

# LOWERTOWN BASSEVILLE

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION ASSOCIATION COMMUNAUTAIRE

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

MEETING NOTES / NOTES DE RÉUNION – 11 APRIL 2016 / 11 AVRIL 2016  
ROUTHIER COMMUNITY CENTRE, 7-8:30 PM / CENTRE COMMUNAUTAIRE ROUTHIER, 19h-20h30

- **Board members present:** Liz Bernstein (President), Nathalie Martin (Vice President), Liz Mackenzie (Director, Heritage), Sarah Bonesteel (Secretary), Donna Kearns (Director, Business Outreach), Peter Ferguson (Director, Planning)
- **Appointed liaisons present:** Norman Moyer (Liasion, Byward Market Safety and Security Committee), Sylvie Grenier (Liaison, Byward Market Core Team), Giulia Nastase (Editor, Eho), Janhabi Nandy (Liaison, Housing and Homelessness)
- Community members present: 34
- Present from the Councillor's Office: Councillor Mathieu Fleury, Emeline Sparks

### 1. Welcome and Introductions / Mots de bienvenue et introductions (Liz Bernstein, President)

- Welcome and round table introductions.

### 2. Lowertown Crime Reduction Strategy / Stratégie de Réduction de la criminalité pour la Basse-Ville (Norman Moyer, LCA Safety and Security Liaison, Jan-François Grabowiecki, Caitlin Hawkes-Frost)

- Delivered presentation on crime statistics and recommendations for addressing crime and increasing community safety.
- Seven-year trend shows that crime rates against people and property are increasing in Lowertown, and are three to four times higher than most other Ottawa neighbourhoods.
- Crime rates are influenced by tourism, shifting population, seasons, police presence and initiatives.
- Need relatively consistent Ottawa Police Services (OPS) presence over time to get to know neighbourhood and issues to be effective. Shift by OPS away from policing by district may negatively impact OPS effectiveness in Lowertown.

### Recommendations for LCA:

- Publish crime statistics and track changes (sharing data helps decision making)
- Continue push for better public data
  - Would like ability to obtain better data for Lowertown more easily.
  - Like OPS to attend monthly LCA meetings and give us meaningful crime data for Lowertown.
- Support for current proposals: maintain district focus by OPS, extension of nuisance bylaw, increased night foot patrols, greater noise bylaw enforcement efforts, continue to oppose granting of new liquor licenses in ByWard Market.
- Focus on contributions to crime
- Explore relationship between the homeless population and levels of crime.
- Direct research on the role of bars nightclubs and criminal activity.
- Strengthen association between LCA and BIA Safety and Security Committee
- Strengthen LCA knowledge and capacity for research, engagement and ongoing work.

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## Discussion:

Importance of issue to LCA and level of effort that should be given. Form more structured committee?

- Tourist activity influences crime. Concern about putting crime statistics in Echo. Would be bad for ByWard Market businesses and property values. Suggestion to track data and wait for next round of OPS data to see direction of crime trends.
- Suggestion to present crime data from perspective of providing useful information that residents want (ie. residents want to know level of crime in their neighbourhood).
- Explaining the context of crime in the community, why our community is different, nature of crime, etc is important to explain along with numbers. Raises question about what is being done by responsible groups to manage crime.
- As resident and business owner, would like residents to be informed about crime data. Crimes come from tourist/bar area or is related to homeless population and drug use. Needs to be better communication between ByWard Market Safety and Security Committee and LCA. Need to be respectful and supportive of struggling businesses but also work toward crime reduction.
- Experience of working as street performer, see homeless, intoxicated people. More data is helpful to support people to act on data and develop solutions to problems. Homeless people engage in crime because they need money to buy drugs and because they are bored.
- Should not publish comparison to rest of City. Can publish raw data with context.
- Need to avoid criminalizing homeless people and figure out how to engage them and help them become productive.
- Important to continue to get information and to look at whether there is link between the increase in number of licensed seats and increase in crime rates. Suggestion to hire student to look into this.
- Homeless people have nothing to do during the day and need day programs to keep them busy and productive (arts, recreational, education).
- Resident and business owner for 20 years. Producing data means that everyone will interpret it differently because everyone comes from a different perspective (ie. issues are different block-to-block: panhandling, American embassy and safety, speeding, bars & nightclubs, etc). Salvation Army has refused to give up any of back area for daytime activities. Shepherds of Good Hope and Mission both have daytime activities and space for clients. Would like to see Salvation Army become part of solution but they are not attending ByWard Market Safety and Security Committee meetings and are not engaging as part of solution. Not helpful to release data without solutions.
- Suggestion to look at other downtown neighbourhoods and what they are doing to address crime (Hintonburg, Vanier, etc).
- Right of residents to have access to data. Why is OPS keeping it secret?
- Suggestion to release data as part of providing information about crime strategies.
- Key way to use data is to lobby for more police resources. More granular data will help Lowertown to work with partners and develop targeted strategies to address crime rates.
- Dealing with problem is better for everyone. Can't expect denial of issue to bring results. Need strategic plan and data to support and motivate it.
- Concern about increase in aggressive panhandling and "group" movements of homeless people. Needs to be addressed to increase tourism in Ottawa.

## Wrap up (Norman, Jan, Caitlin)

- Decided to request crime data because neighbourhood was being unjustly portrayed in media as high crime area. When LCA approached ByWard Market Safety and Security Committee, they were not interested in requesting data. Can contextualize data without comparing it to other areas

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of City. Overall conclusion is this is a safe neighbourhood to live in but not winning with current strategy of addressing crime in media.

- In 2012, LCA signed letter with ByWard Market BIA and Safety and Security Committee to City to ask for visioning exercise on ByWard Market. Focus of exercise was loss of food and retail space, and proliferation of bars and nightclubs (and related safety issues). Survey identified that people were concerned about safety, particularly at night. Improving safety in neighbourhood is part of improving ByWard Market.
- Next steps: consideration to be given to putting data in Echo, would like to work in partnership with ByWard Market BIA and Safety and Security Committee. Support idea of publishing data from last six years but not in comparison to other neighbourhoods and in context of actions to improve situation ("ie community determined to ensure things keep getting better").

### **3. A New Direction for the ByWard Market / Une nouvelle vision pour le marché By (Court Curry and Dana Collins, City of Ottawa / Ville d'Ottawa)**

- 12 farmers markets in City, along with two public markets (ByWard and Parkdale)
- Within 1km radius of ByWard Market building, 1,500 new residential units constructed in last five years and 1,500 more in approvals process and likely to be constructed over next five years.
- LRT station will make it easier to get to ByWard Market.
- George Street Plaza: to be new curbs and pavers, welcoming space with benches and trees, open space with great visual of Main Market Building entering market from new LRT station.
- Detailed plans to be available soon. Looked at history of ByWard Market to draw inspiration for design of plaza. Will be seating. Refined version, more detail available next week.
- Open House: May 11 at Freeman Mall (Rideau Street overpass between Hudson Bay and Rideau Centre), 5-9pm. Displays and more detail about design plan.
- Work with bar/restaurant owners to ensure owners are operating appropriately (ie. restaurants not operating as nightclubs).
- George Street construction planned for September 2016. To be completed by July 1, 2017.
- Fall 2016: report to Council on process to create Municipal Services Corporation (MSC).

#### **Discussion:**

- As business owner and resident, George Street Plaza sounds great but concerned about how to deter gangs and homelessness from this area. New seating areas get taken over by gangs and drug dealers from Rideau Street. Deters tourists and locals.
  - Yes, concerned about appropriate usage and working on security review of building and adjacent space. Will ensure appropriate resources are in place. Reviewing Street Ambassador role in providing security and whether that is appropriate.
- Need to address NCC property management group who look for increased rents from bars/nightclubs and reduce retail. (ie. Moscow Tea Room operating as noisy nightclub).
- ByWard Market is Heritage Conservation District but concerned that plans are not going to Built Heritage Sub-Committee for review/approval. Would like to see Interpretation Centre built into plans for revitalization of Byward Market.
- Agree with developing not-for-profit management organization to reduce bureaucracy. Suggestion to have art and craft centre for homeless in building. Agree with idea of George Street Plaza as open area to host events as space next to Tucker's Marketplace is not enough. Concern that seating in the market is taken by homelessness and is driving away audience of street performers.
- Need proactive Bylaw enforcement strategy that is longer than one year. Needs to be money-making to be self-sustaining (like parking). Could address A-frames, noise complaints.
- Need place for true artisans (local). New, young farmers get squeezed out by existing farmers. Need to address "flea market" atmosphere.

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- LRT construction and concern about noise at night time with late notice to residents. Want to ensure there is open and timely communication with nearby residents during George Street Plaza construction.
- How do any recommendations address increased number of licensed seats in ByWard Market? How to ensure that Main Market Building will focus on food retail, rather than restaurants?
  - Cannot prevent restaurants from opening if zoning permits it but will be following up on restaurants that operate as bars/nightclubs. Will follow up on this issue with the LCA for further discussion and collaboration. Leases signed in building. Will be up to MSC to determine mix of vendors and work with existing lease holders.
- Suggestion to buyout existing tenants to bring in new group with better mix.
- Who will be on board of directors for MSC? Residents concerned about how building will be used.
- Will be up to MSC to determine tenants. For board composition, will be further discussion in report to City. Likely to be a mix of tenants, stand holders, people from outside ByWard Market with expertise in retail, marketing, etc.

#### 4. Two announcements:

- LCA to prepare written commitments on plans for George Street Plaza. Can submit to [info@lowertown-basseville.ca](mailto:info@lowertown-basseville.ca).
- Next LCA meeting is May 9, at the Jules Morin Park fieldhouse. Will be an update on the Rideau Street LRT station construction and Ogilvie Square.
- Annual General Meeting will be June 13 at the Jules Morin Park field house.
- April 27, the LCA has partnered with other organizations on the Street Fight event involving Janette Sadik-Khan from New York City.

#### 5. Updates from Councillor Fleury

- The section of Parent Street north of the Bruyère Hospital is to be renamed Gilberte Paquette, at the request of the Sisters. The official sign installation will take place May 16.
- The OPS foot patrol will operate this summer.

Meeting adjourned: 8:50pm