

Overbrook reaches out to Castle Heights residents

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Ottawa East News | May 04, 2016

In an effort to connect with a neighbouring community, the Overbrook Community Association will host a welcome event with its Castle Heights neighbours.

The association is working with Community Mediation Ottawa and Rideau-Rockcliffe Coun. Tobi Nussbaum to host the event, which is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. at the St. Laurent Complex on May 12.

Overbrook Community Association president Rawlson King said the evening aims to strengthen ties between the neighbouring communities.

“I think that it will allow people to meet each other. There is a potential for disconnect if you don’t know your neighbours,” King said. “We are thinking a dialogue will get more people together and get them to know their neighbours which would help build a welcoming, more inclusive neighbourhood.”

The community association addressed the need to reach out to Castle Heights, a community nestled between McArthur Avenue, Brant Street, Donald Street and St. Laurent Boulevard – and shares the same councillor and ward as Overbrook.

King said the meeting is the first step in connecting with the residents.

“The idea is communities need to be connected to become stronger,” King said.

King added that the association was aware that the Castle Heights area felt left out, not having its own association, and felt it lacked representation at city hall.

Since hearing these concerns, the Overbrook organization has been actively working towards better representing the area and King said one of its new 2016-17 board members lives in Castle Heights, which helps link the neighbourhoods.

He said the evening gathering will also help address other ways residents can feel better represented and heard.

“The idea now is to extend the community association’s resources and structure so that they (Castle Heights residents) can utilize them and so they can advance their concerns,” King explained.

“We want to create stronger ties. We will tell them about the community association, but that is only a short component of the evening. The meeting will be mostly about social inclusion and how we can strengthen the community.”

After a short introduction from the association and Nussbaum, King said Community Mediation Ottawa will facilitate the meeting, offering community members the opportunity to discuss the value of inclusion, ways the community can be more welcoming and what people want the community to stand for.

WORKING TOGETHER

The meeting is a separate event from the association’s regularly scheduled monthly gathering, which will be held on May 19. That meeting, King said, will focus on transportation issues, concerns and projects and aims to invite neighbouring community associations to the table to discuss shared concerns.

“We want to talk about a more coordinated transportation approach,” King said, adding that living in close proximity to each other, separate communities still all share the same roads, and it’s worthwhile to discuss the same issues at the same table.

“We want to be on the same side,” he said, citing times in the past when the Overbrook association butted heads with the Manor Park Community Association about the idea of an inter-provincial bridge in Manor Park.

“We want to bring groups together to talk about transportation needs and what type of resources we could all benefit from,” King said.

More information about the upcoming Castle Heights event, as well as the Overbrook association’s meetings and committees is available at Overbrook.ca.



Castle Heights residents are invited to a meeting at the St. Laurent Complex on May 12 to meet with the Overbrook Community Association. The evening, hosted by the Overbrook community group, Rideau-Rockcliffe Coun. Tobi Nussbaum and Community Mediation Ottawa, aims to make Castle Heights residents feel more connected to their neighbours.