

Crystal Beach Lakeview Community
Conversation
A Vision for our Community: 2020 and Beyond

Crystal Beach Lakeview Community Association

February 2020

The Crystal Beach Lakeview Community Association (CBLCA) hosted a community conversation with our neighbours in November 2019 to begin to create a shared vision for our community. This document provides a summary of this conversation and how CBLCA intends to work towards upholding this vision for our community within our scope and mandate.

Purpose

To gather information about how our neighbours/members want to see our community evolve, specifically within the context of a growing city and the desire to preserve and strengthen what makes Crystal Beach Lakeview (CBL) great. The information will be used to inform the work and position of CBLCA and our engagement with our neighbours in the co-creation of our community of the future.

Methods

Two methods were used to gather data from CBL residents:

- 1) A community conversation was facilitated by Synapcity at the CBLCA AGM in November 2019. Approximately 75 people participated in round table discussions focused on four topic areas: Sense of Belonging; Mobility; Intensification; and Conservation. Three questions were asked for each topic area to facilitate discussion in 12-minute increments. Notes from the conversation were scribed by volunteers at each table and collated by CBLCA executive members.
- 2) An online survey, with the same questions from the in-person discussion, was distributed through the December 2019 CBLCA monthly newsletter. 27 neighbours contributed to the conversation through their survey responses. Responses were exported from Survey Monkey.

CBLCA executive members reviewed the qualitative data from both the community in-person conversation and online survey. Key concepts and themes were identified within each topic area.

Results:

The conversation was structured within four topic areas:

- *Sense of Belonging;*
- *Mobility;*
- *Intensification; and*
- *Conservation.*

Common themes and concepts from each topic area are summarized.

Sense of Belonging

Why we love CBL



NATURAL
SURROUNDINGS



FEELING WELCOME



PROXIMITY

Neighbours noted CBL has a “cottage like feeling” – a neighbourhood surrounded and integrated with nature – and reported three main themes supporting why we love CBL. The most common response was the natural space that surrounds us. Many people cited the greenspace and trees within and around our neighbourhood, our proximity and easy access to the Ottawa River, parks, NCC land, biking, walking trails, and wildlife migration routes as contributing to our sense of belonging.

The second theme had to do with neighbours and feeling welcome. Several people described positive and trusting relationships with neighbours. Others mentioned the mixed age group and the balance of newcomers and long-time residents in their ‘hood, while others spoke of connecting with neighbours through street parties, events at Maki House and dog walking. Lastly, many commented that they had felt welcomed into CBL and were grateful for an active community association.

The third area of focus was on CBL’s location within the larger community. Access to local farms, quick access to anywhere in the city on the Highway 417, and close to amenities in Bells Corners and Bayshore were mentioned.

How we can preserve what we love



CBLCA



LOOK AND FEEL



GOOD STEWARDS

Three themes emerged. First, neighbours shared support for the role of CBLCA and encouraged even more two-way communication, activities open to all, and participation in CBLCA activities.

Secondly, there was preference for architecture that maintains the look and feel of the community. There was some concern about aging infrastructure and development, with suggestions that development along Carling Avenue might be acceptable, so long as the core of the physical community remains in the same style. The third theme highlighted our collective role to be good stewards of the space – outdoor as well as built structures.

Lastly, several respondents noted that change will happen (some of it good!) but that preserving the feel of the community will be important to maintain this high reported sense of belonging.

Ideas to contribute to sense of belonging



COFFEE SHOP



COMMON GATHERING
SPOT



PARTNERSHIPS

Several ideas were shared to further build a sense of belonging in our community. Some of the suggestions include: a coffee shop; grocery store; community co-op; pub; library/reading room; a winter ice-shack; community gardens; welcome sign at neighbor entrances; and a Welcome Wagon program.

A number of participants supported enhancing uses of existing spaces like access to Maki House (including having wifi access and as a welcome centre in emergencies as needed), formal programming on ski trails or ice rinks in winter, and creating a community hub or co-op in Corkstown Park.

Finally, a few respondents suggested we maintain good partnerships with nearby organizations, for example, the Ottawa Carleton Wildlife Centre and Wesley Clover Parks.

Mobility

How we get around CBL



CAR



BUS



ACTIVE (BIKE, WALK)

Use of personal cars is the most common form of transportation around CBL, but there is a clear wish that there were more amenities within walking distance. Many neighbours report using multiple modes of transportation depending on the destination and the season. For example, some residents prefer to bike everywhere, but in winter switch to OC Transpo for commuting to work and a car for errands. All of the following were cited as ways our neighbours get around the neighbourhood: car; bus; taxi/Uber; school bus; private student transportation; walk/run; wheelchair; bike; rollerblades; canoe; boat; snowshoeing; and virtually via Facebook.

Our mobility experience for errands and activities



HAVE TO DRIVE



HAVE TO LEAVE 'HOOD

Neighbours' mobility experience depends on time of day, day of the week and access to a personal vehicle. Everyone needs to leave the neighbourhood to run errands or participate in most activities.

Neighbours have lamented the need to use cars to engage in the community or even run errands in the nearest commercial area, wishing they could walk more. Overall, there is a lack of choice for how to do errands. A car is needed for almost all errands, most of which require travel outside of CBL. Bus routes are infrequent and not direct to main destinations. Most respondents go to Bells Corners or Kanata for most errands and activities. Thus, connection to

these communities by walking, biking, driving or transit is essential but currently best accessed by vehicle.

Desired mobility improvements



MUPTO BELLS
CORNERS



TRANSIT TO BELLS
CORNERS



CORKSTOWN ROAD

There is broad agreement that improved access for pedestrians and cyclists to Bells Corners is a must, with a multi-use path (MUP) mentioned often. Improved local transit options would also be appreciated by many respondents. There are mixed feelings about Corkstown Road potentially being made one way with the LRT, with some in favour and some against, and several suggestions to address speed and cut-through traffic on this road. A variety of other improvements were noted for major roads on periphery, reducing traffic speed, intersections, lighting and sidewalks.

Intensification

How CBL potentially impacted by intensification



CARLING AVE



LRT BAYSHORE &
MOODIE STATIONS

There was consensus that Carling Avenue is a prime location for intensification. The zoning already allows for higher density development along that stretch of road. The area around the LRT Moodie Station is another area that residents believe the city will consider for intensification, since it follows with the philosophy of development around LRT hubs and stations. This option is much more complicated since the NCC is the landowner, and not desired by most residents given the strong feedback to protect all Greenbelt. Residents wonder whether the NCC would be open to developments at Moodie/Corkstown.

While residents seem either resigned to or accepting of intensification on the periphery of the community, there is greater concern about intensification in the interior. Examples would be

residences being turned into multi-unit rentals or new and dense developments. Regardless, residents are bracing for increased traffic along the periphery and within the community.

Potential for local economic development



CARLING AVE



COFFEE SHOP



HOME-BASED
BUSINESSES

There is the sense that economic development is inevitable and even potentially good, but that residents should be proactive and guide it. Respondents identified Carling Avenue as a likely location for commercial activity. There was a fair bit of animated conversation concerning a coffee shop within the community — perhaps located at Corkstown Park — that would serve as a social hub. There was also discussion about the prospect of more home-based businesses and services, which many people around the table welcomed. The prospect of Airbnb rentals, however, got a much cooler reaction.

It's widely felt that the community would benefit from having a modest grocery store nearby. However, there is some acknowledgement that given the geographic location and low density of the neighbourhood, the economics of commercial development are not promising.

Ways to mitigate traffic



CORKSTOWN RD



PUBLIC TRANSIT



ROUND-ABOUTS

Corkstown Road continues to present issues for the community. There are mixed feelings about Corkstown Road potentially being made one way with the LRT, with some in favour and some against, and several suggestions to address speed and cut-through traffic on this road. A variety of other strategies to mitigate traffic were suggested including calls for more speed bumps and a roundabout at Crystal Beach Drive and Carling Avenue. In addition, residents hope for improved transit and parking at the LRT Moodie Station.

Conservation

Overall, it appears that most respondents chose to live in this area because of its proximity to greenspace. The community is generally concerned about over-development and wants to protect existing greenspaces, including wildlife habitats.

Neighbours use the greenspaces for a variety of activities including walking, cycling, skiing, family gatherings, and more. Many raised issues about the trees, noting that ensuring their health is not only desirable for conservation reasons but also as to help reduce noise from the highway and, in future, the LRT. Some people also felt that there could be more community involvement in conservation activities including reducing certain weeds and managing ticks in the area.

What to protect



PARKS



TREES



WATERWAYS

Respondents felt strongly that “all of it should be protected.” Specifically, they want to ensure protection of: the Greenbelt (and no further development on this land); all parks (Maki, Lakeview, Corkstown, Andrew Haydon, and Dick Bell); waterways (Ottawa River, Stillwater Creek, Graham Creek); the wildlife corridor; and trees. Furthermore, we continue to want to be able to access these spaces for recreation and wellbeing.

Conservation ideas for improvement



PARTNERSHIPS



GOOD STEWARDS



MUP TO BELLS
CORNERS

Respondents shared many ideas for how we can contribute to conservation. These ideas included: connecting with the NCC, Ottawa River Keeper and wildlife organizations; keeping

trees safe from disease; managing ticks; facilitating more clean-up initiatives; and, improving cycling connections to Bells Corners, so we have to drive less for daily errands and activities.

Conclusion

There is some agreement on a vision for our community and priorities for CBLCA:

- Maintain our welcoming feeling and strong sense of belonging.
- Protect all of our natural spaces: green, blue, and winter white.
- Enhance choice of safe routes to travel within and outside of our community by car, bus, and active modes of transportation.
- Enhance connections with Bells Corners by walking, cycling and transit.
- Partner and connect with local leaders and organizations to both direct development and preserve our greenspace.
- Consider how to create an accessible gathering place for all ages within CBL.

Many of these suggestions are influenced by a variety of factors, and not all of these are within the full control of CBLCA. Nevertheless, CBLCA is currently addressing many of these issues within our scope and mandate and will continue to engage with neighbours on these priorities.

However, it is important to note the apparent misalignment in fully achieving the vision described in the results. For example, many neighbours expressed the desire for more local amenities, but do not want increased intensification or loss of greenspace, which would likely be required to support local businesses. Neighbours also do not want increased traffic but want to maintain easy access to main roadways, which are typically busier and noisier streets.

Overall, the feedback throughout this conversation made it evident that we live in a great neighbourhood with good people and beautiful natural surroundings. CBLCA will aim to preserve and strengthen what makes CBL great and consider the suggestions for improvement discussed as we evolve into our community of the future.