

West Wellington Community Association



E. of Island Park Dr. / W. of Holland Ave / S. of Scott St. / N. of the Queensway

West Wellington Community Association Minutes, AGM, May 19, 2010

Attendance

Board Members: Vivian Knapp, Susan Kennedy, Jason Thomson, David Haskins, Richard Van Loon, James Gilbert, Katie Paris, Peter Bleyer, Bill Mohrmann-Watson

Community: Jerene Sutherland, Carolyn Kearney, Greg McDougall, Philip Hepworth, Dave Allston, Robin Burgener, Duff McLeod, Terri MacDonald, David Lindsay, Gillian Salmond, Daniel Stringer (candidate for Council), Lorne Cutler (Hampton-Iona Community Group)

1. Welcome and Call to order – quorum established.
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes of 2009 WWCA AGM

4. a) President's Report

The WWCA fulfills an essential role in the community, advocating for residents' interests with respect to development proposals; promoting local events; organizing forums for discussing neighbourhood issues; co-operating with other community groups in the city; and making representations on community concerns to governments.

As residents of the West Wellington area, we are well aware that our community has quickly become one of Ottawa's most popular neighbourhoods. The manner in which our neighbourhood evolves during this period of rapid growth and development will, in large part, be determined by its residents. As a voice which strives to represent the cumulative views of residents, the WWCA is your community association – so thank you for getting involved simply by attending tonight.

Again over the past year there were many development applications which we were asked to comment on, and for a number of the most contentious – including 1375 Wellington (adjacent to Café Mio), the Proshine site at the corner of Wellington and Island Park, and 39 Western – the Association submitted written comments to the Committee of Adjustment. WWCA is also actively participating in community efforts to ensure that the future development of the Sisters of Visitation Convent site at 114 Richmond Road is consistent with the Community Design Plan for Richmond Road and with community interests considering the rapid pace and cumulative impact of neighbourhood intensification. Board member Katie Paris will provide further information in her report on the Convent situation.

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Given the emotions which these proposed developments generate, it's clear that the biggest issue for our community and our Association for the foreseeable future will continue to be the question of intensification and how to do it in an intelligent way. The Board's approach to the question of development is that, at its core, intensification is a good idea – we can't go on dealing with growth by building subdivisions beyond the greenbelt – but we believe in a balanced approach which doesn't leave our community feeling that it is being steam-rolled by developers, by the Committee of Adjustment at the city and by the Ontario Municipal Board. How do we attain the city's goals relating to intensification and infilling while also respecting neighbourhood character and actually benefitting the community? In this regard, over the coming year, the Board will be finalising guidelines outlining the Association's principles for assessing development proposals, to ensure that WWCA is consistent and pro-active in commenting on development proposals. I invite you all to become active in this evolving discussion.

Of course, intimately related to development is traffic. In April, Board member Richard Van Loon spearheaded an Association-sponsored town hall on traffic issues at Elmdale School with Councillor Leadman, the city traffic manager and Wallace Beaton of School Travel Planning Ottawa - the results are summarised in the current issue of The Kitchissippi Times. Board member Ken Duff has also agreed to participate in an upcoming Area Traffic Management Study for Byron Avenue.

In addition to commenting on development applications in the West Wellington community, WWCA has over the past year discussed many city issues extending beyond our Association boundaries. We have expressed our support in writing on the BikeWest proposal, which envisions a dedicated cycling pathway extending from Centretown to Westboro. WWCA representatives attend Community Association Forum on Environmental Sustainability (CAFES) meetings, and Board member Vivian Knapp was instrumental in the recent planting of trees along the Byron pathway, in an effort to proactively mitigate the future effects of the emerald ash borer on our urban ash forest.

Last November, the Association hosted a well-attended town hall discussion on transit issues, and subsequently submitted its views on the proposal to use Tunney's Pasture as a Light Rapid Transit transfer station. Our letter strongly endorsed Carling Avenue as the route for the LRT over the Riverside Parkway and Byron Avenue options.

Many of you are likely aware of a good number of these activities, given that for the first time in several years a WWCA newsletter was put together and distributed to all residences within the Association boundaries. I'd like to acknowledge the lead role that our Treasurer Susan Kennedy played in this project.

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In recent months, the idea of changing the WWCA name has been raised. Some feel that the fact that the West Wellington Community Association and the Wellington West BIA have similar sounding but different names should be rectified, while others contend that "West Wellington" is not specific enough in terms of a geographic focus. (The BIA also covers the Hintonburg section of Wellington.) Current suggestions for a new name for the WWCA are Wellington Village Community Association, WoHO (West Of Holland Avenue) Community Association – or to retain the status quo. The intention tonight is to discuss the issue and bring it to a vote.

Given the rate of neighbourhood change, there has never been a more opportune time for a strong and active community association presence. However, in order to accomplish our goals, the WWCA needs community-minded volunteers! I invite you all to help shape the future of our neighbourhood by becoming a WWCA member, or putting your name forward to serve on the Board of Directors for the upcoming year.

4. b) Vice-President's report

Rick Van Loon summarised the outcomes of the traffic town hall and noted that a follow-up (accountability) meeting will be held in September.

The event was held in the Elmdale School auditorium on April 15, and drew approximately 50 residents. It was co-sponsored with the Elmdale School Council. Presenters included Councillor Christine Leadman, Greg Kent, Manager, Traffic Engineering and Technical Services for the city, and Wallace Beaton, of School Travel Planning Ottawa. The meeting was intended as an open forum to ascertain the level of concern with traffic management in the WWCA area, with particular attention to the school zone.

Concerns expressed include traffic volumes and speeds through the neighbourhood, congestion on Island Park Drive and resulting cut-through traffic, and traffic generated by school drop-offs and pick-ups.

Some attendees noted that intersections are not pedestrian-friendly when they require you to push the "walk" button to get a walk signal, and that the new pedestrian improvements on Wellington Street have made life harder for cyclists.

Around the school, there are no speed bumps, nor any speed restrictions or signage, and crossing-guard programs have been cut.

Measures to improve the situation were proposed, such as:

1. Signage restricting turns from Island Park Drive
2. Stop signs to replace Yield signs in the neighbourhood.
3. Unconventional signage that will catch drivers' attention.

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4. Sidewalks and speed bumps
5. A travel planning campaign involving the school council and parents.

4. c) Treasurer's report

Susan Kennedy reported that the current balance is \$2,746.56, as of May 19, 2010. The most significant expense over the past year was newsletter printing and distribution (\$541).

4. d) Update on the Convent

Katie Paris provided an update on the redevelopment proposals for the Sisters of Visitation Convent at 114 Richmond Road.

The heritage designation is completed at the city, and the developer, Ashcroft, has dropped its appeal of this designation. Ashcroft has submitted its rezoning proposal to the city, which is being evaluated and will be referred to the Planning and Environment Committee.

In the meanwhile, Councillor Leadman and the developer have agreed to refer the project to a Design Review Panel. This panel will be retained by the city to evaluate the proposal based on a number of attributes, such as respectful restoration of the heritage aspects of the property, integration of new buildings, views, community context, and more. The panel will consist of three individuals, an architect, a landscape designer, and a heritage expert.

The panel's recommendations will inform the planning staff's review of the project, and will ultimately inform the vote of the PECommittee and the City Council as a whole.

The planner in charge of this file is Douglas James, and attendees were encouraged to email him directly with letters describing their concerns on the site, at douglas.james@ottawa.ca. The more letters he receives, the better.

Katie noted that the secondary plan for the area clearly outlines development expected on this site would be traditional mainstreet along Richmond Road, but no more than 6 stories in height, and no more than 4 stories on the rest of the site. Ashcroft's proposal simply doesn't respect this plan's prescriptions for this site.

A rezoning decision can be appealed, by either the public or the developer, to the Ontario Municipal Board. An OMB decision is usually final, but in this case would have to be agreed to by the Conservation Review Board, as a result of the heritage designation. There isn't a lot of precedent to understand well what would happen if the CRB does not agree with OMB decisions.

Lorne Cutler, of the Hampton-Iona CA, also provided information on the status of the convent.

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4. e) Membership, mailing list and website report

David Haskins reported that WWCA currently has 69 members. Website is WordPress-based, and has a blog to which 117 comments have been posted.

5. Discussion and Vote on Association Name

After considerable discussion on why the name change proposal was brought forward (confusion relating to BIA name, uncertainty as to what constitutes West Wellington), what name is used most often by local realtors (Wellington Village), and how a new name could be a part of rebranding the Association, the vote took place with the following results:

Wellington Village CA: 13

West Wellington CA: 2

West of Holland CA (WoHo) CA: 1

6. Byron bus removal proposal: Greg McDougall brought up the Byron Avenue vibration issue. After considerable discussion it was decided that Greg, Peter B and James G will collectively draft, for the next Wellington Village CA meeting, text which expresses that WVCA supports residents' concerns and wants to see a resolution to the issue...

Note: The first Public Advisory Committee meeting for the Byron Avenue Area Traffic Management Study will be held Monday, May 31st, 7-9 p.m. The objective of the study is to develop an area traffic management plan for Byron Avenue between Island Park Drive and Holland Avenue, to address some of the traffic concerns raised by the West Wellington Community Association.

7. Philip Hepworth reported that he had, on May 17, attended a focus group session regarding the Richmond Road/Westboro Transportation Management Implementation Plan, at which participants were asked to identify and mark issues on a large map of our area, including the area east of Island Park Drive. Attendees were also asked whether they supported a long list of transportation initiatives (over 30), and to identify others. The invitation to the session stated: "*As part of the approval by Ottawa City Council of the Richmond Road/Westboro Community Design Plan, direction was given to develop a Transportation Management Implementation Plan (TMIP) for this area, the main aim of which would be to detail how over a period of years a higher transit modal share could be achieved. In addition to a focus on transit the TMIP would also identify and evaluate initiatives to promote other non-vehicular modes of transportation (e.g. cycling, pedestrian, and other transportation demand management initiatives) and recommend a strategy to reduce vehicle dependency in the Richmond Road/Westboro area, etc.*"

Contact persons are Steven Boyle, Senior Project Manager, steven.boyle@ottawa.ca and Kimberley Hutton, McCormick Rankin Corporation, khunton@mrc.ca

8. Acknowledgement of out-going Board members: Ken Duff is stepping down from the Board for the coming year.

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9. The nine Board members present (see attendance section, top of document) indicated a willingness to remain on the board for 2010-2011. Peter Duschenes, who was unable to attend the AGM, had previously indicated the same. Duff McLeod, Dave Allston, Dave Lindsay and Robin Burgener put their names forward as new Board members.

Rick Van Loon moved that:

- the WWCA be renamed the Wellington Village CA
- that the Board be expanded from 11 to 14 members; and
- that the members so named be acclaimed as the WVCA Board for 2010-2011.
- Seconded by Peter Bleyer, unanimously approved.

10. Daniel Stringer spoke to his reasons for running for Councillor for Kitchissippi Ward.

11. Carolyn Kearney provided an update on the development application for 39 Western, which was discussed today at the Committee of Adjustment (and on an Ottawa Morning radio interview).

12. James Gilbert provided an update on the Cave Creek Sewer project, and suggested that the WVCA should keep closely informed of developments on this project. He proposed that in rebuilding the streets being torn up, the city should consider some of the other objectives on traffic calming, for instance, or installations of speed bumps.

He also noted that he had received no response from MPP Yasir Naqvi's office regarding the Parkdale offramp and Queensway planning through the neighbourhood, and would draft another letter asking for a response.

13. Next meeting: Fisher Park School, Monday June 14, 7:30pm

13. Rick Van Loon motioned that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Robin Burgener.