

Harbord Village Residents' Association Spring General Meeting

Tuesday, May 16, 7:00– 9:00 pm

by Zoom call

APPROVED MINUTES

Anne Fleming, the Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. There were approximately 28 Participants at the meeting.

The Chair welcomed residents to the Zoom Spring General Meeting and read the land acknowledgement statement.

1. **Approval of Agenda:** Leslie Thompson moved to approve the agenda as amended. Elizabeth Chen seconded. **Agenda was approved.**
2. **Approval of October 2022 AGM Minutes:** Tania Lewis moved that the minutes of the October 2022 Annual General Meeting be adopted; Chan Sethi seconded. **The Minutes were approved.**
3. **Approval of acting board members:** The Chair reported that two board members, Nick Provart and Simon Coleman had take a leave of absence and that the board had named acting board members, Michael Jara and Tania Lewis whose appointment needed to be approved by the general membership. Elizabeth Chen moved approval of the acting board members; Chan Sethi seconded. **The motion passed.**
4. **Chair's Remarks** (Anne Fleming): The chair summarized the achievements of the last six months. We held our first in person PumpkinFest since 2019. The organizers are looking for volunteers to help out with this year's. We sponsored an electoral forum for civic election and have since had a number of meetings with our new city councillor, who has also regularly attended HVRA Board Meetings. HVRA participation in the Fort York Food Bank's Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser was a huge success, with our teams raising more than \$17,000. We had a great turn-out for the Spring Clean-up. Thank you, Kerry Clare, for organizing that. The Spring newsletter was published and distributed, and there is now an updated version available online. Jody Salomon prepared a report on amendments to the Bylaws for Property Standards and Multi-Unit Housing, which is attached to the February minutes. Thank you, Jody, for that. We were very active in resisting Bills 23 and 39, as well as the Metrolinx development of Osgood Hall land. On the bright side, we supported the Active To Yonge St. Cycling Network Expansion. Robert Stambula has been working with U of T students on the Boulevard Project, has brought it to the attention of the councilor. The Fall Fair will be held Sunday, September 10th, and we are looking for volunteers to help with that. We also need volunteers for help with the eblast, and we are still looking for a co-chair, so if anyone is interested in helping out in any of these areas, please get in touch.

5. **Financial report:** Treasurer Lena Mortensen was not able to attend tonight, so Anne presented the Financial Report on her behalf. She pointed out that the board has passed both the Year End Statements and Proposed Budget, and they are now posted online (<https://harbordvillage.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Financial-Statement-Year-End-Jan-Dec-2022.pdf> and <https://harbordvillage.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Budget-2023-no-detail.pdf>). Anne also mentioned that the association may be changing banks for a number of reasons, but principally because our current bank, RBC, is the largest investor in fossil fuel development in the world, this does not align with our Net Zero policy.

6. **Committee Updates:**

6.1 Planning & Development Report: Sue Dexter reported on the various stages of development of projects in HV: the Metro site at Robert and Bloor, Knox Church at Spadina and Harbord, as well as those at Spadina and Bloor. She also mentioned that there is an increasing problem with poorly managed/illegal rooming houses in our neighbourhood and that the councilor should be doing more to find a solution to this issue.

6.2 NetZero Committee: Susan McDonald summarized what the committee has done in the last year and what its long-term goals are, and said more detailed information could be found on the website (<https://harbordvillage.com/projects/netzero-carbon-project/>).

7. **Comments from Ward 11 Councillor Dianne Saxe**

The city councilor began by commending HVRA on their environmental work, saying it was the most active RA in this area and a great example for others. She then summarized what has been going on in City Hall. It has been a big month for climate action. Last week the council approved a legal structure for a serious carbon budget. Toronto is the first city in Canada to do this. Council finally has a Memorandum of Understanding with Hydro, getting them to work with The City on Transform TO. Council received the first full Transform TO progress report. The City has hundreds of new zero-emission buses and are working towards getting city staff out of cars and onto bicycles. They are expanding the electric bike-share program. So a lot of action on climate change. They are working with parks on capital upgrades, getting more benches on public streets, and putting in more water fountains, taking every opportunity to improve the public realm.

8. **Comments from University-Rosedale MPP Jessica Bell**

The HVRA's local MPP gave a brief update about what's happening at Queen's Park. The NDP continues to push the Conservative Government to approve the City of Toronto's inclusionary zoning policy, so developers contribute and pay their fair share to help our housing affordability crisis. Enbridge is applying to the Ontario Energy Board to have Ontarians pay for a very large investment in gas infrastructure which will drive up energy prices but should cause more people to move towards greener forms of energy. Bill 97 is currently being debated in the legislature. This bill moves forward with some modest rental protections, but there are problems with it. It is too weak to deal with the illegal eviction crisis that we have in Ontario. The NDP is working to include stronger tenant protections in the bill. The government has created a "pro-sprawl" document called the

Provincial Planning Statement that radically alters the way we plan and build in Ontario, which could become law without going through the legislature. It is very concerning because it doubles down on opening up the green belt, which will increase the amount of farmland that will be lost, and there are no density requirements, so it does nothing to address the housing crisis. The good news is that there are many diverse groups and municipalities that are organising around this in an effective way. The NDP is still seeing the impacts of Bill 23 which limits the amount of development fees municipalities can collect, which is forcing them to increase property taxes and at the same time cut services. They are working with municipalities to push back: developers either have to pay their share or the provincial government needs to make municipalities whole. There is a big TDSB funding shortfall, and they are talking about laying off staffing position. The NDP is pushing to allow the TDSB to once again collect fees from developers so our schools can meet the needs of families moving into a new area. They are also working with the Ontario Autism Coalition to help parents whose kids are being sent home because schools do not have the resources to deal with special needs students.

9. Area caucuses (break out rooms) and Reports

- 9.1 North West Report (Christian/Kerry):** Kerry reported on a very positive experience with 311. It was great to make a call about garbage and the city work quickly and efficiently to deal with it. We talked about people living in Margaret Fairley Park. That was the case in the spring. Neighbours had been supportive, but they became unruly and it was too much. There is someone new living there now, so we have to think about how to be good neighbours and use these spaces thoughtfully. The 225 Brunswick demolition has begun, and there were reports last weekend that there was construction on Sunday, but this weekend seemed fine. We talked about the graffiti, which is a problem in our area, and dumping, not just in Bagpipe Lane, but in the laneway south of there as well. And setting off firecrackers is all the rage right now.
- 9.2 North East Report (Michael/Frank)** We had not too much to report. We welcomed a couple of new members to the neighbourhood. There was discussion of the ongoing concerns around bikes – particularly ebikes riding on sidewalks, excessively noisy vehicles driving through the neighbourhood, delivery trucks blocking bike lanes, and the general lack of policing around these issues. The three main issues: The Circle K still being open outside its hours; Sussex/Spadina Residence construction as well as 666 Spadina, there have been no updates on.
- 9.3 South West (Jane/Robert)** Everyone is enjoying the King Edward public space, which now has gates on Lippincott. Mostly we talked about the Boulevards Project.
- 9.4 South Central (Susan/Tania)** The first concern was from someone living next to a legitimate construction site where all kinds of things have gone wrong, causing damage to her property, and the city will have nothing to do with it. The city won't do anything about illegal construction either, so this is something we may have to do more about. There was discussion about heat pumps and how difficult it is to make a conversion once a furnace has stopped working, especially if you have radiators, and this highlights the need to think about these things in advance, and plan for them before your furnace fails. We also talked about the biking on sidewalks problems – even on Brunswick where there are bike lanes going both ways. Finally – there has been an illegal renovation happening on Major for over three or four years. It has

been functioning as an illegal rooming house during this time, and the neighbour has been fighting this at TLab for over two years and fears she may not win. It is really frustrating. There is garbage and rats, and calling 311 has not helped.

9.5 South East (Cathy/Jody): Cathy said there had been 311 successes: help with construction issues, getting garbage cans back. Rooming houses came up. We are losing some neighbours partially because they are being surrounded by illegal rooming houses and have been dealing with the problems of the property not being properly managed for multiple tenants. This is a big problem in the neighbourhood. Distemper came up -- raccoons in neighbourhood are spreading it, so pet owners should be careful. And graffiti is on the rise; it has become a big problem in the SE. If you call the police, they will always ask if you have cameras, or video to share, so that is something for discussion.

10. Community Builder Award: Anne announced that Jim Robinson had been named Spring 2023 Community Builder. Many years ago, Jim Robinson built a mini free lending library in front of his home on Major St., south of Harbord. He styled it after the Victorian houses in Harbord Village. Books are free to take, and there's space for donations of adult books and also kids' books and games. It has become a hub for the neighbourhood, with people chatting as they check out the latest titles or drop off their extras and look for something else to read. A later addition was a children's library at just the right height for easy browsing, and there are even welcoming lights in the wintertime. What a great service to the community!

11. Guest Speaker: Sarah Grant, Goldfinch Energy spoke about heat pumps. Find her talk here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zn22aaQspYQ>

12. Other Business

13. Adjournment: Leslie Thompson moved to adjourn the meeting; Elizabeth Chen seconded. **The meeting adjourned at 9:08**