



2015 Rockcliffe Park Survey: The Results

Introduction

Rockcliffe Park is comprised of approximately 780 individual dwellings, of which about 70 are Embassy residences.

There were two prior surveys. In 2001, the newly-formed Rockcliffe Park Residents Association (RPRA) undertook a survey of Rockcliffe Park (RP) residents identify post-amalgamation key issues and concerns and to understand the changing demographics, and use of different community activities and services. **Response rate was 25%**. In 2011, a survey was done to follow up on community issues and activities. **Response rate was 13%**.

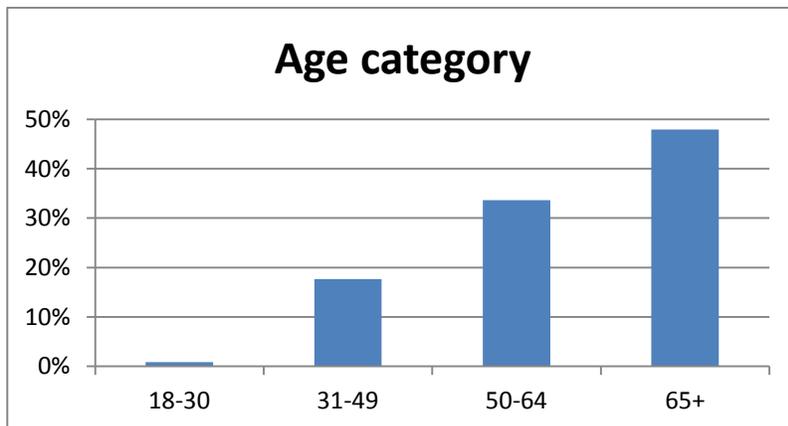
In 2015, the Communications committee of the RPRA surveyed all the residents to better respond to community needs, expand membership among RP residents, and build on the strong sense of community.

The 2015 survey was distributed to all RP residents with the August newsletter. An electronic version of this survey was emailed to all members of the RPRA with email addresses on file. The survey was also available on the website at www.rockcliffepark.ca.

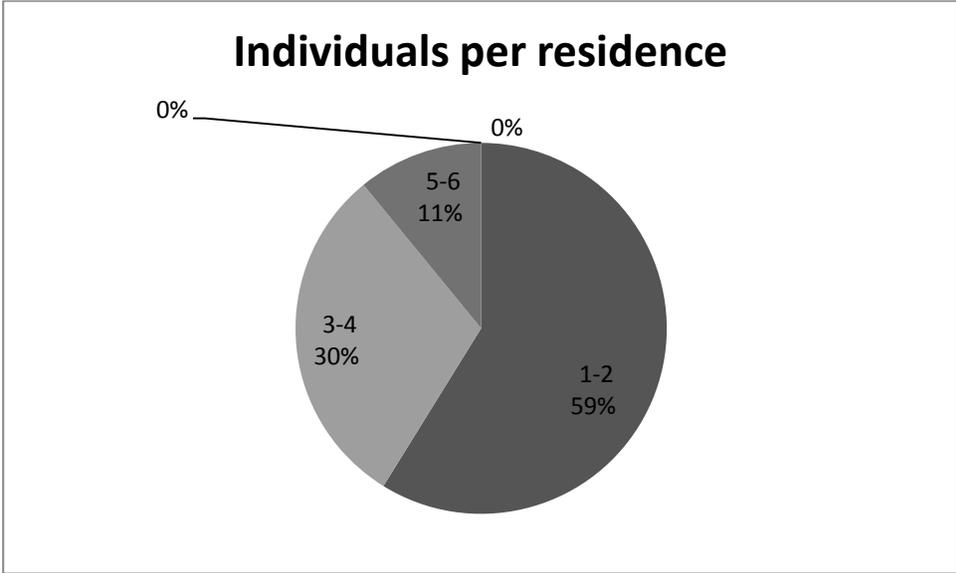
By the end of October 2015, 119 responses (51 paper+ 68 electronic) had been received – **response rate of 17%**.

Section 1 Demographics

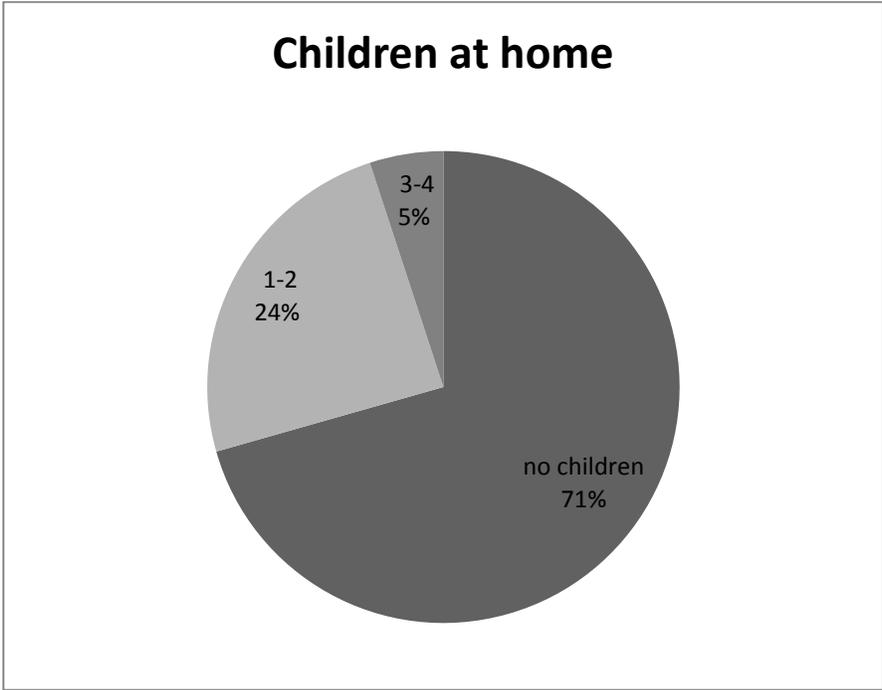
1.1 What age category do you belong to?



1.2 How many people live at this address?



1.3 How many under the age of 18 years?



Section 2 RPRA Membership Fee Structure

2.1 Membership Fees

Of 119 responses:

81% support the \$25 Annual membership

In addition:

39% would like the option of prepaying for multiple years

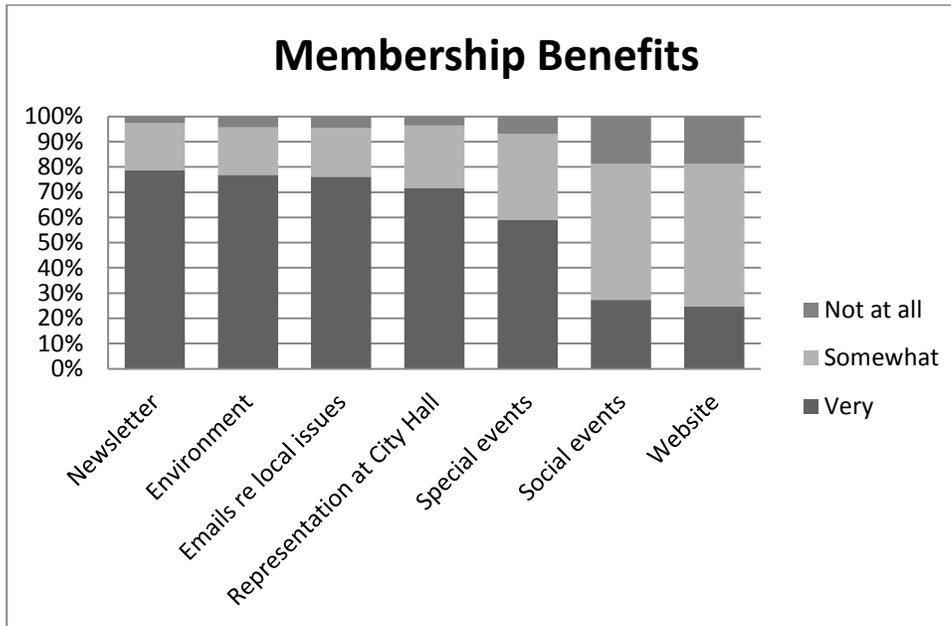
14% would consider a life-time membership option

Comments on membership fees:

- *"1) multiple fee option (also offer annual) 2) Key thing- have an Ashbury/Elmwood drive to collect membership - community service."*
- *don't know how you would price the lifetime membership.*
- *Even if we move away (always possible, because [name] is from [place] and her Dad could use the help) it would be fun to retain RPRA membership as part of our continuing tie with this wonderful place.*
- *Good value for quality returns!*
- *How would life membership work if the person of RP moved out?*
- *I no longer subscribe to the RPRA*
- *I support any of the options but I think the multiple year option makes most sense for most people. If you had a lifetime membership I would take it.*
- *If the administration is easier for two years it would be fine except then the family has to remember when their fees are now due which might make it more work to advise them.*
- *It would be helpful to have a way to check whether one is up-to-date with membership fees*
- *Keep all the options.*
- *It is a bit high*
- *Low.*
- *Membership fees are fine; they are a fraction of the property taxes we pay. May be more convenient to pay two years at a time.*
- *Membership fees are low and could be raised.*
- *Multi year option only if fee reduced*
- *Pay more - get more*
- *Reasonable*
- *RPRA is underfunded for its mandate.*
- *They are very moderate. Paying once a year seems to me to provide a good reminder, conducive to reviewing one's involvement in village affairs.*
- *Very reasonable!*
- *Very reasonable, given the immense value we receive from our exceptionally dedicated and talented RPRA board members.*
- *Would like to pay electronically.*

Membership Benefits

2.2 Which membership benefits are important to you?

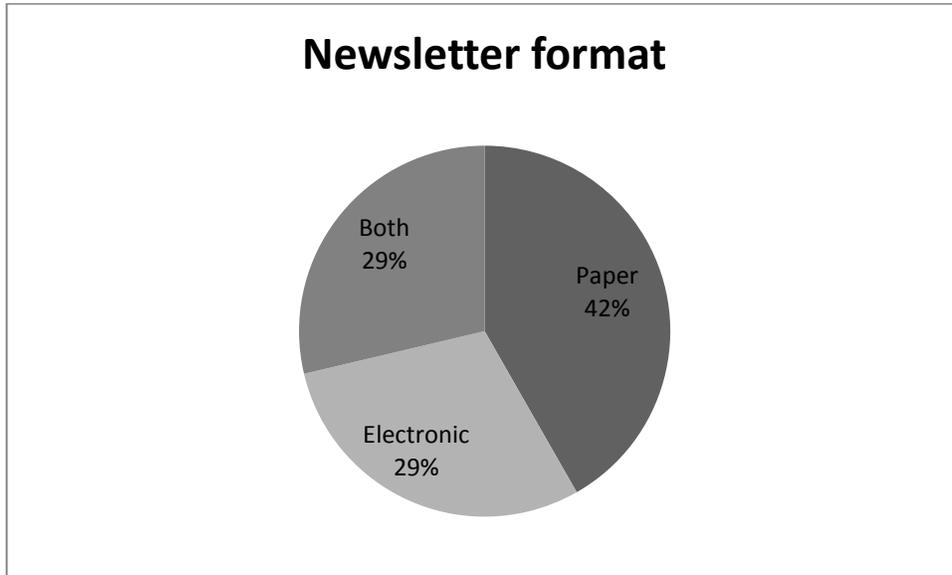


Comments on membership benefits:

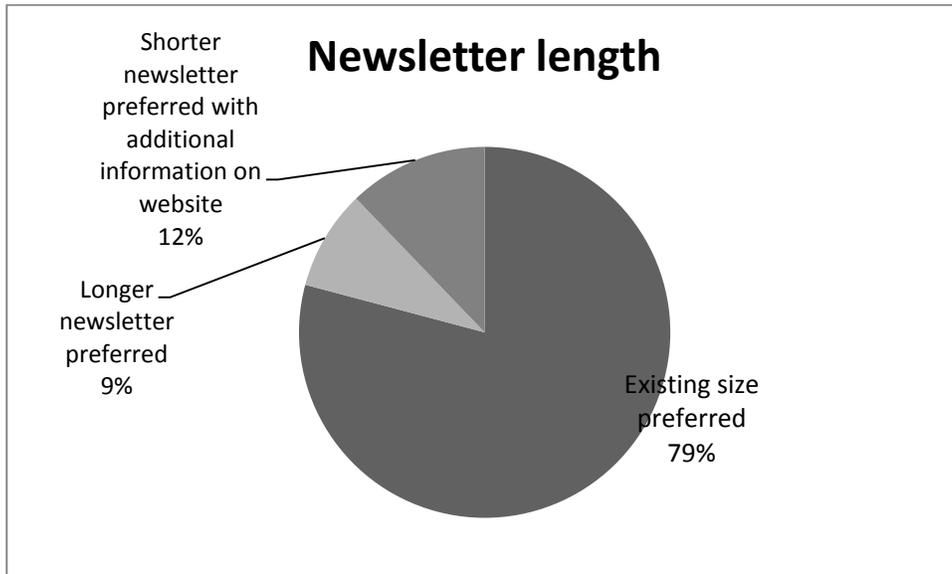
- *Belonging to the community creates obligations and I am happy to assume some of them, as far as my age (86) and current physical form allow.*
- *Definitely the newsletter*
- *Enjoy newsletter and emails re events.*
- *Even if people do not belong we must continue to send newsletter to them. Also things like the tree lighting, book sale etc cannot be restricted to members*
- *Having solid, researched representation for the community on city and environmental issues is very important for the health and welfare of our community.*
- *I would like to see McKay Lake opened up to all and the hours extended at the pond. I think the environmental issues are being exaggerated by the surrounding homeowners who don't want the community to share their swimming holes.*
- *Like it*
- *Newsletter should be delivered electronically; improve format/presentation; add neighbourly news content.*
- *Nice to know what is happening in the community on local issues.*
- *Satisfactory*
- *Special events: which book sale?*
- *Tree lighting ceremony very nice*

Section 3 Newsletter

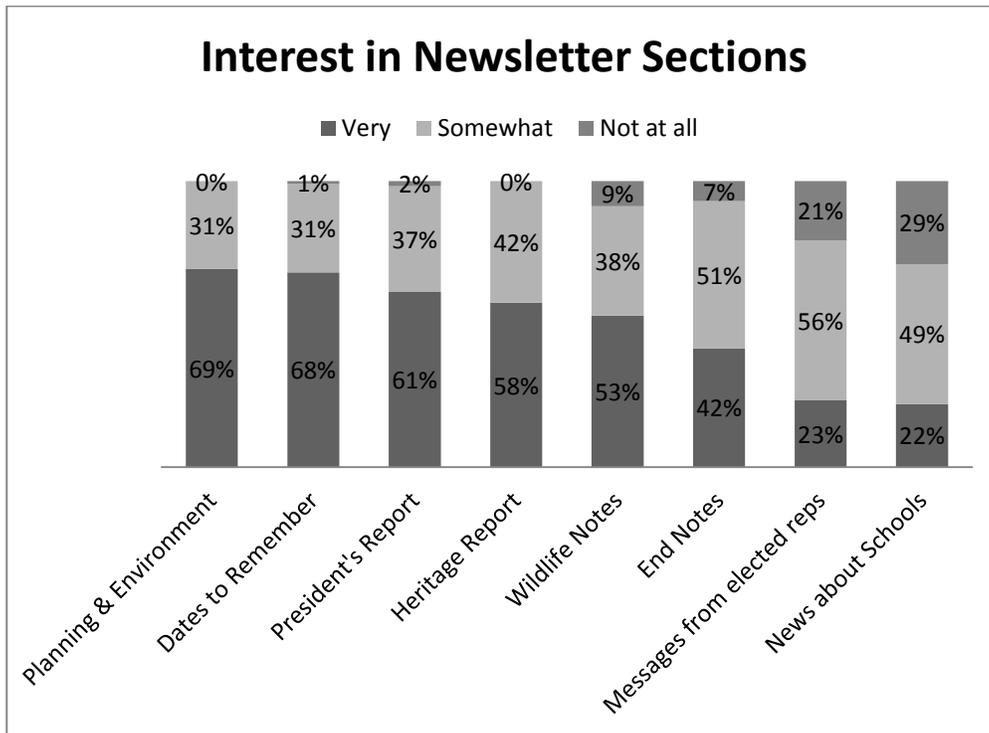
3.1 How do you wish to receive the newsletter?



3.2 How long should the RPRA newsletter be? (currently 12 pages)



3.3 Which current sections are of interest to you?

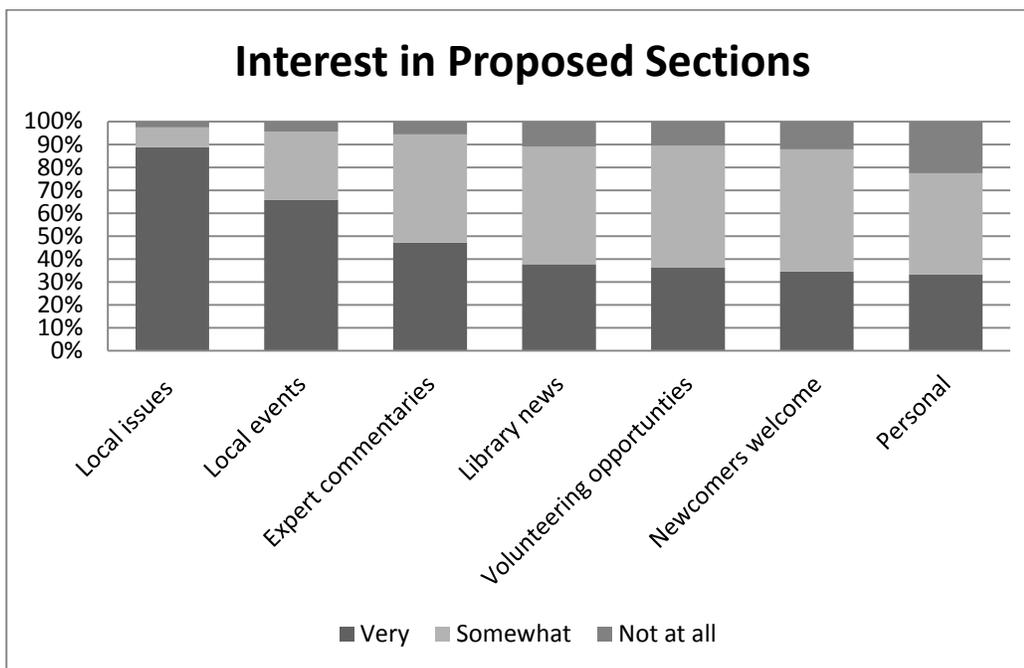


3.4 Comments on newsletter:

- *I have very much enjoyed the new articles coming in contributed by residents, say profile of Eleanore Wendt, the turkey sighting at the Whitemarl condos, would encourage more like this comings and goings in community, coverage of street parties. Even one an issue keeps up the community engagement flavour.*
- *Additional stuff on web site is a good idea*
- *Always very well done.*
- *City council important - Fed / prov elected rep not relevant locally. Would like to see more local neighbourhood content (recognizing this is New Edinburgh) - e.g. shops, food, etc.*
- *Councillor important and all others not at all.*
- *Excellent. Always well written. Thank you.*
- *Fab*
- *Great*
- *I read the Manor Park news for all the news about Beechwood and area businesses...really interesting. For those of us without kids at home too much school news, nothing about the people who live here, what they do. etc. you could have reviews on what the speakers said or have interviews with speakers before they speak to create more interest. How about simple recipes from embassy chefs. The newsletter could be much more interesting and creative.*
- *Messages from elected reps: Really (not at all)*
- *Move to electronic notification of release of each issue on the Members only side of the RPRA website.*

- *Newsletter is quite often delivered very close to important meeting or event dates when other plans are already made. Messages from elected reps appear in other community forums that we see -- i.e. Manor Park Chronicle, New Edinburgh News*
- *Nice format.*
- *ok*
- *Paper version: a lot of work for someone +cost. Use email.*
- *The messages from the Mayor, Queen's Park and House of Commons could be reduced, or rotated and/or moved to the website. Keep the Councillor's message as is.*
- *There could be more community notes regarding musical performances, art shows, etc.*
- *What are end notes?*
- *Wildlife notes - the best part of the newsletter in my opinion.*
- *Wildlife notes and messages from elected offices apart from city councillor could be moved to website.*

3.5 Which proposed sections would be of interest?



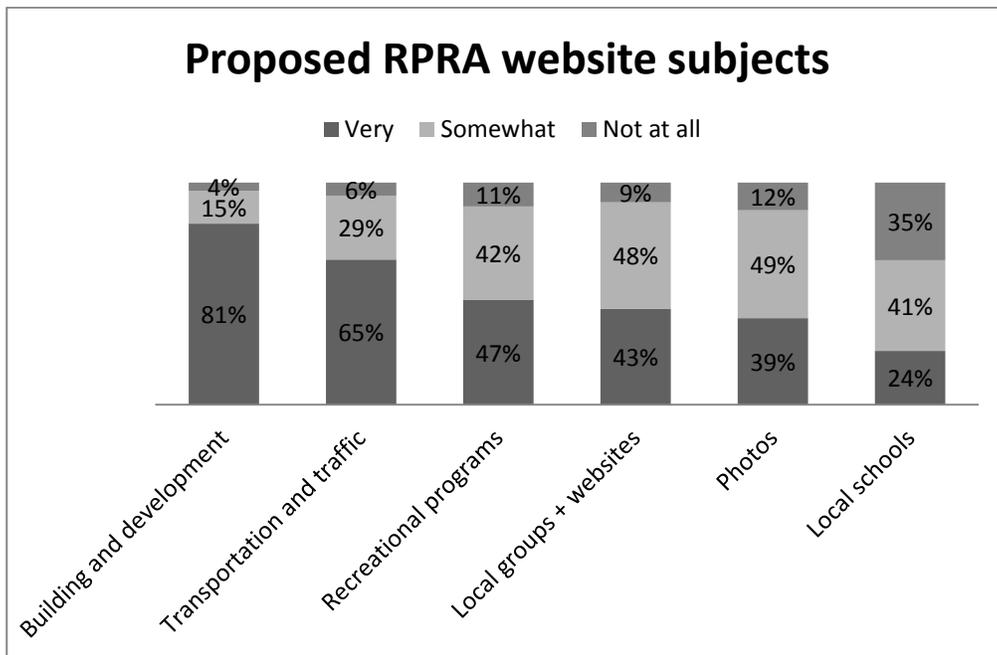
3.6 Comments on proposed sections:

- *All of the above!*
- *Beware of the NE News habit of publishing excessively long articles.*
- *Comments on heritage, members' expertise, etc.*
- *Community centre info also very interesting*
- *Mostly boring! Is there any lively commentary to be had?
Need more*
- *Newsletter should be electronic.*

- *Not sure what is meant by resident expert commentary.*
- *Notable achievements important in Personal section.*
- *Notable achievements important, all other personal not. Newcomers welcome short.*
- *Personal and newcomers welcome- lot of work involved. Who would do it? Need to expand the newsletter*
- *Library news- could be an occasional topic- would involve system-wide issues. How about an interview with Philip Robert- area supervisor-about changes he has seen in last 15 years*
- *Resident experts- all depends- who on what"*
- *See newsletter comment re local news, including Beechwood food / stores, etc.*
- *The proposed Newcomers' welcome seems a very interesting action to take. I think that the fact of even an informal welcoming of newcomers into the village 'fold' is likely to create on their part a feeling of responsibility for their style of life, including a respect for maintaining the heritage aspect.*
- *Would very much like to be kept posted in every newsletter of the progress/non progress of such issues as rink.*

Section 4 RPRA Electronic communications

4.1 Which proposed subjects would be of interest on the www.rockcliffepark.ca website?



4.2 Other proposed subjects:

- *Always local.*
- *Hearing status and proceedings re proposed developments; vandalism reports.*
- *Heritage and environmental issues.*
- *History / heritage*

- *I sometimes wonder whether some kind of "help needed" section could work. Last winter I stopped to help an elderly resident shovel snow. She clearly needed the help, so I walked by occasionally after snow storms with shovel in hand.*
- *Like more*
- *Needs a private side for residents only.*
- *Only information that already appears in the newsletter.*
- *Recipes, a lively commentator, profiles of interesting residents and speakers*
- *Upcoming events - remains a key part*
- *We prefer hard copy.*
- *Website should have link to City of Ottawa recreational programs. Also more history.*
- *Yes. Should use this form of communications for those who have it.*
- *You could get many interesting suggestions. The additional work involved in following them up must be shared by more volunteers.*

4.3 Do you use the Lindenlea Listserve?

Yes – 28%

No - 72%

4.4 Do you want a Rockcliffe Park Listserve separate from the Lindenlea Listserve?

Yes – 51%

No – 49%

4.5 Do you want to receive emails from the RPRa about RPRa events and/or local issues?

Of 107 responses:

84% want to receive both

4.6 Would you use RPRa social media?

Of 113 responses:

69% would not use Facebook

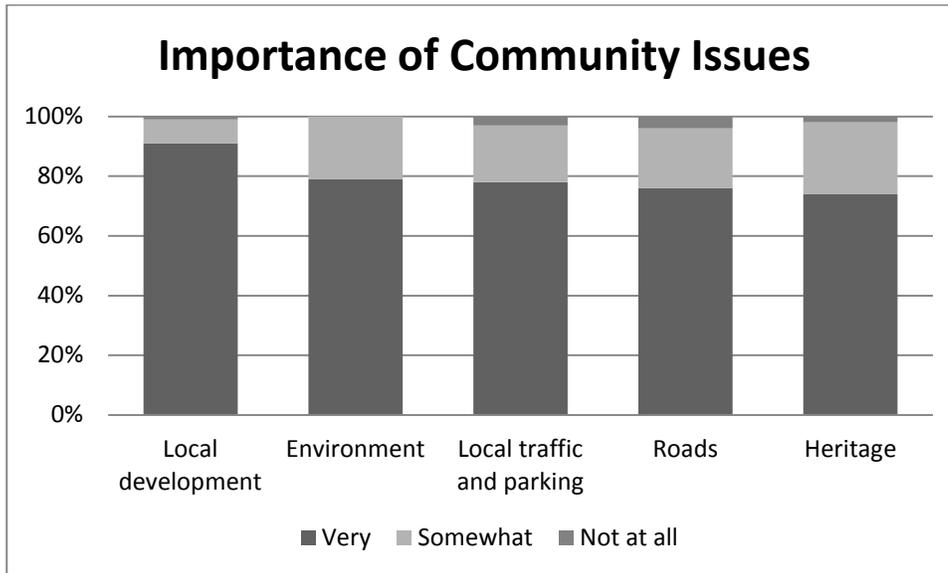
72% would not use Twitter

4.7 Comments on e-communications:

- *Also use Manor Park Listserve.*
- *Definitely NO Rockcliffe listserv.*
- *E-communications are time consuming to initiate and maintain when volunteers are already in short supply.*
- *I am a techno peasant.- no connection with social media,*
- *I do not have internet connections.*
- *I don't know what Listserv is so have not answered that question*
- *I would like access to the Lindenlea Listserv.*
- *No, I don't want this. Keep it simple otherwise you have to monitor 24/7.*
- *Options made available (?)*
- *Would like to hear more about the Lindenlea listserv. May be interested in a RP listserv.*

Community Issues

5.1 Which issues are important to you?



5.2 Comments on community issues:

- *All of the above!*
- *Also any activity such as tennis, volunteer, info on library and community minded individuals.*
- *Comments on policing, safety and vandalism.*
- *Good*
- *Heritage guidelines usually ignored. Same for trees and fences. Do people obtain permits?*
- *I oppose the proposal to build a permanent rink and sports court.*
- *I represented a neighbour a few years ago at city hall in a variance issue. We achieved a compromise in the planned development but it sure was a hard slog. Perhaps it is easier now, with Toby in there.*
- *Issues are dynamic.*
- *More emphasis on community building strategies.*
- *The Pond continues to be an ongoing issue with overuse in general - but not from our community. I hope that we will keep actively lobbying the City for support on keeping up this resource, which they now own and are responsible for. Thank goodness for the presence of monitors.*
- *The Pond is being overused and its ecology is at risk.*
- *"The RPRA needs to balance out some of its activities. There is a focus on heritage and environment -- perhaps because people volunteer in these areas -- and I think other areas are ignored as a result. For example, the RPRA wrapped itself in knots when Ashbury proposed tearing down ""historic"" houses at a time when the Kettle Island bridge looked as if it were a serious threat. The potential traffic from that*

bridge was far more of a threat to our community than the demolition of houses which had relatively little merit.

- *Similarly, many of the houses in the community are life expired, and while they may be ""historic"" for one reason or another, they are not in good condition, have not been maintained, and really are beyond restoration or economic repair. The RPRA can't and should not block the removal of every one of these homes. Certainly, the most egregious examples of modern construction -- where every home is built right to the permitted maximum and then a variance is requested to build more -- should be resisted.*
- *Finally, why is there no debate or discussion about the rink? What happened with that mysterious letter we received debating the merits of the rink project and why was there no response or discussion other than an insert asking us to donate money?*
- *Traffic a major problem.*
- *use and management of community hall and recreation offerings there*
- *"We now have a serious and growing problem with the water level in the Pond. This problem has been worsening over the last several years, and threatens the future of the Pond. Action is required NOW.*
- *A very serious problem is looming concerning anticipated traffic increase on Hemlock Ave. Pre-emptive action is required before the development at the east end of Hemlock occurs.*

Conclusion

Final comments:

- *Excerpts from books and articles about historical info on people / houses / resident activities / political too.*
- *Great work. Thank you!*
- *Heritage district designation, in reality, means little. People do as they wish. Thank you to the Recreation group for all they do.*
- *How to go about getting our horrendously high tax rate LOWERED to more reasonable levels.*
- *I am away for most of the winter but do get the newsletter from time to time but always enjoy catching up on the goings on while I am away*
- *I think the survey categorization of "Very important", "Important", "Somewhat important" and "Not important" would have provided more nuanced responses, especially between the "Very Important" and "Important" categories.*
- *It will be interesting to have the results of this survey analyzed and made accessible, perhaps through the RPRA website.*
- *Let's keep up the fight for Heritage preservation and resist city hall's one-size-fits-all attitude!*
- *Looking forward to more and interesting articles on heritage and environment.*
- *Please kill the hockey rink proposal. It is not appropriate here.*
- *Thank you*
- *Thank you*

- *Thank you*
- *Thank you*
- *Thank you for current benefits of membership and efforts of the BOD and volunteers.*
- *Thank you.*
- *Thanks*
- *Thanks for newsletter*
- *Thanks for seeking out our views.*
- *The newsletter could be so much better!*
- *The RPRA should enlist a volunteer to report to Ottawa 311 by-law infractions: new driveways too wide, paving to lot lines, etc. And to enlist the Councillor's assistance when notifying 311 is not acted upon.*
- *We are in danger of losing the office of the recreation staff.*
- *We need a plan*
- *We hear lots of news and support for KG [kindergarten], schools, etc. but not much about and for seniors.*
- *We pay enormous property taxes for declining levels of service -- look at the potholes on some of the streets in the former village, particularly in the ""panhandle".*
- *Better communication on traffic issues from the City of Ottawa, particularly on the boundary streets, would be appreciated.*
- *What a great survey! Congratulations and thank you:)*
- *Why not have a Rockcliffe Park/ Lindenlea Listserve... together we are stronger.*