

Fall 2006

Volume 4, Number 2

# Harbord Village Residents' Association

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## Message from the Chair of the HVRA Board

Dear members of our fabulous HVRA:

There has been an extraordinary amount of activity in our association since the spring meeting, held last May. It was billed as a "Visioning Exercise" - a way of asking you what you want our association to do in the next few years. We asked people who had been doing interesting things to talk to us about possibilities. From that meeting grew two exciting initiatives, which are now, a short six months later, in full swing.

**One is our "Tree The Village" project, which is ambitious indeed! A group of very keen volunteers will set out to take an inventory of every tree in our neighbourhood.** This has been done only once we know of in Canada, and that was for a much smaller area in the An-



Mary and Gus, Christmas 2005



nex, just north of us.

The second is the Solar Initiative. **HVRA is going to broker bulk-buying of solar units for Ward 20** -- an amazing notion brought to you by, yes, your very active HVRA board. You can find more about these projects elsewhere in the newsletter.

On September 17, HVRA sponsored the Annual Fall Fair in Margaret Fairley Park. It was a tribute to the deep talent in our community and their dedication to building that community that this huge logistical feat pulled

off with nary a hitch. Eminent visitors included the mayor, who told us he cites HVRA as an **example of what a residents' association can be.** The music was varied and wonderful, the food was completely sold out, as was the beer. We earned more than \$2,000, but the biggest gift for our wonderful neighbourhood was, without a doubt, the strength injected into Harbord Village by this wonderful day of community-building.

*Rory 'Gus' Sinclair*

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Is your charming Harbord Village home hot in the summer and cold in the winter? Are you tired of watching your electricity, gas, and oil bills go up, up and away?

**Then you'll want to join us October 17, 2006 at the HVRA AGM for our presentation on: Save It or lose It: energy conservation for your home.**

Speakers include representatives from Greensaver, Toronto Hydro and Enbridge. **They'll present opportunities for you to make improvements to your home that will help you save energy, make your home more comfortable, save money, and maybe even help save the planet!**

Other details:

**Location:** The Kensington Health Centre (25 Brunswick Avenue just north of College Street) in the main meeting room.

Agenda: 6:30-7 p.m. -- registration and schmoozing

7-8 p.m. -- Area caucuses and HVRA business (see Page 8)

8-9 p.m. -- Energy conservation



## The candidates for City Councillor speak

So many decisions...so little time!

To help our wonderful Harbord Villagers with but one of these decisions – the upcoming election – your never-sleeping board has racked its collective brain to come up with a pop-quiz for the candidates.

**To get a glimpse into their psyches, we've tried to mix visionary thinking with local issues you've told us are important to you. And we've narrowed a big list to the 10 questions you see here.**

Enjoy the read -- do your homework – make a decision that will help lift our neighbourhood and the city to new heights – and make it count by voting!

**(Answers are presented in alphabetical order of candidates' last names.)**

*1: What should the City do to prepare for higher energy costs, both as a heavy user and as a leader of the community?*

**DESMOND COLE** ([www.desmondcole.to](http://www.desmondcole.to)): The best way for Toronto to be a leader in this area is to make renewable energy a top priority. We can't wait for oil and gas to become unaffordable before we look to alternatives. Year by year, we can help more citizens invest in green roofs and put them on as many new city buildings as possible. We can work with the province and Ottawa to invest more in transit so that getting around Toronto and the GTA is more affordable. **I heard it suggested that our bid for Expo 2015 should incorporate the theme of "a sustainable city"** - I love this idea.

**HELEN KENNEDY** ([www.helenkennedy.ca](http://www.helenkennedy.ca)): Tim Grant and David Booz are leading the way in HVRA, and I will do everything I can at City Hall to build on their solar power initiative, which seeks bulk-buying contracts to provide access to residents. At the Round Table on the Environment, I proposed that our ward should be a pilot project for energy solutions. Green roofs, solar panels, solar water heating, retrofits on public and institutional buildings, green permits on new construction....The City has actually made some progress, but we need to do more, and supporting citizen initiatives is the way to go.

**DOUG LOWRY** ([www.douglowry.com](http://www.douglowry.com)): The era of cheap electricity is over; we and the City need to embrace that fact by using solar power. Toronto Hydro should lead by starting with solar power panels to run your hot water heater. Using the money from the provincial government for renewals means starting with solar is a first but important step in changing our society. Although solar panels are not possible on every home, it means in the future we need to design our homes with solar in mind. The City has influence over design and should reward and promote **Torontonians who try to make their buildings save as much energy as possible. I like Toronto Hydro's giving a 10% rebate for energy conservation, which is why a non-profit utility is worth keeping.**

**CHRIS OUELLETTE** ([www.chrisouellette.ca](http://www.chrisouellette.ca)): We need a long-term solution to our energy problems and an aggressive conservation strategy should be at the forefront of that solution. This is not impossible; it just seems that neither the City, the Province nor the federal government is considering this a viable solution. Did you know Ontarians use 60% more energy per capita than our New York neighbours? Along with conservation, we need to look at shifting demand from peak to non-peak hours so we have more effective use of our energy-producing infrastructure. Finally, we need to ensure that any investment in new energy is investment in clean energy.

**ADAM VAUGHAN** ([www.adamvaughan.ca](http://www.adamvaughan.ca)): The Green bin program currently flares off methane; it should be harnessed to generate electricity. A tougher building code mandating energy efficient windows and timed lights in all new buildings is needed. Green roofs should not be an option, but a requirement of new development. Community projects to buy and install solar panels **need City Hall's support. Access to natural light should be protected. The city should partner with unions and local hardware stores and organize home retrofitting workshops. A pensioner's house could be winterized, made energy-efficient, and residents in similar houses could learn how to do it themselves.**





## Candidates for City Councillor speak (continued from Page 2)

*2: Can we ensure that just about all of Toronto's waste, residential and commercial, is managed within Toronto? Should we?*

DESMOND COLE: At present we cannot ensure this, but it should be a goal for the future. The City set a goal of 100% diversion of waste from landfills by 2010, but it didn't ensure that new buildings made it possible for residents to recycle and compost. Goals for reducing and diverting waste can't simply be handed down from the City. We have to make our services available to all residents and show them the positive effects of their participation.

HELEN KENNEDY: The best way to manage waste is to reduce it, as a City and as individuals. **Let's make composting and recycling mandatory and extend the bin program to apartment buildings**, which now recycle only 13 % of their waste. Manufacturers should be encouraged to reduce packaging, and bottles should be returnable – recycling through the Beer Store is a start. Incineration, which is being promoted by some as a solution to our waste problem, carries steep costs, could pose serious public health risks, and if you build it, you have to feed it. Far better to stop garbage before it starts.

DOUG LOWRY: **Toronto's waste could be managed within Toronto if and only if we use incineration for electricity as an option.** The concept as I see it would be at an old coal plant (which would need fixing) for the coal plant has existing infrastructure and land to include a recycling facility. In this fashion, as much as possible recycling can be done. If Toronto does not use incineration, the answer to the question is no. There is no available land within Toronto for a dump

CHRIS OUELLETTE: I believe that Toronto should deal with its own waste. If you don't want **waste in your own back yard, then you won't put so much waste out on your front curb.** A long-term solution is to further expand our recycling and composting programs and mount more aggressive educational effort to remind Torontonians about the oft-**forgotten first and second 'Rs'** – REDUCE & REUSE! We do need a short-term solution as our Michigan deal will expire in 2010. I believe the best short-term solution is for the City to acquire a site for incineration. New technologies have already proven themselves to be extremely clean throughout Europe and not have anywhere near the negative environmental and health implications of landfills. In addition, incinerating our garbage could produce enough electricity to power 75,000 homes in our city.

ADAM VAUGHAN: (Our) new landfill site in Ontario will take the pressure off while we examine options for local reduction and disposal. As we do nothing, Toronto falls behind. For example:  
-**Stockholm: The city's buses run off methane created by their sewage sludge. We use diesel for our buses.** Diesel trucks drive sewage to Michigan and landfill it.  
- **Italy: you buy new components to upgrade your computer. Torontonians buy whole new systems and new housing. We landfill the toxic electronic waste. Toronto's institutional buying power should drive change while we wait for better packaging laws.**

*3: What should be done to restore morale in the civic administration, and make it a more effective participant in Toronto's progress?*

DESMOND COLE: Amalgamation has done little to simplify the jobs of civic administrators. City council is supposed to create policies that are reflective of the entire city, but bureaucrats need to implement those policies in very diverse neighbourhoods and conditions. Furthermore, the province has downloaded services to the city without providing the resources City employees need to handle them. There are no easy answers to these problems, and councillors must have the courage to challenge and reform our post-amalgamation bureaucracy.

HELEN KENNEDY: **Decisions are best made where they are implemented, and it's time for the senior management in the administration to appreciate and use the knowledge gained by front-line people, who are the first contact with community members.** A lot of my work at City Hall over the years has been cutting through the tangles of red tape to get things done. We need to take **the 'bureaucratic' out of the bureaucracy and be more open, responsive and creative to new ideas.**

DOUG LOWRY: Morale in civic administration comes from leadership at the top or lack of it. One simple method is to **raise expectations and acknowledge excellence at City Hall. It's also helpful if**

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*HK: "Far better to stop garbage before it starts."*

*DL: "Toronto's waste could be managed within Toronto if and only if we use incineration for electricity as an option."*

*CO: "... the best short-term solution is for the City to acquire a site for incineration."*

*AV: "As we do nothing, Toronto falls behind."*



## Candidates for City Councillor speak (continued from Page 3)

*DC: "...the 1% hike will go a lot further if other levels of government make stronger commitments to transit as well."*

*HK: "Our hands are tied fiscally, so we must fight for a better deal from the province and the federal government ..."*

*DL: "I am fundamentally against allowing taxes to go into anything but the general account ..."*

*CO: "It's now or never for the TTC. We need a zoned faring system ..."*

*AV: "No. GST reform should be used for housing. ... Overhaul our parking system. ... Revenue goes to transit."*

people have a reasonable idea where the City wants to go or what it wants to do and can see light at the end of the tunnel. Expectation and demand for excellence breed excellence.

CHRIS OUELLETTE: First and foremost we need to return to smaller, more participatory Community Councils that deal with all issues affecting a local area. With the diversity of issues facing our neighbourhoods, four councils are not enough.

ADAM VAUGHAN: **Let's-make-a-deal** planning must stop. It confuses and paralyzes staff. Respect overall City goals, but create strong neighbourhood plans, better models of service delivery. Then have the political discipline to enforce them. Constant restructuring of staff interrupts the relationship between City workers and neighbourhoods. Create dedicated teams of City crews in our communities. Have them work directly with neighbourhood associations and businesses. **Create pride of place and pride in work. Take chances, Let's build a beautiful city instead of managing risk.** Get back to cleaning and protecting our neighbourhoods. The emphasis needs to be on design, not just engineering and cost. **Let's amaze ourselves.**

*4: Do you support former chief planner Paul Bedford's view for Toronto to reinstate the 1% GST cut and use the monies to dramatically increase TTC funding?*

DESMOND COLE: **I do, but I think it's a very difficult thing to ask of our residents. We need to** rebuild some trust between the City and the people it serves. As far as getting value for their tax dollars, many residents are dissatisfied. We desperately need money for transit, and the 1% hike will go a lot further if other levels of government make stronger commitments to transit as well.

HELEN KENNEDY: **It would be great to see more money for transit, but Toronto can't reinstate** anything -- the GST is a federal tax, and the new City of Toronto Act prevents the City from taxing anything but the hospitality industry. Our hands are tied fiscally, so we must fight for a better deal from the province and the federal government, and get transit on a predictable, solid budgeting base so we can improve and extend the system. We must end gridlock and car dependency and make transit an essential service like water and hydro. Build it, we will ride.

DOUG LOWRY: **As someone who studied urban planning, it's very tempting to agree with Mr. Bedford's view to increase the GST in Toronto by 1% because, frankly, the TTC could use the** money, however I would say no. I am fundamentally against allowing taxes to go into anything but the general account, for there is an equally and valid argument for other services in the City -- parks, social services, etc.

CHRIS OUELLETTE: Any additional funds for the TTC should be welcomed. We are expecting 700,000 new Torontonians over the next 20 years, and building new roads is not going to solve **any traffic congestion issues. It's now or never for the TTC. We need a zoned faring system** so taking the TTC more often than to and from work makes sense, and we need a reasonable service within a five-minute walk of every household in the city. Ask the nurse who gets off the night-shift at Toronto General Hospital at 7 a.m. on Sunday morning about his or her views on 'Transit City'.

ADAM VAUGHAN: **No. GST reform should be used for housing. Let's re-apply the GST cut to** new commercial and residential development. Use the money to fund a capping system, financing tax relief in neighbourhoods hurt by Market Value Assessment. Overhaul our parking system. Keep permits. Explore a system that requires a sticker to park on streets and meters. Sell stickers by the year, month, week and day. The first sticker would be free, two-car households would buy a second sticker. Suburban cars would need a licence. Exempt out-of-province cars. Revenue goes to transit.

*5: Pedestrians have been relegated to second class status on sidewalks. Will you actively support implementation of the Pedestrian Clearway (proposed in the Vibrant Streets Guidelines) to restore first class sidewalk status for pedestrians?*

DESMOND COLE: I certainly support the Pedestrian Clearway initiative. It recognizes that pedes-





## Candidates for City Councillor speak (continued from Page 4)

trians need to be the first priority on sidewalks and that we should address the needs of local businesses with this priority in mind.

**HELEN KENNEDY:** **You bet! We need to cut the clutter and make walking a pleasure again. Let's** also make this a city we can enjoy walking in safely -- the crossings at Robert Street at Harbord and Bloor spring to mind! We need fewer cars, more people on foot. We must continue to fight the Front Street Extension, build on initiatives like car-free Sundays we initiated in Kensington. We need more major projects like the pedestrian lanes established for the summer as part of Water-front revitalization and the proposed pedestrian clearway on College St., led by the HVRA.

**DOUG LOWRY:** As a pedestrian who walks to and from work, I support the premise of the **Vibrant Streets. It's interesting to note the example from Philadelphia of "walking through restaurants"** -- would need changes both from the gates around patios and an attitude in Toronto, but we can do it.

**CHRIS OUELLETTE:** **Definitely. Our ward's most successful pedestrian areas are ones where we** have decided to embrace pedestrians, like St. George Street and Queen Street by Soho. Lively pedestrian atmospheres mean more sustainable neighbourhoods because of less traffic congestion, safer neighbourhoods and more prosperous neighbourhoods.

**ADAM VAUGHAN:** Yes. The one thing that should have been harmonized after amalgamation was the widths of sidewalks. Sidewalks in the suburbs, where few walk, are wider and get snow-**plowing. Downtown pathways are narrow and, while used more often, don't get cleared. Let's** widen sidewalks whenever and wherever we can. Make walking safer through better design. **A million more people living downtown means a million more pedestrians, even if they're just walking** to their bike, car or the bus.

*6: Other cities seem to have more proactive and effective city bylaw enforcement of- everything from land use to graffiti to club noise to commercial encroachment on sidewalks. How can we make this happen in Toronto?*

**DESMOND COLE:** Parking bylaw officials are everywhere, and they are very busy people. We are using a lot of human labour to hand out endless parking tickets. How long do we intend to do this? With more functional parking solutions, we could re-assign some of these officials to other duties.

**HELEN KENNEDY:** **Bylaw enforcement has been a problem that we've been fighting for years at City Hall. We'll have more powers under the new City of Toronto Act, and I aim to ensure we use** them! And we need to consider new measures. Graffiti and filthy streets should be history. **Everyone is entitled to a good night's sleep. Noise violations should be ticketable offences, given by** bylaw officers during the day and evening and the police at night. Fines should be stiff. We need more bylaw officers, and we should look to cutting red tape and fast-tracking compliance.

**DOUG LOWRY:** A relatively simple solution is for every ward, including ours, to have a Problem Property Committee. The committee would include the councillor, the police, and city departments which regulate activity in Toronto. The councillor is there to be proactive and give political direction to work on solutions. For example, is the problem a police concern or something the City can do, or both? Does the problem extend to other properties, which can be fixed up before they are problems? The committee can and needs to be proactive.

**CHRIS OUELLETTE:** I think that if the City has bylaws, it should be prepared to enforce them and have the correct staffing levels to do so. The City should also make it easier for others to report offences to bylaws.

**ADAM VAUGHAN:** When you call your councilor, someone should answer AND follow up. Amalgamation has overwhelmed staff, allowing a sense of neglect to creep in. We spend too much **time writing letters to Ottawa and Queen's Park and not enough time corresponding with resi-** dents. Dedicated neighbourhood work crews would catch small problems before they become big problems. Increase staff on the street. Stop writing efficiency reports. As a reporter, I led cam-

*DC: "With more functional parking solutions, we could re-assign some of these officials to other duties."*

*HK: "Graffiti and filthy streets should be history."*

*DL: "... every ward, including ours, to have a Problem Property Committee."*

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## Candidates for City Councillor speak (continued from Page 5)

*DC: "I would advocate for more smaller, locally owned businesses ..."*

*HK: "A Business Improvement Area (BIA) would do a lot to help stimulate this stretch of College."*

*DL: "... encourage University of Toronto uses along it ..."*

*CO: "... by bringing out the sidewalks further and perhaps planting more trees, we could turn the section into a more pedestrian-friendly area..."*

*AV: "Work with property owners and the City's culture division to create space for artists."*

paigns to eliminate crack houses, fix parks, clean up alleyways and repair City property. The number of clean pick-up trucks driven by bureaucrats was astonishing. Emphasize more service, not more management.

*7: What would you do to help stimulate the business economy along College, between Spadina and Bathurst? What is your vision for redevelopment along this stretch?*

DESMOND COLE: When I first moved to the city, a restaurant in this stretch became one of my favourite spots. This area of College Street has a lot of pedestrian traffic and a lively atmosphere. I would work with all the businesses in that area, specifically those that have managed to achieve long-term success, to better understand what works in that area. I would advocate for more smaller, locally owned businesses, in keeping with the current atmosphere of the neighbourhood.

HELEN KENNEDY: **We need to hold a series of meetings at St. Stephen's to try to get partnerships going with local businesses, including the University. Community and business cooperation and involvement must be encouraged. A Business Improvement Area (BIA) would do a lot to help stimulate this stretch of College. A plan is in place. Let's explore ways to implement the guidelines for development developed in the neighbourhood charette on College, leading to some low-rise development at the corner of Spadina – while maintaining and extending historic protection to deserving façades on the north side of the street — particularly those at Brunswick.**

DOUG LOWRY: College Street between Bathurst and Spadina to expand the business activity needs to encourage University of Toronto uses along it, depending on who owns the land. U of T is the dominant usage in the area and has rarely crossed College, although there are isolated examples. There could also be a design feature indicating people are entering U of T at College and Spadina. Encouraging more housing along College would be a good thing, fitting into the Main Street and U of T influence.

CHRIS OUELLETTE: **It's an interesting area with so much potential. It also poses a great opportunity for us to better embrace the pedestrian by emphasizing the pedestrian aspects of the street. It almost feels like the street is too wide in this section – by bringing out the sidewalks further and perhaps planting more trees, we could turn the section into a more pedestrian-friendly area where cafés, patios and stores could flourish.**

ADAM VAUGHAN: Why is College west of Bathurst doing better? The answer is simple: the road **isn't as wide. East of Bathurst there's too much space for vehicles passing through, not enough space set aside to create a sense of destination.** The redesign of College was a lost opportunity and handled badly in our ward. It did damage to neighbourhood businesses. Widen the sidewalks. Pinch the road. Establish and support a Business Improvement Association for College. Our ward **has fewer BIAs than any other downtown ward. Why? Work with property owners and the City's culture division to create space for artists.** Small galleries are a tremendous local economic force. The number of computer stores make College an ideal location for new media culture.

*8: How will you help preserve the stability, character and livability of low-rise downtown neighbourhoods such as ours?*

DESMOND COLE: Harbord Village is one of my favourite neighbourhoods in which to walk, day and night. I know the residents who live here treasure their community. I will ensure that any changes to the area in the future are consistent with the current, low-rise architecture.

HELEN KENNEDY: Neighbourhood preservation is enshrined in the new City of Toronto Act. **We need to see it is honoured. Too many of the current councillors don't care a fig about downtown neighbourhoods.** We need progressive councillors, putting community needs first – and working closely with community groups, as I have. Neighbourhood consultation and good planning are key. We have area studies underway in Harbord Village and on Bloor to help constrain spot development, after a similar process on College. And we have managed to achieve some key heritage designations. We must build on this with strong representation in the new Council.



## Candidates for City Councillor speak (continued from Page 6)

**DOUG LOWRY:** One method to maintain the low-rise nature of the area is to have solar panels on the homes. The solar panels would encourage all the other aspects of energy efficiency to be done, which means a good solid housing stock would be maintained. An added attraction of solar panels is that an economic value could be added if a home were shaded. At the moment, shading is treated as a minor nuisance which people have to live with. Placing a solar panel on your home means compensation must be paid, if the solar panel is blocked.

**CHRIS OUELLETTE:** Our neighbourhoods need plans. The Bloor Street Visioning Study is just the beginning. Without proper plans for all our neighbourhoods, we have no framework for guiding growth in a manageable and sustainable way. I endorse plans for our all neighbourhoods that have specific zoning and new bylaws built into them.

**ADAM VAUGHAN:** **Stop let's-make-a-deal planning at City Hall. Let's lead change instead of reacting to it.** Create strong and visionary Part II plans for all our neighbourhoods. We need to link business association, local social service providers and neighbourhood associations and create local planning boards and then enforce the plan. Create local strategies to guide change and protect heritage. Neighbourhoods should be at the table at the beginning of the development process, not just brought in at the end as combatants. Too much planning happens behind closed doors. Private discussions often trump public process. We end up with reckless development and **a mediocre city. It damages older neighbourhoods and isn't building better new ones.**

*Q: How can we make the central core more attractive to, and supportive of, families with children and teens?*

**DESMOND COLE:** Over the past few years, the central core has failed to develop housing for families. This reality is at the heart of the problem. We need to develop dwellings for families of all incomes, so that our downtown reflects Toronto's often touted diversity. I also think it's important that children at school can play on grass instead of a glorified parking lot. The transformation of these spaces is costly, but I think it's important and I will be a strong advocate for it.

**HELEN KENNEDY:** A decline in young families is a Toronto-wide problem, owing in part to changing birthrates and demographics. In Ward 20, we have a better balance of very young children than the city at large, and school age children are mixed. The key to attracting families with kids is a healthy environment, a rich fabric of activities, recreation centres, parks, shops, good schools and child care, affordable housing and transit. We achieved more affordable housing than any other Toronto ward since 2001 – and at the waterfront, we put in a school, a daycare, and a **recreation centre. Let's build on this.**

**DOUG LOWRY:** Livability is determined by your neighbours. An association such as yours greatly helps, and as councillor, I would ensure neighbourhoods that wanted to meet would not have the cost of insurance or other City costs deter them from meeting.

**CHRIS OUELLETTE:** We need to develop more housing options for people so they can plan to **stay in our communities instead of moving on after a few years. People aren't leaving our neighbourhoods because they don't like it here, they are leaving because they have no other choice because of limited housing options once they enter a new stage in their lives.** Successful neighbourhoods are built by people who make a long-term commitment to the area – **let's make Council ensure that new housing development is diversified and supportive of all our residents along with the services that come with that. We do not need more 500sf one-bedroom condos, but that's what Council is approving. We need places for our families to live!**

**ADAM VAUGHAN:** Build housing. The lack of children living downtown is the most serious problem we have. In the last term, we built no public-affordable-family housing in Ward 20. **Private development in the rail lands will house 7,000+ adults, but only 225 children. This trend can't continue.** Large residential buildings should require at least 20% of the units be affordable family housing. Condos need to be designed with outdoor green spaces on low lying roofs and indoor play spaces for winter. Units should be built with connecting doors roughed in so individual units are easily converted to family housing.

*DC: "We need to develop dwellings for families of all incomes, so that our downtown reflects Toronto's often touted diversity."*

*HK: "The key to attracting families with kids is a healthy environment, a rich fabric of activities, recreation centres, parks, shops, good schools ..."*

*DL: "Livability is determined by your neighbours. An association such as yours greatly helps, ..."*

*CO: "We need to develop more housing options for people so they can plan to stay in our communities ..."*

*AV: "Condos ... should be built with connecting doors roughed in so individual units are easily converted to family housing."*



## Candidates for City Councillor speak (continued from Page 7)

*10: What is your vision to take Toronto beyond "business as usual" or "a little bit better" to "an outstanding place to live and work?"*

*DC: "For Toronto to be outstanding, it has to be inclusive."*

*HK: "... it means engaged citizens who work together to build better communities."*

*DL: "... ensuring Toronto is competitive against the surrounding GTA ..."*

*CO: "We need to stop trying to be something, anything, and start being us, Toronto."*

*AV: "... we need to dream up and design solutions for our communities right in our neighbourhoods."*

DESMOND COLE: For Toronto to be outstanding, it has to be inclusive. Our city often sets goals and makes plans without considering how all residents can participate and contribute. All residents of the city should be allowed to vote in its elections, period. The city must build better relationships with its most marginalized residents. We have to give people more meaningful participation in local governance through community councils and practical ward boundaries. Council alone cannot solve our city's challenges. We need the consent, participation, and approval of the people we serve. Raising voter turnout would be a positive start.

HELEN KENNEDY: Vibrant downtown neighbourhoods are the critical element – healthy, livable, exciting and dynamic, diverse. That means the right balance of development and preservation, it means good transit and services. It means responsive government. It means support for heritage and the arts. It means the right balance of development and green space, the right residential and commercial balance – live and work. And most of all, it means engaged citizens who work together to build better communities.

DOUG LOWRY: An outstanding place to live has the concept of reasonably clean, safe streets, good community and economic activities for all. During the World Cup – meeting with the neighbours was encouraged, desired and tolerated by all officials. We need to encourage this activity all the time, not just every four years. I believe ensuring Toronto is competitive against the surrounding GTA would keep jobs in Toronto, which allow people to continually make their neighbourhood and city better.

CHRIS OUELLETTE: I think council is out of touch with Torontonians – busying itself trying to be a 'world class' city but failing to have a 'world class' attitude. We need to stop trying to be something, anything, and start being us, Toronto. Our city's beauty lies in its people, its neighbourhoods, and that's what we need to focus on – preserving the vibrancy and eclecticism of those neighbourhoods. We can do that by ensuring Council respects proper services for our children and young people; respects public space and the built form of our neighbourhoods; and makes sure new development makes sense and is sustainable.

ADAM VAUGHAN: City Council is currently creating more problems than it solves. We must stop the old way of doing things -- taking problems to City Hall and hoping for answers. Instead we need to dream up and design solutions for our communities right in our neighbourhoods. We need to figure out the financing and the strategies to execute these plans and then bring our solutions to City Hall and push for change. More of the same old approach will only give us the same old results. The status quo is failing us all. It's time for change at City Hall and I want to help lead that change.

*Editorial comment: These are truly excellent answers to our questions. We are indeed fortunate to have a slate of such thoughtful candidates.*

## HVRA business for the October 17 AGM

You'll be asked at the Annual General Meeting to approve the creation of a new board position, to be called membership secretary.

The Constitutional Committee recommends the following amendment to the bylaws:

Article 6 (a) shall be amended as follows: "There shall be four (4) officers of the Association: a Chair, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a

Membership Secretary. The officers shall be elected by the membership at the Annual Meeting for one-year terms and shall serve as members of the Board."

Article 6 (c) shall be amended as follows: On line 5, the words "membership lists and other" shall be deleted. On line 6, after "Association," the words "other than the membership lists," shall

be inserted.

Article 6 (d) shall be added as follows:

"(d) The Membership Secretary shall maintain the membership list and associated data; develop strategies for membership development, retention and communication; and issue annual renewal letters, as well as coordinate Area Rep follow-up."





## Robert Street and ice rink hot topics

The University of Toronto is developing plans to redo its Robert St. property – which now includes a practice field, two tennis courts, a change room, a closed ice rink, and a small parkette that is treed and bricked. The university also plans to do something about its small property across the lane, which was built as a beach volleyball court, became neglected and is now used for storage for the large condominium under construction on Spadina.

The university is developing plans to extend the practice field by ¼ (25 yards), which would make it usable for intramural and intervarsity athletics and games. University of Toronto director of athletics

Bruce Kidd, who attended the HVRA open meeting last spring and spoke about the plans, met with a small group from the HVRA in September to discuss the plans and to initiate a consultation with the neighbours. The university intends to replace the existing grass with a synthetic playing field, put in three rows of bleachers and install lighting for evening use. Construction of the new athletic field would remove the tennis courts, change rooms, ice rink and parkette.

**The university's plans for the south end of the field, near Sussex, are not yet fixed. A new ice rink or pad could be put in. The beach volleyball court could be converted to a**

tennis court.

HVRA members attending the initial meeting with the university about the changes to its Robert St. property were primarily concerned to have the university begin a process of talking to the neighborhood. The university agreed to this. At this point, specific concerns about the changes to the Robert St. property include increased noise, disturbances from night lighting (which could be on until 10:45 p.m.), and games, traffic, appearance, community access and loss of existing outdoor recreational space.

- Stuart Schoenfeld, area rep

*“... concerns about the changes to the Robert St. property include increased noise, disturbances from night lighting (which could be on until 10:45 p.m.), and games, traffic, appearance, community access and loss of existing outdoor recreational space.”*

## University removes threat—for now

Two hundred tenants in the Huron-Sussex neighbourhood, behind Robarts Library, have been given a reprieve.

The University of Toronto has withdrawn its appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board of the City's Official Plan. The appeal sought to excuse the University from its obligation to protect tenants, should they get permission to evict them.

No other landlord in the City was appealing that section of the Official Plan.

The hearing was to start September 25, and last three weeks. The University withdrew its suit three days before.

The University has rented out the Victorian homes behind the Robarts Library for years.

But the reprieve may prove to be temporary. The University told the Ontario Municipal

Board that the housing in Huron-Sussex stands in the way of future development. In addition, it has said it wants to develop properties it owns on Washington St.

It has also begun moves toward getting the city to review the zoning that is presently in force on campus, zoning that protects the Victorian character of St. George St. as well as the Huron-Sussex enclave.

The neighbourhood has been protected by special zoning adopted in 1997.

The Huron-Sussex Residents' Organization, joined by the Harbord Village and Annex residents' associations will be involved in those negotiations.

- Sue Dexter



Two of the houses at issue on Glen Morris Street



*“... Each directory comes with a pair of heritage paint colour charts, which will help home owners who are interested in the beautiful colours used at the time their homes were built.”*

If it is, how do you conserve and restore its value and heritage character? The Harbord Village Directory for Conservers and Restorers of Heritage Properties answers all your questions in a 46-page booklet that identifies experts and suppliers who can meet all the conservation and restoration needs of a late 19th century Toronto home-owner, from the roof to the garden gate. More than 300 Directories have been sold – throughout Toronto and the province - since the the creation of Harbord Village Heritage Conservation District Phase 1 (lower Brunswick and Willcocks Street) in April 2005. (HVHCD

Phase 2, Robert Street is currently under development and progressing well.) The Directory may be obtained from Richard Longley, 68 Brunswick Avenue, M5S 2L7, tel: 416.961.2766, email: longley\_fovea@sympatico.ca, for just \$5/copy if you pick it up in person or by mail order for \$8. (Proceeds go to the

Harbord Village Heritage Conservation District Development Fund.) Each directory comes with a pair of heritage paint colour charts, which will help home owners who are interested in the beautiful colours used at the time their homes were built.

*- Richard Longley for the HCD Committee*



## Heritage funding uncertain

The Heritage Conservation District momentum will be stalled unless Councillors Martin Silva and Kyle Rae are able to convince City Council to amend the new Official Plan. In the last few years, several hundred thousand dollars have been given through the Councillor to neighbourhoods to finance Heritage Conservation Studies — the first step toward becoming Conservation Districts. Harbord Village HCD Phase I, the Annex, Queen St. Business district all received cash from developers in return for concessions such as height.

The planning department has said studies can no longer be funded under section 37 because they do not produce **'durable' results.** Harbord Village appeared before the Heritage Preservation Board and urged the board and City Council to restore funding as quickly as possible. Without section 37 monies, many of the neighbourhoods under development threat would be unable to launch Heritage Conservation Districts to preserve their streetscapes.

*- Sue Dexter*





## Help us tree the Village

Trees make our neighbourhood a great place to live. They look handsome, they keep our houses cool, and they clean our air. But not all of our trees are in good shape. Many are getting old. Some may be in danger of falling. Some stretches of our streets already lack healthy trees. Others may soon lose their trees.

As a first step towards increasing the number and variety of trees in our neighbourhood, the Harbord Village Residents' Association plans to conduct a tree inventory next spring to find out what trees we have and what state they're in. Volunteers from the neighbourhood will fill out survey sheets, and then the **University of Toronto's Faculty of Forestry** will use a computer program to compile the information and give us a report on the state of our "urban forest." We'll know about the number, age and health of our trees, including possible hazards and replacement values. We'll also know what varieties we have, including rare species and heritage trees. The study will include trees at the front of houses, which are often the property of the City of Toronto, and also trees in back yards, which are the property of the homeowners.

Then what? After the inventory has been completed, the Harbord Village Residents' Association will consider ways to improve the trees in our neighbourhood. A Forestry graduate student will help us obtain expert advice about caring for our trees and planting replacements if needed. Where strategic planting is recommended, we will work with the City to obtain desir-

able front-yard trees, and we will set up a special arrangement with a good tree nursery for back-yard trees. You will make your choices individually, but the HVRA will help provide a range of options.

Who says? Other neighbourhoods in Toronto and beyond have conducted studies like these and benefited from programs of care and replacement. See **Evergreen's website** at [www.evergreen.ca/en/hg/hg.html](http://www.evergreen.ca/en/hg/hg.html) for news of other projects and advice on native trees and plants. And visit the Neighbourhoods website at [www.forestry.utoronto.ca/urban/neighbourhoods/](http://www.forestry.utoronto.ca/urban/neighbourhoods/) for examples of similar studies and an explanation of the science behind tree inventories.

If you're interested in improving our neighbourhood trees, please consider helping with this work.

Donations are welcome towards the cost of the study. A fundraising concert is being planned for the late Winter with the Tokai String Quartet. More importantly, volunteers are also needed for the inventory. The HVRA will offer training. You will work with another volunteer and will be expected to collect information for only the houses on one side of one block. And you'll never look at trees the same way again! Contact Barbara Broerman 416.929.3340, [b.broerman@att.net](mailto:b.broerman@att.net) to volunteer.

- Margaret Procter for the Environment Committee

*"Trees make our neighbourhood a great place to live. They look handsome, they keep our houses cool, and they clean our air."*

Area rep Sandra DeAthe waters one of the young trees on Robert St.





“... sidewalks are first and foremost for pedestrians ... ”

Local patio showing 0.9 m (3 ft) clearance vs. required 2.1 m (7 ft) clearance

## College Street—still a work in progress

Imagine being able to stroll three or four abreast along our main streets, looking into shop windows on one side, while being enticed by café diners on the other.

Imagine being able to cross Major Street and have a street and have a straight, clear pedestrian pathway to welcome you, as opposed to an **A-frame sign, a 'patio peninsula', a gaggle of paper boxes** or the scores of other items that clutter our sidewalks.

Imagine how wonderful this would be for you, then imagine how essential it would be for a visually impaired person.

Sounds too good to be true? Well, sadly, it appears that Toronto East York Community Council (TEYCC) has ensured just that. More on this later.

After several years of working with our committee, City Staff produced a superb report which supported HVRA proposals for a Pedestrian Clearway on College Street.

Direct of Transportation Services Andy Koropeski declared that **"sidewalks are first and foremost for pedestrians, and no other activities shall interfere with the safe movement of pedestrians"**.

The report spoke to the importance of generous, safe and attractive sidewalk space as a means of improving the look, feel and beauty of the city.

To address situations where existing patios would be adjusted to provide a 2.1-metre (7 feet) clearway for pedestrians—a hot-button with residents at the last Annual Gen-

eral Meeting—HVRA proposed a pilot that would allow patio owners to move some or all of their patios into the tree zone. The staff report declared **HVRA's proposal to be exciting and visionary**.

Who could disagree?

Sadly, the councillors on the Toronto East York Community Council (TEYCC) disagreed.

Spurred on by the concerns of two restaurant owners—**both of whom have 'prematurely' increased their patio sizes—TEYCC watered down HVRA's recommendations**.

Instead of a straight, continuous pedestrian pathway, block by block, TEYCC opted to remain with the existing bylaw. This allows the pedestrian path to weave in and out around local obstructions.

If there is a tree in place, the patio can come within 2.1 metres of the tree pit; if there is no tree in a location, the patio can extend to within 2.1 metres of the curb.

Pedestrians lost to commercialization yet again. But at least there was to be a modified pilot project in place for the 2006 patio season to test **HVRA's curbside patio concepts**.

Or so we thought.

Sadly—you'll hear this word more often—**TEYCC wasn't even able to put this watered-down proposal in place**.

We originally pushed for a March 2006 resolution, but delays and deferrals meant that the proposal for a 2006 **pilot didn't get before the full Toronto City Council—which had to approve it—before the end of September 2006**. And,







## College Street (continued from Page 12)

if we want a pilot for 2007, we may have to start all over again.

**The bottom line:** 'our' Community Council supported limited business interests over residents' concerns (and, we think, over broader city concerns to improve pedestrian amenity).

Meanwhile, we're left with the kind of chaos seen in the accompanying photos.

If you don't like what you see?

- Let our interim councillor

(Martin Silva) know how you feel.

- Quiz candidates for City Council on how they will restore balance to College Street, and where they stand on similar pedestrian issues across the city.
- Ask the candidates if they support the Pedestrian Clearway concept (which City Council has notionally adopted as part of the Integrated Street Furnishings Initiative—see [www.toronto.ca/streetfurnishings](http://www.toronto.ca/streetfurnishings)).

- When you vote, take into account which candidates share your vision for what our local main street can be.

Amazing things have been done on College Street: 90 new trees, much wider sidewalks, and now, new business starting to move in.

**Let's not stop trying to secure** the wonderful pedestrian place we deserve on this vital main street.

- *HVRA's College Street Committee*

*"... 'our' Community Council supported limited business interests over residents' concerns ..."*

**'In-and-out' pathway** caused by existing bylaw.





## Graff triumphs continue

*“The real story was that the kids and the residents met. Together, they made agreements on mural designs or paint colours. Respect was the order of the day for art and property.”*

“Street artists are now making the lane come alive again,” proclaimed The Toronto Star on the front page of the August 29<sup>th</sup> GTA section. They ran a huge colour photo and feature about an event that took place the day before on Croft Street in Harbord Village.

The Globe and Mail also published a photograph and covered what they called “a two-year revitalization project on Croft Street...spearheaded by the Harbord Village Residents’ Association and Toronto Police Service, 14 Division.”

CBC Television was there, as was Global Television. Audra Brown’s story on CityNews was headlined “Laneway of Hope”. And there was a lot more media coverage. It was a big deal in Harbord Village. Why?

Over the past two summers, a massive transformation has taken place on Croft Street:



HVRA Board member Michael Heydon and artist Viviana Astudillo

120 properties/garages owned by residents of Lippincott, Croft and Borden streets were freed of graffiti vandalism by over 100 volunteers and many gallons of paint. Fifteen amazing murals were created.

The real story was that the kids and the residents met. Together, they made agreements on mural designs or paint colours. Respect was the order of the day for art and property. “I’ve got a nice spot on a good wall and the paint is

free,” said Zak Robinson in the Toronto Star. “This is my favourite thing!”

Residents were investing in artists who were formerly vandalizing their properties. **One artist said after this, he’s through with graffiti vandalism. “As a city we need free art where people have a space to express themselves,”** said Norman Yeung. **“We know there’s a place for art, just not everywhere.”**

**It’s probably the most work ever put into transforming a back alley and the most fun anyone’s had doing it.**

The people responsible are:

Toronto Police Services, 14 Division. PC Scott Mills put it all together and pulled it off. His partner, PC Matt Crisp, and 10 summer students from their new Youth in Policing program were the rest of the team.

The Harbord Village Residents’ Association piloted the initiative. In 2005, the newly-formed Graffiti Committee financed and commissioned the Croft Street mural and began painting on Croft.

The Harbourfront Community Centre. Directors of the outdoor arts program, Michael Brown and Kim Morrison, saw it through, from dream to

Some of the artists on August 28







reality. Michael and the kids at the centre designed and painted the Croft Street mural and orchestrated and supervised many of the other murals.

**Community CAVE.** Paul Aiello, Kristian Bonadie, Leyla Bulcan and Art Lockhart.

**All of the Painters.** Laser Eagles (Judith Snow & Debbie Holmes), students from Central Technical School, St. Mary's School, St. Stephen's Community House, Zak Robinson, Norman Yeung, Trevor Goodwin, Pascal Paquette, Vivana Astudillo, Andrew Brown, Erin Zimmerman (Cecil

St. Community Centre Mural Transformation Project), Horus and the guys who got together under the mentorship of Andrew Brown to create their first piece.

The suppliers: Paint Colours Unlimited, ICI Paints, Para-Paints, Canadian Tire, Home Depot, Honest Ed's and many others made sure the residents didn't have to pay a penny (unless they wanted to – and a few very nice people did. The rest of you, how about a \$5 a-year membership?).

Original music on August 28<sup>th</sup>: Sascha Tukatsch and STD.

Brian Morris from City of Toronto Graffiti By-Law enforcement.

The Harbord Village residents who pitched in with pizza, water, money, hoses, washrooms, paint, labour and moral support.

Rob Bedard and the team at Solid Waste Management City of Toronto.

- *Michael Heydon for HVRA's Graffiti Committee*

The Clean Team



The artist and the owner



Got graffiti? Neighbour been tagged? HVRA can help. Contact the Graffiti Committee (see below) to learn more.

## Want to help make a difference?

HVRA relies on the board and member volunteers to get things done -- including the many things you're reading about here. Priorities for the year are set based on member and Area Rep input at the Annual General Meeting -- but the actual work is done by our hard-working committees.

*How about investing a few hours in making our neighbourhood a better place?*

Please give the committee contact a call, and let's have some fun building a better 'hood.

● **Environment Day, Cleanups, Trees:** Tim Grant, 416.960.1244

● **Graffiti Removal/Transformation:** Jane Auster, 416.534.9888; David Booz, 416.806.2669; Michael Heydon, 416.963.9600.

● **Neighbourhood Planning:** Susan Pfeiffer, 416.964.8822.

● **Traffic (Streetscape, Speed bumps, Pinchpoints):**

Gus Sinclair, 416.966.1523.

● **Committee of Adjustment/Bylaw Compliance:** Maria Perin, 416.922.6652

● **Communications, Newsletter:** Jane Auster, 416.534.9888; Richard Gilbert, 416.923.8839.

● **Membership:** Maria Perin, 416.922.6652.

● **Fall Fair:** Gus Sinclair, 416.966.1523.

● **Awards, Community Recognition:** Rory Sinclair, 416.966.1523.

● **Heritage Conservation:** Richard Longley, 416.961.2766; Sue Dexter, 416.964.9527; Julian Kitchen 416.935.0757.

● **Liaison with BIAs/Conflict Resolution:** Gus Sinclair, 416.966.1523.

● **College Street Revitalization (winding down):** Gord Brown, 416.924.6445; Richard Gilbert, 416.923.8839; Robert Stambula, 416.922.4453; Michael Heydon, 416.963.9600.



# Membership stuff

## HVRA Board 2005-2006

Chair	Gus Sinclair	966-1523	rory.sinclair@rogers.com
Treas.	Gordon Brown	924-6445	brownge@sympatico.ca
Sec.	Sandra DeAthe	929-3621	sdeathe@interlog.com
<b>Area Reps</b>			
NW	Jane Auster	534-9888	jauster@rogers.com
NW	David Booz	538-8109	dbooz@golden.net
NE	Stuart Schoenfeld		schoenfe@yorku.ca
NE	Margaret Beare	926-8984	mbeare@osgoode.yorku.ca
SW	Michael Heydon	963-9600	michael@citytv.com
SW	Susan Pfeiffer	964-8822	susan.pfeiffer@utoronto.ca
SC	Richard Gilbert	923-8839	richardgilbert@sympatico.ca
SC	Richard Longley	961-2766	longley_fovea@sympatico.ca
SE	Tim Grant	960-1244	tim@greenteacher.com
SE	Maria Perin	922-6652	m.perin@sympatico.ca
UofT	Sue Dexter	964-9527	susan.dexter@rogers.com

### Membership soars to over 400!

Wow! From 30 stalwart souls at the HVRA launch just four years ago to over 400 names on our roster today. This is truly a neighbourhood that cares -- and is willing to roll up its sleeves to make things better! Please take a bow.

**Already a Member?** Thanks. In particular, sincere thanks to all of you who have honoured us with your Supporting and Fanatic memberships, which have supported many of the new initiatives we've undertaken.

**Haven't had a chance to renew for 2006-2007?** Now's the time. Simply fill out the renewal slip below and mail it with your cheque. To make it simple, how about a two-year membership?

**Not yet a member?** Now's the time! Meet your neighbours, have some fun and perhaps devote a few hours to something you want to improve. No time to spare? We understand. But by simply joining, you'll add your name to the ever-growing roster and help make HVRA's voice even better heard at City Hall.

**Ideas for how to grow our membership, and strengthen connections?** Please contact Gus Sinclair at 416.966.1523 or any other board member (list at left).

This issue of the HVRA Newsletter has been edited by Jane Auster. Layout: Richard Gilbert.

## HVRA Membership & Renewal Form

Thanks to everyone who has renewed for 2006.-2007 Not a member yet? Know someone who should be a member? Please join -- to help us continue building a great neighbourhood!

### 2006-2007 HVRA Membership

**Please mail to:**

### **Harbord Village Residents' Association**

P.O. Box 68522  
360A Bloor Street West  
Toronto, M5S 1X1

### **Please check one:**

Voting Member (individual or family):	\$5	2 years \$10
<b>Supporting Member (to support HVRA activities):</b>	<b>\$20</b>	<b>2 years \$40</b>
Fanatical Member (to <u>really</u> support HVRA activities!):	\$50	2 years \$100

### **Please make your cheque payable to the Harbord Village Residents' Association and include:**

Name.....

Address.....

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

Areas of interest or concern.....