

Friends of Trinity Bellwoods Park – Spring General Meeting

Thursday, May 29, 2014

7:00 pm – 8:30 pm – Trinity Recreation Centre – Main Floor Room

Minutes by Laura Jamer

Meeting Chair: Sian

Number of attendees: 18

Welcome & Intro – Sian

Sian welcomed the group and encouraged anyone and everyone to be part of the steering committee if interested.

Social Media – Carolyn, Laura, Michaelle

Carolyn reported there are almost 850 followers on Twitter and mentioned there is another Twitter account called “Trinity Bellwoods” that is not related to the Friends account.

Laura reported that there are 505 followers on the Facebook page. Facebook hides posts so the more likes and shares a post gets, the more it gets shown to its followers.

Michaelle reported on the website: We migrated the server in January. She reported that unique views to the website were 1500 in January and 3800 as of today for the month of May. There is a signup ability for the newsletter on the website and there are currently 755 subscribers. She has been cleaning up the mailing list as many bounce back. The email open rate is 42%. She would be happy to pass off the website maintenance task to anyone who is interested.

Adopt a Tree Program – Michaelle

Started in 2006 by Jenna Hofbauer; Michaelle took it over in 2008 and now passes the Zurn key over to Laura Jamer who is taking it over as of this year. Michaelle gave a few words of history about the purpose of the program and reported that about 80 neighbours are volunteers in the program. She has put all the buggies out and Brian/Park Supervisor turned on the water. This was a harsh winter and 8+ trees were lost over the winter. She recently did a walkabout with Uyen Dias from Urban Forestry. We are going to get 20+ new trees in the fall or next spring and some will be planted along Queen and the north end. 101 trees were in the program last year with 80+ volunteers and this year we have 58 trees and 45 volunteers. The drop is because so many cherry trees graduated from the program this year. Four new teeny Shagbark Hickory trees have just been planted in memory of the old one taken done in 2012. Michaelle will be transitioning Laura into the program as she has her eye on a park nearer her house. There are enough volunteers at this time. (*Update: new volunteers needed since 20+ new trees were just planted!*)

The job includes watering weekly and mulching and the requested commitment is four years (and babysitting for adopters who go on vacation). Michaelle mentioned that at least 8 other parks have copied the program and Park People & LEAF have used her

How-To guide to launch their own rebranded “Adopt a Park Tree” program around the city.

Greenhouse – Elizabeth (Sian read a statement from Elizabeth)

Elizabeth sent a letter for Sian to read as she could not be at the meeting. She mentioned that the City has responsibility for the greenhouse maintenance and they and Brian Green have done a great job replacing and fixing the roof, doors and other items. The Sunday morning "Hot House" discussion series had another great season this past winter. The seedling program is in full swing and there are many people participating and there are over 80 trays of seedlings. This year the Greenhouse has not accepted the Friends' stipend. The budget was \$600? June 15 is the Greenhouse cleanup and she is looking for volunteers to mulch and plant around the greenhouse, removing weeds, etc. She mentions to come on June 1 for Park Day to volunteer.

Roundtable Introductions:

Sian
Kevin
Andrew
Darren
Bill
Liz
Samual
Michaelle
Brian Green – TBP Park Supervisor
Norma
Marco – Councillor Layton's office
Nellie – city of Toronto Park Permit
Laura
Anna-Maria
Aiden
Nicole
Lisa
Carolyn

Farmer's Market – Carolyn

Market has started but due to the harsh winter veggies are still growing. Venders are by invitation so spots are offered to returning vendors first. Right now there are 23 vendors. There is a Twitter feed (@TBFarmersMarket) and dedicated website (www.tbfm.ca). Volunteers are used for setup and wrap and Carolyn mentioned she is always looking for volunteers.

Kevin asked: Is there any bike valet during market?

Carolyn: We talked about a bike valet once but it would need a volunteer.

Brian said he would be happy to get involved in this kind of project and there are racks available but funding would be needed.

Kevin mentioned a fence would be needed because bikes can get stolen.

Carolyn said the market breaks even and new signage is needed so money for a bike valet would have to be found in addition to current budget.

Nicole mentioned that maybe a sponsor for this kind of thing, like Cycle Toronto.

Carolyn mentioned that she is personally responsible for the permit to the market and a conversation could be had outside of the meeting.

Sian said that it is likely the bike valet can be separated from the market insurance. And, since Kevin has experience with this maybe he can help set it up.

Brian told Kevin to design it and bring it to his attention.

Park Days – Patricia who is coordinating the day is not present so Sian/Carolyn/Michaëlle talked.

Spring Park Day is June 1st from 10-1, meeting at the greenhouse.

Carolyn: It's from 10-1 on Sunday and the meeting is at the greenhouse under a tent. There will be mulch.

Michaëlle: Park Day is about greening of the park; planting, weeding, mulching, pulling the burdock.

Sian invited everyone to come and bring family and friends. She reminded the group that there is a fall park day as well to plant bulbs. She asked if anyone wants to volunteer to run the fall day.

Norma volunteered to run it.

Sian thanked Brian for having his staff go around the flowers when cutting the grass.

Park Events this Summer – feedback & discussion

Carolyn: The big Yard Sale is June 14th. June 15th is the Luminato Literary Picnic which is free with a kidzone. MEC bikefest this Saturday May 31 in the south end.

Samual Q: who holds events in the park?

Nellie: If you're an event organizer, you apply for a permit and must be free and not-for-profit.

Carolyn gets a Letters of Condition from all applications from Nellie and then it gets put on the calendar on the Friends website.

HORIZONS FOR YOUTH EVENT with Beer Garden (May 25, 2014)

Sian: Does anyone have any concerns about what happened with the beer garden this past Saturday in the rink?

Nellie: Horizons for Youth (an at-risk youth charitable organization) has a softball tournament in the park each year. This year they held a charity event having a beer garden in the rink to raise funds.

Anna-Maria: Lives on Gore Vale and has lived there for 12 years and mentions there is a culture of drinking that has come up in the park and is unhappy with the permit from this past Saturday's event. Anna-Maria gave a bit of background about the drinking situation in the park and mentioned the positive community meeting that was held last year. She and other neighbours were shocked that Horizons- an organization that has abused its permits in the past- got a permit for a drinking event. There were two paid on-duty officers which is not enough. She said that this beer garden condoned drinking in the park and that many neighbours were upset by this and the organizers were rude. There were signs all around for a beer garden in the ice rink and no mention of the Horizons.

Nellie stated that those signs were in violation of their permit conditions.

Brian: It was not the intention to bother people, just to regulate this organization.

Laura: Was not so bothered by the event and mentioned it ended on time and was cleaned up well.

Brian: by-law enforcement for parks is responsible for regulating parks but they often don't work on the weekends. This is the busiest park in Brian's 75 park rotation.

Nellie: Received an email from Horizons saying they raised a good amount of money. She asked whether the attendees at the meeting don't want the beer garden or don't want Horizons?

Carolyn: There were so many people drinking outside of the beer garden and beer gardens don't work in the park. Beer gardens encourage drinking.

Michaëlle: agrees with Anna-Marie that green space is really hard to come by and there are so many great bars that could host this kind of event, recommends drinking events not be encouraged in the park. At least people are not littering the way they used to.

Kevin: A rink is a good place for a beer garden and it's not like a bar. He thinks it's a good idea to keep the drinking contained to a specific place. He likes the idea of a beer garden.

Marco: The city's perspective is that being able to permit something like this is about putting restrictions on the event and allows the city to try to control what happens- all things that are missing if it's unpermitted drinking in the park.

Sian: Need more police to monitor after the event to be sure of the dispersion of the beer garden patrons.

Nellie: Doesn't know if any more beer gardens are approved for this summer. This was a trial event based on illegal drinking from last year.

Anna-Maria: The baseball players took their drinks to their diamonds which should not be happening.

Park Supervisor Update – Brian Green

Brian: Lots of things happening this summer. There have been many trees that died this past winter. The emerald ash borer is here and will kill all the ash trees. We lost all of the Redbuds and we're looking to replace those. BMO and RBC will be coming to do community events in the next little while like tree planting and mulching

Other items:

Marco RE: Dog Area Fountain Installation in the bowl: This was spearheaded by TBCA and it's happening next year.

Sian RE: naming of laneways: Let the City know if you want to name the lanes.

Marco RE: John Gibson House: Not a whole lot going on; since April 2013 there have been no active negotiation between the JGH and the City which means the file will soon be closed and no new work can be done, which means new work would have to go through the process from scratch. Marco said they have encouraged JGH to do more community engagement but they have a lot of leeway to do work on their site based on their zoning.

Marco: RE: MOCCA: The building will be subject to paying park levies because of their zoning changes; the city is entitled to receive money based on the density they want to change on their site. This will be about \$100,000 so this would go to Trinity Bellwoods

Park and this will be in 3-4 years. The decision to give the money to TB Park is up to the City Councillor.

Sian RE: Park Rules: Reminder about park rules; no loud amplified sound without a permit. Pop-up shops in the park are not permitted without a permit. There is a curfew in the park that is related to no noise past 11pm but there is a by-law that prohibits people being in the park past midnight but it is not actively enforced.

Sian RE: Park Safety Audit: There is a park safety audit coming soon.

Donation Station Developments

Sian: There was a pilot project about creating donation meters for people to provide loose change to provide to park maintenance.

Film Screening Idea

Andrew: Proposal for film screening in the park and that donations would be fed back to the Friends group. Would this be something that would be considered? Would need power to screen films and would need access to the bathrooms being unlocked later.

Carolyn: Mentioned that Park People is working with TIFF to do this kind of thing.

Michelle: Sounds like a great idea; like TIFF but likes better a neighbor like Andrew doing film screenings in the park.

Laura: Loves the idea and said this event has a great vibe when been in the past.

Anna-Maria: Would be great to have kids movies/family movies.

Sian: Don't forget we need a permit!

Carolyn: How to curb drinking/smoking?

Andrew: Agrees with this point and said a reminder would be needed.

Sian: Suggested working together to develop this idea a little more.

Other business:

Michelle: Jennifer Gagné, (MFC, Faculty of Forest, University Of Toronto) is in second summer of the Trinity Bellwoods Neighbourhood Tree Inventory which she has spearheaded as part of her Urban Forestry studies. She is requesting \$50 to help pay for their training of their ten intern volunteers, one of whom will be asked to update Friends' 2009 tree inventory . FoTBP made a similar donation last summer. Any objections? [None made]

Homegrown National Park Project Update – Aiden

October 5th – hoping to do a park crawl again this year and it hasn't yet been decided for it to be in TBP. August 9 and 10 there is a Homegrown Jamboree – camping in Fort York with fires and ghost stories. Homegrown Music Festival July 4 and 5 also at Fort York. There is a laneway walk on Saturday the 31st, go to the Lost Rivers webpage to find details. Aiden has access to milkweed plants if anyone wants them.

Sian – if anything distressing happens in the park, please call 311 first. There is better tracking of the issue with the city and it's important to call them first for logging.

Sian will chair the next meeting after the crowd encouraged her.