

Federation of Citizens' Associations of Ottawa
General Meeting of October 6, 2015, Hintonburg Community Centre
Draft Minutes

Participants: Gary Sealey (Kanata Beaverbrook CA—chair); Charity Bartlett (Carlington CA); Robert Brinker (Carlington CA); Bob Brocklebank (Glebe CA); Archie Campbell (Dalhousie CA); David Clark (City View CA); Caroline Crowe (Trend Arlington CA); Alex Cullen (Belltown N.A.); Andrea D'Agostino (Queensway Terrace South CA); Nicole Des Roches (Greenspace Alliance); Roland Dorsay (Champlain Park CA); Erwin Dreesen (Greenspace Alliance); Peter Eady (Civic Hospital NA); Maureen Forsythe (Age-Friendly Ottawa, COA); Eddie Gillis (Old Ottawa East CA); Elena Kreugberg (Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society); Carol MacLeod (Glebe CA); Don McIntosh (Citizens for Safe Cycling); David McNicoll (Greenspace Alliance); Cora Murphy (Woodroffe North); Sheila Perry (Overbrook CA); Iola Price (Greenspace Alliance); Gillian Salmond (Wellington Village CA); John Stevenson (Citizens for Safe Cycling); Jim Strang (Old Ottawa East CA); Phil Sweetnam (Stittsville VA); Nadia Thorne (McKellar Park CA); Jim Young (Woodroffe North);

Guests: Diane Holmes (Councillor, retired); Jeff Leiper (Councillor, Kitchissippi Ward); Nick Stow (City of Ottawa)

Welcome

Gary Sealey welcomed all participants and guests and invited all participants to introduce themselves.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved

Minutes

The minutes of the Executive Meetings of 27 May, 08 July and 09 September were received. The minutes of the General Meeting held 09 September were approved.

Presentation of FCA Awards

Archie Campbell introduced Diane Holmes, former Councillor, City of Ottawa, noting her long and distinguished service to the community, and presented her with the 2015 Community Builder award. In accepting the award, Ms. Holmes thanked everyone and took the opportunity to encourage everyone to reflect on the current City of Ottawa budget consultations and the implications of limiting budget increases to 1.75%.

Environmental Issues for Ottawa Communities

In introducing Erwin Dreesen, Gary Sealey confirmed the decision of the FCA to pay special attention to environment issues. Dr. Dreesen talked about the Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital, and associated environmental organizations pointing to a listing of some 104 different groups. He briefly summarized key issues linked to the City's Official Plan of December 2013 and lamented the state of public engagement on these issues.

Land Conservation Policies in Ottawa

Dr. Nick Stow, ecologist and senior planner for land use and natural systems at the City of Ottawa, made a presentation on "Natural, Liveable Ottawa", with a focus on the City's Greenspace Master Plan, which is one of the four master plans that falls under the City of Ottawa's Official Plan.

There were a number of questions and issues posed to Nick and Erwin, including questions about the City's obligations under the Provincially Endangered Species Act (plight of chimney swifts); the existence of City programs to address the threat of invasive species (no programs per se); the lack of respect demonstrated by the City for the Greenspace Master Plan; the updating of flood plain designations; the issue of clay soil restrictions on the planting of trees near the foundations of houses; next steps for the Regional Growth Plan for Eastern Ontario; and the need for communities and individuals to advocate for provincial funds to address invasive species.

Bilingualism for the City of Ottawa

John Trent of Dialogue Canada (who was accompanied by two co-chairs from Dialogue Canada) made a brief presentation on the equality of both official languages in Canada's capital. He encouraged community associations to request Dialogue Canada to make presentations to community groups on the reasons to support bilingualism in Canada's capital. A couple of questions were raised about how to manage a transition to bilingualism for "points of service contact" (eg bus drivers) and whether the City of Gatineau should also become officially bilingual.

Crime Statistics Reports - not discussed

Issues Arising from the Minutes

Bob Brocklebank presented the summary of the dot-ology exercise carried out in the last meeting. The top three initiatives identified in the City's Strategic Plan were improved public engagement in planning matters; traffic, pedestrian & road safety enhancements and renewable energy strategy. Community associations were encouraged to discuss these issues with their members, as appropriate.

FCA Committee Reports

Regional Voices & Issues. Phil Sweetnam briefly presented some concerns related to the City budget (and the modest 2% increase in taxes) and separation of storm water and sewage. A note on these issues will be ATTACHED to these minutes.

Communications

– no presentation

Planning & Zoning

Sheila Perry discussed the upcoming Citizen’s Roundtable (Councillor Leiper taking the lead on this) to focus on civic engagement; how to support partnerships such as the partnership with Citizens’ Academy; and the focus on planning at the next FCA meeting. It was noted that City of Ottawa has a new Planning & Development Newsletter and participants were encouraged to subscribe to this.

The next meeting will be held on 2nd November 2015 at the Manotick Legion.

Open Mike

Don Stewart noted that there was a free public talk on “Erratic Weather, Health Threats, Agricultural Plagues – Climate Disruption and its impact on the world and on us” by Paul Beckwith, Dept. of Geography, U of Ottawa on 7th October, 7pm, at the Churchill Seniors Centre. This is sponsored by the Westboro Beach Community Association.

Adjournment (9.35pm)