as a whole.

b) Secondary Retail

There was discussion that the Triangle could support a secondary retail strip south of Queen Street, potentially fronting on a lane or courtyard. This secondary retail could provide cheaper rents that could be inhabited by art galleries and other existing businesses that are already being forced out in large numbers by rising rents.

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Designing for Retail discussion diagram, showing two different retailing strategies on either side of the E-W lane.

In order for retail to thrive away from Queen Street, it needs to have frequent connections/passageways to Queen to engage the existing pedestrian traffic.

Potential for artist live-work units with public gallery/studio space below and residential above.

Potential for a market space, similar to parts of Granville Island in Vancouver, and Byward market in Ottawa.

Secondary retail is an opportunity to come up with a new street typology that could define the character of the area.



c) Additional Points

In order to maintain the culture of Queen West, conventional retail should be able to access affordable space. Existing patterns of dimensioning, tenancy, leasehold, and ownership should be encouraged. The sale of storefronts at grade to sole proprietors in the form of condominium units would protect the fine grain of the neighbourhood.

Retail thrives on good access to all modes of transportation — pedestrian, automobile, bicycle and public transportation.

Parking is a complicated issue:

- On one hand, increased parking was seen as a good thing to accommodate more people driving into the neighbourhood. In this view, underground parking should be provided for residents and visitors and on-street parking should be available on both sides of the proposed Sudbury extension.
- To others increased parking could make Queen St. more attractive to larger franchise stores and therefore fewer local businesses. Parking therefore was seen as a potential control mechanism for the type of retail that would thrive.

We want to avoid having the retail under too much direct control of specific interests (such as a condo association, whose needs may not match those of the existing neighbourhood.)

In 5 years, the local West Queen West Business Improvement Association will be eligible for facade improvement grants. This association could provide a degree of self-governance for the local businesses.

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Small pockets of retail should be considered throughout the Triangle to provide easy access to local amenities. (An example given was the need for a local grocery store at Dovercourt and Sudbury St.)

Group 3 :: Affordability

a) Summary of general discussion

Working artists are a vital, vibrant and diverse part of Toronto's past, present and future. Certain basic premises must be acknowledged in order to retain this valuable resource for the community:

- Artists need what other working people need: an affordable home
- Artists can also have unique housing requirements: they may need open, loft-style spaces to paint, sculpt or choreograph performance. They may need soundproofing or extra storage space for their work.
- It is good civic policy to be creative about nurturing our arts scene by providing some housing stability. Nurturing city and intelligent development + Affordable housing = world class city.
- Artists are vital partners in building of a great city. To maintain a healthy arts community in Toronto we must ensure that artists have affordable spaces in which to live and work.
- In addition to their obvious cultural and aesthetic contributions to our lives, artists significantly improve the health of a city's economy. Many professional and academic studies support this fact.

Other municipal governments are recognizing the importance of helping to keep artists living IN and AROUND the city. The City of Toronto needs to develop innovative imaginative strategies to address the arts housing challenge, knitting affordable live/work situations into the larger planning schema.

Artists are often the first to populate a distressed or underdeveloped neighbourhood. If the neighbourhood becomes popular and economically successful, like Queen Street West has, rents become unaffordable for artists. (Artists are, most always, a highly educated yet low-income group.)



By offering owner-operated 'condominiumized' retail, live-work, and work spaces,

the people who ‘shape’ an area into a desirable and interesting destination (adding to the sense that we have a livable city) do not get pressured out of the neighbourhood because of high rents. This would also afford continuity within the area — affordable live and work space allows the creative class to remain living and working within the community that they originally developed.

Discussion specific to 48 Abell

Primarily, the discussion focused on 48 Abell Street as a jewel that should not be lost. The fundamental question arose: Why use public funds to knock down an existing building, to create more spaces for ‘affordable or social’ housing, when this goal is already being achieved with the 48 Abell building?



\$14 million in public subsidy would be required to build the 200 unit 19+ storey tower (\$70,000 per unit) and this will not represent the full cost of development. We can also think in terms of sustainability, asking ourselves why contribute more waste to land-fill from a tear-down project and create more concrete for a new project. “The greenest building is the building that already exists.”

48 Abell owners/developers have been suggesting that the existing tenants would be offered spaces in the new ‘social’ housing tower. It was brought to our attention that these existing artist/tenants could not be instantly granted rent-geared-to-income spaces in the new building unless they are already on the city list. In addition, the spatial needs of artists are not necessarily addressed in the proposed social housing tower. All these considerations do not take into account that the social housing aspect of the development is dependent upon receiving public funds, which is far from assured.

48 Abell owners/developers have contacted the city over many years to try to rezone the building into a legal live/work place, however, and appear to have been thwarted by the city on every occasion. The city needs to review its commitment to artists living and working needs (see list above) and possibly help 48 Abell envision a path other than the tower and condo proposals. 48 Abell could be the jewel in the crown of this area — a smartly designed live/work building for artists and small independent businesses. (The Woodward development in Vancouver is a prime example).

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Group 4 :: Heritage

a) Summary of discussion: New Heritage

That which should be preserved is the *genius loci*. Heritage should encompass more than facades (extant or imitative) and buildings-in-isolation — the entire context of the area should be considered, encompassing the structure of the space and its underlying ethos ... investigate the causes of what makes something worthy of being called heritage, not the symptoms. We have the opportunity, right now, to design, build and create *quality buildings* to last and be celebrated. Let's create something that people, in a hundred years, will fight to keep. Imitation of the past (as the Sudbury street townhouse development shows) is not a successful rendering of what new heritage building could be.

1) Small individuated units add to the character of the area — thus the aim should be to keep the grain of the new streetscape similar to the existing Queen Street West with low rise residential and commercial at street level.

2) We need to think of sun not just for retail and main streets but also for the benefit of existing spaces and local residents. Sunlight should penetrate not just on the north side of Queen but also on its south side *through* the new development. This could be cultivated by having many smaller lane-streets throughout the development, and utilising mixed heights allowing the sun to enter the new development area. An Arcade promenade on the south side of Queen may also help address its (potential) lack of sunlight.

3) The one time train station should be revived as a transit node on the way to the airport. The Dufferin bus and the Queen street car, both highly used routes, could be incorporated into the station.

4) Lane-streets and boulevards should be woven throughout new development. This would lead life *into* the development area, and open up the opportunity for pedestrian



walkways, café street life, unique independent businesses, artist's studios — all creating a neighbourhood sensibility where people will want to spend many hours of the day (which also increases area safety). A pedestrian friendly, active neighbourhood steers us away from such examples as downtown Los Angeles — no people on the streets, no small businesses, no active and welcoming street life.



Lane-streets should also perforate the space, helping to veer away from the potential gated community feel of a large block of development at the same time honouring and mirroring the existing street grid on the North side.

5) Small and independent owner-operated businesses and artist-owned (co-op?) live/work spaces are needed. Why do people come to Queen Street West? Not because of large multi-national chain stores, because of unique stores, cafés, galleries, museums. This strategy has been very consciously employed in the Distillery District. We need to foster the 'accidental economies' that happen organically. We need to think of the retail 'audience' prior to development — allowing the individuality of unique businesses to shine. Queen from University to Spadina should be taken as the cautionary tale that it is: a chain-store laden shopping mall.

6) Multi-level retail possibilities should be considered. Thinking of rue St. Laurent and rue St. Denis in Montreal, or Church Street here in Toronto, second level retail could still have 'street' presence, yet afford less expensive opportunities — although accessibility will be an issue. The Sudbury street development, with its shrunken streets, resident-only pedestrians, no commercial presence, all add up to 'no reason to go there' — there is no street life in this neighbourhood.

7) Public art should be encouraged and supported. Many new developments are bringing artists into the development at the beginning stage, not just as afterthoughts. (See the new Concordia Visual Arts building and the Woodward's building in Vancouver — artists are designing wall works that become part of the building). Use the expertise of artists by having them work directly with architects and developers.

b) Other considerations:

- Multi-storey atrium walls acting as winter-gardens, boulevard treatment of various streets, and a pedestrian bridge linking into the rail corridor/park system would all add to the future heritage of the area.

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- Pedestrian access to the water, the CNE, and linking up to other areas through walks and pathways would also be desirable.
- Allow *fertile* ground for trees so that they don't die every year, as opposed to the unsuccessful Sudbury street development (amongst many others).

Group 5 :: Arts and Culture

Summary of discussion

Current development proposals consist of a whole new neighbourhood being dropped onto an existing one without consideration of the existing character neighbourhood.

1) The city should *recognize* the Queen West Triangle as a creative district — a distinct semantic difference from *designating* it such — and that this recognition be incorporated into planning decisions, particularly with regard to zoning and usage of public buildings. The city must play a leadership role in protecting an already existing milieu (from existing working spaces such as the Great Hall to less official instances, such as the studios and live/work spaces at 48 Abell).

This recognition should be extended so that a concept of an 'arts density' already existing in the lower half of the 18th ward be understood more fully and protected.



Policies must be adopted that encourage resistance to over-gentrification — thus short-circuiting the oft-repeated cycle of artists making an area appealing to development and intensification, only to be priced out of the neighbourhood.



2) Heritage buildings should be designated for cultural use, now or when they become available. Examples posed included the old library as a public use rehearsal hall, the post office (should it be decommissioned) as a gallery.

3) A percentage of the lands under development be designated for arts use, akin to park levies. This percentage to be additional and distinct from the public

art commitment that developers must make once a project is over \$50 million.

4) There should be space for temporary public art/performance arts (e.g. around the heritage buildings; in courtyard behind 48 Abell; etc.)

5) A mechanism for artist input into the designated cultural spaces should be developed; perhaps a community committee that would deal with the use of the space. This committee could be facilitated by the City's Culture Division or a third party such as Artscape, but the community committee should not be viewed as only an advisory body.

6) The development of the triangle must include truly mixed-use zoning, e.g. more than a residential/commercial mix. There must be zoning (and real designated space) for light industrial to accommodate the production of art (not only the exhibition of such).

7) The plan for the area should be of an integrated urban design that incorporates the arts. Design reviews of potential developments would aid greatly in ensuring the quality of developments.

8) There should also be space for 'wildness' (the *version sauvage*) that allows for the organic development of local culture — that which is already happening in the surrounding neighbourhood should be nurtured and protected — not frozen through processes of artificial institutionalisation (through such practices as branding, naming, et cetera).

Other salient points from the discussion:

- the strength of the arts sector in the area is in the production of contemporary art ... not arts tourism
- there must be a focus on workspace; allowing the development of new forms and ideas
- re-establishing the train station, and improvements to public transit nodes, which would aid in retaining and improving the viability of the neighbourhood for artists
- lower density in general will help ensure artists remain a core group, not an afterthought
- retail on the south side of Queen St. makes sense; development should be kept at "human scale"; wider sidewalks along south side of Queen St.
- it may be easier to demand that certain buildings be retained for cultural use (e.g. 48 Abell) than to ask that developers include a certain minimum



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number of spaces in new buildings.

- Protecting the (potential) piazza of 48 Abell as publicly accessible space would provide a natural venue for community development/artistic presentations
- the Triangle would benefit from an opening up of the site, through widening of N/S streets, the addition of lanes and other pedestrian access points, ensuring penetration of sunlight into the area. All efforts to avoid a concrete wasteland in the shadow of south side development should be made.
- an Artscape-like building or project in the Triangle would be welcomed.

A final note: many artists in the area loath the notion of the Queen West Arts and Design district as well as existing promotions for the Arts (e.g. the 10 Live with Culture campaign) — they represent the ghetto-ization of the cultural sector to tourist attraction, and undermine the existing climate of the area.

Group 6 :: Public Space

a) Summary of discussion

As seen on accompanying area map, development should be based on the idea of extending existing streets into the Triangle. These streets should be of various levels that would connect it to the rest of the area with multiple types of streets. Retention of 48 Abell Street should be included in future plans, especially considering the massive potential of public space right in its own backyard. Shopping and strolling on Queen Street West would be enhanced with a widened tree-lined sidewalk. The inclusion of bike-lane infrastructure is paramount to encouraging a high-quality environment.

It's important to have user-friendly public spaces for vendors and events and secondary lane ways, primarily for pedestrians (although allowing for delivery and emergency access). There should be a sense of openness, similar to Liberty Village with its larger density buildings spread out which allows sunlight in that would otherwise be blocked by monolithic towers crowded together like walls.

Landscaping should be part of the neighbourhood design package from the beginning, not an afterthought. Built form and public space need to be designed to compliment each other (e.g. public space should not be compensation for built form). The horizon consists of 360 degrees!

Extension of Street network into the Triangle:

- create a continuous flow with the rest of neighbourhood.
- Sudbury Street extension should be a residential boulevard, *not* an extension of lower-Gladstone traffic (Dufferin Street Extension would alleviate this).
- Smaller blocks would break up clusters of large buildings.

Secondary streets/laneways and bike network:

- Existing laneways or lane streets would be pedestrian-ized with exceptions for deliveries and emergencies — No cars.
- Laneway east west in front of 48 Abell could be an outdoor gallery or “Art-Walk” bordered by galleries and workspaces.
- Openings from Queen Street would penetrate the site, including a public passageway through 48 Abell towards a south-facing courtyard/public square.
- A network of walkways guiding people into pleasant spaces, successively leading onto the more remote, but open and public, parts of the site.
- Designated bike lanes on Queen, Lisgar and Sudbury Streets. These would connect, via a pedestrian bridge over existing tracks and proposed rail-line trails, to the waterfront, King Street, the CNE, and Liberty Village area.

South side of Queen Street:

- The sidewalks set backs similar to those in front of the Post Office to encourage people traffic.
- Trees should be planted at different intervals along Queen, continuing down Lisgar and Sudbury extension.
- Queen Street restoration with cafés and a variety of small businesses so as not to create a sterile and lifeless environment.





- functional and aesthetic street furniture (but not the giant ad covered trash cans currently littering sidewalks around town).
- Public market on the corner by the Post office.
- Public Art in addition to the “Art-Walk”
- A small square across from Gladstone where former railway station stood (or could again) would be another asset for the area.
- Businesses catering to mixed incomes to attract diversity to neighbourhood.
- Free Wireless Internet connectivity (why not?).

48 Abell Street:

In addition to points above:

- Preserve the building as live/work space
- Insert an archway through the centre of building to south courtyard (cafés, et cetera could open onto the courtyard, encouraging public engagement).
- The courtyard should be the heart of the public space on the site. It should be an open canvas suited for multiple uses (movies projected on the walls, concerts, outdoor theatre and parkland).
- The building windows would act as eyes for the neighbourhood for public safety in the square.
- Pond, skating rink or a pavillion in the square could be possible amenities.
- Secondary laneways would provide access to the square for transport of stages/p.a. system, etc.

Sustainability/Landscaping/Land Use:

- Sustainable storm water management.
- Ecological design incorporating both built form and open space. Trees irrigated with storm water along Queen, Lisgar and Sudbury.
- An intensively planted berm beside the tracks with openings to bike trails (instead of a wall, as currently appears on south westerly side of tracks).
- Wider sidewalks on Queen, slightly wider ones along major side streets.
- Community gardens sponsored by a local community centre or food bank would enable people of different incomes to interact.
- Ensure trees are planted where they will flourish. Provide proper maintenance for their survival.
- Spaces should not be pre-programmed, but evolve organically as seen fit.

Queen West Triangle Charrette

Proceedings

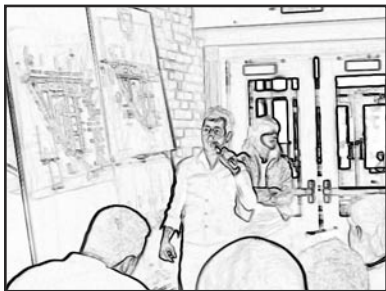
Group 7 :: Sustainability

Summary of discussion

“The greenest building is the building that already exists.” (e.g. unnecessary teardowns do not always lead to the greenest of results)

When concentrated development occurs in a short period of time we should avoid old and outmoded practices for waste management, energy generation, parking issues, etc. There are ways of tying things together and of achieving a higher level of sustainable development than if it is done in a fragmented way.

Utilising the strategy of centralization of services can unleash great potential. A plan for the area which fixes and designates where buildings are going to go opens up the possibility that between new and different buildings there are interesting ideas that economies of scale can bring to the area to minimise environmental footprints (co-generation, geo-thermal, storm-water retention strategies, et cetera).



1) Waste collection for different new buildings can be centralized so that not every building would have to provide individual waste-collection space. Developers would have a little more place to build, and this would also create a better pedestrian environment. City could finance central waste disposal spot for the area in exchange for contributions from developers; some economies of scale would also provide for this without public monies.



2) co-generation systems for the entire triangle could be developed and implemented



3) Once the plans for the area are fixed, a strategy for a joint parking area could be developed, minimizing necessary footprint and creating good savings

4) A point system for buildings which perform better could be used encourage higher standards. We should push for the city to implement such a

system in the Triangle as a test case to see if the city, and we, can get there.

6) Trees in the neighbourhood should not be considered just decorations, and any green space planned should take into account the functional aspects of canopies and single trees (pollution reduction, stormwater management, energy conservation, amelioration of heat-island effect, et cetera). The proposed city-wide bike path may be in the long-term to realization, but we can start today by doing one anyway along Sudbury, regardless of what may happen with the airport link and other planning issues in the rail corridor.

There is an opportunity to developers for market new buildings that are environmentally smart — not only would this be welcomed by the local neighbourhood (which is particularly environmentally-sensitive) but it would also be invaluable in any marketing plan implemented by the developers. Green buildings sell themselves!



The experience of the Charrette was a stimulating and informative experience. We entered into the process with a certain amount of trepidation ... were our assumptions correct, did the wider community share our feelings about desired approaches?



The ideas that were brought up were consistent with a renewed sense of what we should expect from our living environment. Of particular note is the amount of crossover in the themed discussions — the threads that tie the discussions together are easy to identify, so easy that it is not necessary to reiterate them here.



Any development of the Triangle has to take this into consideration. It is clear that a silo approach to the area is inadequate. The neighbourhood is an integrated whole, one that offers the best of the urban experience ... surprise, supportive infrastructure for high-quality life, sustainability (both socially and ecologically), mixed use and mixed residency, the appreciation of 'new heritage.' These are the hallmarks of a healthy community.



Pay attention to the ideas in this discussion: it is with these ideas, and the motivations behind them, that we can protect and enhance the very reasons that make West Queen West alluring to planners, developers, and residents alike. This document is *not* an area plan. That comes later. This document is, however, the perfect base for building one. After all, an area plan without broad community consultation isn't worth the paper it's printed on.



The *genius loci* has been identified.

Now is the time to pursue it.



