

'Treeing Our Village'

BACKYARD TREE PLANTING PROJECT

Report to Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation

December 1, 2009

Prepared by

The Harbord Village Residents' Association

Contact: Dinny Biggs, Chair of the Treeing the Village Committee

dinnybiggs@gmail.com

**HARBORD VILLAGE
RESIDENTS'
ASSOCIATION**

Box 68522, 360A Bloor St. W.
Toronto, ON M5S 1X1



Treeing Our Village: 2009 Report

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1 Summary of Project Activities:

- In 2008 a committee of eight Harbord Village residents was formed to guide the *Treeing Our Village* project. This report builds on the previous reports submitted since 2008.
- Since Spring 2008 the Harbord Village Residents' Association (HVRA) and three adjacent residents' associations have planted or arranged for the planting of 113 backyard trees in their downtown Toronto neighbourhoods.
- In several additional projects, HVRA has held 3 tree information and education sessions.
- HVRA applied for and received a grant for \$24,932.00 for their *Treeing Our Village* Project from the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation (TRPF). In 2008 HVRA received \$22,726 from TPTF. The TPTF hold-back was \$2,206. In 2008 Phoenix Community Works provided charitable conduit services to HVRA for a fee of \$2,169. Grant funds available to plant backyard trees were \$20,557;
- Tree planting was carried out in both spring and fall of 2008 and the fall of 2009. The project followed a previous two-year summer project that created a detailed inventory of all trees in the neighbourhood. Backyard planting preparation involved a multilingual communications plan, site assessment and database development, workshops on tree choices and care, collection of a nominal \$20 fee for each participating resident, and volunteers helping with site visits, the actual planting and follow-up. Prospective tree owners were instructed on clearance from Ontario Call One and on how to care for their trees, with an emphasis on summer watering;
- Spring site visits in 2008 revealed that some backyards in Harbord Village would not be suitable until dead trees or cement patios were removed. In 2009, HVRA offered a \$150 grant to residents who would remove back-yard cement to plant backyard trees. Only one resident accepted this offer.
- In 2008 it became clear to the HVRA Tree Committee that the full grant could not be spent in the time allotted. We contacted representatives of neighbouring resident's associations for their interest. Grassroots Albany (The Annex) and the Christie-Ossington and the Palmerston Residents' Associations joined us in planting backyard trees in their neighbourhoods.
- Spin-off tree projects inspired by the *Treeing Our Village Project* include the planting of trees in neighbourhood parks and local school grounds. These trees were paid for and planted by residents. In 2009, for example, HVRA organized its own fundraising to plant 17 trees on the school grounds of a Central Tech in our neighbourhood. Volunteers included several of the high school students, a plus to consider in care and respect needed by trees to grow and survive.
- In addition, HVRA executed a tender process for a 'village arborist' to encourage use of professional services for pruning and maintenance of trees owned by Harbord Village residents.
- In fall 2009, Palmerston Residents' Association combined with our tree order to add even more trees being planted in backyards under the criteria for the grant. Some trees on back order will be planted come spring 2010 in both Harbord Village and Palmerston neighbourhoods' backyards.

- Just over \$4000 remains unspent from the original Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation grant. We have requested a further extension in time to complete the backyard trees initiative by 2010 with further interest shown by adjoining neighbourhoods for planting partnerships.

2. Summary of Key Project Statistics as of Dec 1st, 2009:

2.1 Summary of Treeing Our Village Results and Participation

Table 1

	2008	2009	2010	Total
Residential Backyard trees planted	90	19	3	113
Volunteers involved with organizing and tree planting	49	20	tbd	69
Residents' Donations and Contributions	\$7,456.60	\$809.48	\$480	\$8,746.08

2.2 Summary Financial Report:

A draft financial summary is provided in Table 2. It is notable that tree purchases amount for 61% of the project expenses

Table 2

Financial Summary as of December 1, 2009
Harbord Village Residents' Association- Treering Our Village Project

Project Revenues	Total		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3 to date
			Oct '07-Nov 08	Nov 08-Oct 09	Oct 09 to date
TPTF Grant	\$24,932.00	79%	\$24,932.00		
less Grant hold-back	-\$2,206.00	-7%	-\$2,206.00		
Resident Donations	\$8,746.08	28%	\$7,456.60	\$809.48	\$480.00
Total Project Revenues	\$31,472.08	100%	\$30,182.60	\$809.48	\$480.00
Expenses					
Trees	\$16,640.33	61%	\$4,948.66	\$8,525.26	\$3,166.41
Communications	\$739.13	3%	\$558.33	\$180.80	
Planting Supplies	\$611.15	2%	\$389.85	\$150.21	\$71.09
Tree Inventory Phase 2	\$6,904.28	25%	\$6,860.02	\$44.26	
Tree Follow-up Assessments	\$175.27	1%	\$0.00	\$175.27	
Backyard Cement Removal Grant	\$150.00	1%		\$150.00	
Charitable Conduit Services	\$2,169.00	8%	2,169		
	\$27,389.16	100%	\$14,925.86	\$9,225.80	\$3,237.50
Net Funds Received	\$4,232.92		(Total revenues received to-date less total expenses to-date)		
Net Grant Funds Received	-\$4,513.16		(Grant revenues received less total expenses to-date)		

The above calculation of net grant funds received highlights the importance of the residents' donations to the project to supplement the TPTF grant.

Gifts-in-kind have included equipment, use of a hall for public meetings and committee member's homes for committee meetings, transportation for planting equipment and supplies and the professional services of volunteers to write brochures, give workshops, and prepare data bases and reports.

In 2008 Grassroots Albany and Christie-Ossington Residents' Association were only reimbursed for trees with a maximum cap of \$500. These organizations incurred expenses for communication, door-to-door delivery, planting supplies etc. that are not included in the above amounts.

2.3 Diversity of Tree Species

With the support of the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation and our neighbourhood residents' associations we enriched our local tree canopy with 113 backyard trees.

Residents were supplied with a list of suggested trees that were native species known to thrive in the downtown core. As Table 3 indicates, there was considerable diversity in the trees planted; the most popular trees were the Serviceberry (27%) and Red Oak (11%)

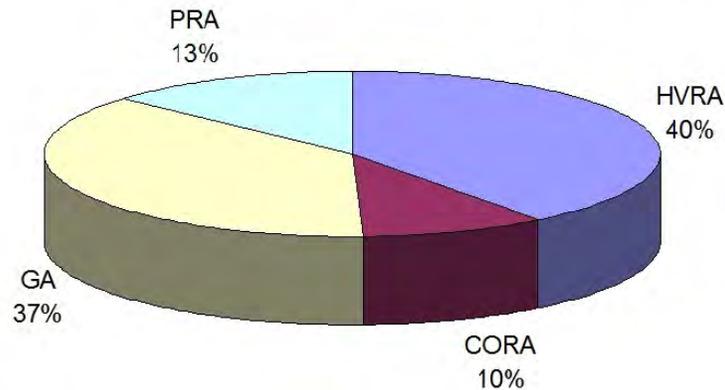
Table 3
Species of Backyard Trees

Species	Number	Percentage
Beech	2	2%
Birch	3	3%
Black Locust	4	4%
Catalpa	1	1%
Cedar, White	6	5%
Dogwood, Flowering	3	3%
Dogwood, Japanese	1	1%
Dogwood, Pagoda	6	5%
Fringe Tree	2	2%
Fruit, Nectarine	1	1%
Fruit, Pear	1	1%
Fruit, Plum	1	1%
Hackberry	1	1%
Hemlock	4	4%
Horse chestnut	4	4%
Kentucky Coffee	1	1%
Kousa	4	4%
Magnolia	2	2%
Maple, Freeman	1	1%
Maple, Silver	1	1%
Maple, Sugar	2	2%
Oak, English	1	1%
Oak, Red	12	11%
Oak, White	1	1%
Redbud	7	6%
Serviceberry	31	27%
Sweet Gum	1	1%
Tulip Tree	6	5%
White Spruce	3	3%

2.4 Community Participation:

Early in the project it became clear to the Harbord Village Residents' Association that all the funds could not be spent on backyard trees in one year. We approached adjoining neighbourhood associations to join this project and plant trees in their back yards and have successfully partnered with three other resident associations. The following chart (Table 4) shows the number of trees planted by the Harbord Village Residents' Association (HVRA), Palmerston Residents' Association (PRA), Grassroots Albany - The Annex (GA) and the Christie-Ossington Residents' Association (CORA).

Treeing Our Village - Community Participation

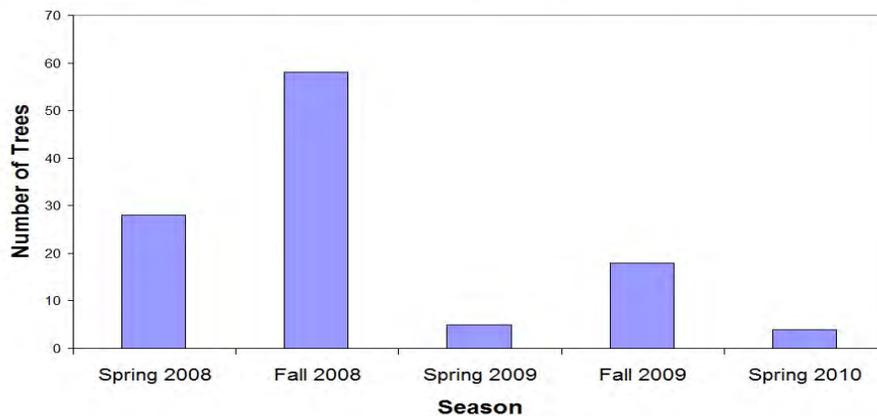


2.5 Planting Schedule 2008 to 2009

As the following chart shows, the participation of residents in the backyard tree program was greatest in Fall 2008:

Table 5

Residential Participation in Backyard Tree Project



2.6 Residential Backyard Tree Locations

Table 6 lists the residential back yard addresses where trees were planted with the grant. The organizations that planted the trees are noted as follows:

HVRA	Harbord Village Residents' Association
GA	Grassroots Albany (Annex)
CORA	Christie-Ossington Residents' Association
PRA	Palmerston Residents' Association

Table 6

Address of Back Yard Tree	Tree Species and Number	Planters	Season
122 Albany	Serviceberry	GA	Fall 2008
31 Albany	Kousa	GA	Fall 2008
86 Albany	Serviceberry	GA	Fall 2008
116 Albany	Kousa	GA	Fall 2008
123 Albany	Pagoda Dogwood	GA	Fall 2008
139 Albany	Redbud	GA	Fall 2008
162 Albany	Flowering Dogwood	GA	Fall 2008
127 Albany	Hemlock	GA	Fall 2008
130 Albany	Redbud	GA	Fall 2008
185 Albany	Kousa	GA	Fall 2008
199 Albany	Fringe tree	GA	Fall 2008
261 Albany	Serviceberry	GA	Fall 2008
604 Bathurst	White Spruce	PRA	Fall 2009
927 Bathurst	Pagoda Dogwood	GA	Fall 2008
1023 Bathurst	Pagoda Dogwood	GA	Fall 2008
1053 Bathurst	Hemlock	GA	Fall 2008
983 Bathurst	Serviceberry	GA	Fall 2008
1021 Bathurst	Serviceberry	GA	Fall 2008
22 Borden	Serviceberry	HVRA	Spring 2008
51 Borden	Serviceberry	HVRA	Spring 2008
90 Borden	Serviceberry	HVRA	Fall 2009
143.5 Borden	Nectarine Fruit Tree	HVRA	Fall 2009
150 Borden	Serviceberry	HVRA	Fall 2009
179 Borden	Serviceberry	HVRA	Fall 2008
180 Borden	Serviceberry	HVRA	Spring 2008
190 Borden	Serviceberry	HVRA	Spring 2008
223 Borden	Serviceberry	HVRA	Spring 2008
162 Borden	Serviceberry	HVRA	Fall 2008
143 ½ Borden	Pear	HVRA	Fall 2008
22 Brunswick	Sweet Gum	HVRA	Spring 2008

Address of Back Yard Tree	Tree Species and Number	Planters	Season
56 Brunswick	Magnolia	HVRA	Spring 2008
72 Brunswick	Magnolia	HVRA	Spring 2008
177 Brunswick	Serviceberry	HVRA	Spring 2008
257 Brunswick	Serviceberry	HVRA	Spring 2008
320 Brunswick	Japanese Dogwood	GA	Fall 2008
342 Brunswick	Tulip Tree	GA	Fall 2008
16 Carling	Silver maple	CORA	Fall 2008
50 Carling	Serviceberry	CORA	Spring 2009
220 Clinton	Red Oak	HVRA	Spring 2008
766 Crawford	Serviceberry	CORA	Fall 2008
854 Dovercourt	Red Oak	HVRA	Spring 2008
875 Dovercourt	Red Oak	HVRA	Spring 2008
482 Euclid	Black Locust	PRA	Spring 2010
105 Harbord	Horse Chestnut	HVRA	Fall 2008
43 Havelock	Red Oak	HVRA	Spring 2008
189 Hillsdale	Red Oak	HVRA	Spring 2008
29 Howland	Red Oak	GA	Fall 2008
123 Howland	Serviceberry	GA	Fall 2008
205 Howland	Pagoda Dogwood	GA	Fall 2008
129 Howland	White Cedar	GA	Fall 2008
131 Howland	White Cedar	GA	Fall 2008
142 Howland	Beech	GA	Fall 2008
184 Howland	Fringe tree	GA	Fall 2008
186 Howland	Tulip Tree	GA	Fall 2008
195 Howland	Serviceberry	GA	Fall 2008
197 Howland	Redbud	GA	Fall 2008
203 Howland	Sugar Maple	GA	Fall 2008
207 Howland	River Birch	GA	Fall 2008
209 Howland	Tulip Tree	GA	Fall 2008
212 Howland	Flowering Dogwood	GA	Fall 2008
253 Howland	Flowering Dogwood	GA	Fall 2008
27 Howland	Hemlock	GA	Fall 2008
79 Howland	Pagoda Dogwood	GA	Fall 2008
1 Leeds	Hackberry	CORA	Spring 2009
11 Leeds	Red Oak	CORA	Spring 2009
11 Leeds	Serviceberry	CORA	Spring 2009
211 Lippincott	Black Locust	HVRA	Fall 2008
235 Lippincott	White Spruce	HVRA	Spring 2008
235 Lippincott	White Spruce	HVRA	Spring 2008
141 Lippincott	Horse Chestnut	HVRA	Fall 2008
90 Major	Serviceberry	HVRA	Spring 2008
175 Major	Serviceberry	HVRA	Fall 2008

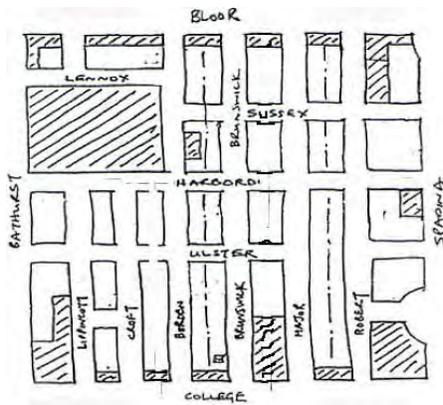
Address of Back Yard Tree	Tree Species and Number	Planters	Season
206 Major	White Oak	HVRA	Spring 2008
208 Major	White Cedar	HVRA	Spring 2008
234 Major	Horse chestnut	HVRA	Spring 2008
234 Major	Serviceberry	HVRA	Spring 2008
240 Major	Tulip Tree	HVRA	Spring 2008
275 Major	Serviceberry	HVRA	Spring 2008
123 Major St.	Pagoda Dogwood	HVRA	Fall 2009
155 Major St.	Plum Tree	HVRA	Fall 2009
156 Major St.	Black Locust	HVRA	Fall 2009
10 Manchester	Red Oak*	CORA	Fall 2008
513 Manning	Eastern Redbud	PRA	Spring 2010
513 Manning	Serviceberry	PRA	Fall 2009
515 Manning	Tulip Tree	PRA	Fall 2009
346 Markham	Pyramidal English Oak	PRA	Fall 2009
371 Markham	White Cedar	PRA	Fall 2009
381 Markham	Freeman Maple	PRA	Fall 2009
381 Markham	Kentucky Coffee	PRA	Fall 2009
442 Markham	Eastern Redbud	PRA	Spring 2010
549 Markham	Eastern Redbud	PRA	Spring 2010
472 Palmerston	Sugar Maple	PRA	Fall 2009
497 Palmerston	Serviceberry	PRA	Fall 2009
497 Palmerston	White Cedar	PRA	Fall 2009
497 Palmerston	White Cedar	PRA	Fall 2009
9 Pauline	Red Oak	HVRA	Spring 2008
56 Pauline	Horse Chestnut*	CORA	Fall 2008
54 Robert	Black Locust	HVRA	Fall 2008
164 Robert	Tulip Tree	HVRA	Spring 2008
302 Robert	Catalpa	HVRA	Fall 2008
95 Robert	Red Oak	HVRA	Fall 2008
32 Roblocke	Serviceberry	CORA	Spring 2009
32 Roblocke	Serviceberry	CORA	Fall 2008
196 Roxton	Red Oak	HVRA	Spring 2008
554 Roxton	Red Oak	HVRA	Spring 2008
846 Shaw	Serviceberry	CORA	Fall 2008
28 Ulster	Serviceberry	HVRA	Fall 2009
100 Wells	Birch	GA	Fall 2008
100 Wells	Birch	GA	Fall 2008
104 Wells	Hemlock	GA	Fall 2008
140 Wells	Redbud	GA	Fall 2008
136 Wells	Kousa	GA	Fall 2008
115 Wells	Beech	GA	Fall 2008

122	Albany	Serviceberry	GA	fall 2008
31	Albany	Kousa	GA	fall 2008
86	Albany	Serviceberry	GA	fall 2008
116	Albany	Kousa	GA	fall 2008
123	Albany	Pagoda Dogwood	GA	fall 2008
139	Albany	Redbud	GA	fall 2008
162	Albany	Flowering Dogwood	GA	fall 2008
127	Albany	Hemlock	GA	fall 2008
130	Albany	Redbud	GA	fall 2008
185	Albany	Kousa	GA	fall 2008
199	Albany	Fringe tree	GA	fall 2008
261	Albany	Serviceberry	GA	fall 2008
927	Bathurst	Pagoda Dogwood	GA	fall 2008
1023	Bathurst	Pagoda Dogwood	GA	fall 2008
1053	Bathurst	Hemlock	GA	fall 2008
983	Bathurst	Serviceberry	GA	fall 2008
1021	Bathurst	Serviceberry	GA	fall 2008
22	Borden	Serviceberry	HVRA	spring 2008
51	Borden	Serviceberry	HVRA	spring 2008
143 ½	Borden	Pear	HVRA	fall 2008
179	Borden	Serviceberry	HVRA	fall 2008
180	Borden	Serviceberry	HVRA	spring 2008
190	Borden	Serviceberry	HVRA	spring 2008
223	Borden	Serviceberry	HVRA	spring 2008
162	Borden	Serviceberry	HVRA	fall 2008
22	Brunswick	Sweet Gum	HVRA	spring 2008
56	Brunswick	Magnolia	HVRA	spring 2008
72	Brunswick	Magnolia	HVRA	spring 2008
177	Brunswick	Serviceberry	HVRA	spring 2008
257	Brunswick	Serviceberry	HVRA	spring 2008
320	Brunswick	Japanese Dogwood	GA	fall 2008
342	Brunswick	Tulip Tree	GA	fall 2008
220	Clinton	Red Oak	HVRA	spring 2008
854	Dovercourt	Red Oak	HVRA	spring 2008
875	Dovercourt	Red Oak	HVRA	spring 2008
105	Harbord	Horse Chestnut	HVRA	fall 2008

43	Havelock	Red Oak	HVRA	spring 2008
189	Hillsdale	Red Oak	HVRA	spring 2008
29	Howland	Red Oak	GA	fall 2008
123	Howland	Serviceberry	GA	fall 2008
205	Howland	Pagoda Dogwood	GA	fall 2008
129	Howland	White Cedar	GA	fall 2008
131	Howland	White Cedar	GA	fall 2008
142	Howland	Beech	GA	fall 2008
184	Howland	Fringe Tree	GA	fall 2008
186	Howland	Tulip Tree	GA	fall 2008
195	Howland	Serviceberry	GA	fall 2008
197	Howland	Redbud	GA	fall 2008
203	Howland	Sugar Maple	GA	fall 2008
207	Howland	River Birch	GA	fall 2008
209	Howland	Tulip Tree	GA	fall 2008
212	Howland	Flowering Dogwood	GA	fall 2008
253	Howland	Flowering Dogwood	GA	fall 2008
27	Howland	Hemlock	GA	fall 2008
79	Howland	Pagoda Dogwood	GA	fall 2008
141	Lippincott	Horse Chestnut	HVRA	fall 2008
211	Lippincott	Black Locust	HVRA	fall 2008
235	Lippincott	White Spruce (2)	HVRA	spring 2008
90	Major	Serviceberry	HVRA	spring 2008
175	Major	Serviceberry	HVRA	fall 2008
206	Major	White Oak	HVRA	spring 2008
208	Major	White Cedar	HVRA	spring 2008
234	Major	Serviceberry, Horse chestnut	HVRA	spring 2008
240	Major	Tulip Tree	HVRA	spring 2008
275	Major	Serviceberry	HVRA	spring 2008
9	Pauline	Red Oak	HVRA	spring 2008
54	Robert	Black Locust	HVRA	fall 2008
164	Robert	Tulip Tree	HVRA	spring 2008
302	Robert	Catalpa	HVRA	fall 2008
95	Robert	Red Oak	HVRA	fall 2008
196	Roxton	Red Oak	HVRA	spring 2008

554	Roxton	Red Oak	HVRA	spring 2008
100	Wells	Redbud, Birch	GA	fall 2008
104	Wells	Hemlock	GA	fall 2008
140	Wells	Redbud	GA	fall 2008
136	Wells	Kousa	GA	fall 2008
115	Wells	Beech	GA	fall 2008
16	Carling	Silver maple	CORA	fall 2008
766	Crawford	Serviceberry	CORA	fall 2008
846	Shaw	Serviceberry	CORA	fall 2008
32	Roblocke	Serviceberry	CORA	fall 2008
56	Pauline	Horse Chestnut	CORA	fall 2008
10	Manchester	Red Oak	CORA	fall 2008

3. 'Treeing the Village' Project Plan and Subsequent Activities:



Map of Harbord Village

A committee of eight Harbord Village residents was formed to guide the *Treeing Our Village* project with the financial support of the Toronto Recreation and Parks Foundation and the Harbord Village Resident's Association. They called the project *Treeing Our Village* and identified six key tasks:

- Organization
- Communication
- Site assessment and data base development
- Tree education
- Tree planting
- Follow-up maintenance and tree health assessment

Participation and membership on the committee has increased over the two years of the project and over 60 volunteer residents have helped out in different ways.



Planting (Spruce) Harbord Village
Spring 08



Fall 08 Tree for Wells St. (Hemlock)
Fall 08

3.1 Organization

The “Treeing Our Village” is a project initiated by the Harbord Village Residents’ Association (HVRA), a downtown Toronto neighbourhood bounded by Bloor, Spadina, College and Bathurst Streets.

The Treeing Our Village project was motivated in part by the Tree Inventory of Harbord Village that was performed in the summers of 2007 and 2008. With the help of graduate Forestry students from the University of Toronto, volunteers collected detailed analysis of the species, age, size and health of the trees that compose the tree canopy in our neighbourhood. The resulting reports informed the neighbourhood’s vision of its stewardship role in the building and maintaining a healthy tree canopy. HVRA’s Tree Inventory project was inspired by a similar Grassroots Albany project in the Annex a few years ago. HVRA’s reports can be viewed online at: www.harbordvillage.com/trees.

In summary, the project was organized by eight volunteers in Harbord Village, five volunteers in the Annex (Grassroots Albany), one in the Christie-Ossington area and one in the Palmerston area.

3.2 Communication

In Harbord Village over a dozen volunteers were involved with project communication.

-Their activities included preparation and distribution of five sets of flyers in 2008 and 2009 including translated of highlights in three languages describing the project and numbers to call of residents acting as interpreters.

-Building on the research results of the HVRA Tree Inventory, a letter was sent both years to 350 absentee landlords owning properties in the community to tell them about the backyard tree project and other *Treeing Our Village* activities.



Grassroots Albany planter in the Annex Fall 08

-Community information meetings were held at King Edward Public School and Kensington Gardens (a long-term care facility with meeting rooms in the center of our neighbourhood).

-Arrangements were made to send information home with elementary students at King Edward School and Lord Lansdowne Schools.

-Two nearby high schools, Central Technical and Harbord Collegiate, were approached to solicit student volunteers for tree planting to offer community service credits for volunteer hours.

-The HVRA website (harbordvillage.com/trees) also posted regular updates on specific trees suitable for order.

-In the other neighbourhoods, flyers were printed and distributed and owners of properties on “tree needy” streets were approached door-to-door to sign up for back-yard trees.

-Press coverage also assisted in spreading the word to residents to sign up for the backyard tree planting project and to other neighbourhoods who then approached HVRA for information and suggestions on how they, too, could rally similar tree planting interest:



Fall 08 Backyard Tree in Harbord Village

Globe and Mail: Ben Archer; June 30th 2007

‘Does Anyone Hear if a Tree Falls in the City?’

Inside Toronto: Justin Skinner; Oct 7th 2009

‘Harbord Village Tree Program Coming to a Close’

<http://www.insidetoronto.com/community/life/article/154872-harbord-village-tree-program-coming-to-a-close>

3.3 Site Assessment & Data Base

In Harbord Village nine volunteers were involved with pre-planting site visits and database development for the spring 2008 tree planting, and four for the fall 2008 tree planting. Grassroots Albany recruited five organizers. Residents who expressed interest in planting a backyard tree received a follow-up visit from members of the Committee to assess the suitability of the location, accessibility and any potential hazards. Homeowners were provided with information about Ontario One-Call before the digging began to check for underground wires, cables or pipes that could cause problems.

They were also asked to sign an agreement regarding tree follow-up care and watering responsibilities and to provide a nominal cash deposit. A database was prepared to record resident information, tree preference, donations etc.

Site visits to neighbourhood backyards revealed that several sites would be suitable if concrete pavement was removed or if dead trees were removed. In Summer 2009, one resident took up the offer of a subsidy to remove this concrete and plant a tree.



HVRA Spring Backyard Plant
Spring 08

3.4 Tree Education

Six HVRA volunteers were involved with tree education. Professor Sandy Kenney from the University of Toronto's Forestry Department arranged for Phillip Wassenaer to give the first of a series of tree health workshops for the neighbourhood at Kensington Gardens. The first workshop was timed for the week prior to the tree planting weekend to answer volunteer questions about the upcoming task. A summary sheet on tips for successful planting was given to each planting team on the day of planting. Research went into the advice given re: mulching, fertilizer and watering. After the trees were planted, residents were given a brochure on tree care and a contact name if the tree showed signs of distress.



Unloading trees on Albany St.
Fall 08



Planting a tree in a Robert St. back yard
Fall 08

3.5 Village Arborist

In the course of work on tree planting, the Treeing the Village Committee heard many requests from residents to recommend a professional arborist, especially for the care of large trees. In spring 2008, a subcommittee invited companies known to residents to submit a plan of services and availability, then invited the principals of three of these companies for a face-to-face group interview, asking questions about services and costs and support for HVRA's strong preference to preserve healthy trees. Bruce Tree Experts was selected. In return for free estimates and discounts on orders, HVRA offered to give contact information in response to inquiries from residents, to distribute flyers, and to invite the company to set up information tables and meet residents at neighbourhood meetings.

As final selection of any arborist services remains with each resident, the 'village arborist' plan has been hard to evaluate. Further thought and ideas based on residents' experiences with care of trees over the last two years will help the committee to consider next steps in supporting a healthy tree canopy in our neighbourhood.

4. HVRA Backyard Tree Planting Schedule:

4.1 Spring 2008

Twenty-seven volunteers were involved with the HVRA spring tree planting as well as tree recipients and families that dug their own holes. Trees and supplies were ordered, delivered and additional door-to door delivery was arranged. Many of the required tools were provided by the volunteers or by local residents.

On Thursday, May 29, 2008, residents of lower Robert Street planted the first five public trees (all white spruce) on a wide boulevard adjacent to Lord Lansdowne School. The residents' agreed to contribute 25% of the cost of this project. A rain delay on Saturday May 31, 2008 necessitated postponing the backyard spring tree planting until Sunday June 1, 2008.

Committee members and volunteers from the local secondary schools and other local residents met to plant 39 backyard trees and 6 other trees, paid for by HVRA, that were planted on Borden Street bordering a parking lot.

4.2 Fall 2008

One of the lessons learned from the spring tree plant was that not enough local Harbord Village residents were in a position to accept a tree in 2008. Site visits revealed that some backyards would not be suitable until dead trees or cement patios were removed. When it became clear to the HVRA Tree Committee that we could not use the full grant before October 31, 2008, we contacted representatives of neighbouring resident's associations to see if they wished to take part in our project. A meeting on July 3rd brought together all those that were interested to discuss the protocols. The Christie-Ossington Residents' Association and Grassroots Albany in the Annex joined HVRA for residential backyard tree planting in their respective neighbourhoods in fall 2008. Despite the rain, trees were planted on Saturday October 25th.

"The tree is beautiful and thriving. What a great surprise it was last Fall when it turned orange and red, visible right out my kitchen window. And yes, I would consider another tree this summer. Thank you so much."
Anne, Borden St.

My Oak tree is doing very well and had lovely blooms this spring. I'm very happy with it. I'll make sure it gets watered through the summer and I'm sure it will survive nicely in my backyard. Thank-you for all your hard work."
Alison, Harbord St.

"My tree is thriving! It's grown like a weed, blossomed beautifully this spring, and is now covered with little berries. Birds, take note."
Wendy, Borden St.

"Thank you very much for asking about our tree - it survived the winter and seems to be doing well. It's a great programme, and we love our tree, a Catalpa:-)"
Regine, Robert St.

"Our tree is perfectly wonderful. It is in full fruit, and looks perfect. Not one twig was lost over the winter. We are so grateful to the Tree Committee for making this possible."
Jane, Major St.

4.3 Fall 2009

Another half dozen trees were planted in HVRA and the Palmerston Residents Association, led by a keen first-year university student, organized over a dozen more trees to be planted with resident and student volunteers from that neighbourhood. It was appreciated in helping their project run smoothly, that HVRA was able to share our experience with routines on site visits, forms and lists for tree orders and resident responsibilities, instructions on planting, tips for volunteer recruitment, and a template for student certification of volunteer hours. These trees were planted on Saturday Oct 24th.

4.4 Follow-up

Residents were given information about tree care and future contacts when their trees were planted if follow up was needed.

Each following season, a phone check/email or site visit checked about the growth of all the trees. All are thriving at this time.

4.5 More Planting

A few trees from the Fall 2009 order were paid as a back order and will be delivered and planted by volunteers in Spring 2010.

With continued interest from other neighbourhoods to be part of our backyard planting project, a request has been made to the City to extend the period to 2010 in which we use up the rest of the funds from the original grant. Although many of the suitable backyards in HVRA now have trees planted, there are many more backyards to access in neighbouring communities and we are keen to continue supporting these efforts.

The purchase of large, healthy trees is an advantage for successful planting but a challenge in access to backyards:



Narrow spaces between houses



Backyard fencing or low overhead access

5 Lessons Learned from the 2008 and 2009 Treeing Our Village Project

- **Project Planning:** A committee of concerned enthusiastic residents prepared a timeline, delegated responsibility for tasks, and met regularly to monitor their progress.
- **Plan for contingencies:** Planting was postponed in the spring due to a severe weather forecast. Volunteers and residents (tree recipients) were contacted easily by e-mail/phone directly. An alternative tree supplier was quickly identified when the original contractor failed to procure the required trees. A first aid kit was available to the volunteers; each team had a cell phone for emergencies or delays.
- **Data Base:** A complete database is critical to both managing the aforementioned risks and getting the right tree to the right address at the right time.
- **Communications Plan:** A comprehensive communications plan is critical. HVRA used its website, public meetings and flyers to homes and schools to contact residents. Our partners were able to adapt this material to their neighbourhoods and turn the project around quickly.
- **Leadership:** Tim Grant provided overall leadership and co-ordination and aptly delegated leadership for key tasks. Indeed, as leadership was shared amongst members of the Committee no one was “burned-out” by the project and everyone remains enthusiastic.
- **This project requires a group of committed volunteers:** In addition to neighbourhood sourcing, the Guidance Departments of the local high schools were called to solicit students who wanted to join us in the spring for their community service requirement.

Key to maintaining volunteer enthusiasm was making the project *fun*. Whether it was the consideration of the volunteers’ physical well-being by providing water and gardening gloves, or the lunch at the conclusion of the



Tim Grant, 2007 to 2009 chair of the HVRA Treeing the Village Committee, leading by example in a Harbord Street backyard.

plant, volunteers were rewarded both with a good social time and the knowledge that they were improving the ecology of their neighbourhood. With the success of planting days in 2008, calls out for volunteers for planting in 2009 quickly put together teams of experienced 'diggers' with new volunteers eager to join in on what they had heard from others about the positive nature of this involvement.



Croft Street Fall Planting Crew 09

- **Compare tree prices and availability:** Tree prices vary by vendor and season. Some nurseries gave us a discount, some did not. The quality of the trees, and dependability of delivery also varied. Grassroots Albany hand-picked each tree at the nursery. For 2009 we selected one nursery after an on-site visit to confirm the health of the trees being provided. We also learned that some trees, although listed on websites, may not be available when the order is actually made; either stock runs out, or the tree is more suitable for planting in a different season. Costs for delivery need to be included in any budget on tree planting; these are especially high when some of the better tree nurseries are over an hour's drive from Toronto.
- **Preparation of Sites before Planting:** Many residents who wanted backyard trees reported, or our site inspections determined, that they first needed to remove old stumps or dead or

dying trees. Selection of Bruce Tree Experts Inc. as our recommended “Village Arborist” was made to facilitate these actions.

In 2009, we offered a small cash incentive to help pay for costs of residents removing backyard parking pods in order to plant a tree, but this was of interest to only one resident.

- **Building HVRA Membership and Leadership:** Although tree offers were not tied to membership in HVRA, we noted that several tree recipients sent in membership dues once they had benefited from the *Treeing Our Village Project*. Membership continues to grow with the keen interest of residents drawn to the reputation of HVRA in action based projects about conservation and the environment.

The Treeing the Village Committee will continue to meet into the year 2010 to develop ideas about maintaining a healthy tree canopy of benefit both to individual residents and to the neighbourhood as a whole. Interest increases as new members join up and we learn more about stewardship responsibilities for ‘greening projects’

Neighbourhood groups close to Harbord Village have also benefited from the backyard tree planting grant and appreciated the friendly advice and sharing of lessons learned to organize their own volunteers for planting projects. On several occasions Treeing the Village members have been asked to give presentations to other communities and talk about our experience with tree planting.



Mission Control for Grassroots Albany
in the Annex

6. Next Steps

- **Future Tree Planting:** Some trees paid for in the fall are on back order for spring planting. This will be organized with our volunteer 'diggers', some of whom have come four times to help out over the last two years.
- **Partnerships with other Residents' Associations:** With extension of time into 2010 to finish spending the remaining amount from the original grant, we are confident of interest expressed by other residents' associations to plant more backyard trees.
- **Continue meetings of the Treeing the Village Committee:** There is a commitment of previous members to continue participation on the committee and new residents hearing about the committee want to sign up. The Committee will review the lessons learned from the 2008 and 2009 tree plantings and continue to plan for maintenance of existing trees and the planting of more trees in Harbord Village. A new chair has been selected, as our previous chair has now taken the position of chair of the HVRA. Continuity and ongoing support for the Treeing the Village committee's work is attractive to residents wanting to get involved in educational, fun and action-based projects that show results and promote neighbours helping neighbours.
- **Leadership sharing lessons learned with other communities:** Members of the Treeing the Village committee continue to accept requests to speak to other interested groups and share some of the practical and logistical aspects of this work we learned for tree planting in an urban setting. The latest such request was on November 26th 09, with the Treeing the Village past and current committee chair speaking to the new Wells Hill Oak Forest residents' group in Ward 21.
- **The Fall 09 Report to the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation** was submitted to Arthur Beauregard, Executive Director, by email on December 1, 2009 from contributions by HVRA residents; Leslie Thompson, Margaret Procter, Dinny Biggs and Tim Grant.



Some of the Harbord Village Spring 08 Tree Planting Volunteers



Some of the Grassroots Albany Fall 08 Tree Planting Volunteers

"The Toronto City Parks and Trees Foundation's financial support has helped create a win-win situation where neighbours are assisting neighbours and other communities with proactive steps towards a healthy urban forest in Toronto of benefit to all who live here."

Dinny Biggs, new chair of HVRA Treeing the Village Committee, Nov 30th 2009