

FoRRP Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday November 7th, 2012.

Location: College Shaw Library, 766 College Street.

Present:

Steering Committee

Susan Antler, Marco Bianchi, Zac Childs, Jill Cuthbertson, Justine Greenland-Duke, Melana Janzen, Shani Parsons, Bob Pritchard

Friends & Neighbours

Christine Leonard, Patricia and John Santos, Mike Sinopoli

Special Guests:

Fred and Joan Hamilton, son of Fred Hamilton whose name is on one of our parks
their daughter Marnie

Jennifer Gagne, Dana Collins, Steven Parkes, Stephanie Parzei and Natasha, from the U of T
Masters of Forest Conservation Program

Introductions (with special guest Fred Hamilton)

We would like to thank Fred Hamilton and his family for participating in our recent meeting at College/Shaw Library and for enriching our understanding of the park's history and particularly the influence his father had in shaping our parks and our community.

Mr. Hamilton was happy to see the Friends group arise and start to take ownership of the parks after years of neglect and a troubled past with gangs like the Fred Hamilton Boys. He was also very happy to see the involvement of City Hall and thanked Mike Layton's office for their response to the needs of city parks and their incorporation of local communities through friends groups.

We would also like to thank Fred Hamilton for his donation of a commemorative tree and bench that has helped contribute to more adequate recognition in our park and another pleasant place to enjoy it. Mr. Hamilton is happy with the direction the park is going and is also supportive of changing the name from Fred Hamilton Playground to Fred Hamilton Park to better represent the nature of how it is used.

To further enrich our knowledge of the park, Mr. Hamilton is going to search

for scrapbooks of the early days in the community. We are also going to create a Wikipedia entry for Fred Hamilton to make more public the significant impact he had on our community.

For the full bio of Fred Hamilton's father you can refer to the FoRRP website for a chronicled account of his life and his impact on Toronto parks.

Update from City Hall, Marco

The ramp contractor is on board. Work could begin anytime between 2 to 14 days for stairs being ripped out and replaced. The replacement of the south staircase is also being included in these plans.

Hard construction will be done within the year. The planting and soft landscaping won't be done until next year. All of the work is going to be covered by the AODA fund. Capital funds for next year are not being used on this project.

Project manager will remain Martin Balgavy throughout the construction.

Martin wants more input from the community on what we want to do with the washroom building.

Total of \$125,000 dedicated to state of good repair capital upgrades, another \$330,000 from development levies for completing paths and work in washrooms building and what ever work needs to be done.

Work for 2013 is going to dig into funds. Need a consultant on board as soon as possible for washroom building.

A total of \$455,000 if we use all of the park levies.

There are no more seasonal park staff meaning aesthetic requests won't be dealt with this year.

History Sub-committee Report, Susan Antler

The Calendar is complete and filled with great archival photos and maps of the area. The history committee is going to print out 100 copies for sale at

the cost of \$10 each. Distribution will go through the website and local shops. *Visions of Utopia* will front the money for production of the calendars. After *Visions of Utopia* is reimbursed for the investment, the profit will be retained in the history committee for future history committee projects. If there are extra calendars, they will be donated to Mike Layton's office to use as they see fit.

The Garrison Creek Markers should confirm the path of where the creek once flowed through the neighbourhood. There should be one set of markers on each street Shaw and Roxton.

One between the future location of the steps and the ramp on Roxton Road facing the street.

One at the North-East entrance of the park on Shaw Street.

Revitalization Sub-committee Report, Melana Janzen

We need more information and feedback on how a community kitchen should be used. This can be done by contacting some non-profit organizations and by talking to local restaurants to gauge interest on how to best utilize the potential of the washroom building. Some important questions are: What kind of kitchen? Will it be commercial? Will it be locally controlled? What to do with potential revenue? We also need to get information on the health standards and insurance implications of running a food-distributing kitchen.

Some notable impacts a community kitchen may have on our parks would be a greater connectivity between neighbours, a venue for events to make event planning easier, and could increase public usage in Fred Hamilton Park. A good person to talk to would be Jutta Mason of Dufferin Grove Park about their community kitchen, which is strictly a community run facility. We would need a large group of volunteers to run such a facility strictly through the community though. Some liability issues could arise in such a scenario. A nonprofit organization would assume liability in such scenarios though and could preclude the RFP process. A commercial outfit might have to go through a RFP process to get approval, which takes some of the influence out of our hands. We could still allocate time for community use if a nonprofit or a commercial organization were to take over as long as the arrangement is made at the outset of the deal.

If run by the community or as a not for profit the City could assume a facility as a park amenity and take control, fix up, and run if need be. This

could be useful in the case of our washroom building to operate as a community space and then later take on other roles. Action: Justine offered to either find or draft a possible agreement so we could understand how a model might work.

Working with a social enterprise we could avoid going through a RFP process if the money is reinvested into the community.

Mike is the Chair of the College Promenade BIA and their next meeting is December 11th. All are welcome and a member of FoRRP can get 10 min to speak at their next meeting about our priorities and future cooperation between the two groups. Action: Jill and one other rep to attend. YMCA is having an open house November 30th, which would be another good opportunity to build deeper relationships with local community organizations. Action: need someone from FoRRP to attend.

Future Designs

Melana suggested approaching design students to draw up plans for the water harvesting idea as a potential project for the future. Having a firm design will help us in our pursuit of grants and other funding. Some future sources of support could be the RBC Blue Water Grant, or the TD Environmental Fund. Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation could all provide funds. Action: discuss further at next Revitalization meeting. Marco also has contacts that can help us with this.

Student involvement may take the form of either:

- a studio setting with students offering up ideas / plans to our group as part of their course work. Action: Melana will connect with students from art, design, engineering, and anyone else interested to take part or
- have a citywide competition with the end goal of generating ideas for our parks. This would be the second choice of the group.

The Toronto Public Space Initiative wanted to contact us and may be interested in helping us achieve some of our goals. Action: Melana will be in touch with this group.

Urban Forestry Course Management Plan

The Urban Forestry Program at UofT has been in communication with Mike Layton's office, local schools, and the City parks department to install a program trying to build a long-term plan for the preservation of our area's green spaces. They are dedicated to beautification and functionality of our parks. They have been developing a 20-year strategy for long-term tree growth broken into 5-year intervals with evaluations to assess what should be incorporated into the next 5 years. They want a lasting endorsement for this program and a commitment to implement it making our neighbourhood more forested.

The Plan

The specifics of the plan incorporate the history of the Garrison Creek area and seeing what the forest was like in the past, seeing what were the original species and if they can be replanted.

Increasing the canopy cover in our area, which includes trees, shrubs, and a variety of other green coverage. The city-wide goal is 30-40% percent canopy coverage by 2050, but we need to address what percentage we can achieve in our parks and surrounding area. Currently we have 7.7% coverage in our area, which is from Dovercourt Road to Bathurst Street and from College Street to Queen Street. Tree planting will of course be influenced by streetscapes, buildings, infrastructures etc. The students are also sensitive to existing tree stock including various tree shapes, ages, and condition, native or non-native inventory, and coniferous or deciduous trees, and what species are the most appropriate for certain locations.

Goals for the two-year plan include community education and outreach by teaching the value of a forest with an "adopt a tree program." This gets people to go out and water their trees taking personal responsibility for their green spaces. Could also serve as a source of revenue and further connect the community. This will require someone from FoRRP to be identified as lead for this program.

An important rule to follow is the 10-20-30 rule. No more than 10% of one species, no more than 20% of one genus, no more than 30% of trees in one family will shift us towards a more healthy diverse forest. We are reminded by the importance of this by looking back in our neighbourhood's history of having a homogenous dominance of Elm trees that were wiped out by Dutch Elm Disease. The Elms were then replaced by Ash trees because of their fast growing capability. Now new pests are coming to kill off the Ash trees,

threatening our canopy once again. Longevity of forest is a priority, which is why diverse species in our forested areas are vital.

Year one operating plan will give options how to move forward. Top priority will be doing a tree inventory and they will link us with Neighbourwoods that has a structure in place to achieve this. This overall Tree Management Plan can act as a good way to apply for grants by having a strategic plan for the future. This can also be helpful with water harvesting plan. The TD fund deadline is December 1st so we will have to act soon if we want to be included this time around. Action: Jill and Justine to look into this grant. Action Marco to connect Jennifer to Mark Ventresca of Toronto forestry department.

The members of FoRRP voted in favour of this plan and have given the forestry group the consent to proceed with our full support and commitment to the program.

Events Sub-Committee Report, Bob Pritchard

- Winter Breakfast is being planned for sometime in January
- BookSwap Idea
- Framework for annual events

Postponed until next meeting

Playscape Sub-committee Report, Justine Greenland-Duke

- Little Free Library

Postponed until next meeting

Communications, Shani Parsons

- Online donations, sales, and volunteers
- Staying abreast of other Friends and BIA activities

Postponed until next meeting

Treasurer's Report, Justine

- FoRRP Bank account, tracking incoming revenue streams and draft budget – Justine
- Discussion about sponsorships
- Grants

Postponed until next meeting

Other Business

- Positioning ourselves to deal with free/cheap “products” trees, lumber etc.

- Community Garden Discussion

Postponed until next meeting

The next FoRRP steering committee meeting will take place on Wednesday December 5th.