

April 28, 2005

Dear Dufferin Grove Resident's Association Members,

First of all let me congratulate all of you on becoming the inaugural members of the Dufferin Grove Resident's Association or DGRA. We on the interim executive committee are confident that this association will become a strong voice in the community to ensure that it continues to evolve and grow in a way that best suits its residents.

Although we came together because of the Doversquare development issue, our goal is to become involved in all future developments in our neighbourhood as well. With that in mind, our latest venture is to conduct a survey next week through which we will try to identify some of the needs of our community. We can then use that information to negotiate for Section 37 benefits from the developer of Doversquare and future developers in the area.

Section 37 Survey

Section 37 of the Ontario Planning Act essentially says that when a developer is asking to build a building larger than what is allowed in that area, he may pay a lump sum of money to the city to be used for the community's benefit. The money is then given to the councillor in the area for distribution. As a community, we can then approach the councillor, Joe Pantalone in this case, with a list of areas we think could use some funding. Generally those areas include things like park improvements, street improvements, aesthetic improvements, community centres, libraries, schools etc.

This week we will be calling on the membership to conduct a door to door survey that we have created to assess what areas of the community residents would most like to see funded. I hope that you can all give a little of your time to engage in this valuable exercise. We are hoping to have the results of this study by Wednesday, May 4 – next week.

We will then take the results of the survey and meet with both Joe Pantalone and the city to let them know what kind of community benefits we would like to receive under Section 37.

OMB Update

Mike Mclean, Paul Walty and I attended the OMB second pre-hearing on April 18th. The developer stated that he would need a longer period for the hearing and therefore the hearing was rescheduled to September 20 and will continue for two weeks from that date.

Prior to the pre-hearing we were asked to submit a list of the issues we would be presenting. The City was asked to do the same. The OMB Member asked that we consolidate the two lists.

After the pre-hearing we met with Leslie Forder, counsel for the City and Elise Hug, the planner on our file. They asked us to come up with a more concise list of issues as well as a list of community benefits we might want to apply for under Section 37 of the Ontario Planning Act.

AGM

The AGM at Dewson School was attended by about 100 people and 45 of you signed up as members. We raised \$350 – not quite enough to hire a lawyer or independent urban planner for the OMB but we thank you for giving what you could. The money we raised will be used for administrative costs at this point, such as mailbox rental, website set-up etc. Thanks to all of you for coming out and sharing your questions and points of view.

As you may recall, much of the discussion at the meeting revolved around why the DGRA took a "no development" position at the November 23 community meeting and was now taking a "some development" position. I'd like to state again that our reason for taking this stance was that it became clear from everyone we spoke with that had experience in this area, that it was inevitable a building of some kind would be built on the Doversquare site. And that if we decided to take a "no development" stance we would have no voice at all. Instead, we were encouraged to develop a position or building that the community would accept and bargain with that position in mind.

Since the AGM, we received the minutes from a meeting held between the city and the developers in which the city asks for compromises that are very much in line with what the DGRA executive has been discussing in recent months. Namely, a shorter, smaller building that would eat up less greenspace. We decided that since the city's position is acceptable to us, we would concentrate our efforts on preparing for the upcoming OMB hearing. Of course, we are continuing to keep a critical eye on the negotiations between the city and the developer to ensure that an acceptable position is maintained.

Other DGRA News

It is with great regret that Andrew Munger has had to resign from his position as President of the association. Unfortunately, a family member became ill and Andrew needed to concentrate his time and efforts on helping them get well. I, Sheila Pin have been asked to take on his role until we hold elections in the fall.

We also concluded that the best way to keep an eye on other developments in the area would be to invite resident representatives to join the executive. So

welcome to Sophia Jong who has been involved in the 46 Delaware expansion development and Dean Perlmutter who is keeping an eye on the Sylvan Avenue apartment development.

Two more new executive members include Marlene Colgrove of Rusholme Rd. who will act as secretary and Mike McLean, a recent masters graduate of urban planning who lives on Concord Ave. and will be helping us prepare for the OMB hearing as well as act as a witness at the hearing.

And congratulations to our membership director, Rachel Taylor of Rusholme who recently gave birth to baby Penelope. Rachel's neighbour Rob Willson, also of Rusholme is working with Rachel on membership as well as acting as treasurer for the association.

Thanks again for your support and for deciding to participate in your community through the DGRA. If you would like any more information or have any questions or concerns about what the DGRA is doing, please feel free to contact me or any of the executive members listed below. You can also send an e-mail to theDGRA@canoemail.com .

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