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NEIGHBOURHOOD MEETING

Host Organization: Corktown Residents and Business Association

Contact: Trevor McLeod

Date: 5 June 2018, 7:25-8:30 pm

Location: Cooper Koo Cherry Street YMCA

Number of Attendees: Approximately 30

Notetaker: Stephanie Chow, Waterfront Toronto

Abbreviations: Sidewalk Labs (SWL), Waterfront Toronto (WT), Master Innovation and Development Plan (MIDP)

Sidewalk Toronto Representatives:

Erik Cunningham (WT), Steven Turell (SWL), Stephanie Chow (WT), Louroz Mercader (WT)

PRESENTATION SUMMARY

Erik began by giving a presentation that included an introduction to Waterfront Toronto, talked about its vision for Quayside, and described the Request for Proposal (RFP) process through which Sidewalk Labs was selected as its Innovation and Funding Partner. Steven then introduced Sidewalk Labs and described what led them to respond to the RFP and the alignment between the two organizations. Both then jointly provided an overview of the partnership and the high-level timeline and key milestones throughout 2018. They talked about the vision set out by Sidewalk Labs in response to the RFP and how the joint team and the initial work is being organized. They also outlined the public engagement plan and described the variety of opportunities to participate over the next several months. The presentation took approximately 45 minutes. They then responded to questions from attendees.

NOTES

The following notes summarize the questions and answers but do not represent a verbatim transcript.

Q1: There's nothing in tonight's presentation about daycares, schools, community centers, and retirement homes. This needs to be considered. You've studied previous attempts at implementing smart cities elsewhere. What are two or three negatives or forms of resistance or consequences that made them fail, so we don't repeat?

- Masdar in the middle east showed that the district did not reflect the city that it was built in. Cities can't be built in the middle of nowhere with no authentic culture or resources - they should feel authentic and embody character of the city that it's in.
- Also, Songdo in South Korea. When it was built, the technology contracts they signed were cutting edge at the time, state of the art. But by the time they built it the technology was ten years



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outdated. We learned that we need to have adaptive tech and to not just lock in the best technology of 2018.

Q2: Are you going to connect the area to downtown? Lake Shore can be a barrier if you're a pedestrian. Are you guys planning on how we can get around if we can't bring our own cars?

- Mobility is not just about creating easier ways for cars to get through. You're probably familiar with the underpasses that run under the rail corridor, so thinking about ways to use that space that are more friendly and widened. Part of this is a discussion with Metrolinx. But it's complicated and expensive. So, thinking about how to create those connections is important. It's always been the plan to connect Cherry Street down to Queens Quay, so funding that and making it happen is something we want to do. Working with SWL will give opportunities to think about that connection in different ways.

Q3: Waterfront Toronto is known for quality buildings. These ideas of container boxes and wood, are these quality? Where are we seeing the connection between quality structures vs boxes?

- The rendering of container boxes and wood frames are not the entire proposal. We can certainly reach design excellence using wood. It is something we can do in a way that's beautiful and represents design excellence and supports longevity. If it's a bunch of containers that are not going to last, then that's not something we're going to do. WT and SWL are focused on this, but we aren't at the building level of proposals yet. Designs will also go to Waterfront Toronto's Design Review Panel for review and feedback.
- I like to use the term fabrication more than modulatory because the idea is not to have a stack of Lego boxes, but rather look at all the tools that can drive costs down. We think about what a building feels like and know that these buildings should be held to the same design standard as concrete and steel buildings.

Q4: SWL is talking about putting in sensors and things that interact with people. I ask that you consider a 10, 20, 30-year policy on how to maintain these technologies, or they will last two years and then be useless.

- Operations and maintenance is fundamental to creating a great city. That's a criterion we will layer in.

Q5: SWL is an investment company, how does it generate a return on investment for its investors?

- There are three ways that SWL can make money.
 - Real estate and following the traditional real estate model. (WT has always worked with private sector developments, so it's similar in that regard.)
 - Infrastructure delivery. We can finance new innovative infrastructure systems, like a new type of electric grid that better distributes energy, SWL can finance and get a return on this financing.



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- Sidewalk can also compete to develop software technology that could be used at Quayside and other places, for example building management software.

Q6: Metrolinx and underpasses – how involved is ST with this project?

- It's not something that SWL is focused on but the design and planning department at WT has been working to find solutions and create opportunities with them. The ST project wants to get involved but it's too early for us and is not our project right now. There are a lot of ways we can think about making it more pleasant than it is now, and WT and SWL are happy to be part of the conversation, but we really need to focus on creating a plan to deliver things that people care about.

Q7: How far in advance is MIDP and what are the short milestones? What happened with the other smart cities that you mentioned? Were they abandoned? If they become ghost cities, that's a problem.

- Each pillar represents an opportunity and what can be done when you combine opportunities. Reducing transportation times and the cost of living are not new ideas, but when you can bring those things together, then there's a huge value opportunity. We are working on that and figuring out which things from each pillar are important and then cross-pollinating them.
- The yearlong process that we're in will take the 8 pillars and show how we can make them all work together. Our public engagement plan, the roundtables and the outreach, are part of our milestones, and we won't see a full draft of the MIDP until the end of the year.
- Examples: Songdo is not a ghost town but it's not very well-known in urban circles. It didn't achieve its objectives, it didn't push boundaries the way we want to. Your point about timelines, we have to work far in advance. The MIDP and the full lifecycle of the development has to look into the future to how this is sustainable. The plan will also address the financial standpoint to the operational standpoint.

Q8: When is the "shovels to ground" construction expected to begin?

- We don't know what the timeline is going to be, but we plan to have a draft plan by the end of the year. We need to make sure that the plan is ok with communities and governments, and that will take six months or longer. It's hard to know. Let's focus on delivering the plan and see where it goes.
- The reason we are hesitant to put out timelines is because so much depends on the plan. We want to push boundaries and need time to get it right. If we need more time to be more ambitious, and responsive to feedback then the timelines change.

Q9: What's your thinking about how this area will fit into the broader city and area of Quayside?

- Quayside, the 12 acres, will be a pilot space. Not everything will be testable on that scale. The plan will think about things that are testable on Quayside and also think about the project to scale. Quayside is four or five streets – we can build one street as a showcase and then say "this is how it



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would work, and this showcase on a bigger scale would look like this". The plan will detail what that means and how interested people would be in seeing it on a larger scale.

Q10: How does this incorporate the city?

- We don't pre-suppose how interested the City is in all this. We are going to come up with a plan that includes stakeholder engagement, this includes both the community and the City. The idea is that we will work together to design a plan that is so compelling that people will want it implemented.

Q11: When SWL was first introduced to the city, the Port Lands was the big testing ground. Is that still the case?

- If the testing or piloting works on Quayside, then the Port Lands could be another opportunity to advance towards. But it's important not to pre-suppose and say would could happen.
- WT's had an unusual RFP in what they were asking for. The proposal SWL put together was for a year to plan. Nothing is committed at this time. Geography can be a discussion after the plan is finished.

Q12: What are the wildest ideas for this project?

- The street ideas are super exciting. If an entire neighbourhood has figured out the mobility aspect and what it means for autonomous cars. Neighbourhoods that feel like winding streets from Italy but are not inconvenient to walk down. That's one that I'm very excited about.
- Some of the ideas about wood design are exciting. How will this neighbourhood feel different? When thinking is shared for some of the buildings and public realm that have wider sidewalks leading to public spaces like parks - that combination of things makes a palpable difference.
- One of the things we are figuring out is the idea of having utility channels with tunnels that run underneath the area and how that would operate. No more garbage trucks on the streets because maintenance workers and packaged deliveries would be moving underground. No more sidewalk cuts, jack hammering or orange cones on the streets because you need to close down lanes for traffic. It's easier to get things delivered because of robots can bring your packages to your building. Right now, people who live in multifamily units often have a storage locker not in their unit. If you have robots that can deliver your things, could that locker be located off site? These are real things that could have a lot of benefits on how you organize your space and what that means for the cost per square foot of real estate. Lots of things come from the conditions of having those tunnels.