

Centretown Citizens Community Association

November Report

by CCCA Member Devon Woods

The Centretown Citizens Community Association wants to involve Centretowners—the community of people who live, work and play in Centretown—in issues related to our present and future. Our mandate is to help make the voices of the community heard by City planners and policy-makers. You can join the CCCA via our website: www.centretowncitizens.ca. Feel free to contact us about anything mentioned in this column using the information provided at the end.

The 2013 CCCA AGM

The 2013 Annual General Meeting of the CCCA took place on Tuesday, October 22, masterfully chaired—for the last time—by out-going CCCA President Jordan Charbonneau. It was a suspense-filled event!

The most important issue to be discussed was that of finding a new president. However, the agenda first involved passing a bylaw amendment that ensured that if there was a only one person running for president, she or he would still have to be voted in by members (with a yes-no vote), rather than simply being acclaimed.

To this point, however, there were no nominations and no one had come forward to run. As the chair made the third and final call for nominations, out of the blue two candidates came forward: Thomas McVeigh and Peter Thorn.

Each candidate then made a statement to the attending membership. McVeigh admitted a more pro-development perspective than the CCCA norm, but stated clearly that developers must follow City bylaws and City plans (rather than their seemingly regular practice of treating the bylaws as a minimum place to begin the negotiation, and making their own counteroffers of double or triple the permitted building heights), and that the Centretown community, in allowing development, must get back some of the essential benefits to make Centretown an increasingly livable and sustainable community.

Thorn made a clear case for focusing attention on important ongoing Centretown issues, often

neglected in City discussions of development proposals, such as affordable housing.

In the ensuing vote, McVeigh was elected president; however Thorn's voice will be heard as he agreed to run as a board member and was subsequently elected to the CCCA board of directors.

Board of Directors

Seven members were elected to the CCCA board of directors: Adam Harris, Paul Mennier, Graham Pressey, Peter Thorn and Tom Whillans will be joining reelected members Charles Akben-Marchand and Patricia Marsden-Dole, and current members Norm Fee, Judy Forrest, Scott Gorry, Henry McCandless, and Lauren Rock, who are returning for the second year of their two-year position.

There were new administrative responsibilities assigned, as well as a few changes in the important committees that are part of the CCCA. These will be posted on the CCCA website, along with the dates for their upcoming monthly meetings. All interested parties are welcome to attend and contribute their views on these important Centretown matters.

CCCA Letter to Mayor Watson

As reported elsewhere in this issue of The BUZZ, Henry McCandless put forward a motion that the CCCA send a letter to the mayor and city councillors requesting that certain procedures related to accountability be carried out as part of the City's deliberation regarding proposals for development in the Centretown area.

This proposal led to some discussion about whether or not the City would pay any attention to the request, and whether it would be possible in practice to carry out such measures, and if actually implementing such a requirement would slow down an already very slow-moving City planning process. However, nobody debated the value of having the City explicitly study and clarify who benefits and who bears the risks and costs of any new policy implementation. The proposal was passed by a vote of the membership at the meeting.

The next Board meeting will be at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, November 20, at City Hall (the room will be announced on the CCCA website).

The Planning Committee: OMB appeal on CDP

The focus of the CCCA Planning Committee is currently on the appeal that was filed to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) opposing certain aspects of the CDP (Community Design Plan) which City Council approved in May 2013. However, it is not just the CCCA who had issues that they were willing to take to the OMB—there are eight other appellants including two individuals, the CCOC, and five developers and/or individual property owners. On October 17, there was a City meeting to sort out procedural matters regarding the hearing.

To our surprise, we learned that the City was asking for the hearing to be in September 2014, far beyond a date that we would have anticipated. We also discovered that we had to identify the “issues” that we wanted the OMB to address. In addition, the lawyer for one of the appellants (the bus station property) asked that their appeal be dealt with separately and sooner. This request was granted.

The Seniors Committee

At the monthly meeting on October 9 at the Sun and Flowers Café, the Seniors Committee discussed the highlights of our past year which were meant for the AGM but will now appear in The BUZZ for readers and residents. We expect to continue into the new CCCA year with the same members and maybe some new ones, who may have signed up at the AGM.

We are interested in following issues in 2014 such as affordable supportive housing opportunities in Centretown for seniors, and other opportunities for an aging population in Ontario that we might tap into in Ottawa. We are also continuing to watch everything to do with safe sidewalks for seniors.

Contact us

You can keep up to date on events in Centretown by subscribing to our email newsletter (contact us at ccca@centretowncitizens.ca), following us on Twitter (twitter.com/CentretownCCA) or visiting our website (www.centretowncitizens.ca). We would be happy to hear from you!