

City Hall Square Plaza & Civic Esplanade Steering Committee

Meeting held August 12, 2021

A meeting of the City Hall Square Plaza & Civic Esplanade Steering Committee is held this day commencing at 10:00 o'clock a.m. via Zoom video conference, there being present the following members:

Councillor Jim Morrison, Chair
Councillor Gary Kaschak
Councillor Ed Sleiman

Guests in attendance:

Peter Marshall, City Rowan and Scott Torrance – FORREC

Also present are the following resource personnel:

Jason Reynar, Chief Administrative Officer
Adam Coates, Planner III, Senior Urban Designer
Wadah Al-Yassiri, Manager Parks Development
James Chacko, Senior Manager, Parks
Thom Hunt, City Planner
Joe Mancina, Chief Financial Officer
France Isabelle-Tunks, Senior Manager, Engineering
Mary Rodgers, Communications Officer
Karen Kadour, Committee Coordinator

1. Call to Order

The Committee Coordinator calls the meeting to order at 10:02 o'clock a.m. and the Steering Committee considers the Agenda being Schedule A attached hereto, matters which are dealt with as follows:

2. Election of Chair

The Committee Coordinator calls for nominations from the floor for the position of Chair. Councillor Kaschak nominates Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor Sleiman. The Committee Coordinator asks if there are further nominations from the floor. Seeing none, the Committee Coordinator asks Councillor Morrison if he accepts the nomination. Councillor Morrison accepts.

Moved by Councillor Kaschak, seconded by Councillor Sleiman,
That Councillor Morrison **BE ELECTED** Chair of the City Hall Square Plaza and
Civic Esplanade Steering Committee.
Carried.

Councillor Morrison assumes the Chair.

4. Presentation – Windsor Civic Esplanade

Cindy Rowan and Peter Marshall, FORREC appear before the Committee and provide a presentation entitled “Windsor Civic Esplanade (WEC) – WEC Steering Committee Concept Workshop” **attached** as Appendix “A”.

The highlights of the presentation are as follows:

- **“What we heard” –**
- **People Centric Design** – Desire to create a flow of people to and throughout downtown (beyond the site)
- **Greenspace & Urban Canopy** – Desire for ample greenspace, landscaping, trees and shade.
- **Pedestrian & Cyclist Connection** – Desire for safe pedestrian-first, cyclist-first connection across north-south route
- **Connection to the River** – Desire to use this site to connect downtown to the Riverside Park & Trail
- **Flexible Use** – Desire for a wide range of space-types and space-sizes to foster spontaneous gathering and passive programming.
- **Inclusivity – “A space for all” – Cultural Resonance & Historical Storytelling** Desire to use the space to tell the stories of the place’s people, history & legacy.
- **Environmental** – Desire for design to include flood mitigation strategies, thermal comfort strategies and prioritization of active transportation.

City objectives include:

- Provide a functional, flexible and programmable outdoor space for public use.
- Create outdoor space for civic ceremonies and announcements.
- Connect City Hall to the Civic Esplanade.
- Incorporate the heritage, culture and context of the existing plaza.
- Increase the connectivity and cultural footprint that the Civic Esplanade and Civic Square segment has on the core of the City.
- Meet environmental and sustainability objectives.
- Incorporate operating and maintenance objectives.
- Reinforce the Civic Campus concept adopted during the design of the new 350 City Hall Building.

Concepts and options include:

- **Light the Path** – Through time in this sentient space, pulsating pathways overlap to gather in shared spaces, defining the communal identity of this truly living place. Will include two gathering plazas with an ice rink in winter and a large splash pad in the summer.
- **River Flow** – Water flow is elemental to the historical origins of communities; especially for the City of Windsor. Modelling the flow of crowd movement, the people centric design offers flexible programmatic experiences in a variety of urban scales that encourage enthusiastic exploration. Will include an ice rink and skating trail for winter use with a large splash pad for summer use.
- **Matrix Garden** – Conceptually, the Matrix looks to the larger context to consider the civic precinct as a civic park, rather than strictly confined by the axial orientation of the Esplanade. Program, activities, stories and art are woven throughout a hierarchy of paths, which tell the story of the land through the people, flora, fauna, ecology and innovation. A focus on tree planting and vegetated roofs enlarges the urban forest, providing shade, wind protection, promoting biodiversity and reducing stormwater run-off to reduce flooding.

A question and answer period follows the presentation.

Councillor Sleiman refers to the connection from City Hall to Riverside Drive and asks if a crossing will be required.

A. Coates responds that the Environmental Assessment did recommend that a connection to Riverside Drive as an underpass is the preferred option.

Councillor Sleiman asks if it is possible to close Riverside Drive (in front of the Casino) up to the International Aquatic Centre and reroute the traffic to allow for free movement.

A. Coates suggests that this be referred to Transportation Planning for a response.

The Chair asks if the three options include a skating trail versus an ice pad or the traditional style of a skating rink and where does the trail go.

C. Rowan responds that all of the concepts have that central element that allows people to skate around in a circular way. The Matrix Concept allows for skating in a figure eight.

The Chair asks if the size of the skating trail would be one quarter of a mile or smaller.

C. Rowan responds that the trail would be quite a bit smaller and is not intended to go through the entire esplanade.

The Chair asks in terms of the River Flow concept, will there be water flowing through the parkland.

C. Rowan responds that the pathways have a flowing quality which function like tributaries to take one to different destinations in the esplanade. This concept does have water experiences, i.e. water pad.

The Chair indicates that there are three conceptual options and asks how the selection process will move forward to reach a final concept.

A. Coates responds that the contract is to look at the esplanade and to do an update of what the original 1994 study looked at. There will be one vision for the esplanade as there will be further consultation so there will be a more solidified version that will meet the objectives and desires of the stakeholders. He adds for the plaza piece, there are three options that will come forward for the Steering Committee to review and to provide direction. The second more in depth round of consultations will be held at the end of August/ early September 2021.

A. Coates adds that the purpose of this meeting is to identify the extensive background, research and consultation that has occurred and where we are in the process.

Moved by Councillor Sleiman, seconded by Councillor Kaschak,
That the project financial summary for the City Hall Square Plaza and Civic Esplanade dated July 30, 2021 **BE RECEIVED FOR INFORMATION.**

That the “Windsor Civic Esplanade” (WEC) Project Report” completed by FORREC **BE RECEIVED FOR INFORMATION.**

That the “What We Heard Report” submitted by Gloss Arch + Eng and FORREC which details the public consultations to date **BE RECEIVED FOR INFORMATION.**

Carried.

5.2 City Hall Square Plaza & Civic Esplanade Project Executive Committee Minutes

Moved by Councillor Kaschak, seconded by Councillor Sleiman,
That the minutes of the City Hall Square Project Executive Committee of its meetings held March 12, 2020, October 8, 2020, February 2, 2021 and June 10, 2021 **BE RECEIVED.**

Carried.

6. Other Business

None.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at the call of the Chair.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 10:41 o'clock a.m.

CHAIR

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR