

Harbord Village Residents' Association Board Meeting

August 18, 2020, 7.00 pm

by Zoom call

FINAL MINUTES

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

Regrets: Gina Buonaguro

Guest: Tim Grant

Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm by Gail.

- 1. Chair's Welcome:** Gail called the meeting to order and noted the continued strange circumstances under which we find ourselves. The board will need to arrange access to a premium Zoom account to host the September and subsequent meetings (Gail has been using hers to this point and this will be the last meeting she chairs).
- 2. Approval of Agenda:** Gail added two other items to Other Business: Gail to report on her conversation with Michael Borelli and Sue's item on trees. Gus moved adoption of the agenda as amended; seconded by Carolee. Agenda adopted.
- 3. Approval of June minutes:** Bob wanted item b) King Edward Yard Revitalization second paragraph language changed to reflect "unintended use at unintended times". Merrill moved approval of the June minutes as amended; Gus seconded; minutes approved.

4. Business Arising - Outstanding from June meeting

a. Harbord Village Mutual Aid Network follow up with specific volunteers (Gail)

Gail reported that she followed up with the volunteers and thanked them for their offer. She did this in two categories: a group email to the many people who offered help but didn't end up helping in the end and a personal email to each person who had done something specifically to help thanking them for their individual contribution.

b. Fall Fair replacement- "HV celebrates Local Business" follow up

Anne reported that now that we are actually closer to September that it is a good time to start thinking about this initiative which is to give a thank you back to the businesses who routinely support the fall fair. She will strike a subcommittee so that the group can consider ideas (e.g.

local passport, fun scavenger hunt). Simon, Christian and Nicole have offered to join the subcommittee.

c. Letter re: oversized garage at Sussex Mews / Harbord

Gus did some research on the property in question and determined that they are allowed to connect the oversized garage to the main property. He contemplated writing a letter but decided that it was not worthwhile to pursue.

5. Other Business

a. Chair / board transition for the 2020/21 year (Gail / Anne)

i. Transition of Gail to Anne

Gail and Anne met to go over the various aspects of the chair transition including Gail forwarding any salient emails to Anne in an organized fashion (e.g. by folder: Pumpkinfest, AGM and every committee that she was involved with excluding P and D). Gail suggested to Anne that she meet with members of P and D to get up to speed on the work of that committee. Anne is now in possession of the remaining HVRA t-shirts, the Chair's file with all the relevant passwords and logins (prepared by Margaret Proctor) and the key to the mailbox. From Gail's perspective, the transition is complete.

Carolee asked when Gail intends to move on; the August meeting will be the last board meeting that Gail chairs. Anne will start chairing meetings as of September. Gail will stay on as past chair until the AGM. Anne reports that finalization of the board slate for the 2020/21 year and the AGM will be the focus of the September meeting.

ii. Past Chair role

Gail will act as Past Chair until the AGM. Gail suggested that Gus would take on the role of a past chair after that.

iii. Empty board positions

Anne will reach out to individual board members to understand where each board member is at in terms of their service and what some of the issues are from their perspective.

Many key people intend to return for the 20/21 term including:

- Anne as incoming chair
- Lena as treasurer
- Andrea as secretary
- SW reps- Jane and Bob
- SC reps- Simon and Susan
- NW reps- Nicole and Christian
- SE reps- Gina and Cathy
- NE is up in the air still -Nick intends to stay on as NE rep but Carolee is leaving for sure

Merrill will be vacating her position at the end of this term and willing to train anyone who is interested on or outside of the board to take on the role. Nicole noted that for a membership

position it would be helpful if it was already someone on the board but in the absence of that if anyone knows people in the community who would be well suited for the role that they bring the names forward to the Nominating Committee. It was noted that any candidate for the membership role should be able to use Excel which is a big component of the job. The person also needs to be detailed oriented since they need to be able to maintain good records.

Gail noted that Merrill's efforts and contributions to the board have been significant. The committee structure that she set up made a difference to the membership file. Gail thanked Merrill for her contributions. She will be missed. Sue moved for a motion of thanks to Merrill for all the work that she has done. Nicole seconds. Motion carried.

In addition to being the NE area rep for a number of years, Carolee has been on P and D for a long time. She will continue to work on the P and D committee for now with Sue and Bob for the time being.

Webmaster position is flux; it is too much for her / one person. Regine is willing to step aside if someone wants to take on the role full time. Nick and Regine are going to have a discussion about sharing the webmaster role.

At the bare minimum, the Board will need to fill a NE area rep position and a membership position.

b. King Edward yard revitalization (Bob)

Jane and Bob met with school board officials and the trustee to talk about the design elements. The city is giving \$150K to the project and a community access agreement will need to be formalized. The success was reported to the councillor's office and was met with a belated thank you. The HVRA will be invited to the next iteration of the design meetings to provide input and an additional meeting at the end of August to talk to where the city money will go. The field elements are the most important aspects in Bob's opinion as it seems to be the most used from a community perspective. Gail thanked Bob and Jane on behalf of the Board for their work on this initiative.

c. Support for the Farmers' Market (Gus)

Since the Bloor Borden market was instituted some years ago the HVRA and ARA give \$500 a piece annually in support of the initiative. Gus moved that HVRA donate \$500 to the market committee; Susan seconded. Motion carried.

d. Transportation Committee report (Nicole)

Nicole reported that the TC was originally founded because of safety issues in the neighbourhood and is now trying to figure out what direction it is going in. It undertook the traffic study and then it inherited the bike lane installation discussion. The three members of the committee want to keep the committee focussed on safety so the TC is proposing that the committee be renamed the "Safe Streets" committee to better identify what it does. Nicole moved a motion to rename the TC to Safe Streets Committee; Merrill seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Clearly safety is still an issue in the neighbourhood (the PCC was canvassed for agenda items and most of their items were safety related). We have very little control over this but there are still things we can do e.g. push for clarification on signage, red light and speed cameras. Nicole

asked if there were any members of the board who wanted to join the committee in its efforts to approach the city re: red light cameras (such as Bathurst and Harbord). Gus reminded the Board that the committee doesn't need to be constituted of board members only; it can include members from the community. Gail asked that if anyone is interested in joining the Safe Streets Committee, they should email Nicole or similarly if they know of anyone that might be interested outside of the board, they should let her know.

e. Net Zero Committee update

Tim Grant joined the meeting to provide an update on the Net Zero committee.

The Toronto Atmospheric Fund was approached to see if they would be interested in funding HVRA's proposals which the committee is trying to fast track. The team is still deciding how much to ask for (e.g. \$50K to 150K) for the retrofit project. The second project, an electric vehicle project, would seek to promote electric cars and bikes. TAF has asked for a proposal for a \$5 to 15K grant for this initiative which would include a major survey on current HV residents to see what it would take to get them to switch to an e-vehicle. Tim reported that there is an Aug 29th deadline for these two proposals which he intends to share with the Board 24 to 48 hours in advance of the deadline. The committee is asking the board for approval to proceed in principle with these two initiatives. Susan put forward a motion to support in principal these two proposals; Nick seconded. Motion carried.

f. Vice Chair role discussion

i. Proposed Constitutional Amendment re Vice Chair (Gus)

Gus offered that the 2016 constitutional amendments that were approved by the Board dealt with succession and no one contemplated how many terms the vice chair would have to serve. The practice has been that there is a vice chair that is ready to step into the role after some overlap with the chair.

ii. Proposed Constitutional Amendment re Vice Chair (Nicole)

Nicole appreciates the difficulty with the succession issue but offered that the reason there was no Vice Chair is that we couldn't find someone to take it on. She suggested that it is inherently problematic to get someone to sign on as a successor to the Chair a year or two in advance. Nicole offered that although succession is important, the way it has worked out is not how it was intended. Anne stepped in as Vice Chair but she didn't serve in the role for a year or two. Nicole stressed the importance of having institutional resilience in the form of a back up for the Chair.

Andrea noted that the Vice Chair position as written in the constitution is not in any way an optional position on the board but it appears that it has been treated that way. She noted that it is one of the few named positions that are meant to be presented for voting by the membership at the AGM. The past chair is not an elected position. Andrea agreed with Nicole that the organization should have some resilience in the form of a Vice Chair.

Gus expressed concern that the HVRA is already a large board and that the Vice Chair as a role would not have enough to do. Merrill didn't accept the argument the Vice Chair would have nothing to do; there are many committees that need membership in addition to the duties assigned to the Vice Chair by the role and by the Chair. Nicole offered that the Vice Chair

position could be held by a member of the board as an additional role and that the Chair could delegate tasks to the Vice Chair as he or she sees fit.

Cathy offered that there are some very specific duties attributed to the Vice Chair on the HVRA website in which the Vice Chair is positioned as support for the Chair. Cathy offered that if the Vice Chair was a viable role it might make the Chair's role easier and therefore make it easier to find someone to take on the Chair role when a term is ending. Cathy didn't think that forcing a Vice Chair to take on the Chair role after transition was appropriate, but rather it would be better to leave the option open to the Vice Chair.

Merrill offered that she preferred positioning the Vice Chair role as a one-year role at the end of which the Vice Chair might consider running for the Chair role when there is a transition. In other organizations she has been in there have been Vice Chairs.

Andrea offered that we defer the conversation until Anne takes over and she reminded the board that Gus has been providing a lot of the support function to Gail and it's not clear what the situation will be after the transition. Sue also suggested that we defer the discussion because there is such disagreement. Anne suggested that we strike a sub committee to further discuss the issue and the potential issues. Gus offered that this is a task for the new board to deliberate on. Nicole offered that since it is a position that should be presented at the AGM, we should not defer the conversation to the new board after the AGM. If we want to reconsider the role of the Vice Chair time for the 20/21 year, time is of the essence. Merrill offered that there is a Constitutional committee contemplated in the constitution already. Anne suggested that it should be an ad hoc committee to discuss this issue. Gus withdrew his motion.

g. AGM Planning (Gail / Anne)

Anne said that she is involved in another board and they held a Zoom AGM and it was a very positive experience. Everyone was invited with a Zoom link; there were some issues with people getting on Zoom but they managed workarounds with Facetime. People were asked to check in by writing their name in on the comments. They had a slide deck for the agenda and they voted by online polls (e.g. a slide would appear on screen; a pop up would ask for their vote – yay, nay, abstain; votes posted so people could see). Each agenda item was opened up for discussion. The agenda items were moved through fairly quickly. Breakout rooms could be done in Zoom. It needs to be vastly streamlined so that we can get through the content in a meaningful way.

Nicole offered that we need breakout rooms for the area caucuses because it's important to have people talk about local issues. Gail offered that breakout rooms are very effective if used properly. She suggested doing a run through in advance with the area reps. Andrea will extend an invitation to the councillor to provide an update (no more than 10 minutes including update and Q&A) at the meeting. People could submit questions in the chat and the chat function would need a moderator as well. Jane offered that maybe there is a way to collect questions in advance from participants as they are RSVPing. This might help in keeping the meeting moving along. Bob suggested that we might want to screen the questions that come in to put a curated list forward including a mix of collective and more individual type questions in an effort to keep the councillor accountable to what he is / is not doing. Lena suggested it may be worthwhile to hire a facilitator to help us execute the meeting.

Gus suggested that Anne and Gail take on the initiative to deal with the finer points of the planning for the AGM meeting. There will be more discussion at the September HVRA meeting.

h. Central Tech community access (Nicole)

Gus offered that questions should be forwarded to him directly going forward. Nicole suggested that the information to contact Gus be put on the HVRA website so community members know where to direct their inquiries. The problem she identified is that Razor has not been great at publicizing the public access hours or changes to the hours.

Nicole reminded the Board that one of the reasons that the HVRA and the councillor opposed the Dome is because of privatization. She asked if this issue of problems with community access should be formally raised with the TDSB and the councillor by the Board to make sure they are aware of the issue. It would serve as a cautionary tale should they continue to do business with Razor or with other partners who attempt to privatize public space. Bob offered that Covid is being used as an excuse but that no one will listen to us now. We will have to wait until things normalize to find a receptive audience. Andrea updated that the dome seems to be open for business as usual and that it is unacceptable that they are unable to post the hours in a timely fashion and on their website. Gus offered that Razor did promise to post the hours on posters outside of the venue. He wants to know if this is happening?

i. Trees

Sue commented that Daniel Suss had success with City Forestry in an ask for a tree in front of his house. He asked the HVRA to send out information in an e-blast as to how to request a tree. People are asked to CC the HVRA and the councillor so that the HVRA can understand how many trees are being requested.

j. Community Policing Liaison (Gail)

Michael Borelli provided an update that he hadn't heard anything from the police on the incidents that Gina reported re: the abductions in Little Italy.

Gail reported that Margaret Fairley park has been the site of an encampment which has left a lot of waste in the park. A report to 311 was made (3 calls). Someone came out from the city to address the situation.

6. Any Other Business

Gus offered thanks to Gail for her leadership on the board and in parting she offered that the board should keep up its efforts to continue to do more great things.

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): Robert St. field construction continues until mid-September: <https://chestnut.utoronto.ca/home/student-residence/residence-projects-updates/>. Light standards and traffic lights have been installed at Robert and Harbord, awaiting installation of signal control box. Rehabilitation of the balconies continues at 666 Spadina, with the last of the balconies removed in July. Concrete chipping to remove

damaged balcony floors to expose rebar will continue until September. Local restaurants have requested and received community support for CafeTO patio program on neighbourhood streets. Bike lanes on Bloor are complete, garbage cans have been installed and parkettes are looking nice, if a bit weedy.

- **North West** (Nicole/Christian): Damage has been reported at the parkette by Rexall. Bike lanes on Brunswick are installed and appear to be calming traffic. The bike lane at Brunswick and Harbord does not have the cut-out through the bump-out for the bikes (which was what was in the plan we were all shown) but is still being planned. New burger place, "Aunty Lucy's" at the Annex Hotel. Unpredictable hours of opening of Central Tech track. Construction noise from 201 Brunswick has repeatedly disturbed neighbours and led to some screaming matches in the street. Uptick in rates in the neighbourhood. Concerns about the proposed development at 225 Brunswick (NE corner of Sussex). The planned construction at 189 Brunswick remains delayed but should commence soon according to the school's leadership. The almost completed addition to the laundromat on Harbord looks like a giant black shipping container from the North much to the dismay of the neighbours.
- **South Central** (Simon/Susan) New bike lanes have been implemented in the SC area and seem to be working well: we haven't heard any complaints (yet). Cars coming north from College up Brunswick remain a problem--possibly related to a missing Do Not Enter sign: we're following this up. Complaints about the illegal AirB&B at 70 Major.
- **South East** (Cathy/Gina): Russell Street was (erroneously) resigned west of Spadina; the item reported to Councillor and the old name put back. Richard Longley still pushing for our part of Russell to be renamed. The pop-out boulevard patio is in use at the top of Robert at Harbord (Flock) as well as other parts of Harbord. Still awaiting the traffic light to be turned on at Robert & Harbord.
- **South West** (Jane/Bob): HVRA worked with King Edward Public School & TDSB officials to help secure \$150,000 from the city for the Yard Revitalization Project, subject to a Community Access Agreement. The Councillor accepted HVRA partnership with the City in negotiating the CAA with the Board. The City has been contacted regarding the new southbound counterflow bike lane on Borden. It has a stop line for cyclists at the intersection with Vankoughnet but a stop sign is missing.

Parent Consultation Committee Report (Gina)

Parent concerns included: a more evident stop sign at Sussex & Borden, a more visible Do Not Enter sign at Lennox & Borden going northbound, signage at Borden and College to deter trucks, a safe socially responsible Halloween plan for the neighbourhood.

Nick put forward a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Gus. Meeting adjourned at 9:12 pm.

Minutes prepared by Andrea Poptsis, Secretary.