

## **Harbord Village Residents' Association Board Meeting**

**Tuesday, November 16, 2021, 7:00 pm**

**by Zoom call**

### **APPROVED MINUTES**

**Attendees:** Elizabeth Chen, Kerry Clare, Simon Coleman, Sue Dexter, Anne Fleming, Karen Laurence, Susan McDonald, Cathy Merkley, Lena Mortensen, Christian Mueller, Nick Provart, Gus Sinclair, Robert Stambula

**Regrets:** Gina Buonaguro, Frank Davis, Jane Perdue

1. **Chair's Welcome:** Anne called the meeting to order at 7:05.
2. **Approval of Agenda:** Gus moved adoption of the agenda, seconded by Elizabeth. Agenda adopted.
3. **Approval of the September 21 Board Meeting Minutes:** Gus moved approval of the minutes, seconded by Lena. **Motion Passed.**
4. **Approval of the October 21 AGM Minutes:** Susan moved approval of the minutes with a minor amendment; Cathy seconded. **Motion passed.**
5. **Business Arising from Past Minutes**

**5.1 Pumpkin Fest (Lena):** Lena thanked everyone who made it happen, especially Kerry, who is one of the key reasons it was as successful as it was. Thank you to all the board members who made it happen. There were two contests -- house decoration and pumpkin carving, and they were both pretty successful. The question was raised, but not resolved, about whether the contest would be continued once we are able to return to our street-based Pumpkin Fest. Anne thanked Nick and the web team for doing such a good job.

**5.2 Safe Streets: Contraflow Lanes (Anne):** Anne reported that there had been some confusion around HVRA communication with the councillor about contraflow lane concerns; however, now that there is a board member (Kerry) on the Safe Streets Committee, Anne thought that would no longer be a problem. Anne also reported that the city would like a meeting with area residents to review the contraflow lanes. The difficulty of this topic was discussed, and there was general agreement that the responsibility for calling a review meeting, inviting participants, and determining what tweaks to the contraflow lanes are required lie with the city. HVRA's role should only be facilitating the meeting, not putting forward an opinion. Anne said she would take this information to the councillor.

**5.3 AGM Follow-up (Anne):** Anne said the minutes of both the October 2020 AGM and the Spring 2021 GM are now posted to the website. She also mentioned that the Net Zero Committee presentation from the AGM is being turned into a YouTube video and it would soon be on the website.

## **6. New Business**

### **6.1 Public Realm Committee**

- a. Laneway Suites (Sue):** Following a year -long review of Laneway Housing, the city is proposing changes to the existing by-laws. These changes include increasing the allowable height of a building and reducing the required soft landscaping between houses. There is considerable community opposition to these changes. There will be a Planning and Housing Committee meeting November 25<sup>th</sup> to review these proposed amendments, and the Public Realm Committee will be sending a letter opposing them.
- b. College Street Upgrades (Bob):** Bob expressed concern that there was a lack of coordination between the Public Realm Committee and the Safe Streets Committee around the issue of College St. upgrades. He pointed out that this is more than just a bike lane improvement project (as its name suggests) and though the plan for the bike lanes was well articulated in the city plan, there was very little detail about pedestrian safety and greening of the neighbourhood, and until we had more information about those elements of the plan, HVRA should welcome cycling improvements but press for full disclosure, contribute suggestions for improvements in all elements of the project (pedestrian improvements and greening), and reserve comment on the whole until more is known. The Board accepted this approach and Bob was charged with leadership on this for HVRA.
- c. College Steet Upgrades (Kerry):** Kerry suggested that now that there was a Safe Streets liaison on the HVRA board better communication should be possible. She referenced the Safe Streets Committee report, saying it brought up issues of pedestrian safety.
- d. Café TO. And Autonomous Vehicles on Sidewalks (Bob):** Bob reported on the November 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee at which Autonomous Vehicles were discussed. He urged the TAAC not to renegotiate the existing 2.1 metre pedestrian clearway City requirement, and recommended that they oppose AV being operated, parked or stored on public sidewalks. On the subject of Cafe TO. he expressed that all were sympathetic about the need to be flexible during the pandemic, but that next year, with new patio rules to kick in, that the pedestrian clearway be followed for both able-bodied people and people with disabilities.

**6.2 Planning & Development -- 19 Borden St. (Gus):** Gus Reported that there had been 4 years of unpermitted work (under multiple owners) on this house, and as it appeared the work was ongoing, P & D contacted the Committee of Adjustment asking for a deferral until it could be determined what renovation has been done. The CofA and the new owner agreed to the deferral. Gus thanked Sue for her expert advice on this matter.

### **6.3 Climate Statement and Motion (Sue):**

The climate crisis is the result of billions of individual and collective decisions. To end it, will require determination, vigilance and sacrifice at all levels in all societies.

Neighbourhoods matter. We are the source of emissions, our trees are a carbon sink. We are also the lynchpin between the City government and residents and as individuals and within associations are in the unique position to influence both.

We respond directly to proposals from government. We actively seek positive change.

Our challenge is

- to consider the ecological consequences in what we do,

- to recommend changes to policies and initiatives that have negative impacts on the environment,

- to encourage and assist fellow residents to take steps to protect the planet's systems that sustain life.

Over the years, HVRA Board has undertaken many projects including trees, household retrofits, movement, heat island reduction. Today we have a NetZero Committee that is promoting household retrofits and studying E-bikes.

We can do more.

In future, we will apply an ecological impact consideration on our actions and on the policies we advocate and those we respond to from governments.

**MOVED:** That HVRA apply an ecological impact consideration on actions we take and policies we advocate with the goal of reducing carbon emissions, to restore the health of the planet.

Moved by Sue; Gus seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** Gus suggested that now that we have adopted the statement, we should share it with other RAs and get a movement going.

**6.4 Inclusionary Zoning Letter (Anne):** Anne confirmed that she signed the Progress Toronto open letter supporting Inclusionary Zoning in Toronto on behalf of HVRA. There was a IZ motion at City Hall, and the most basic version of that motion was carried.

**6.5 FoSTRA Membership (Anne):** Anne proposed that HVRA join this association. Gus moved; Sue seconded. **Motion passed.**

**6.6 December Board Meeting (Anne):** Anne suggested that as the scheduled date for the December meeting was just 4 days before Christmas, the meeting should be moved to December 14. The board agreed.

**7. Committee and Area Rep Reports:** Attached as separate documents.

**8. Other Business**

**8.1 Ontario Corporations Act (Anne):** There is a new Non-profit Corporations Act that came into force in October, and all non-profit corporations need to ensure they are in compliance with the new act, so this is something we will need to take care of. Anne will attend an information session to find out the next steps.

**8.2 Delivery bicycles on Bloor Street (Kerry):** A question from the Safe Streets Committee report – was there a response to the July letter to the BIA trying to discourage delivery bikes on sidewalks. Anne said she had not yet sent the letter but will send it to both the Bloor Annex BIA and the Harbord Street BIA.

**8.3 Net Zero Webpage:** Sue complimented Susan McDonald and the Net Zero committee for their work on the webpage. Gus added that Anne Stevens particularly wanted to thank Margaret and Nick for all their help with the website work. Sue suggested that the compliments be passed on to Margaret and Nick as neither were at the board meeting. Gus agreed to do that.

**8.4** Gus welcomed the new board members, Elizabeth, Kerry and Karen.

**9. Gus moved that the meeting be adjourned;** Kerry seconded. **Meeting adjourned at 8:49**

## **APPENDICES**

### **Northeast Area Reps' Report**

U of T's Robert St. field has opened for use by U of T students and school kids, and the community green space opened with no fanfare on October 12th. It immediately has become a popular place to hang out. Installation of artwork from the Centre for Indigenous Studies on the east fence is ongoing. Demolition of 698 and 700 Spadina is complete, with the east and south walls of 698 Spadina (old 10 Editions Bookstore) retained and supported by a giant exoskeleton.

A meeting of the Construction Management Committee for the U of T/Daniels residence project was held on the 27th of October where U of T promised to investigate how access to the Robert Street field will be enabled when it is not booked for use by U of T, as per the OMB settlement terms.

At 666 Spadina, the last of the concrete work to reinforce the parking garage slab is finally done. The POPS (privately-owned, publicly-accessible space) is taking shape, with form work for the area complete, and new low walls in place.

A petition was circulated to residents of Sussex Avenue between Robert and Sussex Mews to have speed humps installed on that stretch of Sussex Ave. A majority of owners have voted in favour of this.

Still not sure what is going on with the gas station where Tino's used to be...construction hoarding is down, however.

Nicholas Provart & Frank Davis

### **Northwest Area Reps' Report**

'Tis the season for an abundance of over-flowing, leaf-clogged drains!

If that weren't enough, construction at two properties on Brunswick is making life tough for nearby residents.

In addition, while operating in good faith, there are some neighbours who would still like a meeting to discuss the 225 Brunswick issue, as per our breakout meeting at the AGM.

We understand why such a meeting might not be productive but nonetheless want to have it on record that this was requested.

Christian Mueller

### **Southwest Area Reps' Report**

The SW re-elected Jane and I as reps.

We discussed housing affordability and the changes in the neighbourhood such as the very active expansion of housing units through renovations producing two, or three units from one address.

Robert Stambula

**Southeast and South Central** had no news to report this month.

## Nov. 10, 2021 U of T Liaison/planning

1. There are now developments in play on three of the four corners of Bloor and Spadina. 350 Bloor, east of Shopper's is close to coming to council. The northeast corner ScotiaBank proposal has just come in. The University is some distance along in planning towers for Site One, on the southeast corner of Bloor and Spadina. The Councillor wants to put in an affordable housing building north of the subway station north of Bloor.  
There should be a study encompassing the entire intersection, as, if all developments were approved, we would be housing an additional thousand people at an already congested intersection, with resultant pressures of greenspace, transportation etc.
2. Huron-Sussex, Annex and HVRA attended the first meeting with U of T, City Planning and the Councillor on Site 1—the west side of UTS to Washington off Spadina.  
No architect has been hired, so the University outlined in general what its wish list may be for the site. Their idea is to build two towers, 93 and 97 m. with tower separation. These would flank Spadina and Bloor, west of the UTS heritage building, and would extend into the parking lot behind. Heights conform to the Knox viewshed zoning requirement. The buildings will be mostly for housing but including some retail and some institutional. The project is at the notional stage and subsequent meetings will be held to identify points of concern.  
City Planning gave its thoughts on the updated U of T Secondary Plan context. At the moment, the City is looking into heritage protection for the Spadina flank. The planner indicated the City would not at this point object to the University building onto the backwalls of houses along Washington St.  
In subsequent meetings, the communities will engage on this issue and others that may arise in the course of the discussions. They are using the ARA checklist as a basis for identifying concerns.
3. The Queen's Park heritage conservation district planning group has resumed work, with plans to draft a study proposal, in keeping with council direction on the Planetarium site.
4. HVRA comments on amendments to the rules concerning Laneway Housing are attached. City Planning may have agreed to loosen the soft landscaping provision of the bylaw, from a requirement of 85% soft landscaping to what may be 60%. Planning will recommend an increase in height from 6.0 to 6.3 m. and will slightly reduce the laneway greenspace requirement. We will be able to draft out letter of objection once we see the actual planning report.
5. The IZ proposal is now with the Province. It applies only to areas around major transit stops. The minister has the authority to unilaterally change its provisions. Developments with less than 100 new units would be covered. Replacement units for displaced tenants would be additional. So if there are 30 existing tenants, affordable in a new build would not be triggered on an application under 130 units.

## SafeStreets November report

### Ongoing business:

- Followed up on the promise to install painted stop lines at signed stops where absent (one has been done so far, and seems to be helping), Councillor's office has made sure that they are in the queue so we will keep waiting
- Still waiting on completion of parts of Brunswick/Borden counterflow (raised intersection at Borden & Ulster and the installation of bike crossing at College has been tied to College St. renewal, see below, in 2022)

### Awaiting from the board:

- Was there a response to our July letter to the Bloor St BIA about trying to discourage delivery bikes from using the sidewalks?
- Who, aside from us, will be involved in the proposed community meeting regarding the Brunswick/Borden contraflow? And when will it occur?

Currently we have been looking into the safety aspects of the proposed changes to College. Councillor Layton made it quite clear that one of the projects main goals is increasing road safety for all users, and the design includes various features to:

- protect cyclists from traffic
- calm traffic through lane narrowing
- improve safety for people getting on and off streetcars with improved marking for crossing the cycle track
- provide cycle lanes that will not be made impassible by snow clearance (as is now the case)
- create cycle lanes that are wide enough to allow passing within them, without entering vehicular lanes (which will be physically separated)
- increase pedestrian safety through traffic calming intersections
- coherently tie into the Bellevue/Borden NS bike lanes

Overall these changes should make College and the streets that connect with College, safer -- which is what we want. So overall we are enthusiastic. That said, it is not a perfect plan and there are a few specifics that we would like to see addressed:

- The Spadina/College intersection is currently too dangerous. Although this plan is limited in how much it can improve it, we would like the city to make a commitment to explore and implement what is possible.
- The plan includes raised pedestrian crossings of a few of the streets where they meet College. This is an excellent traffic calming measure, and we would like to see it applied to as many of the intersecting streets as possible (at least one street cannot have it because of drainage issues). The current practice is to only implement it near schools, but as I believe all of those killed or seriously injured on this stretch were adults that does not make sense.
- It remains unclear what kind of measures would be implemented for businesses with CafeTO terraces, if there are any, to prevent collisions as patrons and staff cross the bike lane. This needs to be thought through because it is potentially quite dangerous.
- The specifics of how the bike crossing/holding pen at Borden, the signalized laneway South of College by Kensington school, and the pedestrian crossings are planned need to be clarified as well (the signalized pedestrian crossing of the sidewalk is bizarre and should be removed). That these are immediately adjacent to a school makes safety at this junction particularly important.

The overall goals of this plan are ones we endorse, and we hope that the board will also endorse the plan, with the caveats that we are able to work out these details to everyone's satisfaction.