

West Wellington Community Association



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

Wellington Village Community Association Minutes, AGM, Thyme and Again, May 18, 2011

Attendance

Board Members: Vivian Knapp, Susan Kennedy, Jason Thomson, David Haskins, Richard Van Loon, Peter Bleyer, Bill Mohrmann-Watson, Duff McLeod, David Lindsay, Peter Duschenes, Peter Bleyer
Community: Jereen Sutherland, Carolyn Kearney, Philip Hepworth, Dorothy Hepworth, Terry McDonald, Lorraine Farkas, Suzanne Woo, Doreen Glandon, Bob Glandon, Diane Zilkowsky, Catherine James-McGuinty, Jan Frizell, Carl Frizell, Rob Bowman, Bob Daley, John Wordley, Roz Wordley, Mary Lindsay, Kevin O'Donnell (Green provincial candidate), Councillor Katherine Hobbs, Andrew Hickey (Councillor's Assistant)

1. **Welcome, Call to order, Introductions, Establishment of Quorum** - quorum established.
2. **Approval of Agenda** – approved.
3. **Approval of Minutes of 2010 WWCA AGM** - approved

4. a) President's Report

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 will, in large part, be determined by us, as its residents. As a voice which strives to represent the cumulative views of residents, the WVCA is your community association – so thank you for getting involved simply by attending tonight.

Again over the past year WVCA reviewed and commented on a number of development applications. Given the emotions which infill developments often generate, it's clear that one of the biggest issues for our Association for the foreseeable future will remain the question of intensification and how to do it in an intelligent way. We all know that, over the past 12 months, literally dozens of homes have suddenly disappeared in our neighbourhood; with many of the infill developments which have replaced them occupying a far greater proportion of their lot, the result is a loss of greenspace and a rapid change in the character of our community. As Board member Katie Paris wrote in a NewsWest article last summer, "a tipping point has been reached, where the land value of smaller, depreciating homes makes them prohibitively expensive as starter homes. New home builders are now outbidding potential home buyers when major repairs may be needed or maintenance has been deferred." Just this morning, Glebe Councillor Chernashenko, being interviewed on Ottawa Morning, described infill developments as the #1 issue in his Ward, and I suspect the same can be said in Kitchissippi.

The WVCA Board's approach to the question of development remains 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 its preferences are being ignored by developers, by city committees, or by the Ontario Municipal Board. How do we attain the city's intensification goals while also respecting neighbourhood character and obtaining actual benefits for the community?

Over the past year, no local development proposal was more contentious than the application of Ashcroft Homes for the Convent site at 114 Richmond Road. Although not technically within WVCA boundaries,

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which extend from Scott to the Queensway, and from Holland to Island Park, the Association submitted, in 2010, three separate written comments on this matter to the Committee of Adjustment. These letters expressed our concerns regarding the impact which the proposed changes to that large property will have on the traffic, parking and infrastructure of the neighbourhood as a whole, while also stating the opposition of the WVCA to any interruption of the Byron Avenue pathway.

At this time, the Hampton Iona Community Group, the Westboro Community Association and Leighton Terrace resident Sylvano Carrasco are appealing the City's approval of the convent site redevelopment to the Ontario Municipal Board, on the grounds that the City has not respected the wording or intent of the Westboro Community Design Plan in regards to intensification, and that the City has not properly planned how it will accommodate the growth resulting from this development. In the event that no mediated outcome is negotiated in the coming weeks, a hearing date of July 18 has been set.

The fact that, as currently approved, the project density for the convent site is not consistent with the Westboro Community Design Plan, has exacerbated the already significant community concerns regarding the rapid pace and cumulative impact of intensification in our neighbourhood as a whole. This is of particular interest to Wellington Village at this time given the fact that our Wellington St. West Community Design Plan was approved by the City Planning Committee in late-April and is scheduled to go forward for final approval by full council on May 25. Board member Duff McLeod has researched the subject and has recently drafted a letter asking for clarification on the relationship between the City's Official Plan and the Wellington St. West Community Design Plan.

In recognition of the fact that infill developments have become a neighbourhood flashpoint, the Association held a public forum on Intensification with City planners last November. The event featured the initial public presentation of a Small Scale Infill Housing study which the City conducted last summer to document the impact of intensification on established Ottawa neighbourhoods, including the outcomes which are resulting due to having zoning rules and Urban Design Guidelines which do not fully align. (By this I mean that zoning bylaws and the building permit process are not linked to related issues such as infrastructure capacity, protection of older trees, and adherence to the City's Urban Design Guidelines for Infill Housing.)

Of course, intimately related to development is traffic. Last November, Board member Richard Van Loon spearheaded a second town hall on traffic issues at Elmdale School with a panel of speakers including the city traffic manager, the NCC and Victoria Gibb-Carsley representing the School Travel Planning initiative at Elmdale. The Association subsequently outlined its position on pedestrian crossings in a letter to the Councillor and the city engineer for traffic operations - we recommended that all intersections have audible pedestrian lights that automatically change along with every traffic light cycle.

In addition to its involvement in development-related topics, the Association has over the past year discussed many city issues extending beyond our Association boundaries, including co-sponsoring, with other local associations, a well-attended all-candidates debate for the November 2010 municipal elections.

In 2010, following a town hall discussion on transit issues, a WVCA letter strongly endorsed Carling Avenue as the route for Light Rail Transit over the Riverside Parkway and Byron Avenue options. The Association has remained involved in the transit issue of the past year through its participation in the LRT

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Public Consultation Group which is examining the various corridors which the LRT could take through our neighbourhood. WVCA also submitted comments this spring on the proposed transit service changes, arguing against a reduction in bus options along Scott St between Westboro and Tunneys.

Despite these accomplishments, there is much more which could be done to bring local residents together and to foster a greater sense of community. Over the coming year, for example, I'd personally like to see a regular WVCA newsletter distributed to Association members, perhaps modelled on the excellent Champlain Park and Hintonburg examples.

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 WVCA needs community-minded volunteers! The Association fulfills an essential role in the community, advocating for residents' interests regarding development proposals; promoting local events; organizing forums on neighbourhood issues; and co-operating with other community groups. I invite you all to help shape the future of our neighbourhood by becoming an Association member, or by putting your name forward to serve on the Board of Directors for the upcoming year.

4. b) Vice-President's report

Rick Van Loon reported that there are, generally, two types of traffic issues: main street traffic, and cut-through traffic. Perhaps in part to address the fact that the issue was prominent at our November forum on traffic, a crosswalk will be installed this year at Iona and Island Park drive. There remains a need to both put pressure on the Councillor on traffic issues and to support her efforts on the topic.

4. c) Treasurer's report

Susan Kennedy reported that the Current balance at the time of the AGM was \$2623.81. Total expenses for 2010/11 were \$367.92 (mostly room rental plus a banner for \$81.36).

4. d) Membership, mailing list and website report

David Haskins reiterated that people should subscribe to the web site, as doing so serves to update the mailing list, as well as renewing their memberships for the 2011-2012 year.

4. e) Kevin O'Donnell – Green Party candidate for Ottawa-Centre – introduces himself and welcomes attendees to speak with him and learn more about his party's platform.

5. Acknowledgement of out-going Board members: Dave Allston, Robin Burgener, Peter Duschenes and James Gilbert are stepping down from the Board for the coming year. Peter, as the former WVCA Past President, was particularly thanked for his significant contributions.

6. Mid-meeting activity

Susan Kennedy distributed 3 dots to each person; attendees were asked to distribute the dots on categories listed on a large poster board to indicate their preferred priority issues for WVCA to concentrate on in 2011-12. The results (*italicised categories were added to the list during the activity, while the other categories were provided as examples*):

Development: 37 dots

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Traffic: 17 dots
Safeguarding Byron Park: 10 dots
Transit: 10 dots
Environment: 4 dots
Park Designations: 2 dots
Work with BIA to support small businesses: 2 dots

It was noted that some who added their dots to the Development category did so while thinking particularly of the issue of safeguarding Byron Linear Park.

7. Councillor Katherine Hobbs

Councillor Hobbs made the following points in her talk:

- this summer, Carling (eastbound) offramp will be closed for 8 weeks - the crosswalk at Iona and Island Park will be installed after that, along with pedestrian crossings at Holland and Carling and at Island Park and Carling.
- on LRT, there is a need to think about what will happen beyond (west of) Lincoln Fields
- lots is happening in terms of cycling infrastructure. Money has been allocated to the Somerset bridge underpass. As well, Scott is to be repaved this summer with cycling lanes added.
- On development issues, Section 37 discussions are now underway. WVCA should make a list of community wants and needs (e.g. parks, infrastructure, social services, traffic studies - even the latter can cost up to 150,000). The Councillor asserted that "most developers want to talk to you before they make their application - often, in many cases, they will make changes" [in response to community suggestions].
- Discussion on Section 37 segued into a heated discussion on the specifics of the proposed development of the convent site by Ashcroft. It was at this point, in response to a question asking specifically how a decision to use Byron as a southern exit from the convent property would be arrived at, that the Councillor stated that the topic would be on the agenda of the May 24 Planning Committee meeting.
- During the succeeding and at times heated discussion, AGM attendees voiced their concern and sympathy for the plight of Shannon residents as well as their opposition to the proposed cut through the Byron Park.

8. Election of Board Members for 2010-2011

Excepting Peter Duschenes, the remaining ten Board members present (see attendance, top of document) indicated a willingness to remain on the board for 2011-2012. Katie Paris, who was unable to attend the AGM, had previously indicated the same. Rob Bowman and Catherine James-McGuinty put their names forward as new Board members, joining returning Board members Susan Kennedy, David Haskins, David Lindsay, Duff McLeod, Rick Van Loon, Vivian Knapp, Katie Paris, Bill Mohrmann-Watson, Peter Bleyer and Jason Thomson. The 2011-12 WVCA Board consists of 12 members.