



St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association Community Meeting

Held on Wednesday, June 26, 2024 from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Hosted on the Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

Meeting Agenda:

- Welcome, Land Acknowledgement
- St. Lawrence Market Update
- Toronto Public Library St. Lawrence Branch Update - Melissa Sookram
- 2-1-1 - An Introduction - Stewart Linton
- Participatory Budgeting - Status Report - Stewart Linton
- Community Gardening
- Community Updates

SLNA President Stewart Linton welcomed community members and Delegates to the June 26, 2024 SLNA Community Meeting. Stewart kicked off the meeting with a land acknowledgement.

St. Lawrence Market Update - Daniel Picheca

Daniel Picheca from the City of Toronto provided an update on the construction progress for the North Market building. The City is awaiting a date on Substantial completion of the project, at which point the contractor will hand over the building to the City. Handover is estimated for this fall, at which point it is anticipated that the City offices, the cafe, and the Sunday farmers' market will move in. The goal is to re-open St. Lawrence Hall in tandem with the North Market.

Use and booking of public spaces within the facility will be confirmed, once a completion date is available. The City anticipates bookings for space will be accepted in early 2025.

The City has already begun working with the farmers to ensure their questions and concerns are adequately addressed in time for the move:

- Adequate space for vendors: the trade area of the new North Market is 12,500 square feet, compared to 9,000 square feet within the tent. Taking into account the support pillars, there will be sufficient space for all existing and potentially some additional, vendors.
- Vendor fees: The goal is to ensure that the market is sustainable. City policy is that rental rates are increased on an annual basis relative to inflation.
- Loading and unloading logistics: A schedule could be developed that ensures a smooth, load in and load out around the new market environment. The City anticipates there will

be a lot of congestion along Jarvis Street with vehicles and treatment exiting the parking ramp. In order to alleviate this, the goal is to hire a traffic agent on Saturdays.

- Storage: the City has purchased new, more energy efficient refrigeration units to support the program.
- Grand Opening: the farmers would like the market to 'soft launch' in advance of the grand opening, in order to ensure the transition is smooth and any issues are addressed in advance.

The South Market hours of operation pilot project has proved very successful. Sundays have proven to be a very lucrative and busy day for vendors; second only to Saturday sales. Just in general, tenant sales align with that; across the board, tenant sales are up %18.5+ percent from 2022 to 2023.

This month, Blackbird Bakery opened in the space where Sausage King used to be. And Scheffler's will be relocating to where White House Meats once was. The City is planning on going to market for ideas for the vacant spaces upstairs (Urban Fresh also vacated their space some time ago), as well as developing a strategy for indigenous participation in the South Market. And in aligning with this strategy, the City is holding 2 vacant spaces in the market.

There are a number of initiatives in place to look at improving the envelope of the South Market, improve the energy efficiency of the facility, as well as upgrading infrastructure within the building. These initiatives are being funded in part from capital repair funds, funds allocated for retrofitting buildings to make them more energy efficient, as well as federal grants.

A number of events are planned for Market Street this summer, with a focus has been to create diverse experiences centered around food, arts and culture:

- Pride Toronto - June 23
- Taste of the Caribbean - August 4 & September 1
- Opera Sundays - July 9, August 13, September 10
- Asado Argentinian Festival - July 26-28
- Espana Market -
- Brazilian Dance - June 30th, July 28, August 18
- Indigenous Market - September 22

Links:

- [St. Lawrence Market Events](#)

Toronto Public Library St. Lawrence Branch Update - Melissa Sookram

Melissa spoke about programming offered by the library.

- Seniors Health and Wellness Fair - July 10 from 11-4
- Dancing with Parkinsons - July 24 and August 14 from 11-12
- Programming for Adults and Children - Tuesdays & Thursdays from 2-3

Discussion focused around other benefits of having a TPL library card, such as the [tpl:map](#) program. The [tpl:map](#) offers free admission to over 15 of Toronto's museums, art galleries and attractions with your Toronto Public Library card. A limited number of passes can be secured on the first of the month through the [tpl:map program portal](#).

Links:

- [TPL St. Lawrence Branch Website](#)
- [tpl:map Program](#)

2-1-1 - An Introduction

The SLNA Board was unable to secure a speaker on the 2-1-1 program. As such, SLNA President Stewart Linton provided a high level update of the program, with a commitment to find a speaker for a future Community Meeting.

Ontario 2-1-1 is a free, confidential and easy-to-use website and hotline that connects Ontarians with reliable information on local community and social services in more than 150 languages. The two main objectives for the program are to provide better access to service for people in Ontario. The province can then use the data as a resource to strengthen community planning, and provide opportunities for partner agencies and non-governmental groups to participate.

The helpline is answered by real people 24/7 by dialing 2-1-1. Ontarians can also access these resources by live chat, text, and email between the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 p.m.

Discussion focused on another new service at the federal level, 9-8-8. Canada's 988 hotline, which gives people access to suicide prevention services via call or text. Calls and texts to 988 are directed to a network of partners in communities across the country offering suicide prevention services such as counselling.

Links:

- [2-1-1 Ontario - Contact](#)
- [2-1-1 Ontario - Resource Database](#)
- [Government of Canada - Mental Health Support Resources](#)
- [9-8-8: Suicide Crisis Helpline](#)

Participatory Budgeting - Status Report - Stewart Linton

Stewart provided an update on the status of the participatory budgeting process with the City of Toronto. Last May, Councillor Chris Moise's office indicated the City had offered \$750,000 to the community for investment in capital assets that could improve that could bring improvements to the community.

SLNA delegates and community members shared numerous ideas, which were shared with Councillor Moise's office. A number of initiatives are being looked at for our neighbourhood:

- Tree replacement program (through Parks & Recreation) and addition of planters
- Public realm animation
- Heritage street signs and banners commemorating the original 10 blocks of the City

Community Gardening - Stewart Linton

Stewart initiated a conversation around how to revitalize community gardening in our neighbourhood.

Discussion

Discussion centered around how to bring back what was a very active community gardening presence, which dwindled during and following the COVID-19 pandemic, and how to fill a gap between the beautification work being done by the City and by the BIA. The SNLA Board of Directors committed to discuss allocation of funding to a community gardening initiative at an upcoming Board meeting. If anyone is interested in participating, send an email to slna@slna.ca.

Community Updates

Canada Day

The SLNA Canada Day celebration is coming up on Monday, July 1st in St. James Park from 11-3. Lots of activities and entertainment is planned:

- Musical performances, including a Ukrainian accordion player, and the Alan Cohen Quartet
- Dancing performances
- Heritage story and history walk by Adam Bunch
- Kids activities, including a t-shirt painting station

REmarket

The 10th REmarket was held on June 12 & 13 and was a great success.

- 40 volunteers
- 37 skids worth of donations to the Salvation Army - over 10,000lbs
- 3 skids of electronic waste - 2,000lbs
- Information tables: [3R Ambassador Program](#), [Solid Waste Management Services](#), [TransformTO](#), [Live Green Toronto](#), [Toronto Environmental Alliance](#), [Reusable Toronto](#)
- [Repair Cafe Toronto](#) had 24 fixers work on 126 items
- [CultureLink Bike Hub](#) repaired 25 bicycles
- Donations for reuse included 240 pairs of eye glasses, 890 prescription bottles, 19 smartphones, and 3 bags of adult art supplies, and much more

The next REmarket will be held on October 9&10. Anyone interested in volunteering can reach out to reduce@slna.ca.

[Toronto Public Library - Seniors' Health and Wellness Fair](#)

The Toronto Public Library is holding a Seniors' Health and Wellness Fair in the courtyard in front of the library on Wednesday, July 10th from 11-4.

[Heritage Toronto Tours - Creating Toronto](#)

Heritage Toronto is holding a series of events and tours, which the SLNA is sponsoring. Creating Toronto will have a tent set up by the St. Lawrence Market that you can visit on Sunday, July 18 and Saturday, August 24, from 11-3. Tours offered at noon and 2 pm, these are shorter, just one hour, or you can buy gift cards and have your person pick which tour.

[The Market Square Story](#)

Announcement that The Market Square Story - a book on the history of Market Square - is now being printed. The book launch will be held on July 25th in the courtyard at Market Square and a presentation on some of the highlights of the book will be shared at the July Community Meeting.