

Swansea Area Ratepayers' Association

Reflecting the interests of the Swansea Community



Mailing Address: Swansea Area Ratepayer's Association
c/o Swansea Town Hall, Box 103, 95 Lavinia Avenue, Toronto ON M6S 3H9
Website: www.swansearatepayers.ca

Swansea Area Ratepayers' Group

Written on behalf of the Swansea Area Ratepayers Association (SARA)
Swansea Area Ratepayers Group (SARG)

February 20, 2019

Attn:

Deputy Mayor S. Holyday

councillor_holyday@toronto.ca

Councillor Perks Ward 4

councillor_perks@toronto.ca

Nancy Martins Secretariat Contact

gvc@toronto.ca

416-397-4579

Ref: GV1.2 Public Input on Interim City Council Governance System Mtg. February 21, 2019
from the
Swansea Area Ratepayers Association/Group

Further to the request from the Committee for public input, we would like to thank Councillor Holyday for remembering this important component in the development of an Interim City Council Governance System for the City Council's new 26 member configuration. Within the confines of the short timeline of this invitation for public input, the Swansea Area Ratepayers Association (SARA) would like to provide input under the following headings: **(1) Review and Suggested Amendments to the Interim Governance System Document. (2) Inclusion of Community Communication, Engagement and Support.**

In addition, taking into consideration the short timelines for public input, it would make sense to review the operation of the various committees and to have a report in the fall of 2019. We recommend that this committee structure be reviewed in the fall of 2019 with the intention of allowing further public input and amendments if required because of situations with these committees which are not workable.

Review and Suggested Amendments to the Interim Governance System.

Interim Committee Structure Changes

2.a.3. Infrastructure and the Environment – Existing

Change: Water Management and the Environment Committee

Rationale: Water Management is a better fit to identify infrastructure issues around the environment. It relates more to the management and enhancement of rivers, ravines, parks etc. rather than the provision of sewers, roads or bridges and soft infrastructure such as community

centres and public libraries. This combination would offset the possibility that the ravines and parks would be compromised at the expense of new roads or sewage systems

2.a.4 Planning and Housing Committee – Existing

Change: Planning, Infrastructure and Housing Committee

Rationale: The inclusion of Infrastructure with Planning and Housing is a better fit here because it provides the missing link to the provision of support facilities such as sewers, road access and transportation/traffic infrastructure needed to support sustainable development in accordance with Provincial Policies. Without the inclusion of Infrastructure there could be a conflict of interest of super densification development without the consideration of support facilities and the impact on adjacent Healthy Neighbourhoods including ensuring that the necessary infrastructure is in place before or in tandem with proposed development.

2.f Civic Appointments Committee:

Change: There should be a minimum of 5 members on this committee and should have at least one councillor from each of the Community Council. This will ensure some semblance of equal representation for the communities when making these appointments.

9. SARA is supportive of these changes as these are the directives and provisions which supported the existence and continuing operation of the Swansea Town Hall

11.c.1 Public Member Appointments

Change: On the Tribunals Appointment Committee there should be a minimum of two representatives from each of the Community Council geographic areas.

Rationale: This configuration will ensure respect, fairness and opportunity for the diversity and also ensuring that the appointment of persons who will be open to the unique aspects of each geographic area and their respective unique traits.

Review, Feedback and Amendments.

That this Special Governance Committee is committed to report back in the Fall of 2019 on the functioning of the Governance structure. Also require public input as part of the review with the intention and commitment to making changes where identified as needed.

Serious Omission

This document does not identify how the Public will be able to respond, present at or engage with this new Governance format in an **authentic and respectful** communication process. How will individuals be able to respond to issues which come before the various committees and have Our Say on both major and minor potential concerns or decisions?

Inclusion of Community Communication, Engagement and Support.

Larger Wards mean that the avenues of communication between the man on the street and City Hall have become more crowded than ever. The ordinary citizen will need help to be heard.

Fortunately, local **community associations** have been quietly working on behalf of their neighbours for generations and can provide valuable assistance in communicating community issues and providing sensible solutions.

To ensure that this valuable feature of democracy is able to fill the need left by the 26 Ward system to be strong and vibrant; we recommend the following:

1. Recognise the **incorporated** Area Associations by providing per capita funding along with spending regulations and requirements that they must (1) be responsible to the community, (2) not be associated with any political party and (3) must be autonomous. This will provide another layer of governance and support at a time of shrinking City Council Governance
2. Improve communication between Area Associations and the City departments which should have liaison officers to respond to contacts and queries from these organizations.
3. Provide for staffing at the Councillor's office and meeting space in the community to meet with the Area Associations.
4. Legislate a greater role for meaningful consultation with the Area Associations.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Wynne', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Veronica Wynne
SARA/SARG V-P

swansearatepayers@bell.net

416-762-3773