

**YQNA MINUTES OF MEETING #78, Tuesday, November 19, 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 Ulla Colgrass, the agenda was adopted.

2. Adoption of Minutes from October 16, 2019 meeting

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

3. Treasurer's Report – Angie Rivers

Treasurer Angie Rivers reported that donations at the last meeting amounted to \$200. The bank balance was \$668.32 as of October 31.

4. City Council Update for Ward 10 – Brent Gilliard for Councillor Joe Cressy

Brent advised that the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) just released its decision on the City's Zoning Bylaw Amendments regulating short term rentals through businesses such as Airbnb. The appeals of the bylaw were dismissed. The City will release details of its implementation plan in a couple of months. The decision will stop the "ghost hotels" and potentially bring 5,000 units back into the regular rental market.

Q & A

Q: How will the regulations be enforced and will there be penalties?

A: Enforcement will be done by MLS staff who can check the advertising websites, and impose penalties. There will also be a 4% tax on rental income.

Q: Is there a minimum or maximum number of days' rental?

A: The maximum for short term rentals is 28 days, plus a maximum of 180 days per year. The plan is to disrupt businesses operating commercial rental operations.

Q: If condo rules prohibit rentals, will this change?

A: No, condo rules will still apply.

Q: Are there enough bylaw officers? Will more be hired?

A: The City just went through a hiring process.

Q: Some listings only give the general area and a phone number, not the address.

A: The City still has a lot to learn about enforcement.

A: Some towns like Blue Mountain already have some experience to draw on.

Q: Is there any news about the sale of 200 Queens Quay West (parking garage)?

A: Canada Lands have committed to requiring affordable housing. Councillor Cressy's office has sent prospective purchasers to talk to the Affordable Housing Office.

Q: How can construction be accommodated in this tight space?

A: It will be very sensitive.

Q: How is affordable housing defined?

A: CMHC looks at average rents in the GTA and then 80% is called "affordable"; the figure is currently \$1194 per month for a 2 bedroom unit. If needed, the City can add more supports.

Q: Is there a percentage of affordable units in the project?

A: Not yet determined.

Q: What will happen about parking? Many condos have no guest parking, relying on the garage, and the Rees Street lot is going to become a park.

A: Yes, there is an agreement about condo parking. CLC and the condo's have a private agreement that would run with the land. The City has no tool to require replacement.

Q: A condo developer showed visitor parking marked with a V to the City inspector, but in reality the spaces were sold. The City was going to be sued so Harbourfront Centre entered into an agreement to save the City.

A: It is likely that there will be underground parking with replacement spots. This can be addressed during the approval process.

Q: There are many other sites in the City with zoning approval that could be developed. There is too much congestion here already.

A: When the City learned about the sale we knew that whoever purchased the site could make a planning application. We did get the affordable housing commitment. We will go through the normal planning process, and of course, LPAT is the final arbiter.

5. Lake Ontario Flood Control – Lynn Robinson and Mike French

Mike spoke to a powerpoint presentation showing the Great Lakes system and some water level graphs. He noted that the Great Lakes hold 18% of the world's fresh water. The system has two points of regulation, at the east end of Lake Superior and the east end of Lake Ontario. He has consulted 100 years of water level records. Since 2013 there has been a gradual increase, and all the lakes are trending higher than the 100 year average. Currently, Lake Huron is 0.87 m higher, and Lake Erie 0.66 m higher. Lake Ontario receives the inflow.

There is a water balance equation involving inflow, outflow, other sources and evaporation. There have been record inflows lately. The IJC has Plan 2014 that, coupled with high flows in the Ottawa River going into the St Lawrence, has resulted in a reduction in the outflow from Lake Ontario via the dam at Cornwall.

For forecasting, if we use average rates for the lakes we will see a repeat of 2017 next year. If we use the inflow from Lake Erie, and the current outflow plus a wet Spring, then we could see levels a foot higher than in 2019. Lake Ontario is very sensitive.

The International Joint Commission (IJC) do not want to change their Plan 2014 process. Shipping is part of the equation, because of fast currents in narrow areas. There is also consideration for hydro dams, erosion and shoreline impacts, and recreational boating. Plan 2014 was implemented in 2017 just before the flood. The lakes are not operating as normal.

Lynn remarked that this is a shared problem with risks right across the waterfront. We can expect more flooding, and another foot is critical. It could take 5 years for the water in the upper lakes to flow through. She produced a flood map based on a model from the internet using the 76 m contour, showing extensive inundation of lakefront areas in Toronto. We have to ask what would be the infrastructure impacts? What can we do? We can petition the IJC to let more water out, and come up with mitigation plans. Plan 2014 is a computer algorithm, designed to protect Montreal, water intakes, and shipping. Only the Lake Ontario shore is impacted, but other areas should help. How about curtailing the shipping season? There is not much time left this winter while the St Lawrence is not yet frozen over.

The islanders have talked to Adam Vaughan. The US side is very active and very angry. A group called United Shoreline Ontario at Coburg has all the mayors east of Toronto organized. (This group is affiliated with United Shoreline USA.)

Q&A

Q: Has Toronto made any plans?

A: The Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) does have some plans but only for public lands. We need to ask them about their plans.

Q: Is there any information available?

A: Maybe. There are many questions to ask.

Q: Can they let more water out when the shipping season ends?

A: There are issues with the ice, as an early form called frazzle is dangerous. They can let out more water once the ice is fully formed, until the Ottawa River runs.

Q: What about sending more water over the divide through Chicago and the Illinois Canal?

A: We need to ask for extraordinary measures.

Q: Do you have any personal stories to share?

A: **Mike** said that the water comes up into the crawl spaces of homes on the islands. He had to move some of his HVAC equipment. It was a scramble in 2017 but they now know what to do. However, they can't handle a foot more. Also in rough weather the water can come over the sandbags.

Q: What is the priority politically?

A: The Federal Government is a major player but they do not understand. They are only looking at the 2019 flooding in Ottawa from the river.

Q: Can we collect information?

A: Waterfront for All should be the conduit, along with Waterfront Toronto.

Q: We are living in a flood plain. The lakes have always had 7 year cycles, but climate change impacts are different.

A: Infrastructure projects and zoning regulations should be used.

6. Federal Government Update – Adam Vaughan, MP

Adam noted that there have been catastrophic flood impacts along the **Lake Ontario** shoreline. Information went to the Environment Minister. There will be mapping across Canada relating to floods. There are insurance issues. The government is planning a public insurance program for vulnerable areas, as the insurance industry cannot cope with climate change.

Regarding **Sidewalk Labs**, the City must invest in the LRT along the waterfront to knit the area together. The City needs to focus on the LRT; Sidewalk Labs will now focus on the Quayside site, and will need a subsidy to deliver affordable housing with Federal money. The **Toronto Port Authority (TPA)** is releasing the Billy Bishop Airport Master Plan. The issues of RESA's (Runway End Safety Areas) is coming up soon because Billy Bishop is unsafe. The TPA has lied for the past 10 to 15 years about airport safety. In fact, special pilot training is needed to fly into this airport. Adam is waiting to see who the new Transport Minister will be.

Regarding the **Bird Sanctuary** on the Toronto Islands and Leslie Street Spit, the City needs to write the Memorandum of Understanding with the Federal Government. The Federal Government can fortify the lake edge to protect habitats. More funding is being provided to **Harbourfront Centre (HC)** to keep it going after the loss of parking revenue.

Q&A

Q: How does a bird sanctuary help condo buildings subject to flooding?

A: Not much, except that the water will be cleaner.

Q: Instead of selling the parking garage, why not plant trees on the site to help with climate change?

A: When Federal lands is transferred to the Canada Lands Company (CLC), politicians cannot interfere. The City can talk to CLC, but they are looking at developing two towers above a garage and podium. Their mandate is to raise revenue from the site. You can build condos without parking. Condo residents don't drive Monday to Friday in rush hours. The affordable housing component is there. The Harper government authorised the sale instead of making a gift to HC. CLC is a Crown Corporation and has a mandate to sell land to raise revenue.

Q: Can a bylaw block development?

A: The City planning process plus LPAT will deal with it.

Q: What will happen about the Tripartite Agreement under a minority government?

A: It would be a Cabinet decision with delegation to the Minister of Transport. Adam will ask the new Minister, but it is hard to resist the airport and its revenue. The no jets commitment is solid. There are issues of safety under the Aviation Authority, and there will have to be financing and a mitigation method for the RESA's.

Q: The City is the weakest level of government, and taxpayers have to foot the bills. We have no power. We have no green space.

A: Adam is working with John Sewell's group on the Charter City idea. The local councillor works on the affordable housing percentage. CLC can be spoken to, they have been in discussions with the City for 18 months. The National Housing Strategy can be used for funding. There is no purchaser as yet.

Q: Is the Federal Government paying attention to the Lake Ontario flooding?

A: There is a new normal in the Great Lakes that has to be addressed. Montreal and Ottawa have been hit hard. In Ottawa 2,000 people are still out of their homes. However, all communities are precious.

7. Provincial Government Update – Chris Glover, MPP

Chris commented that this is his 4th meeting tonight. He was in some Chinatown consultations because developers have bought up large areas. Jean Lum Lane has been named after Jean who fought to protect Chinatown in the 1960's.

There is a Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness. Their position is that it costs too much to keep people on the streets and in shelters. There are now 5,000 people in need every night. It would cost \$35,000 a night to house them properly versus \$425,000 a night for emergency measures.

Chris noted that this Provincial Government is giving the green light to developers. It has cut funding to the LPAT Community office and changed the TOCore Plan. However, the City has decided that if a development application meets the policies of the TOCore Plan as adopted by Council, then it goes to the front of the line.

Chris added that he is working on employment opportunities for the disabled, of whom only 26% have jobs. He is meeting with BIA's, assistance groups and the Ontario Disability Network. Giving them jobs is not charity, it's good for profits. Tim Hortons provides a good example of staff retention.

On the issue of gun violence, Chris regards it as a public health issue related to poverty. The City needs help from other levels of government to eliminate poverty. Diverse housing is needed because the social housing model has not worked.

Q&A

Q: The Provincial Government is wasting money on the carbon tax fight and cancelling green energy projects, and then says it can't afford to fund education etc.

A: There is all kinds of waste along with tax cuts for corporations and top income earners. Service cuts affect us all.

Q: Is there any news about Ontario Place?

A: There has been no public consultation and the Government refuses to release the proposals arising from the RFP it issued.

Q: We cannot afford poverty.

A: People are mobilizing, and companies don't want homelessness either.

Q: How well is the Lakeshore shelter working? Homeless people say it is too violent so they are camping under the Gardiner.

A: There has been a 25 year period without social housing being built. Now we have the opioid crisis resulting from a new drug trade. People are addicted, and they can get the stuff off the internet. The violence stems from the need to get money for drugs. However, new groups are mobilizing.

8. Update from the Waterfront Business Improvement Association (BIA) – Tim Kocur

Tim noted that he has been with the BIA for about a year. It is funded by a levy on local businesses. HC and Joe Cressy are on the Board. Tim is hoping for more influence by building on past successes. The BIA commissioned an economic impact study by Hatch concerning the LRT. It is available on the website. The BIA is now promoting Waterfront Reconnect to improve the links under the Gardiner, starting with a paint job at Rees Street that features the street name. The idea is to get this kind of facelift all along the Gardiner following rehabilitation works, as well as wider pedestrian crossing markings.

In terms of the public realm, Tim thanked Wayne Christian and Carolyn Johnson for their work on the tree condition reports. The BIA is working to remove eyesores like the Peter Street Basin detritus outside their offices. They are creating a GIS database of public assets like street furniture and tracking how long things remain broken. They identified paving deficiencies to Waterfront Toronto; they report graffiti. Over the Summer they employed a Clean Streets Team to remove graffiti instead of reporting it to the City, when it was easy to remove. Regarding overflowing garbage bins, they kept reporting to 311 with some success.

As for marketing, Tim mentioned that the BIA funds Ice Breakers, the Redpath Waterfront Festival and interactive installations like the seesaws recently at Harbourfront Centre. In January there will be loop features at York Park. They also employ tour guides and have a staff person taking care of social media.

Q&A

Q: There is some street lighting still connected by cords instead of underground, and there is temporary fencing along the LRT tunnel portal.

A: Not many people notice the electricity wires. Toronto Hydro has to fix this. As for the fencing, TTC says it is needed.

Q: The City is not keeping the recycling separate, so can we have better litter bins?

A: the garbage is separated by robots which do a great job.

Q: What are the limits of the Gardiner underpass painting?

A: Yonge to Bathurst, but it may also go east of Yonge. There are not many businesses yet along that stretch.

Q: Millions of dollars are needed to take care of the trees.

A: **Co-chair Angelo Bertolas** stated that YQNA spoke to WT about this. 150 trees were replaced under warranty. The trees should be doing better with the irrigation system and the silva cells that were put in. The City has problems with maintenance because of the special standards here. WT funding ought to go to maintenance as well as capital investment.

Q: The City is digging up and replacing the paving so it not done as well as originally.

Q: Who takes care of the unsightly trash in the harbour at the York Slip?

A: The BIA. Harbourfront Centre says it's not their responsibility now although they did it with some funding in the past. The Port Authority should do it.

9. Annual General Meeting – Allen Rivers

All current officers were willing to stand and were acclaimed.

Co-Chairs – Angelo Bertolas and Carolyn Johnson

Treasurer – Angie Rivers

Secretary – Carolyn Johnson

Planning Committee – Ulla Colgrass

Police Liaison – Claire Sparks.

Web Master – Neal Colgrass

10. Special Presentation – Carolyn Johnson

Carolyn, on behalf of YQNA, presented a gift to former co-chair Wayne Christian who is moving to Edmonton. Carolyn thanked Wayne for his community spirit and especially for all his work on the tree inventory.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

The next meeting will tentatively be on January 14, 2020.