

HARBORD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Communications Committee is a Standing Committee of the Board, as described in Article 9 of the Constitution *[proposed Fall 2017 to replace Communications Director]*. Its membership includes the Webmaster *ex officio* and several others from the Board or outside it, as determined at the first Board meeting after the AGM. Typically these will include one of the Vice-Chair or Past Chair, the eblast editor, and the editor of the print newsletter, as well as any assistant webmasters.

The Communications Committee shares responsibility for developing and implementing the systems by which the HVRA Board communicates with its members and with the broader community. Its mandate includes the oversight, management, and production of frequent eblast messages, the semi-annual print Newsletter and the public website. Expectations now also include support of communications within the Board, for instance provision of board email addresses and storage of documents and templates for Board members' reference and use.

Communications Committee members will coordinate their work, share responsibilities, and support each other in recognizing and solving practical problems. The Committee will report regularly to the Board, and will be expected to make recommendations to the Board on choices and issues concerning communication. Committee members will promote and participate in member engagement activities. They will also participate in new Board member orientation, ongoing training and mentoring as related to communications.

QUALIFICATIONS

No one person is expected to hold all the qualifications needed for the many methods of communication used by HVRA. The following abilities should, however, be within the collective range of Communications Committee members and those to whom they delegate responsibility for specific projects such as the print newsletter:

- Familiarity with a range of communications systems and methods, including CMS (WordPress), mass online mailing (MailChimp), page design (Word), print newsletter (InDesign), and social media platforms (e.g. Twitter)
- Insight into communications issues in order to recommend adaptations as needed
- The flexibility to work collaboratively with each other and leaders of Board projects, and to seek help from other volunteers and outside experts as needed.

REPORTING

The Committee will report regularly to the Board. The Committee must consult the Vice-Chair in communicating public statements from the Board, and will seek advice and input from the Board on the presentation of sensitive topics. The Committee will require Board approval for new initiatives and authorization for expenditures over \$100.

RESPONSIBILITIES

These are the current areas of responsibility:

- 1) **Website:** This is the instrument of record for the organization, disseminating news as well as storing official documentation. It requires page updates or file additions several times a month, more frequently at times of main HVRA events. See the separate Webmaster Job Description for specific responsibilities.

NOTE: The Harbord Village History site resides on the same server as the main HVRA site, but uses HTML coding and FTP transfer rather than Word Press. The current site is complete, requiring only infrequent updates. At present, only Margaret Procter has administrative access.

- 2) **E-Blast News Messages:** These frequent group emails (c. 50 a year) have become the main way of disseminating news about HVRA events and other neighbourhood activities. Messages go out to 500 community members and are each opened by over 300 users. At least two authors / editors are needed to plan and produce eblasts. With support from other members of the Communications Committee and occasionally from Board members, the eblast editors seek out relevant information to include and filter requests for inclusion of specific stories. The general proviso about approval from the Vice-Chair should apply to any sensitive messages or public announcements.

NOTE: The free MailChimp mailing system can also be used by the Board to send emergency messages to the membership, or special messages to segments of the membership (e.g., renewal reminders). The eblast editors are not responsible for preparing these mailing lists or messages.

- 3) **Social Media:** The Board has confirmed its decision not to create an official Facebook presence for HVRA because it would duplicate the above two communication functions. The Harbord Village Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/harbordvillage>) can be used for informal messages

about HVRA events and neighbourhood news. The Vice Chair (or other Board delegate) should be asked to approve tweets with sensitive content. Over time, other social media channels may be developed as appropriate.

- 4) **Flyers:** Members of the Communications Committee may provide advice and assistance for leaders of HVRA activities in preparing print flyers and other publicity materials, but the Communications Committee is not responsible for their production or distribution.
- 5) **Twice-Yearly Print Newsletter:** This multi-page newsletter is distributed to all Harbord Village residences in black-and-white print form and also displayed online in full-colour PDF files. It contains lively interest stories about Harbord Village and showcases HVRA leadership. The newsletter is published twice a year to coincide with the HVRA Spring and Fall Annual general meetings. Division of responsibility is well-established. An executive editor enlists writers, editors, designers, and proofreaders to produce polished copy. Typically, the various roles are recruited from the community as well as from Board members. Writers are asked for articles on specific topics such as development, “letter from the chair,” and other areas of interest.

The roles and the production process (work-back schedule) are outlined in the Print Newsletter Addendum.

- 6) **Provision of Web Services:** Since June 2017, HVRA has rented server space and registered its domain name and security certificate with a Canadian web provider, Web Hosting Canada. Information about this arrangement (and other online accounts) is recorded in a file in the Board-Only area of the website; complete login information is held by the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Webmaster. The suitability of this arrangement should be assessed periodically.
- 7) **Intranet:** Email accounts for the Harbord Village domain (**@harbordvillage.com**) have been set up through our web provider to facilitate internal communication and provide consistent contact information for Officer positions and Standing Committees. More than a dozen are in use (e.g., board, chair, webmaster, membership, gardeners, development, communications), with all incoming email automatically forwarded to one or more recipients. The recipient (“forward”) lists need to be revised with each change in Board membership.

A Board-Only page on the HVRA website now houses an archive of internal board documents, linked as attachments. Board members have a password to access and download these documents; however, only those with webmaster accounts can upload files. A temporary Dropbox site allows both downloads and uploads of board documents by Board members. Steps should be taken to obtain a permanent space with similar access to facilitate sharing of documents being developed.