

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an analysis of the planning history of Rosedale. Rosedale is a residential community located close to downtown Toronto. The neighbourhood has been referred to as a garden suburb in planning literature by a number of leading authorities. Earlier references also speak of Rosedale in terms of the picturesque movement. In general, there is a sense of confusion regarding which planning movement influenced the development of Rosedale and this report attempts to clarify its origins.

BACKGROUND HISTORY

The area that Rosedale now occupies was laid out as a farm lot in the early 1800s by Governor Simcoe as part of the early subdivision of Toronto. The lot was granted to George Playter and subsequently ended up in the hands of William Botsford Jarvis, an enterprising individual from one of Toronto's oldest families. Land speculation was common in the early history of Toronto and the land upon which Rosedale would eventually develop was quite valuable. Its location close to the city was appealing but mostly its unique topography and natural vegetation made it a destination for Toronto's elite society. The naturally hilly landscape was crossed with ravines which made it an attractive area.

William Botsford Jarvis laid out a plan of subdivision in 1854 (Figure ES-1) which divided his 100 acre estate into 62 lots and a number of curving streets. Development was slow. The community started to prosper after his nephew, Edgar Jarvis, aided the development of Rosedale by registering a plan in 1877 (Figure ES-2) and building a number of fine houses. Later development of North Rosedale was initiated by the Scottish Ontario and Manitoba Land Company and David Macpherson in the latter part of the nineteenth century (Figure ES-3, ES-4 and ES-5)

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method employed was a case study analysis of Rosedale in comparison to two important planning movements, using a set of evaluation criteria. Both the picturesque suburb movement and the garden suburb movement were occurring during the time that Rosedale was developing into a community. The picturesque suburb movement in Britain began in the late eighteenth hundreds with the ideas of John Nash. In the United States, the movement started a bit later and was led by Andrew Jackson Downing and Andrew Jackson Davis. The picturesque movement can be attributed to the attraction of rural cemeteries which were designed using the ideas of Downing and Davis, and prospered with romantic planning ideals of the 1850s and 60s. The ideas of Frederick Law Olmsted added to the picturesque body of planning in the 1860s and 70s. The other planning movement used as a comparison was the garden suburb movement. This began in the early 1900s in Britain and built upon the ideas of Ebenezer Howard and the Garden City movement. The garden suburb movement did not begin in the United States until the 1910s and 1920s.

A series of maps showing the development of Rosedale was generated from existing plans and maps. These aided in the analysis because the written record of the history of Rosedale is not complete.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Evaluation criteria were drawn from the leading sources of reference on suburb design. Picturesque criteria were drawn mostly from Southworth's Streets and the shaping of towns and cities, Garvin's The American City, and Rep's The Making of Urban America, while Mervyn Miller's Hampstead Garden Suburb, Howe's "Forest Hills Gardens" and Stern's The Anglo American Suburb were among the most significant sources of reference for garden-suburbs.

STREETS	OPEN SPACE	HOUSING	SOCIAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street type • Street width • Street tree • Percentage of site used for streets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of rec/visual amenities • Lot size • Preservation of open space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front yard setback • Density • House style • House type • House tenure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social goal • Distance to city centre • Community type • Developer

Table ES-1: Evaluation Criteria

PRECEDENTS

Four of the best examples of each of the picturesque movement and the garden suburb movement were used as precedents in the comparative analysis (Table ES-2).

Picturesque Suburb Precedents	Garden Suburb Precedents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park Village, UK (1823) • Mount Auburn, Cambridge, Mass (1831) • Llewellyn Park, New Jersey (1853) • Riverside, Illinois (1869) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hampstead Garden Suburb, UK (1906) • Forest Hills Gardens, New York (1912) • Lindenlea, Ottawa (1919) • Radburn, New Jersey (1928)

Table ES-2: Picturesque suburb and garden suburb precedents

RESULTS

The eight examples and Rosedale were analyzed using the evaluation criteria. It was found that Rosedale exhibits most of the features of picturesque suburbs and hardly any of the features of garden suburbs. Table ES-3 shows a summary of the results.

	Picturesque Precedents				Garden Suburb Precedents				
	Park Village (1823)	Mount Auburn (1831)	Llewellyn Park (1853)	Riverside (1869)	Rosedale (1854)	HGS (1906)	FHG (1912)	Lindenlea (1919)	Radburn (1928)
Streets Criteria									
Street type	●	●	●	●	● □	○ ■	■	■	■
Street width	●	○	○	●	● □	■	□	■	■
Street trees % for streets	●	● ■	● ■	● ■	● ■	● ■	● ■	● ■	○ □
Open Space Criteria									
Rec amenities	●	●	●	●	● ■	■	■	■	■
Lot size	○	●	●	●	● □	■	■	■	■
Preservation	○	●	●	○	●	■	■	■	□
Housing Criteria									
Front setback	○	n/a	●	●	●	■	■	■	■
Density	●	n/a	●	●	●	■	■	■	□
House style	●	n/a	●	●	●	■	■	■	■
House type	●	n/a	●	●	●	■	■	■	■
House tenure	○	n/a	●	●	●	■	□	□	□
Social Criteria									
Social goals	●	n/a	●	●	●	■	□	■	■
Dist. to city	●	●	●	●	●	■	■	■	■
Type of com	○	n/a	●	●	●	■	■	■	■
Developer	●	●	●	●	●	■	■	■	■

- Strongly meets the picturesque criteria
- Almost meets the picturesque criteria
- Strongly meets the garden suburb criteria
- Almost meets the garden suburb criteria

Table ES-3: Analysis summary

CONCLUSION

Rosedale, in plans, appears to be most similar to a picturesque suburb such as Riverside rather than a garden suburb such as Forest Hills Gardens (Compare Figure ES-6, ES-7 and ES-8). Rosedale had been substantially developed by the time the garden suburb movement began so it is not possible that early plans were influenced at all by garden suburb ideals.

The results of the analysis show that Rosedale is not a pure example of a picturesque suburb either. The picturesque suburb movement occurred at the same time that Rosedale was developing in the mid nineteenth century. The similarities are quite obvious but there is not a direct link with the picturesque movement as there is with the other picturesque suburb precedents. Each of these precedents was designed by a landscape architect who contributed to the picturesque movement but Rosedale was designed by a private individual who wished to subdivide his land to make a profit.

Regardless of the planning influences, Rosedale has managed to maintain the attributes that originally made it a success and continues to be an attractive and distinctive community within Toronto.