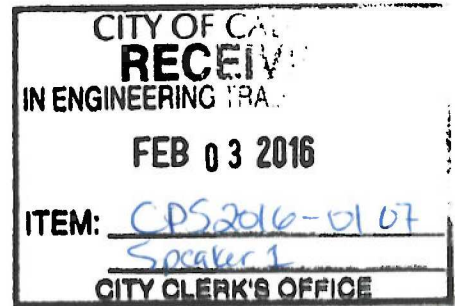




Your Community, Your Association, Your Voice



February 2, 2016

Members of the SPC on Community and Protective Services

Re: THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY-BUILDING SCOPING STUDY, CPS2016-0107

I cannot stress enough how important our Community Association is to our residents. Our membership is increasing steadily because of the advocacy concerns we have been facing with the City...

The biggest issue is that Council is not getting information out to Community Associations in a timely fashion, if at all. Facebook ads to solicit feedback on bylaw and development changes, is unacceptable as the first course of action. The people that are most engaged with Facebook are not always the homeowners who have a vested interest in what happens to their communities. Facebook and social media are good additions to Community Association feedback, but consistent information needs to be shared directly with Community Associations, in a timely fashion, for them to get out to residents. Councillors do not always share information, and it is not worded consistently. When there are changes to proposed policy, bylaws, mapping, etc these things should come to the Community Association development contact DIRECTLY from the City Clerk. Development contacts are updated yearly, and it would be easy to have a check box to be added to an email list.

We have a number of subsidized Calgary Housing units in our community, as well as a housing cooperative. Our community association plays a key role in terms of advocacy for our lower income residents. We also use the money that is generated by our hall rental to provide free social events for all residents. We are looking to expand our facilities so that we are able to provide additional programming for residents (things like art, dance, and fitness classes, and hopefully subsidized daycare). Our facility is currently booked to almost capacity, including before and after school care, free parent and tots group, and subsidized yoga and fitness classes for seniors. We have a first class outdoor skating rink, and offer free summer programs for children and youth in conjunction with the City. We are hoping to offer further programs in our rink space during the summer.

Our Community Association also plays a HUGE role in terms of providing feedback and advocacy for development in our community. We are also engaged with our surrounding communities, and regularly lobby to create pedestrian and cyclist friendly corridors to help improve the quality of life in our communities. It is too much to ask that all residents commit to all Open Houses and Engagement Requests from the City and other Municipal/Federal Bodies-- our Community Association plays the role of liaison and keeps residents updated through both email and paper newsletter.



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It is critical that we are given access to timely information so that it can be shared-- right now it feels like Council wants to take us out of the equation altogether. Community Associations play a CRUCIAL role in helping communities maintain their character as well as the quality of life for their residents. As Council continues to push forward with their own agenda, the voice of Community Associations will be even more crucial in the future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,

Leanne Ellis

Rutland Park Community Association VP Development and Traffic