



Harbord Village Residents' Association

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Stepping Down ... but Not Out

TIM GRANT



After seven years as your chair, I will be stepping down this fall. It is time for new leadership, and fortunately HVRA's board is loaded with talented leaders-in-waiting.

As I reflect on the highs and lows of the past seven years, three things stand out:

Lots More Communication

For years, we had delivered our spring and fall newsletters to every household, but we've never had a more timely way to communicate with residents. That changed a couple of years ago, when we began sending out weekly e-blasts to our 600 members, describing upcoming events, opportunities, and local concerns.

Margaret Procter now prepares these weekly e-letters, and without fail, we receive appreciative comments from recipients each time a new one is distributed. (If you are not yet receiving these, go to harbordvillage.com and pay \$10 to become a member. Do it now before you forget!)

College and Brunswick Parkette Improvement

The redevelopment of the much-neglected parkette at College and Brunswick is another highlight for me. A few years ago, after receiving complaints about its shabby appearance, I woke up one morning with an idea. The best way to shine a spotlight on this neglected corner might be to organize an international design competition. Richard Longley ran with the idea, and the successful competition generated dozens of exciting ideas for revitalizing the parkette. A naming competition that followed attracted wide interest. (Read on in our newsletter for the full story!)

Noise and Disruptions

By contrast, four years ago our unsuccessful attempts to deal with unruly bars and noisy rooming houses were a real low point. Over 100 residents participated in meetings of HVRA's Disruption Committee. We met with City officials and representatives of the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO). It soon became clear that the City was unwilling to enforce its own noise bylaws and the AGCO had no interest in limiting the number of bars on a given block. (There

This newsletter is produced twice a year by the Harbord Village Residents' Association (HVRA) serving the part of Toronto bounded by Bathurst Street, Bloor Street West, Spadina Avenue, and College Street. Visit us at harbordvillage.com.



are nine bars on College in one block east of Bathurst.) In spite of the countless hours so many of us spent on this, we got nowhere. Sadly, these two problems continue to disrupt the lives of many residents.

As in life, there are ups and downs in all neighbourhoods. But what makes the Harbord Village special is how often busy people step forward with ideas to make our corner of the world better, and how willing they are to invest the hours to make them happen. Over the past seven years, it has been an honour to work closely with so many great people. I'm now looking forward to working with HVRA's new leaders and our inspiring volunteers to see where the next seven years might take us.

Fall Fair: What a Day It Was!

CHRISTIAN MUELLER

The HVRA is grateful to the sixty-plus volunteers who selflessly provided their labour and to 109 community-minded merchants and institutions who donated generously to the HVRA's raffle and silent auction, breaking all previous records!

Thanks also to the members of St. Stephen's Community House who gave the kids a great time. NAGS PLAYERS put a new spin on "horse power" in a crowd-pleasing skit that featured a two-person powered horse.

With the help of the Tranzac's expert sound team, young and old alike grooved to the danceable rhythms of

several live acts: The Turnups, Murray Powell, Joe Hall (and half of The Continental Drift), The Groovees, Nuno Cristo (and his cavaquinho-playing ensemble), the jigs and reels of Paddy on the Cell Phone, and the closing musical apotheosis of The Real Deal.

Special thanks to Fiesta Farms (who gave us all the food at a big discount), Crafty Coyote for the BBQed lamb, Rasa for the chopped salad, Independent City Mart for all the free condiments, and Kensington Brewery for discounted beer.

Bravos to Wendy Trueman and

Upcoming Events

- Annual General Meeting, Monday, October 17, 6:30 p.m., Kensington Gardens, 45 Brunswick Avenue.
- Pumpkin Festival, Tuesday, November 1, Harbord Street. Check our e-blasts for details and look for a flyer.
- Central Tech Community swim, Central Tech pool, Bathurst building, every Saturday 2-4 p.m. to May 24. Laps and families, \$2 donation. The community saved the pool from closure in 2009. Come out and use it!



Wendy Trueman

"Harbord Villagers love and support the Fall Fair because it's a 'feel good' party, a multi-generational event where kids with wildly painted faces run circles around their parents in an atmosphere of good will and good cheer." Rory (Gus) Sinclair



Anne Stevens

Christian Mueller, co-chairs of the Fall Fair Organizing Committee, who staged the event as a street festival on Brunswick Avenue after Margaret Fairley Park was unavailable due to construction. Given the success of this year's Fall Fair, perhaps it will expand next year to encompass the adjacent section of Brunswick Avenue as well as the completely refurbished park. Stay tuned!



Bob Stambula



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Anne Stevens

Jelly Modern Doughnut
 Jewellery Galleria
 Jump +
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HVRA Area Updates



Northwest

- Bloor bike lane experiment has changed our landscape.
- Volunteers have begun to green Alan Powell Lane.
- There is new diversity in retailers and merchants. Welcome to CoinOrama Laundromat (newly remodelled), Chipotle (Mexican), Little Piggy's (Korean BBQ), AKA (Japanese teppanyaki), The Dirty Bird (chicken and waffles), The Burger's Priest (burgers and fries), Crafty Coyote Bar & Grill (brew pub), Country Style Hungarian Restaurant (renovated).

*Christian Mueller and Steve Klein
 Northwest Area reps*

Northeast

- The City's new one-way signs on the concrete planters may reduce the frequency of drivers going the wrong way on our streets.
- Watch for the Bloor BIA's public meeting on their green designs for the Metro and FedEx flanks.
- The JCC has installed a new salt water pool.
- Major changes are in the works for Sussex Spadina.

*Carolee Orme and James Murdoch
 Northeast Area reps*

Southeast

- Plans to move the Lord Lansdowne pickup/drop-off zone to Spadina Crescent will go to Community and City Council in the fall. There would be no change to parking regulations on Russell or Robert Streets.
- There are two new additions on the College Street flank: Urbane Cyclist (280 College) and Independent City Market/Loblaws (297 College) are open for business.
- Interested in laneway greening? Contact carlo.drudi@gmail.com if you would like to attend a fall meeting to discuss plans for 2017.

*Carlo Drudi and Caroline MacFarlane
 Southeast Area reps*

South Central

- Residents' petition for speed humps on the first block of Major Street was ultimately successful. They will be installed in 2017.
- After residents near Major and Ulster tried to deter wrong-way traffic by placing buckets with arrow signs at the east side of the intersection, a city official removed

- them. Hand-painted yellow arrows remain on the roadway.
- We now have a stringent set of operating conditions for neighbourhood patios, arising from discussions with the owner of the Cider Bar, neighbours, and the Councillor's office.

*Margaret Procter and Marilyn Martin
 South Central Area reps*

Southwest

- Croft Greening has been very successful, with colour, planting, and neighbourhood engagement. Even Ggarbage dumping is less evident.
- Graffiti and tagging continue, but the Croft neighbours are working with artists Sean Martindale and Pascal Paquette to create new murals in the first block north of College.
- At the northwest corner of Croft and College, nearly two years after the fire that emptied two buildings of retail and tenants, the complex is finally under renovation and construction, retail at grade, rental units upper floors.

*Jane Perdue and Paula Gallo
 Southwest Area Reps*

HVRA continues to work with the Councillor's office and the City to address the continuing challenges of garbage dumping, graffiti, and tagging in the laneways, and cars speeding and/or driving in the wrong direction on our one-way streets. While some progress is being made, these longstanding issues remain an Association priority.



Parkettes Taking Shape in Harbord Village

RORY (GUS) SINCLAIR



Bob Stambula

This summer, two neighbourhood parkettes have been under construction. At Central Tech, the new field development will now be flanked by an open, public shared-use space at the corner of Bathurst and Harbord. Financed by City funds on Toronto and District School Board lands, this was part of the deal struck at the mediated settlement.

As work began on the northeast corner of Brunswick and College, HVRA initiated a competition, similar to the one we had used on our laneway naming project. Our appeal to the neighbourhood generated nine submissions. The panel of judges, including Bob Barnett, Celia Denov, Tim Grant, and Neil Wright ultimately selected The Doctors' Parkette, an idea submitted by Richard Longley of Brunswick Avenue.

Richard provided the following reasons for his choice:

The site of the Brunswick-College Parkette has been involved with health care and strongly connected to "doctors" from the beginning of Harbord Village as we know it:

1885-1953, St John's Hospital for Women, founded by sisters of St. John the Divine.

1954-1997, The Doctors' Hospital occupied the site of St. John's, where it became famous for its services to



City of Toronto

The Doctors' Parkette: The artist's visualization of the Brunswick-College parkette. While the canopy shown awaits further funding, the parkette is scheduled for a November opening.

the people of Harbord Village, mostly more diverse, less affluent, and more likely to be recent immigrants than the population of today.

1990, Kensington Health Centre east of the parkette.

1990s, Kensington Gardens Long-

term Care Facility on the site of Doctors' Hospital.

2012, Chapel of St. John the Divine (last remnant of St. John's Hospital) became Kensington Hospice.

Consider the list of eminent doctors who worked in our commu-

nity including the brothers **Samuel Raxlen, Alexander Raxlen, Benjamin Raxlen,** and **Saul Raxlen,** who founded the Doctors' Hospital in 1953.

Norman Bethune, 1890-1939

Gained fame pioneering blood transfusions on the battlefield during the Spanish Civil War. He lived at 136 Robert Street when he was a small boy, 1896-7.

Katharine Hockin, 1910-1993

A doctor of education born in China to missionary parents. For over 50 years she taught in Canada and in China. In 1951, after two years of house arrest, she returned to live in Harbord Village and teach at the

Centre for Christian Studies on St. George Street.

Henry Morgentaler, 1923-2013

A Holocaust survivor famous for his determination to give the women of Canada access to safe, affordable abortions resulting in the legalization of abortion in 1988. He located his first Morgentaler Clinic in Toronto at 87 Harbord Street, which was fire-bombed by a pair of anti-abortion activists in 1992.

Cyril Greenland, 1919-2012

Moved to Brunswick Avenue in 1968 with his wife Jane and their five children, to be close to the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry, where he

researched violence and mental illness with extraordinary compassion. Cyril was diagnosed with leukemia in 2002 but refused treatment. He died 10 years later, in Kensington Hospice.

Bob Frankford, 1939-2015

Best known as a champion of the right to health care, Dr. Bob's other concerns included racism, homelessness, and inequality in all its forms. A long-time admirer of the work of Jane Jacobs, he advocated for more liveable cities and worked at this and other issues at many levels and in many ways, especially in Harbord Village.

Building the 21st-Century Neighbourhood: The City Wants Our Input

Our calendars are full of public meetings. The HVRA, sister community associations, as well as interested citizens continue their work to assist the City to update the rules on developments and respond to applications without compromising our strong and stable neighbourhoods.

Spadina study

At the same time as City Planning is completing its College Street study, it has begun work on a study of Spadina Avenue, from Bloor to Queen Street. The mandate is to update zoning by creating a vision for Spadina which would enable it to retain its distinctive character while improving its public realm. The streetscape will be closely examined to address

design, density, heights, massing, mobility and heritage.

University of Toronto Rezoning

The University's plans for the rezoning of the University of Toronto St. George campus will include significant attention to streetscapes and public space, and identify the western side of the campus as the principal area for change. The HVRA and other community representatives who have been consulting with the University, the City, and Councillor Joe Cressy have concerns about pinning down the nature of the change and where it is to occur.

Mirvish Village Redevelopment

The first revision of Westbank's

Mirvish Village project includes the retention of several more heritage buildings. There have been some slight reductions in density, the addition of a small parkette on the west side of Markham Street, as well as a reduction in traffic load for Palmerston Lane, but there is still work to be done. More adequate greenspace, less density, and more consideration of traffic impacts top the list.

Public meetings are anticipated on all files. The documentation on the City Planning and HVRA websites is extensive. We would appreciate your observations and concerns at our new planning address: development@harbordvillage.com.



Portrait of the Artist

ANN EYERMAN

A life-long resident of Major Street, Finn, aged 7 (almost 8), is the artist behind those wonderful signs decorating the concrete planters throughout Harbord Village. Finn says he has been drawing since “before I was one year old.” His first drawing was a Father’s Day card, which he still possesses. Finn hasn’t stopped drawing since then. Currently, his favourite subjects are houses and “people from my imagination.” In addition to his artistic pursuits, Finn likes to spend time playing Minecraft and playing with Yu-Gi-Oh! cards. In September, this accomplished young artist will begin Grade 3 at Clinton Street Public School.



Ann Eyerman

To discourage vandalism, Harbord Village artist Finn was enlisted to create a “community garden” sign. It’s worked like a charm.

A Story of Community: 15 Concrete Planter Gardens (and Their Gardeners)!

JENNETTE BOEHMER

“Can a battered, graffiti-daubed concrete planter at a busy urban intersection survive as a mini garden? To my surprise, the answer is a decisive ‘yes.’”

*Frances-Mary Morrison
NE Borden-Lennox*

“You want it to look attractive and can’t leave it bare. You go every morning and you see the flowers bloom and when you see something missing, you get disappointed.”

*George Mandrapilias
SE Lippincott-Ulster*

“I was offended by seeing things die, so I added things from my garden and the planter became part of my garden.”

*Anna Barnett
NE Sussex-Major*

They are invisible to many of us. But we see their handiwork from the first days of spring to the frost of the coming winter. For more than twenty years, they have been our neighbours who have been making Harbord Village beautiful.

Roughly ten years ago, Caroline Van Belleghem (sw Borden-Ulster) convinced the City to provide a new planter and better soil so she could replace all manner of litter with a thriving garden. Jeannie Hastie recounts a similar discussion with the City, after which “the neighbours



Kerry Clare

from 58 to 68 Robert (whether owners or renters) agreed to weed, water, and plant” if the City would create the Robert-Russell pinch point.

Why do they continue? And why do new gardeners join the group? Merrill Swain joined Caroline Van Belleghem helps Amy Furness (NE Borden-Ulster) with watering because it is “the neighbourly thing to do. The best part,” they say, “is getting ‘high 5s’ from neighbours/

strangers walking by, police officers (they always roll down the window to say ‘thanks’), and strangers driving by. It’s the idea that ‘community service’ is being modelled, especially for children.” Kerry Clare and her gardener-daughters Harriet (age 7) and Iris (age 3) are living proof, as they enthuse about their sw Major-Sussex planter: “We’ve loved watching it grow (and meeting neighbours as we watched it grow).” Kara Peet



Kerry Clare



and Erkan Ercel (sw Robert-Har-bord) agree: “Our concrete planter may look modest, but we can say that the new plants have made a vast improvement for both the neighbourhood and its garden-tenders alike.” Reinforcing the theme that caring for these planters encourages neighbourliness, Andrea Poptsis (nw Robert-Sussex) credits her neighbours who also “water the planter on a regular basis.”

The perennials donated by the City this year as part of the HV Green Plan have enhanced this gardening contagion. As Janet Kerman (sw Major-Ulster) attests, “The best part is having plants from the City that can endure the harsh conditions of a street garden.” The HV Gardeners Group also lends support, coordinating planting projects, contributing identifying signs (Leslie Thompson, ne Major-Ulster, based on a drawing by Finn), and developing an online gardeners listserv. As HV Gardeners member Kate Hamilton puts it, “I joined this group to participate in something that I and others are interested in. I don’t know what else the definition of community is.”

That Vision Thing: HVRA Style

STEVE KLEIN

In the HVRA Spring 2016 newsletter, our Chair Tim Grant briefly wrote about the re-visioning exercise the association board began last January. One key driver was the need for the board to update its 15+-year-old structure and composition to:

- Continue to appropriately serve its growing membership, which has doubled over the years;
- Effectively deal with an escalating number of challenges and opportunities within and outside Harbord Village;
- More clearly define the roles of all board positions, existing and proposed, while expanding the role of the area representatives to assist more actively in the development files in their particular area of Harbord Village; and
- Further build on HVRA’s established recognition as a trusted institution both to its membership, with the City, and especially our Councillor’s office.

Details of the proposed revised board structure and composition, and the associated proposed amendments to the association’s constitution to ensure alignment with these revisions, were recently published as a separate flyer delivered to every home in Harbord Village. For those who may have missed this or would like to revisit what is being proposed at this year’s Annual General Meeting (Monday, October 17, 2016, 6:30 p.m., Kensington Gardens, 45 Brunswick Avenue), details can also be

found on the association’s website at harbordvillage.com/constitution/.

One final note: As the lead of the board’s special task group that came together this past summer to undertake this significant exercise, I would be remiss if I didn’t acknowledge without exception the group’s commitment to the tasks at hand, relentless efforts, and forthright engagement of its participants. On behalf of the entire HVRA board, whose current members have wholly endorsed the recommendations to be presented to the membership at the AGM, my heartfelt appreciation goes to Susan Dexter, Gail Misra, Margaret Procter, and Rory (Gus) Sinclair.

New HVRA Website

MARGARET PROCTER



In surveys and interviews last year, HVRA members told us they hardly ever went to our 15-year-old website, mainly because it had become too hard to navigate on the smaller screens of tablets and smartphones. They also told us they valued the website’s content and wanted even more news about the neighbourhood and information about past and current HVRA projects.

So that’s what the new website offers, still at harbordvillage.com, but with a new look and structure. The right-hand sidebar shows links for current news; the sections on the top menu lead to main pages with substantial material (and lots of photos) about ongoing and past activities. Under the Projects tab, for instance, several pages show off this year’s Greening activities and our continuing work on Development Issues; click through their subsections, and you’ll find archived reports from the Tree Inventory, the HERO project, and the design competition for Doctors’ Parkette. A new Neighbourhood Groups page lists informal local networks, and Useful Links shows how to make the most of public services.

The new Membership functions

now make it easy to renew and donate online, saving yourself and the Membership Secretary time and effort. We value seeing updates to your Member Profiles, including notes on your potential volunteer interests.

You can read any or all of this on your smartphone if you want, but it makes a good display on your desktop too. The 30 or so streamlined webpages are packed with good reading about Harbord Village—start anywhere and come back to the top and side menus to find more. Feedback to web@harbordvillage.com is always welcome.

Why You Should Attend Harbord Village Residents’ Association Annual General Meeting

JAMES MURDOCH

The Harbord Village Green Master Plan—here’s your opportunity to learn more.

The City of Toronto is about to roll out the Harbord Village Green Master Plan, intended as a pilot for other areas of the city. Robert Mays, Senior Project Manager, Transportation Services, Public Realm Section and Beautiful Streets, City of Toronto, will outline details of the plan. Joining Mr. Mays will be Professor Pete North, from the University of Toronto, whose students from the Faculty of Architecture will be working with HVRA and the City. Our efforts will centre on greening lanes and flanking city boulevards; water collection for irrigation; and storm water retention, which will reduce water pollution in Lake Ontario.

Be sure to attend the meeting on Monday, October 17, 2016, at 6:30 p.m., at Kensington Gardens, 45 Brunswick Avenue.

The AGM is also the time to learn about and vote on the important changes to your residents’ association’s constitution. Our business is your business!

Details at www.harbordvillage.com



The Greening of Croft: It's Underway!

BARBARA DONALDSON

Take a walk down Croft Laneway today and you will see the colourful plastic barrels anchoring the street that now contains a seating area for children; watering-can sculpture; painted meadow with cows; functioning rain barrels; cool cinder block planters; and old metal doors and grids being used as trellises.

It's deft. It's imaginative. It works. It wasn't always so.

The Croft Greening Project is an initiative created by residents who built an urban garden in Croft Street between College and Ulster streets in the spring and summer of 2016.

The original organizing group of Barbara Donaldson, Rochelle Rubenstein, Jane Perdue, and Anne Kerekes met over the winter months in 2015/16 to start the ball rolling. Others joined quickly. There are so many people to thank, we may miss a few but a special shout out to:

- Blake Neill (Cardinal Tree Care), who moved the barrels to Croft Street.
- The Harbord Village Gardeners, who provided spot-on advice on how and what to plant.
- Dinny Biggs and Abraham Blank for generously hosting two large and several small work parties in their backyard.
- Brian Kucharski, Tyler Workman, and Kurt Kramme, who sawed and prepared barrels. Brian and Tyler also designed and built the cinder block planters.
- The Blanchette family. Pierre,



Jane Perdue

The barest of landscapes challenged the creativity of the Croft Street planters.



Anne Kerekes



Anne Kerekes

Anne Kerekes



Anne Kerekes

- Joanne, Grace and Lucy cleaned, painted and worked on the art installation.
- Rochelle, who chose the glorious paint colours and turned her studio into the barrel painting zone. She was helped by Deb Wise Harris, Alissa Hamilton and Pamela Robinson.
- Peter Block and Alissa, who did many of the plantings.
- Lanny Shereck, who worked the back channels and created the fabulous meadow of cows.
- Conrad Bergschneider, who saw the beauty in the leftover metal, created and tends a beautiful tableau of plants and found objects on the south end of Croft.
- Alex Vizvary for storing our extra barrels and assembling our water barrel.
- Erika James and Kaya McGregor, who became our plant stewards.

Working from their planting plan, barrels were cut, painted in vibrant accent colours, and positioned strategically in the lane. With careful tending, plants soon took hold. The Laneway Garden is very much a work in progress. Interested residents are invited to help us plan next year. We have some successes to build on and many spaces in need of greening. If you are interested in participating, please contact croft-greening@gmail.com.

A complementary initiative to re-

move graffiti and add original murals to garage doors has already enhanced the street.

Croft Greening received generous support from the Laneway Project, the David Suzuki Foundation, and an anonymous donor/neighbour. Thanks also to the office of Councillor Cressy. (See also <http://harbordvillage.com/projects/greening/green-plan/#croft>.)



Jane Perdue

Kids can have a tea party, too



Sue Dexter

Morning light along the planted lane

Guerrilla Gardening in Alan Powell Lane

GAIL MISRA

Inspired by the Croft experiment, some gardeners in the northwest started eyeing the community side of the fence line bordering the Central Tech parking lot. As one of the neighbourhood's toughest sites for vegetation, could it be a candidate for a "guerrilla garden"?

Helen Mills, HVRA's resident horticulturist, graciously spent time with us identifying what vegetation could stay and what could go. She also gave us a long list of native and hardy plants we could try out.

A number of people along Brunswick responded to our flyer. In the end eight area residents came out on a hot Sunday morning in mid-June. We found the plucky weeds and grasses had survived the harshest conditions, sometimes having burrowed down below the asphalt for better purchase. There was a thin ribbon of soil on the asphalt, but not much more. A call-out to the neighbourhood brought donations of several dozen bricks to create beds. Five people gave \$450 to buy plants and a giant bag of triple mix. Helen Mills contributed numerous native plants, while others came from the David Suzuki Foundation.

Planting turned out to be the easy part. Then came the drought and heat. Relentless heat.

Had it not been for the amazing watering efforts of Sandra Foster, Ana Silva, and one other area resident, there would be nothing to see. Instead, there are lovely pockets of

flowers along the CTS fence: marigolds and dwarf zinnias have continued to flower; the coleus and coral bells are surviving; the cleome are now done, the asters are blooming, and the sedum Autumn Joy are just about to flower.

Many thanks to all who helped, including Sandra Foster, Ana Silva, David Halloran, Tim Grant, Christian Mueller, Colin Furness, Helen Mills, Mike and Kristy, Shaun and Sara, Nicole Schulman, Yvette Lang, Josephine Dasko, Jane Perdue, Kelly Weaver, and John Liss for making this experiment possible. We will wait to see if any of our perennial plantings survive the winter, but in the meantime, we continue to thank the garden watering angels, and we, along with the bees and butterflies—and puppy dogs on morning walks—can enjoy the flowers in the laneway!



Hot sun and lots of brush and weeds along the fence in Alan Powell Lane challenged the cleanup crew. From left Ana Silva, David Halloran, Tim Grant, Gail Misra and Sandra Foster.



Gail Misra

No one predicted the drought. Hats off to the waterers Sandra Foster and Ana Silva!



Caroline MacFarlane

Accents of sweet colour dot the west side of the lane.



2016 HVRA Community Yard Sale a Huge Success

JAMES MURDOCH



James Murdoch

“Many hands make light work” is a saying that best describes the effort that went into making this yard sale a huge success. We are so grateful to the many people who came together to help: everything from gathering and storing donations and pricing items to hauling the items to the site, selling them throughout the day, and cleaning up the remainder. Of course, we are also happy that so many people came out to buy, too!

Marilyn Martin began assembling the items last fall, and when the call went out for donations this spring, we were inundated! There must be a lot of empty basements and garages throughout Harbord Village, as this year’s collection was by far the most ever seen at the corner of Robert and Harbord Streets in our short four-year history ... and it showed when

all was tallied at the end of the day.

The Stephen Lewis Foundation received \$2,500 and the Scadding Court Investing in Our Future Scholarship Fund received \$1,500.

A big thank you as well to Knox Church, which donated the tables we had to rent in previous years. Plans are already in the works to make next year’s event even more successful.



James Murdoch

Major Street Refugee Initiative Update

GWYNETH PEARCE AND JAMES MURDOCH

It has been one year since we formed our group and it has been a roller-coaster ride of excitement, uncertainty, frustration, and learning.

After the disappointing news in June that our original application had fallen through, we immediately went back on the waiting list for a new match. We also indicated that we were prepared to be flexible as to the size of the family or families, since it was clear that approvals of Syrian refugees had slowed dramatically once the government had reached its “target” of processing 25,000 people. Even so, we realized that we could be waiting a very long time.

In mid-July, our Sponsorship Agreement Holder asked if we would be prepared to help in the reunification of a Syrian family by sponsoring the immediate relatives of four refugees who had already been brought to Canada as part of the government’s 25,000—family members who had been left behind.

In our case, this extended family had been living in one house in Homs, Syria, a city that has now largely been destroyed. They had managed to escape to Lebanon, but only four family members had been able to come to Canada. Now others could come.

Taking on this “Echo case” involves some additional challenges. Family members already here had been settled in Milton, not Toronto—but they saw no problem in the separation. And we would be taking



Major Street Refugee Initiative and members of the Milton refugee sponsor group: (top) James Murdoch, Jeremy Carkner (Milton); (middle) Gwyneth Pearce, Jenn Carkner (Milton), Annette Tromly, Fred Tromly; (bottom) Chris Aston, Margaret Beare, Mary Newberry, Rory (Gus) Sinclair

on the sponsorship of seven (a baby on the way would make eight) people, considerably more than we had originally contemplated.

We have also met with representatives from the Milton sponsor group, shared our experiences, and have started to make plans. We are all very excited by the prospect of working together to reunite these families and help them rebuild their lives in Canada. There are, of course, many questions still to be answered.

The estimated wait before the families will arrive in Canada is currently 7–12 months. We will do what we can to press the government to shorten this processing time, but at this point, we do not expect the families to arrive until early 2017. Stay tuned!



Harbord Village Trees under the Microscope

JAMES STEENBERG

The overarching purpose of this research was to understand and explore the vulnerability of the urban forest. Urban forest ecosystems provide an amazing array of benefits to city residents and neighbourhoods, ranging from improved home energy efficiency and air pollution removal to increased real estate values and human health benefits. However, cities can be an incredibly harsh environment for trees, with social, political, and biological stressors degrading tree condition and causing tree mortality. In our detailed analysis of the 806 Harbord Village trees, we measured a long list of these stressors to determine which were the most important. In other words, we wanted to know where trees were dying, where they were growing strong, and the reasons.

The grocery list of results was mixed. As expected, a substantial portion of the neighbourhood's older trees were in pretty rough condition, and much of the ash tree population was on its last legs due to the emerald ash borer. Importantly, trees in the worst condition and with the highest rates of mortality in the neighbourhood were all closely linked to different elements of the built environment, like paved surfaces, large and nearby buildings, and commercial strips. On the more surprising side, trees that had been hacked apart to make way for overhead wires were statistically likelier to survive than trees that weren't!

With all this being said, I think



Principal findings: to replace the canopy, let's ensure we plant large native trees. And incidentally, don't scoff at our laneway Manitoba maples or trees of heaven: they also contribute to the neighbourhood's urban forest!

there are a few key takeaways for Harbord Village residents:

- Trees currently being planted are a lot different from the trees currently dominating the neighbourhood, and a lot of them are much smaller tree species, like serviceberry, Japanese maple, and white cedar. Much of the benefits we get from trees are dependent on those trees growing up to be very big. So where possible, plant large, native trees.
- A major portion of the neighbourhood's urban forest is made up of gnarly, unwieldy, and frequently unwanted trees growing in back alleyways and along fence lines. These trees—like the so-called tree of heaven, Manitoba maple, and white mulberry—have their problems, but still play a vital role in the existing canopy and neighbourhood ecosystem. In short, plant native and improve biodiversity where possible, but a “weed” tree is better than no tree at all!

Finally, when I found instances of tree mortality in the neighbourhood—where a tree once stood I often found a new driveway or garage or home addition. My new research theorizes that housing renovation and landscaping may be significant causes of tree mortality, which can go unnoticed because of a delay in the consequences. If this research holds true, the takeaway lesson will be to protect your trees and their roots when you're making changes to your home and residential landscape.

The highlight of this summer research were the engaging conversa-



In 2014, Ryerson University environmental scientists remeasured 2,000 neighbourhood trees and did a detailed analysis of 806 to find out how our trees are faring. James Steenberg, then an Environmental Applied Science and Management PhD candidate, is flanked by Amber Grant (left) and Claire Stevenson-Blythe, Ryerson Environment and Urban Sustainability program.

tions with neighbourhood residents about their trees. They provided insight into the neighbourhood's ecological history, but also some bizarre—bordering on supernatural—causes of tree mortality. A full-grown Norway maple on Spadina was taken out by one drunk driver, while horse chestnuts were lost to a house fire on Robert. An unsuspecting dogwood tree was killed by a chlorine gas cloud caused by a chemical spill in a neighbour's yard. And most memorable, the death of a white oak was at

attributed to a mummified zombie cat that was the result of witchcraft and deliberately buried next to the tree—I kid you not!

If this research holds true, the takeaway lesson will be to protect your trees and their roots when you're making changes to your home and residential landscape.

Special thanks to Ryerson University's Andrew Millward and Harbord Village resident Sandy Smith.

Pumpkin Fest Ahead

Sharpen your knives.

Spruce up your creativity in preparation for November 1st.

We are calling on community artists to once again turn their Halloween pumpkins into works of art.

The schedule is simple: Carve your pumpkin and display it for the neighbourhood kids ... and grownups!

Leave it on your porch for pickup by noon the next day.

Volunteers with cars are especially needed to help collect on Tuesday afternoon. If you can help, contact chair@harbordvillage.com.

More details to follow on the website, on e-blasts, and in a flyer!



Graham Remppe



Planners Now Focused on Harbord Village Boundary Projects

CAROLEE ORME AND SUE DEXTER

The corner of Spadina and Sussex is the site of two rezoning applications that signal significant change may be ahead for our neighbourhood. The challenge will be to make the change fit.

The proposals will take months of study by HVRA, the Councillor's office, and City staff. Public consultations are mandated as part of that process.

Negotiated separately will be a University-City shared-use park at the south end of the Robert Street field. 666 Spadina plans include a small park space along Sussex Mews Lane.

Both projects are under negotiation.

For U of T: <http://app.toronto.ca/DevelopmentApplications/associatedApplicationsList.do?action=init&folderRsn=3995848&isCofASearch=false>.

For 666 Spadina: <http://app.toronto.ca/DevelopmentApplications/associatedApplicationsList.do?action=init&folderRsn=4000284&isCofASearch=false>.



P&S/IBI Architects

The 666 proposal viewed from Sussex Mews Laneway. The white building along Spadina, south of the existing building, would be 11 storeys. A small parkette would be in the foreground.

Comparisons of the Two Applications on Sussex and Spadina

666 Spadina Infill

Density: 4.18 FSI
 Height: 35 m, 11 storeys south side
 Capacity: 128 rental apartments
 55 1-bedroom
 61 2-bedroom
 12 3-bedroom
 Townhouses, Sussex Mews
 8 stacked, 4-storey, 3-bedroom,
 on Sussex

Heritage building and landscape
 No tenant impacts
 Green space: parkette expansion
 on Sussex Mews Laneway, loss
 of greenspace on south side of
 Sussex

UofT Residence, 700 Spadina

Density: 9.41 FSI
 Height: 83 m, 23 storeys
 Capacity: 549 beds, mostly dorm
 Predominantly undergrad

Townhouses
 12 3-storey
 facing Sussex Mews laneway and
 the interior laneway

No heritage
 Tenant rehousing concerns
 Green space: none on site

P&S/IBI Architects



The 666 proposal viewed from Spadina. Townhouses along Sussex are in the foreground.

HVRA Board 2015–2016

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HVRA Membership & Renewal Form

Please check one:

- Voting Member (individual) \$10/one year
- Supporting Member (to support HVRA activities) \$20/one year
- Fanatical Member (to really support HVRA activities!) \$50/one year

Payment can be made online at <http://harbordvillage.com/membership>.

Or mail a cheque payable to *Harbord Village Residents' Association* at HVRA, P.O. Box 68522, 360A Bloor Street West, Toronto, ON M5S 1X1.

Name

New Renewal

Address

Telephone.....Email.....



This issue of the *HVRA Newsletter* was edited by Jane Auster. Managing editor Sue Dexter, layout Ian MacKenzie.

Check our website for a full-colour version of this newsletter:
<http://harbordvillage.com/about/newsletters/>.