



### **St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association Community Meeting**

**Held on Wednesday, January 31, 2024 from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

**Hosted on the Zoom Videoconferencing Platform**

SLNA President welcomed 48 community members and delegates to our monthly community meeting. Once again Stewart delighted and enlightened us with the following “today in history” information pieces:

- In 1606 Guy Fawkes was put to death, so this is Guy Fawkes Day
- In 1958 the U.S. Explorer 1 was the first artificial satellite to orbit the earth, and eight years later the Russian orbiter Luna 9 became the first craft to land softly on the moon. Tragically the Columbia spacecraft disintegrated on re-entry and took the lives of all 7 astronauts on board
- In 2020 the UK left the EU (BREXIT)
- In terms of people born on January 31 who have some notoriety:
  - Franz Schubert
  - Jacquie Robinson
  - JT
  - Johnny Rotten

**TRANSFORM TO – City’s Action Plan for Climate Change**  
**Presented by Meghan MacLean, Program Manager, Climate Action Team**  
**Environment and Climate Division, City of Toronto**

**SLMPAC – St. Lawrence Market Precinct Advisory Committee – Suzanne Kavanagh, Chair**

- **St. Lawrence Hall, St. Lawrence Market, North Building, St. Lawrence Market, South Building, Market Lane Park, Market Street, 125 The Esplanade (Market Tent)**

The new word to use for St. Lawrence Market Precinct Advisory Committee is “District Advisory Committee” since Precinct was seen as part of development. Starting at King Street is the St. Lawrence Hall, our national historic site in the neighbourhood, and then going Southward is this building called the North Market, and then across the street on Front Street is the South Market and South of that is the tent where the farmers are and then there is also Market Lane Park. The other thing that has evolved along the way is that South of that is the animation of Market Street which is an award-winning street. The Farmers’ Market started in 1803. This Farmers’ Market will always be here, in this location, as part of the covenant of the start of the City of Toronto.

The SLNA was doing some research and getting a federal grant to think about building a new Farmers’ Market. In 2002 City Council agreed to go ahead and on June 7, 2010 architects’ contracts were awarded. In 2015 the tent opened and in 2017 we discovered the “porcupine drain”, an ancient 1831 stone drain. So we lost a year or two over that, and then we had covid, followed by a construction strike. In 2019 the contract had to be re-awarded. Apparently at this point we are at 92% completion of the North Market. Because we have been delayed so many times the first priority now is to finish all of the upper floors of the North Market on the East side to get the courts in. No doubt we are behind schedule. We launched our Strategic Plan which is on the website. Presently we are interviewing for subject matter experts. Because this is a public building all of the deficiencies have to be dealt with ahead of time. The whole of St. Lawrence Hall has to be programmed and animated as well. No clarity as yet regarding Market Street in regards to full pedestrianization.

## **Chris Glover, MPP - Spadina-Fort York**

Chris Glover stated that 2023 was a good year for Ontarians. The Auditor General report on the Greenbelt that we requested was just so scathing and showed the corruption so clearly that the Ford Conservatives had to back off on the 7,500 hectares. And then they had to back off on the expansion of municipal boundaries, and that was another almost 30,000 acres of farmland that is now protected. We are still working on that one because there is a municipal loophole in there as well.

The next piece of the Greenbelt that we need to protect is around the 410 which is a ten billion dollar highway that no planner has ever said that we need and it cuts right through the heart of some of the best farmland in the Province. And – surprise, surprise – if you look at who owns or has recently bought the farmland along the route – it's the same names as the wedding guest list at Ford's daughter's wedding. I was talking with people at the door tonight and we started laughing – it's just so bad, if you are not going to laugh you are going to cry. But all in all, it's a huge success – they had to walk back some things.

The next Auditor General report that is coming out is on Ontario Place and I am really hoping that it is scathing enough and explains the details and uncovers some more things we haven't been able to uncover. She actually has access to that lease that the public, or even the members of the Provincial Parliament, have been denied access to. That is one avenue for saving Ontario Place, the other avenue is the work of the people behind Ontario Place For All. They are doing such a phenomenal job. The case going on right now is on whether or not the government broke provincial laws in the development of Ontario Place, especially around environment and heritage.

The other piece that is at the courts is the Ontario Place Protectors fighting Bill 154. This bill was rushed through just before the holiday break. It is one of the most egregious attacks on our democratic rights - it mainly says that if the government has violated the Heritage Act, the Environmental Bill of Rights, the Environmental Protection Act, any municipal Bylaws or if any of the Ministers or any government officials in making this deal with Therma have committed acts of

breach of contract, breach of tort or misfeasance which means misuse of government power, then they can't be held accountable in the courts. From an academic perspective this is a really interesting piece of legislation because they are basically saying that the laws of the land don't apply to them. So Ontario Place Protectors is taking them to court, saying this is a violation of our charter rights. If the government ministers have been breaking the law then surely as Ontarians we have the right to take them to court to hold them to account.

We are fighting hard for the Ontario Science Centre which was used in order to justify the Therma deal – a 450 million parking garage and 200 million dollars of infrastructure development that we are paying for – to hand over the West Island for 95 years with a lease that so far as we know is free to them. But in order to justify it they decided that they were “moving” the Science Centre – meaning they will destroy the present one and spend twice the money to build a new one at the waterfront that's half the size. These issues are getting huge push-back from across the Province. Most people don't want to see our tax dollars going in this direction.

The Service Ontario Centres are being moved from their present locations – leases and agreements with small business owners – and they are being moved to Walmart and Staples. Ford has connections with executives at Walmart and Staples.

We are fighting back on this. We have had some success in 2023 and we are hoping for more success in 2024. We have so many issues at the provincial level that we should be working on, such as the affordable housing crisis, the homeless crisis, the opioid epidemic, the hospitals crisis, our colleges and universities are in deep financial problems – those are the things we should be working on, those are the things where our tax dollars should be directed and that's what we are pushing for at the legislature. Email my office if you have any questions, stories or concerns.

The West Don Lands Committee is wrapping up – Cindy Wilkie and John Wilson have been involved for over 20 years, and they as a community group have

helped shape the waterfront we all enjoy, and it shows the power of organizing and mobilizing.

## **Heritage Toronto Awards**

Heritage Toronto is a construct of the City of Toronto and it is charged with being mindful of and working to promote, conserve and educate people on heritage. It does awards every year and they are in three categories:

- Built Heritage
- Public History
- Books

This has been a key focus for the SLNA in previous years and this just reminds us that not only does it include preserving heritage assets but also acknowledging and celebrating heritage aspects on which we build our future.

There were 25 book nominees for this year. It is a juried process and the books are judged on a combination of those four qualities: advocacy, scholarship, education and production value. There are a number of people in this neighbourhood that know a lot about heritage specifically in this neighbourhood and more broadly in the City and I thought it might be interesting to share just a couple of nominees for this award to give you a sense of the kind of variety that these 25 books provide.

The first one I picked is called *Above The Fold*, a personal history of the Toronto Star, John Honderich

- Founded 1892; Joseph E (Holy Joe) Atkinson
- Once known primarily for tabloid sensationalism and screaming headlines
- Ontario government: veto power over all operations
- Until paper evolved to the five families of the Torstar Voting Trust
- Families committed in court to observe and promote the intellectual and spiritual basis on which The Star has since operated.

- Torstar Voting Trust transformed The Star
- Bastion of journalistic quality
- Routinely wins industry's highest honours and accolades
- Now one of world's leading and most respected socially liberal broadsheets
- Honderichs were one of the five families
- Personal history of one of the most storied and successful newspapers of our time told through the lives of the father and son who ran it for close to 50 years
- John's relationship with his father, Beland, named "The Beast"
- Crippling strikes, courtroom battles, soaring egos, newspaper wars, shift from print

Another book that was recognized is called An Unrecognized Contribution, subtitled Women and Their Work in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Toronto, by Elizabeth Gillan Muir.

- Wide-ranging collection of biographies
- Artists, authors, proprietors of boarding houses, taverns, professionals including doctors, teachers, nurses, lawyers
- These women were integral to the City's commerce and culture
- The work of women strengthened the City's safety net
- Highlights overlooked work of women; providing a female-centred view of Toronto's heritage
- One short biography was about Ruth Fellows Adams (1800-1864)
  - Granted a patent #492 "reverse cooking stove" in June 1854
  - Description of stove has survived but not a picture
  - First patent to woman inventor in Canada
  - Married itinerant Methodist minister, bore 11 children

Jane Cleghorn of Cleghorn & Son – fruit, oyster and fish shop

Jessie Knowles of Knowles & Son – hardware, paint and furnishings

1877 – Margaret Denlord: gatekeeper, toll #1 Mill St., now Broadview. She took her work seriously – in 1894 a teamster member ran the toll; Margaret chased him in her car; police apprehended; toll was paid.

The third book is entitled Run Towards the Danger by Sarah Polley, Confrontation with a Body of Memory.

- What it is to live in one's body, in a constant state of becoming, learning, and changing
- These are the most dangerous stories of my life
- The ones I have avoided, the ones I haven't told, the ones that have kept me awake on countless nights. As these stories found echoes in my adult life, and then went another, better, way than they did in childhood they became lighter and easier to carry
- Transformative power of ever-evolving relationship with memory

It is a collection of six stories, written over many years, and talks about how she has learned to live in her body and go through the constant change of learning and changing. It speaks to how memory changes as experience adds to it and qualifies it. Go to [heritage.toronto.org](http://heritage.toronto.org) for more information.

## Community Updates

### SLNA Events 41<sup>st</sup> Anniversary – Renate Tilson

We are happy to report that we have full-house (100+ people registered) for our Celebration on **February 12 at the Novotel Hotel, 45 The Esplanade, from 6 – 8 pm**. The space allocation is for 100 people only and registration is now closed.

The hotel will provide a cash bar at a Happy Hour price of \$7.00 (red/white wine, local beer, Aperol Spritzer) and complimentary hors d'oeuvres (chicken satay, beef satay, spring rolls, fruit platter, vegetarian and vegan choices).



The Novotel is also offering a 20% discount on their regular Café Nicole menu for registered participants, for Feb. 12 only. You can take advantage of this discount offer before or after the Reception.

### **Updates from the Waste Reduction Group: REmarket and Repair Café – January 24 and 25 – Nancy Fung**

Nancy reported that we had over 30 volunteers to help us with the event, and our donors and visitors numbered at over 1000 – we lost count.

- 32 skids were donated to the Salvation Army, that's approx. 10,000 pounds
- 3.5 skids of electronic e-waste, plus computers/monitors to be refurbished for re-use by RCT
- The Repair Café attracted 123 visitors with 140 items to be fixed
- 15 bikes were repaired by the Culture Link Hub

With every event we have been increasing the recycling/upcycling/reuse process with the following items:

- 300 pairs Prescription glasses, 750 units of oral care items
- Household hazardous waste, cosmetic containers
- Tiny Toy, Brita filters, over 400 prescription bottles, writing implements
- Batteries, ink cartridges
- 450 Prescription bottles, 750 single use masks
- Smartphones (to be reused) razors, cigarette butts
- Reusable shopping bags

### **Our next event will take place on June 12 and 13, 2024**

After every event we get together to discuss what we can do better next time around, using feedback from the community. One question is often asked “what do we do with items between REmarket events?”

We are now working with the St. Lawrence Community Recreation Centre and the following items can be dropped off for recycling:

- Oral care waste
- Empty cosmetic containers
- Single-use masks

The St. Lawrence Community Recreation Centre is located at 230 The Esplanade. We have set up drop-off containers.

- Monday – Friday (6:15 am – 9 pm)
- Saturday/Sunday (8:45 – 8 pm)

Terracycle Cigarette Butt Receptacles

- The program started in August 2023
- Installed in 26 locations within the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood
- Started collecting at REmarkets
- To date: collected 50,000 butts.

### **West Don Lands Committee – Stewart Linton**

Chris Glover already talked about this – the Committee has decided to hand the baton in regards to advocacy and direction-setting over to the resident associations that have grown up in the areas when the Don Land Committees started which has been active since 1997.

- Derelict industrial lands and now vibrant new neighbourhoods
- New Parks: Corktown Commons, Public facilities (YMCA, Anishnawbe Health), infrastructure projects (revitalization of the Don River mouth)
- New neighbourhood associations are Canary District, East Waterfront, Quayside
- Focus shifts to new precincts
- Keating Channel, Villiers Island, East Harbour

Cindy and John have been tireless in their advocacy, SLNA has had representatives, currently Suzanna Kavanagh, and they have worked with others on the Committee to make the kind of changes that we have seen over the last 25 years in this part of the city. We want to acknowledge and thank those that have been involved in doing this work over the years.

### **SLNA Annual General Meeting – March 27, 2024**

- Election of Directors
- 3 positions, each 3 years
- Nominations due on March 25 at 6 pm – you can self-nominate or have someone else nominate you. The nominations form is on the website.
- You need to be a delegate of your building to run
- Your building has to have paid its dues for you to be considered for election – if you are unsure please contact Toby at [treasurer@slna.ca](mailto:treasurer@slna.ca)

Canada Day is coming – if you are interested in volunteering please contact Toby at the email above.

**The next SLNA Community Meeting will take place on February 28, 2024.**

