

# EVENT REPORT

## Sam Lawrence Park Master Plan

*Jane's Walk*  
Walking Tour  
May 4, 2019



mbtw group inc.



Hamilton





# Sam Lawrence Park Master Plan

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### 1.0 Introduction

On May 4, 2019, City of Hamilton, Landscape Architectural Services (LAS) hosted a “Jane’s Walk” through Sam Lawrence Park. Starting at the west parking lot, the group proceeded on a guided tour throughout most areas of the park. The tour guide, John Vandriel (LAS), presented information on the history of the park, the escarpment and posed questions about what the tour attendees think about the park and what changes they might like to see. Approximately 25 people joined in on the tour. **A copy of the tour notes is included in Attachment A.**

*Thank you to all attendees for taking a chance on the weather!*

### 2.0 Summary of Attendee Comments

The following is a summary of comments noted during the tour:

1. *Please keep the Project Bookmark Canada plaque in its current location; the specific location is significant to the text (poem).*
2. *Why don't we designate a portion of the upper lawn as a dog park? So many people use it for that currently.*
  - a. Response: We want to first carefully consider what we want this park to be / look like in the future. The City aims to have designated, fenced-in dog parks in each ward. If we fence a certain area, it will become a mud run. Do we want that look / use in this particular park, particularly one that's a considered a signature park with landscaped areas?
3. *Do NOT put in a dog park here.*
4. *Consider including interpretive signage along the escarpment rock face that pinpoints the exact rock formations and when they were formed.*
5. *Has there been any consideration to put a playground in the park?*
6. *Could a children's play area be incorporated into the upper east open area? It is well protected and out of the way.*
  - a. Response: The inclusion of a playground has been mentioned in other engagement platforms. The project team will be considering this during the evaluation of different design elements.
7. *City should consider putting in a restaurant in the park. Precedent: Queenston Park, Niagara on the Lake.*
8. *If the area used for off-leash dog walking will be changed/redeveloped, it will be missed. There are a lot of people (and dogs) who use it.*
9. *A lot of people use the park for on-leash dog walking – people always there, in all weather.*
10. *Pet waste is an issue. People don't scoop and/or the few litter containers overflow. Could the City provide bags and better disposal for off leash areas (if there continues to be one) and other areas of the park where people walk dogs on-leash?*
11. *There is nothing wrong with the main intersection, it works well. Why spend money on this intersection when you could put all the money into park improvements? What do you need the median for?*
  - a. Response: The City is looking at whether there are opportunities to make the intersection safer.
12. *Music events in the park should not use amplifiers. Very loud music is not welcomed by the neighbourhood.*

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13. Public washrooms are not a good idea as it will attract undesirable activities. It will be constantly vandalized, needing repairs.
14. People don't stay in the park long enough to have to use a washroom. During events they could bring in pot-potties.

# Attachment A

## Walking Tour Notes

## 1. WEST PARKING LOT: INTRODUCTIONS

- Introductions
- Background on Jane's Walk events
- Identify any accessibility issues
- Explore the history of the park, where it's at today, and discuss where we want to go with this site
- Explanation of the Master Plan project
- Participants encouraged to solicit feedback during the walk:
  - o Interesting points
  - o Anecdotes / stories / experiences of using the space

## 2. FAR WEST END: PARK HISTORY

- Quarry site
- Founding of the park
- Landscape Architect K. Matt Broman original park Master Plan
- Park components: stone walls, gardens, interpretive signage, expansive lawns
- Park underwent another upgrade in the early 1990s, but hasn't been updated since then
- Today, many of these park components are in need of repair, some at the end of their life cycle

## 3. VIEWING LOOKOUT (AT FLAG POLES): PARK'S CHARACTERISTICS

- Park is most famous for its views
- Park is popular with tourists and visitors from out of town
- Niagara Escarpment geological landform
- Low points here are due to the remnants of aggregate extraction from the former quarry
- History of Hamilton's urban development over the centuries

## 4. ABANDONED WATERFALL FEATURE / JOLLEY CUT

- Waterfall was a feature planned during the first design,
  - o Meant to emulate the 'city of waterfalls'
  - o Went as far as constructing concrete walls, then had to be abandoned due to slope failure
- Jolley Cut / Traffic Island
  - o Meant to alleviate traffic turning left and right, also for those heading into the Concession Street shopping district
  - o However, the configuration of the street fragments the park
  - o The Jolley Cut itself, fragments the park into different spaces, leaving certain areas like the island and the area where the park sign is located as being very underutilized.

## 5. DISPLAY GARDENS

- Perhaps the other most notable characteristic of the park
- Originally display gardens had a heavy emphasis on annuals
- The 1990s park upgrades shifted to more of an emphasis on perennial plantings
- A push for more native plants
- Exposed rock face allows for teaching / learning opportunities for geology students

## 6. UPPER LAWN AREA

- Used primarily for dog walking these days
- The space is accessible by one way in, one way out through the display gardens... The Jolley Cut really divides the park and that is evident here.
- The original design called for a pedestrian bridge over the Jolley Cut.
- The idea of connecting this space with Concession Street is now back on the table in the recent discussions

## 7. ESCARPMENT PATHWAYS

- Pathways are another defining characteristic of the park (against the Niagara Escarpment)
- Slope stabilization is an issue
- Failing walkways (including one closed to the public) as a result of safety concerns, spurred the need to investigate and ultimately conduct a Master Plan of the site.
- One of the only spaces in Hamilton where you can fully access the rock face and observe the geological formations of the Escarpment