

Pam McConnell

STRENGTHENING OUR CITY FOR EVERYONE

ENHANCING OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

Enhancing the Market Precinct

The St. Lawrence North and South Market, St. Lawrence Hall, Market Lane Park, and the adjacent streets are all being planned comprehensively as the Market Precinct.

Agreements have been signed with the architect of the new North Market. Detailed design work has started with construction scheduled to begin in 2014 and the opening in 2016.

On Market Street, a cooperation between the City and Woodcliffe Properties will create a new beautified streetscape in 2012. Woodcliffe is renovating the LCBO, building new office space, and adding restaurants at street level while rehabilitating the heritage structures.

As the existing sidewalk doesn't have enough space for outdoor patios, an innovative solution

was proposed by Public Realm staff. The developer will build a new curbside sidewalk that meets Market St. at grade. Decorative bollards will divide the sidewalk from street parking in the winter season, which can be extended in the summer to allow patios to animate the street. High quality paving materials will be used for the sidewalk, and widened pavement at the north end of the street will help calm traffic.

On the east side of the street, the St. Lawrence Market is also planning a new enclosed retail space and is coordinating their streetscape plans with this initiative.

This transformation will allow for temporary closures during festivals and events and create a wonderful new pedestrian experience to draw people to businesses on the street and in the Market.

Plans are also being finalized for the Front St. Promenade that will extend from the Market Precinct to the West Don Lands. When Jarvis Street to Parliament Street is being resurfaced in 2012, sidewalks will be reconstructed with decorative pavers, several intersections will have extended 'bump out' sidewalks, new planters will be installed, and the street lighting will be replaced with decorative pedestrian poles as recommended in the Heritage Lighting Master Plan.

When completed, the Promenade will create a wonderful connection to the Pan Am Games athletes' village in 2015 and a legacy to be enjoyed by residents and businesses.

Regent Park Revitalization Update

Regent Park Revitalization continues to move forward with tremendous momentum.

With the opening of the Toronto Christian Resource Centre's affordable housing and community hub building at 40 Oak Street in early 2012, Phase 1 will be complete. This includes:

- New family and senior's rental buildings at 246 and 252 Sackville Street and 1 Oak Street
- New market condominiums One Cole and One Park West
- Rental and market townhouses along Oak Street, Cole Street, Regent Street and Arnold Avenue
- Children's Hub housing Regent Park Day Care, Parents for Better Beginnings and FOCUS Media Arts Centre

- New through streets on Sackville, Oak, and Cole
- New retail and office space, including FreshCo, Royal Bank, Rogers, Tim Hortons, Toronto Centre for Learning and Community Development and Regent Park Employment Services

Phase 2 is well underway bringing critical physical and social infrastructure to the neighbourhood, retail along Dundas Street, and new market and rental housing throughout.

This infrastructure includes the Regent Park Aquatic Centre opening in Spring 2012, the surrounding Park slated for completion in the late 2012, and the new Regent

Park Community Centre next to the renovated Nelson Mandela Park Public School to be opened in the fall of 2013.

In addition, the exciting Regent Park Arts and Cultural Centre is nearing completion and will be opened in 2012. This 5,500 square metre facility includes a large performance venue, space for local arts organizations, youth programming and the Centre for Social Innovation. This facility will be the cultural heart of Regent Park.

Finally, I'm also excited to announce that Regent Park is home to the first expansion of the BIXI Bike Share program with new locations at Dundas and Parliament Streets and Gerrard and Parliament Streets,



Councillor Pam McConnell at the grand opening of the new Regent Park Bixi bike station.

connecting our community to this innovative transportation network.

As work continues on Phase 2, we are constantly examining timelines and ensuring that the Regent Park community is kept informed of the ongoing work and included in the planning for the upcoming phases.

May we all have a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

Pam

Pam celebrates the holidays with the seniors at Dixon Hall.

New Year's Levee

JOIN COUNCILLOR PAM MCCONNELL AND OTHER CITY COUNCILLORS AT THE MAYOR'S NEW YEAR'S LEVEE.

DATE: SUNDAY JANUARY 1

TIME: 2:00 PM TO 4:00 PM

LOCATION: TORONTO CITY HALL, ROTUNDA (100 QUEEN STREET WEST)

VISIT MY WEBSITE KEEP UP TO DATE ON NEWS, EVENTS, AND MEETINGS FROM CITY HALL AND OUR COMMUNITY AND SIGN UP FOR MY E-NEWSLETTER AT WWW.PAMMCCONNELL.CA.

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2011 Winter Newsletter

Volume 13 • Issue 2



BUILDING OUR CITY TOGETHER

Transforming the Toronto Port Lands and Waterfront



Pam at the groundbreaking announcement for Underpass Park.

In August we learned that a behind the scenes move was underway to remove the development of the Port Lands from Waterfront Toronto. Years of planning through community consultation was being pushed aside to allow a fire sale of public lands that would compromise the vision of a naturalized Don River and a sustainable, mixed-use urban neighbourhood.

The public response to this move was remarkable. A grassroots coalition of concerned individuals and organizations known as CodeBlueTO mobilized thousands of people from all parts of the city. They condemned the shift from transparency and good planning to closed door deal-making and ill-thought propositions that included a mega-mall and ferris wheel.

Thanks to this incredible outpouring of grassroots support, I was able to facilitate with Council colleagues a consensus resolution that was supported unanimously at City Council.

As a result, Waterfront Toronto will remain as lead developer and there will be a financial review of the current plans. The approved protocol also directs the agency to look at accelerating development in the Port Lands, create a business plan for their development model, and look at the costs for other options that accomplish city-building goals. A report on this review will be submitted to City Council in June 2012.

Waterfront Toronto is conducting a comprehensive public consultation process during this review and several meetings will be scheduled. I urge you to attend and offer your comments. I believe that we must remain vigilant as there still may be an attempt to take revenue from revitalization out of the waterfront and not reinvest it back into these projects. We cannot allow our waterfront to be used as a tool to balance the City budget or fund unrelated capital projects in other parts of the city. We must ensure that any cost savings meet the objectives of a naturalized Don River, a great new community, and vibrant public spaces.

Please stay connected with updates and notices through CodeBlueTO at www.codeblueto.com and Waterfront Toronto at www.waterfronttoronto.ca.

The momentum on our waterfront continues.

Pan Am Games Village – Dundee Kilmar Development Ltd. has been selected to build the village that will become a mixed use neighbourhood with market and affordable housing. As local investors with projects in the

Distillery, Corktown, and St. Lawrence, they have the local knowledge and a model that ensures the village becomes a successful neighbourhood.

Don River Park – Opening in Spring 2012, this 7.8 hectare park provides flood protection for the downtown with a grassy naturalized prairie area and a multi use park centered around a beautiful pavilion. The park will be accessed by King Street East until the Pan Am Games are complete in 2015

Underpass Park – Opening in Spring 2012, this orphaned space under the Richmond/Adelaide flyover features activity areas, play structures, and seating. This park will connect the West Don Lands to Corktown.

Queen's Quay Transformation – The construction manager has been selected and work will begin in Spring 2012. Phase 1 will extend from Spadina to Bay Street and create a beautiful new waterfront boulevard with a tree-lined promenade, cycling lane, and new streetcar tracks.

Bayside – The development block between Lower Sherbourne Street and Parliament Street, south of Queen's Quay is undergoing a rezoning review to refine the design for office and residential buildings.

Parkside – The first residential building in the East Bayfront is now being marketed as 'Monde'.

George Brown Campus – The new health sciences building opens in Fall 2012 and will bring 3500 students to the waterfront.

Corktown Reclaims Orphaned Spaces

The Corktown Residents and Business Association is leading improvements to this unique neighbourhood in partnership with the City.

Corktown is in the centre of major urban transformation in the West Don Lands to the south and Regent Park to the north, as well as new infill development within its boundaries. Its historic character as a neighbourhood of small streets with distinct rowhouses was compromised by the insertion of huge transportation infrastructure such as the Richmond and Adelaide flyovers. These structures left many isolated orphaned spaces that act as barriers for people to move through and enjoy their neighbourhood. As well, ad hoc construction over the last decades has left inconsistent streetscapes that are barren and unfriendly in places.

Last year, the CRBA created a Visioning document to outline the challenges and opportunities towards strengthening Corktown's community identity and

improving public spaces. The four key themes were streets as places, opportunities from redevelopment, orphaned spaces and parks, and public spaces. In spring 2011, a Ryerson urban planning studio project provided an inventory of the state of the streets and spaces in the area with suggestions for improvements.

The CRBA identified a number of priority projects that could be implemented in the near future that build on earlier successful initiatives such as the new dog off-leash area and removal of the fence at the foot of the embankment at Richmond Street.

A grant from the City's Economic Development Mural Program aimed at creating an attractive identity for the commercial area resulted in additional funds being leveraged from local businesses. The new mural was placed on the wall of the Toronto Humane Society at Queen Street and River Street, transforming a blank

space into a welcoming commemoration of past and future at the gateway to Corktown.

The City's Clean & Beautiful program provided a grant towards design and implementation of streetscape improvement on Queen Street along an unattractive parking lot. The proposal for a post and beam skeleton structure replicating the facade of the former heritage structures, decorated with ivy, is creating the opportunity for a funding partnership with the adjacent property owner.

Inspired by Waterfront Toronto's Underpass Park, the other underpasses have been identified for improvement. Decorative pavers, hardy landscaping, improved lighting and active programming could help reclaim these unfriendly



The new Gateway Mural on Queen Street.

spaces. Discussions are underway to design and fund the project.

A wide swath of pavement on the west side of River Street at King/Queen Streets is now being reviewed by the City at the request of CRBA to provide beautification as the road is realigned.

I am pleased to work with this group that is committed to proactive planning and community engagement to improve spaces for people.

FIGHTING FOR OUR CITY

Preserving the Riverdale Farm for our children



The Riverdale Farm is a jewel for residents and visitors to enjoy.

I am currently chairing the Riverdale Farm Coalition, which is a neighbourhood committee working with City staff towards a sustainable future of the Farm. The Coalition was formed in response to City Council's attempt to close the Farm and the programming. The Coalition is providing the following update for the community:

As many of you have heard, there has been a lot of concern about the Riverdale Farm closing due to the current budget talks. We hope that, by now, you have also heard that the Farm will be staying open: the 2012 budget for the Farm is secure.

In September, City Council endorsed a proposal submitted by a coalition of community groups: The Riverdale Farm Advisory Council, Friends of Riverdale Farm, Riverdale Park West Stewardship Team, Cabbagetown Preservation Association, Don Vale Cabbagetown Residents' Association,

and Cabbagetown Art & Crafts. The Coalition challenged the City to work with it and explore a new partnership model that addresses the ongoing operations and future financial security of the Farm.

Between now and the Spring of 2012, the Farm Coalition will engage with the Farm users, the local community, and the City's senior staff to define this new model and establish a solid foundation for the Farm to move toward sustainability. We are excited and encouraged that the City is open to exploring options to keep the Farm open and accessible. We will also be working to move the Farm forward with world class opportunities and services to the community, near and far. Coalition members are pleased that many individuals and organizations have come forward to offer their help in this process.

In the coming months please watch for regular updates from community organizations and at www.pammccconnell.ca. We plan to solicit your thoughts regarding the Farm. Engagement with the community will take place through online surveys, community meetings, community working groups, and certainly many impromptu street corner discussions. You can also follow us at www.riverdalefarm.ca which has a special section covering this process.

During the coming months, our goal is to secure the Farm as a cherished location for the generations who have grown to love it and for the generations who are following in their footsteps.



Pam joined by community members at the official announcement of 1812 commemoration programming.

Commemorating the Bicentennial of the War of 1812

The War of 1812 marked the beginning of the transformation for Toronto and the entire country. This war was pivotal in setting Canada onto the path to nationhood. It was also the catalyst for the town of York, leading it to become the city of Toronto and the nation's financial, commercial, and manufacturing centre.

As part of a nation-wide commemoration of this formative event and the two centuries of peaceful coexistence with the United States, Toronto has planned a series of events and legacy attractions over the next two years. As a member of the 1812 Bicentennial Steering Committee, I am incredibly proud of the work done by our City staff in working with our communities and private sector partners in delivering hundreds of programs.

The two legacy projects that will come out of the commemoration are the ongoing revitalization of the Fort York National Historic Site, which was a major battleground in the war, and a virtual heritage trail network, to tell the story of the war and our city.

The commemoration gets underway during the week of June 15, 2012, marking the anniversary of the declaration of war. Among the events scheduled is an overnight vigil at St. James Anglican Cathedral, to honour the sacrifices of those who died in the war, and costumed actors talking with visitors in our Old Town, courtesy of the St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA.

On February 17, 2012, the interpretative centre on the First Parliament Site will have its official opening. The Parliament buildings which stood on the site were attacked and burned during the war. Located in the former Porsche dealership, the centre will tell the story of the site through various exhibits and educational programming.

For more information about the history, events, and projects, please visit www.toronto.ca/1812.

2012 City Budget

City Council is currently considering the 2012 Operating and Capital Budgets. Council will debate and vote on the budgets on January 17.

The recommended \$14.8 billion 10-year Capital Plan invests in the City's infrastructure, including the state of good repair of roads, sidewalks, City facilities, and our public spaces. Our growing community continues to be the location for a number of important projects:

- \$411 million to revitalize Union Station
- \$72 million for the redevelopment of the St. Lawrence North Market
- \$18 million for the future St. Lawrence Library
- \$17 million for the Regent Park Community Centre
- \$4 million for the completion of the Regent Park Aquatic Centre

The proposed 2012 Operating Budget, which funds such services as the TTC, libraries, recreation, and emergency services, totals \$9.4 billion. The proposed budget includes a



Pam and fellow Councillors at a special town hall to hear residents' concerns about City services.

DOWNTOWN BUDGET TOWN HALL

Hosted by Councillors Pam McConnell, Kristyn Wong-Tam, and Adam Vaughan

Date: Wednesday, January 4, 2012

Time: 6:00 pm

Location: Council Chamber, Toronto City Hall (100 Queen Street West)

2.5% property tax increase, new and increased user fees, and significant service reductions. Among some of the services that are affected:

- Eliminate free recreation programs for children and youth at Priority Centres
- Reduce service on TTC routes, including the King, Queen, Dundas, and Carlton streetcars
- Cuts to agencies providing health programs, including AIDS prevention
- Cuts to arts and culture funding
- Defer the hiring of Police Officers, Firefighters, and Paramedics
- Reduce funding for child care centres and eliminate spaces

I am very troubled that many of the cuts will have a direct impact on our community, marginalize vulnerable people, and make our city a less desirable place to live and do business. While we should always be seeking efficiencies and ways to improve services, I believe many of these cuts are recklessly attacking the services Torontonians depend on.

To receive input from the community, I am co-hosting a Town Hall with Councillors Adam Vaughan and Kristyn Wong-Tam. I hope you will join us to give your input on the budget and the direction you want for Toronto.

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Central Neighbourhood House's 100 Years of Service



Pam at a special photo exhibit celebrating Central Neighbourhood House's century of community service.

Throughout 2011, Central Neighbourhood House has been celebrating 100 years of service to our community and the City.

From a Winter Fair in Riverdale Park to Jane's Walks to photo exhibitions to gala evenings – community members, past and present clients, supporters and friends have been gathering once a month to celebrate a century of important work.

Our city and our community are very fortunate. Central Neighbourhood House is just as essential now as it was a century ago, when it first opened. At that time, a group of passionate University of Toronto students set out to improve the conditions for new immigrants. That need for service still exists, as does that desire among people in Toronto to help those in need.

On behalf of the City of Toronto, we extend our thanks to Central Neighbourhood House and look forward to our continued partnership in the century to come.

Shaping developments in St. James Town

Over the course of the last few years, the St. James Town neighbourhood has been contemplating new development – something that has not been considered for more than a generation.

Residents have participated actively through various working group processes and at community meetings to shape the form that these developments take in order to ensure that the priorities of St. James Town are placed in the forefront.

In 2010 the North St. James Town Planning Framework study was undertaken. I worked with City Planning staff and local residents to proactively look at the site bounded by Howard Street, Sherbourne Street, Bloor Street East and Parliament Street to assess whether the existing planning controls were appropriate to permit desirable development in the North St. James Town area, as well as to identify area public realm objectives. The results of this review were adopted by City Council in August 2010.

This October, City Council approved a new rental development at 545-555-565 Sherbourne Street. The approved application includes a new rental building containing 409 new rental units, revitalization of Bleecker Street through the addition of town homes and removal of the existing podium, new space for Art City, a significant contribution towards the future St. James Town pool, and new retail opportunities on Sherbourne Street including a renovated grocery store. The final form of this development was substantially shaped by resident input through an intensive working group process.



Pam at the opening of the refurbished basketball court in St. James Town.

Currently, the City is contemplating a proposal for development on the North St. James Town lands. Following a comprehensive working group process and two community consultation meetings, City Planning and the applicants are working through revisions to the proposal based on this feedback. I anticipate that early in 2012, staff will be presenting a final report to Toronto and East York Community Council for a public hearing.

Finally, City Planning will be initiating a City Council directed Community Improvement Plan in 2012 to look at the entirety of St. James Town. This plan will look at enhancements to both public and private spaces and recommend strategies for improving the public realm experience. I have asked Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff to be full partners in this process as we look at a greening strategy to maximize the potential of the extensive amount of open space that currently exists, along with new opportunities.

To learn more about development activity in St. James Town, to view the staff reports to City Council, as well as to stay up to date on the Community Improvement Plan, please visit www.toronto.ca/planning/stjamestown.

Occupy Toronto and St. James Park

As part of a worldwide political movement, Occupy Toronto held demonstrations in the downtown and set up an encampment in St. James Park. Community reaction was mixed, with some concerned about the privatization of a public park while others supported the right to free expression. Although I support the no camping by-law, I was very mindful of the potential for violence in this confined space.

From the beginning, I regularly met with area residents, the St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA, the Very Reverend Douglas Stoute, Dean of Toronto and Rector of St. James Anglican Cathedral, and representatives from Occupy Toronto. I wanted to ensure that community concerns were addressed while finding a more appropriate forum for Occupy Toronto.

I wrote to the City Manager in late October, requesting co-ordinated management and local engagement teams. I developed a plan for a City liaison team, consisting of staff from various divisions to engage with the Cathedral, community, and protesters. I was disappointed that the City decided to pursue eviction before putting these liaison teams in place. This rush to confrontation caused a dangerous level of panic, and de-escalation was required.

As we witnessed during the G20 Summit, it was not protesters who caused damage, but those who came in behind who exploited the situation to create trouble. With the park situated in an historic district, we could not have a brick going through a priceless window in the Cathedral or fire damage to the St. Lawrence Hall. Neither did we want tear gas in a residential neighbourhood, near condo and apartment balconies. I wanted to provide the safest outcome. I believed that this outcome would be found through dialogue, not ultimatum.

I worked alongside Dean Stoute to facilitate meetings with Occupy Toronto and City staff to resolve the immediate issues, such as providing support and shelter options for the vulnerable and homeless in the encampment. With the Dean, we also entered into dialogues with the protesters about options, and with the BIA, we discussed park restoration.

The BIA had already been working on revitalization of Berczy Park and St. James Park. The impact on St. James Park has made it a priority. The assessment by Parks staff following the eviction found no long-term damage. Thanks to a generous donation by Landscape Ontario and the Ontario Sod Growers Association, the park has been resodded at no cost to the City.



Dean Douglas Stout and Councillor Pam McConnell answer media questions following a meeting with Occupy Toronto representatives.

Meanwhile, Occupy Toronto has offered funds for park enhancements, and representatives continue to meet with the BIA, residents, and City staff. Residents have also pledged funds for upgrades. Anyone wishing to make a donation can do so through the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation. For more information, visit www.torontoparksandtrees.org.

The Made in Toronto solution, based on mediation, was unique in the world in bringing a peaceful decampment. This success was due to the advance efforts of Dean Stoute, the BIA, and City staff, and especially our Police Service and Occupy Toronto protesters who were determined to find a path that avoided confrontation.