



spring garden
AREA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

2016-2017 Activity Report
Spring Garden Area Business Association



Background

The Spring Garden Area Business Association (SGABA) is the voice of business in the Spring Garden Area, representing member businesses to various levels of government and other key stakeholders in the community. The Business Improvement District provides a lead role in advocacy on important issues that affect the area in which it represents.

The Vision

Preserve and enhance the essence and experience of the Spring Garden area for members, residents and visitors by supporting business success through community partnerships and resources.

The Mission

To create a vibrant and dynamic business district, the SGABA will:

1. Build effective partnerships with businesses, institutions and property owners to maintain a clean and safe community
2. Attract, retain and promote quality businesses and retail segments to support local economy
3. Promote Spring Garden Road as a renowned destination point with a business, retail and commercial mix, offering unique products, services and events
4. Coordinate events and programs designed to promote Spring Garden Area as the preferred place to shop, work, learn and live

Current Board of Directors

Marilisa Benigno, **Ventura Realty**, *Chair*

Kari-Anne Pendlebury, **CUA**, *Vice Chair*

Lesia Griffin, **Lord Nelson Hotel & Suites**, *Treasurer*

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Michael Haddad, **Westwood Developments**

Lina Clarke, **Pet Valu**

Sarah Archer, **My Mother's Bloomers**

Shelby Lendrum, **P'lovers**

Elizabeth Smith, **Indochine Banh Mi**

Staff

Juanita Spencer, **Executive Director**

Rachel Brown, **Communications and Events Coordinator**



STRATEGIC PLANNING

In the fall of 2015, the Association began a review of its current strategic plan. Over the course of the first few months of this fiscal year, the Association hopes to have in place a new four year plan to guide the activities of the organization. The current strategic plan outlines 2013 to 2016 and we are looking forward to having a new strategic plan to provide a complete vision for the SGABA.

ADVOCACY

It is the goal of the Spring Garden Area Business Association to advocate on behalf of its members. Over the next year, the Association plans to focus its efforts on improved streetscaping, assisting and reducing the number of street-involved people in our area, advocating for tax reform and engaging with city staff, politicians and stakeholders on all issues related to the Spring Garden area. Our aim is to help create a positive environment that will allow our members businesses to grow and succeed.

BEAUTIFICATION

Cleanliness

We are committed to ensuring that the Spring Garden area is a clean and friendly place for both visitors residents and employees. Throughout the year, we will continue to encourage our members to be active in cleaning the areas surrounding their businesses. Association staff will also monitor the area to make sure that any damaged infrastructure or dangerous situations are reported and taken care of in a timely manner.

Summer Students

The SGABA is hoping to receive Federal funding again this year for a summer student. A student is a great asset to the SGABA in helping to keep the streets clean, provide visitors with information and offer support with our summer events.

Flower Planters and Beds

Beginning at our Clean Sweep event in early June, and continuing through the summer months, Association staff will plant and maintain the flower beds in the area. Last year we were fortunate to receive funding to purchase nine flower planters that we placed along Spring Garden and the side streets. This year, we have purchased an additional nine planters to add colour and beauty on the sidewalks.



Graffiti Abatement

The Spring Garden Area Business Association is pleased to provide our members a cost sharing program for the removal of graffiti. Members who notice graffiti on their buildings are encouraged to contact the Association as soon as possible for a quote to have it removed. Working with Atlantic Graffiti Removal Company, Association staff also survey the area and contact members who have a significant amount of noticeable graffiti on their property.

Holiday Decorations

Over the holiday season, we will continue to install seasonal lighting along Spring Garden Road and the neighbouring side streets. Last year, we hosted a window decorating competition for our members and we will organize this contest again in 2016, further encouraging businesses to show their holiday spirit.

Banners

We have ordered new banners for the Spring Garden area that will be on display throughout the entire year. These new banners will help define the SGABA boundaries and create brand awareness for the Association. We will continue to work with the Downtown Halifax Business Commission to manage the usage of the banner poles in our area with external groups who would like to make use of our poles for their own events.

COMMUNICATIONS AND EVENTS

2016 Clean Sweep

Our 6th Annual Clean Sweep event will take place in Victoria Park on Wednesday, June 1st. Providing our members the opportunity to meet one another and take pride in their area, this event has become a favorite with over 70 participants last year. It's a great event to get the businesses involved with the cleanup and beautification of Spring Garden and help them become aware of the process. This year, we will be including a flower planting component to prepare our flower beds and planters for the summer season. We will continue to look for support from Clean Nova Scotia and their Great Nova Scotia Pick-Me-Up program as well as our graffiti removal partner Atlantic Graffiti.



4th Annual Victoria Barks – Dogs in the Park

This is the fourth year for our annual Victoria Barks – Dogs in the Park event and we couldn't be more excited. Held in Victoria Park in early July, Victoria Barks attracts dogs and dog lovers alike. Showcasing a variety of organizations and activities such as local shelters, doggy day care options, training and veterinary clinics there is something for everyone to enjoy. This year, we will be giving away promotional bags with information about the SGABA and other surprises. We will be encouraging our members to include promotional material and information about their business in the bags to connect with a new audience. With over 1,000 attendees at last year's event, Victoria Barks continues to grow and we expect this year to be no different. The event will take place on Saturday July 9th 2016.



4th Annual Spring Garden Children's Festival

Each year in Victoria Park, we host a fun-filled family day with bouncy castles, train rides, music, popcorn and more! Celebrating our fourth Spring Garden Children's Festival this year, we are planning to expand on our previous programming and include additional live entertainment and exhibitors. Similar to Victoria Barks, we will be giving away bags to attendees and inviting our members to include information about their businesses. As in previous years, this event will be free and we will be accepting donations for the I.W.K. This year's festival will take place on Saturday August 6th 2016.



Shopping Under the Stars and the Holiday Season

Continuing the tradition of our Shopping Under the Stars (SUTS) events in 2016, these two nights of special holiday shopping are the kick off to the season in the Spring Garden area. Taking place at the end of November and early December, these events include many holiday inspired activities such as carolers, contests, hot chocolate and a visit by Santa. During this year's events, we hope to expand on the shopping and make it a special night downtown by reaching out to restaurants, the local hotel and movie theatre about creating a holiday promotion package.



After our success with expanding the holiday season in 2015, we will continue to have Santa on Saturdays in the Spring Garden area for the six weeks leading up to Christmas. He will spend his time visiting shoppers and popping in and out of stores spreading cheer. We will also be hosting a holiday choir event at the plaza of the Halifax Central Library. Last year, we invited local schools and musical groups to perform a few holiday songs. The group with the most holiday spirit was awarded a donation to their music department. This event brought approximately 1,500 to 2,000 people to the area and we hope to include even more schools this year. We are looking forward to the year ahead and growing on the success of our holiday events and initiatives.



Member Engagement Initiatives

At the start of 2016, the SGABA began member engagement initiatives to connect with our members and provide them an opportunity to network. Each month, we host a morning mixer at a business in the Spring Garden area. Attendees will have an opportunity to meet one another and connect with Association staff.

We will also host a minimum of four Lunch & Learns over the course of the year with subjects of interest for member businesses.

In an effort to keep our members, and the public, informed of events, issues and activities in our area, SGABA will also host public information sessions with engaging guest speakers. These sessions will vary in topics from planning and development to streetscaping and beautification. Creating meaningful and relevant engagement opportunities for our members is important to the Association's success and we hope to have more chances to do so throughout the upcoming year.

Media

After a comprehensive media review in 2015, the Association has become more focused and organized in its advertising initiatives. With a full year plan in place, we want to grow our current relationships with media partners and look to provide our members with beneficial cooperative opportunities for advertising.

Over the past year, we continued to see a large amount of growth in our social media. We began using Instagram and currently have close to 300 followers. Our Facebook page has 790 likes and we now have 12,400 followers on Twitter. Our social media channels have become a successful avenue to promote our members sales and events as well as keep the community updated with Association events and information.



Newsletter

In 2015, the SGABA re-designed our monthly newsletter. With an updated electronic version of the newsletter, the Association also prints a hardcopy for retail members. By distributing the hardcopy of the newsletter we hope to connect with frontline staff at the stores and keep them updated about what's happening in the Spring Garden area. Not only has the newsletter become a great resource for us to inform our members about Association events, members and other organizations have begun reaching out to use the newsletter to promote their own initiatives.

Community Partnership/Sponsorship

The SGABA supports a variety of different events and initiatives throughout the year including Open City, City Harvest, Word on the Street and the Pride Festival. While we are unable to financially sponsor all events, we are able to promote them through social media, our monthly newsletter and on our new website's event calendar.



We were very pleased to have been a sponsor of the 2015 Chronicle Herald Parade of Lights. Participating in this event was of great benefit to the Association and we plan to be a sponsor again this year. We also hope to be a sponsor of Switch Halifax this year and have been working with event organizers to ensure Spring Garden Road is included on the route.

STREETSCAPING

Healthy Streets Committee

The purpose of this committee is to work with Association staff to provide direction on ways to improve the look and feel of the street. Working with Halifax city officials, the Association hopes to bring major improvements to the area with a full streetscape of Spring Garden including new sidewalks, repaving, decorative lighting and more. Spring Garden is recognized as a core part of downtown Halifax and it is crucial to the Association, our members, and visitors, that the street receives the necessary improvements to once again make Spring Garden a destination shopping district.

Safety

Ensuring the safety of the Spring Garden area is of utmost importance to the Association. For the past 12 years we have hired Independent Security Services Atlantic (ISSA) to provide full time security detail in the area. We also liaise with our local community response officer, Constable Shawn Currie, on a regular basis to remain updated on any major safety concerns.

Navigator Street Outreach Program

The SGABA, in partnership with the Downtown Halifax Business Commission, oversees the Navigator Street Outreach Program. The Navigator works with street involved individuals to provide them with assistance and help connect them to available services. During 2015, the program's coordinator left the position providing an opportunity for the program to be reviewed and improvements made. We are in the process of hiring a new coordinator and aim to have the program up and running in late spring.

