

Harbord Village Residents' Association Board Meeting

April 21, 2020, 7.00 pm

by Zoom call

MINUTES

In Attendance: Gina Buonaguro, Simon Coleman, Anne Fleming, Susan McDonald, Cathy Merkley, Gail Misra, Christian Mueller, Carolee Orme, Andrea Poptsis, Nick Provart, Jane Perdue, Nicole Schulman, Merrill Swain, Sue Dexter, Lena Mortensen, Regine Schmid, Gus Sinclair

Regrets: Robert Stambula

Guest: Botond Ballo, resident of 666 Spadina

Meeting called to order at 7:06 pm by Gail.

- 1. Chair's Welcome:** Gail called the meeting to order and noted the continued strange circumstances under which we find ourselves. Gail advised that she was asked by Nick to invite a guest from 666 Spadina to come to speak to us about the ongoing issues related to the construction there, and Botond Ballo will join us to speak to resident concerns at that site.
- 2. Approval of Agenda:** The 666 Spadina noise issue was added to the agenda. Gus moved adoption of the agenda as presented; seconded by Nicole. Agenda adopted.
- 3. Approval of March minutes:** The issue of the note re: the GICs in reserve was resolved. Susan moved approval of the March minutes as amended; Merrill seconded; minutes approved.
- 4. Other Business**

a) 666 Spadina Construction (Nick Provart)

Despite the provincial restrictions on construction, the work at 666 Spadina was deemed essential due to safety concerns. Workers are continuing to work and the noise from the jackhammering is uncomfortable for the residents of 666 Spadina and for neighbouring residents on Sussex and Robert Streets. The contractor has responded that they will continue their work but they are open to reducing their working hours. The City is trying to arrange a meeting the various stakeholders to discuss potential solutions.

Botond Ballo, a resident of 666 Spadina, provided a resident's perspective on the ongoing construction. He informed the Board that the situation is incredibly frustrating, noisy and disruptive. The project has been going on for a year, however since a month ago when the

lockdown started residents have become essentially trapped in the building 24/7, making the noise unmanageable. It doesn't appear that the construction hours have been limited as had been indicated by the contractor. Residents have been in touch with the landlord with a "cease and desist" type letter, however they have been told that the construction has to go on due to "safety concerns". Legal advice has suggested they can pursue financial compensation (at a later date) but they are unsure of what avenues they can pursue to have the work stopped. They have been in touch with MPP Bell's office who has been unsuccessful at getting the work to stop until the stay at home restrictions are lifted.

Gail suggested that we get P & D involved in the discussion. Sue got in touch with Phil, the owner's representative who had met with P&D to discuss the 666 Spadina expansion at that project's inception. Sue has asked what could be done to address this issue but he has not yet responded. It seems appropriate for the HVRA to get involved to try to see if a solution can be found during this unusual time. Sue suggested that Nick request the Councillor's office arrange a meeting and have Botond's group and the HVRA attend to see if we can negotiate a solution.

Carolee suggested that they are doing work in addition to the balconies that is also really noisy and filthy in terms of generating dust. This work could also be shut down since it is not safety related. Sue put forward a motion to ask the Board to support the initiative of P& D to see whether a just solution can be found to the hostile and difficult circumstances that are occurring at 666 Spadina, where jackhammering is taking place outside of residences. Nick seconded. All in favour.

Botond advised that there is a tenants' association at 666 Spadina and that the leadership of the association would like to join the meeting being organized by the counsellor. This potential collaboration between the HVRA and the residents of 666 Spadina was viewed as a positive development as the HVRA has been looking for ways to better engage renters in the community.

b) Spring newsletter (Gail for Anne Kerekes)

Gail provided an update on the newsletter which will be going to the printer shortly and is on target to be delivered by Canada Post.

c) Spring Meeting - alternative plans (Gail)

Tim Grant has set up a webinar that will be hosted by Sheena Shore on a net zero topic that will be happening instead of the Spring meeting.

d) HV Mutual Aid Network (Gail / All)

- i. **Volunteer list:** the list has been closed off; there are lots of volunteers on the list but not a lot of people needing help at this point in time. These volunteers could be called upon should we decide to restart the Community Resilience Committee. Jane suggested that there will be renewed interest in community resiliency coming out of this pandemic.

- ii. **Masks:** Nicole mentioned that someone in PARA had organized to make masks and give them away. There are people in the HV making masks and Nicole was wondering if there was any interest in putting those people together with the people that are making masks in the community. Gus mentioned that some of the masks that are being made are for the Michael Garon Hospital but Nicole mentioned that there are other people in the community making masks. She suggested that there is demand and potentially supply within our community for the masks; is there any way the HVRA can help? Gail suggested that we ask PARA first to see if they have capacity to offer their masks to our community through an eblast. Nicole is going to reach out to PARA to confirm and then will connect with Anne Fleming re: e-blasting the message out.
- iii. **Homeless / food banks:** Nicole noted that PARA had reached out to us re: food drives. We have been promoting ways to donate food to various initiatives within our community. Gina advised that other communities are stocking their Little Free Libraries with pantry items, which could also be promoted in the HV.
- e) **Vice Chair discussion (Nicole):** The idea behind the Vice Chair role was that the person would perform this role as a Chair-in-waiting and then would assume the Chair role when the Chair steps down. This implies a very long time commitment. Nicole suggested it might make sense to reformulate this position as an assistant to the Chair. Gus said that as per the Constitution, this is how the position is written. Gus noted that it's a hard thing to get someone on the Board to fill the Vice Chair role and that this time we got lucky in that Anne Fleming was prepared to step in to the role. Gus suggested that we leave it flexible and up to the discretion of the Chair. Merrill observed that we have not truly functioned without a Vice Chair since Gus has been fulfilling that role as Past Chair. Gail noted that a Chair would prefer to work with a Vice Chair of their own choosing. Anne offered that it is important to build in flexibility in the roles but that it is also important to be clear in the documentation. There can be a helper role that a Vice Chair fulfils and there is also the role of back up. Anne recommended that we revisit in the Fall after there is a leadership change.
- f) **Plant Fair alternative / Gardeners Group (Nicole):** Normally, the Gardeners' group has a plant fair / swap in late May at Kensington Gardens. Nicole is trying to organize a socially distant plant swap in the same time frame. Discussions are underway to determine if this could be done safely.
- g) **Parent Consultation Committee (Gina):** Gina provided an update on the PCC which she has recently taken over from Nicole. The group consists of about 10 people in the HV who are parents. Gina emailed the existing members to see if they were still interested; only one person responded. Gina plans to check in with the PCC before each board meeting to see if there are any pressing issues. Nicole thanked Gina for taking over this

committee; Gail thanked Nicole for initially starting this committee and for her efforts over the past couple of years.

5. Reports

a. Net Zero Carbon Committee (Susan)

The City is analysing the survey results. The Councillor has encouraged us to make an application for a Toronto Atmospheric Fund grant. Tim was going to get in touch with a person there to see what grants are available and what might fit with the HV Net Carbon Zero committee's plans. A geothermal case study might be good grounds for a grant (e.g. hiring someone to do a feasibility study). There might be an opportunity to get involved with a retrofit project, but this is also still in its early days. There is a deadline for the grant proposal of May 15th. Sue was talking to the Councillor about projects to get the City back to work as we come out of COVID 19 shutdown, e.g. university projects, that could advance the Green Economy.

b. Nicole asked if anyone else had noticed an increased police presence in the community as she had seen on Brunswick. It was also reported that there were more police on Robert Street and after another recent incident in the Annex. Andrea noted that there was an increase in the number of incidents reported on various neighbourhood Facebook sites that there are increased instances of aggressive or menacing behaviour....

c. There was a question about whether we would be having a May Board meeting since we are not having the Spring Members' Meeting. Gail suggested that we would discuss this possibility if there are topics that must be discussed.

6. **Receipt of reports** (acknowledgement of receipt of Committee and Area reports; identification of any new or pressing issues or clarifications)

Area Reports:

- **North East** (Nick/Carolee): 57 out of 150 boreholes have been installed at the Robert Street field (before the project was halted due to COVID-19); the fieldhouse has been mostly demolished; work continues on the balcony rehabilitations at 666 Spadina under the "safety/maintenance" exception to the ongoing chagrin of the residents of the building and nearby streets
- **North West** (Nicole/Christian): Sally Bird Park has been closed off with tape; 200 Brunswick has been boarded up and has a notice from the City posted; construction continues at 201 Brunswick; construction at 172 Harbord (the laundromat) did not pass inspection; construction at the synagogue is delayed; more police cars than usual have been spotted in the community

- **South Central** (*Simon/Susan*): Major Street and Borden Street residents offer a rousing tribute to front line workers nightly with Gus leading the charge on his bagpipes; LeTAO has closed due to nonpayment of rent
- **South East** (*Cathy/Gina*): reports from the community of an aggressive peddler selling gutter cleaning services. The peddler is known in the community; it was decided that an eblast would go out reminding neighbours to be vigilant when considering anyone selling things door to door and to check references before engaging with anyone in this way.
- **South West** (*Jane/Bob*): generally quiet except for a birthday greeting for Irina organized by Shirley Yanover, a Borden Street neighbour, on the occasion of her 80th birthday

7. **Other Business:**

May 7, 2020: Bob Stambula put forward a motion by email to ask the Board to support a Shared Streets proposal, authored with input from P&D and Transportation, to go to Councillor Layton to feed into the City's ActiveTO initiative. A total of 15 responses were registered: 14 votes in favour and one abstention. Motion carried.

Gus put forward a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Merrill. Meeting adjourned at 8:31 pm.

Minutes prepared by Andrea Poptsis, Secretary.