

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

MEETING NOTES / NOTES DE RÉUNION – 9 DECEMBER 2013 / 9 DÉCEMBRE 2013
ROUTHIER COMMUNITY CENTRE, 7-9 PM / CENTRE COMMUNAUTAIRE ROUTHIER, 19-21h

Board members present: Michael Kirkpatrick (Vice President), Sarah Bonesteel (Secretary), Steve Monuk (Director, Business Liaison), Sylvie Grenier (Director, Planning), John Chenier (Director, Community Liaison).

Appointed members present: Nancy Miller Chenier (Co-Chair, Heritage Committee), Norman Moyer (Liaison, Byward Market Safety and Security Committee), Mario Gasperetti (Co-Chair, Planning Committee), Amber Clarke (Membership Coordinator)

- **Total community members present: 17**

1. Welcome Remarks / Mots de bienvenue (Michael Kirkpatrick)

- Welcome remarks and roundtable introductions.

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

- Agenda and notes from November 18, 2013 meeting approved.

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

- **Present from the Councillor's office:** Mathieu Fleury, Nathaniel Mullin, Matt Genest
- **King Edward Avenue update:** The City is leading on the study of the tunnel under Ottawa's downtown. The NCC bridge proposal was designed to address three issues: truck volume, car volume and trucks in downtown. The current study will just look at the issue of trucks in the downtown. With the tunnel, approval to construct would just involve the City of Ottawa. The feasibility study will take 12-18 months. The Kettle Island bridge proposal is still on table but there is now no support behind it so the City wants to look at other options. The bridge is inter-provincial and involves federal approvals. The City is looking at what can be done within its own jurisdiction to address the issue of trucks in the downtown. The purpose of the feasibility study is to narrow the zone of where the tunnel would go. If the study results are positive, the project would go to environmental assessment, then design, and the construction. There is currently no commitment for what will happen after the feasibility study. It starts in January. The study zone is from the 417, to the canal, to the Ottawa River.
 - Question from resident about whether trucks carrying hazardous materials would be allowed in the tunnel: national standards are changing and ability to exhaust tunnels is changing. Miami allows trucks with hazardous materials in their tunnel. On King Edward Avenue, 5% of trucks carry hazardous material so even if they can't go in the tunnel, the tunnel would still deal with 95% of truck traffic in the downtown.
 - Comment from resident: a ring road around the city is needed to keep the trucks out of the core. Congestion is forecasted to increase and we need to look long-term for a solution. The cost will be large for tunnel. The Aga Khan and DFAIT won't likely allow their properties to be modified for a tunnel. The tunnel is still bringing trucks into the downtown.
- Response from the Councillor: consultation with stakeholders will come during the environmental assessment. For a ring road, trucks come from southern Ontario and go to northern Quebec so

the north-south connection is an issue even with a ring road. Trucks aren't going east to west. Trucks coming from Maniwaki and going to Montreal just use Highway 50 in Quebec. More information on the feasibility study will be shared by Councillor's office as it becomes available and it will be posted on his website.

- King Edward Avenue Re-Zoning to Traditional Main Street at Planning Committee tomorrow: proposal is to re-zone King Edward Avenue to a traditional main street, which means buildings three to six storeys in height. This does not change building use and will not impact existing buildings. Mixed use or additional use might be permitted in the future. The Official Plan calls for King Edward to be a traditional main street but it has never been re-zoned to that.
 - Concern expressed by residents that the re-zoning will lift the heritage overlay for the street and that the first development under the traditional main street is a nine-storey hotel, which does not fit the three to six storey allowance.
- Response from the Councillor's office: traditional main streets can allow for up to nine storeys and the proposed hotel fits that. Clarified that four properties on the street have a heritage overlay and that the overlay maintains the scale and consistency (limits height for re-builds to within the same envelope) but that the overlay does not protect the actual buildings. Buildings recommended for heritage designation are not affected by the new zoning.
- Concern expressed by residents that a nine storey building next to a two storey building looks uneven and is not a good approach to take under the new re-zoning.
- Concern expressed by residents about the timeline for consultation of the re-zoning, and that residents did not learn until very late in the process that the heritage overlay would be removed.
- Resident requested that Councillor Fleury attend more LCA meetings so hear directly about resident's concerns. Resident acknowledged that Councillor Fleury's staff is very knowledgeable about the issues but stated that Councillor Fleury is our elected representative and should be hearing about issues first hand.

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 recently set its priorities for 2014, which includes requesting that the City develop a plan for the Rideau, St. Patrick, King Edward Avenue, Dalhousie area.
 - **Claridge proposal for the Metro site:** this includes three-28 storey condominium building with 500-600 units, 658 parking spaces in a six-storey underground garage, and retail at grade. Comments are due to the City by December 17. The LCA will be providing comments but residents can also submit comments to the City staff person responsible for the file at: bliss.edwards@ottawa.ca.
 - Discussion with Councillor Fleury's staff regarding Lowertown representation on the Claridge project as Councillor Fleury cannot comment because of a conflict of interest: The Councillor's staff stated that Peter Hume should be our contact. As Councillor Hume is chair of the Planning Committee, it is standard procedure that he would be our contact if our own councillor is unable to represent us. It was noted by Sylvie and residents that on past Claridge developments, Councillor Hume has not had much time for Lowertown and that although people from Lowertown had met with him and exchanged e-mails, his representation of us was not effective. It was decided that as per Councillor Fleury's offer at the AGM in November to meet with the LCA and discuss other options for our representation when he is in a conflict of interest situation, Matt Genest would set up a meeting for Sylvie with the Councillor in early 2014. Matt stated that once the initial deadline for comments to

Claridge is passed, more specific negotiations can begin so that would be a good time for us to sort out the LCA's representation.

- **Safety and Security / Mise à jour de sûreté et de sécurité (Norman Moyer)**
 - Requested that residents let him know if there are any issues they would like him to raise with the Byward Market Safety and Security Committee? None issues identified.
 - Requested to know if the BIA's arrangements for events over Christmas and New Year works well? No problems identified by residents.
 - Noted that the Alcohol and Gaming Commission is running "Best Bar None" competition and that the list of criteria includes being a "good neighbour". This is determined by the number of complaints the bar has received. Norman would like the Commission to look at the positive side and has scheduled a meeting with the Commission to identify how they could look at the neighbourly criteria positively, possibly through a survey. Residents interested in this issue can get involved by contacting info@lowertown-basseville.ca.
- **Heritage Update / Mise à jour du patrimoine (Nancy Miller-Chenier)**
 - **Andrew Fleck Child Care Centre:** The Committee is concerned about how the proposed Claridge development on the Metro site will affect the Andrew Fleck Child Care Centre. This is a heritage building, designed by a well-known architect and designated to Andrew Fleck. It was the first purpose-built day care centre in Ottawa. The Committee is concerned that the three, 28-storey buildings will impact the three-storey heritage building through increased traffic, vehicle fumes, and shadowing. They are asking the City for heritage designation for the building.
 - **King Edward Avenue Re-zoning:** The Committee did not expect to have to do much with the City's proposal but there are 20 different sections along King Edward: eight are going to be traditional Main Street and the rest are exceptions, such as the proposed nine-storey hotel. The Committee was not aware that the heritage overlays would be removed, including for the abandoned buildings. There is nothing in the re-zoning proposal to protect heritage buildings along King Edward, such as the Andrew Fleck Child Care Centre, fire station, bank note building, Jewish synagogue, and hydro building.
 - **Priorities for 2014:** working with the Lowertown East Resident's Committee (looking for volunteers), working with the Byward Market BIA (interested in a history project).
- **Bingham Park Ice Rink: call for volunteers / Patinoire du parc Bingham : appel aux bénévoles (Sarah Bonesteel)**
 - Please contact info@lowertown-basseville.ca if you are interested in helping with the rink maintenance.
- **Lowertown Echo Update / Mise à jour L'Echo de la Basse-Ville (Sarah Meyer Truswell)**
 - The Lowertown Echo has just put out a new edition and deliveries are underway.
 - The Echo needs a Delivery Coordinator to liaise with volunteers when new editions of the Echo are ready for distribution. Please contact the Lowertown Echo at: thelowertownecho@gmail.com if you are interested in this position.

5. Events – Updates:

- **LCA involvement in Winterfest / Participation de l'ACBV au Festival d'hiver (Sarah Bonesteel)**
 - In past years, the LCA has worked with the Lowertown Community Resource Centre (LCRC) to put on a Winterfest on Family Day, which will be February 17, 2014. We need to identify a volunteer liaison to coordinate with the LCRC on behalf of the LCA. We also need volunteers from the LCA to help out with the event on the day. Please contact info@lowertown-basseville.ca if you are willing to help out.

- 6. **Special Feature:**
 - **Presentation by the Aga Khan Foundation about their plans for the former War Museum Building / Présentation par la Fondation Aga Khan au sujet de leurs plans pour l'ancien Musée canadien de la guerre (Khalil Shariff, Executive Director of the Aga Kahn Foundation; John McNee, Director of Global Centre for Pluralism; Lloyd Phillips, Lloyd Phillips & Associated Ltd)**
 - The Aga Kahn Foundation has leased the former War Museum building for the new Global Centre for Pluralism. This is an organization dedicated to the study and practice of pluralism worldwide. By definition, pluralism is a respect for diversity. The Centre aims to bring together the best thinking and writing in managing diverse and divided societies, and to share information with other countries who may be struggling with managing aspects of pluralism.
 - The Centre is connected with the Canadian Government and the Aga Khan but has an independent board of directors that includes Kofi Anan and Adrienne Clarkson.
 - The Aga Khan was inspired by Canada's successful experience as a highly diverse and multi ethnic country. His Highness, the Aga Khan, could have located the Centre in another but picked Canada because he believes in what Canada brings to world based on our experience of accommodating others and managing a diverse society.
 - The Centre will host lectures (such as a recent one by Kofi Anan), commission studies and reports, and host events. The Centre will bring people together for serious discussions of pluralism-related issues. The vision of the Aga Khan for the Centre is ambitious and long-term. Pluralism issues are not easily remedied, and addressing them is a constant process of discussion and debate. The Centre is still in a preliminary, start-up phase. They are developing programs and putting the pieces together. It takes time to build a new institution and partnerships.
 - The federal government has leased the building to the Aga Khan Foundation for \$1 for 99 years but the Aga Khan will underwrite the expense of all renovations. The building needs to be extensively renovated to make it usable. To defray the renovation costs and because the Centre will not initially need all of the space, the Aga Khan would like to bring one or two tenants into the building in the early years.
 - The board of directors, His Highness and the NCC will insist on tenants that are compatible with seriousness of the Centre for Pluralism.
 - The building currently has 20-30 surface parking spaces, which will be sufficient. Additional parking is available next door at the National Gallery.
 - The Aga Khan has made a commitment to restore the building, which is a major contribution to the community and city. The Foundation hopes to make the most of river and transform the area for public recreation and leisure use.
 - The building is currently zoned as a "major leisure facility" (L2B), allows for use as a museum, gallery, community centre, etc. It does not allow for office space and a re-zoning amendment is

needed to allow the Centre to bring in office tenants. Initially, the Centre would like approximately 32,000 of the 53,000 square feet to be used for office space by tenants, with the balance to be used by the Centre and the Centre re-taking the office space over time. The forecourt will be landscaped and not used for parking.

- The Aga Khan Foundation is committed to working within the building's heritage designation. All designs and proposals will go through the federal heritage review process and NCC design review process. This includes any proposed changes to the building's exterior.
- The lease permits the possibility of sub-leases but they have to be approved by the NCC as the landlord. The Centre's board of directors would also have to approve the sub-lease.
- The Aga Khan has looked at attracting others to use the building who would fit within the zoning but other institutions, such as museums, are likely to just need the space for offices, which would trigger zoning requirement.
- Resident suggested that the Museum of Civilization be approached about using the space to tell Canada's story of multiculturalism, including Lowertown's story of pluralism.
- The Sussex façade will not change but the Centre is considering how to make best use of the River and connect to the pathway system on river front. River front façade of the building is not well-developed, and the Centre may look at making river façade more prominent and increase the river views from inside the building through use of more glass.
- Resident commented that the Aga Khan has brought good design to the community and thanked the presenters for coming and speaking to the LCA because it is not a requirement but very helpful for us to understand the plans. Likes the idea of opening up the river front. Noted that residents are likely nervous about the re-zoning process because we have been burned in the past by developers.
- Resident noted that the Aga Khan delegation building on Sussex seems underutilized so questioned why the new building needs to be fully used? Response was that Delegation office space is actually nearly fully used. For the new building, there is an economic reason for wanting to rent the space but also noted it is important for the building to be used and alive.
- The former War Museum building envelope is structurally unsound and there is asbestos so there is lots of work that needs to be done. It does not make sense to rehabilitate only part of the space so there will be a large upfront capital investment. Global Centre for Pluralism will be the name on the building. Having a tenant means that the Centre does not have to spend its program budget to keep the lights on. They are looking for an institutional tenant, possibly a professional services firm or an embassy.
- Noted by resident that Lowertown always been a portal for newcomers and suggested making a feature of the nearby multiculturalism (Adrienne Clarkson's former house, Jewish immigrants, etc).

Meeting adjourned: 8:45pm

Next meeting date is 13 January 2014 / La prochaine réunion aura lieu le 13 janvier 2014