

# **R.C. Harris Public Advisory Committee Meeting #2/2016**

R.C. Harris Water Treatment Plant, Service Building Meeting Room  
2701 Queen Street East (at Victoria Park Avenue), Toronto

Wednesday April 20, 2016, 7:00 pm

## **Attendance**

### **Public Advisory Committee:**

Julie McNeill (Chair)  
David Lewis  
Henry Spencer  
Michel Joly De Lotbiniere  
Nicholas Discenza

### **City of Toronto Staff:**

Erik Lepik – Toronto Water Senior Engineer  
Mae Lee – Public Consultation Unit

At the end of the meeting:  
(Gord Mitchell – R.C. Harris Water Treatment Plant Manager)

### **Regrets:**

Alan Demb  
Wayne Reeves  
Paul Dowsett

### **1. Introductions**

Everyone present at the meeting introduced themselves.

### **2. Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved.

### **3. Approval of January 12, 2016 Meeting Minutes**

**Julie McNeill** approved the meeting minutes from January 12, 2016.

#### 4. Construction Project – Update

**Erik Lepik** provided an update on the construction project.

Some modifications were done to the hoarding last week so there is once again access to the lake from the site. The hoarding will also be reconfigured so the road to the south part of the pump house will also be opened up in the next few days. The hoarding will basically be around the stockpile, blocking the the road at the southeast corner of the pump building and running from the southwest corner of the pump building to the western boundary of the property. The stockpile area will remain hoarded until the end of the project. **Erik Lepik** showed the members of PAC where the hoarding would be on a map of the site.

The settling basin job is on schedule and work has started on the ring road. Two of the basins at the front of the property have been fully excavated and the southwestern part of the ring road has been demolished. This area will start to be rebuilt in the next 3-4 weeks. This is a fairly substantial job since it requires a lot of concrete reinforcement to be able to support the weight of the delivery trucks to the site. It is a good thing that this road is being redone now, since during the process of demolition a lot of deterioration was noticed.

The valves and filter gates are still in the process of being refurbished. One of the cone valves is expected to be back in about a month and the other 2 will be back once the refurbishing work is completed. **Michel Joly De Lotbiniere** inquired as to who was doing the refurbishment of the valves. **Erik Lepik** replied that the cone valves went to a valve manufacturer in Illinois and the other two are at a Canadian factory near Cambridge called Quality Valve Repair, who is also doing all of the refurbishment work on the sluice gates.

The pedestals are in good shape and the refurbishment of the physical pedestal above grade is going very well. One of the modifications will be the reinstatement of the hand wheel. The wheel will be functional as a back-up, but only when the locking mechanism is removed. This means that visitors will be able to turn it freely but unless the locking mechanism is released, it won't actually work. The wheels were an important part of the original design and function of the plant. The expectation is that they will be maintained now and into the future as they will serve as a back-up purpose.

There have been no complaints from the neighbours regarding the rehabilitation project since the last PAC meeting in January and there were only two minor complaints before the last PAC meeting. It is a very positive thing for the contractor as well as the plant that the local residents aren't being too inconvenienced by the project.

There has been an issue with people climbing over the hoarding to get to the water, usually groups of kids. This is a safety issue and is part of the motivation behind the modification of the hoarding to open up access to the water. **Julie McNeill** asked if the police have ever been called in to address the trespassers. **Erik Lepik** said that during construction, the plant calls the contractor to address these types of issues. One of the contracting staff will come down to the site to tell them not to trespass and if they come back, the threat of calling the police is there.

The soil pile will stay where it is until the end of the project when the basins get recovered. This spring, the soil will be seeded with grass to help with dust control. The grass should be enough to prevent the dust from blowing around but if it doesn't work, then tarping the area will be considered. **Michel Joly De Lotbiniere** asked if there was a cost difference between putting in the grass and needing it to be watered versus tarping the pile. **Erik Lepik** said that planting grass on the pile is part of the contract so there is no additional cost. The contractors are responsible for maintaining dust control, so if the grass doesn't work, they will be responsible for finding an alternative solution. **David Lewis** suggested seeding the area with clover, since it would not require much maintenance. **Erik Lepik** said that the contractors are responsible for making the final decisions as to what is done for dust control.

There has not been any recent updates to the website because, until now, there have not been any updates that would be of interest to the public. However, now that the hoarding has changed there will be more interest and relevant updates coming soon.

The photos on the hoarding are now up and there are four (potentially five) schools that will be doing murals to be put along the hoarding as well. The schools will be sent sheets of plywood, which they will be able to paint in their classrooms before being brought back to the plant and mounted on the hoarding. After the construction project is complete, the murals might be returned to the schools or the plant might want to keep them; this has not yet been decided.

**Michel Joly De Lotbiniere** asked if any more of the black and white photos of the plant would be mounted, since they look really great. **Erik Lepik** replied that there are already 15 old photos of the plant on the hoarding: up by Queen Street, along the road in to the site and down by the water. The photos turned out really well, but it is a costly endeavor so there probably won't be any more made at this time.

**Nicholas Discenza** asked if there was a way to access the digitized images. **Erik Lepik** replied that they are all accessible at the archives and he doesn't think that there are any copyright issues. He invited Nicholas to contact him directly if he was interested in obtaining a copy of a specific image. **Nicholas Discenza** inquired as to what would be done with the prints after the hoarding comes down. **Erik Lepik** replied that they would be used for Doors Open.

**Michel Joly De Lotbiniere** asked how the photographic images were mounted. **Erik Lepik** said that he doesn't think plywood was used, but they were probably mounted on aluminum. Once the photographs come off the hoarding they may have to look into how to maintain the integrity of the images.

**Julie McNeill** asked where the murals would go. **Erik Lepik** explained that the murals painted by the students would go up along the first section of Queen Street going east after Nursewood Road. The plywood is being prepared for the schools and the students should start working on them next week. The goal is to have them up before the end of the school year.

**Mae Lee** mentioned that one of the Nursewood Road residents contacted her a few months ago, wanting to assist in the coordination of the murals. **Erik Lepik** said that he has been in contact with her as well as the principal at Balmy Beach Public School, and they will be working together on the project.

The HVAC project is still in the design phase. A large portion of this project is to make more cost effective heating with a passive system using centralized automation and occupancy sensors. The goal is to heat spaces based on need rather than local thermostat settings.

The chemical storage tank upgrade is currently in the design phase.

The screen door repair should be started later this year. There is a heritage masonry/repair contract and prequalified heritage contractors will be invited to bid on this contract. The pricing is done based on the hours required to complete the jobs, which should speed up the repair process for the smaller jobs around the facility (such as the screen room door, replacing some of the lime stone on the stairs, etc.)

A company has been engaged to work on the front gate. The northeast gate has been temporarily removed as part of the construction project and the southwest gate controls are going to be upgraded. This gate should be functional within the next month or so. The improved gate will have a standard gate actuator, standard gate controller and better safety loops, which will work much better than the prototype gate system that was there before.

There have not been any decisions made regarding the interpretive signage. Details will be available after Gord Mitchell and Wayne Reeves have a meeting to discuss it further.

The plant staff had a meeting with a landscape architect a few weeks ago to discuss the path going down to Nursewood Road from the top of the garages. Because this path was constructed between the two berms, there is always a lot of mud and puddles along it. The landscape architect had some interesting ideas to remedy this problem. One of his suggestions was to put in a walkway to connect the path to the stairs, re-grading the area a little, and potentially putting a bench on the north side of the path with a little berm behind it. Changing the grading would help stop erosion and would act as a natural barrier to discourage people from walking up the path and encourage them to walk around and up the stairs. The main goal is to eliminate the mud that collects in that area. **Erik Lepik** asked the members of PAC if they had any thoughts or suggestions about this area.

**Michel Joly De Lotbiniere** thinks that the idea of putting in a berm and an area with a bench would be good. **David Lewis** said that the bench might not go over well with the neighbours because it would create a congregating point. He added that originally this path was not there; it is there now as a result of the hoarding during the original RMF project. The concrete path could be re-graded and planted with something other than Kentucky blue grass to prevent puddling. **Julie McNeill** asked for clarification: there is a concrete path between the top of the stairs and Nursewood Road, and then there is a "rut" that people walk along going north-south where the grass has mostly died. Which path is being discussed? **David Lewis** replied that the concrete path is the one that could be re-graded and the muddy rut could be rototilled and replanted with high turf grass.

**Erik Lepik** pointed out that the issue with building up the berm is that if it goes over a 5% grade along a pathway, then it is no longer considered a pathway and railings would have to be installed. **David Lewis** said that that much of an increase would not be necessary; realigning the concrete could eliminate the low spots that cause the puddling. **Erik Lepik** said that this spot would always be a bit lower than the north side because of the tree that is there. It is a more complicated area than it appears at first and a lot of things will be considered before making a

final plan. But it is clear that people are going to continue to use it since it is a convenient way to get down to the water.

**Nicholas Discenza** asked if there would be any interest in turning the muddy path into something nicer than what it is now. For example paving the area, using gravel, or landscaping around it. **Erik Lepik** said that the landscape architect would present them with proposals of what would be possible.

**Nicholas Discenza** asked which landscape architecture firm would be working on this project. **Erik Lepik** replied that it is a small firm called M.E.P. based in Toronto, who often do work with the City.

**Julie McNeill** asked if the proposal could be brought back to PAC for comments before a decision is made. She also asked what the timeline would be. **Erik Lepik** replied that it is hard to say what the timeline would be at this point; they would first be looking at concepts and depending on how intricate it is, it might take awhile. However, if the changes are small, it could be rolled out in the next 6 months. It is still very early, but once the concepts have been presented, he will share them with PAC. **Mae Lee** said that once the proposal is available, she will circulate it to PAC members over email.

**Michel Joly De Lotbiniere** asked about the plans for Doors Open. **Erik Lepik** replied that the plant would take part in Doors Open on May 28 and 29, 2016. The same areas of the facility that are usually open will be open. The plant is looking forward to a large turnout for this event again this year. **Julie McNeill** pointed out that during and after Doors Open, people's interest in the site will increase and they will be more likely to look up additional information on the website. So it is important that the website be up to date by this time. **Erik Lepik** agreed and said that this will be done in the next couple of weeks. He also explained that there will be project boards at Doors Open describing the importance of the work currently being done on site.

**Julie McNeill** asked about how the Easter parade had been this year. **Erik Lepik** said that it was planned in advance this year so it was much more manageable than it had been in the past. The plant staff met with coordinators beforehand and permitted them access to site. It helped to have a dialogue with coordinators ahead of time.

**Erik Lepik** reported on the TTC loop construction. He said that he had been to a meeting with the TTC and they are still working on the design. It looks like the track in the loop will be replaced beginning in October or November of 2016. **David Lewis** said that TTC originally said that they would replace the tracks in early spring or summer of 2016, to get rid of the squeaking tracks. **Julie McNeill** asked how long this is expected to take. **Erik Lepik** said that he is not exactly sure, but it will probably be around 6 weeks. His main concern is how the track work will affect access to the plant during the construction project.

There was a brief discussion about the design and function of the TTC tracks. **Erik Lepik** said that there may be some challenges for the plant and they might have to take the curb out on the east side of the intersection, to widen the road enough so that the construction and delivery vehicles can access the plant.

## 5. New Business

**Michel Joly De Lotbiniere** brought up the nighttime lighting of the buildings and said that it is important to consider the colour and material of the lighting as well as the style. He pointed out that when it comes time to replace and improve the lighting of the building exteriors, a specialist should come in to look at it. **Erik Lepik** said that this would absolutely be done. **David Lewis** said that the topic of exterior lighting was discussed at great lengths a few years ago with PAC and **Henry Spencer** added that the first proposal was not very impressive. **Julie McNeill** explained that it had been decided that the future plan for the exterior lighting of the buildings would be from the ground up, and a lot of attention would be put into the conceptualization of the system.

**Gord Mitchell** arrived at the meeting and **Julie McNeill** asked him about the proposal for the path discussed earlier. **Gord Mitchell** said that the plant would not move forward on that project before receiving input from PAC. Once the concept proposal is available, he will circulate the proposed design to PAC members so that they can provide feedback and comments.

**Gord Mitchell** informed the committee that they still need to update the PAC Terms of Reference. There have been some issues with the mandates for other Public Advisory Committees and City Council recently passed a motion that all the Terms of Reference for public advisory committees must be reviewed. A couple of minor things in the PAC Terms of Reference were flagged and a few updates should be made, such as names of people who haven't been involved for many years. To follow the mandate from Public Works and Infrastructure, **Gord Mitchell** will make the necessary amendments and send it out to the members of PAC to review.

## **6. Next Meeting Date and Agenda Items**

The design proposal for the path will be on the agenda for the next meeting. PAC members will probably have a chance to review the proposal before the meeting so that concerns and suggestions can be discussed.

The **next meeting** was set for Wednesday, **September 21, 2016**.