



St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association Community Meeting

Held on Wednesday, July 26, 2023 from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Hosted on the Zoom Videoconferencing Platform

SLNA V.P. Marketing Sharon McMillan chaired the meeting in the absence of SLNA President, Stewart Linton who is on a planned vacation.

The Chair welcomed 49 community members and Delegates to the July 26, 2023 SLNA Community Meeting.

WalkRollMap Presentation – Gabriel Blanc

Gabriel is the new Outreach Coordinator for WalkRollMap (WalkRollMap.org) in Toronto. WalkRollMap is a project initiated at the University of Victoria which now has coordinators at many universities throughout North America. It receives funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada and the idea is to create a crowd-sourced accessibility mapping service for mapping barriers to mobility in cities across North America. This is to help communities to create walkable neighbourhoods by sharing their data.

Why Walkable Neighbourhoods are Important

- Improve health and prevent chronic disease
- Promote social justice and equity
- Improve public health and safety
- Create economic vibrancy and social connectedness

- Green form of transportation

The socio-economic benefits, the fact that getting around by foot or with a mobility device (hence the “walk and roll” in WalkRollMap) is the accessible and equitable way to get around as opposed to driving or even biking which requires a certain amount of money to participate in and the economic vibrance, the connectedness that comes with truly walkable communities. Not to forget zero emissions. By contrast, 27% of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada are from transportation. In Ontario specifically that number is even higher and it is the sector that contributes the most to greenhouse gas emissions. Creating environments in which people can get around without greenhouse gases is incredibly important for reaching our climate targets.

It is important that we are creating walkable communities, but some of the barriers to that are subtler than we might think, in fact so subtle that the urban planners don’t really register them. We might want to call them micro-barriers, things like cracks in the pavement, or other impediments which might make it impossible for you to get around with a stroller or in a wheelchair, a scooter or with a walker.

Part of what WalkRollMap is hoping to do is not only take note of these barriers, but also where they are, whom do they affect, when do they happen – the detail things that make a community walkable or not walkable. We are essentially trying to collect digital evidence for analysis and accountability with the ultimate goal of allowing cities and community groups to set priorities and target action, and to allow them to lobby for more accessible infrastructure.

We are filling a data gap with the collection of microscale barriers to walking and rolling using crowdsourced mapping. Our goal is to work with community partners to reach diverse people of all ages and abilities. In the original design when WalkRollMap was proposed there were certain communities deemed to be more important in having this kind of access, such as individuals with mobility issues, older adults, young children and newcomers. We as an organization are trying to reach all of those communities to provide them with the WalkRollMap resource.

Please help us make your walking and rolling environment safer and more accessible by mapping your experience. If you are on a bicycle please report at [BikeMaps.org](https://www.bikemaps.org). There are three different types of reports you can make:

- Report a Hazard or Concern – e.g. cracked pavement

- Missing Amenities – this is equally important, e.g. there is a missing bench here and there is not a bench for 200 m so it would be very hard for somebody who requires rest stops to get around
- Report an Incident – such as collisions, falls or near misses. This is often a sign that there is a structural or infrastructural issue.

So far we have received about 70 reports which is not nearly enough to conclusively identify certain spots as a problem, this is something the City needs to fix. What I am really trying to do as the Outreach Coordinator for Toronto is to increase the number of pins and to increase the number of community groups that go to this as a resource in order to advocate for their needs.

What type of a Hazard or Concern are you mapping? There are certain sub-categories that you will be asked to report on as well, such as a sidewalk issue, a crossing issue, inaccessibility through weather-related or seasonal issues and safety/comfort issues such as missing sidewalks, trash cans in the middle of the street, etc. The form will ask you to be as specific as possible, it is critical to get fine-grain data on what kind of issues people are encountering.

Safety and comfort concerns are a unique subcategory, another reason why we decided to do outreach specifically to women's groups because there are certainly safety concerns that are particularly important for women – such as a missing street light. Things that would make walking in the dark at night inaccessible. Not everyone experiences public spaces the same and it is important to reach diverse people for range of experiences.

Missing amenities can also be barriers for people who have more trouble getting around on foot. Obviously a missing bench, or a complete lack of benches, fall under this category. In addition to what kind of incident, hazard, concern or missing amenity you have identified we also ask you to make comments on what specifically you saw, such as a car not stopping or slowing down. Taking pictures is a good way to be precise.

Is there an app?

- No, but the website is mobile friendly
- QR code directly to website

No need to sign in.

- For bike-related issues go to [BikeMaps.org](https://www.bikemaps.org) or follow the link on WRM

Your data can be downloaded, it's open. We use it as researchers and can share with cities and organizations. It is completely anonymous.

Here is how you can help:

- Make reports
- Tell your friends!
- Promote the website as a group: Newsletters and websites
- Social Media (walkrollmap on Instagram and Twitter)
- **Live tutorials – Learn to use WalkRollMap.org while reviewing the infrastructure in your own neighbourhood.** If you want a more in-depth look at what WalkRollMap has to offer, Gabe would be happy to organize a LIVE walk around the SLNA neighbourhood with a small group to give everyone a thorough overview, including filling out of forms. <https://lettucemeet.com/1/EL90q> - the on-line sign-up form.

Toronto at this point has 79 pins which means we are being outdone by Ottawa with 300 pins, Montreal has close to 500 pins, Victoria also has upwards of 500 pins, Vancouver has more pins than us as well. Please be sure to fill out the map in this city in particular, we don't want to lag behind. It's time for pedestrians and other vulnerable sidewalk users to get organized!

In answer to an audience question, 311 should still be used when necessary, WalkRollMap is not directly connected with 311 at this point. Gabe mentioned that he is also trying to connect with the Toronto City Council Accessibility Advisory Committee. In response to another question – no, you do not have to fill out the form where you encounter a problem, it can certainly be done from home. You don't need to have data and it also works very well on your computer.

SLNA Announcements

Waste Reduction Group (a committee of the SLNA) – Donna Patterson and Nancy Fung

The next SLNA WRG REmarket will be held on September 20 and 21, 2023. A flyer containing more information will be included in future SLNA newsletters. During Remarket there will be two days of donations to the Salvation Army and on the Wednesday there will be a Freemarket event. Donations will be accepted, displayed on tables and anybody in the community is welcome to take anything they need. REmarket facilitates recycling of items that the City does not recycle. Such things as prescription pill bottles are collected and donated to a charity that recycles prescription bottles. Also accepted: pens, writing instruments, toner, cartridges – they are responsibly recycled through Staples. Disposable razors are also collected and empty make-up containers as well as dental items. We are also looking for volunteers on the day of our REmarket, just a couple of hours will be a big help in sorting out the donations people bring in and decide where to put them.

Nancy added that when it comes to REmarket it is not just the recycling aspect anymore, the re-using, reducing and repairing have become equally important and we want everybody rethinking how to use things responsibly. This has become a very important aspect of the original Remarket concept. Remarket is offered three times a year. This is our 8th REmarket, we started in the Fall of 2020.

On the Thursday we will hold a Repair Café event. This is overseen by “volunteer fixers” who will be fixing clothing, jewellery, home electronics, computer, small appliances, bike repairs and safety checks. The original goal of Remarket in 2019 was to divert items from landfills since at the time there were no outlets for donations in the neighbourhood, and it has been hugely popular and has generated an overwhelming response.

Windmill Line Coop – Repair Café – Camille Hines

Camille introduced herself as the leader of the Zero Waste Group at Windmill Line Coop which was founded a few years ago as part of the Windmill Line sustainability effort and it has been very successful in a number of ways, including a first place win last year for our sustainability efforts at the annual CHFT Conference. In our continuing efforts to keep items out of landfill we are once again planning a Mini Repair Café for the Fall. We are reaching out to the community to help us find fixers - as you know where there are no fixers there is no Repair Café! Donna Patterson has been a great help, not only with helping to have me on your agenda tonight, but she was also a very important part in our very successful Repair Café event in 2019.

We are looking for volunteer fixers for mall electronics, household appliances, and other items including clocks, books, jewelry, clothes, umbrellas and bikes.

If you can help, please email us by August 15th at zwt.windmill1983@gmail.com

Crombie Park Revitalization – Pop-up Information Booths

- Learn more about the revitalization projects and meet the project team (many residents were involved in the consultations that took place several years ago)
- When: July 29 and August 11, 1 – 3 pm
- Where – 131 The Esplanade, under the blue tent between the wading pool and Frederick St.

Local Events

- **Friends of St. James Park**

- Storytime in the Park for children – July 31 – 1 – 2 pm
- Free Fitness Classes – August 1, 8 – 6 – 7 pm

- **Jamii (local arts organization)**

- Annual WAYO Children’s Festival at Berkeley Castle, 250 The Esplanade, August 9, 10, 4 – 6:30 pm

- **Bob Kemp Day** – Bob was a very active and much loved member of our community, working with the BIA. Bob died recently and in his memory his family are continuing the tradition of celebrating Bob Kemp Day. The date is Friday, August 18, 11 – 3 pm, David Crombie Park, The Esplanade and Princess St., opposite the Community Centre. RSVP by August 1 – melanie.kemp27@gmail.com Any donations after the celebration will be donated to the St. Lawrence Market community centre and to St. Mike’s ICU.

Market Gallery Presentation – Exploring Toronto’s Past, Present and Future - Ethelle White

Ethelle is the current Gallery clerk at the Market Gallery which is located above the St. Lawrence Market. She has been with the Gallery for about a month and is still very much involved in the process of learning all there is to know about the history of the Market Gallery – what it is, its role in Toronto’s cultural scene, its history and the current exhibit we have on right now.

The Market Gallery is located within one of the most recognizable pieces of Toronto’s architecture – the St. Lawrence Market South building on Front Street. The building is a bit of a collage of Toronto’s past. The former City Council Chamber was constructed in 1845 and the surrounding larger portion was built around it in the early Twentieth Century. The original City Council Chamber room is actually what makes up the Market Gallery today. The room operated as the original City Council Chamber until the completion of what is today known as Old City Hall in 1899 at which point City Council operations moved over to that new building and the original room was actually boarded up and abandoned. While the original City Council building was incorporated into the St. Lawrence Market building that was built in the early Twentieth Century, the second floor City Council Chamber was essentially forgotten about for more than 70 years.

That South Market building was renovated in the 1970's and at that point the old City Council Chamber room was rediscovered, in a state of disrepair and needing a lot of work and extensive renovations. Toronto City Council decided to renovate it as an exhibit and display space and it has acted as such for the last 50 years. Today the Market Gallery exists within the St. Lawrence Market South Building and hosts regularly rotating exhibits that explore Toronto's past and present and also explore what Toronto's future should and could look like. The Toronto Market Gallery is open Wednesdays to Saturdays from 11 am to 5 pm, with some changed hours in the Fall.

The exhibit we are showing currently is called *Gélédé Queens* and is part of the Toronto History Museums wider Artists Membership Showcase where the art of 10 artists is currently featured at 10 Toronto History Museums, of which the Market Gallery is one. The others are: Colborne Lodge, Fort York National Historic Site, Gibson House, Mackenzie House, Todmorden Mills, Spadina House, Zion Schoolhouse and Scarborough Museum. The artist behind the *Gélédé Queens* exhibit is Destinie Adedokun. Destinie was born in Lagos, Nigeria, raised in India, and currently spends some of her time in New York City and some of her time in Toronto. Her work explores a whole bunch of far-reaching themes, it explores pre-colonized African Indian history, mythology, religion and spirituality, through photography, film, painting and sculpture.

Gélédé Queens uses *Gélédé* dancing as its jumping off point. It is a dance-based ceremony performed by the Yoruba, Nagu, Nigeria and Togo and involves dancing, chanting, carved masks and elaborate costumes. It is traditionally done near harvest time in order to pay tribute to the role that females have traditionally played in Yoruba society. It is typically performed by males, often wearing items of clothing that are traditionally associated with feminine gender identities. *Gélédé Queens* is a conceptualized depiction of the tradition. The exhibition includes a film option, there are physical objects, it is a really rich offering. Destinie looks at the exhibition through the lenses of the Queer and African diasporas. The exhibition opened on June 23 and will be at the Gallery until October 28. It is really beautiful, visually striking and thought-provoking. On October 23 we will be hosting an Artist's Talk with Destinie Adedokun herself, still working on the details.

Other programs and events at the Market Gallery:

- In September and October we will be running an 8-week workshop entitled *She-Rites* through the organization Achieve Potential. There will be 2 in-person sessions here at the Gallery and the rest are virtual sessions. In-person sessions are September 7 and October 26, and on-line sessions are every Thursday from September 14 – October 19 from 6 – 8 pm. There are 10 spots in the program and the workshop is designed to empower racialized and support diverse women of all ages and help them achieve their dreams and goals.

- Artist's Talk with Destinie Adelakun
- Yoga in the Gallery – for all levels - we will be hosting 7 yoga sessions in our actual gallery space, after hours, so it will be just the people participating in yoga – still in the planning stage
- Journaling Workshops in the fall – also still in the planning stage. How to use journaling as a way to understand yourself.

Contact information: The Market Gallery, 95 Front Street East, Telephone: 416-392-7604, email: marketgallery@toronto.ca. Or contact Ethelle White directly at ethelle.white@toronto.ca.

St. Lawrence Market BIA – Robyn Posner

Robyn reported that on Friday, July 28 there will be a Forró For All Beginners Dance Class, at 5:30 – 6:15 pm, followed by Life Music – Carlos Gardozo and Band - 6:15 – 8 pm.

Feast of St. Lawrence – Friday, August 11 and Saturday, August 12 on Market Street – <https://oldtowntoronto.ca/feast/>

On **August 11**, we present a special Picnic on Market Street from 6 – 10 pm. This is no ordinary picnic, it's an exclusive gourmet dining event for charity. The sumptuous 6-course picnic dinner is prepared by chefs from some of the top restaurants in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood and accompanied by wine, cocktails and live music.

On **August 12**, enjoy outdoor food stalls, live music at the FEAST Stage, kids' entertainment at FEAST for Kids, Steven Jones the Illusionist, Chef on Stilts, Zola's Bubble Show, face painting and much more!

Councillor Malik - Ward 10 Update – Tom Davidson

With the new Mayor elected, we are now going to be working a lot more through the summer period in terms of the legislative work – the City Council Meeting in July is usually the last one, but because there is going to be a reorganization of leadership and responsibility due to the bi-election we will be seeing some of these meetings, including Council meetings, taking place during August. The first task is for these new roles and responsibilities to be assigned. The Mayor and Councillor Malik who is on the "Striking Committee" will be busy working on the assignment of roles responsibilities over the next couple of weeks. There will be a meeting in future, a long time coming, on the long-term financial framework for the City which takes a broader look at the structure of the City's finances, how to make decisions on investments and

revenues. This has not been looked at for a long time and will probably one of the big and early items that will be looked at by the new administration.

Regarding the Pop-Ups in David Crombie Park and the revitalization that was mentioned, right now we are at the phase where the detailed design is being worked on based on the overall concept over the next few months. The Pop-Ups are occurring locally and there will be another meeting in the Fall on that detailed design where comments and questions will be considered. In 2024 the actual construction will start, and since this is a large multi-use park this is likely not going to be finished until 2026. More information will be disseminated throughout the presentations, and park staff will be happy to bring updates as well.

The other significant project that we are continuing to work on is the District Library for the St. Lawrence and surrounding neighbourhood which originally was slated to be at the First Parliament site. This was disrupted due to the expropriation regarding the Ontario Line, so our Parks & Recreation and Real Estate staff determined that the parking lot South of the South Market was a viable possibility. We are conducting due diligence regarding the potential for housing on this site. Design work will start this year and we will be looking at maximizing its potential as a community hub in terms of any other community infrastructure facilities that could be added to it, such as linkage to the South Market.

A couple of things have opened up recently such as the One Yonge Community Recreation Centre, a little closer to home for the Western edge of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, which is opening the Pinnacle Development on Harbour Street, a new 50,000 sq.ft. community centre was secured through the development approvals for that whole precinct. It has had a soft opening with summer camps and fitness classes. One of the centre pieces, the pool, is not yet open and this will likely not happen until October. Claude Cormier (Berczy Park) performed another miracle, namely Love Park at York Street and Queen's Quay which opened a few weeks ago. Another beautiful centre piece that he has put on the map once again. It used to be a piece of transportation infrastructure, removed a few years ago with the intent of reclaiming the space as a public space, and it now is a beautiful park.

Metrolinx on the rail corridor, in order to put into effect its regional expansion program (15 minute connections all day long) is adding track to the Southside of the railway embankment and it requires an extension of the Lower Jarvis and Lower Sherbourne Underpasses. That work will start in early 2024. The Community Advisory Committee had a first meeting a couple of weeks ago and more substantial traffic information will be forthcoming earlier in the Fall.

Enbridge Construction taking place on Lakeshore Blvd. – the pipeline that is being connected from the Lakeshore up Parliament St. to around Mill Street – in order to complete that work in a quicker timeframe the city staff worked on a plan to mostly close Parliament between Mill and Lakeshore Blvd. for three weeks, starting as of next week. We will be receiving the full

traffic plan for that shortly. On the West side of Parliament we still have pedestrian access, but it is more restricted on the East side.

Councillor Moise – Ward 13 Update – Edward LaRusic

Eddie thanked the community members who shared their ideas for the Participatory Budgeting process. They are still working on the actual process and require a bit more time, so Eddy is suggesting a later date for this discussion.

Encampments and the lack of A/C at the St. Lawrence Community Recreation Centre:

Eddy has made his way through a large volume of emails regarding encampments in St. James Park. Last week there were 7 or 8 structures in St. James Park and those encampments were cleared over the last weekend but no doubt there will be future tents in St. James Park. Encampment residents are human beings and almost every email he has received advocated for safe indoor space and of course contained a request for more housing in this city. Encampments are not permitted in City parks and ravines, so when staff receive reports about an encampment they visit the individual, try and offer services to bring them indoors. Some may accept the offer of services and of course others may refuse. When an individual refuses to leave a trespass notice will be given to that individual. The notice is a legal document which requires them to leave within 72 hours. After 72 hours staff will check if the encampment is still there, they will offer indoor space somewhere one more time, and if that offer is refused they will proceed to get the trespass order enforced. This is the general process for all encampments in Toronto and will of course apply in our neighbourhood. Staff will need to coordinate with Parks & Recreation, Transportation Services as well as Officers in 51 Division to assist with encampment clearings and that can sometimes longer than the stipulated 72 hours. What can often happen, and has happened in St. James Park, is that an individual leaves and a new encampment pops up occupied by a different resident. This does start a new 72 hour process. This can be frustrating because it appears as if no progress is being made, but the staff will continue with trying to offer services and trying to bring the resident indoors. It's not a perfect system but it has been working to prevent long-term encampments in St. James Park. The reporting of encampments to the City is not intuitive, so I would encourage everyone in the St. Lawrence neighbourhood who sees an encampment to please send me an email at Edward.LaRusic4@toronto.ca.

As some of you may know, there is no a/c within the St. Lawrence Community Centre. The system is broken and needs to be replaced. As a result summer camps have moved to the new facility at One Yonge that Tom was mentioning. Technically it is a cooling centre because it has

pool – which is not operational as yet – so it is probably not a pleasant place to relax in. Unfortunately this is not a quick fix, Parks & Recreation staff have identified that replacing the a/c also means replacing the roof since the weight of a new a/c system could compromise the roof. This has turned into a very complicated fix which creates complications for the timeline. City staff have declared that they are putting repairs in the capital plan for 2030. This is of course not acceptable for Councillor Moise and, if at all possible, I would like to see it in next year's capital budget. Once we have those details, including a starting date for repairs, we will of course share it with you. So there won't be a/c in the St. Lawrence Community Centre for this year, and very likely I won't be next year either. A question from the audience – is there any way to accelerate this for urban kids who do not have the facilities that exist in the suburbs. Eddy responded that indeed some centers have different designations, but that is not the case for the St. Lawrence Community Recreation Centre.

Just For Laughs Presentation – Oz Weaver

Oz Weaver is the Executive Producer of Just For Laughs Toronto explained that the presentation for this meeting represents part of JFL's continued community and business outreach they have been working on for the last several months as they plan the new version of the JFL Festival. Last year they closed Front Street from Yonge to Church Street. [Click this text link](#) to view the slide presentation deck that was shared during the July 26th SLNA Community Meeting.

One of the JFL gates last year was Front and Yonge and a secondary major gate was Church and Front. They had another gate at Wellington and Scott and yet another at Scott Lane and Scott Street. The main stage was between 55 Front and the Flat Iron Building and then we had other activations and things dappled through the site.

In the presentation you will see a slide that depicts 2022 Community concerns listed below in a somewhat distilled format:

Sound/Noise

- Stage was too close to residential buildings
- One show went over the 85 db allowance, peaking over that marker throughout an 1.5 show
- Sound design was all from one location, therefore needed to be pushed louder for the entire site
- Sound checks started too early on the weekend.

Accessibility & Site Design

- Approved drawings did not accommodate for proper egress, most notably between the stage and the sidewalk in front

- A pinch point was created in front of the businesses and 55 Front St. condos
- Dog park was hard to access, and the top of the park was hard to enter into
- Inadequate signage to understand to understand exits, throughways, etc.

No complaints process

- JFL Toronto had not set up a way for the SLNA, Condo Boards, Condo Front Desks or the Business on the site to lodge complaint or request support from JFL.

In the presentation deck you will see slide depicting the new layout and the new site. The biggest change is that the stage has been moved to be located between St. Lawrence Centre and Meridian Hall. It is now in front of businesses and all sound will be projected outward towards other businesses and Yonge St. JFL employed a better sound design where there are now speakers throughout the site rather than the previous set-up where all the sound came from one location. JFL is working with the businesses on the street, they are putting a few food trucks across the TO patios and, creating a food alley, using it to promote the businesses on their site, and they will be providing more picnic tables in the Park. Inside the park there will be one large screen for people to watch and they have also been able to reduce the footprint of the backstage space. JFL will have artists in the St. Lawrence Centre, using those dressing rooms and offices and they will be coming out only about 15 minutes before they go on stage. JFL will be pulling all of the stage power from Meridian Hall which eliminates the massive generators employed before.

The stage now will be 350 ft. from the closest condo. JFL will be paying for City of Toronto Bylaw Officers who will be there for sound checks and monitoring during the shows. If JFL exceeds the sound limit or even comes close, bylaw officers will instruct them to immediately reduce volume. JFL will also have their own sound monitoring to help ensure that they do not exceed volume limits. There are no pinch points around the stage anymore and it has moved away from busy businesses and also the condos' front door. JFL has also hired an accessibility consultant. There will be a full audit of the entire festival. [JFL is 10 days long, 240 shows and 10 venues.]

JFL has added two entrances on the North side of the park. The dog area will be completely unfenced this year so as to allow access. The park right at the Flatiron Building will be open and accessible. JFL is also deploying a massive signage plan and have site maps. In terms of the Complaints Process they are going to hire a Community Site Coordinator and this person will be connecting directly with the SLNA, the BIA, the condo board representative, the front desk or security person at each condo and also the businesses on site.

In early June, JFL send out a postcard to all the residences in the area and greater area through Canada Post, which indicated which streets were shutting down, when they were shut down, the times of the Festival, and a general info email for further questions.

Sharon McMillan thanked all of the community members and reminded everyone that there will not be a Community Meeting in the month of August. The next Community Meeting will be held on September 27, 2023 at 7 pm.