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CDNS 5403

Sustainable Heritage Case Study

Class Presentation

Nov.24, 2022

Community Responses to Urban Development Pressures

Amplifying Indigenous and
Newcomer Oral Histories in Toronto,
Ontario

Parkdale, Regent Park, Victoria Park, and Agincourt Neighbourhoods)



Top left: Parkdale, top right: Regent Park, bottom left: Victoria Park, bottom right: Agincourt (Block by Block)

Description

- Participatory multimedia program
- Led by Toronto Ward Museum
- Collects and interprets oral histories from Indigenous and newcomer community members in Agincourt, Parkdale, Regent Park, and Victoria Park
- Responding to development pressures in each neighbourhood
- The project “preserved and animated stories of migration, settlement and civic life” (Block by Block).



Map highlighting the 4 neighbourhoods which are part of the project. (Block by Block).

Toronto Ward Museum

- Registered charity in Toronto
- Named after The Ward, a former neighbourhood in Toronto where immigrants commonly settled in the late 19th and early 20th century (now the Discovery District)
- TWM aims to be “a cultural institution that strengthens our understanding of immigration history through innovation in interpretation and public engagement” (Toronto Ward Museum).



Photograph of The Ward (Toronto Ward Museum)

Rights Holders and Stakeholders

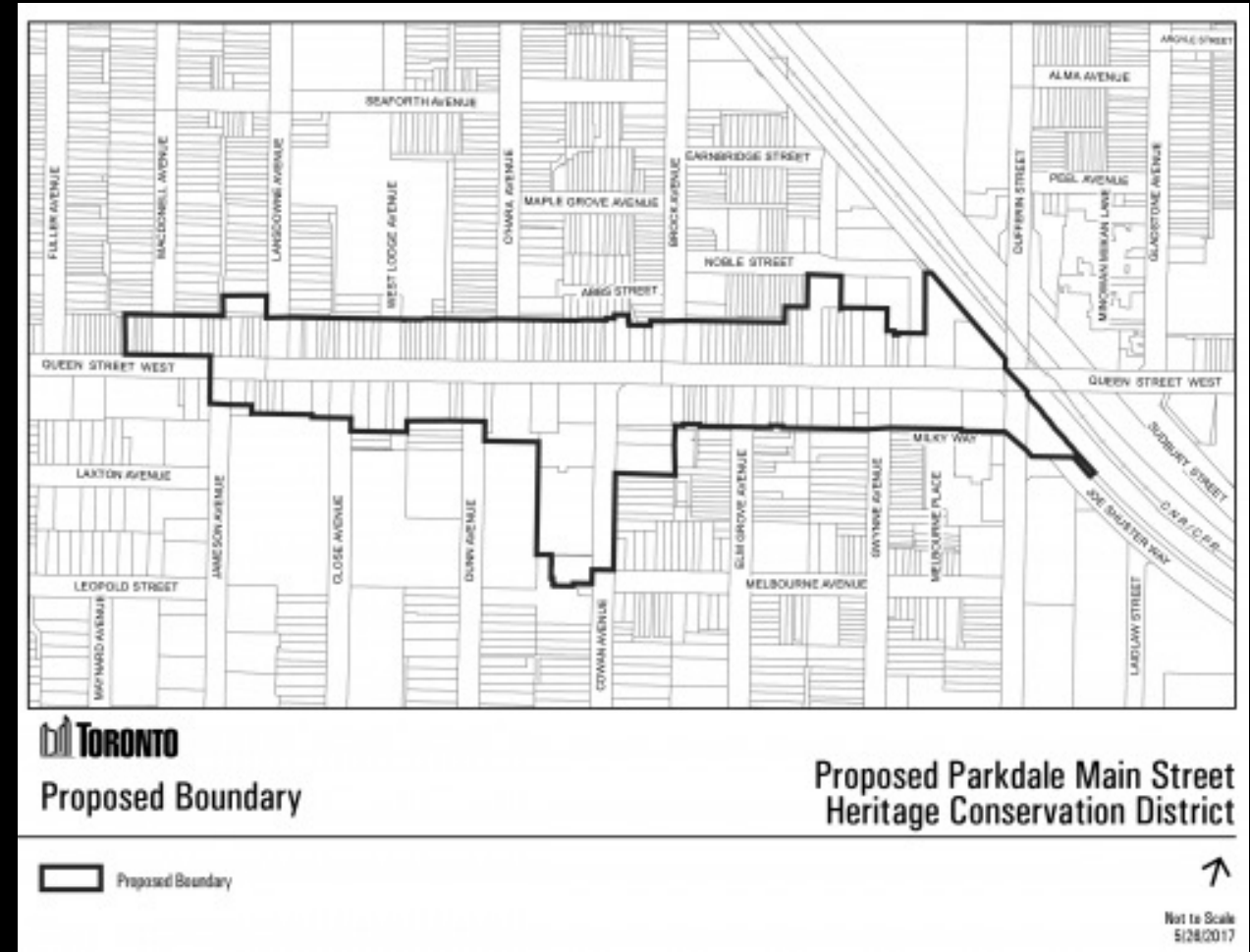
- Rights Holders:
 - neighbourhood residents
 - Indigenous nations: the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples (Treaty 13 and Williams Treaties)
- Stakeholders:
 - Toronto Ward Museum
 - 10 program partners
 - 3 funders
 - 100 storytellers
 - Countless staff and volunteers who took on different roles in the project

Timeline

Date	Event
2017	Stories collected for first Block by Block project
September 2017	Block by Block exhibitions in Vancouver, Montreal, and Toronto
2019-2021	Stories collected from Agincourt, Parkdale, Regent Park, and Victoria Park neighbourhoods
October 2019	2019 exhibitions for each neighbourhood
August 2020-November 2020	Block by Block: Stories of migration, life, and change in four Toronto neighbourhoods
August-November 2022	Searching Beyond Archives: Block by Block Exhibition

Natural/Cultural Heritage

- Emphasis on cultural heritage
- Parkdale Main Street HCD Plan adopted by Toronto City Council July 2022 , establishing Parkdale Main Street Heritage Conservation District (City of Toronto)
 - Provincial designation
 - Does not encompass all of Parkdale
- No other heritage designations
- The cultural heritage of these neighbourhoods lies in the physical places and the stories/histories



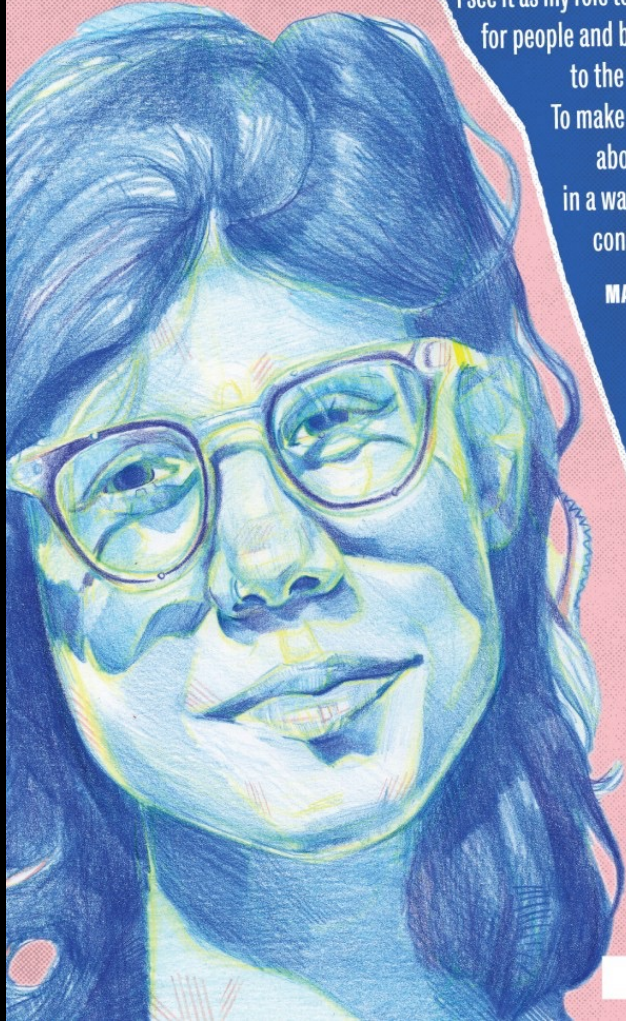
Proposed Parkdale Main Street Heritage Conservation District (City of Toronto)

“

When I got to journalism school,
it immediately clicked.

I am guided by my conscience.
I see it as my role to connect the dots
for people and bring something
to the conversation.
To make people think
about an issue
in a way they haven't
considered it before.

MANISHA, PARKDALE



WARDMUSEUM.CA

Relationship between place and (personal, family, and community) history



Left: Graphic with quote from Manisha Krishna, resident of Parkdale. Right: Photograph of Manisha (Block by Block).

Sustainability

- Environmental: Massive urban development pressures in the area. By drawing attention to those who are already living in these neighbourhoods, the project promotes urban revitalization.
- Social and Cultural: Gentrification. Preserves cultural heritage through stories, also maps cultural networks within each neighbourhood
- Economic: Draws attention to the impacts on low-income communities.

Assessment / Measurement

- **SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities**

- advocacy for and by the migrant and Indigenous communities, especially those who are low-income households, within these neighbourhoods

- **SDG 11: Sustainable Cities**

- project highlights Regent Park residents advocating for neighbourhood revitalization and opposing gentrification which is pushing people out

Top: SDG 10 graphic, bottom: SDG 12 graphic (Barcelona institute for Global Health).



**Reduce
inequality
within and
among countries**



**Make cities and
human settlements
inclusive, safe,
resilient and
sustainable**

Lessons

- Challenges us to have a more holistic understanding of heritage
- Alternate ways of sustainable heritage conservation
- Saving stories as heritage conservation in the face of development pressures, but also advocating for sustainable conservation of these communities through urban revitalization over urban (re)development



Acts of Community Poster (Block by Block)

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