

# MINUTES

## Riverside Park Community Association RPCA Annual Members' Meeting

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Wednesday, October 6, 2021 – 7:00 p.m. EDT  
Meeting Location: Zoom

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### 1. Call to Order

1.1 The meeting was called to order by Travis at 7:04 p.m. The following directors were in attendance (7)

- Kate Cathrae, Director
- Travis Croken, Vice-President
- Róisín West, Director
- Michael Simms, Director
- Mark Staz, Secretary/Treasurer
- Andrew Wintonic, Director
- Terry Wood, Director

1.2 The following community members were in attendance (due to technical error, we do not have an exhaustive list at this time):

- Ali Arya
- Oliver Bendzsa
- Jocelyn Brown
- Donna Bueckert
- Christina Copelli
- James Edgar
- Elizabeth Gluckstal
- Gabriel Gonzalez
- Christine Johnson
- Marika Magro
- Natalie Riendeau
- Sarah Siderius
- Donna Warner

1.3 The following guests were in attendance (5):

- Rebecca Aird, Ottawa Community Foundation
- Riley Brockington, River Ward Councillor
- Toon Dreessen, Architects DCA
- Erin McCracken, Councillor's Office, City of Ottawa
- Steve Winkelman, Ottawa Climate Action Fund

### 2. Land Acknowledgment, Welcome, Introduction to Officers and Directors

- 2.1 Travis opened the meeting by welcoming attendees and acknowledging that we are on the traditional unceded land of the Algonquin Anishinaabe. He expressed gratitude for the privilege of living on this land.

He explained the purpose of the Annual Members' Meeting, provided information about meeting procedures, and noted that while participation is open to all attendees, only members in good standing are allowed to vote. Travis also encouraged any non-member attendees to consider membership in the RPCA.

### **3. Adoption of the Agenda**

- 3.1 It was moved by Terry and seconded by Kate to accept the agenda.

**Motion Carried**

### **4. Receipt of Minutes of the October 7, 2020 RPCA Annual General Meeting**

- 4.1 It was moved by Kate and seconded by Terry to accept the minutes of the October 7, 2020 RPCA Annual General Meeting.

**Motion Carried**

### **5. Public Presentation and Discussion: Riverside Park Community Visioning Session**

- 5.1 Kate Cathrae introduced the session as a first step towards creating a vision for Riverside Park with a goal of establishing priorities and discussing interests and passions of community members. This is also an opportunity for membership to hear from invited guests who are active community builders representing different parts of city life.

- 5.2 Kate introduced Steve Winkelman as the first speaker.

- 5.2.1 Steve's presentation addressed the concept of "complete 15-minute neighbourhoods." He noted an under-supply in Ottawa and across North America of walkable, "complete" neighbourhoods due to policy and market conditions, which leads to higher housing prices, sprawl, higher rates of driving, and up to a doubling of transportation costs. He also explained the environmental costs of a lack of walkable neighbourhoods, listing several benefits of "smart

growth,” including financial efficiencies, convenience for residents, and environmental protections. He encouraged Riverside Park to approach community visioning by avoiding change-averse reactions and instead considering common priorities that can be achieved through thoughtful planning and collaboration.

5.2.2 Kate next introduced Toon Dreessen who began his presentation by talking about the “5 Big Moves” which include

1. Growth Development,
2. Mobility,
3. Urban and Community Design,
4. Climate, Energy and Public Health, and
5. Economic Development.

Toon acknowledged the overlapping jurisdictions in Riverside Park and associated interests which sometimes compete. He also commented on geographic features in Riverside Park such as the Rideau River, train tracks, green space, and Airport Parkway, in addition to current development projects. He suggested that transit circulation be considered in identifying opportunities for further development, including active transportation modes like cycling which are, contrary to common misconceptions, possible year-round. The character and types of roads (collector, major collector, arterial), zoning by-laws, and locations of greenspace and community hubs are also important considerations. He explained why climate change, siting, and procurement are critical issues for any community and can no longer be ignored.

5.2.3 Kate introduced Rebecca Aird as the next speaker. Rebecca presented about community organization, emphasizing the points made by previous speakers that efficiency of existing infrastructure is a crucial consideration in community development.

She shared her experience related to community engagement in Ottawa East to address recent development. That community learned to accept that it might see slightly less greenspace and increased traffic in some areas, but were able to achieve meaningful change for the community that included new amenities by impacting how development occurred, in particular by achieving consensus about community priorities early on and advocating for these as land was purchased and development occurred.

5.3 After panelists concluded their presentations, Kate opened the floor to questions from the audience.

5.3.1 The first question related to costs and impacts of multi-story high-rise buildings.

5.3.1.1 Toon listed several financial and esthetic concerns related to high-rise buildings, in addition to potential loss of community and cultural identity by being “one among a thousand doors.”

5.3.2 Suggestions were sought for growing relationships with community and city allies.

5.3.2.1 Rebecca suggested working with the local city councillor to help identify relevant stakeholders who have expertise that relate to community priorities.

5.3.3 It was noted that when engaging with community members about how to respond to the initial draft of the New Official Plan, there was a collective sense that a 15-minute community does not seem realistic for Riverside Park. However, a community centre would be nice as a focal point for activities and cultural events.

5.3.3.1 Panelists suggested that there could be potential for a 15-minute neighbourhood in Riverside Park. Some streets in Riverside Park could accept small-scale buildings that support ground-floor businesses, including coffee shops and small grocery stores or corner stores.

There are barriers to mobility given the lack of sidewalks and some resistance to sidewalks for fear of losing front lawns, but creating a new sidewalk does not need to result in the removal of a lawn; it could involve reducing road lanes through a road diet.

5.3.4 Panelists were asked how community members can affect the development that's imminent, particularly to the north of Riverside Park, in a way that meets the needs of the community.

5.3.4.1 Ottawa was historically developed by local developers, but this is changing now. It might be more challenging to influence developers who don't live in the community. However, there are responsible developers, and the community could consider finding ways of collaborating with these developers and privileging those that are more responsible and responsive to community needs.

5.3.5 There was a question about how to accommodate such a variety of members of the community with needs that may be divergent.

5.3.5.1 While many elements of 15-minute neighbourhoods are aspirational, the reality in which a community lives can quickly change, as we're currently seeing with many more people working from home, rather than community into the city. This also happens at an individual level where circumstances change and allow for, for example, the addition of a rental suite.

5.3.5.2 It is not realistic to expect some changes to happen immediately, but small changes can be made quickly through community initiatives that involve different uses of common spaces, such as creating seating in carefully selected areas or reimagining property dividing lines with common gardens rather than fences. Use of schools as community hubs can also be rethought so that they serve as welcoming centres for communities.

5.4 Roísín began a facilitated discussion to collect ideas from the attendees to begin to create a vision for the future of Riverside Park.

5.4.1 Terry commented that while the community desires services, those businesses that could offer services desired by community members have been reluctant to come to Riverside Park.

5.4.2 Ro asked what could make a community work. It was suggested that a sense of purpose can drive engagement and participation, fostering a feeling of belonging among community members.

5.4.3 Greenspace in Riverside Park is great and we have the beginnings of a good cycling infrastructure. Transit allows us to connect with other parts of the city. It would be helpful to further build on our greenspace and provide safer and expanded cycling infrastructure.

5.4.4 Pauline Vanier Park could be renovated to better meet the needs of current community demographics, thereby serving as a community hub. For example, splash pads that other neighbourhoods have could be a valuable addition to Riverside Park.

5.4.5 Several community members emphasized the point that the community should avoid pushing back against 15-minute neighbourhoods, and instead seeking elements of such neighbourhoods that are most important, including availability of

food and other important amenities, libraries, safer transportation, and public spaces as community hubs.

5.4.6 McCarthy Road is a gateway to the only plaza that we have close to Riverside Park, but is not safe for pedestrians or cyclists and needs to be reimagined as a more effective and appropriate way of entering our community.

5.4.7 Ro noted that the theme of safety has come through clearly as a priority for the neighbourhood. The desire to instill a community spirit has also been expressed by many residents.

5.4.7.1 In terms of community spirit, events can be planned at different scales. They do not always need to be community-wide events, but could be smaller-scale events in pockets of the community which could foster connection in different ways.

5.5 At the close of the discussion, Ro reminded community members that this is only the beginning of the RPCA's visioning discussion. There will be many more opportunities to provide input into how the community will develop over the coming years. Ro also invited community members to provide feedback and input at any time; the board would be happy to receive it.

5.6 Travis thanked the panelists for sharing their expertise and participating in the community's discussion. He also thanked Ro for facilitating and community members in attendance for their participation and ideas.

## **6. Director Elections**

6.1 Terry began the election discussion by listing the vacancies on the board. There are currently four vacancies and inviting Mark to make a comment.

6.1.1 Mark expressed excitement to learn of the interest among community members to run for board positions. He also noted that given anticipated changes coming for his family, he may be unable to complete his current term on the board and felt it would be best for him to step down at this point given the willingness of others to fill the board positions.

6.1.2 Terry moved to accept Mark's resignation from the board and it was seconded by Ro.

**Motion Carried**

6.2 Terry noted that with Mark's resignation, there are now five open positions on the board. Six nominations were received for the open positions, including for Michael Simms (Riverside Park West), Kevin Wolfe (Riverside Park West), Dave Coyle (Mooney's Bay), Katerina Drescher (Mooney's Bay), Gabriel Gonzalez (General Vanier), and James Edgar (Riverside Park East. All nominees and their seconders have been confirmed as members in good standing of the RPCA.

6.2.1 The RPCA bylaws state that where possible, each neighbourhood shall be represented by two directors from that neighbourhood. However, if there are not two candidates from a particular neighbourhood and a surplus in others, these other candidates can fill a board position in a different neighbourhood. As such, Dave Coyle and Gabriel Gonzalez have volunteered to fill the positions for the Revelstoke neighbourhood.

6.2.2 James Edgar has agreed to step down in favour of a committee position given that Riverside Park East already has two individuals nominated to serve on the board.

6.3 There are now five nominated candidates for five open board positions.

6.4 It was moved by Terry and seconded by Kate that the five candidates be elected by acclamation.

**Motion Carried**

6.5 Kate asked the new board members to provide brief comments to introduce themselves to the board and community.

## **7. Presentation: 2020-2021 RPCA Board Report**

7.1 Travis presented the Board Report to the RPCA Membership ([click to download](#))

## **8. 2020-2021 Financial Statements**

8.1 Michael presented the financial statements for Fiscal Year 2021 ([click to download](#))

## **9. Presentation: River Ward Councillor Report**

- 9.1 After thanking past, current, and new board members for volunteering their time in service to the community, Councillor Brockington presented his Councillor's Report ([click to download](#)).
- 9.2 Terry asked about the possibility of a dog park in Linton Park, noting that the playing field is one of the main fields in Ottawa for Ultimate Frisby and, as such, is maintained by the City. As such, a dog park could conflict with other uses.
- 9.2.1 Councillor Brockington responded that this was just a notice for the RPCA that a request has been received. He also suggested the need for a community discussion, centred around priorities, around where a dog park could best fit.
- 9.2.2 Ro added that a gate at Linton Park would be valuable and appreciated by dog owners in the area. Ro also offered support for the Councillor's suggestion of consulting the community about this issue.

## **10. Follow up to the Walkley Road Corridor Transportation Update**

- 10.1 Terry updated the board about priorities following the city's presentation to the RPCA at its most recent meeting which demonstrated the importance of longer-term comprehensive integrated planning for the greater safety and security of all West Walkley Road transportation users and continued engagement and consultation with the community as various transportation initiatives move forward.

A follow-up session is recommended by the Transportation, Traffic Safety and Transit Subcommittee for early 2022. Terry also summarized several additional recommendations from the Subcommittee which are outlined in his presentation ([click here to download](#)).

- 10.2 The following motion was introduced by Terry on behalf of the Subcommittee, supported by Ro and seconded by Kate: *The Riverside Park Community Association, taking note of and expressing appreciation for the comprehensive Walkley Road Corridor Transportation Update presented by City officials to the September 8 RPCA meeting, as facilitated by Councillor Brockington, and the extensive discussion that followed, supports the transportation priorities and the proposals for further study and evaluation recommended by the Transportation, Traffic*

*Safety and Transit Subcommittee as set out in its report to today's meeting, and requests a follow-up presentation by the City in early 2022*

**Motion Carried**

**11. Halloween Event Planning**

11.1 The Board provided an update about events planned for Halloween, including a “Spooky Story” written and narrated by Travis, delivery of safe Halloween treats, and “pumpkins for pigs” as well as donation of intact pumpkins for making meals for local residents in need.

The RPCA will ensure that all volunteers are fully vaccinated and does not plan on requesting donations for this year’s events.

Full details will be posted on the RPCA website and via social media.

**12. Other Business**

12.1 There was no other business.

**13. Announcements**

13.1 There were no announcements.

**14. Next Annual Members’ Meeting**

14.1 The next Annual Members’ Meeting will be held on October 5, 2022.

**15. Next Meeting of the RPCA Board of Directors:**

15.1 The next meeting of the RPCA Board of Directors will be held on Wednesday, November 3, 2021.

**16. Adjournment**

16.1 It was moved by Ro and seconded by Terry to adjourn the meeting.

16.2 The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 pm.

Meeting minutes were prepared by:

Mark Staz

Minutes confirmed by:

K.Cathrae

Kate Cathrae, President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Staz", written above a horizontal line.

Mark Staz