



North Park Neighbourhood Association  
Public Meeting Minutes

DATE: January 16, 2020

LOCATION: Community Room, Save on Foods Memorial Arena

<b>ATTENDANCE</b>
Board members – Allison Ashcroft, Katie Fillion, Allan Gallupe (Chair), Melanie Groves, Sean Kahil, Harold Stanley Sarah Murray, Community Coordinator
Individual members – As per sign-up sheet
Business members – As per sign-up sheet
City liaisons/ reps – Councillor Marianne Alto, Councillor Shamarke Dubow, Mike Hill
Guests – Mark Willson, Jack Phillips (SOLID Outreach Society)
Regrets – Alastair McCollum, Carolyn Gisborne
<b>AGENDA AMENDMENTS/APPROVAL</b>
Amendments: None. Motion: Kahil, Fillion
<b>PRESENTATION(S)</b>
SOLID Outreach Society is applying for a three-year temporary use permit of 1056 North Park Street, and seeking community support for a rezoning application to include cannabis retail.  Representative Mark Willson briefly outlined the history of SOLID from its founding in 2003, to its quick expansion in 2015 in conjunction with the opioid crisis.  Multiple North Park business owners and residents voiced concern over the dramatic increase of break-ins, vandalism, discarded syringes and illicit drug use in public washrooms and parking lots. They related personal accounts of threats, assaults, violent robbery and defecation on private property since SOLID took occupancy of 1056 North Park in July 2019.  It was also suggested that a correlation between SOLID and the recent crime spike may not be entirely demonstrable. Displacement of persons from the 900-block of Pandora was cited as a contributing factor. Various pleas and appeals for increased compassion toward this marginalized population were also made.  Presenters Mark Willson and Jack Phillips denied that on-site illicit drug dealing was taking

place at SOLID and expressed a willingness to co-operate with neighbours in resolving future issues as they arise.

They also stated that if they were not serving the community as they are, the situation would deteriorate rather than improve. Whether or not their rezoning application for cannabis retail is successful, SOLID will continue to operate out of 1056 North Park.

Several residents voiced their opinion that North Park is not well suited to SOLID Outreach Society, and it was recommended that NPNA should help SOLID find another home in a more suitable location.

Questions were also raised about zoning bylaws which no one present was equipped to answer. It was suggested that City staff with specialized knowledge of zoning bylaws should be invited to attend future meetings.

Upon summation of numerous challenging and negative experiences, many agreed that it would not be helpful to further formalize zoning for a business that the neighbourhood cannot manage to live with on a day-to-day basis. It was also said that if a temporary permit is accepted, it should be for a one-year minimum, and not a three-year maximum.

### **Crystal Pool Discussion**

Councillor Marianne Alto reported that City staff have been instructed by Council to return February 6 with every document drafted to date regarding the Crystal Pool. City Council will then consider all the options put forward to this point.

The chosen design of the new Crystal Pool will be the one that is best fitted to the site, after the site has been selected. So far nothing is off the table.

Frustration was expressed with the lack of community consultation in this beleaguered and ongoing process, now in its ninth year and fourth generation.

The North Park Neighbourhood Association Board has put out a media release in support of the Caledonia Avenue location (940 Caledonia Avenue), and does not support building a new pool in the south-west corner of Central Park (the original proposed location).

Several residents emphasized the importance of Central Park to the community, calling it not just greenspace but the heart of the neighbourhood. Dissatisfaction was expressed at the idea of losing green space to surface parking.

It was said that there is presently no budget to replace Central Park and its assets. Dissatisfaction was expressed that no city planner was included in the site selection process.

The scope of equity and affordability considerations regarding the project were criticized for

being narrow and selective.

The glass panelled design concepts for the new pool building were criticized, both from an energy/climate viewpoint, and also in terms of equity/privacy/accessibility. The maintenance expenses of the current pool are higher than those of any other amenity in the city.

Discussion ensued about the need for financial support from Council in light of the disadvantages North Park is facing.

#### LAST MEETING'S MINUTES AMENDMENTS/APPROVAL

Amendments:

Deferred to next meeting.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT

Details:

Report deferred to next meeting. All regular reports below were deferred due to the lengthy discussion regarding SOLID and the Crystal Pool.

#### REPORTS

##### **Land Use**

A CALUC meeting comprised the first part of the Jan. 16 public meeting. See CALUC notes regarding SOLID rezoning application above.

##### **Communications & Outreach**

Report deferred to next meeting.

##### **Placemaking & Public Art**

Report deferred to next meeting.

##### **Events**

A report from the extremely successful Dec. 13 skating event at Save On Foods Memorial Arena is available on the NPNA website ([see the report here](#)).

##### **Good Neighbour Meetings**

Report deferred to next meeting.

##### **City of Victoria – Council Liaison**

Councillor Alto provided a status update on the Crystal Pool project (see Crystal Pool discussion above).

##### **City of Victoria – Staff Liaison**

No report.

<b>VCAN – Victoria Community Association Network</b> Report deferred to next meeting.
<b>Membership</b> Report deferred to next meeting.
<b>Place of Worship Updates</b> Report deferred to next meeting.
<b>OLD BUSINESS</b>
None.
<b>NEW BUSINESS</b>
None.
<b>MEETING ADJOURN TIME</b>
9:24
<b>THIS WEEK’S MINUTE TAKER</b>
Julian Cervello
<b>NEXT MEETING DATE, TIME AND LOCATION</b>
Date & Time: Thursday, Feb. 20, 7 p.m.  Location: Save On Foods Memorial Arena, Community Room