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G20 town hall meeting

Group recommends apology, inquiry and compensation

By **DON PEAT**, TORONTO SUN

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Around 35 people gathered for a post-G20 town hall meeting Thursday night.

Equity Toronto and Community Education and Access to Police Complaints organized the gathering at the Scadding Court Community Centre.

Nicolai Grut talked about how sad he was after the way he saw police treating people in the “free speech zone” at Queen’s Park on the Saturday of the G20.

“The way the police treated us was just horrible,” Grut said. “Most of us were just standing there wanting to make our presence known.”

During the protest, the police mounted unit charged the crowd and pepper spray was fired at protesters.

“They wouldn’t even let us stand there,” Grut told the Sun. “To me it’s not what Canada is about.”

On Monday, Grut said police were more civil during a protest outside Toronto Police headquarters with police officers even helping guide the protest safely through the streets.

“It’s what should have happened (on the Saturday),” he said.

Annette Snel watched the G20 mayhem on TV but said she came out last night to share her opinion.

She was saddened by the vandalism done by some protesters but even more saddened by the sweeping arrests in the wake of the violence.

“Over 1,000 people arrested? That’s wrong,” she said. “I’m shocked there aren’t more people here.”

After the small group discussions, the groups presented their recommendations to the entire groups. The recommendations included calls for compensation and a public apology from the federal government and a public inquiry.

Toronto councillor and police board member Adam Vaughan sat on the gym stage listening to the recommendations and taking notes.

Susanne Burkhardt of CEAPC said she was disappointed with the turnout but hoped there would be good discussions at the five tables. Burkhardt said the experiences discussed and recommendations generated by the groups will be put into a report that will be sent to all the oversight bodies of all the forces involved in the G20.

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