

## Sibelius Square Working Group meeting

Monday April 10, 2006

Present:

| <b>Name</b>       | <b>Official committee standing</b>          |
|-------------------|---|
| Ginny Brett       | Share the Square                            |
| Mike Coleman      | Annex Dog Owners, Convenor                  |
| Stephen Fisher    |   |
| Fred Freedman     | Rink  |
| Tom Friedland     | Share the Square                            |
| Nena Hardie       | Immediate neighbours                        |
| Caroline Harvey   | Community gardens                           |
| Terri Hodges      | Treasurer                                   |
| Patrick Kennedy   | <b>Chair</b>                                |
| Paul Martel       | Chair, ARA Parks & Trees                    |
| Fiona McHugh      |   |
| Gillian Morton    | Annex Dog Owners                            |
| Premika Ratnam    |   |
| Kristina Reinders | Design                                      |
| Sarah Scott       | Community gardens, Secretary                |
| Diane Silver      | Special Assistant to Councillor Silva       |
| Sandy Straw       | Manager, Toronto & East York District Parks |
| Yvonne Yamaoka    |   |
|                   |   |

The meeting began at 7:10 pm.

1. Welcome from the Chair, all present introduced themselves. Sandy Straw outlined structure of Parks, Forestry & Recreation division of City of Toronto. She is Manager of the Toronto & East York District, responsible to the Paul Ronan (Director, Parks) and Brenda Librecz (General Manager, Parks, Forestry & Recreation).
2. Organizational issues

**Motion** (moved by Fred Freedman, seconded by Mike Coleman): that quorum for meetings of the Sibelius Square Working Group be defined as 60% of those with official standing, and that a motion require the approval of two-thirds of those present in order to be carried.

Passed.

**Motion** (Patrick Kennedy/Terri Hodges): that the regular meeting date of the SSWG be the first Wednesday of each month, with additional meetings as necessary. Passed.

There was general agreement that the objective of discussion at meetings should be to reach consensus, with the acknowledgment that this will not always be possible, and that the Chair should have discretion to limit debate and either call for a vote or defer the matter to a subsequent meeting. Various alternative meeting venues were discussed.

### 3. Appointments

Terri Hodges agreed to serve as Treasurer. Previous appointments continue: Patrick Kennedy, Chair; Mike Coleman, Convenor; Sarah Scott, Secretary.

### 4. Community process

Sandy Straw outlined her role as a facilitator of the community process, in which she will provide information on city procedures, legal issues and technical support from other staff as necessary. Paul Martel described the process by which a community working group defines the objectives of the project, prepares a design brief and a budget, possibly for phased implementation, and seeks feedback from the community at each stage. Community meetings are held under the auspices of the Councillor's office, and are advertised by means of flyers delivered in the catchment area. He described this process as a 'joint initiative between City, working group and Councillor.'

Sandy Straw agreed, and advised that different parts of a plan may need different treatment: some items may be approved by Parks and the community and implemented immediately, while others may need to form part of future Parks budgets, and others may require approval from the Community Council. Section 37 funds are not the only possible source of funding, and various types of fundraising were briefly discussed.

### 5. Dogs off-leash

The Dogs in Parks policy, which Sandy Straw is developing, is being finalized, and will be available to the public once Parks managers have approved it. It will be presented as a deputation item to the City Committee for Economic Development and Parks at their meeting on May 8, 2006, and will be available on the City website two weeks prior to the meeting. *[At time of writing this meeting had been cancelled and replaced by a special meeting on May 4.]*

## 6. Communication with the community

Various means of informing the community about Sibelius Square issues and events were discussed, including an independent website, and flyers either posted around the neighbourhood or dropped to households, by Canada Post or volunteers. Gillian and Premika will work together to coordinate community communications. Patrick will continue to respond to email inquiries, with reference as needed to sub-committee reps and the working group.

Funding for communication is not available at present from Councillor Silva's office. A communication fund has been established, in care of Terri Hodges, 161 Walmer Road, to which each member of the working group is invited to contribute \$25.

There was general consensus that, while members of sub-committees may freely communicate with the media, they must make it clear that they are not speaking for the SSWG.

## 7. Immediate action to restore turf

There was debate of the merit of investing in long-term solutions in advance of any design decisions, and discussion of how to ensure access to park areas by various user groups if the western playing field is fenced off for two months for turf restoration.

Sandy Straw will have city turf management experts, together with Mark Emslie, view the park and recommend what can be done immediately, at city expense, to restore the turf in the western field on an interim basis. She commented that changes to irrigation that were outside the category of repair would incur a cost. She did commit to providing sprinkler connections for the city hoses that are used for the rink.

**Resolution:** that the SSWG will work with the City to reach the best no-cost decision to achieve green grass on the western playing field; Fred Freedman and Caroline Harvey will work with the City plumbers and turf experts.

It was generally felt that in the reduced park area left while the playing field is fenced, a physical separation of off-leash dogs from other users would be the most satisfactory solution for all groups, although an area used intensively by dogs would suffer turf damage.

**Motion** (Tom Friedland/Sarah Scott): that during the next two months, while the western field is being re-seeded and is fenced off, we make the

experiment of fencing in the eastern quadrant of the park, and, although by-laws technically will not allow dog off-leash at some of these hours, that we allow dogs off-leash within the fenced-in eastern quadrant between 7:30 am and 10:30 pm each day. Passed.

8. Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 3, 2006, location TBA.