

Harbord Village Residents' Association Spring General Meeting
Tuesday May 21, 2013 - 7 p.m.
Kensington Gardens
Minutes

1. Chair's Welcome

Tim Grant welcomed all present. There were about 75 residents and guests in attendance.

2. Area Caucuses and reports

The Area Caucuses met and each reported as follows:

North West

1. Graffiti - Mostly good things to report. There has been a noticeable change in the amount of graffiti in the area. There has been a lot of effort to upgrade the quality of art covering offending tags.
2. Central Tech – less problems around the lot with more of a pronounced police presence in the evening.
3. Sally Bird Park – there has been less vandalism since the upgrades at the park.
4. Bars - There is a problem with the bars on Bloor and Brunswick. New ownership of The Annex Live has led to a possible abuse of their license – from café to bar. Garbage is an issue at these places as most bins are overflowing
5. Break ins – increased number of break-ins on Brunswick after clubs and bars close. One resident has been hit 4 times.
6. Synagogue expansion. There is a plan to expand the synagogue on Brunswick just north of Harbord. It was suggested that the plan be monitored by the HVRA on behalf of residents.

North East

1. Noise - Neighbourhood parties and noise from Bloor continues to be a problem.
2. Graffiti – There has been an increase in tagging in back lanes. There is a possible move to clean-up the lane between Major and Robert.

South Central

1. Clean-up – There is a complaint that residents are getting flat tires from screws and nails as a result of contractors not cleaning up after their work is completed.
2. Lighting – Many lights in laneways are burned out creating a safety issue. Residents are encouraged to call Toronto Hydro to get them replaced.
3. Fungus – Neighbours report spotting black knot fungus on trees around Brunswick and Ulster which may require special care.
4. Possible illegal renovation – There are no permits shown at 133 Brunswick. There seems to be work going on in secret with workers on site not very approachable.
5. Heritage designation - Brunswick between College and Harbord is coming along but permit language is vague.
6. College- Brunswick Parkette – plan is nearing completion with orders for furniture with and without arms to accommodate all in the community.

7. Zoning – issues around 38 Brunswick as the building has gone ahead without permits.
8. Graffiti – removal seems to be working.
9. Garbage – illegally dumped at the corner of Croft and Vankoughnet – may need better lighting in the area.
10. Thefts – bicycles from the yards have been stolen recently near corner of Ulster and Brunswick.
11. Phone tree – possible setup amongst interested residents for issues

South East

1. Graffiti - Sue Dexter reports that the graffiti paint-out is continuing. Excellent success on Sussex Mews (thanks to Sylvia Porretta, Stephen Simpson, Robin Penslar and other community members) and Louie Laki Lane is next. Those interested in participating anywhere in the Village should contact Sue.
2. Garbage - Suggested that new residents could be provided with a letter of welcome with helpful details re garbage collection and other useful info.
3. Traffic - Some traffic issues, particularly casino buses using Robert as a turnaround route (Councilor's office notified) and perennial issues re: wrong way traffic.
4. Garbage – Garbage problems have been well responded to by using 311 calls. There are some continuing problems on Sussex Mews and elsewhere. Call 311!
5. Police response – Police responses have been less helpful in some cases (vagrants in back yards, an attempt to ignite an old propane tank) where there was apparently some reluctance by Police to treat matters as an "incident". There are similar problems with vandalism. Once again, residents are encouraged to report, report, report, if there is a problem.
6. Clubs – Clubs remain a problem in some areas.

The **South West** caucus did not meet because of low attendance.

3. State of the City – Adam Vaughan

Due to commitments at City Hall, Adam could not attend but his assistant, Areej Hasso who covers the northern area of the Ward attended.

Areej, on behalf of Councilor Vaughan thanked those who voiced their opposition to a downtown casino plan which is officially dead.

During a Q and A, Areej addressed concerns over development. She said any new proposals are detailed on the Ward 20 website. She also stressed that if there are concerns such as noise from the air show, then contacting the office and providing feedback is important. A concern was raised over the establishment of a private blood plasma donation clinic at Spadina and College. Areej mentioned she will look into it regarding permit and soliciting.

4. Constitutional Amendment (re: areas S of Harbord)

The HVRA Board proposes a realignment of the south jurisdictions. The aim is to make the representation more equitable and according to Gus, remediates a historical problem of distribution. After some discussion, Gus assured everyone that this is like any other constitutional amendment and that it could be passed at this meeting.

Graham moved and it was seconded and passed with an overwhelming majority.

Sue moves that current reps continue until AGM and a new board can agree on representation.

5. History project update – Nicole Schulman

Nicole says the project is really coming along and is quite exciting. Eleanor has been interviewing people who have lived in the neighbourhood from the 1930's up to the 1980's. The website is being constructed and the transcribed interviews will be placed there along with pictures. Much of the work will be on display at a planned show at the JCC in November. There is a plan to place interactive plaques throughout the neighbourhood that allow story telling through smart phones. The committee would welcome anyone who is interested in this project to get involved. Richard Longley, who is compiling a comprehensive street guide to be used for Open Doors and Jane's Walk tours, commented that more information is needed regarding the area east of Brunswick and he encourages everyone to send in any ideas or stories regarding the area.

6. Spring Cleanup – Neil Stephenson

The Litter and Glitter event this past April 21 at Splendido attracted 165 residents and was deemed an overwhelming success. The next event is November 23 at Bloor Cinema. Neil mentioned that they are going to establish flash mob cleanups in June and September that will involve small groups of people for a short period of time. All the info will be on the HV website.

7. Yard Sale

Tim recognized Steve Klein, Marilyn Martin, Christian Mueller and James Murdoch for their efforts in organizing this year's Yard Sale. \$2553 was raised for two charities.

8. HVRA Student Essay Contest Award

Tim, on behalf of the HVRA, presented the award for best essay on 'How I Made My Community Better' to Isahag Ibrahim. His essay was chosen from a list of 8 finalists from two area schools. Isahag read his essay.

9. Awards

Community Builder

Tim, on behalf of the HVRA, presented awards to Sylvia Poretta and Steve Simpson for their tireless efforts, dogged determination and great personal expense in getting rid of graffiti in their neighborhood. They are now co-chairs of the HVRA Graffiti committee.

Heritage

Anna Hagithomas and Anastasios Chatzimichail of 82 Brunswick were awarded for their meticulous restoration of their home.

10. HV Dragon Boat team – Tim MacFarlane

Tim is hoping to put together a HV community dragon boat team. He is looking for 20 people who want to take part in a race on Canada Day. It costs \$50 per person which covers boat rental and race entry. They hope to make this an annual charity event to support Kensington Gardens and Hospice. The team is also looking for sponsors for T shirts and other support.

11. Special Guests

Tim introduced Munib Sajjad and Drew Ursel from the U of T Students Union who shared their concerns over developments at the University. They're opposed to plans to put artificial turf on the back campus as its green space and a heritage site. They are also concerned with the redevelopment of 245 College. The SU would also like to open a discussion with the local communities about turning St. George Street into a pedestrian only thoroughfare.

11. Toronto's Early History – Park Lot project – Wendy Smith

Wendy made an extremely interesting and engaging presentation regarding her work on researching the early beginnings of our neighborhood. She reported that the naming of Harbord Street has long been a mystery, but the best theory suggests the street name honours Edward Harbord, the 3rd Lord Suffield, who lived from 1781 to 1835. Edward Harbord is a forgotten hero of the decades-long British anti-slavery campaign. He is credited with single-handedly pushing the 1833 British Slavery Emancipation Bill through the extremely hostile House of Lords. Many members of the English aristocracy owned lucrative slave labour enterprises in the English West Indian colonies and therefore bitterly opposed the end of slavery. The first appearance of the name Harbord Street was in the early 1850s, on subdivision plans of Park Lots owned by the Baldwin, Denison and Cruickshank families (and some developers who had purchased some parcels). At that time the street stretched from St. George Street and west just to Manning Avenue. It was pushed further west to Ossington Avenue in later decades. The Park Lots were narrow 100-acre ribbons running from Queen to Bloor Street, granted to military men and government officials by Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe, beginning in 1793, during the founding days of the Town of York. (Reminder: Simcoe never became a Lord, although he very much wanted to.) Wendy made a number of connections between the British emancipation campaign in the 1830s and the 1850s Toronto anti-slavery movement to show how Harbord may have come to the attention of the landowners here who were naming streets in our neighbourhood during that period. Wendy is the creator of the ***Toronto Park Lot Project***, an interactive mapping project exploring the earliest days of the founding of Toronto. Her project can be seen here:

<http://wendysmithtoronto.com/parklotproject>

Meeting adjourned at 9:03