



Old East Village Community Association

Executive Monthly Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 16th/2015

Location: Western Fair Farmer's Market Upstairs

Time: 6:30-8pm

Open to the public

Executive Members Present:

Kristina Greenaway-Courey, *President*

Benjamin Vazquez, *Vice-President*

Jacalyn Grabowski, *Treasurer*

Lori Aitken, *Secretary*

Joel Eckert, *Director-at-Large*

Carole Perraud Joly, *Director-at-Large*

Carrie Vaughan, *Director-at-Large*

Executive Members Absent:

Jennifer Diplock, *Past President*

David Cook, *Director-at-Large*

Rodger Moran, *Director-at-Large*

Executive Members *ex officio* Present:

Michael Courey, *Social Committee & Community Exchange Program Representative*

Guests:

Zach Anderson, *London Youth Advisory Council*

Wayne Atkinson, *Ontario SEO*

Angela Galloway, *OEVCA Volunteer*

Shelly Happy, *London Intercommunity Health Centre*

- 6:34pm Kristina** Meeting called to order.
- 6:35pm Kristina** Call to approve the October minutes. Carole moves to pass the minutes. Jacalyn seconds it. No one opposed.
- 6:36pm Kristina** Call to approve November 1st strategy meeting minutes. Carrie moves to pass the minutes. Jacalyn seconds it. No one opposed.
- 6:36pm Angela** Angela Galloway works for TD Canada Trust. They have a volunteer grant program wherein employees who volunteer 40 hours or more per year can apply for a grant as long as the group is a registered charity. She presented us with an approval letter for a grant of \$500. Thank you so much, Angela!
- 6:39pm Shelly** Wants to start by thanking the OEVCA executive for continuing to

promote the Community Exchange Program (CEP) initiative. Our extra promotional work has yielded additional logo contest entrants and 3 new block connectors in recent weeks.

- 6:42pm Kristina** Received a question about whether Ontario SEO is being paid for their assistance. 99% of their help is pro-bono.
- 6:43pm Shelly** LIHC received 2 grants in the amounts of \$1200 and \$1000 to be used towards this project. A small amount has paid for the banners from the block party. The rest will cover the actual software and the web hosting.
- 6:45pm Zach** Presentation to introduce the Community Exchange Program (paraphrased for the minutes):
This is Joe and Joe has a problem. His girlfriend wants to go dancing but he doesn't know how. He knows that there are people in OEV that might be able to teach him to dance but he's unsure how to contact them. Joe is a chef who would love to give back. Ken is a dancing instructor but a terrible cook! He can't add milk to a bowl of fruit loops. Wouldn't it be great if OEV could foster the relationship between Joe and Ken so they can help each other out? Yes!
- 6:48pm Wayne** Developer is absent tonight so he's presenting on his behalf. Basic theory of the website is to match skills as closely as possible. There are multiple optional upgrades that they'd like to build in as the project gets off the ground. This mock up is not formatted. The content will remain regardless of what the decided colour scheme, fonts, etc turn out to be. The site is completely mobile friendly as they anticipate as many as 80% of users might be on smartphones.
Information will be very limited unless you are logged in to the portal. Home screen gives a project introduction and the option to sign in or create an account. Standardized registration form. Any field can be left blank. There is a contact form so people can reach you without actually having your email address.
Service categories are divided into 'wants' and 'offered'.
There is a details field where you can provide more specific information on the categories (ie: Category might be Tuition but you can be more specific in the details field, for example, "I offer guitar lessons.") Ontario SEO is concerned that if categories are too specific it may skew the matching process. The profile information could be made richer with additional fields, too. Registration shouldn't take more than approximately 90 seconds.
When the form is submitted, it goes to an administrator for approval. The moment your profile is approved, the matching is real time and you'll be able to see all of your options right away.
You can click on people's profile to get more information and then click contact to reach out to that person without giving out additional personal information.
- 6:57pm Mike** Mentioned that at the last CEP meeting they talked a lot about the

- information that will produce the best matches.
- 6:58pm Carole** Wants to know if administrators are able to track the contact between participants and find out if they actually exchanged services? Would there be a spot to indicate testimonials, a review, thumbs up or thumbs down, etc?
- 6:59pm Wayne** They've talked about having a reminder email generated in a specific timeframe after contact is made to have participants go back and put a badge on a profile, a thumbs up or sticker, etc.
- 7:00pm Joel** Wonders if Google or Facebook sign-ons would make the registration process simpler or provide additional information.
- Wayne** This adds some complexity to the programming but not to a ridiculous point. It is doable.
- Joel** This doesn't send information to Facebook or Google, it simply uses them to authenticate a person's login.
- Wayne** The caveat is that if there are multiple users in a home environment, that could complicate auto-logins on shared computers. Postal Code authentication will keep registrations to local residents only. Bogus registrations will be weeded out because email confirmation is necessary.
- 7:04pm Shelly** If contact reveals that a registrant has used a bogus postal code to access the site, users will have the ability to report that user to administrators. We know that these types of skills exchanges are already happening informally on the OEVCA Facebook group but due to the format, these arrangements get buried in the news feed. This exchange system interface simplifies and formalizes the means of finding the services that you need.
- 7:06pm Mike** They also plan to add a volunteer tab at the top of the options to direct people who want to get involved in the neighbourhood.
- 7:08pm Shelly** Where 'swappable' skills don't necessarily match, participants can still agree to volunteer to help one another or compensate one another financially. Block connectors can manually assist people with creating a profile if they're not computer savvy, don't have an email account, etc. There are also computers available for public use at Carson Library.
- 7:10pm Mike** Block connectors are the key to getting this up and running and encouraging people to use it. The committee also hopes to create some short videos to show people how it works, how to get involved and how to encourage others as well. The committee anticipates that the activity may fluctuate significantly based on seasonal needs (ie. snow removal, leaf collection, etc)
- 7:12pm Kristina** Is there a launch date?
- Shelly** There is still a lot of decision making needed (ie. finalizing categories, fine-tuning the review process, etc) before announcing a launch date.

Wayne Pat (the developer) has approximately 1500 test users in the system that they're working with now to continue to test how the software is working.
Search functionality is also being built in and the finished design still needs to be decided upon.

Joel Asked about user based primary and secondary tags versus categories.

Wayne This creates a messy situation if a user tags 'snow clearing' versus 'snow removal', for example.

7:16pm Lori Would we be able to start introducing cartoon character "Joe" (from Zach's presentation at the start of the meeting) to our OEVCA members and OEV residents with brief teaser videos or clips to start to help people understand what we're really talking about with this program.

7:17pm Mike Likes the idea but also reminds us that with only a small committee getting this off the ground, they're starting to get overwhelmed with the workload.

Zach Zach mentions that volunteers to assist with making brief videos would be a tremendous asset. Small clips could help people become familiar with the program and even anticipate a visit by their street's block connector.

7:19pm Wayne Wayne mentioned that perhaps Pat can whip up a quick video showing how to find the site and create a profile.

Shelly Mentions that you can browse the site in a limited capacity to get an idea of what it's all about before you create a profile.
Shelly currently has 12-13 block connectors. Block connector training is on Wednesday, November 25th at LIHC. There's also a session on Wednesday, November 18th but only one participant for that session so far. These sessions are more of an orientation at this point to make them ambassadors of the program and hopefully encourage more people to get involved.
Getting the word out about becoming a block connector is the most important thing the program needs to get off the ground successfully.
The more block connectors we have, the lighter each block connector's work load would be. .
Additional tools will come in the near future, especially for block connectors. Hard copy documents, beta access to the site, etc.

7:25pm Zach Perhaps OEVCA executive could all be early adopters as well to test the site and become fluent in the process in the hopes of further promoting the program.
Also wants to know if an outline of what we hope to expect from block connectors would be useful?

Carole In her experience...yes! People will hold off of volunteering unless they're certain what they're signing up for.

7:28pm Shelly She'll resend the block connector expectations (though they are subject

to change).

Shelly anticipates that unofficial block connectors are likely to develop over time. People who are involved in the program and naturally promote it but might not be doing so in an official block connector capacity. Volunteer time commitments should be fluid but we will have some basic expectations.

- 7:33pm Kristina** Thank you to our guests for their time, expertise and terrific information!
- 7:33pm Kristina** McCormicks site development. Did you (the executive) read the plan and Benjamin's formal opinion to be submitted by the executive? Yes, everyone in the group had read the email.
- Benjamin** Feels that an opinion on the plan should come from Kristina specifically and at least 2 other executive members should attend the November 26th meeting to back up our position on the plan as it sits now.
- Kristina** McCormicks site and Secondary Plan are two separate issues. That may account for the discrepancy in meeting times on November 26th.
- 7:36pm Benjamin** Feels this issue truly embodies what committee work is all about.
- Carole** Carole feels that we're satisfied with the plan put forward but that the word impressed makes us seem happier than we truly are.
- Group** Several optional words are thrown about such as pleased, content and satisfied. The group decides that 'pleased' is a truer reflection of our feelings.
- 7:39pm Kristina** After discussions with John Fleming, he feels that if we push back too much, the developer might walk. There has already been much more public input than is typical for a project like this. This doesn't mean that we can't have opinions but perhaps we should pick our battles.
- Benjamin** Benjamin feels that this development should always take the long term vision into consideration. Retail or mixed use development on the main level(s) is important to provide amenities and convenience to the people who choose to reside there.
The parking garage on the first two floors is a short-sighted decision. Benjamin predicts that in 20 years from now, the parking garage will be converted to mixed use or retail use.
- 7:45pm Carole** Concerned about walkways and the compound feel that still exists in the plan.
- 7:47pm Benjamin** Contacted Sierra construction to arrange a meeting to talk to the developer in advance of the November 26th meeting. Awaiting a response from the developer.
- 7:48pm Kristina** Where should the smokestack be if it remains in the plan?
- Benjamin** The smokestack is currently attached to the old boiler house which is a single storey brick building that takes up too much square footage to warrant saving it. The smokestack could be deemed city property as a neighbourhood landmark. It is a standalone structure so it could be moved elsewhere on the property and Benjamin doesn't feel that it

- creates a liability issue.
- Jacalyn** Concerned that the townhouses in the centre of the property will be completely void of any sunshine due to the apartment buildings on the east and west side of them.
- Benjamin** The park space is poor quality. It's really neither private or public.
- Kristina** Asks Ben to reconsider the wording of our official position and re-prioritize the sticking points that we want to focus on.
- Benjamin** This project is a catalyst for further development in neighbouring areas. Keeping it self contained and facing inwards detracts from influencing the neighbouring areas, not to mention it creates potential safety issues.
- 7:58pm Jacalyn** No news on the Christmas tree sale issue. She has sent out requests for communication but hasn't received any responses. She is not familiar with Facebook or Paypal but wonders if Mike Courey can assist her in some capacity with arranging pre-sale information. Jacalyn will keep us informed of her progress by email as the next scheduled monthly meeting falls after the anticipated tree sale date of Saturday, December 12th.
- 7:59pm Kristina** Jenny Diplock has volunteered to assist in getting the January newsletter off the ground. She will setting up a planning meeting ASAP for anyone who wishes to assist.
- 8:01pm Carole** Has set up the OEVCA Facebook brand page. It is unpublished at present. Settings and parameters need to be discussed about how it will operate.
- 8:02pm Kristina** Everyone on the executive should have permissions but the page will not allow visitors to post to the Facebook page.
- 8:04pm Benjamin** Benjamin moves to publish the OEVCA Facebook brand page with the following parameters (executive all have administrator permissions and visitors may read/comment but not make actual posts to the page). Lori seconds the motion. No one opposed.
- 8:05pm Kristina** Meeting adjourned.