



Stratford Lakeside Active Adults Association
c/o Kiwanis Community Centre
111 Lakeside Drive, PO Box 874
Stratford ON N5A 6W3
519-271-4310

July 25, 2017

In our previous memo to you dated May 30, 2017, we promised to keep the S.L.A.A.A. general membership in the loop as new information came forward regarding the Tom Patterson Theatre rehabilitation and impacts on the future of the KCC. At this point, it remains that the Stratford Festival has received funding from the province, and continue to secure funding from the federal government and private donors to support the reimagining of the Tom Patterson Theatre on Lakeside Drive. The Festival proposal has led our Board of Directors to begin examining the possible relocation of our active adults program from the KCC to a space that will allow us to grow and flourish in the future. Today, we are 900 members strong, and expect to reach 1,200 members in the next five years.

In June, the city released a master planning initiative to determine public and community uses that could be included in a Community Hub on the Cooper Block at Downie Street. Our Board of Directors were invited to engage in the feedback process through a series of meetings with the master plan facilitators and have since explored a number of Community Hubs that already exist in other areas of the province. We have learned that Community Hubs are not your typical community recreation centre. They are multi-purpose, vibrant communities that often include several organizations and generations, becoming connecting points for people to meet and collaborate under one roof. For residents, they can provide a variety of services that are easily accessible in a single location; a one stop shop for city administrative services, recreation activities, and health/fitness related programs. The city is continuing discussions with senior government as a funding partner toward the construction costs of a Community Hub.

Early on, the Festival proposed to incorporate a small community centre on the existing site within their plans for the new Tom Patterson Theatre. However, after touring several examples of successful Community Hubs, it has encouraged and inspired our Board to re-think how we could better serve our rapidly growing membership within the hub model. Today, we are tight for space and require more square footage to accommodate existing and new programs. As a result, we have concluded that being a part of a state-of-the-art Community Hub, should the project be funded and come to pass, is an opportunity not to be missed. We would intend to maintain our own separate space for activities and programs, yet share common areas such as gymnasium, large activity and lobby spaces. The Community Hub would give our program space to breath and demonstrate our desire to build relationships with other like-minded organizations, essentially supporting our own existence in the long-term.

As previously noted, the Stratford Festival has received a \$20-million grant from province for the Tom Patterson Theatre rehabilitation that is time-sensitive. The first payment needs to be received before March of 2018 – and in order for that to happen, substantial work needs to be underway. The provincial funding will influence the Festival's application to the federal government for funding. It will also encourage donors to step forward, knowing that the government has shown great faith in the Festival's plans.

The Festival promises to build a theatre that will beautify Lakeside Drive, offer more parking, and include spectacular gardens that all of Stratford can enjoy. Admittedly they, like our membership, feel a strong connection to the existing site at Lakeside Drive. The riverside location is rare and extremely important site for tourism, setting Stratford apart from its competitors in cities like Chicago, New York and Toronto. While Lakeside Drive is a location we have become accustomed to "living at", we admit that it is our members who make our active adult program the envy of many; not necessarily the four walls or site at which we meet. Our program is strong enough to live at another location, and we believe moving on is an important step to our future success.

Recognizing the importance of the Festival to the community of Stratford, and what the future could hold for our membership as a main tenant at a world-class Community Hub, we would like to show our support to the Festival by considering an alternative location for our programs and activities to exist in the short-term, beginning this October We have explored a number of temporary options and believe we have found a solid solution that will serve us very well.

The Stratford and District Agricultural Society is open to sharing the Agriplex at the Stratford Rotary Complex with us as a transition space, and the Festival has offered to pay to for the leasehold improvements to serve our needs. The facility is fully accessible, is on a transit route and offers plenty of parking. It is our intention that the Agriplex would house ALL of the programs and activities we currently enjoy at the Kiwanis Community Centre, and there is the potential to improve and increase our roster of programs, having the Stratford Rotary Complex with two ice rinks and a walking track just next door. It's important for our Board to see our programs operating under one roof, and a bonus of Agriplex would allow us to join our 200+ pickleball members, who currently play out of the 24,000 square foot Fieldhouse at the Agriplex in the fall/winter months.

Being on the Stratford Rotary Complex site in the short-term integrates us with multiple generations and organizations; similar to a community hub. It represents a key stepping stone for us to embrace a culture of organizational integration, and the ability to co-exist with others. Ultimately, we hope to find a long-term home in the Community Hub.

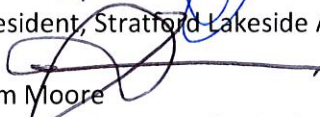
We hope you will support us in this solution as we feel it serves the future of our Association very well. Also, it shows our willingness to work with our neighbours to ensure a strong future for the City of Stratford. We would like to invite you to an open house on Tuesday, August 1, 2017 at 10:00am at the Kiwanis Community Centre to review and discuss the plans of the Agriplex as an active adult program transition space, and view the Community Hub and Tom Patterson Theatre concepts.

As always, I appreciate your understanding and patience on this initiative, and look forward to receiving your feedback at our open house on August 1st.

Sincerely,



Steve Kropf
President, Stratford Lakeside Active Adults Association



Sam Moore
Vice-President, Stratford Lakeside Active Adults Association