



ST. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association Community Meeting

Held on Wednesday, June 30, 2021 from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Hosted on the Zoom Videoconferencing Platform

SLNA President Stewart Linton welcomed all community members to the June meeting, including the Association Delegates who were gathered to participate in the planned Delegate Engagement Discussion. We also had the Leader of the Green Party Annamie Paul in our midst, who brought greetings and reported feeling a bit under the weather after recently receiving her second vaccine shot. She is eager to support our work and hopes to meet us in person at one point.

Update on Jamii

Isorine Marc reported that Jamii held an Indigenous Day on June 21, with sharing songs, poetry and stories, giving everybody the opportunity to listen and connect. Another exciting happening was the release of a video for June 27, Canada Multiculturalism Day, of a multicultural wedding in the Park, carried out by 10 artists and 10 people from the community, highlighting different traditions from the many cultures in our country.

Isorine also reported that the SLNA and Jamii teamed up to provide entertainment for Canada Day, a Musical Ride through David Crombie Park, Berczy Park, and St. James Park. 9 amazing artists from different traditions will participate.

Special thanks to our sponsors:

- The Friends of Berczy Park
- The Friends of St. James Park
- The Canadian Council for the Arts
- BMO (King & Church)

The artists are Sergio Xocolate and Suzanne Roberts Smith, Leen Hamo and John Abou Chacra, Heidi Chan and Aki Tenten, Aqua Nibii Waawaaskone and Suba Sankaran and Dylan Bell. We will start at the East end of David Crombie Park at 10:30 a.m., then move on to the West end of the Park, over to Berczy Park, and lastly St. James Park. We anticipate that we will end the festivities around 4:00 p.m.

We will also be joined by special guests MP Marci Len, MPP Chris Glover, MPP Suze Morrison and Councillor Kristyn Wong Tam.

Jamii have developed a new program, Young Women in Leadership.

Delegate Engagement Workshop

In an effort to make the role of Delegate a more rewarding and valuable experience, Delegates received a letter from us late last week, including the following key points:

- What are the key components and the responsibilities of the Delegate role
- Do you see opportunities to enhance that role and/or your contribution as a Delegate
- Can/should the Board do more to support you

Stewart then turned the meeting over to Sandra Fishleigh, the moderator of this session. She stressed that enhancing the role of the Delegates is of prime importance, and we are hoping to hear from as many as possible as to how you feel this can be accomplished. We would like to hear your reactions to the suggestion of actually giving reports at our meetings, how would you see that happening, and what you might report on.

June responded that because of covid the communication flow is somewhat hampered at this point since little information is flowing back to the residents of her building. She does not believe that bringing a report to the association meetings is very useful since she feels it is difficult to know residents' opinions. Tenants have very busy lives. Sharon McMillan reported that in years past there was a form which delegates could post in their buildings which stated the name and address of the Delegate so people could get in touch. Victoria reports that in her building it is very difficult at this particular time to elicit much feedback on any issue, it is not

possible to use the common room to have a discussion, so she only hears bits and pieces from different people. It would be very helpful if the form that was discussed earlier could actually give suggestions for discussion topics. Victoria would be happy to set up a table in her lobby (pending building permission, of course) and bring up some discussion points with individuals and take the information back to the meetings.

Alan, a delegate for 5 years and currently President of LARA, feels that he does not have a clear idea of what the role of the Delegate in the SLNA is. He feels that one of the roles would be to act as a conduit between the building and the SLNA, bringing concerns and hopefully taking back possible solutions suggested by the SLNA. Alan has been to many community meetings and it is rare that delegates have been asked to become involved in anything. If the delegates are the representatives of the stakeholders of the organization then they should actually be highly involved. One of the things we should put together is a clear statement of what the SLNA expects from the delegates and what the delegates expect in return.

Don states that his role is to act as a conduit of information from the SLNA to his building, passing on relevant information to his management and Board of Directors for dissemination to the residents for them to use if it impacts them. If there is any feedback Don feels it is his responsibility to pass it back to the SLNA.

Kristine reports that her building uses an e-blast as a means of communication through Condo Control Central and she feels it is necessary to keep the frequency low because people simply unsubscribe if they feel overwhelmed. So she decides what she feels is critical to her residents. Delegate Updates – she feels it is really important how actively the Delegate is involved with what's going on in the building. Kristine is the Chair of the Residents' Committee and very actively involved, so she feels there is lots of information she could provide and she would also appreciate information sharing. In response to Sandra's question if the SLNA newsletter is routinely posted, Kristine mentioned the need for not overwhelming the residents with information and only passes on what she considers to be relevant information.

Ian Morrison stated that the way to increase delegate engagement is to keep an eye on the big issues that are happening in our neighbourhood, and he finds the most useful role the SLNA plays is connecting us to major institutions, infrastructure and politicians. He would not wish to hear a lot of local information from various delegates and prefers emphasis on the bigger picture.

There was a question about SLNA's Mission, and Sharon stated that this information is something we should highlight on a regular basis, please see the Mission Statement below which is posted on our website.

Mission Statement

The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association advocates on behalf of the more than 35,000 residents it represents to preserve, protect and enhance the quality of life in the St. Lawrence neighbourhood.

Its efforts to accomplish this Mission are focused in five strategic areas:

- responsible development;**
- conservation of heritage;**
- community;**
- participation;**
- relationships.**

These five Areas of Strategic Focus are further amplified as follows:

The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association uses its influence and leverages the voices of the more than 35,000 residents it represents to:

- advocate for responsible development in the neighbourhood and its near surroundings; development which preserves its unique nature and heritage character, conforms to City policies and is supported by adequate infrastructure;**
- advocate to conserve the neighbourhood's heritage, including the original ten blocks of the City of York, the St. Lawrence Market, and the many and varied heritage buildings, green spaces and other historical sites in and around the neighbourhood;**
- promote a strong sense of community through communication, participation and events;**
- participate in all relevant processes – community, governmental, regulatory – which have the potential to affect the quality of life in the neighbourhood;**
- develop and leverage relationships with major neighbourhood institutions, corporations and utilities for mutual benefit (including St. Michaels Hospital, St. Michael's Hospital Family Health Unit, George Brown College, police, fire department, cultural institutions (i.e., St. Lawrence Hall, theatre companies, Canadian Opera Company), St. Lawrence Market, major neighbourhood employers, key utilities.**

Ronny, a very long-term member, reports that she is presently not a delegate, but she is aware that the current delegate in her building goes to great trouble to pass on all information received to the residents via a newsletter. She feels a delegate should share all information pieces received and not pick and choose according to

their own interests. She also reported considerable success with open agenda meetings.

Lynn appreciates this information sharing session. Knowing about the different communication strategies and styles buildings use in keeping the residents up-to-date is useful. In her building they are concerned about the big issues such as First Parliament site which is just across the street from them. Direction on how they can support the advocacy in this regard would be appreciated.

Suzanne Kavanagh, a former SLNA President, reminded everyone that our website is rich with information useful to all, and also reminded us that going back to the bylaws is always a good idea. She suggested that perhaps the meetings could be presented in three pieces; perhaps one third with an external speaker on larger issues, one third with the delegates reporting in, and a third with information on the work of the standing committees. As far as delegate information sharing is concerned, she commented that how information is disseminated depends on the spirit of the building, in some cases the delegate uses his/her good judgement on the kind of information that will be most useful to be sent around, in other cases all information received goes to all residents. A further comment was that she is always thrilled when there is an actual election of candidates serving on the Board vs. people being acclaimed.

In response to Sandra's request for further comments on how the SLNA can support delegates, we heard from Cindy as a relatively new delegate who would appreciate a fulsome orientation, including some guidance regarding the website, where to find things. Ronny added that it would be useful to have information pieces in written format. Sharon reminded everyone that we do post the minutes of our community meetings on our website under slna.ca to allow people to review all of the information that was presented at each meeting.

Don made the point that once information goes into the building and there has been discussion, if there is something of direct impact to the building it could be presented at the next community meeting and the Board could decide if it falls under their purview to give actual advice or guidance in the matter.

Sandra thanked everyone for their input and engagement. Stewart stressed that the SLNA welcomes any information or suggested presentations from the Delegates – please send the information ahead of time so we can incorporate it into our agenda.

TO LIVE UPDATE

St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts. Leslie Lester, Vice-President of TO Life and Clyde Wagner, the CEO and President of TO Life, spoke to us about the process they are engaged in as far as the reimagining of the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts is concerned. TO Life is managing three city buildings right now, Meridian Hall and the St. Lawrence Centre, and the Meridian Arts Centre up at Yonge and Sheppard. They are working with the City of Toronto and Create TO which manages all of the real estate assets for Toronto to partner with the reimagining of the Centre. The Centre is 50 years old and lots of things are not working to the best of their capability, one major hurdle is that it is not AODA compliant, i.e. not wheelchair accessible. It is time for us as a neighbourhood and as a performing arts sector to reimagine what the future is going to look like. When the building was purpose-built over 50 years ago we all watched theatre and music in a very specific way, and things have changed. The process is about how we can work together, the neighbourhood and the performing arts sector and also with communities that would be underserved or underrepresented.

Close to 500 people filled out a survey which was sent out and a lot of information was received. A report called Phase Zero was created, and this is the launching of the public engagement piece. A Stakeholder Working Group has now been formed. They are not representing any one specific group but are sharing their lived experiences. Sharon McMillan is part of this group. They have done one workshop, with three more to come. They have commissioned an indigenous artist to create a mural on the side of the St. Lawrence Centre west wall which is now in place. A final recommendation will be delivered in February Of 2022.

There was a comment from the audience that the lights above the mural are not all in working order, and a question - how does one find out who the stakeholders are. Leslie Lester responded that there is a website stlcnx.org which acts as a portal for all questions at any time, and also has a lot of information about the mural and its creator. Please make use of it. The public engagement piece of this process is throughout the summer, with the Stakeholder Working Group, and then they will be folding in the process with the consultants who will be putting together a recommendation to City Council in February 2022.

Mary McDonald brought up a concern regarding placing 2-directional cycling lanes on the south side of the Esplanade in an area where drop-offs and deliveries are happening on an ongoing basis and where there are a number of senior buildings. Mary reported that she has made her

concerns known in writing to Chief Planner Gregg Lintern. Clyde Wagner agreed to discuss this issue further with her.

First Parliament Site Update

Infrastructure Ontario released some more detail about preliminary plans for the site. SLNA is continuing to work with the West Donlands Committee and other neighbours to get access to the full report. You can get more information on Corktown TOC.

Wellington Street Update

There was a plan to start work in March 2021 and finish the project by September of 2021, and we just found out that the project has now been shut down entirely and it will be picked up again next April. We are disappointed and sent a letter to Mayor Tory and the City Councillor. The city's response was: It's an old part of the city, we don't really have reliable maps and we don't know what's under the ground.

A community meeting was convened by the City Councillor on June 30 which proved to be disappointing, and we consider it a failure of project management. They did acknowledge that they should have consulted with the community. We are pondering SLNA's further response on this issue.

The next SLNA Community Meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 28, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. We will not be holding a Community Meeting during the month of August.