

**MINUTES OF MEETING #75, Wednesday, January 16, 2019
Radisson Admiral Hotel, 249 Queens Quay West**

Chaired by Angelo Bertolas

1. Adoption of Minutes from November 13, 2018 meeting

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

2. Treasurer's Report

On behalf of Angie, Allan Rivers reported that the current balance as of the end of December was \$1333.40. He noted that the typical meeting donations amount to \$80 to \$100, and requested donations at this meeting.

3. Provincial Update – MPP Chris Glover

Chris reported that there was a rally for Ontario Place last Saturday which both Joe Cressy and Adam Vaughan attended. A report from the Queens Park library shows that the Province owns most of the land, but it is a Heritage Property under the Act, and the City owns the water's edge to the north. The Federal Government has some powers through the Toronto Port Authority. Chris feels that all of Ontario should be involved in decisions pertaining to the future of this location.

Regarding Waterfront Toronto, the Provincial representatives have been fired.

The defunct Hearn Generating Station site of 16 ha. was sold by the Province to Studios of America for \$16 million.

The City Place schools and community centre are due to open in September 2019. This 12 acre site could be a model for the port lands. The building includes two gymnasias, and a green roof with sports facilities.

Sidewalk Labs is supposed to issue a Master Plan in March or April.

The Ministry of Education is planning a 4% cut to funding on top of the other recent cuts, including a special program that helped low income youth find work counselling others, a program that helped to mitigate violence.

A few meetings coming up: Special Education Group on Tuesday at Chris' building; The Etobicoke Network on Wednesday to discuss the 4% cut; and on January 31 Affordable Housing at Scadding Court.

Q & A

Q. What information is available concerning plans for Ontario Place?

A. Woodbine would be competition for a casino, and the airport height limit of 45 m would constrain a Ferris wheel. Otherwise, anything goes.

4. Council Update – Ward 10 Councillor Joe Cressy

Joe noted that the 25 ward model is in effect, meaning that Ward 10 could see 160,000 residents in 5 years' time. A governance review study has begun, which might recommend 2 representatives per ward, a bit like the former Metro Toronto model. During this term, his focus will be on affordable housing, health, and waterfront revitalization.

On health, Joe wants to be the chair of the Board of Health to address the opioid crisis which is killing one person every day, even worse than the AIDS crisis was. The focus must be on mental health, with shelters and schools helping with education programs.

Regarding housing, the waiting list for subsidised housing is 181,000. Little has been built since the 1970's. In this area Adam Vaughan is our helper at the Federal Government. The other area is affordable rental units for middle income people. A healthy vacancy rate is 3% but in Toronto it is under 1%. AirBnB is creating ghost hotels and taking rental units out of the market. The City has developed a policy requiring AirBnB rentals to only be offered in a person's primary residence but the bylaw is under appeal, with a hearing at the OMB planned for August.

On the Waterfront, Joe noted that he is the new City representative on the Board of Waterfront Toronto (WT). He said that WT was formed in 2000 and has transformed the waterfront with new parks, development and livable communities. It has 4 appointees from each of the three levels of government. The Province thinks it is not working. At risk is the Provincial contribution to the \$1.2 billion needed for flood protection. 29 projects came in under budget; Queens Quay West was 30% over budget. The goal of WT is not just selling off the land.

Concerning Ontario Place, the last Liberal government created Trillium Park and the Bill Davis Trail. They had an RFP out for a culture tenant. The new government has cancelled that and fired the Board, prior to announcing new plans. Where is the leverage? The City owns access from the lakeshore, including the bridges, although expropriation is possible. The Province could use a Minister's Zoning Order to impose its vision. A new group, ontarioplaceforall, is being set up to involve the public in articulating a vision.

Work is continuing on the two new parks on Queens Quay West: detailed design for Love Park is under way, with construction planned for 2020; detailed design for Rees Ridge will follow later this year, with construction planned for 2021.

A report from KPMG is due soon concerning the new ferries, which should be in service in a couple of years. The design is considering all users; residents, tourists, and school children; and the possibility of expanding service to other areas.

Joe commented that new transit to the waterfront is needed and the key issue is the link from Union Station. He supports the original EA solution, but other options are being explored. There is an open house next week and a report is due in February to explain the findings.

For the PATH extension under York Street, no overnight construction is planned.

Q & A

Q. Any comments on the potential subway upload?

A. It is concerning that Ford wants only the subways. They carry more than 2 million daily trips that also involve streetcars and buses because it's a network. Transit planning needs to deal with the whole system and include housing planning. Subways are profitable and there are air rights over the stations. This idea was tried in New York and is a disaster. The City needs more power.

Q. What about funding for the Jack Layton Ferry Terminal?

A. Only Phase 1 is being built. \$100 million is needed for the rest. Joe will work on getting this funding, with help from Tom Davidson who is now on his team with responsibility for waterfront issues.

Q. Regarding AirBnB, condos need to check their declaration and fight this use.

A. Condo boards can decide on rules. There is also the City's licence process but it is under appeal. In the interim, the City is asking AirBnB to desist from listing units that do not comply with the policy. Residents can help by reporting the use.

Q. Do you have any concerns over the sale of the Hearn site?

A. Yes. While WT is preparing a Master Plan for the entire port lands for all three levels of government, a lot of the land is owned by the Province and could be sold off.

Q. What is the status of the Rees streetscape?

A. Joe is not aware of this, but thinks the BIA is involved in north-south improvements including Rees Street. Angelo Bertolas confirmed this.

Q. Hydro One is looking at a new trunk cable to the area.

A. They are not going under Queens Quay, but are exploring other routes.

5. Federal Update– Nicole Waldron for MP Adam Vaughan

Nicole noted that the local elected officials from all three levels of government are working well together. Adam is working on the National Housing Strategy under the funding envelope. He supports WT. Regarding Ontario Place, the Mississaugas of the New Credit also have a land claim.

There are some Town Halls coming up, as well as the New Year Levee on Saturday – please respond to the invitation.

Summer jobs with the Federal Government are being listed and applications are due by January 25. If there are any other issues, please email.

Q & A

Q. What is the status of our post office?

A. Nicole will find out.

Q. What about funding for Harbourfront Centre?

A. Adam is working on it. Nicole encourages YQNA to send emails about it to increase attention to the issue.

6. TTC Riders – Anna Lerner

Anna noted that TTC Riders is a voice for TTC users, advocating for better service and lower fares. She commented that the TTC has the lowest subsidy in North America and needs better funding. TTC Riders has three main campaigns at present:

Subway Upload : The Province is looking at the subway assets, and the result could be a two-tier system with extra fares to ride the subway. The three station line to Scarborough funded by developers is not a real deal. They are targeting a few key Wards like an election campaign;

City Budget: Anna invited YQNA to help deputate at the TTC Board Meeting on Thursday and at Budget Committee for increased funding and a push-back on any fare increase this year. There is training for deputants;

King Street Pilot: This is being extended to July to allow for a complete analysis of a full year's data. After the budget TTC Riders will increase their work on it and also look at more routes in need of this kind of support.

Q & A

Q. Why are children riding for free if there's a funding problem?

A. It is a matter of access to a public service. Children's fares were probably a small component of the revenue.

Q. Presto is unreliable. Does this lead to fare evasion?

A. Most people do pay. Presto is definitely a problem, TTC Riders are pushing for a meeting with Metrolinx about this system which was forced on the TTC. The only part of the system which is Proof of Payment is the streetcar fleet, which is well inspected. There is a \$250 fine for fare evasion.

Q. Wheelchair access to the subway is problematic.

A. There is an Accessibility Committee. Also Wheel Trans service is available for wheelchair users.

Q. Why are developer-provided elevators not to TTC standard?

A. They should be.

Q. When are tokens being phased out?

A. By the end of 2019.

Q. Any thoughts on the Scarborough Subway?

A. TTC Riders prefer an LRT. It looks as if the Province changing the design will just lead to more delay.

Q. What is the impact on businesses of the King Street Pilot?

A. There are only a few that are impacted that have most of their clientele from the suburbs. TTC Riders has met with the businesses and feels there is a need to emphasise the supportive voices. Moneris data is being analysed for the final report.

7. Defend Toronto – Doug Earl

Doug explained that he is a retired CBC journalist and is speaking in place of John Sewell who had a family engagement tonight.

He stated that Defend Toronto was founded in response to Bill 5 and has grown to 200 – 300 members attending monthly meetings . The next one is tomorrow to talk about Ontario place and the subway upload.

People were outraged by Bill 5 and did not understand what was the problem Ford was trying to solve. They feel there is a Shock Doctrine process, which has led to a chasm of trust between the Province and Toronto. What is the meaning of the proposed review of regional governments? For the TTC it is crazy to rip the spine out of the transit system and create a disintegrated network. The Province talks about a regionally integrated transit system, but GO trains rarely integrate with the subway. The Province says it is better able to borrow for transit funding but is it looking at Public Private Partnerships, selling air rights, or even selling off the subways? The Australian example is not encouraging. Citizens need to mobilize and know what we want, like the sound transit plan which was widely consulted on. The Province needs to be respectful.

These imposed decisions imply that the Province knows best, a hallmark of all provincial governments that treat cities as children. The key issue is the status of cities. Toronto competes with world class cities, and its citizens need to take this to heart. 1 in 12 Canadians live in Toronto; our population is greater than that of PEI which enjoys the status of a province. \$150 billion goes to the Canadian GDP from Toronto and we get maybe 9% back; this is not a fair share. It is like Metropolis being run by politicians from Smalltown.

There are many creative minds in Toronto considering this issue. Toronto could become a charter city. In the US there about 120 charter cities, which have the power to run themselves separately from their State governments. Our constitution should include this provision. Defend Toronto is working on the content, like the City of Toronto Act but stronger, with powers to levy income and sales taxes. The plan is to have the proposal ready and discuss it with other parties looking for support in the next provincial election. Josh Matlow is also advocating for this idea. Please visit our website for more information.

Q & A

Q. In Scandinavian countries there is a clear division of powers and taxation.

A. The Canadian Constitution only deals with the Federal and Provincial governments.

Q. Do we need a referendum?

A. In Los Angeles, for example, only the citizens can make changes to their charter.

Q. What is the status of other big cities in Canada?

A. Vancouver and Calgary have more power, but still subject to their provinces' approval. The Big City Mayors are also working to this issue.

Q. Who would grant the charter? How could it be made strong enough?

A. It would be done through an Act of the provincial government, but the process needs to be entrenched in the constitution. There are examples around the world.

Q. Can we split up these huge Wards?

A. That could be done; maybe create two tiers.

Q. Are revenues prescribed in the constitution?

A. Revenue has to be part of the charter. The best solution would be a block grant from the Province, because if Toronto had a sales tax there would not be an even playing field with respect to say, York Region.

Q. Why can Toronto not be a Province?

A. The constitutional amendment process required under Section 41 would lead to gridlock.

Q. Why can the Federal government not intervene here?

A. The Federal government does have the power of Disallowance, but it can't really be used because of the precedent.

Doug concluded by thanking YQNA for working with other groups to support better funding for Councillors, for example. Angelo noted that this is the Ward 10 Group.

8. Harbourfront Centre Update - Heather Waddell

Heather opened by thanking YQNA for our support over the years. She noted that Harbourfront Centre (HC) is a charitable not-for-profit organization, which receives 30% of its income from government and the balance from donations, sponsors and revenues. Government support is vital to leverage the rest. Heather stated that she has been with HC since 1985 and strongly supports its arts and culture mandate and programs.

Regarding visual arts, the Design TO Festival is on. A dance weekend is coming soon, followed by Kuumba in February as part of Black History Month. On the Victoria Day long weekend there will be the return of the Junior Festival. Registration is open for school groups and March Break camps.

Q & A

Q. What is happening about the former Pawsway building?

A. Happy Place has had a good experience and is extending to the end of January. HC is open to short-term tenants but is still looking for a long term user who will stay for years and take on the necessary renovation of the building.

9. Ontario Place – Laura Cooper

Waterfront for All, an umbrella group of some 30 organizations, and Park People hosted an all-day rally at Metro Hall to highlight Ontario Place as a park for all Ontarians. There were 2 million visitors last year. Ken Greenberg provided a history of the Place; Mark Mattson of Swim, Drink, Fish spoke about the water quality monitoring his group does. Attendees shared their stories of Ontario Place. IMAX was developed in Canada and this theatre was the original one.

Laura reported that ideas for future use included activities for families and an International Water Research Centre. Adam Vaughan stated at the event that he did not expect the Federal Government to have much involvement beyond the harbour jurisdiction. The event has led to the formation of Ontarioplacforall.

10. Love Park – Ulla Colgrass

Ulla advised that the original design from Cormier was only going to save one tree – the one on the island in the pond. Klaus Hatje researched the trees and found that only 4 of the 15 are Norway Maples; the rest are mostly elms around the curved path, plus the catalpa which will be on the island. It is a flowering tree that has large seed pods, which one can find on the ground. Netami Stuart of WT and the designers are quite receptive to saving more trees and will work with Parks staff and YQNA, which is represented on the Stakeholder Advisory Committee by Angelo Bertolas. The pavilion in the design is working out to be too expensive.

Ulla also provided a supply of leaflets about caring for the new street trees for attendees to take back to their property managers.

11. Appointment of New Secretary

Co-chair Angelo Bertolas advised that the person elected in November is unable to serve and asked for volunteers because out-going Secretary Carolyn Johnson is doing double duty as Co-chair. There was no volunteer at the meeting.

12. Other Business

Gary Pieters, President of CPRA, advised that there was a recent shooting at a condo in City Place near Bathurst Street. The unit is suspected of being used by AirBnB.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9 pm.

Next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday March 12, 2019