



# University of Toronto

OFFICE OF THE VICE- PROVOST, SPACE AND FACILITIES PLANNING

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## **FOR INFORMATION:**

TO: Planning and Budget Committee

SPONSOR: Ron Venter, Vice-Provost, Space and Facilities Planning

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DATE: November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2004 for December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

AGENDA ITEM: 13

## **ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

Project Planning Committee to address the preservation of Philosopher's Walk.

## **JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

Under the Policy on Capital Planning and Capital Projects, section 5.A, the membership and terms of reference of Project Committees shall be reported to the Planning and Budget Committee.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The preservation of Philosopher's Walk as a heritage landscape setting within the University is an important part of the open space plan for the St. George Campus. It is an area enjoyed by the University community – students, staff and faculty. It is also enjoyed by the general public and is protected under the City of Toronto by-laws as "university open space." [There is no construction permitted within its boundaries.] In *Stepping UP*, we have identified enhancing the student experience as one of our top priorities. In addition, we have also articulated our commitment to continuing to build linkages with our community. The preservation of Philosopher's Walk reflects both of these aspirations.

The redevelopment plans of the Royal Conservatory of Music and the Royal Ontario Museum will affect the physical surroundings and change the topography of the north portion of the Walk. Approval of these projects by the City required that contributions be directed towards the placement of additional trees in this area. Notwithstanding this attempt to mitigate the effect of construction, the Walk as known by scores of pedestrians will change.

Additionally, the reconstruction of the exit to the Museum subway catering to a potential development on the planetarium site, owned by the ROM, will direct an ever increasing flow of pedestrian traffic through the Walk.

As a result of these developments and their impact, the University has commissioned an update to the master plan for Philosopher's Walk and after a selection process, retained Envision, The Hough Group. Michael Hough, a member of the firm acted as the University's landscape architect repaired and formalized the area of the Walk in 1962. The cost of the study, funded jointly by the Offices of Campus and Facilities Planning, Capital Projects, and Building Services and Grounds, will cost \$30,000 and provide the University with a remedial plan and ongoing maintenance strategy for Philosopher's Walk. Funding for the implementation of the resulting plan will come from several sources including potentially the payments from adjacent private sector condominiums and through private benefaction directed towards specific elements in the plan. It has been noted that developers are making use of the proximity of the St. George Campus for marketing and also to fulfill the open space requirements of their developments, with the City accepting "payment in lieu of" under special agreements. Requests have been made by the University to direct City funds to Philosopher's Walk knowing that the adjacent private developments will bring increased use to the area and put pressure on Philosopher's Walk.

The residents' associations in the neighbouring communities, City planners, Heritage Preservation Services staff and local municipal politicians are aware of the situation and of this project. Support will also come from the Toronto and East York Preservation Panel.

#### **PROPOSED COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP:**

E. Sisam	[Chair] Director, Campus & Facilities Planning
G. Averill	Dean, Faculty of Music
R. Daniels	Dean, Faculty of Law
G. Nower	Director, Building Services and Grounds
C. Waldheim	Chair, Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design
L. Hoffman	Faculty of Physical Education and Health
J. Raaflaub	University Advancement
J. Binks	Capital Projects
G. Seaborn	Bursar, Trinity College
TBA	Undergraduate Student
TBA	Graduate Student

During the on-going deliberations of the Project Planning Committee, it is anticipated that the Committee will extend invitations to various consultants and other experts to participate in selected meetings to fully address the terms of reference. Input from both the Royal Conservatory of Music and the Royal Ontario Museum will be coordinated into the Project Planning Report.

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE:**

1. Review and make recommendations regarding the consultant's study updating the master plan for Philosopher's Walk, a noted heritage landscape within the University of Toronto campus
2. Review the northern entrance area and the plans of the Royal Conservatory of Music and the Royal Ontario Museum to recommend necessary remedial work required as a result of the construction of those institutions at the north end of the Walk.
3. Make recommendations regarding the layout of the walkways, tree density, access, material palette, and ongoing maintenance for Philosopher's Walk to maintain a durable functionality whilst maintaining its hidden tranquility.
4. Identify the proposed timing for the work to be undertaken.
5. Identify the total project cost for the project including any phases as they may be required.
6. Identify all proposed sources of funding.
7. Report by January, 2005.