

Fall 2007

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Harbord Village Residents' Association

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*This newsletter is pro-
duced twice a year by the
Harbord Village Resi-
dents' Association (HVRA)
serving the part of Toronto
bounded by Bathurst,
Bloor, Spadina, and
College. See Page 8 for
more information about
HVRA or visit
www.harbordvillage.com.*

Message from the Chair of the HVRA Board

Dear members of our wonder-
ful HVRA:

As usual, your board has been
very active keeping things on
the go inside our fabulous
neighbourhood and commu-
nity.



Here are a few highlights:

●The Tree Inventory got off
to an amazing start, with the
volunteer base reaching the
30-plus mark.

●The Solar Project has en-
tered the final phase where
the solar companies selected
by the HVRA Solar Committee
as presenting the best deal for
our members are now enter-
ing into contracts with mem-
bers who have signed up.

●By the time you read this,
the 15th annual HVRA Fall Fair
will have taken place in Mar-
garet Fairley Park [September



16th), for which there will be a
report at the AGM on October
16.

●The Bloor Corridor Visioning
Study, ongoing since the be-
ginning of the summer, aims
to have all stakeholders –
Annex Residents' Association,
HVRA, Huron Sussex Resi-
dents Organization, City Plan-
ning, University of Toronto,
City Council, inter alia – agree
on what Bloor Street should
look like over the next 50
years. Phase 1 involves Bloor
Street/ Avenue Road to
Bathurst, and the visioning
involves such things as height,

density, green space and
community amenities. You are
ably represented in this exer-
cise by Sue Dexter.

Graffiti eradication has pro-
ceeded at a great clip in the
Croft street area south of Ul-
ster ... and this all under the
persistent and cheerful leader-
ship of Michael Heydon. Go
take a look – it looks wonder-
ful!

With all good wishes for a
happy autumn,

Your chair guy

Rory 'Gus' Sinclair

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: ALL ARE WELCOME

6:30 for 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday October 16, 2007

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

AGENDA

6:30 - 7 pm – Registration and schmoozing

7:00 - 7:20 – Area caucuses and election of area reps

7:20 - 7:30 – Caucus reports

7:30 - 7:45 – HVRA committee and other reports

7:45 - 8:00 – Election of officers for 2007-2008 fiscal year

8:00 - 8:10 – Councillor Vaughan: State of the Union

8:10 - 9:00 – Special Topic: *Raising taxes versus cutting services:
the city's financial future (see Page 7)*



Here comes the Sun!

"I'm happy to report that I love my solar panels. The installation was painless, and my array is making electricity every day"

The Downtown West Solar Energy Project (DWSEP) has been a great success! Over 80 households have signed up for site visits with the intent of installing over 130 solar energy systems, half domestic hot water, and half photovoltaics (to produce electricity). Vendor site inspections are in process, and a handful of systems have already been installed.

It was very challenging to

select the preferred vendors from a number of very high quality bids. Eventually, we selected Goldwater Solar Services for the solar hot water systems and Solera Sustainable Energies Company for the photovoltaic systems.

We had four public meetings around Trinity-Spadina with total attendance exceeding 220 people. To publicize the meetings, about 40 volunteers hand-delivered approximately

17,000 flyers to all the houses in the area bounded by University to Ossington, Dupont to Queen. Along with promoting our public meetings, the flyers included some general information on solar energy systems, allowing us to raise the general understanding of solar energy among many people, even those who couldn't attend our meetings.

Solera Sustainable Energies has installed four photovoltaic systems, and the homeowners are delighted. Jessy Kahn writes, "I'm happy to report that I love my solar panels. The installation was painless, and my array is making electricity every day. I am using the power myself and am comfortable with this solution, preferring not to add any more complications to my tax return.... I highly recommend this purchase to other neighbours and hope that more people will want to jump on such a worthy bandwagon. Thanks again for organizing everything."

Jessy's point about using the power herself is a good one, because we are finding the process of signing up for the Standard Offer Contract, and then connecting to the grid, somewhat bumpy. (We understand that even Olivia Chow and Jack Layton are having trouble getting an SOC connection agreement for the PV

Margaret Procter was the first Harbord Village resident to obtain a solar water heating system as part of the project





system they've had for a number of years!). The SOP is new, and project participant Sue Dexter, by sheer persistence, may have been the first household in Toronto to get an SOC connection. The province, the utilities and the safety authorities are still working out the details on how to make these connections safely and according to all the appropriate codes and requirements. We plan to use **what we've learned to develop** tools to assist other people in making their connection so they can start being paid \$0.42 per kilowatt-hour.

Goldwater Solar Systems have completed a handful of installations of solar hot water systems. Margaret Proctor was the first HVRA resident to complete her installation and is very pleased to be reducing her natural gas use by getting hot water from the sun.

A number of the DWSEP participants are considering purchasing on-demand water heaters to provide backup hot water, thus reducing their gas consumption even more. Some people are also looking at using their solar hot water systems to supplement their space heating needs, for even greater savings (and even greater reductions in greenhouse gases).

Thanks to all of the people who supported the project, including Olivia Chow, Deputy Mayor Joe Pantalone, Councillor Adam Vaughan, the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association, and the residents' associations. A special thank you to all of the many volunteers and committee members who helped in many ways, big and small. The largest thanks go out to the project participants who, by installing solar systems on their homes, are taking a stand against climate

change and making Toronto a greener place.

It's still not too late to get involved. Information on the project is posted on the Downtown West page of the OurPower.ca website, along with the Solar Energy Project page at www.harbordvillage.com. If

you're interested in additional information and project updates, or want your own solar energy system, contact us. May the sun continue to shine on us all!

- David Booz, 416.806.2669

- Tim Grant,
tim@greenteacher.com

Adopt a tree

Toronto's trees suffered dreadfully during this summer's drought, young trees in particular. Harbord Village property owners and tenants **are invited to 'Adopt a Tree' to be ready, if** such a calamity occurs again, to water the trees in their front and backyards and trees on nearby city property (sidewalks, boulevards, back lanes, concrete tree boxes).

HVRA would also like to encourage anyone who is prepared to contact local business and home owners on College, north and south sides, Bloor, Bathurst and Spadina, where trees are often neglected and suffering, to ask **them to water the trees located on 'their' sec-**

tions of sidewalk, or, at least, to provide water to volunteers who are prepared to do so.

If you think a tree is in distress or in danger of losing branches or falling down, call the **City's Urban Forestry Services Division at 416.338.8733.**

If you would like to 'Adopt a Tree' or persuade others to do so, please contact:

- Richard Longley, 416.961.2766
68 Brunswick Avenue
longley_fovea@sympatico.ca

Community Police Liaison Committee (14th Division) Priorities and Update

The Community Police Liaison Committee does not meet over the summer. Beginning in September, the regular date of the CPLC meeting will change to the second Wednesday of the month. Please send any police-related concerns to Margaret Beare in advance of these monthly meetings.

While the HVRA area is considered one of the safest in the city, we are not immune to acts of violence and drug-related activities. Graffiti and the destruction of personal property continue to be neighbourhood concerns, and the efforts of HVRA members, together with police support, keep some of the graffiti at bay, but this continues to be a frustrating endeavour.

Over the summer, HVRA, together with community members, were disturbed by reports of extreme noise, vandalism and intimidation incidents involving some of the residents of **60 Borden Street. Several neighbours' cars** were vandalized with paint, and another vehicle was dangerously compromised by having

the wheel nuts loosened such that the wheel fell off in traffic. 60 Borden residents hurled **an incendiary device onto one person's property**, and repeated shouted taunts made community members fearful within their own properties.

Councillor Adam Vaughan convened a meeting at City Hall on July 6th to attempt to develop a plan to reduce the neighbourhood concern. The Community Liaison police officer attended the meeting, and HVRA members emphasized to him the need for more frequent patrols and more definitive police actions and presence to stop 60 Borden residents from threatening citizens. Promises were made by the owners of the house. Security officers were to be employed and the police were to patrol more often. Perhaps the greatest impact came from the removal of the most disruptive tenants. The situation is still being monitored.

- Margaret E. Beare (HVRA board member for the Northeast)



Our massive tree inventory

During June, July and August, our neighbourhood saw 30 hard-working volunteers embark on one of the most ambitious tree initiatives undertaken in the city in recent memory. Working in teams of one to four, they spent countless hours conducting an inventory of most of the trees in Harbord Village's front and backyards. It was a lot more work than any of us dreamed.

The kickoff event was a day and a half "NeighbourWoods" training session in early June. During the training, Professor Andy Kenney of the U of T Forestry Conservation Department and a colleague taught our volunteers to identify common tree species, assess their size and health, and record these details on special data sheets.

Then the hard work began. Armed with clipboards, measuring devices and NeighbourWoods tally sheets, teams spent many days and evenings identifying the species and assessing over 30 factors per tree and talking to the many homeowners and passersby who stopped to talk

about the project. Despite the fact that some blocks had more than 200 trees, we estimated that by the end of August, 50% to 55% of all of the

Toronto tree advocacy organization, provided an added incentive by agreeing to provide charitable receipts to all donors.) In addition, we re-

"None of this would have been possible without the generosity of dozens of residents and local businesses who donated a total of \$6,420"

Sheila Gilbert and Sherry Galvao assess a tree on Major Street



Sherry Galvao measures the height of a tree in Major Street

trees in the Harbord Village had been evaluated.

Throughout the inventory, our efforts were guided by Julie Keller, a graduate student in forestry conservation at the University of Toronto. She helped teams get started, filled in when members were unavailable, and answered numerous questions throughout the three-month period. Best of all, she was not shy about calling potential volunteers and provided encouragement to everyone who worked on the project. Given how much time was required to inventory all the trees on a single block, her encouragement was pivotal.

None of this would have been possible without the generosity of dozens of residents and local businesses who donated a total of \$6,420. (Evergreen, a

received small grants from the Toronto Parks and Recreation Foundation and the federal government's summer student job program. Most of these funds were used to cover salary and training costs this summer. The remaining funds will help us with the next phase of the project.

As you are read this, Julie is writing an interim report, the results of which will be released at a community meeting later this fall. At that time, we'll seek community input about what next steps should be undertaken to improve the urban forest in our downtown community. Already, our hard-working volunteers have passed along several suggestions. But for now, the hard work is over.

- Tim Grant is the chair of HVRA's Treering the Village committee





HVRA's Tree Inventory

Committee would especially like to thank the following, who conducted an inventory on one or more blocks this summer:

Cynthia Best
 Dinny Biggs
 John Biggs
 Debby Black
 Andy Buxton
 Carol Carter
 Heather Carter-Simmons
 Alice de Sousa
 Anne Eyerman
 Laurence Fishmore
 Sherry Galvao
 Doug Gameroff
 Carmen Gauthier
 Sheila Gilbert
 Barbara Godard
 Dorothea Godt
 Sue Grimbly
 Alissa Hamilton
 Julie Keller
 Janet Kerman
 Len Lewis
 Gail Littlejohn
 Richard Longley
 Maria Muszynska
 Kanan Patel
 Margaret Procter
 Samiha Sayed
 Caitlin Smith
 Emily Wilkinson
 Harriett Xanthakos
 Liisa Younger

The following generously contributed funds for this work:

Samiha Abdel-Sayed
 Annex Mart
 Peter Arberg and Kanan Patel
 Jane Widerman Auster
 Margaret Beare
 Pierre Beeckmans
 Bookmasters Ltd.
 David Booz
 Tamara and Jake Bukhanov
 Monica Campbell
 Olivia Chow
 Cristello Hospitality Group
 (Sydney Medlewitz)
 Josephine Dasko
 Sandra L. DeAthe
 Josephine Dasko



Suzanne Dubeau
 Inge Fowlie
 Sherry Galvao
 Doug Gameroff
 Carmen Gauthier
 Richard Gilbert
 Gingeresque (1286184 Ontario Ltd.)
 Dorothea Godt
 Richard Gorman (College Crescent Associates)
 Tim Grant
 Morton Greenberg
 Susan P. Grimbly
 Jeannie Hastie
 Michael Heydon
 Jurecka and Associates
 John Liss
 Nikki Marks & Sam Cohen
 Susan McDonald
 Rebecca McHugh
 Elizabeth McRae
 Curtis Oliver
 Maria Pasquino & Richard Longley
 Jane Perdue
 Susan Pfeiffer
 Minh-Hong Pham
 Phoenix Community Works Foundation (Toronto Parks and Recreation Foundation)
 Pita Q Restaurant (1475773 Ontario Inc.)
 Margaret Procter
 Queen Video (582004 Ontario Inc.)
 Rose and Jack Rodrigues
 Mary Romaniuk
 Keith Sharp
 William P. Sharpe
 Helene and Sheldon Silverman
 Rory A.P. Sinclair
Peter Slojanovic (Peter's Garage)

Spadina Foot Mart (Wajdi Abukhreibeh)
 Robert Stambula
 Mary Suddon
 Judith Taylor
 Leslie Thompson
 Westwood Creative Artists
 Sarah Whitehouse & Randy Schwartz
 Shirley Yanover
 Susan Dexter Young

Samiha Sayed and Doug Gameroff take the measure of trees in Kinkos' parking lot off Major St.

Gail Littlejohn, Carmen Gauthier and Debby Black determine the circumference of the largest tree on their block





New Sakuras for Bathurst

“We remain hopeful that adding cherry trees to this neglected, rather desolate section of Bathurst Street has great potential to bring much joy – especially during spring blossom season – to local residents and the tens of thousands of transit users and car drivers who pass by each day”

Last year, the Japanese Consulate donated six Japanese Sakura (cherry blossom) trees, which we planted on the east side of Bathurst, just south of Lennox (adjacent to the NW corner of Central Technical School). Because of a number of negative factors – delays in planting the trees, poor soil, and inconsistent watering last summer – four of the trees failed to leaf out this spring.

Fortunately, the consulate was willing to replace the four dead trees this spring and gave us a fifth one, too. So we improved the soil, pruned the new trees, and arranged a schedule of volunteers to water the trees from early June through August.

We remain hopeful that adding cherry trees to this neglected, rather desolate section of Bathurst Street has great potential to bring much



joy – especially during spring blossom season – to local residents and the tens of thousands of transit users and

car drivers who pass by each day. [Editor's note: the trees have already brought joy to this editor, who lives on nearby Lippincott Street.]



Please join us in extending a big thanks to the Japanese Consulate for their generosity and to the following who helped water the trees this Summer: the staff of The Real News, Jane Auster and Sandra DeAthe.

- Tim Grant for the HVRA Environment Committee

HVRA boardies Jane Auster and Sandra DeAthe demonstrate the muscles they used to keep the new and older Sakuras alive on Bathurst Street in the face of the summer's drought



Heritage Conservation District Update

The Harbord Village Residents Association won Heritage Toronto's **32nd Community Heritage Award and its Members' Choice Award** in the late fall of 2006 for its heritage conservation efforts, including the publication of our **'Restorers' Directory'**. Each award came with a cheque for \$500, which has been directed towards

heritage conservation in Harbord Village.

Sales of directories continue to be brisk (171 copies so far in 2007), again with profits going towards local heritage conservation.

The fifth edition of HVRA's Conservation and Restoration Directory is now available.

You can buy it at HVRA's AGM on October 16. Price remains \$5, or \$8 by mail order from:

Richard Longley
68 Brunswick Avenue
Toronto, M5S 2L7

T: 416.961.2766
F: 416.961.3141 Email:
longley_fovea@sympatico.ca

"Meet the Bloor Corridor Visioning Study. Bloor Street, from Avenue to Christie, is being redrawn ..."

Bloor Corridor Visioning Study

Remove a lane of traffic on the main street section of Bloor (from Bathurst to Spadina) to allow for pedestrians, shoppers, restaurant and bookstore goers – and yes, hardware customers – to plant a row of trees that will reach as far as Avenue Road?

Make any new building along the street sustainable – energy-efficient, top-of-the-line, ecologically-sensitive, LEED standard at a minimum?

Help green the city by creating pedestrian walkways, adding amenities like benches and sheltered areas and a crosswalk at the north end of **Philosopher's Walk** to make that frequently used crossing legal?

Reduce our dependence on the car by encouraging and upgrading local services, improving infrastructure, including the creation of new parkland on the Green P lot at Lippincott, financed by housing on part of the site?

Meet the Bloor Corridor Visioning Study. Bloor Street, from Avenue to Christie, is being redrawn – so far in the imagination of neighbours, of the University of Toronto, of Business Improvement Association representatives – by a set of creative consultants and city planners.

To date, there have been two public meetings. A third,

leading to a final plan, including what kinds of buildings can be built along Bloor east of Spadina, will be held in the next few months. We will keep you posted.

- Susan Dexter for the HVRA Board

Construction Update

At last, the construction phase of both the Royal Ontario Museum and the Royal Conservatory of Music is about over, and the rehabilitation of **Philosopher's Walk** and the **Queen's Park Crescent** side of the ROM can begin.

Damage has clearly been done, but we believe all parties are committed to fixing their part of the Walk – though there may be some

permanent damage to the greenery.

Philosopher's Walk is the best of the new world of Bloor Street. Pedestrian-friendly. A natural sanctuary within the heart of this great city. We need to cherish and protect it.

- Susan Dexter for the HVRA Board

The Annual General Meeting of the Harbord Village Residents Association

Tuesday October 16th 6:30 for 7:00 p.m.

Kensington Health Centre
25 Brunswick Avenue

It's certainly no secret that the city is in serious financial trouble. The reasons for this are many; suffice to say that the combination of downloading social services by the provincial government under Mike Harris and the freeze on taxes under Mayor Mel Lastman has been a total disaster for the city.

At a meeting of the HVRA board and Councillor Silva a year ago, Councillor Silva asked where we stood on the question of raising taxes versus cutting services. Needless to say, board members voiced strong opinions.

Because of the seriousness of this matter, your board feels **it's important to get the input of the annual general meeting**, so this will be our special topic after the caucuses, reports and election of new officers.

Let us hear your voice and opinion on October 16th at Kensington Health Centre. The full meeting agenda is on Page 1.



HVRA's organization

JOIN HVRA
AND LIVE
LONGER!

HVRA
NEEDS
YOU

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, Clean-ups, Trees:*
Tim Grant, 960.1244.
- *Graffiti Removal/ Transformation:*
Jane Auster, 534.9888;
Michael Heydon, 963.9600.
- *Traffic (Streetscape, Speed bumps, Pinch-points):*
Rory Sinclair, 966.1523.
- *Committee of Adjustment/Bylaw Compliance:*
Rory Sinclair, 966.1523.
- *Communications, Newsletter:*
Jane Auster, 534.9888;
Richard Gilbert, 923.8839.
- *Membership:*
Katrina McHugh, 833.5900
- *Fall Fair:*
Rory Sinclair, 966.1523.
- *Awards, Community Recognition:*
Rory Sinclair, 966.1523.
- *Heritage Conservation:*
Richard Longley, 961.2766;
Sue Dexter, 964.9527;
Julian Kitchen, 935.0757.
- *Liaison with BIAs/Conflict Resolution:*
Rory Sinclair, 966-1523.
- *College Street Revitalization (winding down):*
Richard Gilbert, 923.8839;
Michael Heydon, 963.9600.

HVRA Board 2006-2007

Chair	Gus Sinclair	966-1523	rory.sinclair@rogers.com
Treas.	John Pham	920-9788	phaminhong@hotmail.com
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SC	Richard Longley	961-2766	longley_fovea@sympatico.ca
SE	Tim Grant	960-1244	tim@greenteacher.com
SE	Leslie Thompson	964-6393	lthompson@lesrisk.com
UoT	Sue Dexter	964-9527	susan.dexter@rogers.com

Membership stuff

Membership soars past 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 2007? Now's the time. Visit www.harbordvillage.com OR fill out the renewal slip with this issue of the newsletter 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 membership secretary Katrina McHugh at kmchugh@trebnet.com.

HVRA's mailing address is:
PO Box 68522, 360A Bloor Street West, Toronto M5S 1X1

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