

Sandy Hill Northwest Neighbourhood Improvement Group (SHNNIG)

Minutes

Wednesday, June 13th, 2012 (4:30-6:00pm)

Present: Councillor Mathieu Fleury (Ward 12, Rideau-Vanier), Jim Hubay (200 Rideau Condominium Board), Rev. Laurie McKnight-Walker (St. Paul's Eastern United Church), Liz Kessler (Student Federation of the University of Ottawa), Dave Ro (St. Joe's Supper Table), Andrew Hendricks (Ottawa Public Health), Rev. Mark Whittall (St. Alban's Anglican Church), Andrew Cheam (Centre 454), Rebecca Volk (Centre 454), Geri Blinick (Sandy Hill Community Health Centre), François Bregha (Action Sandy Hill), Tania McCumber (By-law and Regulatory Services), Inspector Uday Jaswal (Ottawa Police Services), Nathaniel Mullin (Councillor's Office)

1. Welcome and introductions

Councillor Fleury welcomes all members present, and thanks St. Joseph's Church for hosting the meeting.

2. Review of the agenda

Councillor Fleury adds to the agenda a discussion on Project "Dandelion" and Project "Firecracker". He also requests the deferral of item #3 to the next meeting. Jim Hubay asks to speak to initiatives at 200 Rideau Street.

The group agrees to the agenda as modified.

3. Initiatives at 200 Rideau Street

Jim introduces initiatives that will be undertaken by the residents of 200 Rideau Street. The residents will be raising funds for the Ottawa Mission and participating in future Cleaning the Capital events.

4. Projects "Dandelion" and "Firecracker"

Insp. Jaswal provides an update on Project "Dandelion," which was an enforcement blitz in the downtown core that focused mainly on nuisance issues such as open liquor, public intoxication, drug trafficking, etc. He also speaks about Project "Firecracker," which was lead by the Ottawa Police's Street Crime Unit. During the course of this project, 108 people were arrested for various street-level drug trade offences. This work is proactive and helps to displace problems and prevent future activities.

5. Stakeholder updates

- Reverend McKnight-Walker speaks of the increased vandalism to the church's property over the past few weeks, as well as some incidents of theft. She also identifies some issues relating to individuals loitering in the area, particularly on the steps of the church. Councillor Fleury highlights the importance of reporting these incidents to Ottawa Police so that they may be documented (*for any life threatening emergency or crime in progress call 911, for any other police emergencies dial 613-230-6211; for any other city-related issues call 311*). It is also suggested that some of the local parishes could get together to do a basic training session on how to deal with problematic situations involving vulnerable individuals.
- Liz Kessler of the SFUO speaks about issues as they relate to students. She highlights major challenges in landlord-tenant relations, where some problematic property owners are taking advantage of student tenants. Liz also speaks about the upcoming Welcome Week for the 2012-2013 school year, which will take place in the first week of September.
- Dave Ro indicates that numbers of clients is on the rise at the supper table; they are mostly all new faces. It is said that this may be due to the high migration rate in the homeless community. St. Joe's Supper Table will also be working on opening an ice cream stand as a social enterprise; this would help to raise funds for their activities.
- Andrew Hendricks speaks about how OPH is tracking the community impacts arising from changes to regulations for Oxycontin and reporting this to the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care. OPH is also creating tools for communities to help deal with the impacts of these changes. The drug referred to on the street as "Bath Salts" is an emerging issue, and is being closely monitored.
- Rev. Mark Whittall updates the group on St. Alban's Church's activities. He says that the congregation has grown considerably over its first year of operation. Renovations are currently taking place to accommodate the arrival of Centre 454; they should be complete by late August. There will be community space in the building, which will eventually be available for community use. All exterior garden space will be fenced off, and the garden will be complete before Centre 454's move.
- Andrew Cheam of Centre 454 indicated that the move of the centre would occur sometime in August, but that the timeline was not firm due to delays in the repair work inside the Church. Rebecca Volk speaks of the centre's management board and their commitment to safety and security as well as addressing community concerns. Discussions have been held between the centre and the Ottawa Mission on how they will coordinate the community walkabouts. It is also requested that the community walkabouts be included as an agenda item at the next meeting.
- Geri Blinick reports that the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre's Annual General Meeting will be on June 28th at 5:30pm in the Sandy Hill Community Centre (250 Somerset Street East).
- François Bregha highlights some of the recent initiatives being undertaken by Action Sandy Hill. Among many things, ASH is working on the creation of a Town and Gown

Committee for Sandy Hill, which will bring together the University, the community and the City to talk about tools which can be used to improve the quality of life in the neighbourhood.

- Tania McCumber of By-law and Regulatory Services gave an update on activity in the area. Since students have mostly left for the summer, complaints are down, but graffiti complaints are up at the moment. There are now extended hours on weekends (Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays) until 3:30am (instead of 2:00am). Jim Hubay indicates that there are still ongoing issues with property standards at the Metro store on Rideau Street.
- Councillor Fleury speaks of some of the challenges in Sandy Hill Northwest. He updates the group on the amendments to the Noise By-law. The changes, approved on June 13th at City Council, put more of an onus on tenants to control their guests when they are having parties and get-togethers; they are now responsible for the noise of their guests under the amended by-law. Councillor Fleury also indicates that if there are issues which arise between meetings of the SHNIG, members may contact his office to discuss them at any time.

6. Other

Members are encouraged to bring forward items for the next meeting's agenda.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40pm.

8. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday October 3rd at 5pm in St. Alban's Church/Centre 454.