

**YQNA MINUTES OF MEETING #76, Tuesday, May 14, 2019
Radisson Admiral Hotel, 249 Queens Quay West**

Chaired by Angelo Bertolas

1. Adoption of the agenda.

On a motion from Neal Colgrass, seconded by Carolyn Johnson, the agenda was adopted.

2. Adoption of Minutes from March 12, 2019 meeting

On a motion from Carolyn Johnson, seconded by Neal Colgrass, the Minutes were adopted without amendment.

3. Treasurer's Report – Angie Rivers

Treasurer Angie Rivers reported that YQNA recently purchased a new projector and cart; paid \$150 to Cathie MacDonald of TNC for expenses in the Noise By-law study; donated \$25 to the Radisson staff who sets up our room; and covered a bank service charge, leaving a balance of \$597.76. She noted that the donations box could be found at the back of the room.

4. Homeless Shelters – Community Liaison Committee (CLC) Update

Co-Chair Angelo Bertolas advised that the shelters are located at 545 Lakeshore Boulevard and 701 Fleet Street. He sits on the CLC on behalf of YQNA and attended a recent meeting. 545 will be reserved for couples and women, while 701` will be a 24/7 respite centre for all. He showed some statistics about homelessness in Toronto, such as 4000 people using shelters and over 500 on the street.

Fred Victor is running the program at 701 while |Homes First is looking after clients at 545. 701 is a sprung structure (a heavy-duty tent) which will be ready by the end of May, when clients currently sharing the space at 545 will move in.

Jennifer McGowan of City shelter staff joined Angelo for a **Q & A**.

Q: What is the structure at the east end of Queens Quay?

A: At 351 Lakeshore Blvd there is another respite centre run by Dixon Hall.

Q: Are there safety issues for staff and volunteers when clients have mental health issues?

A: Staff are trained and there are security personnel on site. The volunteers are generally involved with social and recreational activities.

Q: Are the clients in dormitories or private rooms?

A: At shelters like 545 up to 5 people share a room like a hospital ward; in the respite centres that are open 24/7 they are more like dormitories. People can stay all day or come and go. The City is looking at providing smaller spaces. There are lockers where clients can safely store their stuff. At 351 there is a shipping container for longer term storage of belongings under lock and key.

Q: Is the City going to adopt the Danish Model (nobody on the street)?

A: The City is working on a housing plan for 2020 to 2030. A survey is providing ideas on how to generate affordable housing.

Q: What is happening about the tent city under the Gardiner?

A: A different department looks after that issue.

Q: How can communities work to help with solutions? What are some success stories?

A: Social isolation is a problem. There is a great variety of users of the shelter system.

Project Comfort offers support and YQNA could look at volunteering. As well, there could be training for condo concierges to handle the homeless.

Q: What will happen when the lease expires on 545?

A: The timeline for the lease is unknown. We are working with developers and looking for a long-term site.

Q: What activities and concerns have there been for communities around shelters?

A: Loitering is the main one. The Community Liaison Committee (CLC) has been created to try to deal with issues. Angelo Bertolas is the YQNA rep so he should be contacted if there are concerns.

Q: Are the shelters separated by gender? Who runs them?

A: Fred Victor runs the mixed-gender respite; Homes First runs the womens' and couples' shelter.

Q: Is the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre involved?

A: They have been invited to the CLC but have not been involved as yet.

5. City Council Update for Ward 10 – Councillor Joe Cressy

Bushra Mir, Constituency and Planning Advisor, spoke about the Provincial Government's cuts to the Toronto Public Health (TPH) budget, which amount to \$65 million this year.

Joe TPH services include water testing, air quality monitoring, vaccinations and restaurant inspections. Cities across Ontario are working to reverse the cuts to public health funding. City Council voted 25-1 to oppose these cuts.

June 15 is Joe Cressy's next environment day at David Crombie Park. A Class EA Study has been started for the Lower Simcoe Underpass, and there will be another one about basement flooding. Residents can sign up for information.

Q & A

Q: Can the City make up the shortfall in TPH funding by raising property taxes? Could Joe Cressy publish the email addresses for members of the Provincial Government?

A: The City is hoping not to have to raise more funds.

Q: Does the flooding study deal with the level of Lake Ontario each Spring?

A: Yes.

6. Provincial Government Update – MPP Chris Glover

Chris extended an invitation to YQNA to attend his official office re-opening following renovations to make it accessible. There is also an art show of paintings of disappearing store fronts. The Opposition is still studying the implications of the Budget Bill as the estimates have only just been released. TPH is the hardest hit health unit with only 50/50 funding. In other areas the formula is 70/30 or even 90/10. The city is facing a cut of \$177 million including health, paramedics, children's services and the loss of the gas tax increase. This not a good time to be cutting public health funding when there is measles and Lyme disease from ticks thriving in the wet spring.

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is facing a \$48 million shortfall which is devastating since it has never been adequately funded since the Harris Government took control of its funding. In 17 of the last 20 years the TDSB has been under-funded. There will be about 35% fewer teachers due to the larger class sizes and on-line learning now required.

Regarding Bill 107 dealing with the subway upload, the register for deputants is still open. Most Bills have had time-outs with no tours across the Province to hear from residents. Bill 108 dealing with housing is a gift to developers. Section 37 benefits are removed and the new community benefit charge is not related to the number of units but to the land value. The Endangered Species Act is being amended as “pay to pave”. The funding for flood mitigation is being reduced.

Chris noted that he recently gave a 20 minute speech at Ueens Park about inclusive democracy. This has only been in place in Canada since 1960 when First Nations got the vote. An economy is more prosperous when social services are fully funded, and we need great education to attract investment. Ontario students are in the top 5 of countries when it comes to reading; our education system has been excellent. This government is undermining the economy.

Q & A

Q. Can Toronto sue the government for loss of support?

A: Former Mayor John Sewell has founded Defend Toronto. His opinion is that if the Province took City property it would be a violation of its Charter rights and could form the basis for a law suit.

Q: Why is Premier Ford attacking Toronto?

A: It seems vindictive and personal. It is economically short-sighted when Toronto is the economic engine of Canada.

Q: I thought the goal was to balance the budget in 5 years. Is anyone tracking the cuts and revenue give-aways?

A: There have been \$100 million in tax breaks. The corporate tax rate is reduced from 11.5% to 10.5%. Ontario's huge deficit is not the result of over-spending; it has come from 20 years of governments cutting taxes too far.

Q. Can we stop paying our Provincial taxes (in protest)?

A: Some people are working on this idea. The cancellation of Ontario's Cap & Trade policy is leading to compensation payments to industry.

Q: What are the plans for, Ontario Place?

A: A press conference is planned for Thursday to announce an RFP for the future of Ontario Place. There is a group called Ontario Place 4 All.

7. Creating a Healthy and Vibrant Toronto for All – Gil Penalosa, 880 Cities

Gil gave a lengthy and detailed presentation on cities and their future in this part of Canada. Some key points are captured here.

The World population will grow from 3.5 billion to 7 billion. In 30 years the population of Canada will grow by 7 million, mostly in cities. Over the next 25 years there will be 50% more people in the area between Oshawa and Niagara. Therefore, higher density development will be required, but it can be provided in 6 to 8 stories rather than 40.

Over the past 40 years there has been too much focus on cars. Moving the east end of the Gardiner is a waste of money. Emerging countries are making the same mistakes. The elderly, children, and the handicapped are slaves to car owners. Look at Mississauga; now Markham, Milton and Brampton are doing the same thing, building car-dependent suburbs. We need a Spiced City. Do you remember a few years ago there was a pilot on Queens Quay to show what the revitalized street would be like?

Climate effects per capita are worst in the suburbs. Individual mobility is walking and cycling. Streets are public spaces, along with parks and squares; places for people to gather anonymously. In Bogota they have built a lot of parks. Great parks do not necessarily depend on high spending. Everyone needs high quality parks.

Open Streets. People should actually be on the street; sleep at home, live outside.

Pedestrian Sundays are a start. Quality sidewalks and bike trails give dignity to pedestrians and cyclists, however poor. Young people do not see cars as such a status symbol.

The rule of common sense. Is it safe for a child of 8 and an adult of 80? Every trip begins with walking. While walking we use all our senses. People are upset about plane crashes, but 741 people are killed by cars while walking, every day. Vision Zero without funding is zero vision. In Toronto on average a pedestrian is hit by a car every 3.5 hours. There has to be a City-wide focus on safety; lower speed limits save lives; crosswalks need refuge islands. The City has to be walkable and safe; pedestrians are the most vulnerable and must be considered first, with no cycling on sidewalks. Think of the children.

In Toronto only 3% ride bikes but a cyclist is hit every 7 hours. Toronto needs bike networks that work summer and winter and link to transit. GO Transit is spending \$40 million on garages for cars at the stations.

We need transit priority, and benches on the streets. Management is the key, not just maintenance but a focus on public consultation, safety, a variety of kinds of parks with activities. Empty parks are useless, we must fill them with activities year-round. We should focus on winter uses, winter street lights from Hallowe'en to March. In Gothenberg they have a rain park; there is no bad weather, only bad clothing. In Melbourne streets and lanes were reclaimed with trees and public art.

Physical activity is guaranteed through walking and cycling a part of everyday life. It is a health issue too. Loneliness and depression are improved by contact with nature and playability on the street every 300 to 400 m. Schools should be community hubs. People are living longer and half the population is over 60; older adults have value and we must get rid of ageism and provide for inter-generational experiences. The general should prevail over the particular. Change is hard, but no to something is yes to something else. Beware of the CAVE people – Citizens Against Virtually Everything.

8. University of Toronto Noise Study – Maedot Andargie

Maedot advised that the U of T is conducting a study of acoustic comfort in condos, covering types of noise, and effects on quality of life and sleep. The plan is for a survey in June, followed by in-suite monitoring over the course of a week in each unit that volunteers later in the Fall. Only noise will be recorded. Sleep will be monitored through a wristband device. The results of the study will be shared and there will be recommendations for improvements to sound insulation for example. More information will be posted on the YQNA website.

9. Waterfront Updates – Angelo Bertolas

Co-chair Angelo Bertolas noted that the Quayside Master Plan is to be presented to the Waterfront Toronto Board very soon. It amounts to 1000 pages. A Summary will be made available for a decision on proceeding or not. There will be a public information session at the Westin Hotel in June.

10. Noise By-law Update – Carolyn Johnson

Co-chair Carolyn Johnson stated that Council at its April meeting adopted the Noise By-law report with some amendments. The final wording of the by-law is not yet available. She noted that YQNA has been involved with the review since 2015 with many hours devoted to working with MLS staff and deputing at various committees. Unfortunately the result seems to be a bylaw that is easier to administer rather than one protecting the public from unwanted noise.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 pm.

The balance of the agenda is held over to the next meeting.

The next meeting will tentatively be on September 17, 2019