

**Overbrook Community Association (OCA)**

**Board Meeting**

**21 November 2019, 7:00 pm**

**MINUTES**

**Adopted 23 January 2020**

Attendance: Board members: Joanne Lockyer (VP), David Behn, Heather Amys (President), Marie-Christine Blais (Secretary), Marjolaine Provost, Mercedes Marcano, Marilyn Read (Minute-taker); Regrets: Sheila Perry, Ismael Awaleh (VP), Danika Brisson (VP), Jo Stinson, Patrick Venier (Interim Treasurer); Nora Benamra, Shay Purdy; Committee members: Paul Pagliuso, Steve McNamee; Residents: Christine Langlois, Jaya, Louise Renauld-George

1. **Welcome and Residents' Mic:** Heather welcomed everyone and there was a roundtable of introductions. No residents' issues were raised.

Heather provided an update on Jo Stinson's health and conveyed Patrick Venier's regrets. Patrick has agreed to continue as interim Treasurer while Jo recovers. Heather encouraged participation in upcoming fundraisers for RRCRC and OCA. Joanne announced she is organizing a food and clothing drive in west Overbrook and that the Big Turkey Dinner will be held on December 24 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm at the Overbrook Community Centre. The Family Day grant from the City has not yet been confirmed but the sleigh ride has been booked.

2. **Agenda:** Heather added two items to the agenda: a meeting with MP Mona Fortier and the 2020 meeting schedule. **Marilyn moved acceptance of the agenda as amended. Marjolaine seconded. Carried.**
3. **Minutes:** Heather moved approval of the draft minutes of the September 19, 2019 meeting as circulated. Joanne seconded. Carried.

Heather requested revisions to the draft minutes of the Nov 7, 2019 Board orientation in camera meeting. She then moved approval of the draft minutes as amended. Mercedes seconded. Carried.

4. **Tree planting project:** Christine Langlois made a presentation about a project she is leading with a group of Overbrook residents to plant trees and create micro-orchards in Overbrook. The goal is to increase the tree canopy and its diversity, to produce more local and organic fruit and to build community. It addresses climate change and creates opportunities for local action. Mixed micro-orchards could be planted in Overbrook Park between the community gardens and the play structure and some street corners would be suitable where there are volunteers to care for the trees. The group identified 13 pages of potential locations for City tree planting in quick response to a request to OCA from the City through the Building Better Revitalized Neighbourhoods (BBRN) program. Two children who were part of the team are writing articles for the next issue of *Connexions* – one in French and one English. Next steps include ongoing research and partnership-building and an application for funds to Tree Canada.

**Action:** Raise the subject of trees with MP Mona Fortier and link the tree project with a potential greenspace strategy under BBRN. Heather

5. **Safety Committee:** Heather reminded everyone to complete the [Carleton University Neighbourhood Policing Survey](#). Paul noted that the results of the survey to date and of focus groups will be presented to the public on December 16 from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at the Rideau Community Hub.

The hiring process for the Crime Prevention Ottawa funded position is progressing.

**Action:** Follow-up on timing of Planning and Development Committee (P&D) meetings to ensure they do not conflict with Safety Committee meetings. Nora

6. **Logos:** Marjolaine presented seven options to refresh and modernize OCA's logo. In discussion, there was no consensus on a preferred option but suggestions were made for adapting various options to meet the criteria of simplicity and the inclusion of a water/bridge element to connect with the name, "Overbrook". It was agreed that the logo should have two colours, including the blue of the current logo.

**Action:** Logo to be further refined based on discussion. Marjolaine

7. **Digital Team Terms of Reference:** There was a brief discussion about draft terms of reference for the Digital Team, which Marjolaine circulated in advance of the meeting. It was agreed that Team members should have the final say.
- Action:** Digital Team Terms of Reference to be finalized and presented for adoption at the next Board meeting.  
Marjolaine
8. **ConneXions: next edition and Advisory Committee:** Joanne reported that the deadline for articles and ads for the next edition of the newspaper is December 13 (no extensions). The paper will be published and ready for distribution on January 10. Heather reported that we will advertise for an Ad Manager, whom we plan to pay an honorarium contingent on advertising sales. Terms of Reference for the Newspaper Team and the Advisory Committee will be presented to the Board at a future meeting. Marjolaine suggested two people for the Advisory Committee: André Dalencour and Jean-Sébastien Marier.
- Action:** BF terms of reference for Newspaper Team to next Board meeting. Alex Pope
- Action:** BF terms of reference for Advisory Committee. Heather
9. **Rideau River in Overbrook Project:** Marie-Christine presented the attached proposal developed by Steven Boyle on behalf of P&D. The goal is to encourage a greater sense of connection in the community with the area around the Adawe Bridge and its history as well as to increase safety. Similar educational and seating areas have been set up elsewhere on the river and on the canal. Steven is proposing to write to the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority as the first step in promoting the project. Heather thanked P&D for their initiative.
- Action:** Prepare letters proposing installation of the Rideau River Kiosk for Heather to send. Steven Boyle
10. **Poverty Reduction:** Heather reported that she and Danika attended a recent town hall hosted by the Ottawa Food Bank on poverty reduction. A speaker from Hamilton described success they have had by educating the community and businesses about the realities of low income residents and engaging businesses to pay living wages. Ward 13 is the top user of food banks in Ontario and Ottawa has had a 14% increase in people waiting for community housing in the last year bringing it to over 12,000. Heather will meet with the Community Collective (presidents of Ward 13 and Vanier community associations) who continue to work on poverty reduction.
- Action:** Poverty reduction to be a focal point for meeting with MP Mona Fortier. Heather
11. **Other Business:**
- **Bulletin Board:** Heather noted the need to put our name on the bulletin board the Community Centre provides for us. Joanne volunteered to take care of it using stencilled letters.
  - **Meetings:**
    - Heather has provided written input to Trustee Chris Ellis for a meeting on “Schools We Want” and to Sheila Perry on the FCA data workshop;
    - Paul and Nora will attend a November 27 meeting with Holland Properties, owner of The Mission, about a proposal for Overbrook;
    - Marjolaine will attend a November 28 meeting on establishing a Winter Trail along the river;
    - Heather and P&D will attend a BBRN meeting on November 28 along with the Vanier Community Association;
    - Councillor King’s next Ward Council is scheduled for January 16 on the themes of community safety and poverty reduction. (P.S. This meeting has been rescheduled for Jan 22, topic is Poverty Reduction.)
  - **OCA meeting schedule:** Discussion was deferred to the next Board meeting.
12. **Next meeting:** January 16, 2020, 7 p.m., Overbrook Community Centre (P.S. Meeting has since been pushed to January 23<sup>rd</sup>.)

**Attachment:** The Rideau River in Overbrook

# The Rideau River in Overbrook

# La rivière Rideau à Overbrook

## Proposal summary

There is an untapped opportunity to inform and better education the public about the Rideau River. This waterway cuts through much of urban Ottawa and has multi-use pathways, often on both river banks, and yet there are very few kiosks or information panels along its many kilometres of pathways where somebody could stop and learned about the river. This document puts forth a proposal that a pilot project of kiosks and a seating area, “The Rideau River – in Overbrook”, be set up in Overbrook near the Adawe Crossing. This could be a partnership project of the National Capital Commission (NCC) and the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA).

## Background

The Overbrook Community Association is putting forward this request that both the NCC and RVCA work together to plan, fund and put in place this kiosk and seating project in our community (Figure 1 – red circled site). It could be a first pilot project and if deemed a success it might be replicated at other riverfront locations such as near Billings Bridge, near Carleton University, etc.

Along Overbrook’s western boundary is the Rideau River with adjacent NCC owned parkland, the well-used Rideau eastern (east side) multi-use pathway and of course the Adawe Crossing which has been a great success story. The Adawe Crossing opened in 2015, linking not only



**Figure 1** – suggested kiosk location (red circle), falls and Adawe Crossing – near the west end of Donald Street

Overbrook and Sandy Hill but providing an east-west crosstown walking and cycling connection in urban Ottawa. This footbridge is traversed by people on average more than 110,000 times per month during the warmer months and it continues to be a favourite location for picture taking. It is a “stop and take a moment to look” place and it complements the nearby east riverbank where there is the erosion prevention works consisting of large stone blocks where you can sit down and gaze out at the rock ledge small falls.

People, and also wildlife (mainly waterfowl), gather in the area of the bridge and small falls all year round. There is a lot of foot and bicycle traffic of commuters, seniors out for a stroll, dog walkers and weekday or weekend passerby visitors from elsewhere in the National Capital Region or from across Canada. It is these

people of all ages and from all places that are the target audiences to stop and read the kiosk information and to sit down and view the river. Get in touch with this place, don't just pass it by.

### **Key elements**

A model of what could be done kiosk-wise is found at Dows Lake where the NCC installed very attractive kiosks on the north and south shores – photos of the former are shown in Appendix A. At this proposed Overbrook location there is also need to have more seating than the existing one wooden park bench. Several benches with backs and arm rests (to help seniors) could be set back from the multi-use pathway in proximity to the kiosks and with views towards the river.

What might these bilingual kiosk panels say? Below are some initial ideas, realizing that there is limited panel space yet so much to tell.

Panel Board 1 – Nature Here at the River – due to open water and a food source waterfowl stay all year here, say this and show identifying photos of the wintering birds: mallards, mergansers, etc. Briefly mention the small minnows that you may see on the shorelines, mammals that visit day or night and the plants along the river banks and in the river. (RVCA – lead author)

Panel Board 2 – Flooding Hazard – show a photo of the ice damming and how not that many decades ago the river flooded the area of the nearby former Rideau Tennis Club (now Rideau Sports Centre); explain why the City of Ottawa undertakes spring ice clearing operations and how this is done, with use today of more environmentally friendly methods than dynamiting, to prevent flooding. Let us know what might climate change mean for the future of the river? (RVCA – lead author)

Panel Board 3 – People and the River – give a short history lesson of use of the river: by First Nations and how it was part of a larger travel network, by European settlers who cleared and cultivate its shores, and then by city dwellers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Tell us how the Gréber Plan of the mid-twentieth century sought to, and successful did, preserve as public lands along much of the Rideau and Ottawa River shorelines. Tell how we benefit today from this planning effort – greenspace, pathways, pedestrian bridges, etc. (NCC lead author)

For security reasons lighting (possibly solar powered) along part of the existing pathway might be another element to consider. These lamp posts could be, from the existing Adawe Crossing and Donald Street lighting, extended both south towards the suggested kiosks site and also north adjacent to the Rideau Sports Centre as there is a dark zone there.

### **NCC and RVCA - mandates and partnership**

The NCC is actively seeking to animate, e.g. seasonal cafés, new dock access, etc. the Rideau Canal corridor and that of the Ottawa River too. The Rideau River also needs some attention to make it more “public–friendly”. Often in the National Capital Region we hear of there being too much government, too many levels and lack of cooperation among them. Here is an excellent opportunity to send a positive message, to demonstrate a partnership between the NCC and RVCA which is surely possible for this good cause. Appendices B and C remind us of the mandates of the NCC and RVCA.

### **Next steps**

This is the start, a proposal, an idea with merit for the NCC and RVCA to consider. We hope that both organizations can foresee the public benefits, as a pilot project, of these kiosks and a seating area here along the Rideau River. We hope that jointly the NCC and RVCA may undertake a feasibility study, leading to funding, design and construction of this small educational project. How very good it would be to know our river better!

November 2019

Submitted by the Overbrook Community Association

## Appendix A – Photos of Dows Lake information kiosk



# Appendix B – National Capital Commission

Copied from web site:

The National Capital Commission is the federal Crown corporation dedicated to ensuring that Canada's Capital is a dynamic and inspiring source of pride for all Canadians, and a legacy for generations to come.

## Mandate

The National Capital Commission is a federal Crown corporation created by Canada's Parliament in 1959 under the National Capital Act. Its predecessors were the Federal District Commission, created in 1927, and the Ottawa Improvement Commission, created in 1899.

The NCC is subject to the accountability regime set out in Part X of the Financial Administration Act. It reports to Parliament through the minister designated as minister responsible for the National Capital Act.

Building on more than a century of experience, the NCC provides unique value in the Capital Region by fulfilling three specific roles: long-term planner of federal lands, principal steward of nationally significant public places, and creative partner committed to excellence in development and conservation.

## Long-term Planner

The NCC is the main federal urban planner in Canada's Capital Region. In this role, the NCC works in collaboration with stakeholders to enhance the natural and cultural character of the Capital.

## Principal Steward

The NCC manages Gatineau Park, the Greenbelt, the Rideau Canal Skateway, urban lands and parks, pathways, scenic parkways, real property and heritage buildings, agricultural and research facilities, and commemorative monuments. It is also the custodian of the Capital's six official residences.

## Creative Partner

The NCC encourages creativity and innovation in everything it does. This means building strong relationships with people and organizations throughout the region and across the country, including local municipalities and Indigenous communities.

# Appendix C – Rideau Valley Conservation Authority

Copied from web site:

## About Us

RVCA is one of Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities. Under Ontario's Conservation Authorities Act, the RVCA is responsible for furthering the "conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources in the watershed." We are responsible for protecting people and property from natural hazards like flooding and erosion.

For over 50 years, the RVCA has worked to protect the health of our watershed and the people who live in it. Through environmental monitoring and reporting, on-the-ground restoration and stewardship, conservation lands and education, development review and approval and flood forecasting and warning working in close partnerships with our member municipalities, other levels of government and academia has made this work possible.

## Our Vision

Our vision is for a thriving watershed with clean abundant water, natural shorelines, rich forests and wetlands, diverse habitat and sustainable land use that is valued and protected by all.

## Our Mission

Our mission is to understand, manage, protect, restore and enhance the Rideau watershed through science, stewardship, education, policy and leadership.