

Harbord Village Residents' Association
Minutes of Spring Meeting
May 15, 2007
Kensington Gardens

Approximately 40 Harbord Village residents attended the meeting.

1. **Chair's Welcome:** The meeting commenced at 7:05, chaired by Gus Sinclair.

2. **No area caucuses were held.**

There was general discussion about some of the happenings and issues in the neighbourhood

- Compost ran out early this year; councillors pay for compost out of their own budgets
- The new traffic light at Bloor and Robert is preventing most of the wrong-way traffic south on Robert, but then so did the tree in the planter put in place last fall.
- There is a general problem with city trees dying, the supposition is because they are not watered sufficiently. After discussing ideas such as 'tree volunteers', including local businesses, and an 'adopt-a-tree' program, Jane Perdue agreed to find out from the City what their policies are on tree maintenance, and in particular how often they water.

3. HVRA Business and Committee Reports

a. Committee Reports

i. Environment

1. Trees

Tim Grant reported on the Treeing the Village project. The first step is to do an inventory of the neighbourhood trees - we have 70 people to date who have volunteered to do this. At a cost of \$6,500, U of T will train 50 of the volunteers on tree identification, and, a grad student will be hired to coordinate the volunteers and write the report. \$3,000 in pledges have been collected so far, and we have a \$1,000 grant. People who make pledges should make their cheques payable to Evergreen, a registered charity, which will then issue tax receipts. Project members will be going door-to-door to raise more funds.

2. Solar

David Booz reported that the RFP for solar hot water heating and for photovoltaic power system went out, and the bids have been evaluated. The committee is on the point of announcing 2 vendors, one for each system. About 40 people either want to go ahead with one of the systems, or are seriously considering it.

3. Graffiti

Michael Heydon reported that no major murals are planned for this year, but the committee is working with the Harbord BIA this summer to clean up Harbord Street, and may do some smaller murals. Contact Michael if you are interested in having a mural done (which can help prevent future tagging as there is some respect for murals in the tagging community); the resident pays for the mural paint (\$100 or so), the artist will work for free. To paint a garage a solid colour takes about one gallon and costs about \$35-40, which includes a discount at Exclusive Paints, and means the resident will have the correct paint for quick re-painting if they are re-tagged.

ii. College Street

This report was given by Richard Gilbert. There will be a pilot this year on College Street to test curb side patios with a clearway (a gap for pedestrians with the patio near the curb, the gap in the centre, and the restaurant on the other side of the gap) - 14 restaurants will participate. The City has not been enforcing the current by-law that a patio must leave 7 ft. of space for pedestrians; this year they will enforce the by-law and try the clearway concept. Restaurants can also use other businesses' spaces if they agree.

iii. U of T

Sue Dexter will give this report as part of the climate change discussion.

iv. Zoning and Planning

Gus Sinclair reported that the House Inventory is now complete and will be on our website. Every house was counted and use of houses and buildings noted; e.g., single or multiple dwelling, how back yards used, etc. We have a snapshot of what our community looks like, and as we continue to experience pressure for development, we have a starting point for discussing how and where we want change to occur.

b. Directors' and Officers' Insurance enabling motion

Gus Sinclair addressed the need for the Board to have Directors' and Officers' insurance for possible liability suits against the Board. The entire Board is made up of volunteers who need to feel comfortable working on the Board, especially as individual members could be liable for actions of the Board as a whole. Two situations have come up recently that point to the need for insurance:

- An owner in HV built an illegal addition to her house and built without a permit. The owner had to go to the Committee of Adjustment to try to get approval in retrospect. As this sort of illegal construction has the possibility to affect all of the residents, the HVRA Board wrote a letter to state that the by-laws should apply to everyone. The owner was aggressive and threatened to sue Gus. A frivolous suit against a Board member or the Board could empty our coffers very quickly.
- A committee of the Board will make recommendations for solar equipment vendors. Someone might see the Board as liable.

Richard Longley moved that the Board be authorized to seek appropriate Directors' and Officers' insurance to a maximum of \$1500. Seconded by Stuart Schoenfeld and passed.

4. Website Presentation and Motion

Gus Sinclair gave a history of our website and the reasons for developing one; as a repository of our corporate memory and a place where residents can find information about the neighbourhood and the activities of the Board, join HVRA, and renew their memberships.

Richard Gilbert reported that the website is 2/3 ready and usable, and continues to be a work-in-progress. A live demo gave the audience a tour of the website, including the features above, and the members database where members can change their personal information. We still need a history of our area - when HV started, demographic changes and any interesting bits of information and statistics. The point was made that some residents do not have access to computers. The Board will have to monitor this as we move more and more into digital methods of sharing and processing information.

The development of the website was financed by three members of the Board ahead of a general members' meeting, as we found the right person at the right price and time to get the project launched. These Board members need to be reimbursed. **Bob Stambula moved that the Board be authorized to spend not more than \$3286 for one time expenses related to building the website. Seconded by Susan Pfeiffer, and passed.**

5. Climate Change and Your Carbon Footprint

Sue Dexter reported on a meeting that took place with U of T, HVRA, the Annex Residents' Association, and Huron-Sussex Residents' Association. The meeting was to discuss how the groups might combine their efforts to work on climate change initiatives, and use the neighbourhoods as 'labs' to monitor the effects. Processes would be embedded in the community and would be less likely to fall away. Not sure yet what shape this will take.

An enthusiastic discussion followed to point out where people in the neighbourhood might use energy needlessly, or be able to conserve energy. These were some of the ideas -

- Transporting food - shop locally
- Appliances that heat and cool - adjust them
- Rave clubs - turn down speakers so nearby houses can turn off air conditioners and open windows
- Don't leave TVs & VCRs, etc. on stand-by
- Dry clothes outdoors
- Upgrade fridges, esp. landlords for tenants
- Vacuum coils on fridges
- Put a blanket on your hot water heater
- Use an instant water heater, for household hot water and as radiant heat for the floor
- Have a 10L heater under the sink that heats overnight; that's all you have for the day for that sink
- Check the transformers in your house (e.g., phone charger); if they're hot, they're on all the time
- Bullfrog Power - can buy your energy from renewable sources only through Bullfrog. This has a big, positive impact.
- 80% of the energy related to food is the shopping trip - walk to the store (The number of households without a car is increasing in our neighbourhood, according to one participant.)
- Encourage local farmers' markets
- Change your everyday routines to accommodate energy reduction; small changes by a large number of people have a big overall impact.
- Exert organized influence on Dominion Store to have local produce

Farmers' Markets

- There will be a new farmers' market in May at Shaw and Dundas
- A Trinity Bellwoods farmers' market is getting going
- The Ramsden Park farmers' market vetted local vendors
- We need a farmers' market in Harbord Village

- o Dominion parking lot?
- o Lippincott Green P parking lot?

Initiatives

- Ask Dominion Store to have local produce
- Support Kensington Market, where produce stores are closing in favour of shops and restaurants
 - o Olivia Chow's office will help us get in touch with the Kensington Market people and Trinity Bellwoods
- How to affect public policy?
 - o June 22 and 23, Bloor Visioning Study; Phase I is from Avenue Road to Bathurst
 - o We need to have an idea of what we want in our own section of Bloor Street - imagination needed!
- Strong businesses
- Bike lanes
- Pedestrian clearways
- Parks at the sides of buildings
- A civilized neighbourhood

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.