

# REPORT

## St. James Town Initiative: Neighbourhood and Health

### Community Voices

#### From Evidence to Action

#### SJT Steering Group: Round Table Meeting at City Hall

November 13, 2008



## **Introduction**

Building relevant feedback mechanisms in community based research is essential to allow the sharing of information with various stakeholders including community members and policy makers. The SJT Initiative organized a meeting with program managers, planners and policy makers at the Toronto City Hall on November 13, 2008 as a part of the broader information strategy. The purpose of the meeting was to provide municipal policy makers and program delivery agents with the evidence gained from the *Community Voices* Photo Voice research project and to encourage their interest and involvement in working on recommendations arising from the project.

The members of the *St. James Town Initiative* Steering Group presented the main findings and recommendations at a City Hall Roundtable. Councilor Pam McConnell and a broad group of municipal representatives from a range of departments engaged in providing services to the St. James Town neighbourhood participated in this event. The presentation was well received and it was followed with a lively discussion. The presentation is available on SJT website ([sjtinitiative.com](http://sjtinitiative.com)) under *research and resources*. Here the main points from the discussion session are presented below:

### **1. Issue: Garbage and Recycling**

#### *Potential actions*

- a) Organize neighbourhood visits with appropriate city staff
- b) Engage building property owners from the onset
- c) Partner to organize public forums on new programs
  - i. Organics collection
  - ii. In-unit recycling

#### *Challenges*

- Raise awareness among newcomer residents about City of Toronto litter hotline

### **2. Issue: Parks and Green Space**

#### *Potential actions*

- a) Work with city staff on current plans for beautification of existing city park
- b) Look at possible interventions throughout St. James Town for improved lighting and green space amenities
- c) Look at possibilities for putting up signs e.g. no feeding of pigeons etc.

#### *Challenges*

- Most of the land within SJT is private. The city can use bylaws to help enforcement

### **3. Issue: Bicycle Parking**

#### *Potential Actions*

- a) Work with city staff to develop an audit of bicycle parking needs in St. James Town

b) Make recommendations to property owners about installation of safe bicycle parking  
*Challenges*

- Most of the land within SJT is private. Engage landlords and property management to agree to initiate programs and implement the changes

#### **4. Issue: Building Improvement and Maintenance**

##### *Potential Actions*

- a) Work with the new building audit process to ensure public awareness of the program
- b) Work with St. James Town residents and city staff to prioritize some building code and by-law enforcement issues

##### *Challenges*

- To inform and encourage tenants to register complaints
- Make relevant city phone numbers and emails readily available as well as information about the complaint process in various languages

#### **5. Issue: General**

##### *Potential Actions*

- a. Private versus Public Space
  - i. The city will provide a map of St. James Town showing who owns what
  - ii. The working group and the Wellesley Institute will work with city staff and the Councillor's office to engage the property owners in implementing changes that will make the community a healthier, more beautiful place to live
- b. Public Awareness
  - i. All stakeholders need to work together to develop and expand public awareness programs in St. James Town regarding tenants' and property owners' rights and responsibilities, as well as access to health services and healthy lifestyles
- c. Mayor's Tower Renewal Project
  - i. The working group and the Wellesley Institute will work with city staff and TCHC to implement a community engagement plan so that the Tower Renewal Project can have the maximum impact on the St. James Town community as a whole
- d. Other Community Services
  - i. The St. James Town Initiative will use its website and other forms of outreach to inform residents about other services and engagement program that the city has in the community

**St James Town Initiative  
Round Table Meeting  
City Hall  
November 13, 2008**

List of City Staff members

- 1) Pam McConnell     City Councilor
- 2) Angela Stea         Planner, City Planning
- 3) Brian Waterman     Supervisor, Regent Park South Community Centre, Parks Forestry & Rec
- 4) Cathy Tersigni     Community Health Officer, Toronto Public Health
- 5) Chris Brillinger     Executive Director, Social Development, Finance & Administration
- 6) Fiona Skurjat        Supervisor, Investigation Services, Municipal Licensing and Standards
- 7) Gerry Martell        Manager, Operational Support, Solid Waste Management Services
- 8) Glenn Gustafson     Executive Assistant to Councillor McConnell
- 9) Kim Quade            Labour Market Manager, Downtown Toronto Social Services
- 10) Mark Hawkins       Supervisor, Parks, Parks Forestry and Recreation
- 11) Nancy Evans        Operating Unit Manager, Toronto Community Housing Corporation
- 12) Rosemary Foulds    Policy Development Officer, Shelters Support and Housing
- 13) Sean McIntyre      Constituency Assistant to Councillor McConnell
- 14) Shari Kamali        Manager, Downtown Toronto Social Services
- 15) Susan Kitchen      City Planning
- 16) Tona Robis          Director, Downtown Toronto Social Services

## Pictures from City Hall



SJT Initiative Steering Group with Councilor Pam McConnell at City Hall. Round Table Meeting, November 13, 2008.

