

# Minutes of the SSWG Meeting of March 28, 2007

In attendance: Gillian, Fred, Patrick (chair), Mike, Julie, David.

While no formal decisions were made at this meeting, those in attendance heard updates from city hall, and worked with the Community Meeting Committee to refine the plans.

Next SSWG Meeting: April 18.

## Updates:

1. POSSIBLE MATERIALS for TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE. Sandy has indicated (by telephone) that Parks would cover the cost of what she called "farm fencing." This design would involve a welded-wire grid affixed to metal T-bars driven into the ground. Those in attendance requested further details (this request has been forwarded to Sandy).
2. SELECTION OF A DESIGN CONSULTANT. Patrick related his conversations with Adam Vaughan and Chris Ronson. Adam reports that he and Parks Design have met several times with Brenda Librecz, who has indicated her support for a pilot project at Sibelius Square which would see greater community involvement in the selection of a design consultant. This would be a departure from the usual selection process with City parks. Chris has indicated that he is preparing a proposal that he could not discuss until further meetings with Purchasing.

## Revised Community Meeting Plan

1. Date of community meeting: May 15.
  - a. attendance may be as high as 250
  - b. break out 12 people each would be ideal.....10-15 rooms required?
  - c. Possible Venues
    - i. RSGC
    - ii. Walmer Rd Baptist Church
    - iii. JCC
  - d. We should budget a small honorarium for a few older children to supervise a video screening (for childcare).
2. Meeting Goals
  - a. Explain how community feedback will be used, how community members can become involved, and a project timeline;

- b. Share information and analysis of Square issues with the community ;
- c. Receive ideas and feedback from the community on Square issues;
- d. Get specific direction from the community on the proposal to create a trial enclosure for dogs off-leash through September 30.
  - i. David asked how we would assess the trial in September.
  - ii. Gillian and Ginny have offered to generate some assessment ideas; Ginny mentioned a dog-run assessment program in NYC.
    - 1. smell
    - 2. feces
    - 3. other ...
  - iii. \*\*We need more details on proposed fencing

### 3. Communications

- a. Communications Goals:
  - i. What, Where, When.
  - ii. Convey that this is an open process – no decisions have been made.
  - iii. Education – directing residents to background information before they come to the meeting.
- b. Channels
  - i. Flyer:. The text for the flyer should be discussed and circulated within the WG. Julie Markle will design a flyer for distribution by mail through the councillor's office and Patrick will coordinate with the councillor's office.
    - 1. Telephone poles
    - 2. Mailing through councillor's office
  - ii. SSWG Email list
  - iii. SSWG website notice
  - iv. ARA website notice
  - v. Notice in community newspapers.
  - vi. Informal information session for the community, held by SSWG in Sibelius Square on April 28, 4:00-5:00 PM

### 4. Planning Principles for the Meeting

- i. Q&A/Input from the community – the SSWG would like to encourage community input, giving equal time to all.
  - 1. All will be encouraged to speak and share ideas in the small group sessions; the convenor of each group will share a summary with the larger group;
  - 2. Questions and feedback will be received by the SSWG via website and email before and after the meeting;
  - 3. SSWG members will circulate during the meeting, to gather feedback;

4. Any obvious omissions should be clarified in the closing remarks;
  5. Time does not allow for an open mike in the larger (opening and closing) sessions of this community meeting.
- ii. Adam's Role
    1. Adam to confirm that, going into the community meeting, he does not have a bias towards any of the three long-term solutions to the dogs off leash conflict.
    2. At the end of the meeting, Adam will be asked to make a reading on whether the community supports a trial enclosure;
    3. At this meeting, neither Adam nor anyone else need make a final selection among the 3 alternatives solutions.
  - iii. The Role of City Staff
5. Meeting Structure - 2 ½ hours in total
    - a. Councillor Vaughan will chair – Opening Remarks (10 minutes), including an introduction of:
      - i. city staff
      - ii. the WG
    - b. Patrick: Opening presentation on the ground covered to date by the WG, and a brief summary of our analysis of the off-leash options. (20 minutes)
    - c. Meeting break-out into small groups to address 3 sets of issues. (20 min. each minutes)
 

Gillian will manage the mechanics of this process with the group, including:

      1. explaining how it works at the beginning; and
      2. calling on each facilitator to summarize discussion at the end.
    - d. Wrap-Up where discussions are summarized by the break-out session facilitators. (45 minutes)
    - e. Adam to close the meeting, and provide direction on the temporary enclosure based on the community input in the meeting.
  6. 3 SESSIONS. Key objectives & questions for feedback in each session. (Goal: 3 main questions per session).
    - a. **Play area & playing field**

*Objectives*

      - i. Durable and attractive turf
      - ii. Encourage active recreational use of field year round, including a skating rink.
      - iii. [play area objective?]

*Questions – waiting for survey results before finalising questions*

- i. Safety: enclose play area(s)? or create more enclosure of the Square on its perimeter?
- ii. Innovative or traditional play structures?
- iii. We are told that a field house is essential for a community rink (hose storage), and may have other uses for community events; however some find it unattractive. Should it remain? How can it be better integrated it into the design of the square?
- iv. The turf will be greener and healthier with irrigation. Should we incur the environmental cost of an irrigation system?

**b. The dogs off leash question**

*Objectives*

- i. Decide whether to have off leash dog play in Sibelius Square, and if so, how?

*Questions*

- i. We have been told that no permanent changes can be made to the by-law that allows dogs off leash in the square until after a new Dogs Bylaw is finalized later this year. In this context, the Sibelius Square Working Group recommends a temporary dog enclosure (till September 30) in much of the southern quadrant of the square. The SSWG will work with the City to find an enclosure which is safe, somewhat attractive, and of no cost to the community. ADO has taken on the responsibility of clean-ups. This trial would:
  1. allow the western playing field to be used by adults and children at all times during the spring and summer of 2007;
  2. provide a safer area and extended hours for dogowners to exercise their pets; and
  3. allow us to test the idea of a permanent, fully-designed “soft” enclosure.

***Do you support this recommendation for a trial enclosure with a definite end date? If not, what arrangements would you like to see this summer?***

- ii. In the longer term, what are the pros and cons of each of the three off-leash regimes described?

**c. Other Design Objectives**

*Objectives*

- i. Excellence in Design/Beautiful and Usable
- ii. A central gathering space for people
- iii. Recruiting community gardeners (?)

### *Questions*

- i. If we complete the perimeter sidewalk on the west, should we restore Brunswick to its original narrower width (as it is north and south of Sibelius), or pave a strip of grass? (The city has indicated that this work could be funded through a separate sidewalk fund.)
  - ii. Should we expand the square northwards, making Bernard a narrower laneway without parking?
  - iii. Do you think the park requires a renovation or a redesign? What do you like about the park? What do you dislike about the park?
  
7. (This topic was deferred by those present on March 28 until the next WG meeting.) Role of working group members in the meeting. Gillian has outlined three possibilities. We should discuss whether we can select a common approach:
  - a. Advocates for a position
  - b. A neutral supporting role; informational only (similar to the role of a chair in a group)
  - c. As individuals, and not representing the working group