

# Hunt Club Community Association

MONTHLY MEETING, 7 MARCH 2022

**Present:**

1. Peter Brimacombe, President
2. Peter Foulger, Vice President
3. Audrey Bélanger Baur, Treasurer-Secretary
4. Lynette Joseph-Sankey, Director
5. Matt Page, Director
6. Brian Wade
7. John Sankey
8. France Picard
9. Barbara Shea
10. Dave Coyle
11. Piero Narducci
12. Andrew Sutton, City of Ottawa (Assistant to the City Councillor)
13. Riley Brockington, City Councillor
14. Norman and Patricia McLeod
15. Tania Mushka
16. Kathy Wright
17. Barry Smith
18. Ijeoma Udechukwu
19. Salma Al-Shehabi
20. Cathy Bourguignon
21. Valerie Field
22. Christine Johnson
23. James Mihaychuk
24. Denyse Baizana

**Regrets:** N/A

## MEETING MINUTES

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

Peter welcomed everyone to the monthly board meeting.

### 2. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda is modified. The item *TD Grant* is swapped for the *Fall Festival*, and the *Treasurer's Report* is removed.

Motion: To accept the agenda for this meeting as is.

Moved by Peter Brimacombe, seconded by Audrey Bélanger Baur, carried by vote (approved).

### 3. Approval of Minutes

Meeting Minutes: 7 February 2022

Motion: To accept the minutes of the monthly 10 January 2022 meeting.

Moved by Peter Brimacombe, seconded by Lynette Joseph-Sankey, carried by vote (approved).

### 4. Housing Task Force

The floor opened for discussion regarding the [Ontario Housing Affordability Task Force Report](#). The overview of the report is as follows:

*The Task Force is comprised of industry leaders and experts. They consulted with stakeholders including municipalities and advocacy groups to develop their report.*

*The Task Force report is part of the government's broader plan to seek feedback from a variety of sources, including through municipal and public consultations, to identify and implement measures to address the housing supply crisis and get homes built faster.*

Peter Brimacombe begins the topic with prepared motions and remarks and has received comments from John Sankey prior to the meeting. Peter Brimacombe has sponsored a Cambodian family in the 1980s to come to Ottawa, and he and his church have put a lot of effort in this endeavor, but "what the Housing Affordability Task Force is saying... it's not asking... it's telling us... and that is a big difference. We are not being asked, we are being told". Peter was happy to offer to sponsor a family 40 years ago but does not want to be forced into change he doesn't want today. The motions are put forward to allow Peter to go door to door and inform his neighbours about the Housing Affordability Task Force, a radical plan, while Ottawa's Official Plan already plans for increased density on existing streets, such as his and his neighbours' streets.

Motion 1: The Hunt Club Community Association (HCCA) recognizes the need to increase density on existing streets. It is needed to improve energy efficiency, to preserve farmland, and to house an increasing population. The HCCA opposes the recommendations of the Housing Affordability Task Force but supports the Ottawa's new Official Plan.

The first motion would allow Peter Brimacombe to go tell his neighbours about the Housing Affordability Task Force Report because he doesn't believe they know about it.

Matt Page asks whether Peter plans to speak as the President of the HCCA, and if that is the case, what he plans on telling them. Peter B. responds that he has a flyer which is posted on the website. The flyer is pulled up on the screen for all members present to see.

Peter Brimacombe explains that the flyer showcases the most radical proposals of the Housing Affordability Task Force report, which are to increase as of right to four storeys high any residential construction on an existing residential street, such as his. The flyer also explains the serious reasons to increase density, which can be achieved either through the Housing Affordability Task Force recommendations or the Official Plan of Ottawa, and that the HCCA favours the Official Plan. Peter suggests that this flyer should be distributed door to door to inform homeowners that are not aware of these potential important changes that could "happen to their property" so they know "what is in store

for them”. Peter is “probably the only person in Ontario that will go door to door to explain what is going on” and for him to be able to do this, he needs the approval of the association.

Other members of the HCCA are sharing their thoughts about the Task Force report and the proposed flyer:

Tania Mushka applauds the attention being given to this issue because significant influence of developers is now overriding other principles. Tania has two main points she wants to make: first, she likes the email that was sent to the FCA, but questions the blanket statement that “the HCCA supports Ottawa’s new Official Plan” on the basis of accuracy as she does not think the HCCA has already agreed to all points of the Official Plan, and therefore thinks should reserve judgment until after a careful analysis of all items in the Official Plan the HCCA may oppose. Tania suggests rephrasing “the HCCA supports Ottawa’s new Official Plan is respect to...” but does not think the HCCA has agreed to provide a blanket approval of the Official Plan. Second, she wants to know what the objective is regarding the flyers. Is it to gain support for residents to write to their representatives? Peter B. explains that he wants them to be aware of what is happening because “this is the first time [his] neighbours are hearing about this, and they will be shocked”. As for the Official Plan, Peter B. assures that it is a process and explains that the city has been in active discussions for over a year, and notes that the South Keys presentation in January 2022 is part of the Official Plan. Fundamentally, he explains that “we are in favour of a political process at the municipal level”. At the end of the day, Peter B. believes that planning decisions will be made at the provincial level or at the municipal level, and the HCCA should align itself with having planning decisions made locally at the municipal level, as it has always been done. “On a flyer, you do not get to explain a 400-page document [the Official Plan]. Riverside Park has had extensive meetings with the new Official Plan which are ongoing, and they are under development pressure, evolving and transforming, [whereas] Hunt Club is fortunate because we are status quo, but we are still subject to increasing density. That’s where we are right now. The path forward is either provincial or municipal.”

Brian Wade initially brought the issue to the attention of the association and separates the issue into two parts: the main part of the report, but also the process the provincial government has followed, which was expedited (Task Force commissioned in December 2021 and report released end of January 2022), and these recommendations may be passed at the provincial level before the June election. Brian personally objects to the rushed nature of this process. Many municipal managers have concerns about the final recommendations and how fast the province is moving forward. The flyer does not discuss the recommendations, and one of them is “to remove public consultations”. Public notices and consultations are important and getting rid of them is dangerous. The report also recommends increasing the fees to appeal a decision from \$400 to \$10,000, which is prohibitive. These are the serious factors that need to be mentioned for Brian. That said, he agrees with many recommendations in the report and does not feel it is fair and representative to suggest that all members of the HCCA are opposed to all the recommendations of the Housing Affordability Task Force report, or that all members of the HCCA approve of the Official Plan even though it has been approved by Council and is now a done deal. Brian agrees that it is important to let the people of the community know about the report, but how it is written here is misleading and leads to a lot of fear mongering. Brian agrees with Tania regarding the need to identify the next steps and what is asked of residents the HCCA would reach out to with a flyer: “is it to join the association or to write to their MPP? And which recommendations are we bringing forward to the discussion: zoning or reduced public consultation in the process?”, the latter being what Brian had raised the issue about in the first place.

Christine Johnson agrees with everything Brian has said and understands the thrust of Peter's worry. She finds there are two main issues: "it's a position dictated by the provincial government for developers to have carte blanche to build anything they want up to four storey or less without any community or public input, and if there is any public or community input, it would be at a very high cost." Christine believes the HCCA can take position in opposition with "the provincial government dictating what developers can do in our city and questioning the cost associated with community/public input. This framework is what is worrisome."

Peter Brimacombe responds that what he is looking to accomplish is to start "a political movement and energize the base" to oppose recommendations of the report and prevent the adoption of the recommendations before the provincial election is in June 2022. "There is an urgency because Doug Ford in 2018 reduced the size of the Toronto City Council from 47 to 25 in the middle of an election" and now "nobody could go down Plante Drive and say your neighbour could be a 4-storey building next to your house, and that's what I'm standing for... nobody would do that".

Audrey Bélanger Baur agrees mainly with what Brian and Christine have shared. Audrey believes that private property rights are solid and that no one will be obligated to change what happens on their property and no one will be forced to sell to a developer when they move. Even with zoning change, these are very long term and slow-moving changes. The neighbourhood wouldn't change overnight. Audrey has prepared a motion, which she hopes is a good compromise, seeking for *the Board of Directors to discuss this further, to take quick action, build a consensus and balanced opinion from the HCCA that could be shared with members and on which the HCCA could seek feedback and provide guidance to members regarding further actions to take.*

Ijeoma Udechukwu asks if Peter Brimacombe has discussed this with other community associations or is this a standalone initiative for this community association only? Peter Brimacombe says that he spoke with one person from a different association and believes everyone thinks like him on this issue, but it is a private initiative. Ijeoma believes there is more strength in numbers, and Matt Page confirms that a letter was sent to the Federation of Community Associations for possible common engagement.

Riley Brockinton says there is a lot to unpack here. The Provincial Government wants to contribute to help increase housing supply in the province, and they believe that regulation and red tape that slow down construction and adds costs to projects are the barrier to take down. Riley explains that single family home neighbourhoods (R1 zoning) would disappear as Peter is warning. There would be a greater diversity of housing types, density would go up, and the sea of single detached homes would change significantly on many streets. Riley explains that some people think that is okay, but there is also opposition and knows based on his experience in politics that "a transition is better than jumping in the deep end". What the city is doing now is a comprehensive zoning bylaw review to determine how and where density will increase to accommodate over 400,000 people over 30 years. Riley says that if the community is concerned about multi-family homes in traditional single-family detached areas, then that is what we should focus on. Riley will forward to the Board the response of the City of Ottawa to the 55 recommendations and encourages the association to provide added value to this document.

Tania speaks again to present her opposition and to encourage the association to oppose dictated planning from the provincial government that could overrule local decision-making in addition to appeals being prohibitively expensive or equivalent to "fines" but warns of the trap of opposing affordable housing. "We do not want to be seen to be opposing this report because we oppose

affordable housing”. Peter Brimacombe reminds again how Doug Ford “suddenly and drastically” impacted the city of Toronto, “most likely without consultation” and he could do it again. “Single family housing could disappear [like that] because all you need is a developer buying a poorly maintained house, which brings down the price, and then there’s four units! And that’s it and there’s no consultation and there’s no zoning, and all the protections I’ve enjoyed owning this home for 36 years are gone. Can we have a political campaign going door to door which will grab provincial politicians’ attention?”

Matt Page takes the stage and recommends that the Board should read the city’s response. He questions the impact \$200 of flyers and going out in this weather will have. He encourages the Board to meet and to review the flyer to improve its structure, messaging, and call to action. This is a major issue that needs to be discussed. The voice of citizens being pushed out of the process is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Audrey Bélanger Baur brings up again a motion for vote which includes the items Matt Page just shared, it is amended to Peter Brimacombe’s request to one week instead of two:

*Motion: For the Board of Directors to meet within one week, study the Affordable Housing Task Force report, review the City of Ottawa’s comments, and debate a balanced official position of the Hunt Club Community Association.*

Peter Brimacombe seconds the motion; it is carried by vote (approved).

The Board agrees to meet on Wednesday, 9 March 2022, at 7pm.

- a. Email to FCA

An email was sent to the FCA as agreed at the last monthly meeting. The letter is posted on the website.

- b. Housing Task Force flyer

The Board of Directors has agreed to meet

- c. Housing Task Force Motions

The Board of Directors agreed to meet on Wednesday, 9 March 2022, as per an amended motion.

- d. Relevant points

## **5. Insurance**

Insurance with The Co-operators was secured at the annual cost of \$683.48 with liability coverage from 18 February 2022 to 17 February 2023 inclusively.

Liability coverage of \$2M for bodily injury and property damage, as well as personal and advertising injury liability. Medical expense limit per person is \$25,000, and tenant’s legal liability limit is \$2M per premise, as well as \$2M per non-owned vehicle. Legal liability for damage to hired vehicle endorsement is \$100,000. Most claims have a deductible varying between \$1,000 and \$2,500.

Members on committees for various activities, Christine Johnson and Barbara Shea, express their thanks for insurance having been secured.

## **6. Vacant Unit Tax – Salma Al-Shehabi**

Salma is summarizing the key elements of this tax. The vacant unit tax is going to Council on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022. Every homeowner will have to report every year on the status of their units. Primary residences are exempt from this tax, but if they do not reply by the deadline, they will be subject to a fee. If no reply is given, the unit will be deemed vacant and subject to a 1% vacancy tax.

The number of vacant units in Ottawa is allegedly over 22,000 (survey result) but does not target purpose-built rentals (PBRs). The city is expecting that this tax will apply to only up to 760-3,000 units. It is expected that this will provide \$5M in revenues. Salma emphasizes that there is a large cost to property owners (mandatory yearly reporting), and PBRs will not be included. Salma explains that the City does not have jurisdiction over PBRs, and the city will not pursue jurisdiction over them (PBRs of 7+ units are categorized as commercial real estate, not residential). The City has chosen, after consultation, the 6 months definition to deem a unit vacant.

Salma contends that the vacancy tax is not targeting the “right kind of units” and places “a large burden on homeowners to report” and “increase assessment values leading to increased property taxes”, while PBRs will have no reporting obligations (19,000 to 21,240 units citywide).

Salma explains that in Vancouver, after the implementation of such a tax, PBRs were favoured and the value of taxation from other properties shrunk as almost none were available. The vacancy tax would moreover have led to a drop in vacancies making rentals more expensive based on information Salma has collected. She asserts that PBRs can keep units empty and to wait for high paying renters even when the vacancy rate is as high as 8%, therefore not supporting affordability as the tax is meant to do.

Audrey Bélanger Baur states that the objective of the vacancy tax is meant to ensure that homes are used by residents to live in, and this may naturally lead to a low vacancy rate. She agrees that excluding PBRs appears to be an important oversight to ensure that goal is met as she knows PBRs in the Hunt Club community have multiple available units for months at a time but nonetheless keep them empty until the high rental asking prices is met (this practice creates false scarcity pushing rental costs up for renters). The PBR loophole appears to sabotage the vacancy tax in its objective to give renters more market power.

## **7. City Councillor’s Report – Riley Brockington**

Councillor Brockington’s report this month is extensive. March is a very busy month with lent for Christians, International Women’s Day, la Francophonie, St. Patrick’s Day, etc.

### **a. The Occupation**

- Downtown streets have now been cleared, but the presence of the convoy for weeks has nonetheless left a significant imprint on the people in Ottawa.
- Both City Council and the Police Board have passed motions to investigate the events, management, and response of the police throughout the three-week occupation. The objective is to learn from this incident.

- Jurisdiction of Wellington Street (municipal, provincial or federal) will be re-evaluated and it is possible the street being closed to motor-vehicles for a time (pedestrian only).
  - A private class action lawsuit to hold convoy participants personally liable for business disruptions was launched a few weeks ago of the amount of app. \$300M.
  - An amendment to the Provincial Police Act to allow municipalities to sue organizers of events like this for policing costs was also passed recently.
- b. International Women's Day
    - Everyone is welcome to attend the Speaker Series on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 6:30pm virtually on zoom.
  - c. Trivia Night
    - Online session on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022, online (register in advance).
  - d. COVID and Ottawa Public Health updates
    - Restrictions lifted on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, provincially (vaccination proof no longer required). Mask mandates still in effect for the time being.
    - Vaccination clinics are still open, including at the community center (no appointment), Tuesday and Thursdays , 1pm-7pm.
  - e. Safety Review of Mooney's Bay Hill
    - A tragic fatality occurred at the end of December.
    - An independent review is underway. The hill was assessed, and a report has already been delivered to the City.
    - The coroner has provided a written set of recommendations to the city of Ottawa, to which the City must reply by August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022.
  - f. Rideau River Blasting
    - The next two months will be dangerous around water zones. Please be mindful and stay away from creek beds as they will fill up fast.
  - g. How to report a pothole
    - Report them to 311 (phone) or online
  - h. Free service by OC Transpo
    - Confederation line is free until March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022.
    - Many buses are also free to use during this period (mainly downtown).
  - i. Online activities at the Ottawa Library
  - j. Airport Parkway
    - Transportation Master Plan approved by City Council includes the widening of the airport parkway in three phases. The City is proceeding with Phase I.
    - A working group has been established and the HCCA has a seat at the table if a volunteer is interested in representing the community (development of the blueprint of this project).
    - Walkley road is also going through a redesign from 4 lanes of traffic to 2, with the inclusion of bike lanes replacing one lane in each direction. The pilot project will begin in June 2022 to collect data and public input to help shape the final redesign (environmental study).
  - k. Hunt Club Road – Red Pine Plantation

- City Council unanimously approved Riley’s three-part motion, which includes Ottawa investigating a viable land swap offer. If there are no land swap offers by the City of Ottawa, the trees will be cut down by the Airport Authority.
  - According to an Airport Authority report, the red pine plantation is not healthy, was never meant to be public woods, and its mandate includes the development of land and improving the economic vitality of the airport.
- l. Transportation Master Plan
    - Comments on active transportation extended to March 18, 2022.
  - m. Solid Waste Master Plan
    - One of the objectives is to Increase divergence rate of items making their way to the landfill to avoid having to build another landfill.
  - n. Infrastructure Updates
  - o. Commemorative Naming Applications
    - An application has been submitted to the City’s commemorative naming team for consideration of naming the weight room I the Hunt Club Riverside Park Community Centre the *David and Anita Mitchell Weight Room*. David is an active member of the community living on Cahill Drive. It is expected that the application will pass the 30 day public consultation period.
  - p. Earth Day Event in Hunt Club
    - Volunteers on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 from 10am to 4pm to clean the park.

### Comments and questions

Peter Brimacombe expresses his regrets that Chief Sloy had to leave his post. Riley emphasizes that Sloy was the right man for the type of changes the police service needed, but he was unfortunately unable to deliver during this critical time.

Christine Johnson reopens the discussion about the Red Pine Plantation as a passionate defender of the trees because these are not “garbage trees”. She suggests it would be possible to transform that plantation into a full fledged mixed wood forest. Christine directs residents towards a YouTube video which explains how this could be done (for each person’s own understanding – 6 minute clip): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6fPeMLzWnY&ab\\_channel=ForestsOntario](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6fPeMLzWnY&ab_channel=ForestsOntario).

Tania Mushka echoes everything Christine said and highlights the “[Amazon] is in trouble [and] the planet in trouble” and insists a red line must be drawn, not in favour of profits for the Airport Authority. Tania also has a question about Walkley Road to understand what the rationale is for going from four lanes to two, and what would be the land-use of the cleared space and if property owners will be affected. Councillor Riley explains that there will be bike lanes and that changes will only affect land from curb to curb (curb, bike lane, travel lane, middle turning lane, travel lane, bike lane, curb). A crosswalk could be added on Walkley Road if it is reduced from four to two lanes permanently. Tania is pleased with the sensible land-use change to come through the addition of bike paths.

Barb Shea asks if a review will take place regarding the civic response and leadership as a result of the occupation. She hopes “this will never happen again in this way. Many of us were looking for leadership...”. There was no leadership when residents were looking for leadership and she would like all

councillors to have an opportunity to speak their peace. Riley will get back with wording of various motions carried over two or three meetings. He confirms that Council cannot direct the Police Chief directly (it is unlawful). Riley nonetheless acknowledges that there has been an issue on occasions on Council with leadership putting its head in the sand. "Leadership is not about being present in the good times, it's about taking charge in the more challenging times". Riley will respond in writing with more details.

Audrey Bélanger Baur asks about expectations to participate on the working group concerning the redevelopment of Airport Parkway as she would like to put her name forward to participate in the process. There are only three meetings scheduled and one has already taken place. Councillor Riley explains that Parsons is the consultant chairing the working group and that the HCCA can send a delegate. The President of the HCCA can send an email to Riley (3 meetings in total, next meeting in the Spring) to confirm the nomination. The next public meeting will take place in September.

Ijeoma Udechukwu emphasizes that the events of the occupation were not properly managed. The extent and size of occupation were unexpected. The news said that Sloly had asked for 1,800 policemen and women in reinforcement, and it only came after he resigned. Ijeoma wants to know what the politics were and why he did not get the support he needed which led him to resign. Councillor Riley says he does not have all the answers. Riley reports that Sloly claimed him during a Council meeting to have all the resources needed to end the occupation, but that story changed a few days later. Councillor Riley reports that Chief Sloly pulled the plug on specific police actions and repeatedly did not answer directly when asked what his plan to end the occupation was. It is understood that there was likely tension in the joint command. It was difficult for many residents to see police officers unresponsive to their needs while occupiers got away with inappropriate and illegal behavior. It will take some time for residents to regain trust in their police force.

France Picard is thankful for the Councillor's work in keeping all residents aware and up to date on information. France asks about the size of a pothole for it to qualify for reporting. Councillor Riley encourages everyone to report all pothole sizes as it is better to fix small potholes before they become bigger problems. There is a sunken pothole on McCarthy between Paul Anka Dr. and Hunt Club she will report again.

Brian Wade has question about the Hydro work, which has been substantially affecting the park land inquires about Hydro's exit plans when they are done their work and if cleanup of the area is to be expected. Riley explains that utility companies have the right to use public land in this way for their own purposes, but that they are contractually obligated to return to park to its original state upon termination of their work.

Kathy Wright is highly appreciative of Councillor Riley's work. Kathy raises again the lack of leadership throughout the occupation and finds the jurisdiction issue highly problematic and does not understand why Wellington was deemed to be the City's sole responsibility. Councillor Riley explains that federal funds (\$3M per year) are provided to the City to assist with security on Wellington St. during federal events, but the cost of policing during the occupation (estimated at \$31M so far) far exceeds annual contributions from other levels of government. Wellington is a municipal street and that is why Chief Sloly was in command of the response. It would have been a federal responsibility if the occupation had taken place solely on Parliament Hill.

## **8. Fall Festival**

The HCCA Board felt pressed to bring back the Fall Festival as part of its mandate when elected. The Fall Festival will take place September 17<sup>th</sup> from 11am to 4pm. The Hunt Club Community Centre has already been secured, it is happening rain or shine.

The theme has not yet been determined, but the objective is to celebrate community (arts, nature, food, sports, small businesses). Drive or donation is also being considered. Input (contacts, thoughts, etc.) is requested and monthly updates will be given. Opportunities to highlight community heroes – e.g., crosswalk guard are also in the plans.

To come: Sponsors, volunteers, electrical equipment, staging, photography, media advertising, etc.

## **9. Creative Art Club**

Dianne (d.arts@bell.net) is running an art club every Monday from 10am to noon. Don't bring oil-based paints. \$3 weekly drop-in fee.

## **10. Toddler Storytime**

Christine announces that story time for toddlers is coming to our own community soon. Starting on April 5<sup>th</sup> 10:30am to 11:15am. Swing by the community center. The activity is ongoing weekly for the month of April. Thank you to the HCCA for sponsoring the Toddler Storytime.