

Grange Community Association

Minutes of January 16, 2019 Meeting

1. Welcome

In Attendance

Brian Tyndale, Dennis MacIntosh, Steve Glinnard, Willie Chin, Nadia Smith, Geoff King, Karen King, Max Allen, Daphne Mauer, Charlie Mauer, Liz Driver, Ralph Daley.

2. Green Plan

Grange Park DOLA

- Although delayed, the area has now been resurfaced with new Fibar. Karen has requested meeting with Parks Toronto, to express appreciation and seek to develop a stronger working relationship.
- Geoff suggests it might make sense to invite a board member of University Settlement to participate in GCA, since they are close to the park. Geoff knows one person through the off-leash dog park.
- Metal spikes that held down underlay from the Fibar are no longer posing a safety threat.

Relic Park

- Ralph advises that Bryan Jones, our landscape architect, has now put together 30 page draft proposal for the project. Ralph and Max will meet with Bryan, Liz, and Edwin Rowse and provide feedback on the proposal
- Liz has put a proposal together to get a summer student to focus on the public engagement aspect of the park. We want public input on active planned activities vs. passive enjoyment of the park.
- Planning underway to apply for "Public Space Innovation" Grant from Park People which will provide early-stage funding. Demonstrating public engagement will be key to obtaining this grant.
- Ralph will talk with Councillor Cressy to ensure that we are communicating effectively with Parks.
- Dennis says it would make sense to get local condo developers involved with the project, and that they are interested

- One innovative element of plan could be closing off St. Patrick Street just north of Dundas St W, and creating park space.

3. Community Standards

180 John Street

- Co-working space called “Spaces”, building owned by Allied, applied for AGCO private event license, then sought public participation. While it does not appear that their “party” was very successful, it was agreed that we send a letter of objection to AGCO to thwart future problems and avoid a precedent being set.

St. Patrick Market

- Geoff advises that the situation with this city-owned building is dire. There is so much graffiti that you can't see through the windows and homeless are occupying the front and rear alcoves.
- Geoff has sent a letter to the City arguing there needs to be graffiti clean up; streets-to-home program should help homeless in the area; City legal should try to terminate lease with lessee; and property tax forgiveness needs to be eliminated for lessee
- Geoff called 311 again, and was advised that the graffiti removal order has been made, but that abandoned garbage had not been collected initially due to the City not wanting to take homeless person's possessions, but has now been finally cleaned up.
- Ralph has raised this issue with Councillor Cressy who advised that City legal was considering solutions to this problem, including termination of the lease.
- Liz enquired whether the Queen Street BIA was involved, but Max advises that BIA does not tend to engage on “community” issues, and noted that the lessee is a member of the BIA.
- Geoff notes that rent paid by the lessee is well below market rates, and that a portion of profits have to be paid to the city, so it is possible that lessee is using vacant property to reduce his tax exposure.
- Ralph observed that the Councillor city does not want to do anything about the park behind the market, which is a key priority of our GreenPlan, until something is done about the market itself.

4. Planning and Development

250 University

- Proposal to put enormous condo tower above Bank of Canada building at Queen And University
- Some viewed the development as out of context with the immediate area: Four Seasons, Campbell House, Canada Life. 2004 city planning document identified immediate area as “mid-rise”

area that complements that Canada Life Building, and also helps to “frame” Campbell house. Area is for institutions, which includes Campbell House, proposal does not adhere to that.

- Max advises that the as-of-right height on the site is ca. 28 stories, so theoretically 20 story building could be put on top with no issue
- Max advises that Liz should talk to Mary at Heritage Toronto. However, Councillor Cressy may be okay with it, particularly in light of Section 37 funds.
- Charlie notes that because it is on subway line, densification is probably allowed.
- Liz notes that University is a “great street” according to the TOcore document, intersection of Queen West and University is important
- Max suggests that if Campbell house is considered a park, shadows created by condo over park may violate city’s rules. However, Liz advises that while Parks Toronto maintains Campbell House grounds, there is no formal agreement with the city. Liz will submit letter sharing her thoughts on the condo proposal.

156/ 160 John Street

- 5 story “cap” proposed to go onto existing building. 45 degree slope will prevent shadows on north side of Queen street, and proposal shows that sloped roof will open up to permit an open-air rooftop restaurant.
- Exterior walls are covered with an “iridescent” material, and uses best green technology, first of its kind in Toronto. Concern was expressed about sun reflecting off this new wall material.

250 Dundas West – Dennis

- City planner for this file, Nathaniel Baker, resigned, so Dennis met with new city planner, who had a lot of questions about the neighbourhood. She was empathetic about shadowing and traffic issues and likes looking for a “balance” in planning.
- Proposal is for a 9 story business podium, with 43 stories of residential on top of the podium. City had said before that they wanted more business space, so developer increased podium height from 7 to 9.
- Dream VP of development is Tony Madeiro, and Allison McKellar, is their community liaison
- Public meeting by Dream to be held on February 13th. Max proposes that we tell Tony Madeiro that the meeting date is not convenient for us.
- Dennis says that Allison McKellar is really interested in the park, and looking for a “trade” for another park

292 Dundas West

- Developer, at Heritage Toronto insistence, proposes to leave old building at corner, even though it is not designated a heritage building. Ralph and Max to consider options for GCA intervention

170 Spadina LPAT Hearing

- Plaza proposed to develop the empty lot with an 18 story building. The building immediately to the north would be shadowed, which the owner of that building objects to.
- The original OMB hearing turned down the building, but advised that if it was redesigned it would be looked upon favorably, if it did not exceed 12 stories. Plaza did a redesign for a 12 story building, which the City liked, but Mr. Sullivan still objects to.
- GCA position has always been there is too much parking in the proposal, city then agreed and allowed one floor less of parking.
- Max notes that it's important that GCA has input on what gets built on the west side of Spadina, because eventually it will impact the east side of Spadina.
- Max notes that laneway to north of proposed building can be used for restaurant patio.

Ontario Place and Exhibition Place Engagement

- The consensus of a local umbrella organization in support of keeping Ontario Place is that it should be entirely accessible to the public. This organization believes that Ontario Place and Exhibition Place should be merged into one organization owned by the city.
- The GCA will support the umbrella Organization, "Ontario Place for All".

Rail Deck Park

- Max reported that GCA is involved in the LPAT hearings regarding the Rail Deck park proposal.
- Developers want to building 8 towers on the north side of the corridor, but the City opposes this idea because they want the entire corridor to be a park.
- Max, for the GCA, submitted to the tribunal that a public-private partnership is the ideal way to proceed, since city does not have the engineering expertise or money to do it on its own.
- Delays are now occurring because of concerns about the new LPAT process. Previously, the OMB would hear a development case de novo and would hear witnesses from all sides. The LPAT process is very different: it does not allow witnesses, instead is based entirely on written material. Lawyers involved in the Rail deck park proposal have asked LPAT to confirm tribunal procedures and the question was referred to a provincial divisional court for guidance; response from the court is expected near the end of April, 2019.
- In the meantime, adjudication of LPAT cases has now halted in Toronto until procedural rules are clarified by provincial court

- Ralph notes that that a critical engineering issue with the park will be long term park maintenance the rail deck structure.

5. Institutional

Expanding GCA Boundaries

- Max proposed for consideration the expansion of the Grange Community Association catchment eastward to Yonge St, to provide representation for increasing numbers of residents there and to help them navigate the new 25-ward system.
- Councillor Cressy is likely to support such an expansion.
- Similarly, we should consider expansion southward. As a first step we should discuss a merger with the Entertainment District Residents' Association, which currently consists of very few active members. Residential buildings in the Entertainment District are a new phenomenon, and there is a low ratio of owner-occupiers in its condos, which may explain lack of engagement in residents' associations.
- Going south of Queen West would give GCA more say in development proposals in that area.
- In the long run, residents associations may eventually become similar to BIAs, with funding and assistance from the city, thus assisting us to represent a larger area.

AGM

- A spring date for AGM to be discussed at next meeting, then planning will commence.