

**Lowertown Community Association  
L'Association communautaire de la Basse-Ville**

MEETING NOTES / NOTES DE RÉUNION – 10 MARCH 2014 / 10 MARS 2014

ROUTHIER COMMUNITY CENTRE / CENTRE COMMUNAUTAIRE ROUTHIER

- **Board members present:** Liz Bernstein (Vice President), Michael Kirkpatrick (Vice President), Ted Lawrence (Treasurer), Sarah Bonesteel (Secretary), Steve Monuk (Director, Business Liaison)
- **Appointed members present:** Liz Mackenzie (Co-Chair, Heritage Committee), John Woodhouse (Liaison, Lowertown East Resident's Committee), Michelle Ramsay-Borg (Brand Communication Advisor)
- **Total community members present:** 19

**1. Welcome Remarks / Mots de bienvenue (Liz Bernstein)**

- Welcome remarks and roundtable introductions.
- Marc Aubin, President, has resigned. This leaves a vacancy on the board. Please let a member of the board know if you are interested in joining the board or want more information. You can also contact [info@lowertown-basseville.ca](mailto:info@lowertown-basseville.ca). We are looking for someone with an interest in a particular area who will pursue it on behalf of the LCA. Liz and Mike will continue as co-presidents for the remainder of the year.

**2. Approval of Agenda and notes from last meeting / Approbation de l'Ordre du jour et notes de la dernière réunion (Liz Bernstein)**

- Notes from February 10, 2014 meeting approved.
- Agenda approved with the following change: Our Community Constable was not available this evening so will provide an update at the May meeting instead.

**3. Councillor's Update / Mise à jour du conseiller**

- **Present from the Councillor's Office:** Mathieu Fleury, Nathaniel Mullin
- **Winterfest:** Councillor thanked people for attending the winter carnival and noted that it was fun to see groups in the building and many youth. The rink at Jules Morin Park hosted an Ottawa Senators practice a few days later. Youth from St. Anne and York Street schools came out to see it.
- **Core Team Group/PPS Study:** Series of 14 items to pilot this summer, including a "night market" for fresh food on Thursdays (planned for early evening, popularity may lead to expansion of hours), trying to bring in more farmers through fee waivers, Savour Ottawa stand (close to EQ3) with "kitchen" showcasing what you can make with local produce. These initiatives are being undertaken by the City and BIA.

- **Rideau Street:** This is the third year of construction. Lane closures in each direction at Wurtemberg started today. The final work is being done on the water main. Afterward, final details and streetscaping will be completed. The Councillor's Office will continue to provide updates. Bus detours are not expected but there may be delays. The lane closures will last up to a month.
- **Uptown Rideau Community Development Plan (CDP) Review:** CDP is for section of Rideau between King Edward and Wurtemberg and was done in 2005. There has not been development in that area because of sewer and water restrictions. With the recent upgrades on Rideau, development can now begin. Two sites in that area are owned by Richcraft. Development plans for both were appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) and were settled with nine storeys whereas the CDP allows for a maximum of six storeys. This leaves the community vulnerable to additional projects being approved with greater than six storeys. The new Official Plan and Rideau CDP are not aligned. Melanie Knight is the City Planner reviewing the CDP and will be discussing her review at the LCA meeting in April. She will be looking for input from the community.
- **St. Patrick Re-Surfacing:** Will take place this summer. The City is aware that the intersection of Dalhousie and St. Patrick is in bad shape. St. Patrick has a concrete base under the asphalt and it is cracked about every 3m. This leads to cracks in the asphalt, which are patched by the City. As the concrete continues to move, the surface re-cracks.
- **Potholes:** Councillor Fleury asked that residents continue to report pot holes to 311. This helps the City know where to focus.

#### Questions (Q) and Responses (R) with Councillor Fleury:

- Q: How to obtain the OMB hearing results for Ridgecraft? R: The Councillor's office can obtain these through Melanie Knight.
- Q: Who is responsible for the pilot projects in the Byward Market? R: Markets Management, the BIA, and the City.
- Q: Lack of Oktoberfest events? R: Council approved certain activities but then they were turned down by the City's Special Events Team. The issue was roadway access versus public space and alcohol licensing, and whether a road closed to vehicle traffic is still considered a roadway.
- Q: Are any initiatives planned to proactively monitor/enforce patio size and A-frame signs? Community member would like to see proactive measures undertaken before patios are set up. R: BIA will send e-mails to business owners to remind them. Bylaw will enforce if rules are broken.
- Q: Complaint from community member that bylaw officers are not proactive and will not enforce bylaws unless a specific complain is made. Would like to see proactive enforcement. R: Councillor Fleury noted the complaint.
- Q: Note from community members about success community had last year by posting complaints about Blackthorn patio infractions on the LCA facebook page. R: Noted that the LCA is collaborating with Alanna from the Councillor's Office on a letter to the National Capital Corporation about enforcing patio and sign regulations on their property.
- Q: Concern expressed about lack of wheelchair accessible patios, especially given the amount of sidewalk space that patios take. R (Steve Monuk): at least six patios are wheelchair accessible. The heritage buildings are a challenge to accessibility. Because of restrictions on modifications, washrooms are only in the basement. If that is the case and they are not accessible to all, the patio is not required to be accessible. Patios are often constructed above-grade to provide a level surface for tables and chairs (sidewalks and stones are often not level enough).

- Q: Suggestion to measure and tape out legal limits of patios to ensure owners do not exceed allowable limits and construct patios that encroach on sidewalk space.
  - Q: When are patio licenses renewed? R (Steve Monuk): They are automatically renewed on April 1 each year. Owners pay for licenses all year but there are restrictions in place from Nov 15-Apr 1. During that time, owners can't have anything permanent in the patio space because of snow removal. They can also only have items out during hours of business.
  - Q: Are noise complaints factored into patio license renewal? Community member asked that Councillor Fleury continue to work with the community on the sidewalk encroachment issue. R (Steve Monuk): City staff has delegated authority to renew the licenses. Reviews are done on a case-by-case basis. If businesses have convictions, there would definitely be reviews.
  - Q: Want to attract more farmers to market but where would their stalls go? R: many vendors do not have full-time stalls and there is room to reduce parking and add more stalls.
  - Q: Update requested on City Environment Committee. R: There is no federal response to the Ottawa River Action Plan (ORAP) yet but the City is optimistic. The intent is to do it ASAP but it is funding based. It could be delayed because partners are not there. Climate change plan: Don't have response from Councillor leading this file but staff is on target to report in Q2 of 2014. Councillor Fleury will follow up with Councillor Chantiry.
- 4. Special Feature: Tar Free 613 Presentation (Ben Powless, Campaigner, Ecology Ottawa)**
- The Energy East Pipeline was proposed by TransCanada last summer. They want to take a pipeline that carries natural gas from Alberta to New Brunswick and convert it to carry oil. This would be one of the biggest oil pipelines in North America and the world.
  - It would carry diluted bitumen. This is concerning because of TransCanada's history of safety issues. A recent Energy Board review noted that TransCanada was not in compliance with some safety regulations on other pipelines. They have had several ruptures and spills, including those on pipelines converted from gas to oil. The pipeline is about 20 to 40 years old (depends on section).
  - The pipeline cuts into Ottawa in west end, near Kanata and within 1km of homes in Stittsville. It crosses the Rideau River north of Kemptville.
  - The pipeline is potentially dangerous to Ottawans. Ecology Ottawa is working to raise awareness and educate people about the risks and concerns associated with the pipeline. The pipeline would facilitate an expansion of Alberta tar sands, which are the biggest single source of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada, leading to more climate change. The pipeline passes over two of Ottawa's biggest aquifers (residents depend on for water), as well as over the Rideau River. The type of bitumen the pipeline would carry is very difficult to clean up if spilled in water.
  - Impacts of pipeline spills in other communities: diluted bitumen has distinct behaviour that is costly to clean up and takes long time to clean. The oil would get stuck at the bottom of the river so it is very hard to clean. This type of bitumen tends to sink, rather than float. With some spills, water bodies have been shut down for human use because they can't be cleaned. They would have to be dredged, which is too costly.
  - The pipeline is TransCanada's last ditch effort to get oil to the east coast and onto tankers to be sold abroad. The project presents a tremendous risk for residents along pipeline with no benefit for residents. Just benefits for TransCanada.
  - Ecology Ottawa has hosted information sessions and organized educational events.

- The process moving forward: TransCanada has submitted an application to the National Energy Board (NEB) for approval. The federal government has to approve or deny the application by 2015. The NEB's powers have been cut back. The Prime Minister now has the ultimate approval authority. The Ontario Government's Ministry of Energy has announced a review of the pipeline. This is significant because it is a federal project but Ontario has concerns about the potential environmental and economic impacts. Ontario is conducting hearings and consultations with citizens. The first date in Ottawa is April 7 in Stittsville. NEB hearing in Ottawa may start at the end of this year or early next year.
- Next events: April 13, Maude Barlow (Council of Canadians), Graham Saul (Ecology Ottawa), and Eriel Deranger (Athabasca Fort Chipewyan First Nation) will speak about the risks of the pipeline. The event will be held at the Mayfair Theatre, 7:00pm.
- The City of Ottawa will undertake its own risk assessment of the project, particularly to understand what capacity the City has to respond to spills.
- Q: Concerns expressed about spills but also about change the pipeline from gas to oil as this may lead to a natural gas shortage at peak times of year. R: TransCanada is proposing to possibly build another gas pipeline but that would be a separate application process so the timeline is unknown.
- Q: Any data on whether risks of spills increase with a converted pipeline? R: No specific data is available. Data from the United States on Keystone 1 (converted pipeline), which is 40 years old, had an estimated spill rate of 1 in 7 years but in its first year of operations had 12 spills. It was noted that TransCanada was not following its own safety regulations or Canada's safety regulations.
- Q: What constitutes a spill? R: This is a problem because we don't know how the government defines "spill". The provinces don't have an obligation to publish spill results. Through Access to Information, journalists in Alberta found 15,000 incidents over 40 years (average of two spills per day) that no one knew about. From the data, it seems that any release at all is considered a spill but information from the provinces is not forthcoming. Reportable incidents are those over a certain threshold and need to be reported to the NEB. Once an aquifer is contaminated, it can't be clean. It has to be re-dug elsewhere.
- Q: Who owns the pipeline? R: The pipeline is owned by TransCanada but in different areas is maintained by different companies. Enbridge is our local company that buys gas and ships it in the pipeline. They have raised concerns about potential lack of gas supply.
- Q: When NEB does their review, do they look at local impacts, such as lack of natural gas? R: People have to apply to participate in assessment process as experts or as people who are directly impacted. There are strict terms for participation and being approved to participate is a long process. You basically need to have pipeline going through your yard. The NEB is restricting public participation in hearings. Ecology Ottawa and other groups have raised the issue of exclusion.
- Q: Where is the provincial review? R: First one is April 7 in Stittsville: <http://www.ontarioenergyboard.ca/html/oebenergyeast>.
- Q: What is the City's role? From City point of view, they don't have an official role. Legally, the project just has federal authority. TransCanada has to apply to the City for some permits, and also to the province for some. At the political level, if municipalities come out against pipeline, Ontario could oppose it. Some municipalities in New Brunswick have already stated concerns. The City of

Vancouver applied to be intervener on the Kinder Morgan pipeline through Vancouver. We could look at their process as a precedent for Ottawa.

- Q: Is the Ontario process separate from the NEB or is there any shared responsibility? Ontario would be an intervener after conducting their own assessment, which will be more open to public.

## 5. Areas of Interest – Updates / Champs d'intérêt – Mise à jour:

### Planning Update / Mise à jour du Comité de planification (Liz MacKenzie on behalf of Sylvie Grenier)

- **7 Clarence (Memories restaurant):** Little support for the glass box-style building proposed to replace the existing structure, which is owned by NCC and in poor repair so will be demolished. The building is located in a Heritage Conservation District. The City's Built Heritage Sub-Committee did not approve of the proposal, which is for a higher, wider and longer building than the current one. The proposed building would also halve the width of the walkway to the Tin House Courtyard. The NCC will prepare a revised design for community and City consideration. There will be an article on this issue in the next Echo. Alternative design suggestion is to stone.
- **Uptown Rideau CDP:** City staff announced the review and update of the CDP, which was approved by Council in 2005. The plan is the result of extensive public consultation and it outlines a clear vision for the area of three to six storey buildings. Developers was higher heights (Dharma is proposing 16 storeys) so the City is looking at the CDP again. There will be an Open House on March 26 at the Rideau Library from 3:00-8:00pm. Community members are encouraged to attend.
- **541 Nelson:** The LCA Heritage Committee has requested that this building (corner of Rideau and Cobourg) be designated as a heritage building. It is the last of the grand mansions that were part of Upper Rideau Street. This building is at risk if the 16-storey proposal that we saw from Dharma last month and changes to the CDP are approved.
- **Lowertown East Heritage Review:** Nearly three years ago, the City promised to undertake a comprehensive review of the heritage properties in Lowertown East. Despite many requests, we have had little action. A letter to the Mayor pointing out the urgency of getting this work done has triggered a response. The city's senior heritage planner has asked the Heritage Committee to prioritize the list of buildings where designations have already been requested over the last three years. The LCA's letter to the mayor is in the March e-newsletter.
- **OMB Appeal on Traditional Main Street Zoning for King Edward Avenue:** The appeal has been submitted to oppose the zoning. If you are concerned about the zoning, please contact Ted Lawrence ([ted@storm.ca](mailto:ted@storm.ca)). The reasons for the appeal are explained in the March e-newsletter.
- **Union du Canada:** Concern about pedestrian safety at the intersection because the sidewalk and part of the roadway are blocked. This situation will continue until the end of April, when the blockade will be reduced to just the sidewalk on Dalhousie and York. Request from community members for Councillor Fleury to follow up on this issue and implement measure to increase pedestrian safety.

### Environment Update / Mise à jour environnementale (Liz Bernstein)

- Following up on walkability study, patios and sandwich boards, ORAP and City's Climate Change Strategy.
- There will be a Complete Streets Forum to discuss implementation on March 29. Please let us know if you plan to attend: [info@lowertown-basseville.ca](mailto:info@lowertown-basseville.ca). The event will be from 10-4 but the location is TBD.
- The LCA has endorsed a campaign asking the City not to sell bottled water in City facilities and at City events. Additional information and a petition are available in the e-newsletter.

### **Safety and Security Update / Mise à jour de sûreté et de sécurité (Steve Monuk)**

- **Sandwich Boards:** Business owners have an encroachment permit for their patio area so should not have anything that extends beyond the patio. The City sends a letter at the beginning of each patio season as a reminder. The BIA also sends reminder letter. Request that the LCA again collaborate with the BIA on a letter to businesses. Steve to co-ordinate letter with Liz.
- **PPS Study:** no money allocated for implementation until this year. The pilots Councillor Fleury mentioned are part of the study follow up.
- **Alcohol and Gaming Commission:** Has decided to allow Ontario VQA wines to be sold at market stalls. Considered local products. No beer, just wine at this point. Grapes in wine have to be grown in Ontario.
- **Lowertown Brewery:** new restaurant replacing Hard Rock Cafe. Building permit issued for renovations to roof. Second story patio will have retractable roof. Restaurant will have locally brewed beer. Will also have merchandise.
- **Canada Day:** Applications due soon for outdoor areas. Porta-potties will be installed in market.

### **Communications (Website) Update / Mise à jour des communications (site web) (Michelle Ramsay Borg and Sarah Meyer Truswell)**

- The next edition of the Echo will be bigger and on newsprint. The deadline for articles is Friday 14 March. The Echo team is looking for someone to connect with advertisers for rates, sizes, deadlines, etc. If you are interested in this volunteer job, please contact [echo@lowertown-basseville.ca](mailto:echo@lowertown-basseville.ca). Suggestion was made to let Jasna at the BIA know about the deadlines, etc so she can follow up with business owners in the market. Request made to increase size of LCA name on masthead to make association clear and easier to use when promoting LCA. Next step is to get enough advertising to fund Canada Post delivery, which would ensure the Echo is delivered to all condo and apartment buildings.
- **Website:** a committee of four is drafting the new website. It will go live on May 1 with whatever content is submitted by March 15. The committee has a volunteer translator but having a bilingual website is technologically complex so they are not yet sure if English and French content will be on the same page or whether there will be mirror websites.
- **E-newsletter:** The newsletter has a 45 to 48% click rate (those that receive and open it).
- **Facebook:** We went from zero to 200 followers in one year. Many stories reach three to five times as many people because they are shared on others sites, such as Heritage Ottawa, and Urbsite. Indication that other associations find our content useful and interesting. Vision is to get website up and running and increase facebook users, then fold the e-newsletter. It takes a lot of time to produce and is an antiquated method of communication.

- Branding: many associations linked with heritage use row houses as part of their branding. Michelle is looking for something more distinctive and someone to design a logo.

**Homelessness Task Force Update // Mise à jour du Groupe de travail des Sans-abris (Dwight Burgess)**

- Not present. No update provided.

*Meeting adjourned 8 :45pm*