

Mount Edwards Court Neighbourhood Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 19, 2016
The Chapter Room
Christ Church Cathedral

Kathy Stinson, Cool Aid introduced herself as chair.

Everyone in the circle introduced themselves and their connection:

- Chris Coleman, City Councillor
- Heidi Hartman, BC Housing
- Dan O'Connor, VicPD
- Candice MacDonald, Cool Aid agreed to take Minutes: to capture general themes and any action or follow-up items.

An attendance sheet was circulated – minutes will be emailed and posted on the Cool Aid website:

www.CoolAid.org/mtedwards

Kathy opened the meeting with a reminder of the purpose of the meeting.

An agenda was circulated and accepted

Minutes from April 5, 2016 were accepted with the following amendments:

- Christopher Schmidt's amendment document to be added **except** for the paragraph stating that SpeakUp Fairfield speaks for the neighbourhood

It was noted that a slight amendment had been made to the previously accepted March 22nd minutes; where a neighbour was named, his name has been removed and replaced with 'a neighbour'.

Action Items from the previous meeting:

3.1 Cool Aid to continue to tighten up Community Liaison Presence

- Neighbours expressed that there are still gaps in the presence of staff outside; this is a continuing source of frustration and is seen as a management problem;
- Noted that so far they have done a good job of keeping the area clear, but a question of how long the presence will continue
- The liaison presence seems to be the most inconsistent between 8pm and midnight; Dan advised that this was helpful, concrete feedback; Cool Aid advised that we are hiring an additional dedicated staff; acknowledged that we have committed to have the liaison presence outside regardless
- A neighbour noted an occasion where the liaison and a person assumed to be staff were taking up the whole sidewalk and they had go around them
- It was noted by 2 neighbours that they witnessed a drug deal and use at Vancouver and McClure at 11:30 pm one evening. Dan O'Connor noted that the area is 2 blocks away from Mt. Edwards and asked for clarification of which area is the preferred priority for security. He explained that if you

have increased security in one area, it pushes activity elsewhere. Cool Aid is willing to take direction on the sphere of attention; recent direction had been to limit the liaison to the front and side of the building as neighbours want to see that they are present.

- The couple who witnessed the drug deal called the non-emerg VicPD number as they were concerned for the wellbeing of the women who used the drugs
- The same couple witnessed another incident the following evening at 12:30: 2 people pulling loaded carts down the street heading in the direction of Mount Edwards
- A neighbour asked VicPD why they couldn't install CCTV cameras in the area; there are privacy concerns -- this is not the UK; police rely on the public to assist
- Neighbours spoke of this being an undue burden and of witness fatigue

Note: conversation went quite a bit off topic, discussing crime in the neighbourhood at large rather than issues specific to the operation of Mount Edwards. People also wanted to (once again) discuss long term plans for Mount Edwards which is not the purpose of these meetings.

ACTION ITEM: Cool Aid to continue to tighten up the Community Liaison Presence

3.2 Update from working group drafting the Neighbour Agreement

- Jahnet spoke on behalf of the working group; other participating neighbours who were present identified themselves: Helen, Kim, Mary, Bob; also included were Kristina and Don from Fairfield Gonzales CA; Dan VicPD; Chris City of Victoria; Heidi BC Housing; Kathy, John, Don from Cool Aid; Stuart and Todd from Cathedral School; and a couple of residents from Mount Edwards.
- It was suggested that calling this an 'Agreement' lends it credibility it doesn't have; implies more acceptance than there is
- It was suggested that 'framework' was a better term; someone else suggested 'best practices' or 'vision statement'
- It was noted by a parent that Stuart doesn't fully represent the views of parents
 - Noted their concern about children witnessing an arrest
- It was asked who was representing business on the working group – there is no one
 - Once the document is final, working group members will be sharing it with business neighbours
- Chris Coleman noted that he was concerned about bullying – has been approached by people from all sides with this concern; asked for respect in process; reiterated the need for a process or forum for people to provide info which would be brought forward as a 'body of evidence' for the trial in September

ACTION ITEM: Working group to bring back a final draft

3.3 VicPD to check with analysts to determine if historical stats can be provided

- The process has been started

3.4 VicPD to look into ways for neighbours to report concerns to Police/Province without becoming vulnerable

- Dan provided the following contact info for the Provincial Legal Team for Tent City; anyone with information to share should contact them by e-mail:
Chewka, Kaitlyn - Kaitlyn.Chewka@gov.bc.ca
Webber, Katie - Katie.Webber@gov.bc.ca

3.5 VicPD to look into increasing Mt ED ATOM to include Tent City

Police did a very thorough job of sharing stats for all of the ATOMs surrounding Mount Edwards Court; this took up a lot of time. It was difficult for the note taker to capture all of this information. We asked Police to provide a summary which is included below:

Police provided and discussed calls for service in the area around Mt Edwards and Tent City for the 2 week period of April 5th to April 19th, 2016. Police explained the different call types which occurred in the surrounding area and calls of concern were discussed. There were 2 calls for service within the block of Mt. Edwards in this 2 week period. Statistics in relation to tent city and the neighbouring areas will be released on a 28 day cycle by the VicPD media department

Dan noted that even if the statistical evidence does not suggest increased activity, making the patrol a priority is still going forward. Dan also said he would talk to his media relations department about the way information was being shared – there is a large disconnect between what the police are reporting re: no increase in crime and what residents are experiencing.

Someone asked about foot patrols in the area – Dan advised there was some Bike and Beat units in the area but mostly car patrol. Dan heard the suggestion about posting someone at Tent City and will bring that back and report at the next meeting. He also reiterated that people should email (rather than phone him) with file numbers and times and he will look into them.

Someone asked about taking photos and video – Dan suggested caution.

The neighbour adjacent to Mount Edwards talked about a call he made to police concerning a stolen bike. He wondered why the Community Liaison had taken no notice of it as it was clearly visible on the property line of Mount Edwards. **Cool Aid will look into this.** He also wondered why it wasn't included in Dan's stats. It would have been attached to the file (and appropriate ATOM) of whoever initiated the call about the bike being stolen.

3.6 & 3.7 Chris Coleman to take back disappointment / create a forum:

Ties back to earlier comment re bullying; Chris is trying to create a process – privacy is a concern. The City is hopeful that Portland Hotel Society's involvement in Tent City will help mitigate some concerns. There is some thought that with their presence at the site, it might encourage some people to leave.

He has no new information on the lighting upgrade.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, May 3, 2016, 7:00 pm, Chapter room