

HARBORD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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Ward 20 Councillor Joe Cressy
Toronto City Hall, Suite C50
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

12 January 2016

Dear Councillor Cressy:

We appreciate your success in obtaining support from Community Council in November for installation of speed humps on the first block of Major Street, with its high population of young children and elderly residents. This plan was first proposed by residents two years ago, and was renewed at your suggestion in Fall 2015.

Now block residents need your help again to ask Community Council to confirm the proposal in spite of the failure of a recent poll to meet the minimum response rate. This result was predictable because of severe flaws in the polling method that became evident last month. As you have already heard from individual residents, dozens of ballots were distributed for people who no longer live on the block, and many more residents (including longterm renters) did not receive ballots at all.

In spite of this chaotic distribution, 108 ballots (minus 2 spoiled) were received by City Clerk, very close to the 117 required for a minimum response. Of those ballots, 78 voted in favour of the speed-hump plan, a sizable majority. That number reiterates the strong affirmation you saw in the petition collected in September, which showed the support of more than 80 people for installation of speed humps. Please use those indicators to ask for a Community Council decision in favour of speed humps on Major Street between College and Ulster. We look forward to hearing that the plan has been confirmed and that installation will proceed as soon as possible.

This experience also raises concerns about the quality of the polling methods used by the City to gauge support for local plans, including restaurant patio applications as well as traffic measures. When Major St. residents called and emailed city offices in December about redundant or missing ballots, they were told that the inaccuracy of the lists produced by the provincial agency MPAC is well-known. In fact, staff members in your office and the Registry Services office let us know that failure to meet minimum response rates was common or even expected in polls like ours. These explanations reveal a wasteful process that diminishes respect for city rules and undermines trust in city governance. We hope the process can be improved for the sake of civic democracy as well as efficiency.

Sincerely,

Margaret Procter, South-Central Area Representative, HVRA
cc. Tim Grant, Chair, HVRA