

April 2005

Volume 3, Number 1

Harbord Village Residents' Association

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Welcome!

By Rory 'Gus' Sinclair
Chair, HVRA

Hello, HVRA members and Harbord Village residents!

It might seem a tad tedious to report, but I must tell you that, yet again, your board has been up to its usual breakneck pace of activity as well as maintaining the high quality of work you've come to expect of us. Inside you'll find various reports on those activities – read on!

You are lucky indeed to have such a fine group steering the neighbourhood to great and ever greater accomplishments. I am so proud to serve with these remarkable and good neighbours.

Everyone, stop right now and give them a big hand – Thank you! That felt good!



Here are some dates and events to note:

April 23, Saturday: The Mayor's Cleanup Day - 10 a.m. to noon

Meet coordinators at the corners of Brunswick and Ulster or Brunswick and Sussex where



you'll receive bags and instructions. Come, meet, greet and bond with your neighbours as we all clean up the nooks and crannies and back lanes of our neighbourhood. We have been doing this for a number of years, and we think it's great that the Mayor is following our lead!



April 30, Saturday: Olivia Chow's Environment Day – 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Parking Lot on Borden Street at Central Tech

Replace your damaged blue or grey box free – bring in your old one and proof of residency or buy a new one.

Donate for **re-use** your books, non-perishable food, glasses, hearing aids, leftover paint, small appliances, bicycles and other sporting goods; also for **Re-use: children's books, National Geographics, hockey helmets and jerseys, cassettes,**

CDs, DVDs, materials for children's art programs, broken watches, buttons, costume jewellery, fabric, keys.

Drop off for recycling: cell phones, office machines, computers, electronics, household hazardous waste, tires (max five), no TVs/ microwaves unless they work, polystyrene, plastic tubs and bags.



May 17, Tuesday: Annual Spring Meeting - 6:30 p.m. registration for 7 p.m. start

Kensington Health Centre, 25 Brunswick Avenue (between Major and Brunswick)

HVRA reports to members on our activities over the last six months.

Plus, special guests will discuss this hot, hot, hot topic:

Beautification or Uglification: Which will Dominate Harbord Village? What's our role?



Changes on tap for College Street bars?

So read the recent Annex Guardian headline referring to plans in the works for continued College Street revitalization.

After lobbying for wider sidewalks, 90 new trees, and the orderly replacement of the many things that inhabit our sidewalks, your tireless, highly caffeinated College Street Committee is turning its attention to **the latest challenge ... specifically**, how can we keep the won-

derful, spacious boardwalk feeling, when patios come back into season?

As usual, our architects and good neighbours, James Brown and Kim Storey, have come to the rescue.

The concept is simple: designate the sidewalk from face of the buildings to edge of the tree pits as a "pedestrian clearway" and shift patios, merchandising displays and vendors to tree zone and beyond. The result? A straight, clear continuous walkway for pedestrians -- with storefronts on one side and patios/other displays on the other. Pedestrians retain the wonderful walk we currently enjoy and twice the visual interest. Storeowners get better access to their front entrance and window displays **and** the potential for prime real estate opposite their business. Plus, the area might get some much needed cachet from this European style makeover!

As usual, Councillor Olivia Chow and the tireless Helen Kennedy have guided our proposals through Community Council -- such that businesses are being granted temporary patio licences while the required by-laws are drafted and brought to Council. The proposal is to have a one-year pilot project to try this out. Committee members Bob Stambula, Richard Gilbert, Bob Frankford, and Michael Heydon have been getting answers, addressing issues and building bridges with College Street businesses -- and support is growing. The Toronto Star's Christopher Hume thinks this might be a model for use elsewhere in the city!

Stay tuned for the outcome of this phase and for more details of upcoming events on your College Street. For starters, how about a pilot project to reduce newspaper box clutter on College and a formal ribbon cutting in June?

Gord Brown for HVRA's College Street Revitalization Committee

Could College Street look like this?



Photos by Gord Brown

"The result? A straight, clear continuous walkway for pedestrians -- with storefronts on one side and patios/other displays on the other. Pedestrians retain the wonderful walk we currently enjoy and twice the visual interest."





Avenues study is a Go!

At the March 30 Community Council Meeting, councillors supported adoption of the Avenues Study, which HVRA requested over two years ago -- and directed City staff to develop a planning report to help make it a reality.

For years now, City staff have promoted the idea of residential intensification along the "Avenues": main streets within the city which are well-served by transit and can support the many new residents who the official plan predicts will come to the city over the next 10-20 years. For those of us in Harbord Village, the idea of many new residents between Bathurst and College supports the ongoing College Street Revitalization efforts -- and moves us close to the vision of a possible "university village". And intensifying along our borders will help protect the stable, residential feeling within our neighbourhood.

The "Avenues" urban design study, prepared by Brook McIlroy consultants in 2004 with HVRA input, clearly states that heritage structures must be retained -- but there is significant opportunity for redevelopment on the south side of College, and at the Bathurst and Spadina intersections.

The report points to the Ideal Condominium just west of Bathurst as a good model for redevelopment, which would see zoning for 9 to 11-storey residential-over-retail buildings along the south side of College Street -- and potentially higher at the Spadina/Bathurst intersections. It also considers 4-6-storey redevelopments on the north side College from Borden halfway to Brunswick, Robert Street east to the laneway, and Lippincott to Borden. However, given the fractured ownership and narrower lots, the north side developments are less

likely than the south side opportunities.

And the report stresses the importance of mixed use and superb design to ensure that the intensification strengthens the neighbourhood.

Combined with the exciting new streetscape, the proposed redevelopment provides further impetus for College Street revitalization -- which our membership has so strongly supported.

Stay tuned for further details.

Text and photo by Gord Brown



"The report points to the Ideal Condominium just west of Bathurst as a good model for redevelopment"

HVRA launches Neighbourhood Awards!

A great neighbourhood comprises great people. To recognize those among us who've improved our community, our association is launching a special awards program in 2005. This year, we are inviting nominations for four awards. We are also seeking volunteers who will **judge this year's nominations.**

In 2005, we are seeking nominations for:

- * Best front yard garden
- * Best heritage restoration of a home
- * Best heritage restoration of a commercial building
- * Neighbourhood Builder Award. This award will recognize residents who have made a substantial contribution to the betterment of our community.

To nominate someone for any one of these awards, here is what you need to do:

- 1) Using no more than one page, explain why someone or some property owner is particularly deserving of one of our four awards. Include the address, name of the award, your name, mailing address, phone number and email address.
- 2) Submit a maximum of three photos illustrating the front yard garden or the front of the restored home or commercial **building you're nominating.** If nominating a Neighbourhood Builder, try to include a head and shoulders picture of that person.
- 3) Submit the above items by September 15 by email to

rory.sinclair@rogers.com or as a hard copy to Gus Sinclair, 133 Major Street, 416.543.2785.

Note that neither front yard garden projects nor heritage restoration projects need be nominated in the year in which **they're completed.**

We're seeking three volunteers to judge the nominations for each award. Please contact Gus Sinclair if you're willing to serve. **And don't hesitate to send Gus suggestions for additional awards that HVRA should offer in the coming years.**

Don't be shy. Send in your award nominations NOW!

Tim Grant for the HVRA Awards Committee



Harbord Village boasts Heritage Conservation District

On April 18, Harbord Village Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Stage 1 became a reality. The purpose of the first stage of the HCD is to maintain and restore the late 19th century character of its protected houses on Lower Brunswick Avenue, Willcocks Street, Spadina Avenue and Robert Street.

“That was the easy part. Now we have to ensure the HCD makes a positive contribution to the life of our community.”

HVRA is establishing an HCD Advisory Committee, chaired by Julian Kitchen, to facilitate the implementation of the HCD. Working in consultation with Heritage Architect Cathy Nasmith and Toronto Preservation Board Heritage Coordinator Brian Gallagher, this committee will provide residents and property owners with the guidance to ensure that future repairs and renovations to the rooflines and front and street visible side elevations of their houses will be carried out in accordance with HCD guidelines. (Please remember: HCD guidelines do not apply to interiors or rear elevations where renovations continue to be controlled by the existing building by-law.)



The HCD process has gone very smoothly so far. Property owners have been kept informed by frequent mailings and invitations to meetings to ensure that we all know what it means to live or own property within an HCD. Fears have been laid to rest regarding the scope of the HCD, the cost of HCD-compatible repairs and restorations and the impact of HCD designation on property values.

Thanks to the ad-

vice of Heritage Coordinator Brian Gallagher and the hard work of heritage architect Cathy Nasmith—and the input of a squad of dedicated property-owner volunteers—every property in the HCD has been photographed and its history incorporated into an HCD plan. A copy of the plan was delivered to every HCD property owner on January 6.

That was the easy part. Now we have to ensure the HCD makes a positive contribution to the



life of our community. There are many categories of renovation and repairs within an HCD -- to doors, porches, windows, roofs etc. -- that do not require building permits in non-HCDs. Within an HCD these items should be restored or replaced in such a way that closely resembles their appearance at the time of construction.

To assist property owners who need to renovate or restore their HCD houses, Cathy Nasmith and Richard Longley are preparing an HCD Property Owners' Manual, which will describe the building and decorative styles of the 1880s and 1890s, provide information on restoring or replacing these

elements, and include a list of renovation contractors and suppliers of HCD-compatible doors, windows, fencing, paints and hardware.

HCD property owners are urged to contact Julian Kitchen (jdkitchen@sympatico.ca) or Richard Longley (longley_fovea@sympatico.ca) before they start planning or investing in any HCD-sensitive renovations.

Financing Stage 1 of the Harbord Village HCD was made possible by a donation from David Green, developer of the high rise currently under construction to the south of the Miles Nadal JCC. To allow expansion of the HCD within Harbord Village, donations were requested of all property owners (\$100 suggested, any amount accepted.) To date, 19 donations have been received, ranging from \$100 to \$500. We would like to see those donations increase to match or exceed David Green's \$10,000 contribution to assist the expansion of the HCD.

For more information, contact Julian Kitchen or Richard Longley at the email addresses above.





But is it art?

With Toronto budget cutbacks due to federal and provincial transfer shortfalls, there is one thing we've got more of this year...graffiti. Or, specifically, tagging.

The line between graffiti and art might be somewhat blurred. The line between graffiti and tagging is not. Tagging is vandalism, committed by individuals or groups with markers or paint, most often from aerosol cans. It requires no skill and is hurriedly applied to private and public property.

This summer we're taking on tagging in Harbord Village... and our work has already begun!

The all new Graffiti Committee (Taggers 'rn't us?) met with Scott Sullivan, graffiti co-coordinator at City Hall. The City has identified our neighbourhood as posing the toughest graffiti challenges in Toronto. The plan is to coordinate the efforts of the community and the City to say au revoir to nasty tagging.

Scott and John Kalimeris (who is with the company Goodbye Graffiti) will speak at our spring meeting. The theme is Beautification or Uglification? The future of Harbord Village.



With the help of the City and the police's 14 Division, we're planning a graffiti removal weekend in June. Stay tuned and get ready to banish the tags!

Michael Heydon for the HVRA Graffiti Committee

"In 2002, the lane between Borden and Brunswick was dramatically transformed by the Harbourfront Community Centre as part of their summer art project."

Two more stunning garage door renderings from Harbourfront Community Centre's summer art project. Photos by Michael Brown





HVRA re-launches front-yard tree initiative

“... it’s our hope that Harbord Village will start to look a lot greener in the coming years...and not a moment too soon!”

This spring, for the second year in a row, HVRA will be hiring a young graduate student from the University of Toronto’s Forestry Department to go door to door in our neighbourhood, encouraging residents to fill out a City application for a free front yard tree. Last year’s effort was inspired by the work of the late Jorg Bentz, a long-time Lippincott Street resident who was responsible for the planting of more than 50 neighbourhood trees. This year, an anonymous donor has contributed \$500 to help continue the effort. HVRA has offered to match any additional donations raised from community members up to a maximum of \$300.

Our student employee will be carrying copies of the City’s free front

yard tree application and a letter from HVRA encouraging homeowners to select a native tree species from the City’s list of free trees. This year, she/he will also be carrying copies of a brand new brochure prepared

With this two-pronged approach, it’s our hope that Harbord Village will start to look a lot greener in the coming years...and not a moment too soon! As The Toronto Star reported last year, our urban for-



by the City’s Urban Forestry Department at our request. It explains to homeowners that the roots of none of the tree species planted by the City will damage the foundations or water pipes of houses -- the number one concern identified last year by homeowners reluctant to sign up for a free tree.

Last year’s HVRA employee compiled a list of 10 public spaces in our neighbourhood, such as schools and parks, which would benefit from more trees. We forwarded that list to the Urban Forestry Department last June, but were told that owing to a one-year backlog of site inspections, we had to be patient. Now that that one year has almost passed, we’ll soon be renewing our phone calls and emails in the hopes of getting some trees planted in those 10 locations.

est had been shrinking. In 1992, the tree canopy once covered 22% of downtown neighbourhoods, but by 2003, the canopy had shrunk to 16%.

How can you help? Ask us for an application form for a free front yard tree from the City for yourself or a neighbour. We’re also seeking donations that will enable our student employee to knock on more doors. Please let us know if you speak Portuguese, Italian, Mandarin, Cantonese or another second language and would be willing to talk to a few local residents who do not speak English. If you can assist this year’s HVRA tree project in any one of these three ways, please contact me at 416.960.1244 or tim@greenteacher.com at your earliest convenience.

Tim Grant, chair, HVRA’s Environment Committee



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; Susan Pfeiffer, 416.964.8822.
- **Graffiti Removal/Transformation:**
Jane Widerman 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):**
Rory Sinclair, 416.966.1523.
- **Committee of Adjustment/Bylaw Compliance:**
Maria Perin, 416.922.6652;
David Booz, 416.806.2669.
- **Communications, Newsletter:**
Jane Widerman Auster, 416.534.9888;
Richard Gilbert, 416.923.8839.
- **Communications, Website and other:** Susan Pfeiffer, 416.964.8822.
- **Membership:**
Kaye McCormack, 416.961.3777;
Margaret Beare, 416.926.8984.

- **Fall Fair:**
Rory Sinclair, 416.966.1523.
- **Awards, Community Recognition:**
Rory Sinclair, 416.966.1523.
- **Heritage Conservation:**
Richard Longley, 416.961.2766;
Sue Dexter, 416.964.9527.
- **Liaison with BIAs/Conflict Resolution:**
Jane Widerman Auster, 416.534.9888;
Margaret Beare, 416.926.8984.
- **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.

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



This photo and the upper one on Page 6 were taken at the HVRA Fall Fair, September 2004, by Wayne Neon



Membership

HVRA Board 2004-5

Chair

Rory 'Gus' Sinclair 416.966.1523

Treasurer

Gord Brown 416.924.6445

Secretary

Bob Wilson 416.928.0271

Area Reps

Alisa Apostle 416.962.0404

Margaret Beare 416.926.8984

Richard Gilbert 416.323.8839

Tim Grant 416.360.1244

Richard Longley 416.961.2766

Kaye McCormack 416.961.3777

Maria Perin 416.922.6652

Bob Stambula 416.922.4453

Mark Treleaven 416.921.6251

Jane Widerman Auster
416.534.9888

Special Board Member for UofT

Sue Dexter 416.964.9527

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

Membership soars to over 350!

Wow! From 30 stalwart souls at the HVRA launch just four years ago to over 350 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 2005? Now's the time. Simply fill out the renewal slip on our back page and post 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 Kaye McCormack, 416.961.3777 or Margaret Beare, 416.926.8984.

HVRA Membership & Renewal Form

Thanks to everyone who has renewed for 2004. Not a member yet? Know someone who should be a member? Please join -- to help us continue building a great neighbourhood!

2004 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 |
| Supporting Member (to support HVRA activities): | \$20 | 2 years \$40 |
| 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.....