High Park Community Advisory Council
Box 108, 95 Lavinia Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
M6S 3H9

HPCAC COUNCIL MEETING Minutes

Wednesday 6:30 pm

April 28th, 2010

The regular HPCAC Council Meeting was held at the Howard Park Tennis Club.

Present were:

Robin Sorys	Member-at-large, Chair
John Cleary	Member-at-large, co-chair K9 committee
Diane Buckell	Member-at-Large
Sharon Lovett	Co-chair, Natural Environment Committee
Arthur Beauregard	City of Toronto
Barrie Thomson	Treasurer
Rastia'ta'non:ha (David Redwolf)	Taiaiako'n Historical Preservation Society
Jerry Hodge	Member-at-large, Chair Building, infrastructure and safety committee
Kim Beemer	Member-at-large, Vice-chair
Bernard Sanders	Member-at-large
Karyn Morris	Member-at-large
Paul Wehrle	Member-at-large
Mark Ellwood	Walking Tour Coordinator
Helen Sousa	General Supervisor
Jorge Ture	Park Supervisor
Peter MacAloney	Toronto High Park FC
Lyn Green	Allotment Gardens

Regrets from:

Cheryl Hart	Colborne Lodge
Gloria Worth	Park Watch
Jane Schmidt	Volunteer Stewardship Program
Karen Yukich	Co-chair, Natural Environment Committee

Robin Sorys took the chair at 6:37 pm

1. Introductions/Adoption of Agenda

We went through a round of introductions of all those present. Helen introduce Jorge Ture the new Park Supervisor. Helen is moving to a new role with the city as General Supervisor still responsible for the park.

2. Declarations of conflict of interest

None

3. Minutes of the previous meeting (February 24th, 2010, and March 24, 2010)

There was a discussion of the dissemination of the meeting minutes. The minutes were posted on the website, but some members expressed frustration that they did not receive minutes emailed to them. There was a discussion of the minute protocol as well as an updated master list of email addresses of all interested parties.

The minute review protocol will be discussed at the executive meeting on May 5. Sharon Lovett will forward a master list of email addresses to the HPCAC secretary.

Motion:

Bernard Sanders / John Cleary

"Postpone approval of the minutes for Feb 24th and March 24th until the May HPCAC meeting."

Motion carried

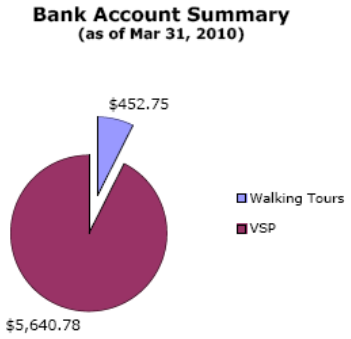
4. Treasurer'S Report

Barrie Thomson presented the following treasurer's report.

Treasurer's Report

as of April 28, 2010

- Financial Update
  - Walking Tour: $ 452.75
  - VSP: $ 5,640.78
  - Balance: **$ 6,093.53**
- Cleared Transactions
  - *Mail Box Rental (6 month)* *<$ 47.88>*
  - *Children's Events* *<$ 1,400.00>*
  - *VSP Misc Funds* *<$ 293.00>*
- Pending Transactions
  - *None*
- VSP Request - Arthur
  - *Meetings, Tallgrass, Carolinian*



Arthur updated the council on a decision by the city. The city is not comfortable with the volunteers managing the funds raised and redirecting them to the city as has been previously done. Effective immediately, the plant sale will now be operated by the Greenhouse and Urban Forestry and the VSP volunteers will help. All monies will be collected by volunteers and turned over to a city representative. The city will disperse the proceeds with the state goal being to continue to support the VSP activities and natural environment initiatives. Funds from last year's plant sale are to be discussed between the city and the executive. The plant sale this year will be May 9th.

Motion:

Karen Morris / Jerry Hodge

"Issue a cheque for $720 to the VSP for the next 2 months.."

Motion carried

5. Business arising from the minutes

5.1. Extended license free fishing — Sam Zemicael

Helen and her replacement Jorge are still trying to connect with Sam to discuss the proposal.

5.2. Update from city — Arthur Beauregard

Arthur has provided his report to the city with his analysis of the HPCAC. Some members expressed disappointment at not having had direct input into the report.

<u>Election and AGM</u>

Kevin Bowser asks the HPCAC for all of the by-law and election items that the council are uncomfortable with or over which there is confusion. The city will provide an interpretation so that an election can be held. HPCAC agrees to provide the list within 2 weeks, and an ad hoc committee will meet with the city

The council would like matters of structure to be addressed before the next election. Arthur will take the request to the city.

<u>Liability Issues</u>

The city will start to work more closely with volunteers. Health and safety training will be offered to all volunteers. VSP will be the first group, and will get training at the end of May.

5.3. Update on off - leash working group — Helen Sousa

The consultant has presented a concept design. This design will now be presented for discussion with the working group. There will be $500,000 investment for improvements to the off-leash area.

Additionally, Helen provided updates on trail improvements. $300,000 will be spent for the trail improvements. A tender was awarded for 2 trails: a) the north-south trail, and b) the stairs to Spring road.

Three other projects that were originally considered were excluded: a) discovery walk trail, b) the stone steps from Spring Road to Parkside and c) the Bloor Street steps.

However, Bloor Street resurfacing will be done starting in June and will include converting the Bloor Street steps to a ramp.

The new stairs will be expanded metal steps, and some members expressed concern that dogs are afraid of this type of step and generally don't want to use them. This means that people may go around the steps creating an unwanted trail in the adjacent area. Helen will review what can be done.

6. New Business

6.1. Grenadier Group

There were several questions about the Grenadier restaurant:

There was a question about some sheds built in the parking lot – Helen confirmed that these were approved.

There is a deck being built just north of the main restaurant in the space where the organic market used to be. There was concern about the footings and the impact on the mature trees. Helen confirmed that the deck is being built within the lease area and so is permissible. No new footings have been placed.

The rule that no outside food may be consumed on the deck is a condition that is allowed under the terms of their lease.

The Business Services Group at the City negotiated the Grenadier lease. Helen will give Jerry the contact details so that Jerry can review the lease terms.

6.2. Illegal Bike Ramps

There was a discussion about illegal bike ramps erected on Snake mound, at the south of the park. These ramps are not legal and were removed by volunteers from the Taiaiako'n Historical Preservation Society last year, but they have been rebuilt.

Police have been contacted and they said they will patrol the area and issue fines if necessary.

There was a discussion on whether it would be useful to erect signs saying that it was not an approved biking area. Helen will review, but said that often signs are just taken down or ignored.

7. Reports/Updates

7.1. High Park Supervisor - Helen Sousa

The tender process to replace the wiring in lights has started.

7.2. Colborne Lodge - Cheryl Hart

Cheryl sends regrets and was unable to attend.

7.3. Built Environment & Safety - Jerry Hodge

Preliminary Trail Improvement Data Collection

Update from March 12, 2010 meeting with Helen Sousa - BIS items: 8:00 AM: Supervisors office.

Item: **Trails:** to organize a meeting with the following in late April to discuss a strategy to evaluate trail upgrading requirements:

Kara Webster, Jennifer Gibb and/or designate, (Helen Sousa), Jorge Ture, Jerry Hodge, Karen Yukich, Sharon Love, John Cleary, Cheryl Hart and/or Robin Salt, Nature Centre staff person to be decided, Jennifer Kawalski, and Robin Sorys.

At the meeting a strategy of investigation will be discussed and launched to permit any of the above persons to walk existing trails in the park and recommend any or all of the following to Forestry and the Park supervisor:

A) Trail name

B) Trail value – i.e. recommend to remain open or to close or to move.

C) Trail base structure type – in very good, good, or deteriorated condition.

D) Trail length and terrain it traverses

E) Particular issues with this trail i.e. width, historical value, grade, current usage, safety.

F) Value of this trail e.g. nature interpretation, hiking, walking, cycling, other

G) Suggestions for trail improvement on this trail

Some of the above members have been asked to walk a certain group of trails for the purposes above and make a report. A reporting form and GPS or other method of designation can pinpoint the trail under consideration. The maps Jennifer K. has provided form the base for the study and should be made available for designated areas in an enlarged form.

7.4. Natural Environment - Sharon Lovett

Sandy Smith an Entomologist will be doing research in the park on dog strangling vine looking for control options.

VSP was/is holding the following sessions:

28-March: transplanting

11-April: Urban Forestry talk

25-April: Boulevard bed clean-up

5-May: Plant Sale Preparation group meeting at the Greenhouse

9-May: Native Plant Sale at the Greenhouse.

23-May: Garlic mustard control session.

The High Park Nature website is still under development, but is not ready yet. No release date was given.

The council would like to note that Dagmar Baur, a devoted park volunteer for many years, died on Saturday.

7.5. K9 Committee - Tammy Reid/John Cleary

1) Mini-Spring Cleanup – April 24th

We had excellent weather for our mini-cleanup on Saturday April 24th. The date was chosen to coincide with Earth day activities along with other City-wide cleanup events. The turnout was very good for the cleanup portion. A small group of regular volunteers did some stewardship work focused on signs and fences. Code of conduct signs were added to the main entrance and the two nature trail heads, along with “no biking allowed” signs throughout the trail system. Fencing repair focused mainly on the trail behind the allotment garden as tree falls and vandalism have resulted in a lot of the fences being pulled down.

2) Trucks on trails and bikes on Spring road

City crews are still driving down the nature trails in their trucks for garbage pickup causing considerable damage to the trails and endangering park users. There are no garbage located along the trails that are not easily accessible from paved roads. The spring weather has also increased the speedy traffic of bikes on Spring road, especially on the Northern section at the bottom of the hill. There is currently an excellent "children and dog at play sign" at one location on Spring road and the committee was hoping that additional signs could be placed at the curve at the bottom of the hill as well as further up the hill to signal cyclists that caution is required.

3) Posts for signs at trail heads

The posts holding signs for the northern entrance to the off-leash Nature trail and the entrance below the allotment gardens could use replacing. Both posts show signs of deterioration and are currently inadequate in placement to hang signs. The lack of gates at both location means that the posts/signs are the only indication of the beginning of off-leash area.

7.6. HPI – Jerry Hodge

Report: interim HPCAC rep on April 14th HPI meeting

Items of interest include:

1. High Park Nature Centre staff presentation

The Nature Centre staff presented an itemized account of the

future programs that have been booked for the spring and summer.

Expected earnings from all program for the remainder of the year

totalled $43,500 with most programs already full.

With Jon Hayes as new staff two new programs will be offered: An after-school program called "Tuesday in the Pond" will cater to 8-12 year-olds at Grenadier Pond, and a Lecture Series centring on Nature Awareness for adults. Speakers for three evening lectures have been confirmed: Coyotes, Bees and Birds.

2. Consultation with Arthur Beauregard

Arthur has particular expertise in High Park and working on Volunteer Boards that liaise with the City. He is also the Executive Director of the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation. Arthur's insights into Board operations from other venues were particularly important. A wide-ranging discussion ensued. HPI sits close to the centre of the pack when it comes to raising money as a Charity (about 60%) and raising money from programs (about 40%). Five distinct needs from new Board members were discussed at some length. They included marketing, fundraising, membership, governance issues and financial connections. Issues raised will be vetted at the May meeting. Another interesting thread was the role of Parks in environmental education and what segment of the City staff is best suited to manage core programs in that area. A Service Plan for Parks and Recreation is currently being discussed and could include environmental program support.

3. Working Arrangements

Discussions regarding the working arrangements of the Board were discussed. Arthur's input and a general consensus suggested a "working" Board where each Board member has a committee attached in their area of expertise. Each Board Director and the committee are expected to "work" on issues between meetings and bring results to the Board meeting through the Director. Voting procedures were discussed.

4. Directorships and Memberships

The group discussed methods for finding new Directors and how to take them through a vetting process. Angie had provided a model for that work and the topic will be discussed at the next meeting.

Memberships were discussed and some initiatives included brochures at the Open House on April 25th to capture some of the parents that send their children to programs. The web site can be used for promotions. Katie and Sarah have developed a Face Book and Twitter Nature Centre site that is already getting a lot of attention. John is working on the update of the Friends of High Park pamphlet to be ready for April 25th.

5. The Welcome Centre

Jerry introduced a number of initiatives to foster Nature Appreciation for the Welcome Centre this summer.

They include brochures for Self-Guided Tours of Hillside Gardens, Grenadier Park South. Grenadier Park North, Colborne Lodge, High Park Savannah, Spring Creek and the Settling Ponds, and the Zoo.

A Hidden Park Game will be publicized for the iPhone,

The Trackless Train will be solicited for tours rather than rides.

Bagged activities will be developed for kids on the Patio.

Place "maps" will be made up for the Patio tables

And the Park Activities Board will be operating again.

Since many visitors are here from other places the available set of Brochures will be broadened.

There are 3 nature awareness talks planned: (see attached flyer).

Nature Awareness Lecture Series

This spring, learn about current environmental issues in your neighbourhood. This brand new lecture series offered by High Park Nature Centre invites experts from local nature organizations to teach us about the nature in our city.

Thursday, April 29
Coyotes and Urban Wildlife
Toronto Wildlife Centre
Join Nathalie Karvonen to learn more about the wildlife that lives in the city and the threats it faces. A special emphasis will be given to coyotes.

Thursday, May 20
Pollinators in the City
Pollination Canada
Maria Kasstan will be teaching us about the important jobs that pollinators do in our city. Discover some of the native plants you can grow to help pollinators.

Thursday, June 17
Birds & Buildings
FLAP
(Fatal Light Awareness Program)
Michael Mesure will be presenting on the problems migrant birds face as they travel through our city. Learn what actions you can take to make Toronto a safer place for migrating birds.

Location:
High Park Nature Centre
430 Parkside Drive
(Parkside Drive & Indian Valley Crescent)

Time: 7-8 PM followed by Q&A

Ages: For audiences 10+

Fee: Suggested donation to support presenting organizations

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8. Other Business

No other business.

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Next Meeting - The next meeting will be held on May 26, 2010 at the Howard Park Tennis Club at 6:30 pm.