



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

**Held on Wednesday, September 29, 2021 from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

**Hosted on the Zoom Videoconferencing Platform**

SLNA President Stewart Linton welcomed 76 community members and delegates to the September 2021 SLNA Community Meeting.

Board member Sandra Fishleigh opened the meeting with a land acknowledgement and made mention of September 30 as the First National Day of Truth and Reconciliation to honour the survivors of residential schools and those who never returned home.

Tom Davidson from Councillor Cressy's office gave an update on David Crombie Park. Even before the Master Plan process began formally they received comments that the amenities of the park require update and improvements. This generated the initiative for a master plan process and involved an uplift of the whole park itself. There was a comprehensive public engagement process as well as individual meetings with various stakeholders.

The Park Master Plan includes flexible seating, a central gathering area, a picnic area, a ceremonial space next to St. Lawrence Market, a splash pad, rejuvenated playground and school yard, an off-leash area for dogs and a horticultural area enhanced with seating, public art and ecological planting and water features. The basketball court remains, as well as the soccer field which will be supplied with new walkways.

Since many streets bisect the park and the promenade along The Esplanade plays an important role, an integrated approach between and public realm was taken. The following early concepts from the Master Plan are presently under review with Transportation Services:

- 1) Closure of Wilton St. between Market and Jarvis to become part of the park
- 2) Continuous tree lined promenade along The Esplanade
- 3) Adjacent sidewalks flow seamlessly into the park
- 4) Unit paving across roads foster better visual connections between park blocks
- 5) Widening of the sidewalk along the North side of The Esplanade enhances the crosswalk.

Plans are to use one integrated team for the entire process. The anticipated Work Plan Schedule runs from 2021 for the consolidated RFP, followed by Design, Consultation and Approvals in 2022, and the Tender/Award and Construction process will run from 2023 to 2026. There will be Community Updates – the first Public Information Session will take place early in 2022, with a second one later in the year, and there will be ongoing updates between 2022 and 2026.

Tom answered questions from the audience – yes, the off-leash dog area will be fenced, and there was indeed consultation with parents on schoolyard issues, a community member questioned the decision to switch from a wading pool to a splash pad arrangement. There will be alternative accommodation for students during schoolyard construction, and this information will be shared during the Public Open Houses. In response to a question on budgets for park maintenance Tom mentioned that this very valid question will be addressed by Councillor Cressy in the future.

### **Update from 51 Division**

Superintendent Peter Moreira introduced himself and reported that he will be moving to Headquarters working on issues at a different level and will continue to be a voice for the community. Stewart Linton asked him to share his observations on trends in terms of serious crime in the neighbourhood relative to previous summers. Superintendent Moreira cited assaults, auto theft, break and enter, murder, robbery, sexual assaults and theft over \$5,000 as the major crime indictors that are used by all police forces as a base measurement all across Canada and that's how the federal government determines the crime severity index. Assaults and break and enter may be the two highest indicators in our specific neighbourhood. What this does not measure is how liveable a neighbourhood is, whether it is inviting or not. There is definitely an increase in the number of assaults that have happened, and of course the approach to assaults on the street would be a different one compared to domestic violence.

A member of the audience mentioned the issue of bicycles that are being stolen, and that her bike happens to be her lifeline particularly at this time when she does not want to use public transit. Bicycles are usually taken off the streets – they may be locked but there are new tools in place that allow bicycle theft to be carried out rather more easily and swiftly. The second way they are taken are as a result of break and enter, sometimes from condominium bike rooms where security may not be strong. Offenders can easily grind off padlocks and such. The bikes are often sold and passed around in the neighbourhood, it is actually often an unreported crime. The best thing to do is to register your bike on line. Please promote registering your bike. The Serial number is usually on underside of pedal crank. Flyers are available at 51 Division. <https://bike.torontopolice.on.ca/BicycleRegistry/> In using this service you may be able to get reunited with your bike.

The data portal is also available on their website <https://data.torontopolice.on.ca/pages/open-data>

One can also report certain types of crime and disorder only – that way you don't have to deal with waiting for a car or an available call-taker. <https://www.torontopolice.on.ca/community-complaints>

The best way to reach 51 Division is to send an email to [waterfront@torontopolice.on.ca](mailto:waterfront@torontopolice.on.ca)

Another community member thanked 51 Division for the off duty policing that has taken place which he felt kept him and his 2 young children very safe. He mentioned Superintendent Moreira's comment of "ability to live in the neighbourhood", and Superintendent Moreira confirmed that public use of space is how the policy service measures success.

He expressed concern about the kind of calls that tie up a lot of time for the officers, such as medical and ambulance calls that require that an officer be present. As an example, those specific calls, involving risk of loss of life, numbered 37 in 2020 and rose 170 in 2021. He also mentioned that in 2020 there were no overdose calls, and in 2021 there were 55 such calls. His main areas of concern are mental health, addiction and homelessness. Their services are 24 hours and it is important that there is great visibility of police officers on the street.

SLNA President Linton asked if there is a way that the SLNA's voice could be helpful to 51 Division's efforts and Superintendent Moreira encourages community members to stay involved and communicate with their Councillors about areas of concern.

Another question from the audience dealt with car traffic enforcement in the neighbourhood. There are a lot more speeding car drivers in the neighbourhood and a lot of congestion on all of our streets due to construction. If we have traffic enforcement issues who do we contact? The city recently brought in no left turns from the Esplanade to Jarvis, which is not abided by and

therefore makes this intersection one of the most dangerous on the city. How do we get traffic wardens in our neighbourhood?

Superintendent Moreira responded that the Traffic Wardens program is a city agency working out of Transportation. As for Jarvis Street – it has historically led in collisions, and 51 Division just held a meeting whereby they identify traffic patterns in areas of concern and try to find a solution to mitigate the problem. They have identified four areas that contributed to the problem: aggressive driving, speeding, distracted driving and prohibited turns. They observed a four hour window of traffic on Jarvis, and their presence for that length of time caused a distinct change in traffic behaviour. Policy presence matters. Issuance of tickets decreased and traffic concerns on Jarvis in general eased. If you see traffic concerns on Jarvis please contact Staff Sergeant Todd Gowan at [www.torontopolice.on.ca](http://www.torontopolice.on.ca) Sergeant Gowan indicated that at this point in time they are more active at this particular intersection, with attendance at different times of the day, with particular attention to the no left turns on Jarvis, in the hope that proper analysis of this problem will be possible. He stressed that this is a city-led initiative and the police is a partner. He also stressed that the police deployment at The Novotel is a paid duty program supplemented by the off duty officers in a pilot program and therefore not drawing on the regular staff resources, officers are not taking away from other duties.

### **Delegate Engagement**

A Delegate Roles and Responsibilities Document was prepared and shared with all of the delegates. There was a question about delegates contacting their buildings about dues, an invoice is sent to the buildings directly. It was suggested that the respective building Delegates are informed when the invoices go out, or receive a duplicate copy, so that they know when and if to remind their building managers.

Being short of a quorum we were not able to vote on and ratify the document.

### **Metrolinx Presentation**

Franca Di Giovanni led the presentation on the Ontario Queen Street Streetcar and Vehicle Diversion in relation to the Queen Street closure. There will still be virtual open houses to inform the public. She explained that for road closures of longer than one year there needs to be City Council approval. They are moving forward with a package of road occupancies. The Queen Street closure is the biggest one by far, moving forward to the Infrastructure and the Environment Committee and subsequently to City Council. The approach here is coordinated with lots of other capital infrastructure works in Toronto. This is a transfer station between two lines right in the middle of the city. There is not the same kind of space available than in smaller areas for construction and depositing of material. This will be a stacked station and the

engineering folks will have to be figure out how it will be built. The most efficient way to do that would be to do the full road closure. Yonge Street will not be closed, but some of the East/West car traffic will be closed off, with pedestrian access remaining.

By shifting the new station box directly under the existing Queen Station box no new entrances are required and there will be improved passenger distribution and safety and reduced conflict with underground utilities. The team working on this will closely work with colleagues working on other capital infrastructure works projects. The closure will be roughly between Bay and Victoria Streets. The North/South streets will be kept open and the East/West streets will be closed.

This brings us to the 501 streetcar diversion. Metrolinx is proposing to fund the expedited construction of additional streetcar capacity downtown which has been a long-standing objective of the TTC in response to customer calls for improved streetcar service reliability. The intent is for the 501 Queen streetcar to use the added capacity during the Ontario Line Queen Station construction.

There will be a slightly longer travel time during construction but Queen Station work does not impact the downtown cycling network. York and Simcoe provide North/South connectivity while Richmond and Adelaide provide East/West connectivity. Post and ring bike parking can be found throughout the area in addition to building specific bike parking for destination cyclists.

Other options were considered as well as alternative station options. Since the utility work is a most significant driver for the proposal full closure appears to be the most serviceable option. During construction pedestrians and cyclists will be able to move through the area. Albert Street will be converted from one-way to two-way to maintain access to the Eaton Centre and the court buildings. Phase 1 – start time is summer 2021, and the anticipated start time for Phase 2 is fall of 2021.

A community member brought up her concern that the process may change the unique present “urban landscape” of Queen Street and add more highrises, eliminating the distinct look and feel of the area. Concern was also expressed about adding a subway line to that area.

There was another question about who is overseeing the entire project, and Franca responded that a whole unit called the Third Party Utility Team will be responsible for working out agreements with all of the utility companies.

The timeline is as follows: **Summer 2021** – stakeholder consultation for the long-term closure of section of roadway on Queen Street.

**Fall 2021** – review and assess stakeholders’ feedback, seek Toronto Council approval of full closure of Queen Street roadway and Queen Street streetcar diversion for 4.5 years, and start the demolition of Hudson’s Bay basement which will continue to July 2022.

**Winter 2022** – wet utilities relocation and other utility works by Enbridge, Toronto Hydro and telecommunication providers begin. This will continue to Spring 2023.

**2023** – construction begins on South Civil, Stations and Tunnel package, as well as tracks.

### **First Parliament Site**

SLNA President Stewart Linton stressed once again that the SLNA Board’s first priority in this regard for our community is more open space in the form of parkland. Our SLNA Delegates have been fully briefed on the developments with the First Parliament Site which has been taken over by the Province and is now part of the Ontario Line Corktown Station Transit Oriented Communities Development. A number of community voices representing SLNA, West Donlands, the BIA, the Arts and the indigenous communities have been engaged with Infrastructure Ontario on a confidential basis for many months. Infrastructure Ontario released a proposed concept rendering for the site, and we strongly expressed that this proposal falls far short of community needs and expectations as expressed in the First Parliament Master Plan.

### **Reference Links:**

From Infrastructure Ontario:

<https://www.infrastructureontario.ca/Corktown-Transit-Oriented-Community/#pDetailRecentAnnouncements>

From City of Toronto – Original Master Plan

[https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/90b5-2021-05-18-First-Presentation.Final\\_.pdf](https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/90b5-2021-05-18-First-Presentation.Final_.pdf)

Stewart Linton thanked all community members and presenters for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 9 p.m.

**The next SLNA Community Meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 27, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.**

