



Event Summary: December 2, 3, 4, 2010

For three days the Mississauga Seniors Centre gymnasium was transformed into an open design studio where almost 500 members of the public were joined with our team of staff and consultants to develop a vision for the Lakeview OPG lands.

Together we examined the study area with respect to the following four themes:

URBAN: This session was about the urban fabric of Inspiration Lakeview. What should the future urban fabric look like? What pattern of streets and blocks will connect it to the rest of the City while creating the desired atmosphere and development opportunities? How tall should the building be and where should they go? Can these themes contribute to the overall sustainability of the site?

CULTURE: This session was about the culture and activity at Inspiration Lakeview. What types of places and programs should there be to bring people together from all ages, genders, abilities, cultures, orientation and beliefs, and where should they go? What are the opportunities for cultural tourism? Can these themes contribute to the overall sustainability of the site?

BLUE: This session was about the main feature of the site – the water and how best to highlight it. Where is the water's edge? How can we create more access to the water by bringing it into the site? What happens at the water – vibrant urban spaces, passive natural spaces, or both? How do we get on or in the water? Can these themes contribute to the overall sustainability of the site?

GREEN: This session was about the opportunity of the site to create significant public open space. How should we shape the system of parks and open spaces? How much should be natural? How much should be programmed? Can streets be part of the green space network? Can these themes contribute to the overall sustainability of the site?

On Thursday and Friday afternoons we spend two hours in two teams, tackling each of the four themes with sketches and lively discussion. Then the groups came together around the model to test the ideas in 3-D. Each afternoon the model evolved further based on the work and comments of everyone involved.

On Thursday and Friday evenings we gathered again to step back from the details of the site and be inspired by international experts on a variety of topics.

On Thursday evening Erik Freudenthal, Head of Communications at the unique sustainable development in Stockholm: Hammerby Sjostad, spoke about that City's

challenge to build a new community on a brownfield site that was 50% more sustainable than other typical developments. Now that the former industrial lands have been occupied for a number of years (although development is still ongoing), they have determined that they almost reached their goal: energy use, water use, carbon production are 40% lower than other developments initiated at the same time. Erik showed examples of a number of interesting technologies that contribute to that reduction including a vacuum waste system, district energy heating using waste heat from the waste water treatment plant and garbage incineration plant, and treating stormwater runoff in open landscaped channels, among others.

On Friday evening the focus shifted to how culture and parks can contribute to the sense of place at Inspiration Lakeview. Gail Lord, President of Lord Cultural Resources spoke about how cultural capital can be created. She listed 7 “ingredients”: 1) Vision; 2) Leadership; 3) Content; 4) Architecture; 5) New Knowledge for New Publics; 6) Global Connections; and 7) Timing. Using examples of cultural renaissance projects from around the world, Gail demonstrated how having an idea and a champion are key to the success of any major (or minor) project. The project also has to be relevant in its content; a great building alone will not guarantee long term success. She also spoke about recognizing that the consumers of and contributors to culture are changing, particularly in a place as diverse as Mississauga and how any project should be aware of its potential audience here and around the world. Finally Gail stressed the importance of timing. With a project as long term as Inspiration Lakeview there are opportunities to put the site on the map immediately by using the asset of space (of which our study area has plenty!) to host large, temporary, international events. A major permanent cultural facility may indeed come in time, but in the short, or medium terms such events as an international floral exhibition can help the area to define its own culture.

Matthew Urbanski, a principal at Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates Landscape Architects Inc. in New York City, presented examples of waterfront parks his firm has been involved in, mostly involving former industrial sites. The clear themes Matt’s examples all shared were the need to address both the city side and the water side of the parks in different ways and to be aware of the experience of moving through the park. He showed that with innovative design seemingly incompatible features can achieve harmony side by side, such as a skateboard park, carousel and café. Matt also emphasized the importance of planning at the outset for the ongoing maintenance of these exceptional spaces.

On Saturday our team spent the morning pulling together the model to reflect the many opinions and ideas we heard over the previous two days. The early workings of a truly collaborative vision were presented on Saturday afternoon at a presentation attended by MPP Sousa, Mayor McCallion and Councillor Tovey as well as over 100 members of the public.