

Rockland Neighbourhood Association
Minutes - Meeting of the Board of Directors
Virtual Meeting
Wednesday, February 10th, 2021

Present: Art Hamilton, Sandra Jackman, Bob June, Brittany Calder, Chantal Meagher, Dave Clarke, Dave McWalter, Pearl Arden, Patricia Kidd, Charlayne Thornton-Joe (council liaison), Gary Pemberton (neighbourhood liaison)

Guest: Carollyn Yardley

Absent: none

Meeting called to order at 7:04 PM

Introductions: RNA's new council liaison, Charlayne Thornton-Joe, and neighbourhood guest Carollyn Yardley

Agenda

Motion to approve - Chantal seconded by Dave, approved unanimously.

January 12th, 2021 minutes

Motion to approve: Dave seconded by Brittany, approved unanimously.

Councillor's Report

Charlayne expressed that her role is to hear our concerns and comments and bring them to council, as well as provide updates from council to RNA. She will liaise with Gary to get up to date. Tomorrow's council meeting will include Clover Point -the city has received a significant amount of emails expressing concerns. Also will include lessons learned from the by-election and neighbourhood boundaries. RNA will receive communication about the proposed Gonzales/Rockland amalgamation and can respond. The board discussed this proposal.

The Land Use Committee expressed concerns about a lack of a corridor plan and current RNA neighbourhood plan. The recent condominium proposal for Oak Bay and Fort Street is challenging without a corridor plan. A board member requested more information on the 'Missing Middle'. Charlayne will follow up on these items, and expressed that she is pleased to be our new liaison for the next two years.

Neighbourhood Update (Gary)

Gary distributed the February My Great Neighbourhood staff report prior to the meeting. Community lunch and learns will continue throughout the year - the next one is entitled the Power of Community Art. Suggestions are taken for topics.

An update was provided on the neighbourhood grants available. The city is in the early stages of putting a steering together for participatory budgeting grants for neighbourhood placemaking.

Gary met with neighbourhood associations to discuss the \$20,000 available funding for neighbourhood coordination. Responses for funding uses included engagement, outreach, ease of volunteer burnout, and to further neighbourhood strategies. Concerns included admin support, bureaucracy, lack of dedicated space. This would provide an opportunity for RNA to have a part time coordinator to do some heavy lifting for us. Gary advised us to think about benefits and challenges as this is expected to go committee in a couple of weeks.

Gary will follow up with city transportation in response to our enquiry about the long anticipated speed reader.

Calendar Review

The post office box has been paid for the year. Art has all the keys to the PO Box, but will consider distributing a few.

Sandra to send out 2021 calendar of events and updated contact list to board members. Art looking into setting up a Google docs file so we can share relevant documents and templates.

VCAN Update (Bob)

Bob - the last meeting focussed on homelessness and pressures that North Park, and to a lesser extent Harris Green have been under.

VCAN is pushing to have electronic meetings be an integral part of the community engagement process, rather than discretionary at the option of the developer.

Committees Reports:

Land Use (Dave)

1737 Rockland is underway. City has provided feedback and is waiting for the proponent to respond. Yesterday another half dozen trees were taken down. There has been a general lack of communication with neighbours.

1745 and 938 Richmond are almost finished, and are only now going to the Board of Variance for height. LUC to follow up with the building inspector to find out where the break in the process is. This is not the first time height variances have been requested after the building is substantially complete.

1224, 1226 Richardson - 3 multi-unit house-plexes. This has now been passed by council and rezoning has gone through. Building heights have increased. Due to affordability and proximity to downtown, a large reduction in parking was granted.

1475 Fort St apartment - Large apartment building with minimal setbacks. Committee of the Whole suggested it go forward to a public hearing at council. Likely a month or two away. We expect this to be contentious as it is a large square building with reduced setbacks, requires removal of big trees, and will result in sunlight reduction to the houses on St Charles. Charlayne advised that the decision to go to public hearing was not unanimous.

Oak Bay, Verrinder and McGregor - Bob met to discuss a proposed 40 unit, 7 story condo development bordering these streets with access on McGregor. It involves moving 3 or 4 designated heritage houses, and includes a small pocket park on Verrinder, coffee shop on the corner of Verrinder and Oak Bay, and yoga studio. Current renters on the property will be given options to buy into the condos at a discount. Very early days.

Environment (Dave C)

Dave emailed board members the application for next years community garden coordinator grant. Currently working on identifying parcels of city owned land and evaluating the suitability for benches, etc.

Membership (Art)

Art and Brittany are exploring a new membership management system. The board discussed welcome packages for the new residents of Bellewood Park, possibly facilitated by Abstract. Chantal will look into how the Art Gallery is accomplishing this.

Social (Pearl)

No updates

Welcoming (Dave)

No updates

Woodland Garden (Dave)

Storm cleanup has been underway.

Treasurer (Art)

The Neighbourhood Association grant has been received. RNA currently has \$32,244 in the bank. This will decrease as some garden coordinator funding will go back to city.

Communications (Pat)

Pat is working on cleaning up the website. The self guided heritage pamphlets on the website print out 8 x 14 which is too large for most people to print. It was suggested that we print copies for Art Gallery and Craigdarroch Castle to hand out, also potentially get a neighbourhood box for this and other info, and create a QR code.

MOTION: Bob moved that we allocate up to \$2,000 to print Rockland walking tours. Seconded by Dave C. Discussed and approved unanimously.

Art advised that Bare Metal has migrated the RNA Website to the cloud for a minimal increase in price. Melissa, James and Cory recommend that we migrate to Mail Chimp for our mail out software, as ours is outdated.

Members are to review bios on the website and sent updates to Art.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

Neighbourhood Boundaries: Potential amalgamation with Gonzales Neighbourhood Association. Discussion ensued about neighbourhood identities, similarities and differences, workload issues, Gonzales wishes, city support and general lack of information about this proposal. Bob, Chantal and Pat to reach out to the Gonzales Neighbourhood Association for a meeting.

9:10 meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 10th, 7 PM via Zoom. Please advise Sandra if unable to attend.