

Church Wellesley Neighbourhood Association

Minutes

Directors' Meeting May 16, 2020

10am – 12pm (via Video Conference)

Present: Connie Langille, Paul Farrelly, Kyle Iannuzzi, Robert Packham, Tara Schorr, Trevor Hennig, Neil Gibb, Don Altman, Peter Small

1. Administration

1.2 Land Acknowledgment

1.3 Agenda – amended and approved

1.4 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

1.5 Minutes of Last Meeting 25 April, 2020 – approved

1.6 Financial Status - \$2,266.33

2 Activities Report Out

2.1 Communications

- Eblast – the May eblast had articles on: COVID-19 & Encampments; Cresford condo receiverships; Pride 2020 going online. Next eblast will cover 519 letter to community, crisis in Church Street businesses; Active TO and Church Street this summer (patios; more pedestrian space);
- Tara said we ought to be advocating more in our communications; Trevor agreed but said the wording of specific advocacy actions would have to be agreed upon by the Board. We could circulate a draft on a particular topic (such as the violence and vandalism happening in the Village). *Tara said she could start on this.* Kyle said that we need to agree upon the breadth of our mission / advocacy (for instance, housing issues) and also to be concerned with tackling root causes as opposed to symptoms. We do have a progressive councillor and MPP, so are there things that we can do as a neighbourhood association to help move important files forward, such as called on the province and federal government for specific actions? He recommended we look at doughnut economics as a global model to base our priorities. Paul recommended focusing on the encampments as that is a burning issue at the moment. Trevor opined that we need to have a role both as information providers and as advocates for causes. Kyle moved and members agreed that these are two important and distinct roles, and that timely dissemination of information is complementary to advocacy positions that require more back and forth to compose and agree upon.
- Response to Bill Morneau letter – *Kyle said he would start on a draft response*
- FB community Forum (1300 member closed group) – Tara has been moderator and wants some backup on this responsibility. Connie volunteered to help shoulder the load; *Tara will set up an online training session to which all Board members are invited.*
 - Robert said there should be two different streams; one focussed on news and good things happening; the other on symptoms of systemic failures (assaults etc.). Tara said the CWNA Facebook page does play more the former as our public face, whereas the closed forum has a lot more individuals posting – some positive, some negative. Moderating toxic threads is draining and we do lose forum members because of negative posts. FB has recently added the option to create separate chat rooms for topics, so that is a possibility. Discontinuing the Forum is not an option, as many users find it valuable.
 - A debate ensued as to why there is so much negativity on the Forum and its effects. Does

posting about every negative incident (and the consequent thread that ensues) *magnify* the impression of a community that is under constant attack and where it is unsafe to venture out onto the street (Robert); or are the posts a result of legitimate fear and anger that the CWNA ought to be addressing more directly and boldly (Kyle).

2.2 Placemaking

- CWNA Green Plan update – Trevor
 - Goal for 1st meeting with councillor, is an agreement in principal that this is a good idea and that the Councillor will co-sponsor it.
 - Will include link to and copy of The Grange plan.
 - As per Grange plan, “Target areas include renovations of existing park spaces, creation of new parkettes and linear parks, transformation of street flankings, greening of local laneways, strengthening of the tree canopy and promotion of climate adaptation efforts locally.”
 - Can go beyond official city plans, to include privately owned and institutional public spaces.
 - Would work in conjunction and harmony with all official plans and improvements, including the Church Street Master Plan, North Downtown Yonge Design Guidelines, Yonge Street Environmental Assessment, Charles Street redesign and the City’s Parks and Public Realm Plan.
 - Would work within realistic parameters of City infrastructure.
 - Moving forward we’d need a steering committee, CWNA Placemaking committee, rep from Councillor’s office (Tyler) and we will also reach out to the community to get others involved.
- Wellesley planters / Grace McInnis – Trevor – The City (Neighbourhood Projects section of Transportation Services) will deliver perennials for the planters at 25 and 43 Wellesley East as well as some for Grace McInnis Coop at Gloucester and Church on June 5. We have requested the BIA to provide water for them. ScotiaBank workers want to help care for the planter at 25 Wellesley.
- BH Park permit – Meet Your Neighbours – keeping Sept 12, 2020 permit for now.
- PRIDE virtual – Pride 2020 will be online

2.3 Heritage

- Yonge - Gloucester Masonic Temple – there’s going to be Hasty Market and we’d like not to have their huge red and yellow signage all over the place. Since it’s a heritage building there are some protections from ugly signage. Robert recommended *he and Connie request a signage bylaw officer to inspect, making sure he knows it’s a heritage building.*
- Cultural Heritage Resource Analysis for The Village – Paul. The North Downtown Yonge Planning Framework illustrated that many of the buildings on Church Street are “potential heritage” buildings (not yet “designated”). Cultural Heritage Resource Assessments co-ordinator, Gary Medina, is reaching out to the community, having contacted the Archives and CWNA (Paul) to gather information on the cultural heritage of the Village. Paul will be cooperating with him on an ongoing basis.

2.4 Membership

- Discussion about memberships and membership renewals. Don recommended actively reminding members that their membership is expiring. We currently have been sending out a general reminder around the year-end and new year; we also get new members and renewals in person at the AGM.
- 2019 members aren’t annotated in MailChimp; *Tara to provide Excel list to Trevor who will update MailChimp.*
- RE building memberships, Paul said the database of contacts (and ability to readily invoice

corporations) needs to be brought up to date and a new round of canvassing personally addressed to contacts in buildings. *Connie has some contact info and will provide.*

- Trevor will add “Join or Renew” reminder in the footer of the eblast and the website pages.
- Neil recommended more visible PayPal buttons and an Interac payment option. *Trevor will look into.*

2.5 Development

- One Development– Paul – This is before the LPAT, scheduled for September. ONE has indicated they are open to mediation. *Paul will speak with the City planner to find out the City’s position;* if there’s a mediation CWNA will be there. Robert said that ONE’s revised application answers every major concern previously brought forward except for height and it is doubtful LPAT would rule against ONE because of shadow on Barbara Hall Park. However, we could still get some other concessions from ONE, such as how the street corner is treated.
- Cresford Receiverships; some work has resumed on The Clover (at Gloucester); Halo (at Grosvenor) appears stalled.
- 2-8 Gloucester – in demolition stage, with heritage frontages moved to storage
- 33 Isabella (Infill) - This property and the Gloucester St. property have different zoning, so there’s an application to amend the zoning going to the next Community Council meeting. CWNA will support the amendment.

Affordable housing in our neighbourhood.

Connie referred to the Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness Submission to HousingTO Consultation, which addressed: A. Realizing the right to housing; B. Creating more access to deeply affordable housing supply; C. Supportive housing as the solution to chronic homelessness; and D. Ensuring accountability.

Robert and Don said that at some point we should recommend specific sites in the neighbourhood for affordable housing / co-ops; and that housing needs to be mixed income.

Connie encouraged everyone to read the document in full for the next meeting. We can then get into what exactly we want to demand of the various levels of government. Kyle suggested consulting with progressive and proactive elected representatives to see how we might move the cause forward. Don and Peter said that we need to look at how governments define “affordable” and how they’ve slanted toward ownership affordability vs rental affordability. Don said that the tendency of capitalism to commodify resources is a root cause of today’s high housing prices and that the tax system is a part of the problem (eg. no capital gains on the sale of a principal residence). Neil and Peter said the effect of short-term rentals (airBnB etc) on the rental market needs further attention. Neil also said that rent controls must be reinstated. Trevor said that single family zoning should be ended so that multi-unit buildings can go into the neighbourhoods. There was general support for co-ops.

Paul suggested he, Don and Neil consult with housing expert Sean Gadon via Zoom and identify the areas CWNA wants to get involved in. Also there is an enormous amount of info available through the Housing TO process.

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2.6 Safety

- Community Safety Network – met on Wednesday.

Sanctuary & Barbara Hall Park

- 33 people have been moved out of George Hislop to temporary housing.
- Violent incidents continue to occur; often it is violence between at risk persons in the parks. Many of the prisoners who were released because of COVID-19 and those newly convicted are technically non-violent, but multiple break and enters are not deemed “violent.” Police require a victim to make a report to attend; a witness report is not enough. Accused may be arrested, but are then immediately released back into the community by the justice system, where they take up the same anti-social behavior. Many residents form the opinion that nothing is being done and place blame on the police and city councilor.
- Kyle said that another aspect to be consider is the fact that safe injection sites are clustered downtown and that there are people moving from outside the city in order to get access to these sites. While safe injection sites are a necessary element of a harm reduction strategy, the concentration of sites within a small area is problematic. Services should be provided in all communities where there is a need.
- Tara pointed out that there has been a downloading of social services to non-governmental agencies (ie Sanctuary); should our governments not be taking more responsibility? Others said that higher taxes are needed to invest in our communities and that property taxes should be reformed.
- Board members are very concerned that the policing and judicial system is not working as it must: individuals who break the law must face consequences for their actions.
- *Connie wants to meet with the Sgt. Dyck and community officers. We will also bring these issues up for discussion with the Councillor and at the next Community Safety Network meeting.*

2.7 AGM

- Deferring a decision on the AGM (physical meeting or online) to a later date, but it must be held in 2020. Kyle and Tara strongly support an online AGM

2.8 10th Anniversary celebration

- on hold

3 Recap of Actions & Upcoming Events

- Paul: contact City planner to find out position on ONE Development mediation
- Tara: Start a draft of a response to the community from CWNA re violence and safety in the Village
- Tara: Set up an online training session for FaceBook Forum
- Kyle: Draft a response to MP’s letter
- Trevor: add more links and ways to renew and join (eblast footer; homepage; FB)
- Connie (& Robert): request a signage bylaw officer to inspect Hasty Market, making sure he knows it’s a heritage building
- Tara: provide Trevor with 2019 members list
- Paul: arrange online meeting with housing expert Sean Gadon (Don and Neil to attend)
- Everyone: Read the [Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness report](#)

- Recommended reading: *Doughnut Economics* by Kate Raworth
- KWT Meeting - 25 May, 2020 - no details at this time
- Next CWNA meeting 13 June, 2020