

March 20, 2017

To: Chair and Members of the Planning Committee

Re: motion 9.1 (motion to declare 38 Strachan Street West and 344 Bay Street North surplus)

As long as I have lived in the North End, over 30 years, the area at Bay and Strachan has been a grassy “parkette”.

I read in the newspaper on March 1, in an article mostly about Eastwood Park, the Councillor’s proposal that the use of 2 pieces of land in the North End be changed. The article referred to “... a conversation in the community” and I assumed that both ideas, Bay/Strachan and Eastwood Park would be part of some kind of community conversation.

I am writing to request that there be consultation with neighbourhood residents about both of these proposals.

As far as I know, there has been no conversation with the Friends of the Sunset Garden, “gardening group”. There are many forms of public engagement, and often new ideas emerge that benefit both the City and residents.

I wish to point out three examples of positive “community conversation” although I know there are many more.

1. The City needed to do a sewer infrastructure project called Real Time Control. Without going into details about RTC, our Councillor Jason Farr, and the City met several times with residents about the project. The project was explained, options were discussed, residents concerns were listened to, and my sense is that the project was a success, for both the City and residents.
2. Participatory Budgeting 2016, Ward 2 was a success due to the number of residents ideas that were submitted, and the number of residents who voted. A committee led by Civic Plan, and the Ward 2 office included several residents who worked hard in their community to publicize and encourage resident participation.
3. Our Sobi Bike system is another example of a successful project with both City and Citizens working together.

Changes are happening in the North End. The West Harbour development is a big project; but there are others. Hughson Street Church is partnering with Indwell for a project for 40 units of assisted living on James North. Welcome Inn is discussing a similar project for seniors near Bennetto Recreation Centre. To our south, along James North more development is occurring, such as the Acclamation Condos and the LIUNA project next to the Lister Block.

The GO station, which I hope will be busier in the future, was not contemplated during the development of the West Harbour Secondary Plan and that project changed how the City, and Province, look at our area.

In all of these cases there has been consultation.

Therefore, I respectfully request that the motion be delayed or tabled until further consultation with area residents takes place, preferably as part of the consultation process being contemplated as part of item 9.2 for the "Eastwood Precinct".

Thank you,

Sheri Selway