

Community Gathering Downtown and College Hill



May 12, 2018

Content

1. **Summary**
2. **Topics**
3. **Notes**
4. **Follow Up Actions**

Top Three Topics:

1. SMA Pool
2. Immigration
3. Nursing Home for Francophones
4. Promotion of Botanical Gardens



1. Summary

Political Representatives Present:

David Coon, MLA Fredericton South

Kate Rogers, Deputy Mayor and City Councillor for Ward 11

On May 12, 2018, David Coon hosted a community gathering at the Centre Communautaire St. Anne for the Downtown and College Hill area of Fredericton South along with Deputy Mayor Kate Rogers.

Participants at these meetings wrote their names and issues on a flipchart sheet, and were given two to three minutes to speak about their issue to the group at large. There was an additional minute for responses, whether from the audience at large or from a specific person. This allowed for a variety of topics to be discussed, and for everyone who wanted to say something or ask a question to be able to draw attention to their particular issue.

The dominant issue raised at this meeting was regarding the Sir Max Aitken Pool. Other issues brought up included the need for a Francophone Nursing Home, better promotion of the Botanical Gardens, and questions about how well immigration was proceeding.

2. Topics

1. Pool continuity
2. Immigration
3. Pool priorities
4. Un foyer de soins pour les aines francophone de Fredericton
5. SMA Pool
6. Pool, SMA vote Monday night
7. "We want a pool solution but time's almost up" - Daily Gleaner
8. City Council to promote the Botanical Garden more

3. Notes

1. Below is some of what participants had to say about saving the SMA pool and ensuring a replacement competitive pool, followed by Kate Roger's response:
 - Pool Advocates:
 - Two parts: 1. Extend the SMA Pool, 2. Get a new facility. Negotiations failed. Issues: 1. city would not take on liability; 2. regional support lacking; 3. playhouse was priority. Minister Fraser says he will bridge the funding gap. Gets rid of two obstacles: 1. fees for competitive and regional users, and 2. liabilities. Remaining issue: Playhouse funding. Q: Is the Playhouse still an issue? Does it still need to be guaranteed funding?
 - Q: In your opinion, Kate, how will council vote?
 - Time is almost up.
 - Startled that UNB is not providing a pool.
 - Concern: level of commitment from the city. Question the interest and commitment from the city. Council need to start with fresh eyes.
 - York Arena repair: city came through for hockey, but not for swimming.
 - Q: What would happen if today the rinks announced that they were going to close? The city would go nuts. Why don't we have the same reaction for the pool?
 - For the sake of children and seniors, the city must vote for the SMA pool.
 - In December university and city talks broke down. This was followed by meetings with the advocacy group and city staff to plan a new pool, but these seem to have stalled. More recently, Minister Fraser offered funding to keep the SMA Pool open. Feel nervous that the city may withhold support. This coming Monday Council meeting is the last opportunity to support the pool. Asking the city to please support the extension of the SMA pool.
 - Told that the city had two priorities: the Playhouse and the Airport expansion. The Airport is now taken care of, but now the city says it can only have one priority: the Playhouse. Q: is it one or two priorities?
 - Concern: This is a health concern. Doctors support the pool for health reasons. 9% of kids in NB get the level of activity they need. 60% of adults are overweight.
 - Q: If the SMA pool closes, where do the kids go for their physical activity? The city said that 40-60% of the pool users could be transferred to the indoor pool at the same cost. Now they have offered transfer for 10-15% with higher fees.
 - Q: Why does the city support other groups but not the aquatics group? Example: York Arena was quickly repaired even though it went over

budget, and there are many more rinks in the city than pools. Also, aquatics is a female-dominated sport. Feel under-supported compared to male-dominated sports like hockey.

○ Kate Rogers:

- Don't believe everything you hear in the Gleaner, it has been very toxic and misrepresenting. Regarding the question of priorities: The province told the city they weren't clear enough about their priority. So the City chose their priorities and made it very clear: the Playhouse for the city and the Airport expansion for the region. The Playhouse was the number one priority. Commitments were made to the board, to the region and the government. Negotiations happened with the YMCA while Kate was Acting Mayor, they wanted to partner on a pool, but a different direction was taken when the Mayor returned. We need a long term solution.
- There is more the province is requiring from the city that is not being revealed. The province had a responsibility here but wouldn't act until the city insists. It's too bad they're only coming in at the 11th hour. Kate always insisted the need for a three year plan to keep the SMA open. The province didn't initially support the pool, but they are coming forward now to offer support. The challenge for the city: commit to the pool while keeping to other commitments. There are lots of pool allies in city council. Kate's conundrum is whether or not to reward the province's bad behaviour by voting in favour of accepting their offer and extending the pool life. (Comment from audience: sympathize with Kate's frustration, but if the province hadn't come in now the pool would be shut down in September. It didn't work between UNB and the City). Kate supports keeping the SMA pool open, but feels like the province is bullying the city and doesn't want to reward this behaviour from the province. (Comment from audience: the constituents feel like they are being bullied by the city and that their kids are being used as a pawn in a bigger game).

2. George Murnaghan - Immigration

- Q: How successful has NB been in attracting and keeping immigrants? What are the plans?
- David: Doing better at keeping immigrants and refugees. Many Syrians are staying. The Province is more engaged. David met recently with Syrians, and passed on information to PETL (Post Secondary Education Training and Labour) which was very responsive and has a positive team. The Assistant Deputy Minister, Charles Ayles, gets involved personally with cases to help individuals stay.
- Kate: Ignite Fredericton works on immigration attraction and retention. Of importance is quality of life, and they work on this too.

3. Louis-Philippe Albert - Un foyer de soins pour les aines francophone de Fredericton

- There are no nursing homes in Fredericton that offers 24 hour service in French because of labour constraints. Even if a person can speak English, when they become elderly, they often revert to their mother tongue. Q: Why are there no nursing homes in French in Fredericton?

- David: Recently saw a proposal for a Francohpone nursing home in Fredericton. Looks like a good proposal. The obstacle is that government is moving towards corporate nursing homes over community-based ones.
 - Kate: Could there be a nursing home on the grounds of CCSA?
Answer: Yes. Have enough land that it could even be in a village model. Province just needs to move on it. UNB also has land that the province could use for this.
4. Louis-Philippe Albert - City Council needs to promote the Botanical Garden more
- City should promote the Botanical Gardens more, get more participants, members and supporters. City supports it financially but it needs more social integration. Currently it is run by volunteers.
 - Kate: Will direct staff to promote the garden more.

4. Follow Up Actions

David Coon

1. David will research strategies designed to ensure immigrants stay in Fredericton, meet with newcomers and staff at the Multicultural Association to better understand the needs and propose strategies to the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour.
2. David will continue to push for community nursing homes over large corporate nursing homes. This would enable communities to develop the types of nursing homes that meet their needs, such as a Francophone nursing home for the Fredericton area.

Kate Rogers

1. Kate will speak to Ken Forrest, Director of Growth and Community Services regarding land identification for a francophone nursing home.
2. Kate will speak to Dave Seabrook, Assistant Director of Growth and Community Services and Manager of Tourism regarding maintenance and promotion of the Botanic Gardens.