

**Grange Park Revitalization Project  
Comments Received via email following design presentation April 22, 2014:**

I attended the community open house on April 22 which provided details on the revitalization of Grange Park and was impressed with the efforts and collaboration that have taken us this far in the project. I do want to provide some small level of input for consideration. First, I wonder if the washroom facilities could not be incorporated into those of University Settlement. This would potentially lead to safer and cleaner facilities and remove the risk of the proposed public washrooms becoming a filthy, mostly unusable facility such as those in the Kensington park. The monies to build and maintain facilities in the park could be rather directed to University Settlement to offset capital and ongoing costs as would be incurred.

Secondly, I would try to avoid making Grange Park too formal and 'fussy'. It definitely needs some TLC (I especially like the program to sustain the trees) however we should be leery of changing the current organic vibe. The park needs to be informal (e.g., a blanket spread on the ground vs picnic tables, the current playground items vs newer, more narrowly focused facilities, etc.) and of course welcoming to all.

Lastly, I am marginally concerned over the use of the park as an off leash dog run. This is a current situation and I am always a little concerned for my granddaughter's safety when large dogs are running free in the park.

I am looking forward to the results of the revitalization project and applaud the efforts of all involved.

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I go to a park to relax. I can't relax if I don't have anything to lean against. Most of the seating, benches, should have backs. I could see maybe some stools or picnic tables, but most of the seating should have backs.

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Parents don't want to start a visit to a playground by saying "NO" to their children. They shouldn't have to walk past the dangerous grown-up apparatus to get to the safer young play area. It would be tempting for the little ones to want to play there. I believe the young children's play area should essentially stay where it is, functioning as an entrance to welcome families. As you go further into the park the equipment, or apparatus should get more complex.

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I attended Tuesday's session have a few additional suggestions after reviewing the proposal again in detail.

1. I did note in my written comment that I would like to see a fenced dog area included, and the Grove area south of the path could suit this need. There are no people walking dogs pictured in the "artist's renderings" so it seems dog owners are not being considered. With overall ground area gained for the park from the parking lot next to Butterfield and the removal of the brick bathrooms, there should be enough space for a moderate fenced dog area comparable to St. Andrew's at Adelaide & Brant.
2. There are also no cyclists pictured, so I'm concerned that they have not been considered either. Though we have a proposal to connect John to Beverley via a contra-flow lane on

Stephanie, if that does not get approved a lot of bike traffic will be going north and west in the park. The paths need to accommodate this.

3. Although the removal of the fence along Beverley will make the park more welcoming to pedestrians, the proposed seating/benches (page 10) look tempting for skateboarders. As do many of the other park installations. I don't have a problem with skateboarding but this doesn't seem like the right place for them. Maybe we can offer a skateboard park somewhere else nearby? e.g. The Green P surface lot off McCaul next to McCaul-Orde Park.
4. I notice that the building shadow of 50 Stephanie is being considered/projected, which is good, but what about the proposed development on McCaul from Stephanie to Grange? What is the footprint and how tall is this building proposed by the developer, and what will its shadow be?
5. A minor point but some sort of barrier to vehicles should be reintroduced at the John St entrance. I can see remnants of posts there. Although it's convenient for waste pickup and park services to drive in, twice in the last year I've seen cars (SUVs) drive right up the promenade late at night. I suspect one driver was drunk, the other nearsighted, but neither was familiar with the street or noticed they were driving in a park for a few seconds. Because it was late nobody was right there on the path but in both cases it could have been serious.

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I've been a resident of the neighborhood for only about 5yrs but in that time, I have enjoyed going to Grange Park with my dog. As it is now, the dogs meet up in the centre green space, and it has served the locals fine. Personally, I don't allow my dog off leash unless it's in a fenced in area.

The new proposal is great, I love everything except the lack of acknowledgement of the dogs who frequent the park. There are areas for all who use the park but our canine friends. The new park does not address the growing number of people with dogs who like to socialize them. As our community grows, that need will grow as well. Why not address this now when a reno is underway, rather than a few years from now at extra expense? As a responsible dog owner, I want to have a space in my park to take my dog that is safe from cars, and to keep her away from little children who can often be a temptation to chase! If the revitalization of Grange Park is to better serve the community, it should not ignore it's canine neighbors.

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Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the Grange Park revitalization plans.

Two thoughts for your consideration .

1. Consider locating the play area for the young children where it is now, not in the north east corner. This would capitalize on the current flow of families from University Settlement welcoming parents and children to the park. And... This area provides more sunlight throughout the day than the northeast corner.

2. Put a priority on play areas and all active and rest areas using materials and equipment and designs that promote all season play and use. Ensure that the park invites use in all four seasons, especially winter. A park that reflects Canada, as well as Toronto would be great. Consider showing all season designs/pictures in

future meetings to highlight the importance of the Grange Park reflecting the climate of Ontario and how adults and children can take advantage of the park year round.

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I like the park's plan however my concern is taking the gates down on the eastern side of the park, which in general is a good thing. When OCAD put in the park between Grange Road and itself it was originally grass - people walked on it, the ground became mud. A temporary plan of wide patio stones was put in and now it is bricked. I highly doubt brick was thought about during the building of OCAD. When the fences come down, people will go in all directions, for example is there any reason why they would not come in between the two proposed playgrounds? Is that expected? since people travel on various modes in the park is that ok for safety of the kids? Does that change any of the concepts? Is the desire still to funnel people down towards Grange Road or is there more than one eastern side exit?

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The park is used by a wide range of income groups including people sleeping at University Settlement can they be reflected in the drawings? will they stay longer in the park with better seating?

Once again I think it is a good plan and hope it starts sooner than later.

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Hi!

a) I mentioned to the University Settlement years ago that they need to move the homeless shelter's entrance to OUT of the park as that narrow laneway entrance/exit onto McCaul is a noisy brawling congregation point of people swearing about drugs, but to no avail.

The organizer of the homeless shelter there wants a larger away-from-park rental building completely, which would be fantastic for everyone. I did put in an email to the councillor the Univ. Sett. mentioned would be responsible, who said (right or wrong) that no such official request had been made. Nothing was done.

2) The park needs more openness onto McCaul, right through the parking lot, through OCAD parkette, for safety and transparency.

3) It needs a working water supply.

4) Perhaps a revamp would do well to extend (with additional and different funding) to the Univ. Settlement itself as it is widely used by many families and locals as a recreational centre, yet the outside layout is horrendous as far as safety (nooks and crannies), appearance, and interaction with the park (large glass enclosures looking out onto the park and providing a pleasant ambiance and light and the air of security as the community centre personnel would be able to see views of the park).

5) But in the end it is a modest people park with tai chi groups out early in the morning, dogs playing at random times, children's groups from the community centre, and ad hoc soccer playing. The right amount of upscale and community must be achieved or many of these groups of residents will find it inaccessible after decades of use and watching over the safety of the park.

6) I jogged past the ROM at night (on a multi-purpose Metro run for chicken) and saw how the open glass multi-storey layout allowed viewing from Bloor St. The AGO needs to open itself up in this fashion to the park, which is lovely and cute at night with dogs playing and great lighting as of late. Its basement studies on Beverly look fabulous from the street. The park needs more of that AGO view, but from grass. Its Dundas show windows should actually contain something fabulous, and not paper ball lanterns. This should not be Toronto's art inheritance from the AGO which has amazing Lawren Harris works upstairs and a great McCaul movie corner with Moore and nicely laid out trees. And any windows to replace some of the Ago blue panelling would be much appreciated.

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I say yes to the Grange Park revitalization plan. The plan has a three pronged core:  
The infusion of TLC, The long term care that will be given to the trees and tree cover and the fact that Grange Park will have it's own caretaker(if I got my facts right). I do like the continuous no break benches-they refit to all uses and absolute sharing is Core to their design.

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*To the committee members:*

***An excellent design for for Grange Park! We will be proud to showcase the revitalized park to neighbours, the city and indeed the world!***

***I am certain that with suggestions there will be a little tweeking here and there! But once comments/suggestions have been discussed, set target dates for construction and please get on with the job.***

**Comments/suggestions:**

***Entrance from Weston Centre : Yes! This is a safety issue! I have seen too many long lines of classes of children exit from the Dundas Street doors, make their way (walk, run,skip,straggle as children do) south on Beverley Street and into Grange Park for lunch and/or activities!***

***Lighting : Art is also the manipulation of light!***

***Soft light the historical Grange building and the "Spiral Staircase" of the AGO to give them prominence!***

***"Underlight" trees for a stunning artistic effect!***

***Lighting on the pathways and playground should illuminate downward and not radiate in 306 degrees which can glare and annoy pedestrians and residents on Beverley Street.***

**Concerns :**

***Skateboarders do damage to property. Design with that in mind!***

***Discourage bicycle riders from using the park as a short cut!***

***Make the park a "dog on leash" park. Educate the dog owners on the personal health benefits of walking their dogs and not form "coffee clubs" while their pets run free, disturbing/scaring children and seniors!***

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