

Varsity View Local Area Plan Meeting #10 – Culture, Heritage & History
Wednesday, December 15, 2010
Brunskill School Library
101 Wiggins Avenue South
7:00 pm

Attendees: Marianne Amos, Patricia Englund, Susan Hatfield, Nancy Johnson, Zoe Litman, Patricia Mathias, Brian & Donna Noonan, Brenda O'Connor, James & Nicole Saretsky-Perkins, Laurence Thompson; Paula Kotasek, Mark Emmons and Catherine Kambeitz – Planners, Kevin Kitchen – Community Initiatives Manager, Shirlene Palmer – Recording Secretary

1. Welcome & Introductions

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Mark Emmons introduced himself and Paula Kotasek as co-facilitators of tonight's meeting.

The purpose of tonight's meeting is to learn about the Culture Plan for Saskatoon. Paula will be giving a presentation on City of Saskatoon Heritage Programs. And, we'll wrap up the meeting with a fun oral history activity, where we'll ask you to share stories/memories/facts about Varsity View.

2. Agenda & Ground Rules

Through this Local Area Plan we have created Foundations for Success (or ground rules) to specify how meetings will be conducted. It ensures that group members feel comfortable in sharing their concerns, opinions and ideas with the group.

1. Listen to each other with respect
2. One person speaks at a time and no side conversations
3. Everyone has an equal voice
4. Let everyone speak
5. Stay focused
6. Speak loudly

3. Saskatoon Culture Plan

Kevin Kitchen, Community Initiatives Manager

Saskatoon has begun to develop a Culture Plan. What does that mean to Saskatoon? Why is a Culture Plan important? How will this process look?

Our culture is our collective traditions, our religions, our diverse languages, our founding nations, our stories and histories, our progressive ideas, our creativity, artistry and craftsmanship, our built heritage, our natural heritage and our Saskatoon spirit.

The concept of a Cultural Plan began in 2006 when Saskatoon was named cultural capital of Canada for cities over the size of 200,000 people. The city received \$2 million to help stimulate arts and culture in Canada. Being named cultural capital was beneficial for

Saskatoon not only because of funding but it paved the way for the need for a culture plan. It tied into the Centennial celebrations; public art was also a big part, lasting legacies of theatre and a number of key statues. e.g. John Lake, White Chief, Prairie Wind.

This started the momentum, but to keep the momentum going Saskatoon needed a plan. What role can the city of Saskatoon play? What role can the community play? How can the City support the community?

Initially the thought of culture brings to mind arts, heritage and festivals which are part of it but we try to stay away from a narrow definition of what culture means. It means various things to different people.

There are some cities that have developed Culture Plans. In Ontario some cities have mandated cities to develop Culture Plan.

When looking at culture you have to look deeper in many areas, for example, zoning and land use. The bars in the Broadway area are a unique incubator for musicians, even if they may be not what some may think of as culture. There are community-funding grants for Wanuskewin, Persephone Theatre and several museums in the city. Also involved in recreation and programming such as Leisure Services Youth Art Camp in the summer. Looking broader there are libraries, galleries, economic development, link between downtown, River Landing, Riversdale, etc.

Culture is much more involved than many recognize. Culture should be looked at as one of the building blocks to building a healthy community.

Creative economy is starting to emerge. We are all competing for talent, business, residents, recruitment of students to the University of Saskatchewan would be a selling point if there were symphonies, festivals, musicals, etc

These are just some of the reasons that a Culture Plan is important to Saskatoon. It is not the first in Saskatchewan. Yorkton's was approved in fall of 2009, and Regina is also working on one.

A City staff member from the Community Development Branch will be overseeing the project, but will work with external advisory, businesses, university and an internal steering committee. Community Association, school boards, BIDS have been involved with the Culture Plan. An open house was held on TCU place on December 2 at the Bessborough Hotel. Jennifer Keisman, who was involved with the Yorkton Culture Plan, is also lending her expertise to us.

The Culture Plan will take place in three phases.

Phase one was the audit and analysis, environment scan to find out where Saskatoon sits for weakness, strength and what opportunities are there.

Phase two is the development of the framework; a big part will be from the Culture Planning Forum that took place in March. From this draft, a vision will be developed as well as drafting principles and directions. The community was very helpful to direct what should be in arts

and culture planning. The visioning initiative took advantage of this process began after the beginning of Saskatoon Speaks as there is a clear link. Culture was discussed in many of the core themes of the Saskatoon Speaks visioning project.

Phase three is the phase we are currently in, the planning process, kicked off with an open house on December 2, where about 130 people showed up. The public had a chance to review the draft plan.

The draft Saskatoon Culture Plan includes:

Vision

Principles:

1. Accessible
2. Inclusive in our diversity
3. Collaborative
4. Sustainable
5. Innovative
6. Responsible leadership

Key Directions:

1. The Cultural Sector: Building capacity within the cultural sector
 - Work with community counselors
 - Saskatoon has a lot of culture but not many strong organizations
2. Heritage: Ensure cultural heritage is conserved and valued
 - Build stories and history
 - Have more museums in Saskatoon that most people know
 - Métis and First Nation history needs to be detailed
 - City has many nationally, provincially and municipally designated historical sites
3. Diversity: Celebrate diversity and strengthen opportunities for cultural interaction
 - Community of communities
 - Explore opportunities to celebrate
 - More new comers and want include them - interculturalism
4. Youth: Cultivate conditions for youth and young professionals to thrive
 - Want to make sure our young creative entrepreneur in Saskatoon
 - Need to focus on warehouse district, school for architecture or other types of spin off businesses
 - U of S is a huge player in the culture scene
5. Neighbourhoods: Support and enable cultural development at the neighbourhood level
 - About accessibility
 - Important to have things in downtown but also important to have things in neighbourhood. Some neighbourhoods have walking tours on history and heritage, art in the park, etc.
 - Facilities are important as well, libraries, schools free space usage when school out

6. The City Centre: Develop the City Centre as a Cultural District
 - Important to benefit the economy of the downtown

Early in the process, a culture heritage inventory of cultural spaces was done, found many school theatres that could be put to better use when school is out.

The next step is, based on all the information received, to create a detailed Culture Plan that will be written, refined, detailed, including changing of some of the language and drill down to the actions.

There is still time for community feedback, please contact Kevin if you have wish to pass anything onto him.

Kevin asked what culture do you see in the neighbourhood?

- University of Saskatchewan has lots of fascinating architecture as well as University Hospital – who built them, who lived in them. The fact that it is a campus in itself is representation of a culture, living, school, festivals, events right next door to your neighbourhood.
- Albert Community Centre – lots of programming
- Public art, big piano
- Used to be a big concrete mushroom on Aird Street

Kevin noted he is working with the City of Saskatoon Business License Section to document the number of home-based industry in neighbourhood.

- Churches – there are several different churches the neighbourhood could take advantage of

Questions:

- **Global sensibility, do they think of this? Along Meewasin Trail trees planted on one side and when going for a lovely nature walk came upon an unsettling piece of public art. Can anything be done about this?**

Mark noted if it is community land there is a group of citizens that meets annually or bi-annually to review applications for public art and then choose locations for it. If you require information on an art piece you can contact Urban Design section.

Kevin noted there is a second program that deals with Temporary Art placement, such as art on Broadway, Riversdale and Downtown. A Visual Art Jury overviews this art placement. They make decisions on behalf of the City. The city is looking at combining these two programs for better management.

Comments:

- If there is more advertising done about a piece of art being placed like in the Saskatoon Sun or StarPhoenix or something, then people could discuss it and make informed suggestions.

Mark noted there are some kinds of renegade public art, such as artwork placed on power poles or you might live across the alley from someone who has artwork in their yard no one knows about.

- Electrical boxes painting was done by young kids on Broadway to start and the rest of them have been done by SCYAP (Saskatoon Community Youth Arts Program)
- What makes the architecture of houses in Varsity View unique is that they are not the same, there are no big garages in front of houses.
- President Murray Park started out as a tree farm.

Mark asked if anyone had any ideas to promote culture in the neighbourhood.

- Doing a history of the neighbourhood, there are lots of interesting people that have lived here – create a map. This can help preserve some of these houses as well.
- Nutana has an annual Pumpkin festival in November. What can we do that is similar?
- A famous doctor lived in neighbourhood who helped develop Medicare, Wolfe??

Kevin noted the bigger picture would be great for Saskatoon history if all the neighbourhoods document their individual histories.

- Jane's Walk – organize it and get people together
- A committee member noted there is a person who has a lot of information of the history of Varsity View and she would be willing to document it and give to City of Saskatoon Archivist Jeff O'Brien.
- There was a session at the J.S. Wood Library showing how to research the history of your home.

Paula noted the LAP program has funded some small research projects to help document the history of neighbourhoods and this could be considered for Varsity View.

- Local History Room at main library has a lot of interesting information.

4. City of Saskatoon Heritage Programs

Paula Kotasek

Paula noted there is currently not very much documented history of Varsity View. The City of Saskatoon has information as to who the streets are named for, but not much other history.

The Heritage Property Act

- An act to provide for the Preservation, Interpretation and Development of Certain Aspects of Heritage Property in Saskatchewan. (1980)
- Empowers municipalities to designate Municipal Heritage Property; empowers the province to designate Provincial Heritage Property
- Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee: to advise Council on matters arising out of the Act; programming: i.e. Heritage Awards

Civic Heritage Policy

- 1996: City Council approved the Civic Heritage Policy
- Policy defines the City's role in the heritage conservation process

“Material, natural and human heritage in the community of Saskatoon will be conserved and interpreted in a planned, selective, and cost-feasible manner to the benefit of current and future generations of Saskatoon citizens and visitors”

“A community is not a museum. While not every vestige of the community's heritage could or should be saved, it is important to identify and protect the key elements of the past, in Saskatoon's material, natural, and human history...”

Heritage Conservation Program

- 1998 approved by Council
- Outcome: “Selected heritage properties will be conserved appropriately for the benefit of the community and visitors now and in the future”.
- Municipal Designated Properties and properties on the Community Heritage Register may receive financial incentives
- Evaluation criteria: architecture, integrity, environment/context, historical value, usage
- Assistance is related to rehabilitation projects
- Tax exemptions
- Property is protected & owner agrees to maintain property

Built Heritage Database

- A listing of properties of heritage interest in the community
- Assists in defining our heritage resources – a base of information & starting point from which to manage historic resources
- Criteria developed with input from the community
- Provides a listing of properties that may have potential to apply for designation and incentives under the H.C.P.
- Interpretive and heritage awareness programming
- LAP process: information for community heritage programming and stewardship
- Marketing & Education i.e. “Business Profile” : business & heritage information
- Research

The LAPC is encouraged to submit entries to be added to the built heritage database

Criteria are broad & general:

- Constructed before 1945
- Connection to historical person/event
- Example of known architectural style/theme
- Known architect
- Landmark status
- Rarity value: Architectural/historical theme of which there are few remaining

- “Other demonstrable merit” (i.e. Mendel: cultural meaning)

Paula noted currently there are very few Varsity View properties listed:

- 5 properties on the heritage database
- 3 Municipal Heritage Properties
- A number of interesting people who influenced the growth & development of Saskatoon, lived in Varsity View

Community Heritage

- Raises awareness about heritage – identify heritage resources. Provide information to the neighbourhood about these resources.
- Consider: pamphlets, website, displays, walking tours
- Education & Information: a written history, articles in newsletter, workshops on restoration techniques, additions to City database of heritage properties

Caswell Hill and Nutana have walking tours. The history of Varsity View is tied to the University and Royal University Hospital, but there is also a story to tell about the neighbourhood

- Commemorating heritage, interpretation – recognition that heritage property is something special
- Consider plaques, markers, walking tours, MHAC heritage award program - nomination to recognize community contributions
- Stewardship: municipal designations, salvage program, artefact and/or photographic displays

Montgomery has explanation of street names and Buena Vista has an entry sign.

Awards Program – Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee

Winners in Varsity View (1988 – 2010)

- Private Infill Residence – 1024 11th Street East
- Private Infill Residence – 1038 Aird Street
- Infill Public Building – 1011 University Drive (Ronald McDonald House)
- Renovation Private Building – 1038 University Drive
- Honorable Mention – 1030 Main Street
- Adaptive Reuse - 1118 College Drive

Paula noted when looking at what is historical you must remember it is not only buildings, it can be streetscapes, landmarks and special places as well as people.

Regulatory Tools

- Municipal Heritage Property
- Architectural Control Districts
 - Zoning overlay
 - Applied where there is a distinct style to be preserved or when there is a design theme that is promoted

- Infill Guidelines
 - Currently park of Visioning – February 16
- Municipalities do not have the authority to implement design control.

A built database form was handed out for committee members to take home and fill in with something that they feel should be on the Built Database.

Comments:

- There was a national survey done in 1972. A team was hired to research each province and document any structures built prior to 1914, the history of it and photograph. Not sure who was responsible for organizing this but may have some interesting information.
- There was also some type of study on wartime houses in Saskatoon that Varsity View took part in. These were then catalogued. It may be in the University of Saskatchewan archives.
- There were three main mass produced house types – workman house, flat roof, California bungalow but there were also Eaton’s catalogue houses.

5. Oral Exercise

The Committee was asked what are some interesting facts/stories/memories/tales of Varsity View? Does Varsity View have any former or current prominent citizens?

Tell us about your history:

People

- Grant McEwan
- Farley Mowat’s House was moved into the neighbourhood
Dr. Ewing (Leila – his wife) some type of eye doctor, Head of U of S – wife still owns property.
Lynda Haverstock - Elliott & Munroe behind where condos are being built
- Senator Lillian Dyck – Temperance & Munroe
- Rob Norris, MLA (1100 block of 11th)
- Maureen Duwors (Olympic Athlete - 1956)
- Dr. Duwors – Track & Field Coach – late husband
- ? Brack – Extension Division
- Dommasch – Artist, Head of Art Department and well know photographer
- Dr. Singh – Head of Vet Med U of S

Stories

- Mushroom on Aird Street
- Elmer Shinkaruk house
- Slough Grosvenor Park (email James)
- Grosvenor Park (1970 and 1974 flood no storm sewer) large rain storm 14th to Main was flood
- Storm in 1982 – 14th Street
- 8th Street Commercial Building – Comic book store

- Colonial – Candy store that was moved to Sutherland 1960's (8th and Ewart to Jessop Ave)
- Tiffany's restaurant on 8th and Clarence
- Was Varsity View part of the Temperance Colony? (Sportsman was built on the edge of the Temperance Colony)
- University Annex – first name of the neighbourhood, when did it change?
- Luther Care Home
- Temperance Cafe – must have history, always part of U of S, Alexandra must also have history
- Wayne's Grocery – now Subway – was owned by Wayne Mack
- Brunskill School when built in 1951 was very modern building at the time – owned by Mrs. J. Mack's brother
- Cumberland Park – reason is a park is it was very expensive to have a corner lot so no one could afford it so left open and so then became a park

Questions:

- **Some houses in Nutana were there when it was a Temperance Colony and own their mineral rights unless there is a change of ownership. Would this extend to Varsity View?**

Not sure this would have to be looked into.

Comments:

- It would be interesting to see an overlay of the Temperance Colony over Varsity View to see what part, if any, of it was the original Temperance Colony.
- There is a lot of history on the corner of College and Cumberland, Royal Bank is 50 years old.

If you think of anything else, send to Paula or Mark to make sure they are preserved.

5. Closing Remarks

Mark thanked everyone for coming out and wished them happy holidays.

- 6. Next Meeting: January 19, 2010**
Topic: U of S/Varsity View Community Relations, Children's Hospital of Saskatchewan, and Smart Cities, Healthy Kids – Nazeem Muhajarine

Meeting adjourned: 9:00 pm

Interesting Note: If anyone is interested in seeing how walkable your house is considered check out www.walkability.com