

- = Wildwood Community Meeting with Metrolinx - October 29, 2020 = -
(notes by Don Booth)

Meeting lasted from 4pm to 5pm

In attendance:

Metrolinx Community Relations: Carmen Rapati and Jocelyn Stenner

Metrolinx Project Manager: Houtan Moravej

Metrolinx Project Manager: Sung Cho

Somerville Contractor; Patrick Bahen, Estimator / Project Manager, Utility Division

Community Members (neighbours): About six people - I don't feel comfortable publishing people's names without permission

Community Member from Merrill Bridge (just across the tracks): again, not comfortable in posting names without permission

Community Advisory Committee (group of representatives from neighbourhoods along the tracks): Don Booth (lives on Gainsborough)

MPP: Rima Berns-McGowan, MPP
Ahmer Khan, MPP Berns-McGowan's office

City Council: Claudine Sierkowska (Councillor Bradford had to attend the city council meeting)

City of Toronto

Casey Craig, Transit Expansion Office

Rhema Stevenson, Transportation Services

Tina Fernandes, Parks, Forestry & Recreation

Vera Gavrilova, Transit Expansion Office

Apologies if I've missed anyone.

Current Construction - The Big Red Machine

Schedule for Current Work (aka. How long with the Big Red Machine be there?)

All current work will take place **during the day**.

7am to 4pm

SIX (6) days a week - Monday through Saturday

The Big Red Machine aka. The "Reclaimer" will be there for six weeks. About early or mid-December

There will be a few small trucks for an additional two weeks.

This work will be completed by early January.

Emergency Phone Number

There is no emergency number posted on the site. In the case of an emergency first responders would have no one to contact to tell them if there are explosive or toxic materials.

The representative from Somerville (the contractor) will post his personal cell number, available 24/7.

After the meeting Metrolinx decided not to post an emergency contact. Neighbours are directed to dial 911 for emergencies and 311 for non-emergencies.

What is it doing?

In order to build a fourth track, Metrolinx needs to move communication cables. The cables will be buried. This machine refines the "mud" that is used in pulling cables through the underground conduit that holds them. The "mud" is a substance called bentonite. It is non-toxic.

There are no toxic materials on site except for the diesel that runs the "reclaimer".

They drill sideways next to the tracks to make a tunnel for the cables.

The soil from drilling is collected on site and shipped away to be treated.

The tanker trucks hold water.

Why is there no information posted on the site?

Metrolinx is exempt from City of Toronto bylaws that would require information to be posted along with a building permit. They have chosen to ignore these bylaws.

Consultation

Metrolinx indicated that they welcome consultation after they have hired contractors and details of work are settled. A neighbour living across the tracks on Merrill Bridge Park said that, in fact, it has been impossible to get information about the trees and other features of the park will be destroyed. An offer was made to meet soon, after Metrolinx has completed its application to Toronto Parks and after they have written a simplified version of their application. They have had several months to do so and nothing is forthcoming.

Don Booth (me) stated that consultation after all decisions have been made is more or less useless as it offers no opportunity for Metrolinx to modify its plans to protect community concerns.

Traffic: There will be no large trucks. Pickups, cube vans, worker's cars.

Idling: Workers have been idling trucks and shining lights. Summerville said that they would address this at their daily meeting.

Who to contact with non-emergency problems? Workers disregarding the neighbourhood? What to do? This question did not arise. The posted number goes straight to the construction supervisor.

JANUARY - Next work - 6 - 10 months

A large project - **Retaining Wall on the North Side of the Tracks**

It is expected that this work will take place mostly at night

Build a retaining wall on the north side of the tracks - this will use the church parking lot as well as Merrill Bridge Park.

This is a large wall needed to support a fourth track.

It will take out trees, foliage and - we don't know what more - on the north side of the tracks.

The retaining wall was not discussed at this meeting. There will be another meeting, on the north side of the tracks, to discuss this larger project.

Enlarge the culvert under the tracks

Small's creek runs through a culvert under the tracks.

Metrolinx is enlarging this culvert.

Work will take place in Merrill Bridge Park. In the Ravine. Mostly on the north side of the tracks.

Some work will take place on the south side.

We were informed that the work that needs to be done very close to the tracks on the fourth side will be accessed by the tracks.

We were promised that no machinery would be needed in the creek. No access is needed from that ravine on the south side.

Our MPP Berns-McGown Spoke Out

Rima Berns-McGown, our MPP, said that she has attended meetings like this with Metrolinx where residents have asked for useful communication, ample warning of when Metrolinx would arrive, what they would do when they get there, a schedule of work (so people can know when they can plan on a good night's sleep, entertaining friends or family), clear picture of what trees would be lost, what habitat would be ruined; proper mitigation of noise and vibration and treating communities with respect and deference. Each time she has heard Metrolinx ask for patience and that all questions would be thoroughly studied and a response is forthcoming at the next meeting. MPP Bern-McGown said that this needs to stop. It's time for action.

The Heavy (aka Loud) Work - until 2024 or 2025

After the communications cables are relocated and the retaining wall built other work will begin.

Metrolinx will first need to enlarge the trackbed and then build a fourth track.

After that they can build the catenary system (electrical system for powering new, electric trains).

The new trains will not have an engine so we will be spared the diesel noise and pollution. When running slower they will be very quiet. They will not cause as much vibration. When going at full speed the noise of the train will be almost as loud as the diesels.

Noise Barriers.

Full service, when all is complete, will see a train every 3.5 minutes from about 5am until 1am.

The last thing to be built will be noise barriers.

Metrolinx will build noise barriers all along the north side of the track.

On the south side of the track they will build barriers from Woodbine to Ladykirk.

There will be no noise barrier on the south side from Ladykirk to a point south of Monarch Park.

Metrolinx is aware that when the fourth track is complete houses will be equally close to the tracks and trains on both sides of the park.