

Catch da Flava IN THIS ISSUE

Table of Contents

- 3 Editorial In Memory of Pam McConnell
- 4 TCHC Addresses Community Concerns Over Rezoning
- 5 Regent Park Social Development Plan Guidelines
- 6 Understanding The Regent Park Social Development Plan (SDP)
- 8 Social Development Plan Report: SDP Planning Committee's Update
- Introduction to the Regent Park Social Development Plan Guidelines
- 11 Social Development Plan Meeting Guidelines
- 13 SDP Conflict Resolution Process
- Mutual Accountability Process in the Social Development Plan

Editorial - In Memory of Pam McConnell

by Adonis Huggins

Welcome to the seventh issue of Catch da Flava, Regent Park Monthly Newsletter.

Catch da Flava is produced by the Focus Media Arts Centre in partnership with the Regent Park SDP. Along with Regent Park TV, the newsletter is devoted to informing readers about the issues that impact and affect the neighbourhood, as well as profiling and showcasing the groups, events and cultural activities that make Regent Park a great place to live and work.

This issue is dedicated to promoting the understanding of the SDP and to the late Pam McConnell, who was a strong advocate of the Regent Park redevelopment. Her statue, a photo of which is adorned on our cover, remains a lasting monument to her legacy and commitment to Regent Park.

In front of the Aquatic Centre located in the heart of Regent Park, lies a statue paying tribute to the remarkable life and legacy of Pam McConnell, a dedicated public servant and advocate for social justice.

It serves as a reminder of her vision and the values that she stood for, promoting compassion, equality, and community participation in those who visit the aquatic facility.

The statue not only honours McConnell's incredible legacy but also acts as a continual reminder of the need for working together to build a brighter future. Titled 'Look at What We Have Achieved!' and created by Alexander Moyle, a Toronto- based sculptor who creates purposeful public art, worked closely with McConnell's family during its creation, ensuring that her essence was captured. The statue represents the immense influence that one individual can have on a community, and it encourages visitors to the Aquatic Center to follow in McConnell's footsteps and make a positive difference in their own and others.

Pam McConnell (February 14, 1946 – July 7, 2017)



McConnell's spirit and determination are captured in the statue, which depicts her as a young woman with extended arms, symbolizing her friendly and inclusive personality.



TCHC Addresses Community Concerns Over Rezoning For The Final Phases of The Regent Park Revitalization

In July of 2023, Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) was successful in obtaining City Council's approval for rezoning for the final phases 4 & 5 of the Regent Park revitalization.

Highlights of the plan include:

637 new affordable housing units
633 RGI (rent-geared-to-income) replacement
units, completing TCHC's commitment to replace
all 2,083 RGI units at Regent Park
1,976 additional market units
10,461 m² of commercial and non-residential
space
3,714 m² of community space
A new civic square anchored by 2,200
m² Toronto Public Library

Despite City approval, concerns about the rezoning application continue to persist. In an effort to address these concerns and spark dialogue, Catch da Flava reached out to Stephanie Beattie and Walid Khogali Ali, two community leaders critical of the rezoning application and has bought their concerns forward to Peter Zimmerman, a senior staff member of Toronto Community Housing.

Stephanie Beattie is a past member of the Regent Park Neighbourhood Association. In an interview with Flava journalist, Gabriel Meissner, she revisits how rezoning shaped phase 1, 2, & 3, and reveals that social housing units in phases 1, 2, & 3, have an "expiry date". According to Beattie, TCHC is not bound to keep these units more than 25 years, at which point they can sell them. Stephanie is also concerned about the increased density of the area resulting in more high rises in phases 4 & 5, than was originally contemplated.

Peter Zimmerman, the senior director in the development division at Toronto

Community Housing (TCH), insists that it is a misunderstanding to think that TCHC will eventually sell its social housing units. While city documents may mention that Rent-Geared to Income (RGI) units have a 25-year expiration date, Peter argues that this is nothing but 'boilerplate' language, stating emphatically that TCH is committed to long-term affordable housing and that TCH will maintain all 2,083 social housing units in Regent Park as social housing in perpetuity.

Stephanie Beattie also argues that initially Regent Park was meant to be a 50/50 mixed community consisting of an equal number of social housing, to market priced housing. Under the current rezoning plan, Stephanie says that the ratio will be 30% social housing to 70% market priced housing.

Zimmerman counters this claim by arguing that the 50/50 mix is fallacious. He claims it has always been TCH's intention to have more market priced units than non-market priced units. However, Zimmerman argues, that TCH does have an interest in reaching the 50/50 mix, and states that on a square footage level, they are close, because the RGI units are physically much larger than the market priced units. In a follow-up brief, TCHC states that Forty (40) per cent of the unit mix will be social housing.

Overall, Stephanie argues that much of the revitalization and rezoning process can be characterized as a lack of transparency and information sharing as most of the decision making is done behind closed doors.

While admitting that the application for rezoning is a complex process, Peter insists that the Regent Park community has and continues to be instrumental in shaping the vision of a revitalized Regent Park. Most recently, Toronto Community



Housing, Tridel and our planning consultants, Bousfields facilitated four rounds of community engagement (August 2021 to March 2022) to inform the master plan, including our recently approved Rezoning Application, for Phases 4-5. During this period, we engaged an estimated 2,175 participants in 24 public consultation events.

Stephanie is not the only one with concerns about the rezoning application. Walied Khogali Ali is Co-Chair of the Regent Park SDP Stakeholder Table, and Resident Co-Chair of Community Benefits Oversight Working Group. In an interview with Gabriel, Walied argues that there is insufficient allotment for community spaces as articulated by the 28 different resident and not-for-profit groups that indicated a need for space in a community building spacing report submitted to TCHC, and insists that a desire for a central community owned and governed space has gone unheard.

Walied also argues that there is also a lack of much needed outdoor vendor spaces for the nurturing and development of resident entrepreneurs that would enable them to bring their goods and services to market.

In a follow-up statement addressing Walied's concerns, TCHC states that the Regent Park revitalization project to date has realized the development of a significant amount of community spaces and services, including the Regent Park Athletic Grounds, Pam McConnell Aquatic Centre, Daniels Spectrum (a community cultural hub) and over 200,000 square feet of retail space. Additional community spaces are planned for Phases 4-5. The recently approved Phases 4-5 rezoning application has unlocked an additional 100,000 sq ft of retail space, including micro retail opportunities to be realized in these final phases of the revitalization.

Learn more about the rezoning by visiting the project website RP4and5.ca.

By Dimitrije Martinovic, Community
Journalist with Focus Media Arts Centre.

Understanding The Regent Park Social Development Plan (SDP)



The SDP was created in consultation with Regent Park residents and stakeholders to preserve the spirit of the neighbourhood through the revitalization process and to stimulate social cohesion and positive social change in the community. The SDP outlines social / economic strategies and mechanisms that will lead to a renewed community and is organized around the four pillars, each represented by a working group. They are Communications, Community Building. Employment and Economic Development, and Safety. The SDP is also supported through various committees including a SDP Planning Committee that guides the work. All working groups and committees are governed by the SDP Stakeholders Table.

SDP STAKEHOLDERS TABLE

Working Groups

Communications
(Agency Co-Chair)

Community Building

Employment and Economic Development

Safety

Committees

Terms of Reference

Funding Committee

Evaluation and Benchmarks

Planning Committee

Community Benefits
Oversight Working Group

Social Development Plan Report: SDP Planning Committee's Update

In June 2023, the SDP Planning Committee bid farewell to Greg Gary, Executive Director of the K-Club, for all his work as the Agency Co-Chair of the SDP.

Luckily Greg is not leaving the SDP and will continue his valuable involvement on the SDP Planning Committee as an agency member. Greg's replacement as the Agency Co-Chair of the SDP, is Leah Katerberg, Vice President of Programs & Partnerships at Yonge Street Mission. The Agency Co-Chair on the SDP reports to the Executive Directors Network (a network of decision makers from agencies serving Regent Park) and serves as co-chair of the network. Thus, Leah Katerberg also replaced Greg Gary as the new Co-Chair of the Executive Director's Network. As a new member, Leah brings a fresh perspective to the inner workings of the SDP, and will have the support of other agency members involved in the SDP.

In late July, Ismail Afrah, the SDP TCHC Resident Co-chair, announced that he will be stepping down from the role of SDP co-chair. as well from the role of co-chair of the SDP **Employment and Economic Working Group and** member of the SDP and Community Benefits Working Group, in order to take up a new employment opportunity with TCHC. Ismail has been a strong contributor to the SDP and its various committees since the refresh in 2000, and his presence on the SDP will surely be missed. Ismail Afrah's position as the SDP TCHC Resident Co-Chair will be replaced by Walied Khogali Ali, formerly the Co-Chair of the SDP Community Working Group and a vocal advocate of the SDP as well as a member of the Community Benefits Oversite Working Group, where he also serves a co-chair. Ibrahim Afrah will replace his brother Ismail, as Co-Chair on the Employment and Economic Development Working Group.

In September, resident advocate and long-time member of the SDP Planning Committee, Innes Garcia, officially joined the SDP Planning Committee as a co-chair representing the TCHC Tennant Council. The TCHC Tennant Co-Chair position had remained unfulfilled since the resignation of Lloyd Pike approximately two years ago. Innes Garcia will join Leah Katerberg, Marlene DeGenova and Walied Khogali Ali as the four co-chairs of the SDP.

New SDP Planning Committee Co-Chairs



Leah Katerberg, SDP Co-chair



Walied Khogali Ali, SDP Co-chair



Marlene DeGenova, SDP Co-chair



Innes Garcia, SDP Co-chair In addition to the changes in co-chairs, SDP Planning Committee also welcomes Ismail Mohammed to the position of Administrative Coordinator of the Regent Park SDP. Ismail Mohammed is replacing Mahadir Khan, who resigned early in the year to pursue a new employment opportunity.

Finally, another important member transitioning out of the SDP is Denise Soueidan-O'Leary, formerly Co-Chair of the SDP Communications Working Group and the Director of Community Wealth Strategy & Special Projects with the Centre for Social Innovation (CSI). Under Denise's leadership, CSI has played a major role in supporting the SDP and trusteeship of many SDP projects over the years. Denise has taken a new position as a project manager with a consulting firm.

The SDP Planning Committee would like to thank Greg Gary, Ismail Afra, Mahadir Khan and Denise Soueidan-O'Leary for their tremendous contributions to the work of the SDP.

Evaluating the SDP

Now that summer is over, the SDP Planning Committee has resumed its weekly Thursday meetings.

Presently, the SDP Planning Committee is working with the Evaluations and Benchmark Committee to evaluate the SDP and all its working groups. Findings will be used to report to the greater Regent Park community and the city on the work that the SDP has been doing. If you are a member of the SDP, and have not already done so, you are encouraged to fill out an on-line survey evaluating the SDP.

The survey can be found here: https://forms.gle/yt4aE8GoQM3EWnRG8

SDP Stakeholders Meeting

In addition to evaluation activities, among the top items on the SDP Planning Committee's fall agenda is planning the next SDP Stakeholders meeting. The meeting is scheduled to take place on November 24th, 2023. This is an opportunity to bring all the members of the SDP to hear about the activities, ratify the new leadership and to make major decisions related to the work of SDP.

Relationship Building

Lastly the SDP Planning Committee has made repairing and strengthening its relationship with the city staff, a priority. For those of you who are unaware, in May of 2023, city support staff members, Richard Kiwan and Daniella Castello, withdrew their participation on the SDP Planning Committee citing ongoing health and well-being concerns related to conflict and confrontation between and among members. Shortly afterwards, City Counsellor Chris Moss and TCHC representatives followed suit. In an attempt to resolve this issue and bring back these important stakeholders to the table, the SDP Planning Committee has issued apologies on behalf of the individuals involved and has adopted stricter meeting protocols and guidelines. In addition, the SDP Planning Committee has developed a conflict resolution policy to help members manage conflicts between each other. Despite these actions, it is unclear to what degree, city staff will continue to work with the SDP Planning Committee.

Stay tuned for further updates in upcoming issues of Catch da Flava.

By Adonis Huggins, Executive Director of Focus Media Arts Centre and Co-chair of the SDP Communications Working Group.

Introduction to the Regent Park Social Development Plan Guidelines

The planning committee set up a task group in early 2022 to propose ways for the Social Development Plan network to deal better with issues during meetings or among members that hindered the work. The group was to develop meeting guidelines and a conflict resolution process, as well as consider other proposals for improving our processes of working together.

The group has completed a draft package for the above purpose, and is presenting it to the November 27th, Stakeholders Table.

As members of the SDP, we aim to create a welcoming, inclusive network, where we each take responsibility for our own actions, where we are mutually



accountable to each other and to the network as a whole, and where we seek to understand and collaborate with each other even when we disagree.

We agree to follow these guidelines to keep our network welcoming and inclusive.

We are committed to working together in a way that does not cause harm to one another or to our community. Most of us are members of equity-seeking groups. We recognize that we bring our life experiences to our work, which for many of us includes experiences of trauma. Each of us has the power to speak our truth in a way that shows care and respect for others, including respect for the many differences among us. This includes considering how our actions and words might oppress others.

We are accountable to ourselves and to each other:

Self-accountability: It can be hard to see yourself. When you have an issue with another person or when someone has an issue with you, consider whether you may have contributed to the issue. Are there any changes you can make within yourself?

Mutual accountability: If a person brings a concern to you, be open to hearing it and responding from an open stance.

As a network, we will continue to equip each other to hold productive meetings, to better deal with conflict and to be self and mutually accountable beyond this guide, through resource sharing, training, and ongoing reflection on our experiences.

Three documents make up these guidelines: the meeting guidelines, the conflict resolution process, and mutual accountability. This package complements and is in alignment with the SDP Terms of Reference.

The meeting guidelines are for all members to follow so that meetings flow smoothly, with active discussion, respectful disagreement, and clear decisions.

The conflict resolution process sets out how members are to engage constructively with each other when in conflict.

Mutual accountability outlines how we will respond when meeting guidelines aren't followed, and in particular when the violation of the meeting guidelines is serious. We mean to use this document as a last resort, using the first two documents as the preferred guides for dealing with difficult situations.

Social Development Plan Meeting Guidelines



Purpose:

To support a cohesive, inclusive, safe, respectful, and welcoming meeting, where we build consensus together, make clear decisions, everyone feels heard and we are mutually accountable to each other.

How we will do this:

- One person, one mic
- Make space, take space
- if you've spoken a lot, give opportunity for others to speak
- if you haven't spoken:
 - ask if you don't understand
 - · contribute to reaching agreement
- Do no harm we all have our personal challenges
 - think of the impact of words, tone, behaviors and actions on others
 - We can impact or harm others unintentionally
 - Reflect on how you are conducting yourself - you are doing the best you can with what you have
 - Speak to the issue, not about the person: no insulting, name-calling, no shaming or blaming, including in online chat
 - Correct yourself when you realize you may have spoken in an offensive way
 - Any communication in speech, writing

- or behaviour that attacks, threatens or harasses an individual or group using discriminatory language or imagery will not be tolerated.
- Taking into account the feelings of others, you may intervene to communicate what you need in the following situations:
 - Convey respectfully when you have been offended, hurt or discriminated against
 - Convey respectfully when you believe you have been misunderstood or misinterpreted
 - You will be able to clarify the misunderstanding or misinterpretation after the speaker has finished.
 - The facilitator may address the issue if necessary.
 - Ask others for clarity, rather than assuming you know what they mean

Don't interpret other people's words

- Be mindful of time; stay on the agenda item
- No one knows everything, but together we know a lot

there are no stupid questions all have wisdom

think about where you want to get - other people's ideas can help yours everyone is valued and everyone's contribution is important

 A meeting that is properly called, and operating in accordance with the terms of reference, can be adjourned only when a consensus to adjourn exists among all members.

Recording

- audio/video recordings & artificial intelligence bots - Al bots are automatic notetakers sent by a group member to take notes and/or record when they are not present
 - Recording of any kind is subject to a decision by the group.
 - Agenda items can be held in camera -

- without recording.
- Any person can request that a recording be paused during their intervention.
- If there is no other way to stop an Al bot, it can be placed in the waiting room.

Meeting Facilitation

- The facilitator encourages and models respectful conduct that aligns with these guidelines.
- The facilitator guides the meeting in accordance with the SDP terms of reference.
- Participants are to allow the facilitator to carry out their role.
- Facilitators ask meeting members to speak in order of raised hands. The facilitator may ask a person who has spoken little to speak before others who have spoken a lot.
- When an agenda item requires a decision, facilitators are to ensure a clear decision is made before moving on to the next agenda item.
- Try to avoid conflict over process in meetings. Give preference to discussing process issues outside of the meeting. If a process issue is raised within a meeting, and the person raising it and the facilitator are not able to come to agreement in a timely way, the facilitator will put the issue to a vote by the group as a whole. It is expected that the issue will be discussed outside of the meeting.
- The facilitator is neutral on decisions, with the following exception:
 - Facilitators may share their own thoughts on agenda items when:
 - All others who want to speak have spoken at least once.
 - The facilitator takes their turn in the list of speakers.
 - Before sharing their thoughts, the facilitator identifies that they are not functioning for the moment as a facilitator. After speaking, the facilitator states that they are returning to the facilitator role.

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SDP Conflict Resolution Process



The following is a summary of the Conflict Resolution Process:

In the Social Development Plan community, we understand that conflict will arise among our members as a natural part of working together. We want to build a culture among us where we all agree that it is not wrong to be in conflict with others. When managed well, it is possible for conflict to lead to groups working better together. When conflicts become stuck, we as a group recognize that conflicts can have repercussions both for individuals involved, and for the wider network. Collectively, it is our responsibility to work through conflict to effectively address and resolve issues.

The policy outlines three essential principles that members should consider when working through conflict:

Self-accountability: When you have an issue with another person or when another person has an issue with you, consider whether you may have contributed to the issue. Are there any changes you can make within yourself?

Mutual accountability: If a person brings a concern to you, be open to hearing it and responding from an open stance.

Trust Building: In situations where trust is low, look for ways to build it. One way to build trust is to address conflicts with as few people present as necessary. Engaging in conflict with a large

number of people present can make addressing the conflict more challenging.

The policy is accompanied by a chart describing a variety of ways that members can move through conflict. The chart outlines four scenarios.

- Both/all parties are willing to talk to each other, in which case members set aside time to listen and speak to each other one or more time/s, out of a mutual willingness to come to an understanding.
- Not all parties are willing to talk to each other, in which case those that wish to speak turn to another member of the network/community as a neutral person to seek ways to engage the other.
- 3. No parties wish to talk to each other and in the case the conflict continues to hinder the group, the group leads or offers a formal process with a neutral third party, or the group leads offer to bring together larger circle, with an agreed upon facilitator, to hear concerns of both parties, and create space for all members of the circle to speak about how the conflict is affecting them.
- Lastly, if no resolution to the conflict can be agreed upon and the work of the group continues to be hindered, the situation will be addressed through the SDP Mutual accountability process.

The SDP Mutual accountability process purpose is to outline steps to follow when the meeting guidelines and the conflict resolution process aren't sufficient to resolve issues that arise.

Mutual Accountability Process in the Social Development Plan

Purpose: outline steps to follow when the meeting guidelines and the conflict resolution process aren't sufficient to resolve issues that arise.

Small scale issues:

For the most part, when guidelines aren't followed, the meeting facilitator is encouraged to identify the issue clearly and briefly and to bring the meeting back to its intended focus with minimal additional disruption. We are aware that, as noted in the meeting guidelines, "We are all doing our best with what we have." Sometimes a person may be facing challenges on a given day. Facilitators first, and other members second, are to work with members at an early point who appear to be having difficulty engaging

in the meeting within the meeting guidelines. All in the meeting are encouraged to hold space for each other. For most issues, this approach should resolve the problem.

Serious breaches

Note: "Breach" means break - the guidelines have been broken

A serious breach occurs:

- When harm is being done to individuals.
 Such harm may affect all in the group, not just the individual directly affected. Examples of harm being done could include name calling, use of derogatory language, yelling, microaggressions, or others.
- When a meeting is being prevented from proceeding, or when one or more persons repeatedly interferes in the smooth functioning of meetings.
 - For repeated small scale violations of meeting guidelines: When a member repeatedly doesn't follow meeting guidelines, the meeting facilitator, or the co-chairs will offer to hold a session

outside the meeting for support and coaching on how to participate more effectively. Any person may request support or coaching from others in learning how to follow the meeting guidelines. If the offer is declined, no other coaching is sought out and repeated small scale violations continue, this will be treated as a serious breach.

When an agreed on process is not followed.

The meeting facilitator, followed by group cochairs, are the first people responsible for identifying serious breaches. In addition, all members of meetings are able to identify serious breaches. If the person who identifies the serious breach is not facilitating, they are to identify it briefly and request the facilitator to address it.

When a serious breach is identified:

- The facilitator is to address it.
- If the facilitator is unsure whether a serious breach has occurred, they will ask the person who is thought to have committed it to clarify what they said or did.
- The person who committed it may recognize it and commit to not repeating it.
- Any use of discriminatory language or imagery in speech, writing or behaviour that attacks, threatens or harasses an individual or group will not be tolerated, and will be cause for the facilitator to immediately remove from the meeting the person who is communicating in the above ways.
- If appropriate to the situation, the person committing the breach, or others affected by it, are expected/encouraged to use the conflict resolution process, as underlying issues tend to be at the root of serious incidents.
- When a serious breach has occurred, the facilitator may issue a warning and explanation of it to the person committing the breach. This will be recorded in the meeting

notes.

- The facilitator or the person warned may follow up with each other after the meeting.
- If multiple parties commit serious breaches in the same incident, separate follow-ups and recommendations will be made, guided by the conflict process. (Note: The conflict process suggests that the parties may follow up with each other on their own, and report back to the group the outcome.)
- If a second serious breach occurs either in the same meeting or in a subsequent meeting within a reasonable timeframe, the facilitator may respectfully suggest the person leave the meeting.
 - If the person stays, the facilitator will hold a go around for each member of the group to speak once, respectfully and briefly, to whether or not they believe the person should be removed from the meeting. Comments must address only the behaviour - attacks on the individual as a person will not be permitted. As well, people are to make comments only on events they were present for. A vote will be held if necessary on whether the person is asked to leave or allowed to stay.
 - If the situation is not resolved, the facilitator may end the meeting.
- If a decision is made that the person should leave the meeting, they will not be permitted to return to future meetings until they commit to adhere to the guidelines. Follow up will include the following:
 - Group co-chairs, and/or others authorized by the group, will have further discussion with the person at question to more deeply understand what happened and to attempt to resolve the issue. They may turn to other people skilled in addressing issues from a trauma-informed lens for guidance. Further action, such as training, may be suggested.
 - Depending on the circumstances, an apology may be appropriate.
- Those working with the person will decide when the person is eligible to return.

- If and when the person returns, those involved in the follow up will give a brief written or verbal report to the group.
- If the person does not return, those working with the person will report back to the group on the situation within two months.
 The group may direct them to try other approaches.
- The person may appeal to be allowed to return to the group. The appeal will be heard by a small group designated by the planning committee, including the Stakeholders Table co-chairs.
- · Decisions made by the appeal body are final.

Introduction to Regent Park SDP Guidelines

Social Development Plan meeting guidelines

Social Development Plan conflict resolution process

Mutual Accountability in the Social Development Plan

A full copy of these documents can be obtained by emailing:

sdp.regentpark@gmail.com

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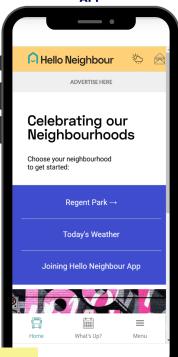
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