

Alexandra Park Community Visioning Committee
January 22, 2009
Alexandra Park Community Centre (APCC)
7:00-8:30pm

Present: Rebecca Bassey (City of Toronto), Chris Bolton (Trustee TDSB), Randy (CHFT), Marwa Eldardiry (AP resident), Donna Harrow (APRA/APCC), Sandra González (TCHC), Effie Henry (AP resident), Ange Kinnear (EA-Councillor Vaughan), Colleen Lavallée (APRA/ APCC), Fathi Sheikh-Hassan (Atkinson Co-op), Winston Tinglin (CSPCT)

Regrets: Lynda Brunette (AP resident), Alina Chatterjee (TCHC), Evelyn Murialdo (TCHC), Waseem Tahir (Atkinson Co-op), John Campey (CSPCT), Tam Goossen (CSPCT), Tom Clement (CHFT)

Agenda was set with the following items:

- **Debriefing December's Community Visioning Event**
- **Distribution of hardcopy of the survey findings**
- **Community Beautification and Gardening**
- **African Heritage Month**
- **Time and dates of future VC meetings**

1. Debriefing December's Community Visioning Event

- Overall, people felt that the event went well. Winston mentioned that it was well organized, well attended and that participants were engaged.
- Effie echoed similar comments and added that at the beginning of the meeting she had difficulty in hearing while the simultaneous interpretation was taking place. After she understood what was going on and moved to a different spot and was able to hear better.
- In terms of interpretation, Rebecca suggested that there be specific tables with interpretation happening, that way people who join the meeting a little later would have an easier time in finding their interpreter.
- Donna felt that the residents did an excellent job in facilitating (Colleen and Marwa).
- Fathi mentioned that it was a good to see that several community members were represented, such as youth, children and seniors.
- Ange stated that Councillor Vaughan was pleased with the turnout and the engagement level, and enjoyed interacting with the children's table the most.
- Sandra opened the discussion of potential next steps. She shared the idea of starting to form working groups with residents and other stakeholders in order to develop action plans for each of the main themes.

- Donna mentioned that we could start by inviting residents who were part of the community visioning day, members agreed.
- Ange stated that we need to revisit who is at the Visioning Committee (VC) and how we communicate back the work of the VC to the broader community.
- Sandra reminded the committee that the discussion about the VCs purpose and composition had come up last year as well. The purpose of it was to help guide the data collection process. Now that the data collection is over there is a need to rethink its purpose and composition. She suggested that this be put on the agenda for next month's meeting.

Discussion of youth participation at the event and future participation

- Donna highlighted that whatever we do next, we need to rethink and see how we could improve youth participation, perhaps doing an evening event.
- Rebecca mentioned that it would be good to work with some of the other youth frontline workers (from Scadding etc). Perhaps in the future a youth focused event could be organized, with the youth workers in attendance as well. She also stated that another way to engage youth could be through creating a facegroup site or a youth blog.
- Sandra agreed with the above sentiments. She also shared that William (Youth Engagement Coordinator for TCHC) will be touching base with youth by going to where they already; that is, he will be dropping by some of the programmes that youth attend at the nearby by centres. Similar to the community visioning event, he will solicit additional information in terms of next steps.
- In terms of youth engagement, Randy mentioned that he plans to look into issues of governance and civics. This could encourage youth to become involved in co-op elections and other elections.
- Fathi mentioned it would be a good idea to engage the "men of honour group."
- It was agreed that additional ways to engage youth need to be thought of and used in the revitalization process.

Discussion about the dissemination of information from the report findings and the community event

- Ange mentioned that it would be good to explore having the report and the information from the meeting put up on the web, that way further information on next steps could be solicited (people can add their thoughts).
- Winston mentioned that information from the meeting and the report were quite dense, we would need to look at ways to reformat it to make it more user friendly.

Other meetings that have happened since the community event

- Ange mentioned that Adam convened a meeting with different stakeholders- there were representatives from different City divisions, Co-op board representatives and residents. A key piece discussed at the meeting was the fact that OCAD wants to join the discussion as there is an interest to create student housing in the area. Ange informed that each stakeholder was to start developing a “wish list”, similar to what the community is doing. There is the possibility that a Community Development Corporation may be created to manage the process.
- Sandra mentioned that Derek Ballantyne attended that meeting. She also said that TCHC has formally announced that it is committed to the revitalization of Alexandra Park as well a few additional communities.
- Chris Bolton took the opportunity to share that he had the opportunity to meet with TCHC staff. The meeting was primarily to discuss geothermal energy.

ACTION ITEMS

- The following agenda item will be added for the next meeting: Future and composition of Visioning Committee.
- Ange Kinnear to send minutes of the stakeholder meeting.
- Committee will explore ways in which accessing information can be made easier (website etc), as well as outreaching to youth.

2. Distribution of hard copy of the report

- Nav from the CSPCT had made know that there are several hard copies of the report.
- Randy kindly volunteered that some of them could be distributed along with the co-op newsletter, or at least to have an insert saying that copies are at the office. Hard copies will be given to the co-op office as well as to the community centre.

3. Community Beautification and Gardening

- Sandra informed that in late November of 2008 the City of Toronto’s Office of Partnerships approached TCHC in order to find out about community engagement initiatives taking place in Alexandra Park.
- A presentation was made to staff from the Toronto Community Foundation and of the City of Toronto.
- Project partners were mostly interested in green initiatives out of which a proposal was produced based on information that had been gathered in the community.
- Toronto Community Foundation approved funding for \$43,000 to implement an initiative to make outdoor public spaces more people

friendly with the creation of community gardens, outdoor furniture and public art.

- Committee members were happy to hear of the news. More details to follow.

4. African Heritage/ Black History Month

- Donna shared with the group that the community centre is planning to have an event at the end of February (28th of February/ 1st of March) to wrap up Black History Month. The idea is to have a Caribbean Carnival to educate people about the meaning of Carnival, the link to the Caribbean islands and slavery, as well as linking it to the Underground Railway. The plan is to have a workshops as well as a dance with a DJ in the evening.
- Randy mentioned that CHFT is also planning an event. Details to follow.

5. Time and dates of future VC meetings

- Options were discussed in terms of changing the dates and time of the Visioning Committee meetings.
- Committee decided to keep the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7PM at the APCC.

NEXT MEETING: Feb. 18th at 7:00 PM at the APCC.

All VC meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month