

OLRA Board Meeting – September 22nd, 2015 – Draft Minutes

Present : Boyd Waites, Marcia Todd, Trudy Murray, Bob Lauhglin, George Niblock, Amanda Holden, Tom Pugsley, Simon Palmer

Regrets :

Anya Dunning, Clemens van Zeyl, Chris Coderre

Approval of Minutes from last meeting:

Motion to approved proposed by Marcia, seconded by Trudy, passed without comment.

Treasurer's Report: As at August 31st, 2015

Cash balance of \$5,261.49

GIC \$10k renewed from Sept 18th for 100 days, December 22nd maturity @ 0.6%. Trudy reported that she could have got 1% but that would have meant locking in for 15 months. The board agreed to not lock in as the money is intended as a contingency fund.

Board Roles:

Some roles were assigned at the last meeting, however Lisa has left the neighborhood and is no longer able to participate, which opens up the Vice President and Secretary positions.

From the last meeting:

- President: Boyd
- Vice President: Lisa (now vacant)
- Secretary: Lisa (now vacant)
- Treasurer: Trudy
- Membership, including E-communications: Amanda
- Print communications : Amanda (production) / Tom (distribution)
- Planning and Heritage : A sub-committee comprising:
 - Anya
 - Clemens
 - Tom
 - George
 - With guidance from Boyd
- Newsletter/Database : Amanda
- Web Site : Amanda
- Parks, Green Space, Trees and Environment : Anya & Bob
- Transportation : Chris
- Garden Tour / Neighbourhood Event : vacant

Open roles:

Secretary:

Simon volunteered and board agreed, effective immediately.

Vice President:

Boyd gave some clarity about where he needs help and backup from the VP role. It broke into several categories:

- Co-signatory for the bank, which needs to be decided by the end of the year.
- Community Groups including other RA's, BIAs, the Mayor, etc.
- Ward 3 Residents Association, formed from fellow RAs, which is proving useful in presentations at the town
- Town planning meetings (Streetscape / Cultural Hub, livable Oakville etc.). This requires knowledge of the plans and to be following the issues.

Amanda asked whether we could separate the role into parts, that formed into the following proposal:

- Vice President: Bank signatory and Ward 3 RA liaison : George
- Community Groups and Town Planning meetings will be drawn as needed from the Planning & Heritage sub-committee.

Tom proposed a motion that the role be divided as described, Bob seconded and it was carried by the board.

Neighborhood Event / Garden Party :

In the absence of a volunteer, and given that any event would be next year, it was decided to defer the issue until the next meeting. Some ideas for venues were suggested including Erchloss.

Membership : Amanda

One new membership and two renewals received. One further membership question was raised by Trudy, the status of which will be checked with the database by Amanda.

Newsletter : Amanda

The e-mail platform has been switched to Mail Chimp. Volumes are low so the service is free. The e-mail format is good for HTML, but has some limitations around attachments, forwarding etc. Given the platform capabilities Amanda decide not to keep separate databases for e-mail and membership. Recent test was a success and generally applauded.

Volunteers were requested for printing and delivery of the newsletter; Lisa has details of routes etc. Tom and Simon volunteered to participate. Content will be provided by the group but production to PDF will be done by Amanda and handed

over to production for printing. The intention is to continue with Barkley for the printing.

Last year's was distributed in early November, which implies being at the printers on Oct 28. In turn that implies articles being ready for print on Oct 7th. Being 3 weeks away the content is needed quickly – ideally before the next meeting.

Content providers for the following topics were requested:

- Update on downtown plans, streetscape etc.: Boyd and perhaps Clemens
- First and second street heritage district: George
- Transportation update : Chris
- Parks and Greenspace : Bob has content
- OLRA board members : Amanda
- Membership invitations etc. (will mail recent expiries separately) : Amanda
- List of current members for 2 year period : Amanda
- Events : Amanda
 - St Andrews Christmas House tour (Dec 4/5th)
 - Santa Claus parade
 - Carol singing etc.
 - Christmas tree lighting
 - Members asked to keep their eyes out for things in Dec-April
- Facebook notification
- New web site if done in time
- Tribute to Joe Sarnecki

Web site : Amanda

Amanda will be trying out a new hosting company (PageCloud) that will do a web site design for \$100. Wordpress is proving to be a bit cumbersome. PageCloud has integration with Facebook and Amanda said she will create a Facebook page for OLRA. The domain name (OakvilleLRA.ca) will need to be redirected to the new web site.

<https://www.facebook.com/OakvilleLakesideRA>

Greenspace : Bob

Bob reported that the update of the city's private tree by-law seems to have disappeared. 3RAs agreed, 1 disagreed. Bob has been unable to get much information out of Dave Gittins on the subject.

The option to develop 800-1000 homes on the golf course site at Saw Whet has been sold to Bronte Green by private owner. There is broad opposition to the development by local RAs, the Mayor etc. A public meeting in July was attended by around 600 people to oppose the development.

There is an OMB hearing in October, however there will be insufficient time to hear all representations, so it has been pushed out to January.

OLRA didn't register, so Bob registered as an individual and volunteered to deliver the OLRA message. The local RA was looking for support and the Chairman had written a letter, including issues of losing public golf, green space and trees in Oakville with Deerfield closing.

The local community would like it to remain a golf course and zoned as it is. Bronte Green have gone straight to the OMB claiming the town was tardy in response.

Trudy proposed a motion that OLRA supports the local RA and that Bob represents us at OMB hearing into Saw Whet lands issue. Tom seconded and the motion was carried by the board.

474 Lakeshore Rd E : Bob

There is a proposal to sever the lot at 474 Lakeshore Rd E, which is a heritage property. The result would be a flag lot for existing property and a new home with an address on Lakeshore. There is an application for a package of minor variance to including a much smaller frontage. Boyd points out that the new town zoning by-law strongly discourages flag lots.

Heritage heard the proposal in July because existing home is heritage designated, but developer asked for new severed lot to be removed from heritage designation. This was agreed with the condition that the new home on the new lot gets referred back to heritage. The existing building is historically relevant because of cultural significance rather than architectural.

George asked how, when severed, the new house would be referred back to heritage once the lot has been severed. Bob said there may be provision for being adjacent to a heritage property. In any case the heritage committee seems to have agreed.

George shared his opinion, shared by many on the board, that the heritage character of the area is as much affected by space between buildings as the buildings themselves. In fact this position was also taken by others including Gren Weis at a recent meeting about the 1st and 2nd Street heritage plans.

The variances go before the committee of adjustment on September 29th, including a package to bring the existing property into legal conformance.

Bob, although in a difficult and conflicted position as a directly adjacent property owner, thinks there is clearly a loss of green space and trees.

Boyd pointed out that any opposition to the proposal at the CoA would have to be on basis of the variances, not the issue of whether something can, or should, be built on the land. The most significant variance is the frontage of 4.41m rather than 18m.

Other severances of a similar nature have got round this by forming a condo corporation.

Precedent is the problem, both past and present, and approving this potentially opens up many other properties to a similar outcome. The opposition to flag lots by town planning is not well described in its documents.

Boyd asked whether board would consider formally opposing this development. Tom suggested a member of the board will speak against the variances at the CoA meeting on the 29th, member to be decided. Bob and George both have a conflict of interests. Boyd and Bob will connect following the meeting on who will attend.

George proposed a motion, Amanda seconded. An OLRA member will speak against the proposal at the CoA meeting. The motion was carried.

Planning & Heritage : Boyd

First and Second Street area.

Over summer there has been feedback from local residents and a new report has been produced, adjusted based on the feedback feedback. Boyd provided a link to the report and recommends committee to read and bring forward any issues.

<http://www.oakville.ca/business/first-second-street-heritage-conservation-plan.html>

Summary is that the local residents are quite in favour of the report with a few issues, such as linking back to in-zone plan. Other residents quite concerned and felt it very restrictive and wanted to opt out.

Boyd feels that, on balance, the new plan is not a bad idea. The houses are being re-designated to contributing and non-contributing, although there were many conversations early about what that actually means. Heritage picked a date as a demarcation line (1934??).

Boyd thought there perhaps should be more provision on heritage grants.

George thought there would be need for clarification around windows. It is clearer in other areas. There is inconsistency in definition and implementation.

The new report goes to council on Oct 7th, and that meeting is open to representations. It then comes back to council on Nov 17th for approval to switch from old to new guidelines. Boyd had not heard from many residents on the subject, but a registered letter was delivered today so maybe that will sponsor some interest.

Streetscape

The streetscape plan is on a different timeline to the cultural hub. The plan, which is mainly about Lakeshore Road, has been approved by council and detailed

engineering design is being worked on. The timeline is 2019 for start of construction. The BIA was happy they got a date for planning purposes, but this is a later date than expected. The work is expected to take 2 years. At the same time the bridge will be renovated on Lakeshore, which will give wider sidewalks.

Prior to that in 2016/17 they are planning to implement a two-way traffic system through the centre of town instead of the one-way systems today. This will be converted in 2016/17.

Cultural Hub

The intention is to move the fire hall to the Kerr Street site in 2018, which coincides with the Oakville Arena rebuild.

Phase 1 cultural hub plan is library and gallery and adding up to 200 parking spaces in a 2018 timeframe. The plan and timing didn't seem very solid.

Last heard about above ground parking garage at the corner of George and Church SW. Boyd previously presented to council suggestions to moving parking ahead of the streetscape plus other opportunities along Church Street and cost offsets for building a parking lot, including commercial arrangements and taking parking underground.

There is now a possibility of moving parking completely underground below the old Post Office, the originally proposed site and below the road. Surprisingly, the cost to build per space is lower for the underground (40k vs. 66k) and it would yield approximately 300 spaces. The proposals in the Cultural hub give an additional 470, some dedicated to performing arts centre, some available for other use. George pointed out that there is water flowing below George street which has caused problems with underground parking in other developments, but otherwise it seems a very good idea.

This led to a discussion about whether the Post Office would be replaced by commercial space which would be shared by the library and whether it would be possible to finance part of the activity. The four storey limit downtown would be a challenge.

Boyd believes Church St to be an opportunity being the rear side of Lakeshore Road, perhaps provide parking and viable spaces for residential, retail and commercial use. The questions arising from business community is why limit to 4 storeys.

There is a clear emphasis on attracting visitors, but having people living and working is the best way of perpetuating a good environment and community.

The Performing Arts Centre proposals goes to council to start looking at budgets to continue the project – not the capital budget to do the work. One thing that they do want to put in is to increase the size of the lobby, to refurbish the admin offices and

improve the washrooms. They are asking for \$1.5M to do this work. Marcia points out that the upstairs washrooms have been updated recently.

The idea of the sesquicentennial federal money has gone. The province has issued what it is going to fund and it doesn't cover cultural initiatives. This brings the funding into further question. Private funding partnerships will clearly be needed to build the plan and the town cannot afford to build it on its own. Taxes are an unlikely favorable source of revenues for it.

Boyd met with other RAs and decided to survey residents around the cultural hub. The survey went out to the other RA residents three weeks ago. This should go out to our residents and members immediately as the last day of survey submissions is 29th. Questions are around preferences of options, funding mechanisms, etc. So far it has had 300 responses. The intention is to submit responses to the town.

Boyd will send link to board members and asks that they take the survey, circulate if desired. OLRA is mentioned in the survey. Amanda asked that Boyd send the text of the email invitation and she will send it out.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2KBZPXW>

George pointed out that of the three options proposed by the town, the third (New Building, dispersed) was pushed for by the town, although it's a confusing array of options. The town seems clearly to have a preference even though they are choosing not to state it overtly.

Consistent feedback about the options is that we have nothing at the river or lake. Only option 3 has any potential of water facing retail, which is possibly at the bottom of the proposed residential/hotel building. The controversial element of option 3 is the sale of some public land.

Meeting Schedule

13th October @ Anya

10th November @ Clemens

8th December @ O'Finn's

Those being all the issues, the meeting was closed. Thanks go to Trudy for her generous hospitality.