

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

AGENDA / L'ORDRE DU JOUR – 11 FEBRUARY 2013 / 11 FÉVRIER 2013
ROUTHIER COMMUNITY CENTRE @ 7 PM / CENTRE COMMUNAUTAIRE ROUTHIER à 19h

- Board members present: Liz Bernstein (Vice President), Michelle Ramsay Borg (Director, Communications), Sylvie Grenier (Director, Planning Committee), Sarah Bonesteel (Secretary)
 - Total community members present: 20
1. Welcome Remarks / Mots de bienvenue (Liz Bernstein)
 - Introductions of community members present
 2. Approval of Agenda and notes from last meeting / Approbation de l'Ordre du jour et notes de la dernière réunion (Liz Bernstein)
 - Meeting agenda and notes from the January meeting were approved.
 3. Councillor's Office Update / Mise à jour du Bureau du conseiller
 - Present from the Councillor's Office: Alanna Dale Hill, Nathaniel Mullin
 - Jules Morin Park Rink: the rink has been a great success and the volunteers are doing a great job. The lights for the rink will be installed in the next few weeks.
 - Our Lady School (abandoned building at the corner of Cumberland and Murray): the City received an engineering report from the property owner indicating that the building was no longer structurally sound. The City erected safety barricades and directed the owner to brace and secure the building. If the owner does not undertake this work within the week, the City will do the work and bill the owner for the cost. If the owner wishes to renovate or demolish the building, they need to apply to the City for a permit. Any application for this building would go through the City's heritage review process.
 - Official City Plan Review: there is a community consultation scheduled for Wednesday February 13 at City Hall. People can also complete an online survey at: <http://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/public-consultations/building-liveable-ottawa-official-plan-and-master-plan-review>. Completing the survey is an important way to have a say in the planning process. This is the beginning of a year-long process so the community will have more opportunities to participate. Writing letters and reaching out to key councillors are also ways for the community to be involved in the process.
 - Environmental Roundtable on Greenhouse Gasses: Consultation was supposed to occur in the first quarter of the year. Everyone is waiting for Councillor McRae to move things forward.
 - Action Item:** Councillor's office to share updates on this issue with LCA.
 - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification: Currently, new buildings must be constructed to meet the requirements of the silver level. The certification process is bureaucratic and expensive. There is a proposal to continue building to the silver level but to forgo certification. Nothing has been decided yet. A report on this issue will be tabled at the Environment

Committee meeting in March. The LCA would like to see the city continue to use LEED certification for consistency and transparency.

-Action Item: Councillor's Office to share updates on this issue with LCA as they become available.

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

Planning Update / Mise à jour du Comité de planification (Sylvie Grenier)

-The Planning Committee has begun meeting more often at the pre-consultation stage with developers. The committee met proponents for La Nouvelle Scène and 364 St. Patrick. It will meet the owner of 198 Clarence at its next meeting.

-La Nouvelle Scène: The proposal includes the demolition of the current building and the construction of a new structure that will triple the current usable space. The new building will feature a theatre, two rehearsal studios, a courtyard, a bistro/art gallery/gathering area and offices for five theater companies. The demolition is planned for June 2013 and the new building is expected to open in August 2014..

-664 St. Patrick (between Murray and St. Patrick on the east side of King Edward): The proposal is to construct a nine storey hotel or condo building. The Planning Committee recommended a six storey building recessed at the 5th and 6th floors, incorporating heritage design elements on the lower floors and treating all sides of the building in the same way as the front because it will be viewed from all sides..

-Change of zoning request for 198 Clarence: This is a request to amend the zoning to permit a wine bar.

-The Planning Committee did not have pre-consultation with Claridge on their two proposed projects on Dalhousie and George, although Claridge did make a presentation at the January LCA meeting. The two projects are the renovation of the Union du Canada building and the construction of a 22 storey condo tower. The Planning Committee provided the following comments to the City: no height increase should be approved to what is currently permitted and the Union du Canada should be restored to its original condition given its important architectural context for the francophone community.

-ByWard Market Study: Project for Public Spaces (PPS) submitted a draft report in early December to the city. The draft has been circulating among city departments. City staff continue to deny access to the consultant's report to the Steering Committee. Members are concerned because the process no longer seems transparent and cooperative. They have been advised that they will not see the report until it is made public for the City's Planning Committee meeting in April

-Councillor's Office response: The PPS report is being reviewed by staff. Staff are drafting recommendations related to the report which will be shared with the Steering Committee with the report. The report has not been released yet because once it is released to the Steering Committee, it becomes public. The report needs to be presented with recommendations so the report does not become controversial and get shelved (as has happened in past with other reports). The City wants to ensure the report is successful and results in action. The Steering Committee can provide comments on the recommendations drafted by City staff. Also, some technical elements of report do not match City policy and staff are requesting these parts be changed.

Communications Update / Mise à jour communications (Michelle Ramsay-Borg)

- There were technical issues with the e-bulletin this month so everyone on the distribution list received the French and English versions in separate e-mails. This should be fixed for next month.
- Liz Bernstein thanked everyone who contributed to the Echo and helped with deliveries.

Heritage Update / Mise à jour héritage (Liz Mackenzie)

- The Heritage Committee will have display at Winterfest on Monday February 18.
- Rideau Street Renewal and History Project: the committee has spoken with the planners about including heritage elements in the project, such as commemorative plaques and stepping stones. The planners have expressed willingness for this.
- The committee is working on a funding application to hire two students for the summer. The students would research and prepare for the 100th anniversary of Macdonald Gardens in 2014 and historic house tours. They would also do oral history interviews with local seniors.
- Union du Canada: This building is in a heritage district so has heritage protection as if it had its own heritage designation. The building meets all of the criteria for heritage protection. This building was centrepiece of pride for francophones in the cooperative movement.
- Abandoned buildings: The committee is working on a strategy to bring this issue to public attention and also to address the situation with building owners.
 - Councillor's Office response: The Councillor's Office requested a legal opinion on whether unoccupied buildings could be held to the same property maintenance standards as occupied buildings. City legal staff have advised this is possible. It will take time to have buildings assessed and the City expects to receive legal challenges from building owners. Bylaw officers would issue work orders with deadlines. If the work is not done, the City would do the work and charge the cost to the owner.

Environmental Update / Mise à jour environnementale (Liz Bernstein):

- CAFE meeting: included environmental representatives from community organizations. The conversations focused on planning issues, downtown growth, emerald ash borer crisis, greenhouse gas roundtable. Downtown residents are concerned about the lack of representation from downtown councillors on key City committees. The CAFE representatives discussed ways to share resources and coordinate efforts.

Health and Safety Committee / Comité de Santé et de sécurité:

Safety and Security Update / Mise à jour de sûreté et de sécurité (Norman Moyer)

- This committee is chaired by John Edwards and Steve Monuk, with support from the Byward Market BIA Secretariat. It is a forum for discussing safety and security related issues, including the impact of special events.
- Norman would like community members to share safety and security concerns with him so he can raise them with the committee.

Homelessness Task Force Update / Mise à jour Les Sans-abris (Dwight Burgess and Shannon Poole)

- The group recently visited three shelters (Shepherds, Mission and Salvation Army) to learn about their services. They are all emergency shelter services but also do community outreach and harm reduction. The shelters each have a specialization: the Mission has social programs and a palliative care hospice; the Shepherds focuses on harm reduction, housing transition support,

client case management, and an alcoholics program; and the Salvation Army does mobile outreach.

-The Shepherds used to have the SCOT team for outreach. This helped to reduce the need for police involvement in situations with Shepherds clients. The program was cancelled because of reduced funding. The Task Force would like to help the Shepherds find funding to reinstate this program.

-The shelters are dealing with clients with addiction and mental health issues but don't necessarily have the appropriate resources.

-About 7,500 people use shelters in Ottawa on an annual basis. 86% are true emergency, short-term users (there for two weeks and then gone again). The remaining 14% are episodic (leave the shelter and return multiple times) and more chronic users (there for at least 60 days, and in some cases, years). 80% of the resources are expended on 14% of the clients. Having this information is helpful to developing a strategy to reduce homelessness.

-The Task Force is talking to other community resources and people in other cities with successful homelessness reduction programs to gather more information.

-The City is reviewing their housing policy spending in light of changes to the provincial policy so this is a good time for the LCA to be getting involved in the issue.

Parks and Recreation Update / Mise à jour des parcs et loisirs (Dog Parks / Parcs pour les chiens – Micheline Juneau)

-Presenter not at meeting.

5. Events – Updates / Événements – Mise à jour:

- LCA involvement in Winterfest / Participation de l'ACBV au Festival d'hiver (Liz Mackenzie)

-The Winterfest will be held on Monday February 18 at Jules Morin Park in the afternoon. The LCA is pooling resources with the Lowertown Community Resource Centre to hold this event. The LCA is providing the food. Volunteers are still needed to help out.

6. Special Feature / Présentation spéciale:

- Heritage Streetcar Presentation / Présentation des tramways patrimoniaux (David Jeanes)

-A heritage streetcar would help to revitalize the downtown core, enhance the shopping and entertainment district, promote green and accessible transit, and create public /private partnership.

-There were streetcars in Ottawa from 1870 to 1959. They ran along Sparks Street, which was a transportation route across downtown.

-The group is proposing construction of a heritage streetcar route across downtown from the Convention Centre to the War Museum (2.4km), along Spark Street.

-This route ties together many hotels, museums/cultural sites, LRT transit stations, shopping and restaurants. It would be complimentary to LRT but serves different purpose. There will be stops every block so it is less oriented to commuting.

-Other cities around the world have successfully implemented replica heritage streetcars along with their LRT or other rapid transit systems: Portland, San Francisco, Little Rock, Tampa, Istanbul, Budapest, and Maorca.

-Streetcars are on rails and travel in straight lines so move predictably, which makes them safer in close proximity to cyclists and pedestrians. The skirts are low so little risk of falling underneath.

-Feasibility study was conducted by Carleton engineering students at Carleton. Currently looking at funding sources and developing a business case.

-The power source would be a single overhead wire or a rechargeable battery.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35pm

Next meeting date is 11 March 2013 / La prochaine réunion aura lieu le 11 mars 2013