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The Action Plan Team consisted of Melissa Bowman, Anka Brozic, Patrick Gilbride, Rebekah Haynes, Anna Maste, and Erin Toner. Thanks to Agnes Das, City of Kitchener Neighbourhood Liaison, and the Neighbourhood Development Office for supporting the team throughout this process.

Summary of vision and possible neighbourhood priorities



Vision:

The Victoria Park neighbourhood is an inviting community that connects people through history, culture, and nature.

Priorities for the neighbourhood:

- Install and maintain a neighbourhood community information board
- Install historical storyboards and/or signage
- Partner with the City on its Urban Forestry initiatives
- Install a painted crosswalk on West Ave (near Homewood Ave)
- Expand and enhance the VPNA Food Forest



Spotlight on the Victoria Park Neighbourhood

Written by Todd Bowman

The City of Kitchener's recent Neighbourhood Strategy revealed the varied ways people define their neighbourhood. Some saw their neighbourhood in a broad geographic sense; for others, their neighbourhood was simply their street. Defining the limits of the Victoria Park Neighbourhood is equally challenging; Victoria Park itself is central to the neighbourhood, but how far in each direction does its broader neighbourhood extend? Its official boundaries today along Joseph, Queen, Spadina/West and Victoria Streets encompass much of the German Company Tract block purchased by Joseph Schneider. However, the original inhabitants of the neighbourhood would not have seen these rigid political and geographic lines.

Before Europeans arrived in what would become Berlin, the area was inhabited by Neutral peoples between confederacies to the north and south. Mississauga natives, part of the Anishinaabe peoples, moved into the area in the 1600s. The Mississauga were nomadic people, camping and wintering where fish and game was available. One semi-permanent settlement was just outside the north-west corner of the current neighbourhood, roughly around today's Strange and Park Streets. Natives for centuries had traveled an ancient trail between settlements that approximates today's Mill Street. A Neutral village numbering up to a thousand often wintered alongside the swampy land of what today is Victoria Park. One of the last area native



presences to continue this practice were small family groups of Mississauga in the early 19th century. A plaque in Victoria Park commemorates one such family based on Tuhbenahneequay and her sons Kahkewaquonaby and Maungwudas. These long-standing native practices gradually discontinued with the arrival of European and American settlers and the concept of land ownership they brought.



The Schneider property visible in the 1861 Tremaine map.

Joseph and Barbara Schneider arrived in the neighbourhood in 1807, likely traveling the last leg of their long journey from Pennsylvania on the Mill Street native trail. The Schneiders purchased Lot 17 in Block 2 of the German Company Tract, which had been purchased from Mohawk chief Joseph Brant. The Schneiders began to clear and farm the land, building their famous home in 1816 along with a barn, sawmill and other homestead structures.



Key to the growth of the fledgling village named Berlin in 1833 was Joseph Schneider's decision to rent a small portion of his lot at the corner of the Great Road (King Street) and Schneider's Road (Queen Street South) to Phineas Varnum. He opened a blacksmith shop and a tavern (where the Walper Hotel now stands) that attracted other commerce, starting the development that would become downtown Berlin and an important corner of the Victoria Park neighbourhood. Homes and businesses gradually spread along the northern edge of the current Victoria Park neighbourhood, particularly on King Street East. By the mid-1800s, now-familiar streets such as Charles, Joseph, Foundry (Ontario), Francis and Water spread out from King Street to the south, but avoiding the swamp that stretched behind the Schneider home.



Far from the swamp of Schneider Creek was Town Park (later Woodside Park), at another edge of the current Victoria Park neighbourhood. Since 1872 it functioned as the town's main outdoor gathering and recreation spot, but was seen in the minds of many Berliners as too distant from the town centre and lacking in attractions. After Joseph and Barbara's deaths, the Schneider family accelerated the sale of parcels of their original lot and more businesses and homes spread south along Schneider Road, re-named Queen Street South in the 1880s. But area growth was often inhibited by the swampy lands behind the Schneider property. Still, by the late 1800s, other recognizable streets had been developed in this area, including David and later Schneider. Development progression, the sale of lands, and the 'issue' of a too-distant park all came together in the 1890s to create the defining feature of the modern neighbourhood.



Victoria Park, 1899

around parts of the park and charging admission. Several features and buildings were constructed in the park in these early years: the first boathouse (originally along David Street shore); the comfort station (1910), now the oldest existing building in the park; and a peace memorial and bust of Kaiser Wilhelm I (1897) and monument honouring Queen Victoria (1911).

City council approved the purchase of a large parcel of land from the Schneider family on which to build a new city park. The swamp was drained and land cleared as construction began in 1895. The new part of the park was added to an existing private sports field where the clock tower commons is today. Victoria Park opened with much fanfare on August 27, 1896, with its central water feature, bridges and 3 islands. Its early years weren't without the occasional controversy, such as fencing

The park quickly became a hub of activity, as a 1907 publication noted the park's many features: "Athletic Grounds, Tennis Grounds, Boating, and every accommodation for Picnic and Excursion Parties." Swimming could have been added to this list when the city's first swimming pool was built in Victoria Park in 1921. However, it was short-lived in its original location at the west end of the park due to pollution and health concerns and a new location was sought. Neighbourhood activism helped prevent the new pool being located directly beside the Pavilion; instead, Woodside Park was chosen, and Harry Class Pool (as it was later named) remains popular with many neighbourhood residents. Its attractive garden landscape facing Queen Street is a welcome sight of colour after long rows of buildings.



March 1916; Grace Schmidt Room Digital Collection

The First World War brought tumult to Berlin but also to Victoria Park and its surrounding neighbourhood. Soldiers trained, marched and demonstrated in the park's athletic fields, but other nefarious and unfortunate events occurred. Most notably, the original park pavilion, built in 1902, burned down as a result of arson in 1916. The best-known wartime event in the park was the removal of Kaiser Wilhelm I's bust from the statue base, leading to the iconic photograph of its rescue from the Victoria Park lake.

The end of the war led to continued changes in the Victoria Park neighbourhood. The structure of the park allowed for further development up to its boundaries, and a wave of post-war construction increased the number of buildings as streets around the park were completed and lots filled in, mainly with homes. City directories indicate that the streets surrounding the park contained roughly 168 buildings in 1910. By the war's end, those same streets had 297; this growth continued in the post-war 1920s, reaching 430 buildings by decade's end. This early wave of neighbourhood intensification brought more residents to the area and the city as a whole. The steady growth of the neighbourhood led to the opening in 1912 of Victoria School on Joseph Street to serve the neighbourhood and its children.

Victoria School opened in 1912.



Most of this neighbourhood growth was residential, but the Victoria Park area also contained some commerce and industry. Large industries like the Lang Tannery, Gies Foundry, J.M. Schneider Meat Packers and Ahrens Shoes operated just outside the border of the neighbourhood; within the boundary a prominent early industry was Wintermeyer Glue Manufacturers on the western edge. Many Victoria Park residents doubtless worked in such businesses and factories, given the proximity to their homes. Railway lines ran through the edge of the park and a station was located on what is today's Iron Horse Trail near Queen Street on the park's western edge, connecting the area to a wider market for its products. Commerce was generally found on streets at the edge of the neighbourhood (especially Queen, Joseph and Victoria streets); however, some businesses were more central. An ice dealer operated on David Street from 1900 to 1929, meeting Berlin residents' food storage needs before the invention of the fridge; there was also a glass company and a 'leatherette' located very near the park.

Kitchener's population growth was slowed by challenges deriving from the Great Depression in the 1930s and World War Two (1939-1945), but resumed apace in the late 1940s. The Victoria Park neighbourhood had roughly reached the spatial limit of its growth, though other changes and developments arrived in the post-war decades. Victoria Park was still the location of the city's summer sports. A grandstand along David Street in today's commons allowed thousands of spectators to watch baseball, football, lacrosse and other sports over the decades. But factors such as suburbanization and the automobile led to the stadium's removal at the end of the 1966 season. The field still hosts thousands, either playing sports recreationally or as the focal point for events such as the Multicultural Festival and later the Blues Festival.

Most North Americans embraced the car after the Second World War, and it affected travel through the park which was facilitated by two roads. The existing road (Jubilee) connecting Park and Courtland dated to the 1920s, as did another road that connected Park and Schneider, passing through today's playground area. Increased car travel in the post-war era led to significant congestion issues; neighbourhood efforts



helped to close the Park-Schneider road in 1968. The neighbourhood was also prompted to organize by periodic flooding of the lake that affected surrounding homes, particularly on David Street and Hilda Place. Yet another flood in 1975 contributed to the formation of the Victoria Park Neighbourhood Association that campaigned for improvements to the floodgates connecting the park lake to Schneider Creek.

The park lake floods into David Street, 1920. Photo courtesy of Harold Russell.



Changing patterns in labour and industry affected the post-war neighbourhood's appearance and functioning. Industry, once the life-blood of early Berlin, was in decline across much of North America, and this was evident in the Victoria Park neighbourhood. The closure of area industries represented a neighbourhood in some transition. The nearby Lang Tannery closed in 1974, and three large industries on Queen Street beside the rail lines ceased operations in the 1960s: the Kissner mill, Bramm Coal company and Perkins Glue. While residents

may not have mourned the loss of a glue factory, these trends threatened some historic buildings in an era that did not embrace heritage value as much as a later time would. For example, from the 1940s to 1970s, Joseph and Barbara Schneider's home-stead functioned as a multi-resident rental building with



The Schneider property circa the 1890s.

an adjacent gas station and restaurant. Action by historical organizations and Kitchener citizens, including some neighbours, led to the home's preservation and restoration that approximated its original appearance. The Joseph Schneider Haus Museum opened in 1981 and became a focal point of the neighbourhood's cultural and historic engagement.

The Schneider Haus Museum and its timing seems symbolic of the neighbourhood's heritage awakening. Residents encouraged the City of Kitchener to recognize the area's historical value, leading to the Victoria Park neighbourhood designation as a Heritage Conservation District in 1996, the same year that Victoria Park celebrated its centennial.



However, its heritage designation has not prevented various forces of change pressing in on the neighbourhood. While intensification of Kitchener's core has led to more citizens living in and around Victoria Park, it has come at the cost of the demolition of several buildings. These made way for apartment buildings starting in the 1960s, most notably the Conestoga Towers, Victoria Park Towers and the Iron Horse Towers on Queen Street. Though not all lost buildings were of significant heritage value, the neighbourhood will continue to face in the future the challenge of changing and modernizing while retaining its historic character.

Some of these trends that posed challenges also brought benefits to the neighbourhood. Many old buildings, no longer functional in their original purpose, were preserved through what planners often call 'adaptive reuse'. Bread and Roses, Emil Vogelsang's button factory and later the original Williams Green and Rome / Cluett Peabody factory at Queen and Courtland, was one of the first industry-to-homes conversion in Kitchener. On Benton Street, the Arrow Shirt Factory's transition to residential lofts is another example, as is the preservation of Victoria School as a mix of medical offices and affordable residences. The rise of the high-tech sector brought jobs and new residents to the area, and provided funds to re-purpose old industrial buildings in and around the neighbourhood, most notably the Tannery redevelopment. Several other surrounding one-time industries and warehouses were re-purposed as offices or homes. (these are found on Michael Street at Linden, Queen South at Woodside, Victoria at West and Highland East beside Woodside sports fields.) On the opposite side of the coin, many homes in which generations of families were raised have become professional offices, social agencies, hair salons and, alas, junk yards.

At one time, like most parts of the old city, the neighbourhood was served by many corner variety and grocery stores, most of which have disappeared. Gone are such stores previously located on Highland at Queen, Queen at Brock, David at Joseph, and Water at Joseph among others. The transition from small corner grocery and convenience stores to the larger stores of today is reflected in the first Zehr's grocery store which opened in 1950 in the Victoria Park Neighbourhood at Highland Road and West Avenue. At one time, the neighbourhood boasted three service stations on Queen South, one at Victoria and West, one at Joseph and Gaukel and one at Highland and Spadina. In 2017, only the latter survives. Changing patterns in how people shop and travel are seen in the changing forms and function of this dynamic neighbourhood.



The Victoria Park neighbourhood's history shows a neighbourhood of many dichotomies. Its historic nature contrasts the nearby embrace of new technology; the neighbourhood is centrally located in Kitchener's downtown, yet its central feature is a pastoral oasis amidst ongoing development; and its past shows an ability to adapt to changing social patterns while also holding onto and preserving its historic character. No doubt the neighbourhood will face challenges in the future but its past shows an ability to meet them with historic innovation.



Postcard of Victoria Park, 1914.



About the Author: Todd Bowman graduated from the University of Waterloo with a degree in history. He teaches history and social science at the high school level in Waterloo Region. He maintains a strong interest in the local history of Kitchener through membership in the Waterloo Historical Society and the Victoria Park Historical Committee.

Photos taken by Todd Bowman unless otherwise noted.





VPNA NAP meeting #1 – May 17th, 2017 5:15pm – 7pm

In attendance:

Agnes Das, Patrick Gilbride, Anna Maste, Anka Brozic, Melissa Bowman, Rebekah Haynes, Erin Toner

Agnes provided a snapshot of NAP principles, budget, parameters, focus on documentation, and engaging community

The plan needs to be asset based. So what are our strengths? (See part one). How might we build on these strengths? (see part two)

Part One: Assets (based on discussion and whiteboard ideas)

WALKABLE

- Walkable
- Rideable
- Iron Horse Trail
- Close to Downtown Kitchener
- Close to transit
- Restaurants
- "Active"
- Mature trees
- Park features (water, gardens, trails, etc)

PARK

- Pavilion
- Gardens
- Gallery
- Bandstand/Gazebo
- Brings in families
- Festivals
- Wildlife
- Lake/Water
- Variety of uses
- Houses and park together

HISTORY

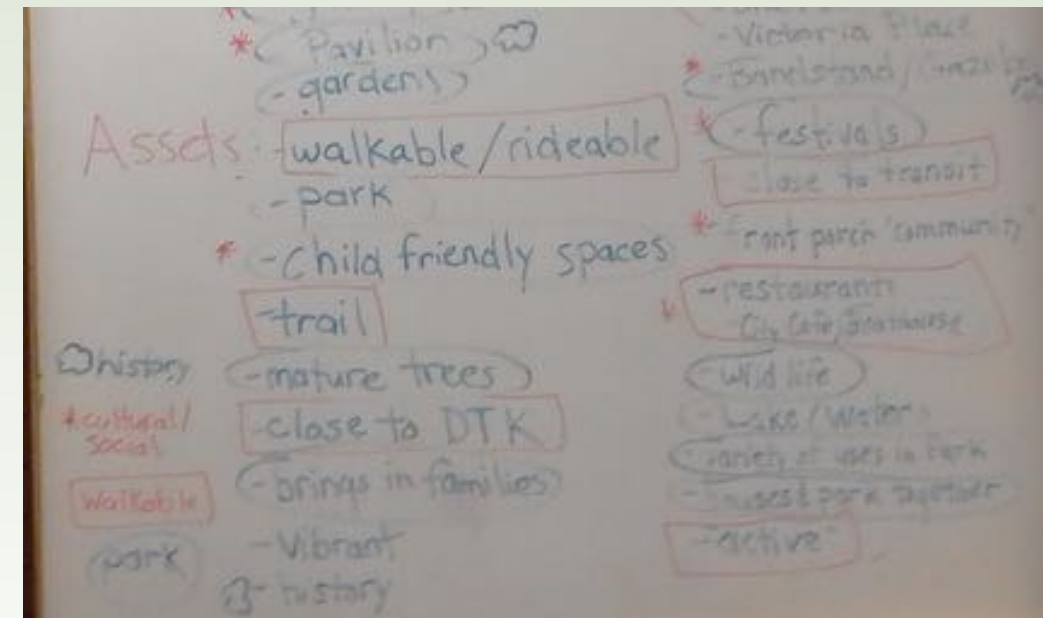
- Pavilion
- Gallery
- Bandstand/Gazebo
- People such as rych, Harold, the Yantzis
- Schneider Haus

SOCIAL/CULTURAL

- Pavilion
- Bandstand/Gazebo
- Child friendly spaces
- Festivals
- Front porch community
- Restaurants
- Diverse people
- Diverse housing
- Schneider Haus
- Reception House
- OneRoof
- Victoria Place



Whiteboards proved invaluable throughout our meetings.





Part Two:

Brainstorming based on identified assets and categorized:

Walkable:

- Traffic calming strategies (at Highland/ West)
- More crosswalks (in and around the park. For example, on Jubilee near the Boathouse)
- Lighting (in and around the park and trails)
- More benches/resting areas



Park:

- Signage (wayfinding, stories of place, etc.)
- Fitness training circuit
- Alternative adult play equipment
- Community board
- More benches
- "Butt Stops" and information





Historical:

- History 'stories' shared in a variety of ways (plaques, pictures, signage, events)
- Music and stories shared in the bandstand once a week
- Story maps
- Photos of what used to be in specific spaces



Social/Cultural:

- Free classes in the park (for example: tai chi, fitness, art, music)



Decisions agreed upon:

Our boundaries for this project will reflect our current VPNA boundaries.

Considerations:

- We have access to \$4000 if needed to support the work of this project. Potential uses for these funds include: hiring someone (writer; photographer; students to obtain and analyze needed data)
- City encourages us to demonstrate the breadth and depth of possibilities so advises to document everything to help 'tell the story' of our experience.
- We can reference the VPNA aims and objectives to identify the vision for the NAP.

Next steps:

- Refer to previous asset mapping exercises done in the neighbourhood and bring that information into this discussion. Melissa to follow up on this for next meeting.
- Bring others into the conversation (neighbours, organizations, businesses, etc.).
- Remember to continually document our processes.

Next meeting:

May 31st 5:30pm at the DCC

*all photos retrieved from Google images, except for RCMP history wrap (taken by Melissa Bowman)



VPNA NAP meeting #2 – May 31st, 2017 5:30pm – 7:30pm

In attendance:

Agnes Das, Patrick Gilbride, Melissa Bowman, Rebekah Haynes, Erin Toner

Regrets:

Anna Maste, Anka Brozic

Our plan needs to be asset based. Last meeting, we identified many assets and categorized them into 4 areas (walkable, park, history, social/cultural).

Part One:

List of neighbourhood assets based on previous asset mapping activities (done in the neighbourhood), discussion and whiteboard brainstorming ideas by our action team.

Walkable:

Trail
nature
winter lights
clean walkways
City Café
Iron horse Trail
geocache
park washrooms

Park:

Splash pad
Food forest
Lake
swan
boats
clock tower
the Park
winter lights
clean walkways
fountain
gardens
playground
geese
Boathouse
park events
canoeing
Kaiser's Bust
park washrooms

Social/Cultural:

Cafka Art Walk
Multicultural
Festival
Craft beer and
Ribfest
The Tannery
Boathouse
park events
festivals
Working Centre

History:

The Tannery
Schneider Haus
Boathouse
York apartments
Kaiser's Bust
clock tower

Other:

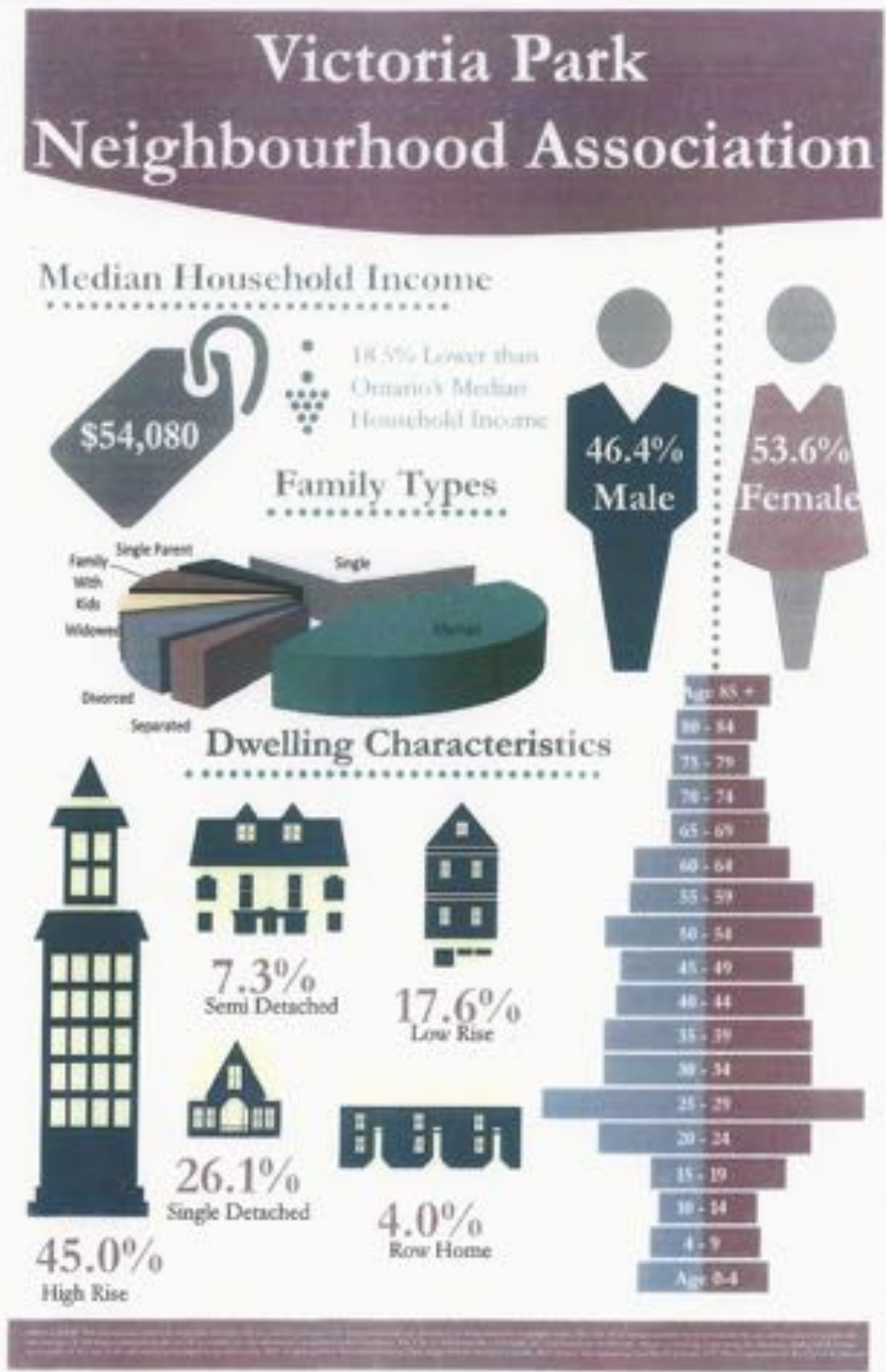
Harry Class Pool
Queen's Greens
Communitech

Action team hard at work (May 31, 2017)



Part Two:

Reviewed neighbourhood demographic maps and information:
 Agnes provided several demographic maps for us to review. She also provided a sample neighbourhood profile .





Team reviewing neighbourhood demographics and maps. (May 31st, 2017)





Part Three:

Discussion of vision based on identified assets and neighbourhood demographics:

A vision statement refers to the desired end state over the long term
We considered the following from the Neighbourhood Action Plan Guide:

3. Develop a Communications Plan

Keep residents informed.

The creation of a communications plan will help inform residents about their work and engage more people in the process. The communications plan identifies when and how the Neighbourhood Action Team will communicate with the neighbourhood and gather their input. When to communicate should align with the key tasks and major milestones identified in the workplan. Recognizing the diverse makeup of a neighbourhood, it will be important to communicate and seek input in different ways.

Some examples could include events, meetings, newsletters, website and social media.

Tip: Always try to communicate in plain language. Use words and sentences that are appropriate for a Grade 6-8 reading level, so everyone can understand and remember your message quickly and easily.

SEE THE TOOLKIT, TOOL B - ENGAGING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD, TOOL C - VALUING INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AND TOOL 1- COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

4. Engage the neighbourhood

Understand your neighbourhood today. Create a vision for the future.

What do residents know about their neighbourhood

One of the first Neighbourhood Action Team meeting agenda items should focus on further developing the asset map of the neighbourhood. The team should take some time to review the asset map that the community started at the neighbourhood gathering, discuss the information and add any additional assets that were missed. The asset map is simply one tool that the team can use to help develop a picture that represents what residents know about their neighbourhood.

A review of social and demographic statistical information may help to broaden everyone's understanding of their neighbourhood. Information about the people who live in the neighbourhood, housing, income levels and land uses can be considered. Information about how safe, accessible, connected, inclusive, diverse and engaged neighbourhoods are will be made available and can also be considered. All of this information can be requested from City staff.

Asset mapping combined with statistical information can serve as an important reference throughout the process because it can help highlight the conditions and experiences of others. Interesting stories from the asset mapping exercise may help put a human face on the statistics.

SEE THE TOOLKIT, TOOL E - ASSET MAPPING: NEIGHBOURHOOD GATHERING, WALK AND ASSET CHART, TOOL F - How TO PLAN AND RUN MEETINGS AND TOOL J- NEIGHBOURHOOD STATISTICAL INFORMATION

What kind of neighborhood do residents want

Once residents have developed a complete picture of their neighbourhood, a vision for the future will begin to develop. The vision describes what the Neighbourhood Action Team wants the neighbourhood to be in the future.

Key question: In 5 years, what will the neighbourhood look and feel like ?

Think about the actions that can be taken to make neighbourhoods safe, accessible, connected, inclusive, diverse and engaged. An effective vision will inspire and motivate the broader neighbourhood to work together to achieve it. It will inform all goals, objectives, priorities and actions moving forward. Remember to get endorsement by the broader neighbourhood so everyone gets behind it. Eventually, residents may want to share their vision with Kitchener City Council. City staff can help with this.

SEE THE TOOLKIT, TOOL K - How TO DEVELOP VISION STATEMENTS, OBJECTIVES, QUICK WINS AND ACTIONS



5. Develop an Implementation Plan

Identify actions to achieve your vision.

Once residents have a vision for the future of their neighbourhood, the Neighbourhood Action Team can fine-tune its objectives in order to develop and prioritize specific actions for implementation based on the feedback from the neighbourhood. For instance, an objective may be to create an inventory of residents' strengths while the specific steps to achieve the action may include creating and distributing a survey, collecting and analyzing the survey and sharing the information with the neighbourhood.

If necessary, City staff can assist with this step. When refining the objectives and actions, remember to:

- Create objectives that
 - use action verbs (such as write, solve, build, produce)
 - are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely)
- Ensure the objectives include quick wins, short term actions and long term actions
- Rank the objectives in order of priority (i.e. which ones should be done first)
- Prioritize actions within each prioritized objective

The implementation plan should:

- consider what organizations are available to be involved in specific actions
- identify which individuals, groups or organizations should take the lead on specific actions
- determine what can be achieved within a short, medium or long-term timeframe
- confirm where resources can be accessed

We also relied on Tool K from the Toolkit:

Tool K- How to Develop Vision Statements, Objectives, Quick Wins and Actions

Vision Statement

The foundation of the Neighbourhood Action Plan is the vision that is created by the people who live, work, learn and play in the neighbourhood. Residents can drive the change that they want to see when they clearly articulate a vision for the future of their neighbourhood. The vision is for the neighbourhood, created by the Neighbourhood Action Team and endorsed by the neighbourhood.

The vision should:

- Be concise, identify what is possible and create a picture of the future of the neighbourhood.
- Be inspiring and inspirational.
- Explain why the neighbourhood is creating a Neighbourhood Action Plan.
- Explain where the neighbourhood is heading and what they are trying to achieve.

Steps to create a vision statement:

- Select a facilitator and recorder
- Make sure sticky notes, pens, flip chart paper and markers are available

The facilitator will:

- Explain to the Neighbourhood Action Team the purpose of the vision statement.
- Ask the team to review the asset map and neighbourhood profiles. Ask the team to consider the following questions: Based on our assets and issues, what do we want our neighbourhood to look like in 5 years ... 10 years ... 20 years? How do we build and enhance our assets? How do we address our needs? What is possible?
- Give each team member a sticky note and pen and ask them to write down ONE idea of what they want their neighbourhood to look like in the future. Give the team 10 minutes to think, reflect and complete.
- Facilitate a "go around" by asking each team member to speak to their idea. Have the team discuss each idea. The recorder will capture the main ideas on flip chart paper. The facilitator will then ask the team to group ideas together into major themes. Get agreement on the major themes. Ask the group, "Did we miss anything?"
- Write each theme on a flip chart and post around the room. Give each team member one sticky dot and have them place it on the theme they think is most important. The themes with the most dots are most important for prominent inclusion in the vision statement.

It is important that the team not wordsmith a vision statement as part of this exercise. Have one or two team members, the facilitator and City staff take away the major themes, put some sentences around these themes and bring this work back to the group for discussion at the next Neighbourhood Action Team meeting. This will save the team time and frustration and allow them to move on with the development of goals and objectives. Once your vision statement is complete, do a REALITY CHECK.

ASK: Can this be achieved?



Goals and Objectives

Once the Vision Statement is created and endorsed by the Neighbourhood Action Team, the next step is to create the goals for the Neighbourhood Action Plan, based on the main themes developed during the visioning exercise. People often get confused about what is a goal, an objective and an action. **Goals** are general guidelines that explain what you want to achieve in your community. They are usually long-term and represent global visions such as "protect public health and safety."

Objectives define strategies or implementation steps to attain the identified goals. Unlike goals, objectives are specific, measurable and have a defined completion date.

Actions are more specific and provide the "how to" steps to attaining the objective.

Here is an example of what a vision statement, goal, objective and action might look like.

Vision: We want our neighbourhood to be known for its safety, walkability and friendliness.

Goal: Create a safe environment for pedestrians in our neighbourhood.

Objective: Increase pedestrian-friendly features on Main Street.

Actions: Plant trees; install benches and calm traffic through bump-outs along Main Street.

Is there a Quick Win? A quick win is an action that can be achieved in a couple of months using minimal resources, shows early success in the neighbourhood and creates a "buzz."

Important note about the process:

While the final Neighbourhood Action Plan will clearly present the vision, goals, objectives and actions in a way that makes sense to the reader, the creation of this work is often less ordered and cohesive. Often residents will focus on the immediate tasks or behaviours they would like to see change in their neighbourhood to meet their vision, without being able to speak about how these ideas fit into broader goals and objectives. Experience in other cities suggests that sometimes the goals and objectives emerge out of a number of concrete actions that can be grouped together to create the goals and objectives. Because of this, it is important to keep a record of all ideas that emerge during discussions so that no idea gets lost.

Discussion points:

Do we want to reference the characteristics of a great neighbourhood here? No, but let's include them in our goals.

Let's bring suggested vision to VPNA June 6th meeting. Also, what of the 4 categories (walkable, park, history, social/cultural) do we want to focus on? Melissa will add this to the June 6th agenda.

We reviewed the VPNA's constitution in our discussion of our vision.

ARTICLE II – Aims and Objectives

To be non-denominational and non-partisan.

To create a friendly community spirit.

To preserve and enhance the quality of life in the Victoria Park Neighbourhood.

To promote the availability of a quality residential and social environment in the community of the Victoria Park Neighbourhood.

To study and evaluate the community, its needs, and the services which exist to meet those needs.

To stimulate awareness of community problems and provide consulting and advisory services to the neighbourhood.

To encourage and facilitate co-operation among agencies and organizations providing service to the neighbourhood.

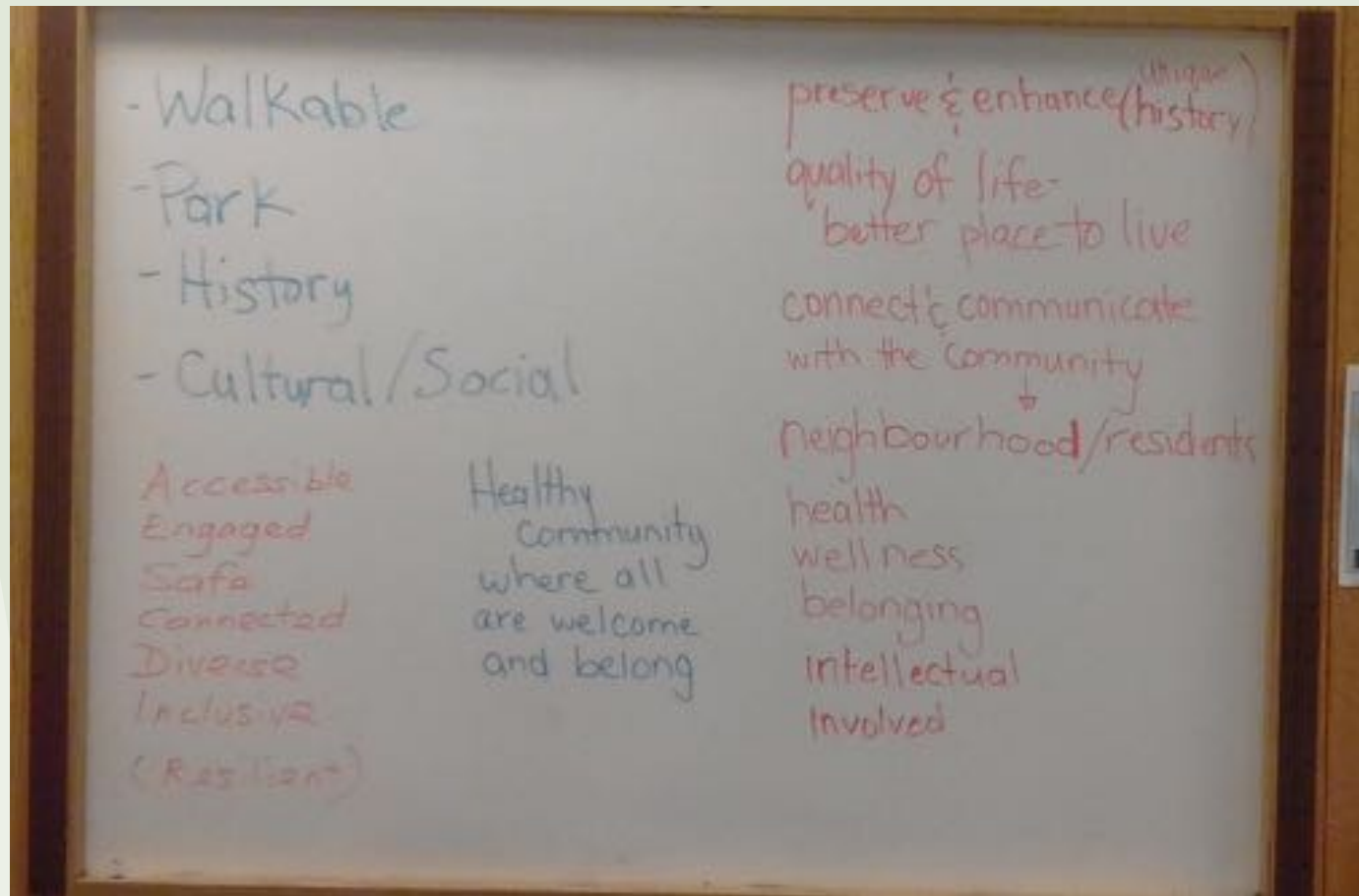
To provide when feasible such common services or facilities as are deemed in the best interest of the neighbourhood.

To engage in such other activities related to planning, co-ordinating and implementing joint action as may be deemed to be in the best interest of the welfare of the neighbourhood.

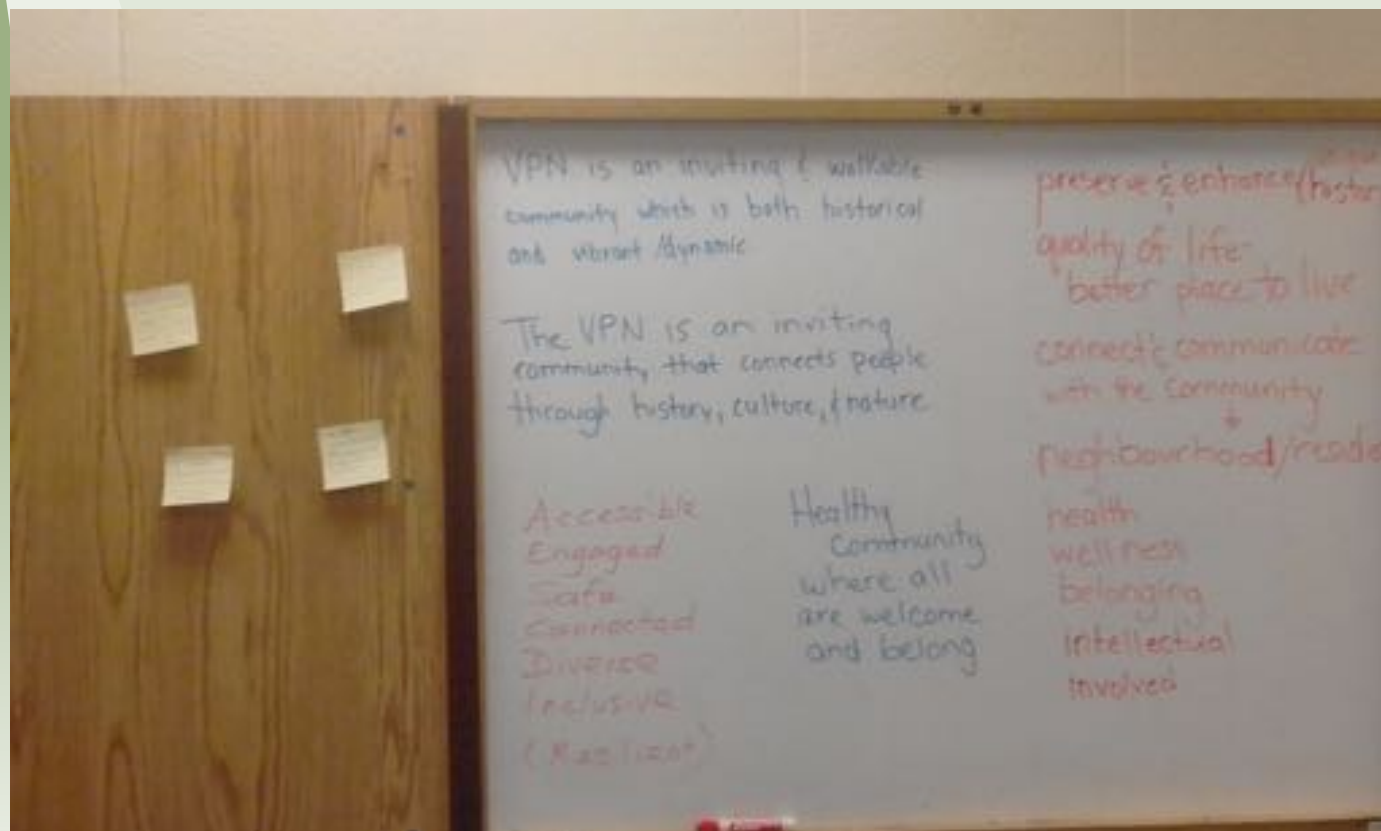
To promote recreation activities with the community with the objective of encouraging participation of all residents of the area and in all age groups.

To encourage the best use of present recreational facilities and the development of new facilities. To work in close co-operation with the Kitchener Parks and Recreation Department in providing public recreation.

We want our neighbourhood to be known for its unique character. We want to preserve and enhance (as per section 3 of aims and objectives) those 4 areas – walkable, park, history, social/cultural in the neighbourhood.



The whiteboard and sticky notes get lots of use as the team brainstorms ideas for our vision. (May 31, 2017)



Decisions agreed upon:

Vision to recommend to the VPNA: The Victoria Park neighbourhood is an inviting community that connects people through history, culture, and nature.

Considerations:

Do we want to hire someone to create a neighbourhood profile? Here is a link to a neighbourhood profile for the Mount Hope neighbourhood. <https://communityedition.ca/if-streets-could-talk-mount-hope/> Melissa also has a hard copy in case link disappears.

Next steps:

Bring others into the conversation (neighbours, organizations, businesses, etc). Remember to continually document our processes.

Next meeting:

June 21st, 5:15pm





VPNA NAP meeting #3 – June 21, 2017 5:15pm – 6:45pm

In attendance:

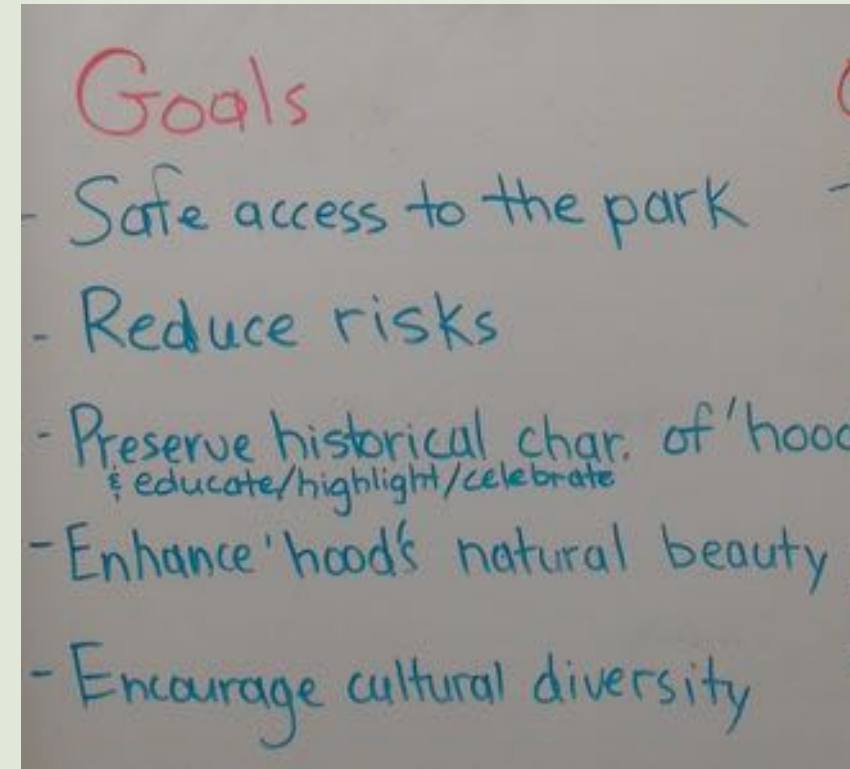
Agnes Das, Patrick Gilbride, Melissa Bowman, Rebekah Haynes, Erin Toner, Anna Maste, Anka Brozic

Informed team that the VPNA unanimously supported the vision statement for the NAP.

Part One:

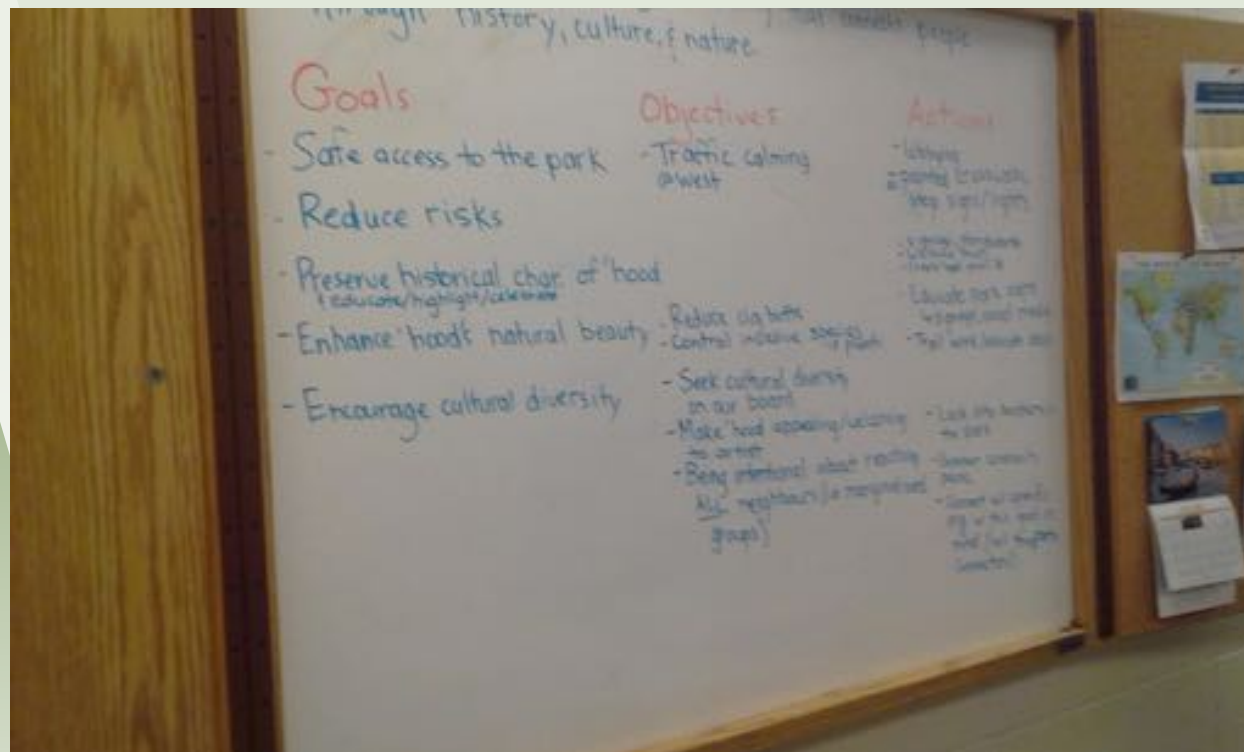
Develop goals, objectives, and actions:

We considered Toolkit – Tool K throughout this discussion.



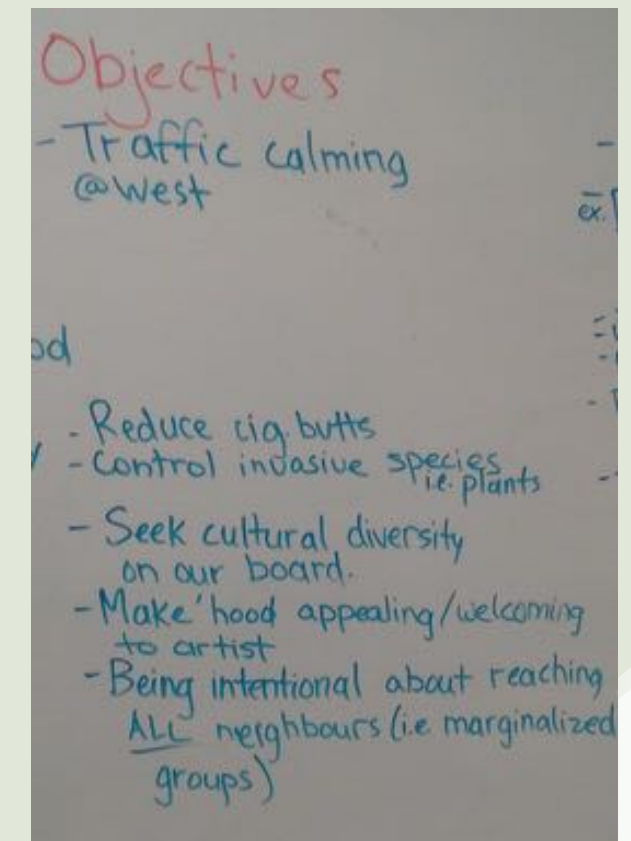
Goals: these were developed based on our lists of neighbourhood assets and what we would like to strengthen (highlighted in brackets)

- Safe access to the park (walkable, park)
- Reduce risks (walkable, park)
- Preserve the historical character of the neighbourhood - as well as educate/highlight/celebrate it (history)
- Enhance the neighbourhood's natural beauty (walkable)
- Encourage cultural diversity (social/cultural)



Objectives: based on our described goals (bracketed numbers refer to goals – see above)

- Traffic calming (West Ave; Jubilee; etc) (1)
- Reduce cigarette butt litter (4)
- Control invasive plant species (4)
- Seek cultural diversity on our team (5)
- Make neighbourhood appealing/welcoming to artists (5)
- Be intentional about reaching ALL neighbours (especially marginalized groups) (5)





Actions

- lobbying
ex. painted crosswalks, stop signs/lights
- signage; storyboards
- walking tours
- Create 'hood profile
- Educate park users
↳ signage; social media
- Trail work/educate days
- Look into buskers in the park
- Summer community picnic
- Connect w/ specific org. w/ this goal in mind (incl. third party connectors)

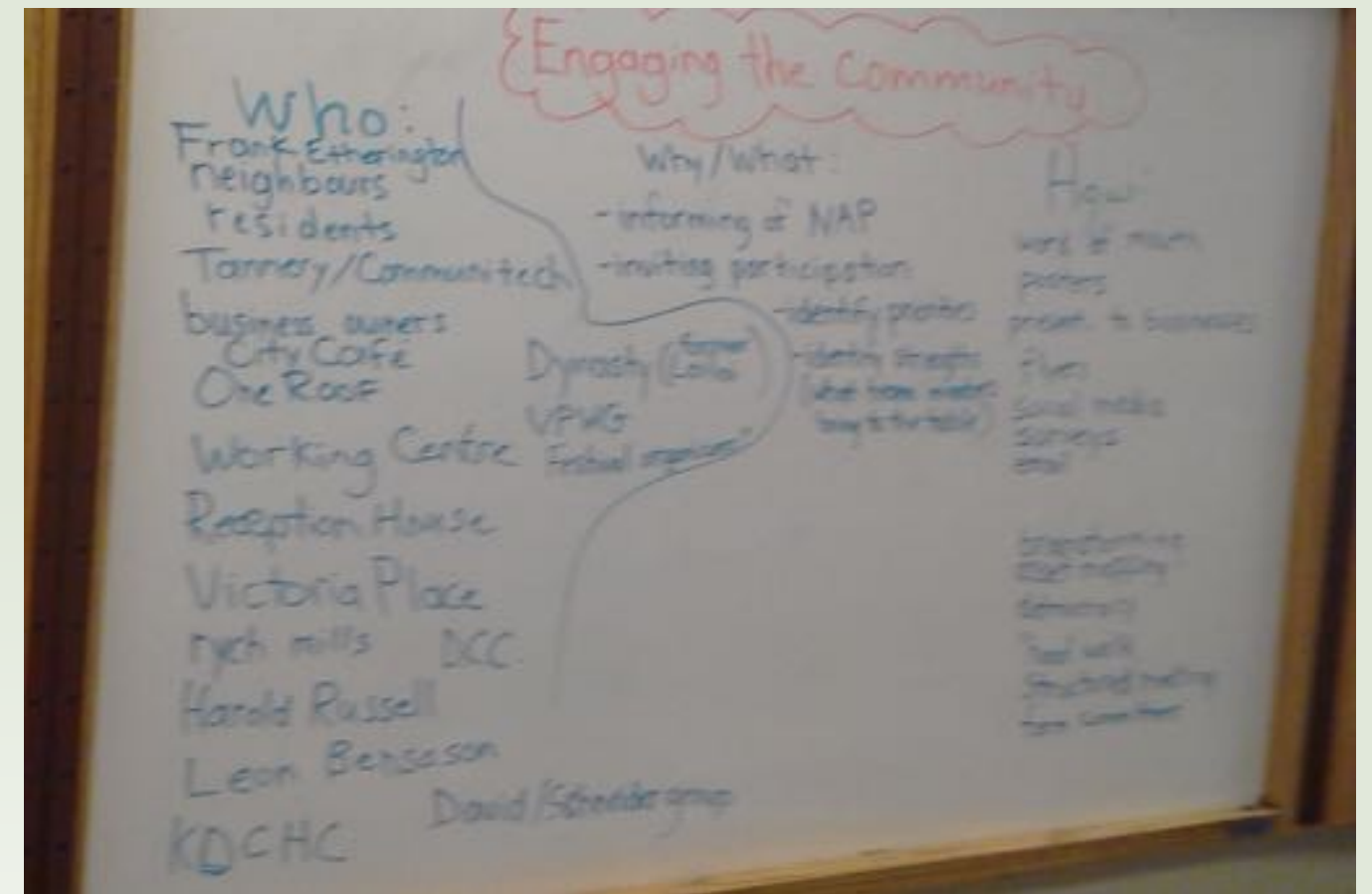
Actions: based on stated goals and objectives (bracketed numbers refer to numbered goals – see pg. 34)

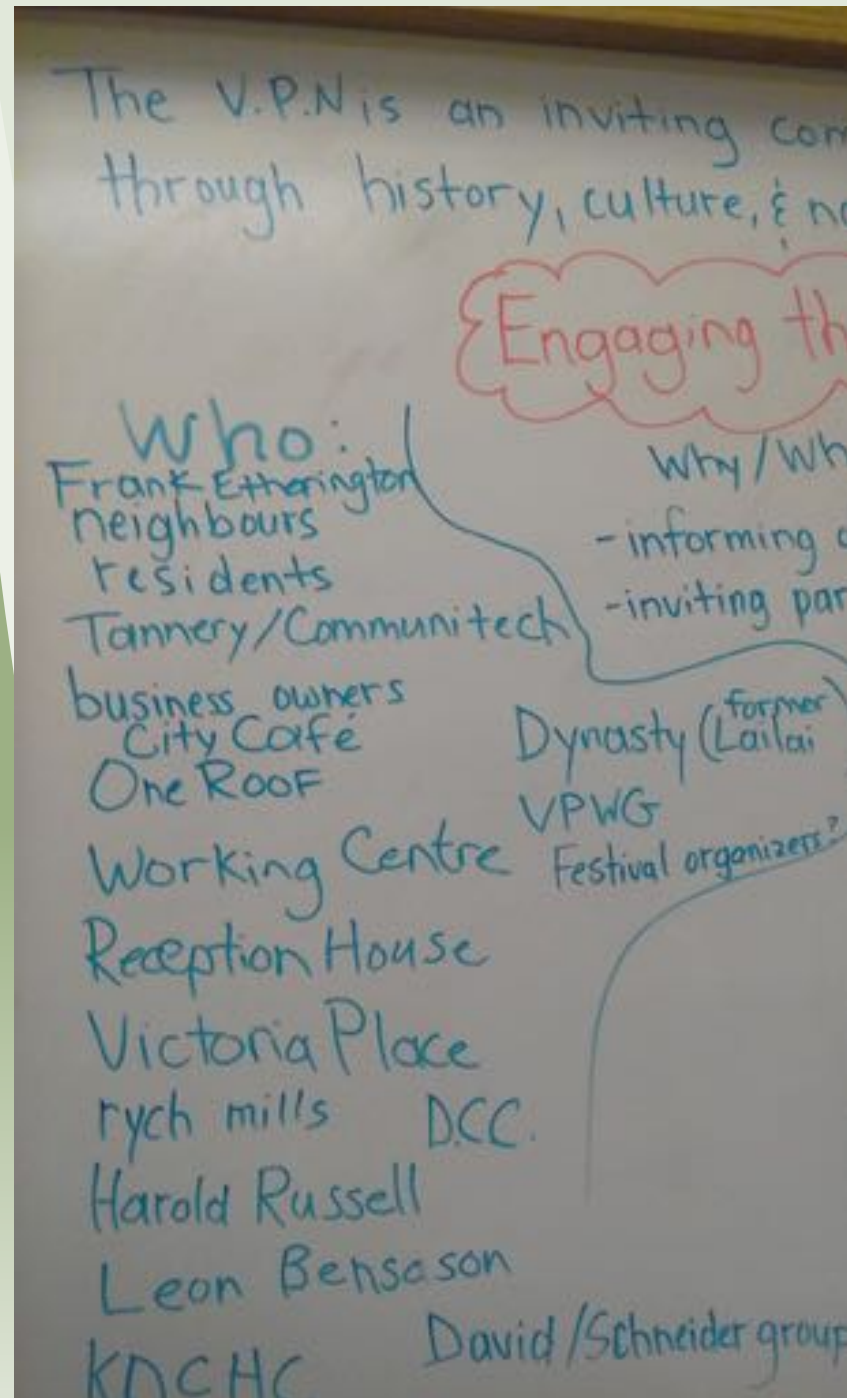
- Lobbying for improvements (1)
- Installing painted crosswalks, stop signs, and/or stop lights (1, 2)
- Installing signage, storyboards (3)
- Offer walking tours of the neighbourhood (3)
- Create neighbourhood profile (3)
- Educate park users through signage, social media, other (4)
- Offer trail work days, workshops (4)
- Support buskers in the park (5)
- Summer community picnic (5)
- Connect with specific organizations with the goal of connecting with marginalized groups – including third party connectors (5)

Part Two:

Engaging the community:

We wanted to keep the Neighbourhood Action Plan Guide, in mind as we developed a plan to engage the larger community.

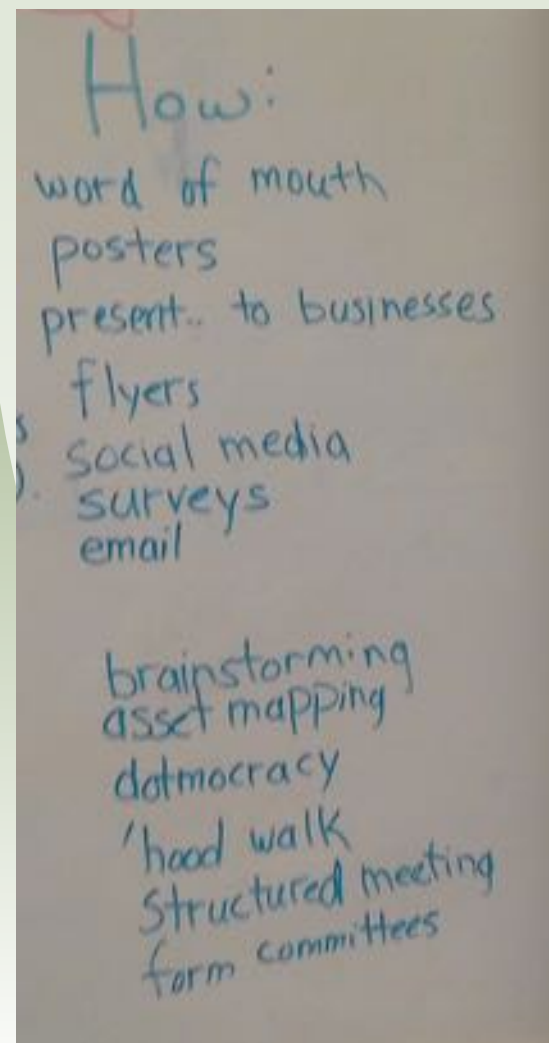
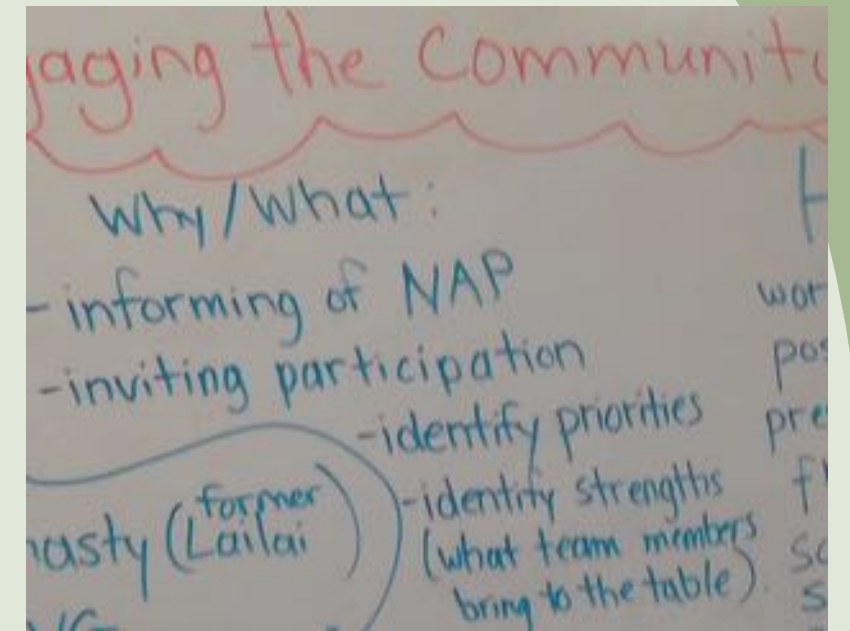




- Who:
- Neighbours/residents
 - Councillor Etherington
 - Tannery/Communitech
 - Schneider Haus
 - Business owners, including:
 - City Café
 - Dynasty (former Lailai)
 - Victoria Place
 - Organizations, including:
 - OneROOF
 - The Working Centre
 - Reception House
 - Downtown Community Centre
 - KDCHC
 - REEP
 - Victoria Park Working Group
 - Key neighbourhood stakeholders, including:
 - Harold Russell
 - rych mills
 - David/Schneider group
 - Leon Bensason
 - Linden Terrace
 - Iron Horse Towers
 - Victoria School

Why are we engaging the community? To share what information?

- Inform others of NAP
- Invite participation
- Identify priorities
- Identify strengths (what are specific team members able to bring to the table?)



How can we best engage others?

- Word of mouth
- Posters/flyers
- Make presentations to businesses/organizations
- Social media
- Surveys
- Email

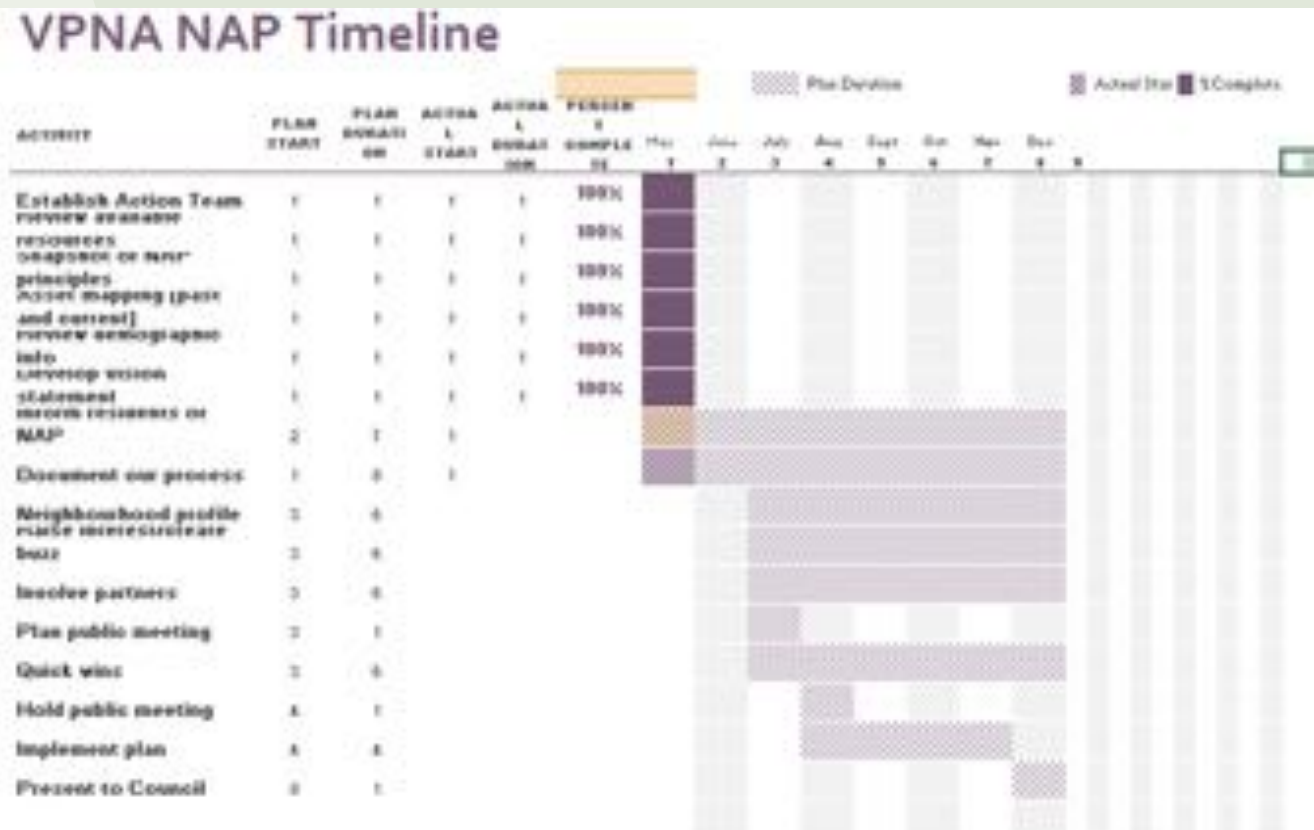
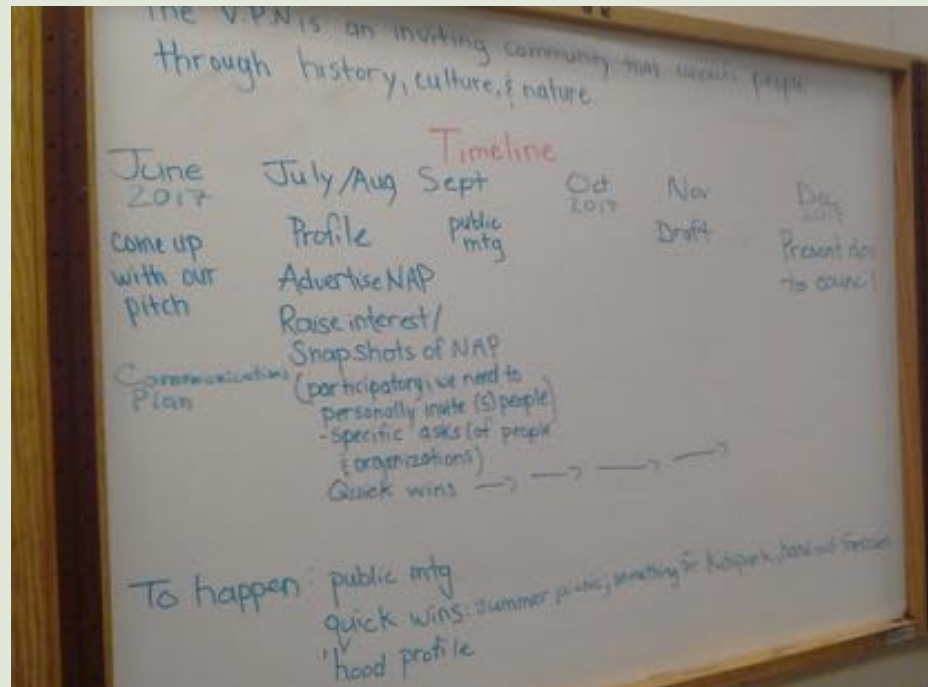
Once together, we can:

- Brainstorm
- Asset mapping
- Dotmocracy
- Neighbourhood walk
- Structured meeting
- Form committees



Part Three:

Create a timeline



Discussion points:

- Agnes shared the Resident-led Traffic Calming Guide as well as the Placemaking Challenge plan for 2018. Both of these resources may be useful in future discussions.
- We discussed the idea of quick wins and creating some interest and ‘buzz’ around the NAP. Potential ideas: hosting a summer picnic; a handout for Kidspark; handing out freezies in the park along with a small flyer about the NAP

Decisions agreed upon:

- Goals, objectives, and actions created
- Timeline developed

Considerations:

Do we want to hire someone to create a neighbourhood profile? Here is a link to a neighbourhood profile for the Mount Hope neighbourhood. <https://communityedition.ca/if-streets-could-talk-mount-hope/> Melissa also has a hard copy in case link disappears.

Next steps:

- Bring others into the conversation (neighbours, organizations, businesses, etc)
- Identify some quick wins and implement them
- Remember to continually document our processes
- Decide on neighbourhood profile plan
- Develop a specific communications plan to assist in creating interest as well as informing stakeholders

Next meeting:

July 4th, 7pm



VPNA NAP meeting #4 – July 4th, 2017 7:00-9:00pm

In attendance:

Agnes Das, Patrick Gilbride, Melissa Bowman, Rebekah Haynes, Anna Maste, Anka Brozic

Part One:

Agnes invited the City Transportation and Planning Manager to attend (to explore feasibility of traffic calming measures).

Quick wins:

Barry from the City's Transportation Planning department joined us for a discussion around resident-led traffic calming and some potential quick wins. There is a level 2 PXO pedestrian crossing being installed in the Park on Jubilee at Water. This is a quick win to some degree and can highlight one option in traffic calming options. It was noted that traffic calming can only happen where it makes sense and within provincial as well as heritage rules. West Ave may be a good candidate for a painted crosswalk (near Homewood where the trail crosses from the park towards Patricia, Belmont, etc). Road paint wears fairly quickly and would likely need repainting annually. This crosswalk could be added to the annual maintenance program where maintenance refers to closing the road to allow for neighbourhood residents to hold a street party and repaint the crossing. A conversation would need to occur with nearby residents about potential plans. We may want to seek out neighbourhood artists to help design and implement the crosswalk design. It should be noted though that a painted crosswalk does not give pedestrians right of way – they are still expected to cross only when clear. A level 2 PXO crossing however does offer right of way to pedestrians. This crossing could be a potential candidate for that type of crossing, but not likely until 2019.

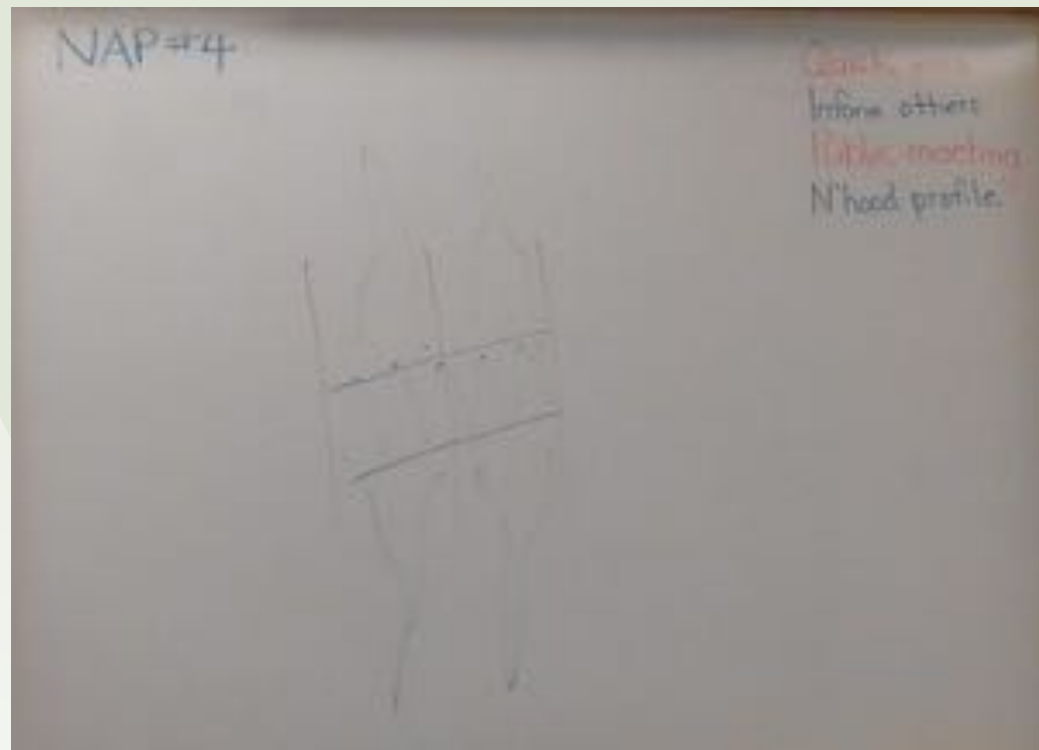


Some great examples of decorative crosswalks can be found in Halifax, St. Paul, Seattle, and Portland.





Before talking to nearby residents seeking approval of our plan, ensure that our plan is clear and understandable first. We may want to consider doing a sidewalk chalk version on the road prior to actual installation. This could be part of the Placemaking Challenge. Or it could be done as part of a street party event – though it may be required to be pressure washed off at the end of the event. Other areas of interest for traffic calming that were noted: David at Joseph (though this may be a short-term issue as the bus terminal will eventually be removed); Park/Jubilee at Devon; Queen at Spadina.



Barry mentioned that, although the crosswalk itself does still need to be defined, art work in and around the crosswalk can extend past the defined crosswalk borders – as illustrated in whiteboard picture.

Agnes invited Landscape Architect, Design and Development, Manager of Trails and Multi-use Pathways (to explore adult playground equipment, trail improvements,...etc.)

Jon from the City's design and development department joined us to discuss playgrounds, natural areas, and urban forestry with the idea of creating some quick wins around those areas. Playgrounds obviously pose a challenge for quick wins given what's involved in creating playgrounds. There is a long queue and many regulations, especially around safety surfaces. There is some interest in developing exercise/parkour type equipment, but there are no current examples of it in existence in Kitchener currently.

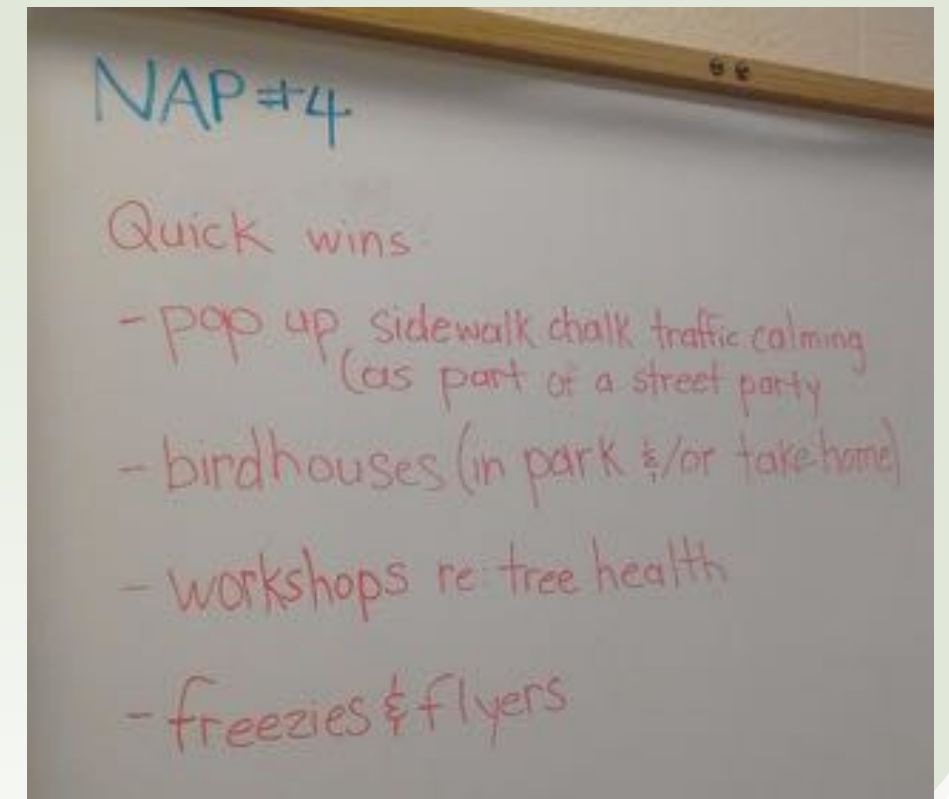
Potential areas to use include the Henry Sturm Greenway (though there are plans currently in development for this space); the food forest area; the Iron Horse Trail (again, there are some improvements already coming to that space).

Possible options for expanding the food forest area. City's interest though is more on native species as opposed to food forests specifically. Also, fruit trees will not be maintained by the City given their challenges. As well, any plans must address longevity of the project with 'ownership' being handed over to the VPNA. The 2 biggest challenges in growing more trees are hydro concerns and soil volume. We could look into matching grants for food forest expansion plans. We may want to partner with the City in offering workshops about tree health.

There seems to be some interest in looking at ways to attract more birds to the area. A potential quick win for this could be offering a bird house making/painting activity. People could either take their birdhouses home and/or we could install some in the neighbourhood/park. This may mesh well with a street party event as well.

Identified possible quick wins:

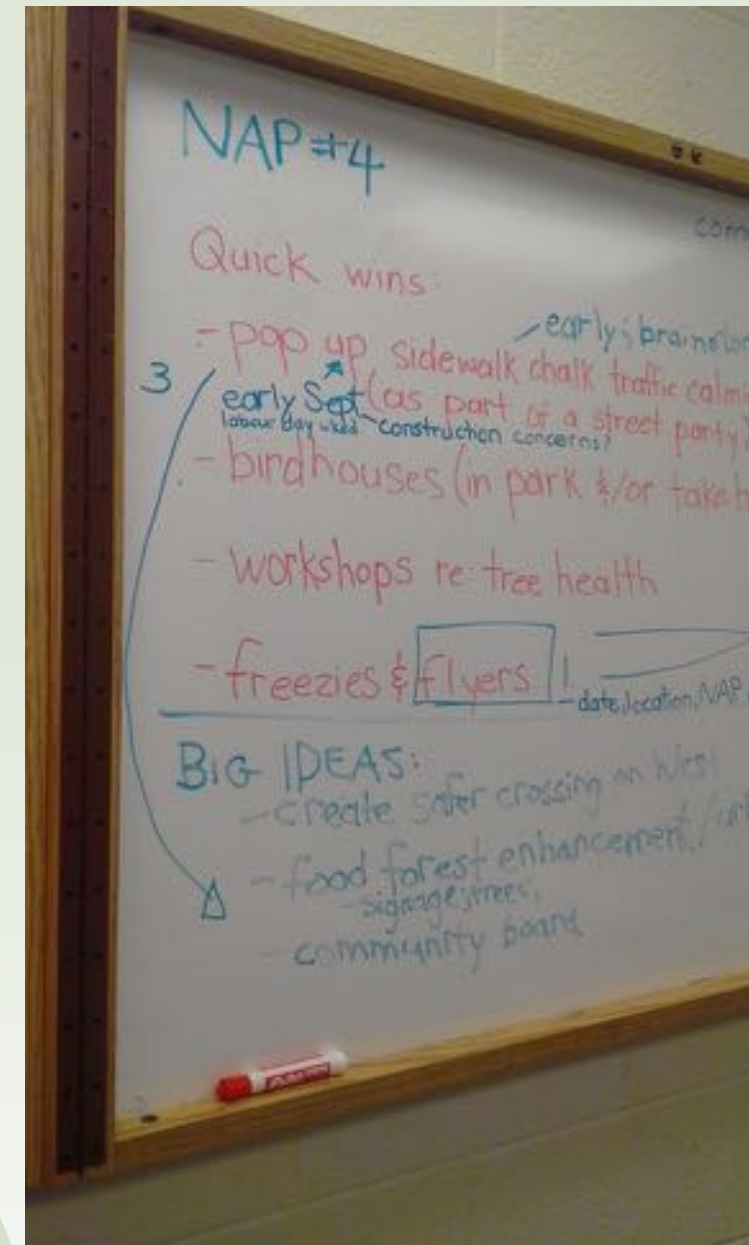
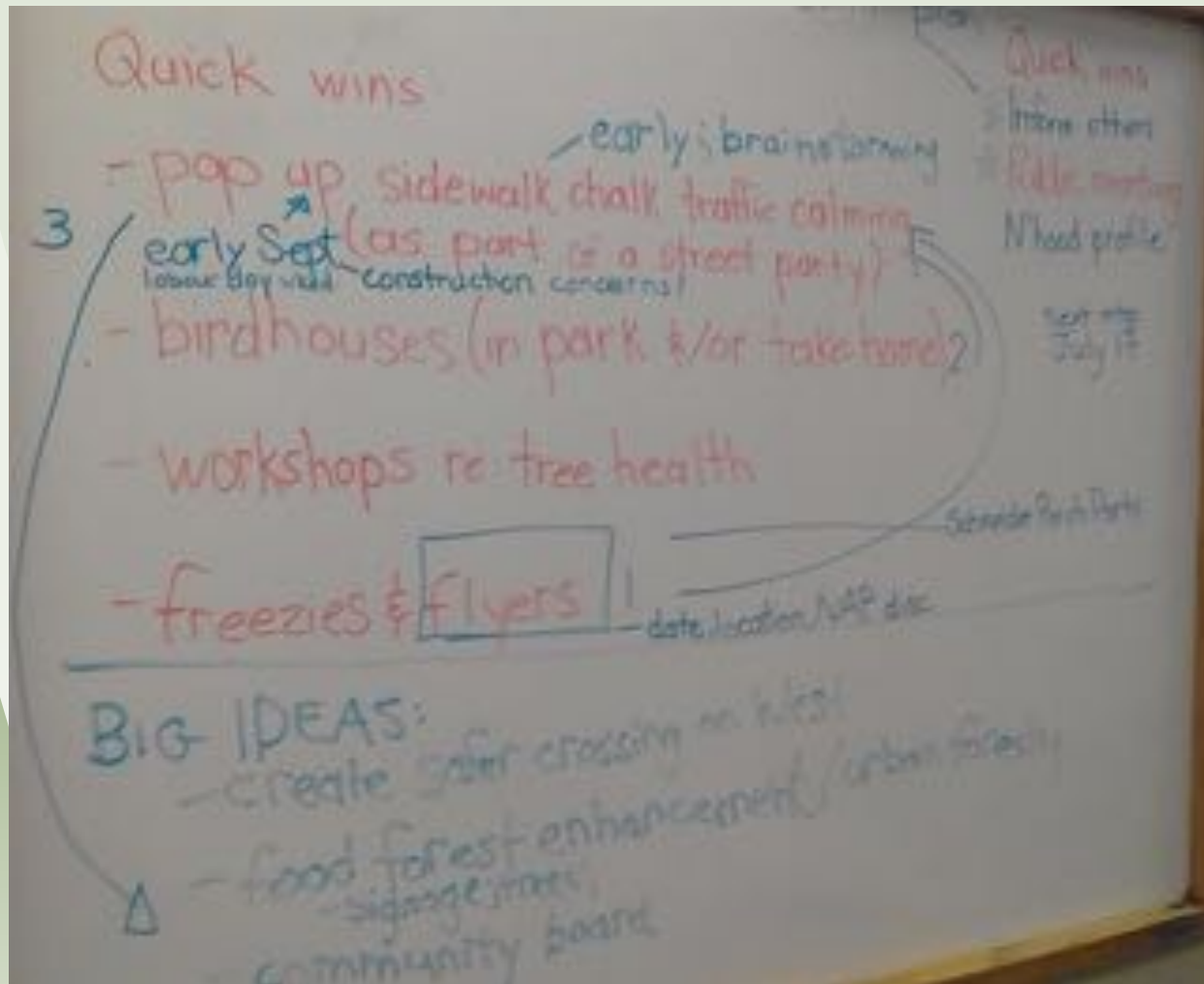
- pop up sidewalk chalk traffic calming (as part of a street party)
- birdhouses
- workshop on tree health
- hand out freezies and flyers in the park to advertise about NAP





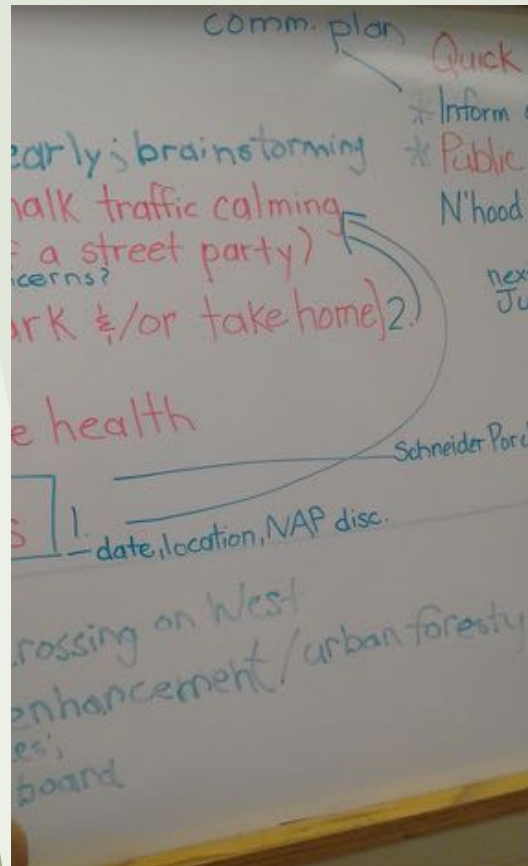
Quick wins – steps:

- Hand out freezies and flyers in park to advertise street party (and NAP)
- Hold street party in early September to advertise NAP and invite further participation. Offer sidewalk chalk (supports goal of safer access/reduce risks – through a painted crosswalk)
- Offer birdhouse making (supports goal of enhance natural beauty of the neighbourhood)



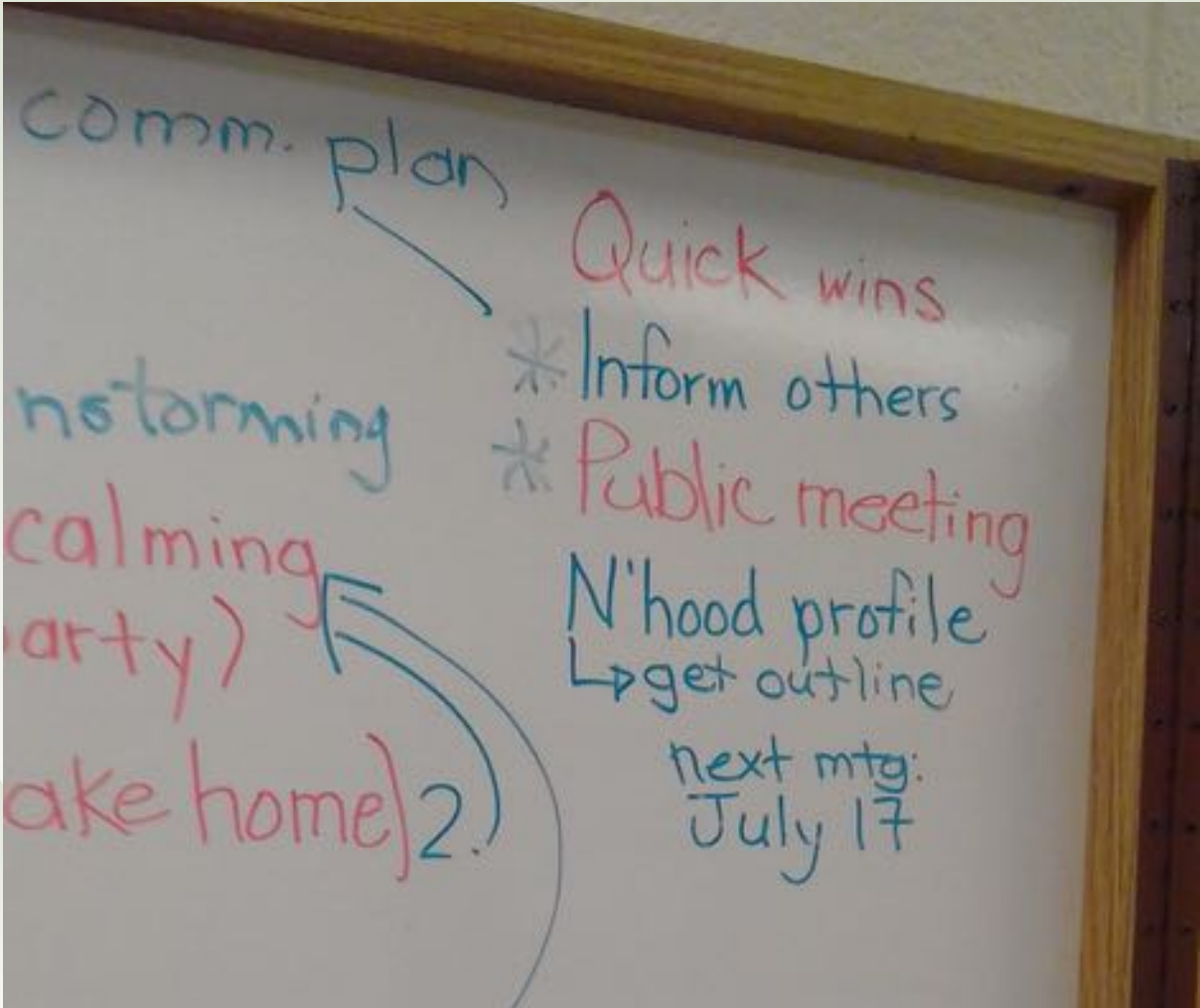
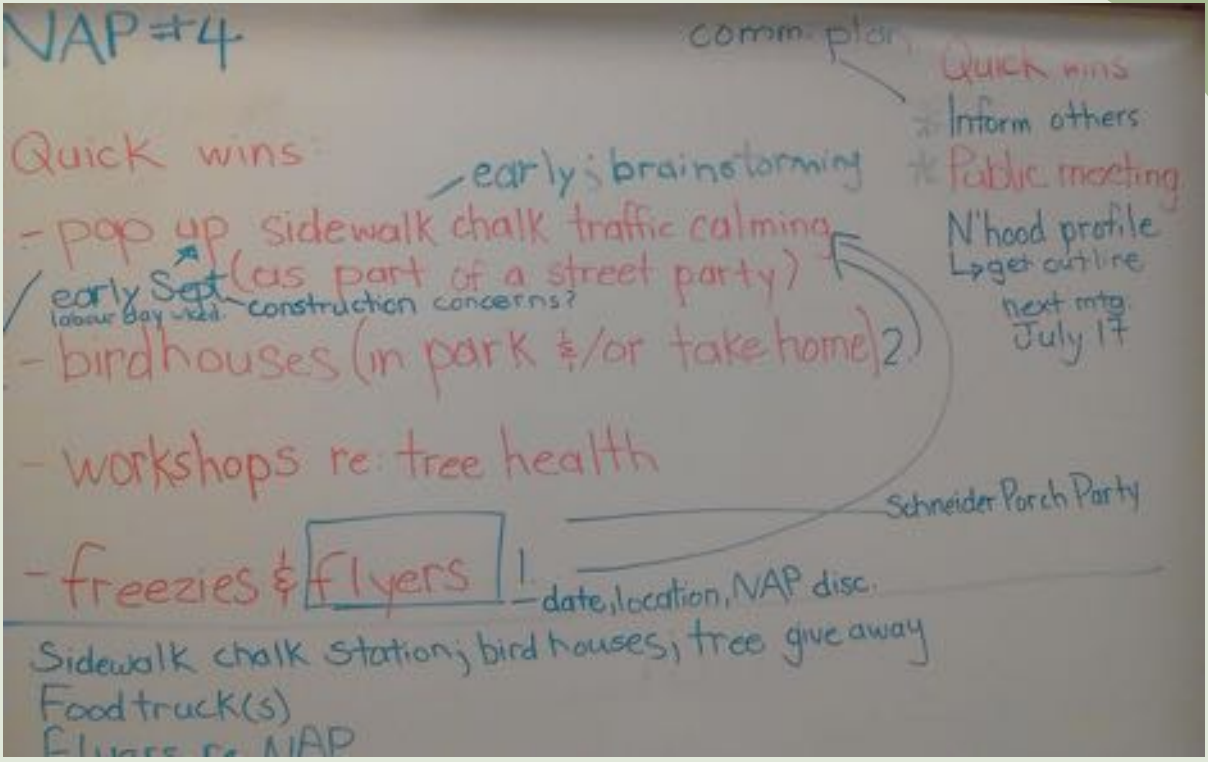
The quick wins are ways to support and inform others of the big ideas identified in the NAP, including:

- create a safer crossing on West Ave
- food forest enhancement/urban forest (including more trees, signage)
- community board



Need to create flyers to hand out in the park (with freezies) – may also want to hand them out at other events including the Schneider Creek Porch Party and Kidspark.

- Flyers need to include: date and location of street party ideas around the NAP
- Need to investigate: when improvements planned for Henry Sturm Greenway (may impact date of street party)
- Plan for 'stations' at the street party, including: sidewalk chalk; bird houses; something related to a community board; food; activities [FoN trunk? Bouncy castle?]
- Giveaways? Such as prizes or something larger like a tree giveaway?
- NAP info and sign up information



Part Two:

Neighbourhood Profile:

We decided that including a neighbourhood profile in our NAP would be beneficial. Todd Bowman has stated an interest in creating this for the NAP team and will present a proposal prior to our next meeting. Once the proposal is reviewed, we will confirm a price for an honorarium for this work. A price of \$250 was suggested.

Discussion points:

Agnes shared information about some local artists if needed. She also informed the team about KENA's pilot Block Connector program in partnership with the United Way.

Decisions agreed upon:

- We will look into the feasibility of a street party as our 'public meeting'.
- We will follow up on creating a neighbourhood profile.

Considerations:

Next steps:

- Bring others into the conversation (neighbours, organizations, businesses, etc)
- Remember to continually document our processes
- Develop a specific communications plan to assist in creating interest as well as informing stakeholders
- Create our implementation plan around our quick wins, public meeting/street party, and the NAP in general From the Neighbourhood Action Plan Guide:

The implementation plan should:

- consider what organizations are available to be involved in specific actions
- identify which individuals, groups or organizations should take the lead on specific actions
- determine what can be achieved within a short, medium or long-term timeframe
- confirm where resources can be accessed

Next meeting:

July 17th, 7pm



VPNA NAP meeting #5 – July 17th, 2017 7:00-8:30pm

In attendance: Agnes Das, Patrick Gilbride, Melissa Bowman, Rebekah Haynes

Part One:

Neighbourhood Profile:

We decided that including a neighbourhood profile in our NAP would be beneficial. We agreed that an honorarium of \$250 would be appropriate.

The following proposal was submitted by Todd Bowman

Purpose

To provide readers and residents information about the history and changing character of their neighbourhood, presented in an accessible reading style and concise format. Its content would include topics such as changes in the appearance of the neighbourhood, industry, development patterns, notable residents and its central feature: Victoria Park.

Structure

Approximate length? The profile would include a mix of historical images (if permission can be obtained) and current ones.

Outline

Pre-European settlement: early native settlements, features

Europeans' arrival: earliest settlers, growth of the area

Victoria Park: creation, uses

Neighbourhood growth: surrounding homes, industries

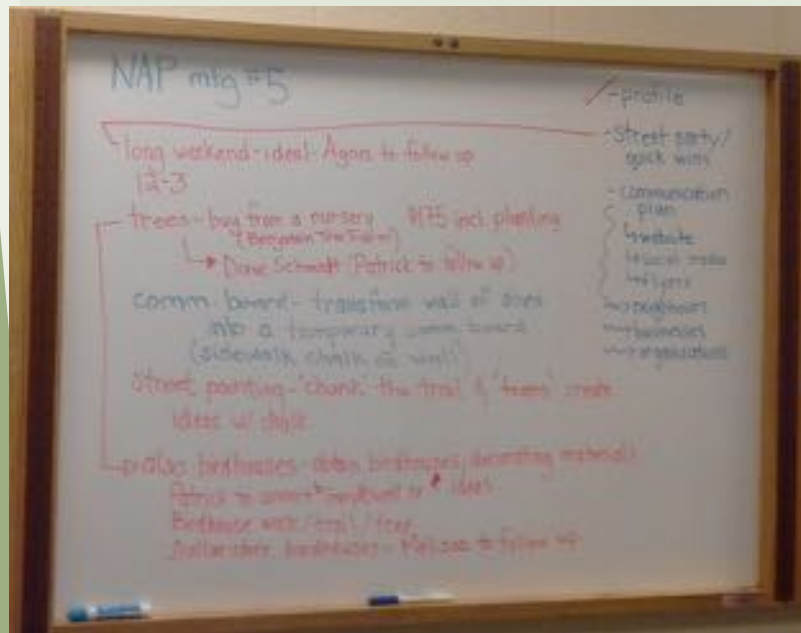
Contemporary face of the neighbourhood

Discussion from the team looked at potential uses for the neighbourhood profile. Agnes suggested that it could serve as a before and after look at the neighbourhood. Other possible uses that were discussed included: posting it to the website (either as one piece or in smaller segments); submitting it to the Community Edition (similar to Mount Hope's submission); including it in our final proposal to Council; using it in the creation of neighbourhood storyboards; use quotations/abbreviated version for the street party. If it is written in a way that we can pull shorter segments out to share in a variety of ways, that may be useful. It was suggested that a reverse chronology may work well so as to suggest the story has not ended, but continues on. Might there be a way to include land acknowledgement in the profile?



Part Two:

Street Party:



Quick wins – steps:

- Hand out freezies and flyers in park to advertise street party (and NAP)
- Hold street party in early September to advertise NAP and invite further participation
- Offer sidewalk chalk (supports goal of safer access/reduce risks – through a painted crosswalk)
- Offer birdhouse making (supports goal of enhance natural beauty of the neighbourhood)

The quick wins are ways to support and inform others of the big ideas identified in the NAP, including:

- create a safer crossing on West Ave
- food forest enhancement/urban forest (including more trees, signage)
- community board
- signage, storyboards

Date: September long weekend would be ideal. Agnes will follow up with staff about this possibility

Street party activities:

Tree giveaway – the City currently does not have a way to support the purchase of trees. We can buy trees from a nursery. Bingeman tree farm offers a tree and planting for \$175. Patrick will follow up with Dave Schmitt as to further possibilities

Community board – transform the shed wall into a temporary community board using sidewalk chalk

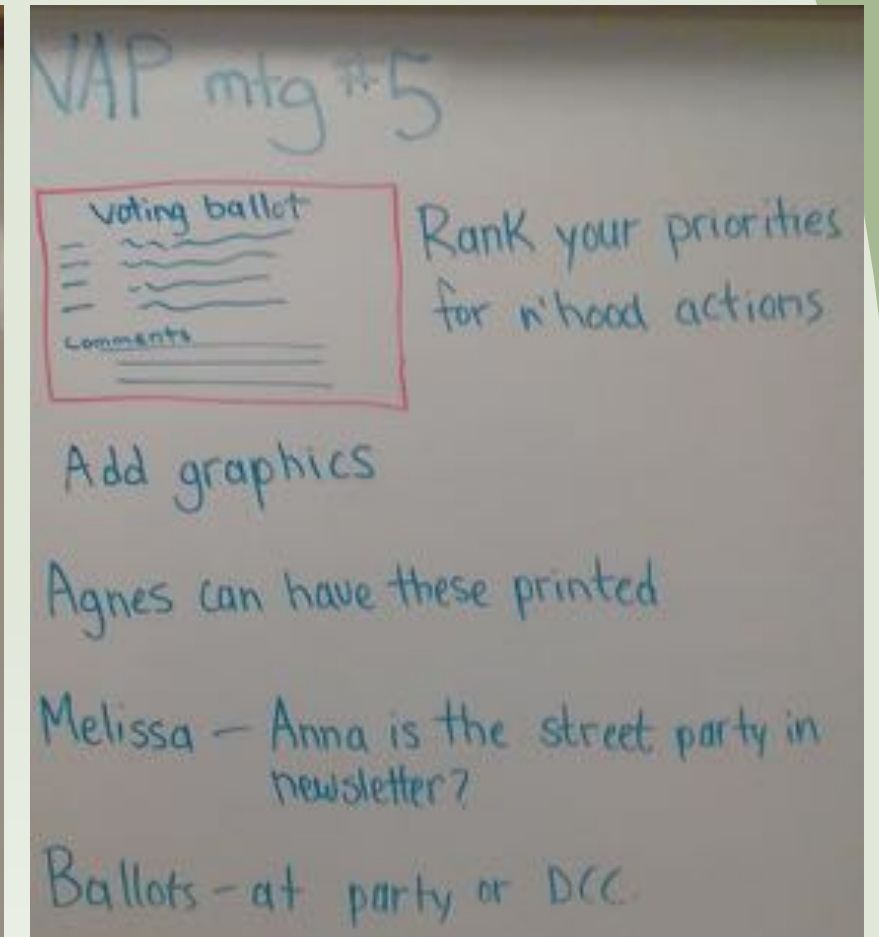
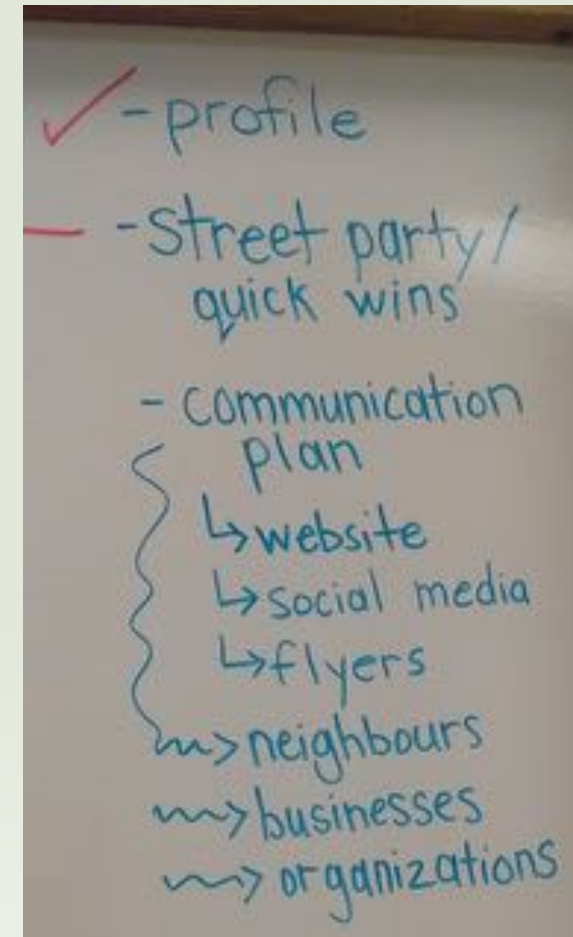
Crosswalk painting – divide trail into sections and teams create designs using sidewalk chalk

Birdhouses – obtain birdhouse decorating materials; Patrick to connect with Gary Howell for possible ideas; Melissa to see if Dollarama still sells small birdhouses for kids to paint/decorate; could create a birdhouse ‘walk’/ trail section/or fill one tree with lots of little birdhouses

Story board – Is there a way we can include an activity around this idea?

Raffle – people can get tickets through different actions (signing up for the newsletter; painting a birdhouse, etc) and then place tickets in the prize baskets they are interested in.

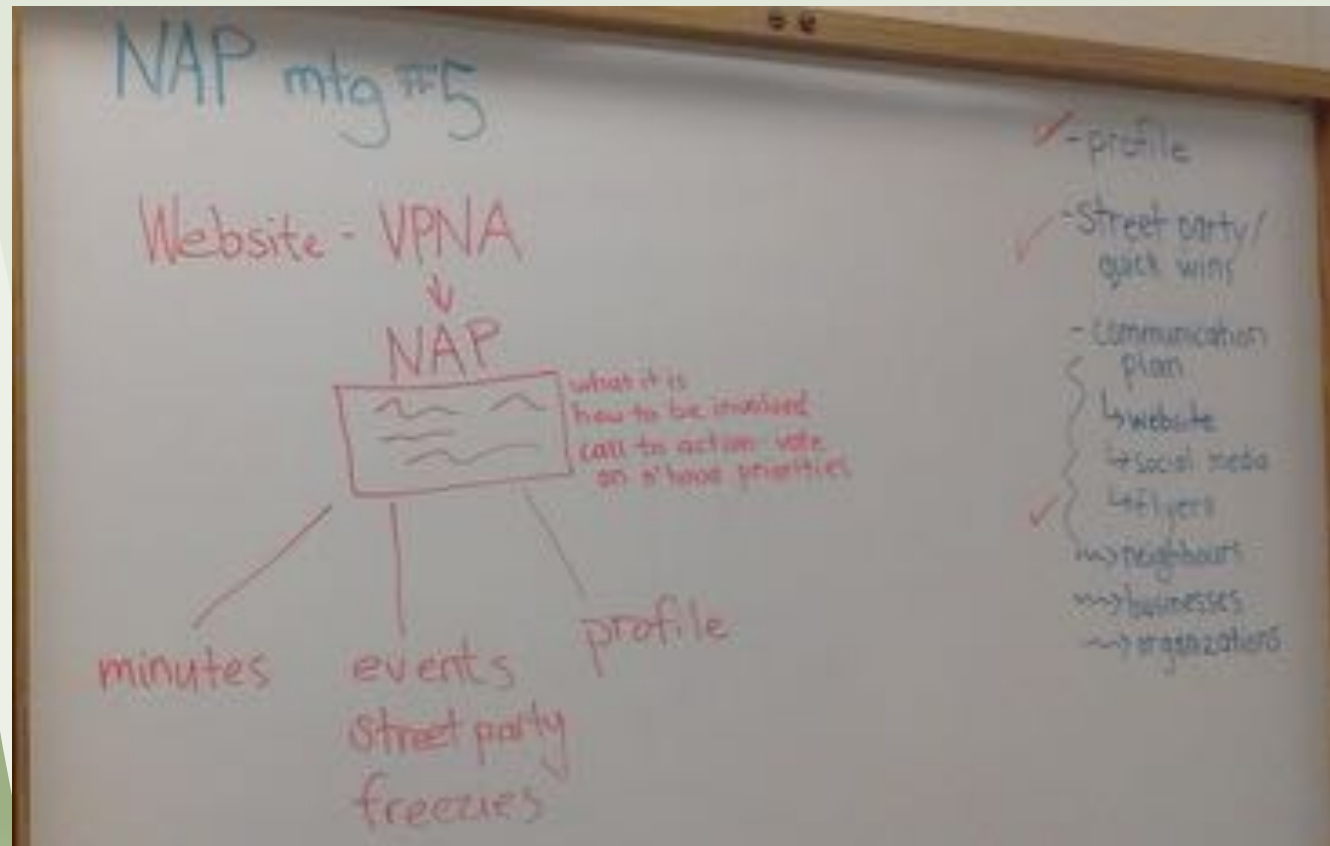
Part Three(a): Engaging stakeholders - Flyers



Melissa will create a final version of the flyer with the voting ballot on the reverse. Once completed, it will be submitted to Agnes for printing. We will also need to provide ballots at the street party. Do we want to simply use these flyers at the street party, or come up with something else?



Part Three(b): Engaging stakeholders - Social Media



Melissa created a page on our website for the NAP. She will add the following categories to it:

- Minutes
- Events (street party; handing out freezies; others)
- Neighbourhood Profile

Also, on the front page of the NAP page we should include:

- What it is
- How people can become involved
- The call to action and how people can vote on the listed priorities

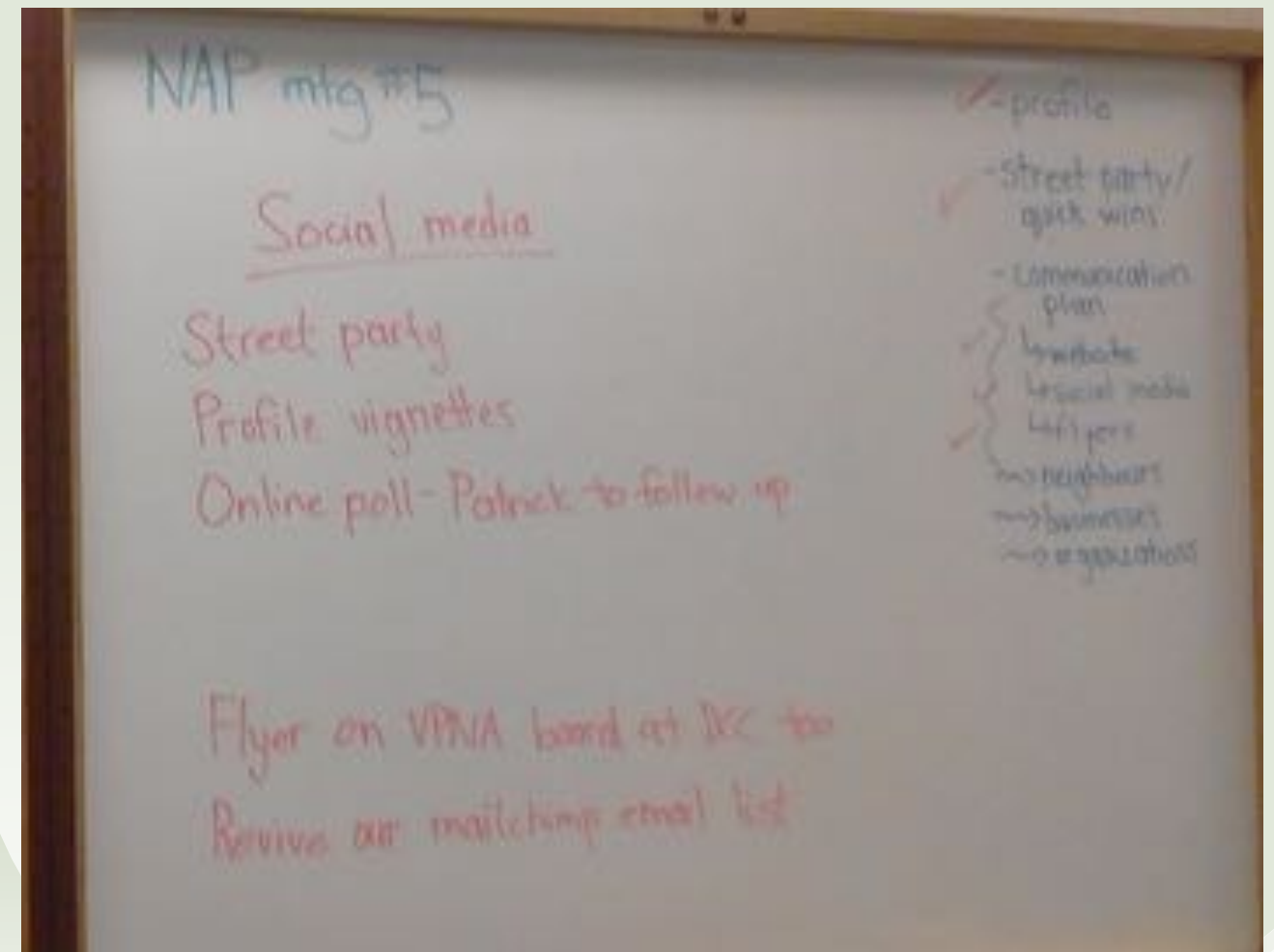
We currently have Facebook and Twitter accounts to use to highlight and promote the NAP.

We can post (Melissa to address):

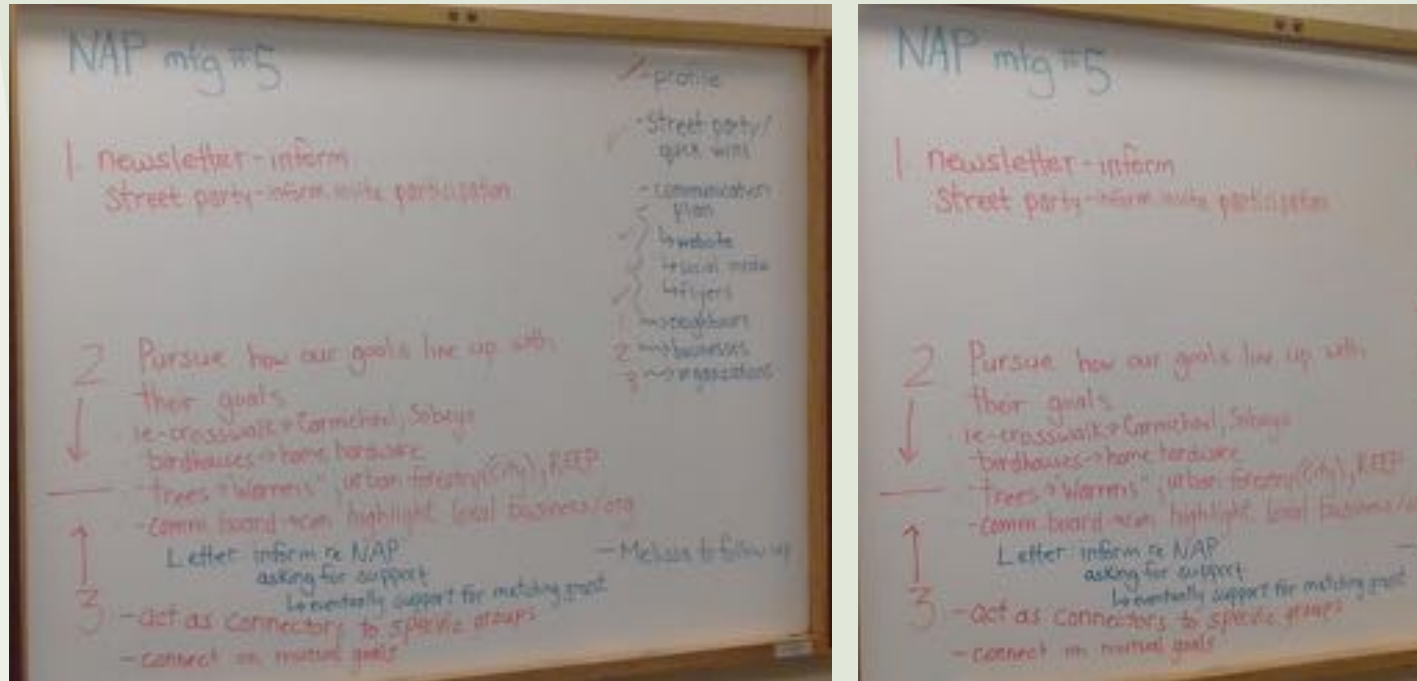
- Street party details
- Profile vignettes
- Online poll (Patrick will look into the logistics of this)

We can post some hard copies of flyers around as well including at the DCC. Melissa will update our VPNA board at the DCC.

We could revive our MailChimp email list as well. Let's confirm this plan at our next meeting.



Part Three(c): Engaging stakeholders - Residents/Businesses/Organizations



We can use our newsletter to inform residents of the NAP (and street party). We can also include our flyers in the next newsletter. The street party can help us inform residents of the NAP, as well as invite participation and engagement.

We also want to connect with businesses and organizations in and around the neighbourhood. This is best done by identifying shared goals and priorities. For example, Sobey's plaza merchants and J.F. Carmichael school may be interested in supporting a crosswalk on West Ave. Home Hardware may want to support the bird house project. REEP, Warren's Greenhouses, and/or the City's urban forestry department could offer support to our food forest plan. We could use the community board to highlight neighbourhood businesses and organizations as well. Melissa will draft a letter that could be used when connecting with these stakeholders. At the next meeting, we can identify specific stakeholders we want to connect with using these letters. These groups may also help us connect with specific groups of people that we may not otherwise easily connect to.

Discussion points:

- Agnes let us know that there is an opportunity for residents to engage in feedback on possible placemaking upgrades on Queen St. Residents can participate (and find out more about the project) through Engage Kitchener's website.
- Agnes provided an updated, condensed version of the Neighbourhood Action Plan Guide.
- Agnes informed us that work on the trail and Henry Sturm area may begin by August 28th. We have asked her to see if we may still be able to access the space on the September long weekend and she will let us know.
- Agnes reminded us to consider the Placemaking Grants again as a potential income source for our projects. One of the grants specifically mentions edible food forests and may work well for our food forest and urban forestry initiatives.

Decisions agreed upon:

Our ideal street party date is September 2nd, 2017 from 12-3pm. We will set September 4th as the rain date. If these dates do not work, we could consider running the street party in conjunction with the Fall meeting regarding community gardens in the Henry Sturm Greenway.

Considerations:

Melissa created a Neighbourhood Action Plan page on our website on July 15, 2017.

Next steps:

- Bring others into the conversation (neighbours, organizations, businesses, etc)
- Remember to continually document our processes
- Complete flyer and send to Agnes. She will arrange for printing.

Next meeting date: July 26th, 7pm





VPNA NAP meeting #6 – July 26th, 2017 6:30-7:30pm

In attendance: Patrick Gilbride, Melissa Bowman, Anka Brozic, Anna Maste

Part One:

Street Party:

We identified tasks required to prepare for the Street Party. We then identified what is involved in each of those tasks as well as a lead person to tackle each task. See chart.

Neighbourhood Party!

Fun	September 2 nd , 2017	Treats
Games	12-3pm	Arts
Prizes	Henry Sturm Greenway	Crafts

Learn about our Neighbourhood Action Plan
and vote on your priorities

Idea	What that looks like/requires	Lead
Tree giveaway	Purchase or have donated trees	Patrick will contact Benjamin Tree Farm and discuss options.
Community board designs on maintenance shed	Get sidewalk chalk Does the shed require any prep work for this?	Melissa will get lots of sidewalk chalk. Shed should be ready to go as is.
Crosswalk designs on Iron Horse Trail	Get sidewalk chalk Does the trail require any prep work for this?	Melissa will get lots of sidewalk chalk. We will use the community trail, not the IHT. Anna will talk to Michelle Purchase (and others?) about joining us for this.
Birdfeeder 'station'	Need pinecones, sticks, twine, fat, birdseed, wet wipes, garbage can.	Melissa will purchase supplies. Anna and Melissa will collect pinecones and sticks
Storyboard 'demo'	Print one on foam core for display	Todd will research and write up storyboard info. Melissa will arrange for printing it onto foam core.
Raffle	Provide tickets for 'engagement' (painting a birdhouse, designing trail, etc); need tickets; need baskets to put tickets in for specific prizes; how will we announce winners?	Melissa will provide paper slips so we can get name and contact info from entrants.
Voting	Need ballots (just use flyers?)	Yes
Food and Drinks	Need to look into food 'rules'. We can buy large bottled water. Anna has a pump to access water bottles. Anka has a connection at Sobey's. Give out freezies.	Melissa to confirm food rules with Agnes. Need to purchase several large bottles of water. Anka will identify food options with her Sobey's contact. Melissa to supply freezies.
FoN trunk	Book items; pick up items; return items; \$25 fee	Melissa will book items.
Bouncy castle	We decided that this gets complicated and may take away from the other things we are doing that day.	Not needed
NAP Information	Have information sheets/display board about the NAP	Melissa will prepare.
NAP sign up sheet	Have a way for people to sign up to engage further	Melissa will prepare.
Social media plan	Start advertising now! Mention to bring water bottle for free fill ups.	Melissa to work on this.
Letter to potential partners	Melissa brought a draft letter. Several improvements were suggested.	Melissa will update the letter and send out to the NAP group for final edits.
Obtain prizes for raffle	Potential prizes: trees, lil library kit, Schneider Haus passes, Sobey's gift card, City Café gift card, City of Kitchener swag	Trees (Patrick); Lil library (Anna); SH passes (Melissa), Sobey's (Anka), City Café (Melissa), CoK swag (Melissa)



Part Two(b): Engaging stakeholders - Residents/Businesses/Organizations

We put some information in our recent newsletter to inform residents of the NAP (and street party). We will also include our flyers in the next newsletter. The street party can help us inform residents of the NAP, as well as invite participation and engagement.

We also want to connect with businesses and organizations in and around the neighbourhood. This is best done by identifying shared goals and priorities. For example, Sobey's plaza merchants and J.F. Carmichael school may be interested in supporting a crosswalk on West Ave. Home Hardware may want to support the bird house project. REEP, Warren's Greenhouses, and/or the City's urban forestry department could offer support to our food forest plan. We could use the community board to highlight neighbourhood businesses and organizations as well. Melissa will update the draft letter that will be used when connecting with these stakeholders. At the next meeting, we can identify specific stakeholders we want to connect with using these letters. These groups may also help us connect with specific groups of people that we may not otherwise easily connect to.



Discussion points:

- Agnes informed us that work on the trail and Henry Sturm area will begin the week of September 5th so our ideal date of Sept 2nd will work.
- Agnes reminded us to consider the Placemaking Grants again as a potential income source for our projects. One of the grants specifically mentions edible food forests and may work well for our food forest and urban forestry initiatives.
- Melissa looked into getting the bookmobi out to the street party but it is already booked up elsewhere.

Decisions agreed upon:

- Our street party date is September 2nd, 2017 from 12-3pm. We will set September 4th as the rain date.
- Since we are delivering flyers to the whole neighbourhood with our newsletters, we will skip the handing out freebies and flyers in the park. Instead we will have freebies available at our street party.

Considerations:

We will attempt to tackle the items on our street party prep list as individuals and communicate over email during the next several weeks. If we deem a meeting prior to the street party, we will schedule that as needed.

Next steps:

- Bring others into the conversation (neighbours, organizations, businesses, etc)
- Remember to continually document our processes
- Complete NAP letter for businesses and organizations. Decide who will deliver these letters to which stakeholders.
- Work on our specific tasks to prepare for the street party.

Next meeting date: Will attempt to accomplish many of the preparations for the street party over email in the next few weeks. As we do so, we will decide if/when we need a meeting before the street party.

Street Party Summary:

We held a neighbourhood street party on September 2nd, 2017 from 12-3pm at the Henry Sturm Greenway. We offered:

- Outdoor games including bubbles, ladder golf, and scoops and balls (obtained from the Festival of Neighbourhoods activity trunk)
- Main booth that highlighted the NAP's priorities and asked people to vote on them
- Three historical story boards to highlight historical signage as one of our priorities
- Sidewalk chalk on the trail for people to draw their ideas for painted crosswalks as one of the priorities
- Sidewalk chalk on the side of the shed for people to draw ideas for community information boards as one of the priorities
- A tree giveaway to highlight 2 of our priorities – urban initiatives and expanding the food forest
- Ice Cream giveaway (from FourAll Ice Cream)
- Raffle for items/gift cards from local businesses
- Victoria Park Gallery booth that offered historical displays and maps of the neighbourhood and park
- Bird feeder creation station (using pine cones, lard, and bird seed)

Neighbourhood Party!

Join us **September 2nd, 12-3pm** at the Henry Sturm Greenway for games, treats, and prizes!



Learn all about our Neighbourhood Action Plan and vote on your priorities for our neighbourhood.

Stay up to date on the Action Plan, the neighbourhood party, and other VPNA activities and events.

www.facebook.com/VictoriaParkNA
www.victoriaparkna.com
info@victoriaparkna.com



The weather was nice (if a little cool for ice cream!) and the rain held off til after we finished tear down. We had approximately 50-60 people attend the event. The free ice cream was definitely a hit. Many people stayed for quite a while, looking at the displays, chatting with neighbours, and learning about and giving feedback on the NAP's priorities. We received 20 completed ballots and several others had already voted online. The ballots we received in person rank crosswalks as the number one priority, followed by food forests, urban initiatives, and then the community boards. We did not include historical signage on our ballots but several people did mention it in their comments as a high priority for them. It will be interesting to compare these ballots with our online survey results. We will compile all the data later this month and discuss at our next meeting.

The event cost about \$500 to run. This included purchasing raffle prizes (City Café gift card, Black Arrow gift card), ice cream (FourAll), pizza lunch for volunteers, and a variety of supplies for the bird feeders, cleaning supplies, etc.

We thank our sponsors for their generous donations, including refreshments and a gift card provided by Sobey's (Highland Rd), a #lovemyhood hoodie, and a tree from Benjamin's Tree Farm.

Raffle winners were drawn and informed that they won.

- Brent won the City Café card
- Brett-Lee won the Black Arrow card
- Rose won the Sobey's card and hoodie
- Michelle won the tree. However, she lives in a condo and has asked to donate the tree to be planted in the park. We need to follow up as to whether this is a possibility.

Survey feedback:

Hard copies of ballots:

I think the idea of the story boards is nice and really neat, especially because I'm not from the area so having moved here it would be interesting to learn.

Traffic calming initiatives to be installed on West Ave since careless driving habits are unimpeded.

More education about not feeding the ducks and geese and swan.

Dog park?

Art is fun and a way to show unique creativity. Bringing more attention to the crosswalks is great! Possibly more than one, around other dangerous intersections.

New to Kitchener – delighted with the neighbourhood.

Add more trails in Kitchener.

Story boards and historical signage would also be great!

Online survey:

I'm not sure where the food forest area is. Sounds good though.

I would love to see painted crosswalks or traffic calming in other areas as well. I am close to Queen's Blvd and Spadina and that intersection is difficult for pedestrians. There have been many accidents and that intersection is a school crossing. I know there are other difficult intersections in the neighbourhood.

Install signs on the Iron Horse and secondary community trails to remind cyclists to use their bells.



VPNA NAP meeting #7 – Oct 4th, 2017, 5-7pm

In attendance: Patrick Gilbride, Melissa Bowman, Erin Toner, Anna Maste, Rebekah Haynes, Agnes Das, Josh Joseph

Part One:

Street Party Review

Date: September 2nd, 12-3pm (Rain date of September 4th, 12-3pm)

Street party activities:

Tree giveaway – We can buy trees from a nursery. Bingeman tree farm offers a tree and planting for \$175. Patrick will follow up with them as to further possibilities. Patrick obtained a red oak donation from Benjamin tree farms. The winner of the tree lives in a condo and wants to donate the tree back to the VPNA to plant in/near the park. We need to look into how to make this happen.

Community board – transform the shed wall into a temporary community board using sidewalk chalk. Attendees used to chalk to provide ideas for a community board, including: ‘Tell me a story...’, ‘Remember when...’, and ‘Neighbourhood Garage Sale’ sections.

Crosswalk painting – divide trail into sections and teams create designs using sidewalk chalk. May be best to use ‘Community Trail’ instead of the IHT as it is likely less busy. People added drawings to the trail as well as words for making the crosswalk ‘look like a river’, ‘look like an ocean’, and musical notes.

Birdhouses – obtain birdhouse plan/ideas Patrick to connect with Gary Howell for possible ideas; Mini birdhouses from Dollarama do not seem very eco-friendly. We will make mini bird feeders out of pinecones/sticks, fat, and birdseed. We may also want to make bird nesting balls out of bright coloured materials. Melissa to create list of needed supplies. People enjoyed making small birdfeeders to take with them.

Story board



Street Party finances:
\$200 Four All ice cream
\$100 Prizes for raffle
\$61.02 3 Storyboards
\$25 FoN activity trunk rental
\$36.14 Pizza for volunteers
\$51.42 Supplies
\$473.58 Total



Our Street Party allowed us to transform this...



Into this...



In addition to having a fun day connecting with neighbours, we were also able to share our vision for the neighbourhood action plan as well as seek feedback on some of our priorities.



Neighbours had lots of ideas to share and let us know why they #lovemyhood.

Part Three: Next steps for sharing the NAP with others, including City/Council

Josh Joseph from the Neighbourhood Development Office joins us tonight to help us navigate the next steps.

Present to Council, ideally by the end of this year. We will do a short 5-minute presentation and be available for questions.

Things to do:

- Prepare a final document to give to Council that outlines our process and engagement with neighbours. Keep this as a high-level summary such as outline the top three priorities from the survey. Keep it fun. Add pictures.
- Agnes and Josh will prepare a 1-2 page cover report as well.
- May want to offer our whole document to Council as a visual.

Things to consider/remember:

- The goal is to inform Council and let them know our next steps.
- Council will be interested in who we engaged with and how (May want to remind Council that we are all volunteers so are limited to some degree in our level of engagement).
- What have been the benefits to us as a group from engaging in this process? Challenges? Lessons learned?
- Highlight that we are still in process; this isn't done yet

Discussion points:

Agnes reminded us to consider the Placemaking Grants again as a potential income source for our projects. One of the grants specifically mentions edible food forests and may work well for our food forest and urban forestry initiatives. The deadline has been extended to Oct 23rd for the Placemaking Grant. Melissa is in the process of filling out the application for this grant. What specifically do we want to include? How might we be willing to animate the space at the end of July 2018 as part of this process? Are we able to commit to animating the space at that point?

Decisions agreed upon:

Based on feedback received to this point, the painted crosswalk across West Ave is the highest priority for neighbours. We will apply for the Placemaking Grant for this priority. Let's also consider planter boxes, seating, adding colour/fun. Might we plant our donated tree in this space as well?

Considerations:

Melissa has connected with Mary and the Brock Street group. Mary and possibly one other neighbour may be interested in joining in the NAP team discussions. Mary can't do Tues meetings before 7pm, but Wednesdays can work.

Next steps:

- Bring others into the conversation (neighbours, organizations, businesses, etc)
- Remember to continually document our processes

Next meeting date: October 17th, 5-7pm



VPNA NAP meeting #8 – Oct 17th, 2017, 5-7pm

In attendance: Patrick Gilbride, Melissa Bowman, Anna Maste, Rebekah Haynes, Agnes Das

Part One: Placemaking Grant application

Complete the placemaking grant application. Based on feedback received to this point, the painted crosswalk across West Ave is the highest priority for neighbours. We will apply for the Placemaking Grant for this priority. Let's also consider planter boxes, seating, adding colour/fun. Might we plant our donated tree in this space as well?

Part Three: Next steps for sharing the NAP with others, including City/Council

Present to Council, ideally by the end of this year. We will do a short 5-minute presentation and be available for questions.

Things to do:

- Prepare a final document to give to Council that outlines our process and engagement with neighbours. Keep this as a high-level summary such as outline the top three priorities from the survey. Keep it fun. Add pictures. Melissa will work on preparing a draft and then get feedback from the team.
- Agnes and Josh will prepare a 1-2 page cover report as well. Where are we in this process?
- May want to offer our whole document to Council as a visual.

Things to consider/remember:

- The goal is to inform Council and let them know our next steps.
- Council will be interested in who we engaged with and how (May want to remind Council that we are all volunteers so are limited to some degree in our level of engagement).
- What have been the benefits to us as a group from engaging in this process? Challenges? Lessons learned?
- Highlight that we are still in process; this isn't done yet

Discussion points:

Ideas to use the neighbourhood profile?

Decisions agreed upon:

Considerations:

Melissa has connected with Mary and the Brock Street group. Mary and possibly one other neighbour may be interested in joining in the NAP team discussions. Mary can't do Tues meetings before 7pm, but Wednesdays can work.

Next steps:

- Bring others into the conversation (neighbours, organizations, businesses, etc)
- Neighbourhood profile
- Remember to continually document our processes



Possible Neighbourhood Action Plan Priorities

What do you think of the priorities we have developed? Add your comments to each one.

Do you have other ideas? Add them to our list.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Display boards were created of each of the possible neighbourhood priorities. They were on display at the Street Party to provide residents with a better sense of possibilities for each option. Comment sheets were also provided so people could make suggestions/recommendations on any/all of these options.



Community Information Boards

The VPNA should install permanent structures in the neighbourhood that would allow sharing of information among residents.



Expand the VPNA Food Forest

The VPNA should develop and expand the food forest area, perhaps with more planted areas, benches, and a little library.



Partner with the City on its Urban Forest Initiatives

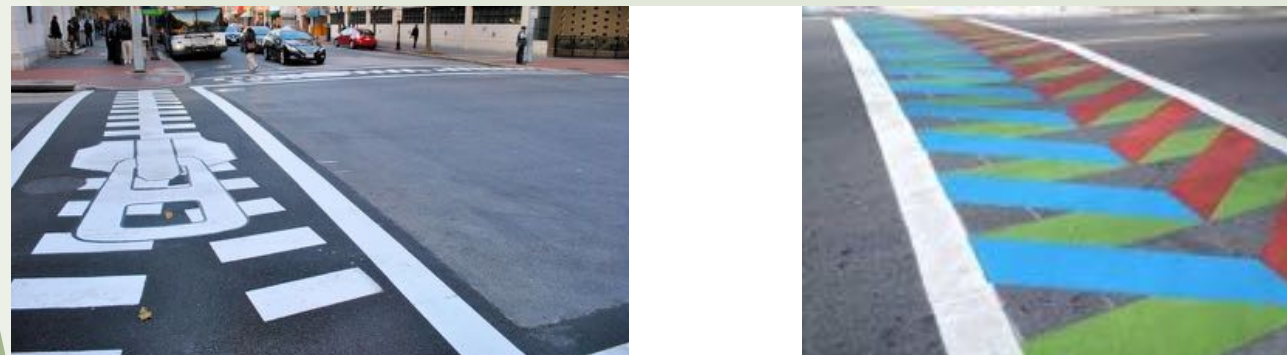


Kitchener's Strategic Plan (2015-2018) laid the groundwork to develop a sustainable urban forest program, including creating a long-term urban forest strategy for the private and public urban forest. The VPNA should look for ways to support these initiatives.

Add storyboards and historical signage to the neighbourhood

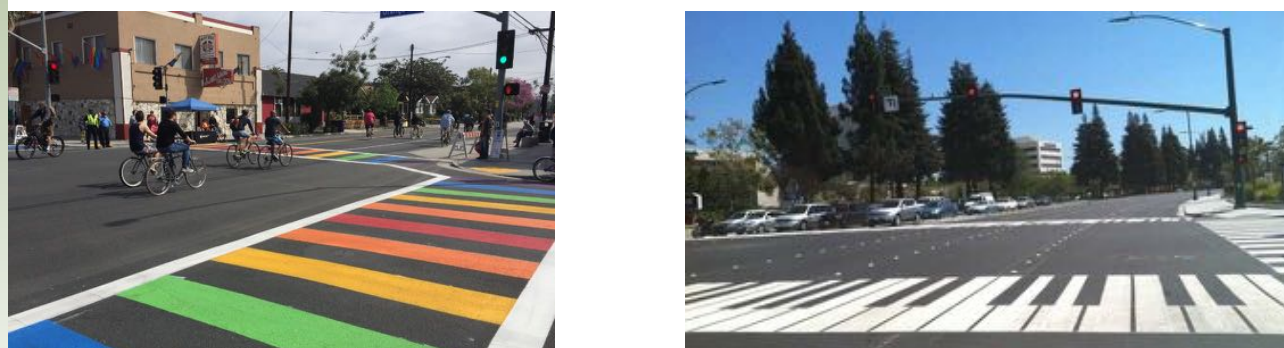


Storyboards and signage help residents connect to the history of the area. The VPNA should create and install such signage in the neighbourhood.



Painted Crosswalks

Painted crosswalks have been used in neighbourhoods to help bring attention to a crossing and reduce traffic speed. The VPNA should install these crosswalks in our neighbourhood.



Victoria Park Neighbourhood Association is working on a Neighbourhood Action Plan and we want you to be involved!

A neighbourhood action plan is an opportunity to enhance a neighbourhood's strengths!

There are several ways you can engage in this process:

- Check out our website www.victoriaparkna.com and click on Neighbourhood Action Plan
- Join us for our neighbourhood party at the Henry Sturm Greenway, September 2nd, 2017 from 12-3pm
- Join our action plan team! Email info@victoriaparkna.com for more information



Voting Ballot – Tell us What You Think!

The neighbourhood action plan team has identified several priorities for the neighbourhood. Please rank them in order of your preference from 1 to 4, with 1 being your top priority.

- Install and maintain community information board(s)
- Install and maintain a painted crosswalk on West Ave
- Enhance and expand food forest area in the park
- Partner with the City on its urban forestry initiatives

Please add any other comments below related to these priorities.

Please return ballot to street party volunteers on Sept 2nd, 2017 from 12-3pm or return to the Downtown Community Centre main office (ATTN: Agnes Des) by September 8th, 2017



Title



Title

Title