

(Draft) MINUTES OF YQNA MEETING #97 Tuesday November 7, 2023

On-line Via ZOOM with approximately 82 participants

Hosted by Ryan Singh

Chaired by Angelo Bertolas, Chair

1. Angelo Bertolas

Angelo welcomed participants to YQNA's regular bi-monthly meeting and thanked Ryan Singh for volunteering to run the technical aspects of tonight's meeting.

2. Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Wendat, the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Chippewa, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. We pay tribute to their legacy and the legacy of all First Peoples of Canada. Today the traditional meeting place of Toronto is still home to many Indigenous People from across Turtle Island, and we are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work in the communities that have grown in the treaty lands.

3. Provincial Update — Benna Whahedi, Constituency Assistant to MPP Chris Glover

Chris Glover, MPP had a calendar conflict, so Benna Whahedi, his Constituency Assistant gave the update.

- **Ontario Place** - The Auditor General is investigating the Ontario Place redevelopment project because of requests from Ontario Place for All. \$650 million is being spent consisting of \$450 million on a parking garage, and \$200 million on other site upgrades. The Conservatives hid knowledge of the parking garage for two years. Ausma Malik, our City Councillor and Deputy Mayor, is leading this fight on the municipal side. Chris wanted to thank Olivia Chow for suggesting moving the thermal spa to the Better Living Center on the CNE grounds. This move could save taxpayers \$450 million as there are 6000 parking spots available at the CNE. The Conservatives have put up kilometres worth of solid plywood boards to obstruct people's view of their plans, such as cutting down 650 mature trees. Chris has posted a [video](#) of this plywood fence.
- **Greenbelt** - In the initial scandal that the Auditor General investigated, there were 7500 hectares of land bought for \$250 million. It turns out that land is really worth about \$8.3 billion. The Conservative government is focusing on the municipal boundary expansion. The Conservative government would purchase farmland just outside of the city boundaries, and then afterwards implement these municipal boundary expansions to expand into that area, making the land worth much more.
- **Homelessness** - The homelessness crisis is growing throughout the province. Toronto's aggressive plan for housing is a good step. Chris and his colleagues in the official opposition are pushing for the following actions from the Conservative government:
 - Reintroducing rent control to cover units occupied after November 15, 2018.
 - Immediately waiving the PST on all-purpose built rental housing projects.
 - Allowing for inclusionary zoning to be applied across the city.
 - Removing the right of appeal for projects with at least 30% affordable housing in which units are guaranteed affordable for at least 50 years.

- Continue to pressure the Conservatives to provide funding to the city to build more affordable housing and of course, more wraparound services.
- **Bird Bird-safe windows** - Chris tabled his Bird Safe Windows bill on October 30th which would change the building code to mandate bird-safe windows on all new construction and major retrofits. Birds usually collide into buildings and windows right below or at the treeline (first five stories).
- **Upcoming Events**
 - Monthly Coffee with Chris Events, where you can meet one-on-one with Chris for 15 minutes or participate in a 30-minute roundtable with all attendees.
 - Holipalooza Holiday Party at The Bentway Studio Atrium (55 Fort York Blvd.) December, 1 pm – 3 pm. [RSVP here.](#)
 - For more information on these events, you can email cglover-co@ndp.on.ca or follow Chris on Twitter or Instagram - [@chrisglovermpp](#).

4. Harbourfront Centre News – Massimo Demaria, Chief Operating Officer of Harbourfront Centre and Sonia Chai, Chief Branding Officer

- **Safety and Security** - Recently there has been a lot of vandalism (includes property damage, break and enters, theft, homelessness, medical issues): 42 incidents in September, 68 in October, and several incidents so far in November. Several measures have been implemented to try to mitigate this:
 - Alter patrol schedules to target high risk areas more often.
 - Increased lighting along the boardwalks.
 - Will be installing some signage to notify the public our security number.
 - Supplying emergency disposable blankets to those in need.
 - Collaboration and sharing information with other parking areas in our area.
- **Harbourfront Public Square** - Due to shipping and manufacturing delays, we are aiming at early spring for the opening of the public square.
- **Amsterdam Bridge** - It is an eyesore, but the infrastructure will cost over \$1 million to fix. We are asking the city for help.
- **Skating Rink** - We currently do not have a sponsorship. Sonia indicated that from a financial feasibility standpoint, it is very unlikely that we will be able to get the skating rink up and running for this year.
- **What's playing at Harbourfront** - Check out [What's On - Harbourfront Centre](#) to see the schedule of events.

4. Federal Update – Kevin Vuong

- **Skating Rink** - When the decision was made to remove the skating rink, Kevin had checked with different organisations for financial sponsorship of at least \$50,000

per year. He will circle back with the organisations and report back to the Harbourfront Centre offline.

- **Refugee crisis** - In March 2023, the Federal government cut funding from \$70 million to zero, which caused the refugee crisis this summer. Kevin has been fighting to get funding. We have been able to secure \$90 million of emergency funding for refugees in the City of Toronto, but that is just an interim solution; it is not nearly enough. The Toronto Watchdog is investigating how the city responded this summer to the refugee crises with doors being closed to some people, but open to others.
- **Safety concerns** - Our community is home to most of the city's respite centres and safe injection sites, and many are very close to schools, which puts our children at risk. Prior to 2021, there was a city bylaw, which restricted support facilities from being within 250 metres of one another. But this bylaw was quietly removed in 2021, causing issues in our community. The issue is that the cycle of addiction cannot be broken without also having enforcement, treatment, and prevention. These injection sites are only allowed to operate with an exemption from the federal government. Kevin is advocating that the government provide resources to ensure that communities where the safe injection sites reside (like ours) are safe or to abolish them.
- **Escalation of Anti-Semitism** - There has been a troubling escalation of harassment and vandalism of Jewish-owned businesses in our community. Kevin is calling for the federal government to ensure that our existing hate propaganda laws are being enforced.

5. Keynote Speaker – First Deputy Mayor Ausma Malik

- **Committees** - In addition to being appointed First Deputy Mayor, Ausma is on the following committees:
 - Chair of the Striking Committee
 - Chair of the Exhibition Place Board of Governors
 - Vice Chair of the Executive Committee
 - Vice Chair of Toronto and East York Community Council
 - Member of Economic and Community Development Committee
 - Member of the Board of Health
 - Member of several local boards for our BIAs Community Centres
 - Mayor's designate on Waterfront Toronto
 - Harbourfront Centre Board of Directors
- **City Budget** - The city started consultation with the public earlier this month for the 2024 budget. The Executive Committee is laying out the city's new framework and doing some crucial first steps:
 - Implemented a graduated municipal land transfer tax rate fiscal for residential properties valued above \$3 million.
 - Removing the cap of \$5 an hour parking for street parking rates.
 - Conduct a comprehensive review of those reviewing new revenue and policy

- tools such as foreign buyer land transfer tax and a commercial parking levy.
 - Asking that the province upload the responsibility and costs associated with the continued construction and maintenance of the Gardiner Expressway in the Don Valley Parkway, including any future capital and operating costs.
 - We have also asked the City Manager to review all sources of revenue tools available, such as the commercial parking levy, and includes requests to the provincial government for additional tools such as a municipal sales tax.
- **Improved Infrastructure** - One of the most important things is to ensure that we implement essential public and community infrastructure as our community grows. For example, One Yonge Community Centre has recently opened with full programming and a brand-new pool. This is part of a comprehensively planned set of community facilities for the new Waterfront, including new parks and childcare.
- **Waterfront LRT** - This is critical to serve our existing communities and the new communities that are being built along the waterfront. Malik is supporting the approval of a \$64 million investment into design work for this critical transit link.
- **Billy Bishop Airport** - In the past few months, Ports Toronto has communicated to the city that it will seek permission to implement Transport Canada's Runway End and Safety Area (RESA) requirement. At this point, no detailed proposals have come forward, and city staff are waiting for information to respond. Any discussion on the future of the Island Airport done through a democratic and transparent process that considers the public benefit of any decision regarding city lands. Ausma has also been working with the community around the airport to develop an Emergency Preparedness Plan. Ausma will keep us informed.
- **FIFA World Cup 2026** - The agreement to host the World's Cup that was signed last term brings a lot of opportunities and challenges that still need to be addressed. Her priority has been to ensure that the World Cup event is tied to strong community benefits that include local hiring and procurement, cultural programming and activities that helps our neighborhoods.
- **Rees Park** - Waterfront Toronto and City Parks have decided to change the Rees Park design team. She wants to reassure everyone that the project is still fully funded and that the stakeholders, including YQNA, will continue to be part of the design consultation. However, the design work will continue through the end of 2024, so we are looking at a one-year delay.
- **Harbourfront Community Liaison Committee (HCLC)** - Ausma's office has been working with Harbourfront Centre and YQNA to discuss the HCLC and are having a meeting on November 21 to discuss a framework for these meetings.
- **Short-Term Rentals** - The goals of this bylaw are to limit short-term rental activity in Toronto to principal residences and to protect critical rental stock that we absolutely need in this housing crisis by maintaining access for tenants to long-term accommodation. Last month, the city held public consultations asking residents to share their feedback on the bylaw and proposed changes. Staff is currently reviewing the feedback after which, we will be reporting back to the Planning and Housing Committee and City Council.

- **Noise Bylaw Review** - The bylaw was last amended in 2019 with the goal of examining the implementation four years later. The key focus areas for the review include assessing the effectiveness of the current decibel limits and enforcement approach for amplified sound, enhancing the City's response to excessive vehicle noise, and strengthening noise enforcement and strategies for proactive mitigation of noise issues. The city hosted a series of public consultation meetings this fall, and the input will be used to recommend refinements to the noise bylaw. A staff report is expected at the Economic and Community Development Committee in early 2024.
- **E-scooter and Micromobility** - In May 2021 the City Council declined the option to participate in the Electric Scooter Pilot Program, and instead asked Transport Canada to harmonize micromobility vehicle safety standards, testing and labelling and to consult with key stakeholders. This term, a new motion was proposed to direct staff to look at a more detailed range of devices, including cargo bikes. A report back is expected in early 2024, and a comprehensive review of this issue will take place.
- **Ontario Place** - Ausma is committing to fight for the future of the critical green and public space. Ausma's motion moved forward to review the feasibility of an alternate location of the Spa to Exhibition Place. Thanks to Ontario Place for All, the Auditor General will review the decision-making around Ontario Place and Ontario Science Centre.
- **Questions and Comments on Ausma's Presentation**
 - Suggestion about looking at other revenue sources for funding, such as uploading the Gardiner and Don Valley to the province.
 - Question: LRT will need a redesign of the track into Union Station. How do we ensure that we continue to have some means of transportation along the Waterfront in the meantime.
Response: Phasing and Construction Planning approach is still being worked on. But we cannot leave residents and visitors stranded. So, one possibility is to run streetcars along the route while the Union Station is completed.
 - Comment: Regarding the sales tax, we need to ensure that lower-income families are not hurt as a result. Ausma said that equity is one of the principles guiding the choice of revenue tools so that we are not widening the inequality gap through any of these measures.
 - Suggestion: The city really needs to increase their enforcement efforts in regard the noise bylaw, Airbnb, and E-scooter pilot. Maybe the enforcement should be self-funded.
 - Concerns about public safety in our neighbourhood. Ausma mentioned that they are looking to expand the Toronto Community Crisis Response unit to all communities in the city.

6. Waterfront BIA – Tim Kocur

- **Love Park** - The BIA funded and managed the moveable, unlocked chairs in Love Park this summer.

- **Skating** - There is still a skating rink at Sherbourne Common opening at the end of November. The BIA is looking into providing hot chocolate there on certain days.
- **Fireworks** - working on hopefully having fireworks again on New Years Eve.
- **Sugar Shack Market** - will likely take place the first weekend of March.

7. YQNA AGM

- Angelo Bertolas has been elected as the vice-char of FoSTRA (Federation of South Toronto Residents Associations) and is on their policy committee. The committee has drafted a submission on the noise bylaw revisions suggesting the following:
 - City council should consult with noise engineers to establish an effective noise level, measurement criteria and measurement tools.
 - Vibration noise should also be considered.
 - Increase the number of enforcement officers and have 24-hour coverage, with the cost probably funded through fines, penalties, and permits being issued. Angelo learned in consultations that many of the noise bylaw officers leave in the early afternoon, so are not there when the complaints occur.
 - Fines and penalties should be increased.
 - Noise rules between all levels of government should be coordinated.
 - Residents Associations should have a say in how exemption permits get issued.
 - Consider establishing a noise tribunal which has the authority to level significant penalties and deal with these issues much more quickly than the court system.
- The city is considering extending the business operations for nightclubs, bars, and clubs from 3 am curfew to 6 am. FoSTRA will be putting together a submission on that front as well.
- Current Roles in the AGM
 - Chair - Angelo Bertolas
 - Treasurer - Carolyn Johnson
 - Chief Technical Officer - Neal Colgrass
 - Secretary -
 - Billy Bishop Liaison Committee - Hal Beck
 - Police Liaison Committee - Ryan Singh
 - FoSTRA delegate - Liz McGroarty
 - Harbourfront Community Liaison Committee - Ryan Singh and Angelo Bertolas
 - Social Media Editor - Leah Lambert
- Treasurer's Report - Carolyn Johnson

Basically, we lost a little bit of money this year compared to last year because we didn't have as many donations. It costs roughly \$1,000 a year to run the organization with Zoom. If we move to a hybrid model, there may be increased expenses.
- We at YQNA volunteer our time to work on issues that affect us all. There are expenses of running these Zoom meetings and carrying out our work on your behalf. Your donations are greatly appreciated. Please [visit our website](#) and click on the donate button.

Opening Balance October 31, 2022	\$2689.68
Closing Balance October 31, 2023	\$2218.36
Net decrease	(\$471.32)
<u>Income – Donations</u>	<u>\$667.57</u>
<u>Expenses</u>	
2022 Zoom Final Quarter	\$165.11
Cheques	\$65.30
Website	\$176.14
EoSTRA Membership	\$30.00
Zoom First Quarter	\$272.90
Website backup	\$81.35
Zoom Second Quarter	\$148.55
Zoom Third Quarter	\$148.55
Bank Fees 12@/\$1.95	\$23.40
Total	<u>\$1111.30</u>

- Meeting Poll - Ryan Singh

Ryan conducted an online poll to see if members would prefer in-person, online, or hybrid YQNA meetings. The most popular response was online meetings:

In-Person Meetings – 7 out of 49 – 14%

Hybrid Meetings – 18 out of 49 – 37%

Online Meetings – 24 out of 49 - 49%

8. Next YQNA meeting projected for Tuesday, January 9th 2024.