

**Public Realm Advisory Committee
September 26, 2012
Ontario Room**

Attendance:

<u>Members:</u> Councillor Valerie Burke Councillor Alex Chiu Hanif Nori, Chair Omar Bhatti <u>Regrets:</u> Councillor Logan Kanapathi Sadiq Pirani	<u>Staff:</u> Karen Boniface, Technical Coordinator Catherine Jay, Manager of Urban Design Brenda Librecz, Commissioner of Community & Fires Services Francine Périnet, Director of the Art Gallery Laura Gold, Committee Clerk
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The Public Realm Advisory Committee convened at 5:12 p.m. with Hanif Nori presiding as Chair.

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Moved by Councillor Alex Chiu
Seconded by Councillor Valerie Burke

That the Minutes of the June 6, 2012 Public Realm Advisory Committee be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

2. PUBLIC REALM UPDATE

Civic Centre

Ms. Karen Boniface advised that planting beds had been installed at the Civic Centre pond. With the help of volunteers sustainable plants will be planted. The project cost was approximately \$18,000. These funds were obtained from sources other than the \$30,000 allocated for community projects. It was recommended that a press release be prepared highlighting the volunteers role in the planting of the new planting beds at Civic Centre Pond.

Ms. Brenda Librecz reported that fountain nozzles were installed in the new rink at Civic Centre to help keep the birds away, as they were defecating and causing drainage problems.

It was noted that there are plans to create a grand entrance to the corner of Highway 7 and Warden Avenue to the pond at Civic Centre. Some other plans for this area included: adding sidewalks along Highway 7; adding a staging area for events; and improving the accessibility of the pathway leading to the pond. The goal is to create a square that can be enjoyed by the community. Infrastructure funds will be used to cover some of the costs associated with this project and funds are also being put aside in 2013 for the grand entrance to the area.

It was questioned if there was an opportunity to turn the pond at Civic Centre into a splash pad in the summer months. Staff advised this was possible, but thought it may not be a good fit given the number of weddings that occur at Civic Centre.

It was noted that consideration is being given to changing the fountain nozzles at the front of Civic Centre and to adding stone benches. This will help beautify the area for couples taking wedding pictures and for everyone's enjoyment.

It was noted that Civic Centre has been designated as a culture heritage centre.

Integrated Leisure Master Plan

The Committee requested that the Integrated Leisure Master Plan be presented to the Committee at the next meeting.

Bike Racks

This is an ongoing project, and phase 1 is expected to be completed in 2013.

Henderson Mural

This project was expected to be completed in 2013.

Planting Beds

There were plans to add planting beds with daffodils to community centres and to four locations to be determined in each ward. Staff will meet with the Ward Councillor to determine the appropriate locations for the planting beds. Locations where planting beds already exists will be looked at first to help minimize costs and a preference will be given to gateways.

It was noted that staff are looking at sustainable garden solutions to replace flower beds and baskets, as an E3 initiative. The Committee was asked if it had any suggestions.

Trees at Highgate Park

It was noted that the trees planted at Highgate Park in the fall of 2010 have not blossomed yet. Staff were requested to investigate this matter and to show Councillor Chui examples of other types of trees that blossom that could be planted at the park instead.

Speaker Series

The Committee discussed the speaker series. It should consider what it wants to achieve and who it wants as speakers. The first speaker could introduce the concept of the public realm and following speakers could discuss components of the public realm (e.g. public art; community engagement; and random acts of beauty). The speaker series could be held at various locations in Markham (e.g. Heintzman House or the new Cornell Community Rehearsal Hall).

Some ideas for speakers included: David Suzuki or David Suzuki's daughter, the Police or Fire Chief to discuss public engagement; or Chris Hume from the Toronto Star.

Staff were requested to contact Sadiq Pirani to see if he is still interested in assisting with the speaker series.

Francine Périnet advised that she will assist with the speaker series.

News Paper Vendor Boxes

Brenda Librecz provided the following update with respect to the news paper vendor boxes:

- staff are investigating which boxes have been placed illegally;
- Owners of the boxes have been notified that their permit will not be automatically renewed;
- Staff are investigating increasing the fee of having a box;
- Staff are investigating ways of beautifying the boxes;
- A by-law and policies are being created to govern the placement of the boxes, which is anticipated to be completed by spring 2013.

An update was requested to be provided on this matter at the next meeting.

Boulevard By-Law

Karen Boniface advised that staff will first educate the community on the new Boulevard By-law passed last spring and then enforce the by-law. It was noted that problematic areas can be reported to Bylaws staff, so that resident can be notified.

3. PUBLIC ART UPDATE

Francine Périnet provided the following public art update:

- The public art at the Cornell Community Centre is ready to be installed;
- The completion of the bike racks have been delayed due to a personal issue with the artist;
- The Pomona mural has been completed;
- The Henderson mural will now be created offsite and installed at its completion due to the high cost of creating the mural onsite;
- A sculpture is being installed outside of the museum.

It was noted that staff will be looking at where public art shall be placed at the Pan Am site.

4. NEW BUSINESS

It was noted that the impression on the John Street overpass bridge is very subtle. Staff advised they would investigate this matter, as the impression is being used on other bridges in Markham and is intended to have a dramatic appearance.

5. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the Public Realm Advisory Committee will be scheduled to be held in November 2012 on a date to be determined.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The Public Realm Advisory Committee adjourned at 6:35 p.m.