

Downtown Residents Association Meeting Minutes

February 17th, 2015 at 1501 Douglas Street

Minutes Recorded by: Don Elliott, Board Member

Present: Ruth Annis, Doug Boyd, Kelly Chirhart, Don Elliott, Robert Florida, Nicholas Harrington, Erika Luebbe, Kaela Schramm, Ian Sutherland

Regrets: Cathy Brankston, Eric Ney, Karen Gallagher

1. Council Report

- a. Councillor Thornton-Joe introduced herself to the board and provided a brief background of her involvement in the downtown. She further identified that two important issues, in her view, relate to homelessness and street noise.
- b. There was a question about the role of a neighbourhood liaison. In response, it was stated that different neighbourhoods have very different ideas about what the role could/should look like. It is important to note that neighbourhood concerns are measured and weighed alongside other considerations.
- c. What can be done about homelessness and people camping on private property? – This is a difficult problem to solve and it continues to grow. Potential to raise the issue of fire safety with people sleeping in doorways/ fire exits.
- d. A topic for future consideration could include a discussion of what can be done in support of strategies to address homelessness.
- e. Problems with Cridge Park and transient populations. Often these folk are not from here or are on 'holiday' but access homeless services and sleep in parks. There is a report forthcoming on this topic.
- f. What is the process for getting crosswalks created? There are a certain criteria in place to evaluate crosswalk with input taken once a year. Crosswalks are very expensive to create and when not done properly can lead to greater incidences of modal conflict.

2. CDC

- a. Working on Roving Refinery date/location.
- b. Working on Vic Matters. Looking for topic/date.
- c. Chamber of Commerce food event.

3. HLC

- a. Going to begin to 'data mine' information from the liveability solutions meeting.
- b. Discussing a possible re-brand of the HLC.

4. Land Use

- a. 1515 Douglas St. approved. Ian spoke in support.
- b. 819 Yates St. – Small rezoning to go rental. Building purchased. Some massing concerns.
- c. 960 Yates St. – Planning and Land Use this week. Letter sent to Council.
- d. 840 Fort St. – Letter Sent. Better materials being used.

- e. 816 Government St. – Undergoing review. Underwhelming design. Condo and mixed use. Will work to get comments to design panel.
- f. 613 Herald St. – Under review.
- g. 838 Fort St. – Minor zoning amendment. Gate redesign.
- h. McPherson Theatre – HVAC stuff ugly.
- i. Considering developing a set of minor policies for land use. Looking to outline expectations possibly regarding such items as size of units, materials used, sound abatement in units, disclosure requirements, etc.

5. Communications

- a. Ellen Henry joined.
- b. Opportunities/need to look at an endorsement policy? Will continue to look into this.

6. VCAN

- a. Session with Jason Johnson (City Manager)
- b. Asked how to better communicate with staff. New contact person assigned. Safe streets and active transportation are part of the city's strategic planning process.
- c. Electing two leads and two alternates.
 - i. Doug (Lead), Ruth (Alternate), Nicholas (Alternate), Undetermined (Lead).