

## **Harbord Village Residents' Association Board Meeting**

**Tuesday, June 21, 2022, 7:00 pm**

**by Zoom call**

### **APPROVED MINUTES**

**Attendees:** Kerry Clare, Elizabeth Chen, Simon Coleman, Sue Dexter, Anne Fleming, Karen Laurence, Susan McDonald, Cathy Merkley, Lena Mortensen, Christian Mueller, Jane Perdue, Gus Sinclair

**Regrets:** Gina Buonaguro, Frank Davis, Nick Provart, Robert Stambula

1. **Chair's Welcome:** Anne called the meeting to order at 7:08
2. **Approval of Agenda:** Kerry moved the agenda be approved; Lena seconded. **Agenda approved.**
3. **Approval of April 19th Board Meeting Minutes:** Susan moved that the minutes be approved; Gus seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
4. **Approval of the May 25<sup>th</sup> General Meeting:** Jane moved that the minutes of the May General meeting be accepted by the board; Susan seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
5. **Business Arising from past minutes**

**5.1 Guest speaker honorarium:** The practice of paying guest speakers at the general meeting was discussed. It was agreed that it should be a modest fee and the same fee should be paid to all speakers. Kerry moved that an honorarium of \$100 for general meeting guest speakers be added to the HVRA budget. Lena seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**5.2 College St. Upgrade:** Anne said she had spoken to Councillor Layton, and he confirmed that City Council had approved HVRA's add-ons, and that there would be meaningful community consultation on any future changes to the City's College St. Upgrade.

**5.3 June events on Harbord and Bloor Streets:** Anne gave a brief report: the HBIA, supported by HVRA, held its first Artisan Studio Tour on June 4<sup>th</sup>. The day was very successful. The HBIA plans to make this a regular spring event, and June 4<sup>th</sup> laid a good foundation for that.

On June 18<sup>th</sup> Bloor Annex BIA, HVRA and Annex RA threw a block party to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Wiener's Hardware. Four generations of Wieners have operated the business at the same Bloor Street address since 1922. Both events were fun and everyone was glad to have in-person activities back again. Kerry thanked Anne for all her work in making these events so successful.

## **6. New business**

**6.2 Todd Irvine walks:** Karen said that Todd Irvine would be leading a small group of interested residents around the neighbourhood to point out the damage done by poor pruning practices. Todd is hoping to persuade the city to change their approach to city tree pruning and would like HVRA to support him in this. Karen said she would report back to the board on Todd's walk so we could discuss whether and how to move forward with this issue.

Margaret said Todd also proposed a general walk for the gardening group to look at interesting trees. Margaret said this fits with the gardeners' group agenda because in lieu of the plant fair, which has been cancelled for the year, the group wants to hold other events. The one issue is Todd needs to charge. As the gardeners have no budget and work to ensure all gardening events are free, Margaret asked HVRA to pay the fee -- \$150 plus tax. The point was made that if the association subsidized the walk, participants would have to be HVRA members only, and it would have to be very well publicized. Simon suggested that a video of the talk highlights could be posted to the website. It was agreed that that this would be an interesting event of potentially long-term benefit to the neighbourhood. Kerry moved that \$150 (plus tax), to be taken from *Board Approved Projects and Expenses* budget, to be paid to Todd for this walk and talk. Gus seconded. **The motion was passed unanimously.**

**6.3 Fall Fair planning:** Anne said planning had started for the Fall Fair. The traditional date for the event is the first Sunday after Labour Day, which is September 11<sup>th</sup>. There is a great team who know how to do this, but more volunteers are always needed. Gus volunteered Kerry.

**6.4 New Board Members Search Committee:** Anne identified herself and Gus as the search committee and noted that Gina is stepping down as SE Area Rep, and Simon, a SC Rep, will be taking a one-year leave of absence. In addition, we are still looking for a Vice President, so if anyone knows anyone who might be interested in getting involved with the board, please let them know. Gus mentioned that he will also be away for six months in 2023.

**6.5 Date of next board meeting:** As the board meets only once in the summer, Anne polled members to decide if July or August would be the month off. The vote was tied. As Chair, Anne decided the meeting would be July 19<sup>th</sup>, and there would be no meeting in August. Karen noted that she would not be here in July, so someone else would have to fill-in as secretary.

**7. Committee and Area Rep Reports** – acknowledgements of receipt only unless action or discussion required.

**7.1 P & D: U of T Secondary Plan:** Jane Perdue abstained from voting on this item and excused herself during the discussion because of a potential conflict of interest. The board discussed options in respect of the University of Toronto Secondary Plan, which will govern the planning framework on the St. George campus for the next several decades (if it passes). While supportive of the plan in general, the board identified a serious lapse in the document that will go to Community Council June 29. The plan, as it stands, recommends putting the buildings at the corner of Bloor and Queen's Park in the Bloor St. framework. This assigns an exceptional density to Lillian Massey. If built out, a tower could be added on the existing heritage building to a height of 48 metres, four metres less than the Hyatt Regency. This would disrupt the entranceway to Queen's Park, destroy the symmetry between the ROM and Lillian Massey and the lower rise heritage landscape to the south (report appended).

Susan said that Lillian Massey was a Victoria College building, not a U of T building. Sue said that would be interesting and possibly useful, if true.

Sue moved that the board agree to withhold support of the secondary plan pending TEYCC adjusting the map to place the southwest and southeast corners in the Queen's Park character area. Kerry seconded. **The motion passed, eleven in favour, one abstention.**

**7.2 Safe Streets Committee:** In their June report (appended), the Safe Streets Committee asked:

*As our April query about our **participation in the working group for College Street** remains unanswered, should we assume that we are still prohibited from communicating with the city on this topic? If so, we would like to know who is participating to express safety concerns.*

It was noted that this question was answered during the April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. Unfortunately, because of the intervening Spring GM, the minutes of that meeting were only approved this evening and so had not yet been posted to the website. In addition, Kerry, the Safe Streets Committee board rep was not at the April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, and so the information was not communicated to the SSC in a timely manner. The board decision at the April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting was:

*... if the city did approve a consultation committee, the SSC would be a part of that group; however, SSC should not be communicating directly with the city on this issue in any case. If and when an HVRA consultation committee is formed, that committee will designate someone to speak to the city on behalf of HVRA. To have SSC communicating with the city on the issue, independent of the consultation committee, would be too confusing and would undermine the work of the HVRA.*

Kerry said she would report this information to the SSC, and that she would bring any concerns of that committee to the board, who would be in touch with the city about safety concerns.

Anne pointed out that the city is setting up an “open trailer” bi-weekly, to make themselves available to anyone who has concerns about the work and the safety of the site. This service will be open to all members of the public.

**8. Other Business**

- 9. Adjournment:** Gus moved that the meeting be adjourned; Susan seconded. **The meeting was adjourned at 8:44.**

Minutes prepared by Karen Laurence, Secretary 2021 - 2022

## **APPENDICES**

1. Area Reps Reports
2. U of T Secondary Plan Report
3. Safe Streets Committee June Report

## Area Reps Reports

### NW Report:

- Please see update (below) from Bob about construction on the Central Tech Parking Lot this summer. (Thank you, Bob!)
- Our area played a nice role in the Harbord Street Art Crawl on June 4—it was fun to try (and fail) at the pottery wheel at Clay Art Studios and see art on display by Central Tech students.
- The community was also invited to attend the Central Tech Art Exhibition. It was great to see some of the fantastic work being created by the young people who attend school in our neighbourhood
- Work continues on two construction projects on Brunswick between Harbord and Sussex, and the sidewalk/north cycle lane is often blocked by vehicles—one afternoon they were parked along the entirety of the street. This was reported to the city councillor who encouraged us to call traffic enforcement the next time this happens.

Kerry Clare

### Central Tech Parking Lot

It was uneventful save for one item. The school is having their Borden Street parking lot redone (paving & infrastructure/drainage); this was in the previous minutes but the new news was that construction would commence at the conclusion of school and run through the whole summer.

So in mid June we're hearing about more than two months of construction in the Borden lot having effects on the bordering homes (our NW), which is a problem enough, but this is also the main parking lot to serve those coming to the dome by car.

I reminded our friends that great effort was taken with the settlement of the CTF matter at the OMB and the work soon thereafter to mitigate against any use of street parking by dome clients.

I mentioned that the official alternative lots, that being at King Edward and Harvard Collegiate are where clients are to park and not on the street. I noted that the King Edward parking lot is being resurfaced as well this summer so it may very well be out of action when the Borden Street lot is out.

I asked if the construction could be accelerated; I asked if it could be split so there's always some parking available; I asked what efforts were going to be made to redirect clients to the official lots and not the street.

School board officials undertook to see what they could do about the length of construction and the maintenance of some spaces through construction but nothing was promised; cost concerns as always were present.

Bob Stambula

### NE Report:

- Zebra-stripe crossings finally installed at Sussex and Robert Streets!
- speed measurements undertaken by the City as part of assessing whether speed humps should be installed on the short stretch of Sussex between Robert and Sussex Mews.

- A Value Village boutique will be going into the old Brunswick House building, where the Rexall was.
- Landscaping for the POPS on the west side of 666 is complete and the space should be opening soon.
- U of T seems to have stepped up to a) start watering the new community green space at Robert and Sussex, and b) to maintain the old parkette at 60 Sussex that was south of the Robert St. ice rink. U of T Police has also been quite active at shooing dog owners off the field.
- the City posted information boards at the north end of 666 Spadina. This was deeded to the City for a new park and the City is soliciting ideas for this area, which they are calling 51 Sussex Park. There was a survey which closed on June 3rd: <https://www.toronto.ca/51SussexPark>.

Nick Provar

### **SC Report:**

‘Planting of flowers and laying of grass has begun at Kensington Gardens in Brunswick, and we’ve been talking to staff at KG about the state and health of the plants. KG are also offering HVRA members exclusive tours of the completed developments of the site, on Wednesday, June 22, 3:30 P.M. to 4:30 P.M. or Thursday, June 23 Time: 3:30 P.M. to 4:30 P.M. Tours can be booked here: [Book your tour today!](#) ‘

Simon Coleman

### **SE and SW**

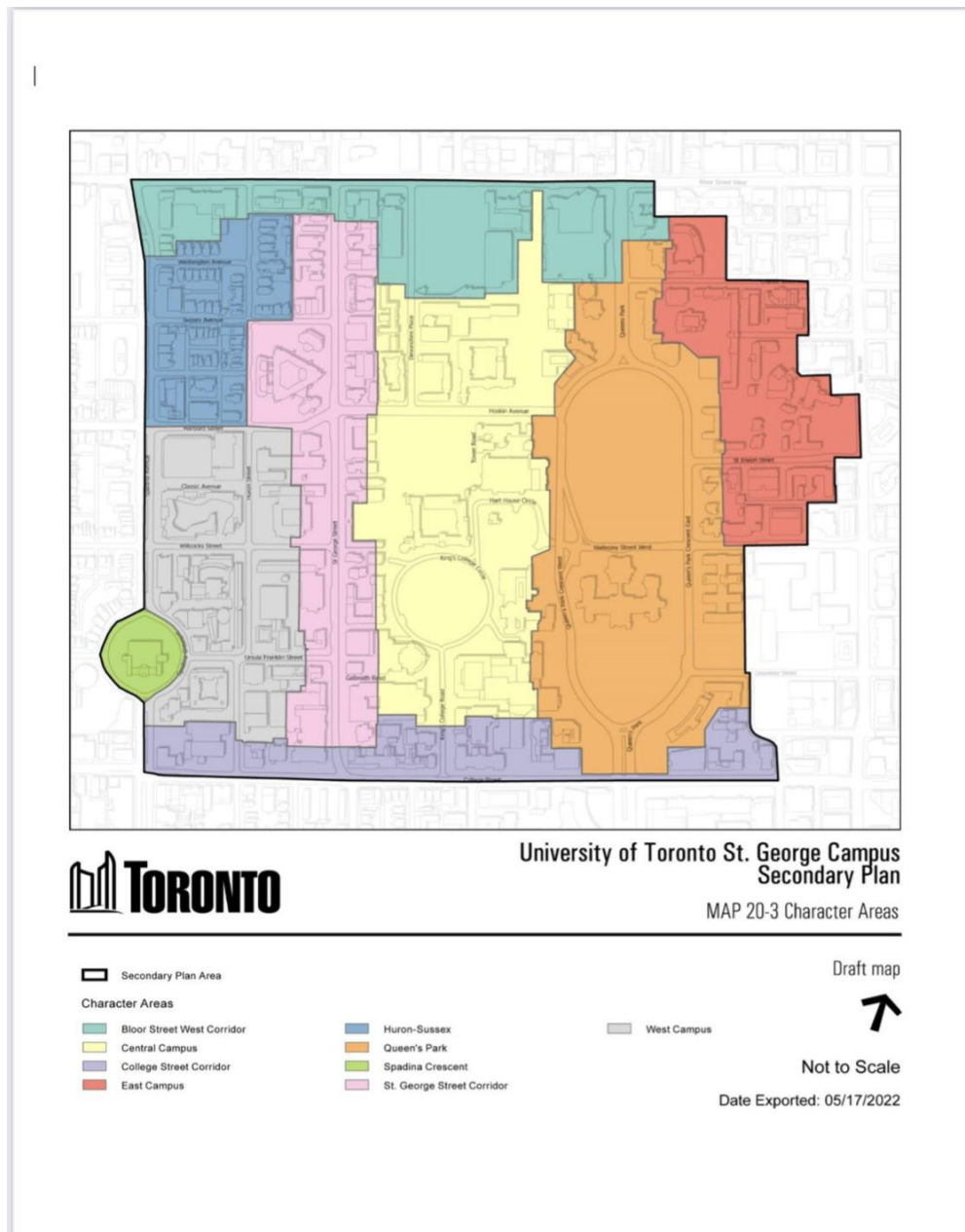
No news is not bad news.

## Planning report: U of T Secondary Plan

June 19, 2022

We are having a problem with the proposed secondary plan, which is coming to council June 29. We have been able to convince Planning to make many changes in the document. There is much to be pleased with—particularly on the sustainability/green side and public realm. But there is one element that is concerning all residents' associations adjacent to the St. George campus.

The Queen's Park character area opens the door to development, particularly on the southeast corner of Queen's Park and Bloor by placing both Lillian Massey (and the ROM) in the Bloor St. character area, rather than leaving it in the Queen's Park character area.





But the fit with Bloor St. doesn't quite work. Planners inserted special language at the Bloor/Queen's Park intersection to distinguish ROM and Lillian Massey from other buildings along Bloor Street, so development will:

“at the intersection of Bloor Street West and Queen's Park, include compatible low-scale institutional buildings and mid-scale institutional buildings only, which will reinforce and enhance the significant and sensitive gateway location and will transition from the taller institutional elements and generally higher scale permitted elsewhere **where** along Bloor St. West to the Queen's Park Character Area with its generous parks and open spaces and generally lower scale.....”

Not only are they different from the other buildings in the character area, approval of mid-scale buildings would clear the way for as of right development of 48 m. on the corners, three m. short of Park Hyatt Hotel.

But there is more potential pressure on that corner.

The Lillian Massey presence on Bloor is a wing. The earliest notion it is a Bloor St. main address was driven by the early monetization of University holdings: in 1996 the basement pool and ground floor was rented to Club Monaco. In 2021, this lease expired and the current sales pitch the University's agents are distributing place Lillian Massey—the whole building, in the Mink Mile.

[https://images1.loopnet.com/d2/JYCybyTJ\\_PyOrLXAhHqaTFoc07\\_H4JOsEmsbusD9dvU/157BloorStreetWestBrochure2.pdf](https://images1.loopnet.com/d2/JYCybyTJ_PyOrLXAhHqaTFoc07_H4JOsEmsbusD9dvU/157BloorStreetWestBrochure2.pdf)

At the same time, a draft planning initiative based in Yorkville, also declares the building part of the Bloor St. Business Corridor. This would be used in future planning arguments and sets the stage for greater heights.

This would disrupt the dramatic stepdown to Queen's Park south of Bloor.

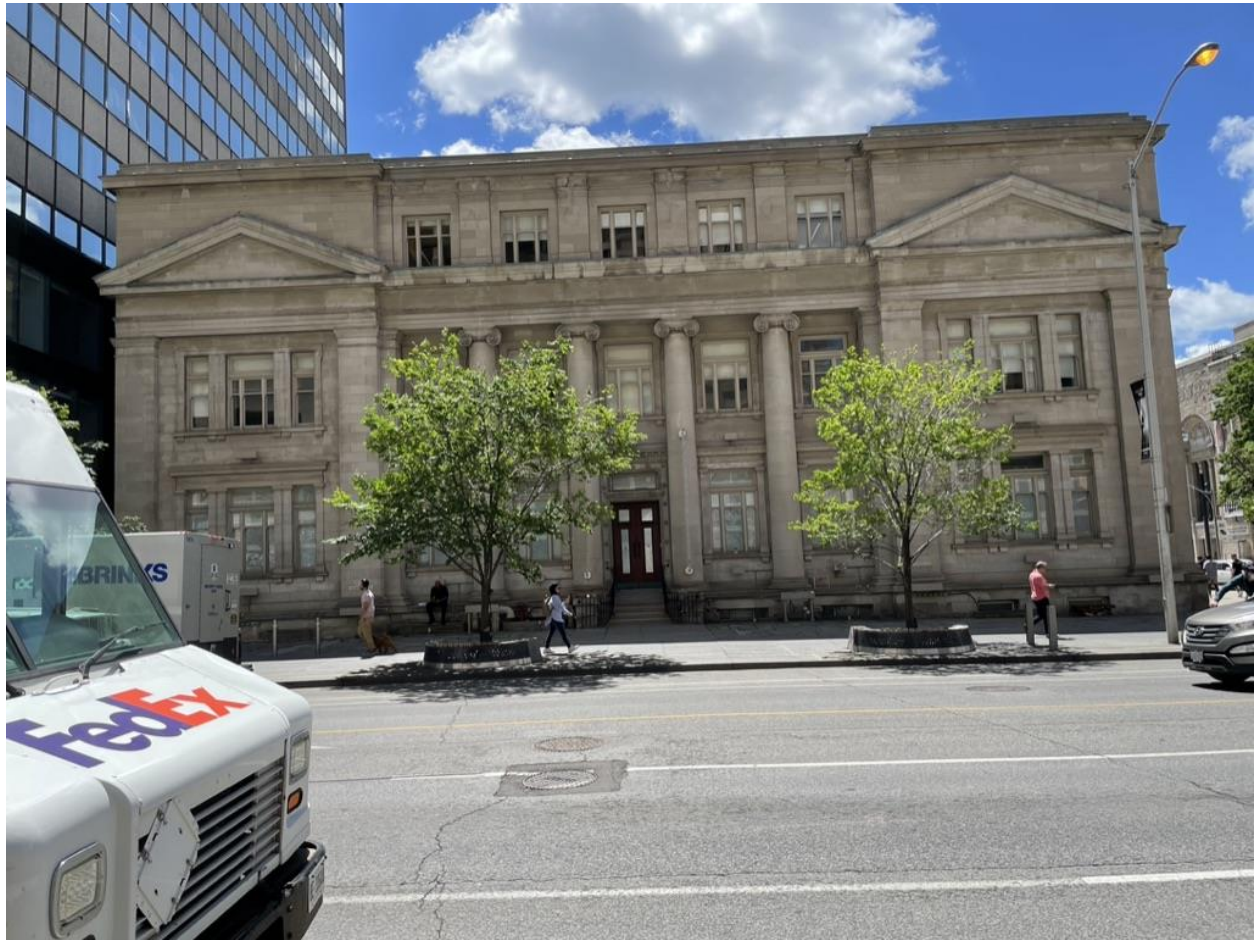
There are excellent arguments to justify placing the buildings in the Queen's Park heritage area. The ROM and Lillian Massey could be sisters:

- the buildings were built at virtually the same time—1913
- 1975 heritage designations bind the two,
- the Queen's Park fronts of the buildings are the main entrances, longer, more elaborate,
- interior heritage attributes are parallel, including elaborate stained glass
- the feeder streets (bloor east and west and avenue road are inferior),
- in the words of the heritage designation, they form the gateway to Queen's Park

But for a small change, the excision of a paragraph, a change in two lines in a map boundary, we could support the secondary plan. Regrettably, we now cannot.

We have had the same arguments before: the Queen's Park character area is a precious public asset, heritage buildings set in a pastoral framework, the seat of the provincial government within lands owned by a great University. It should be celebrated, not diminished.

**The north wing: empty now, ground floor and basement club Monaco, university offices above**

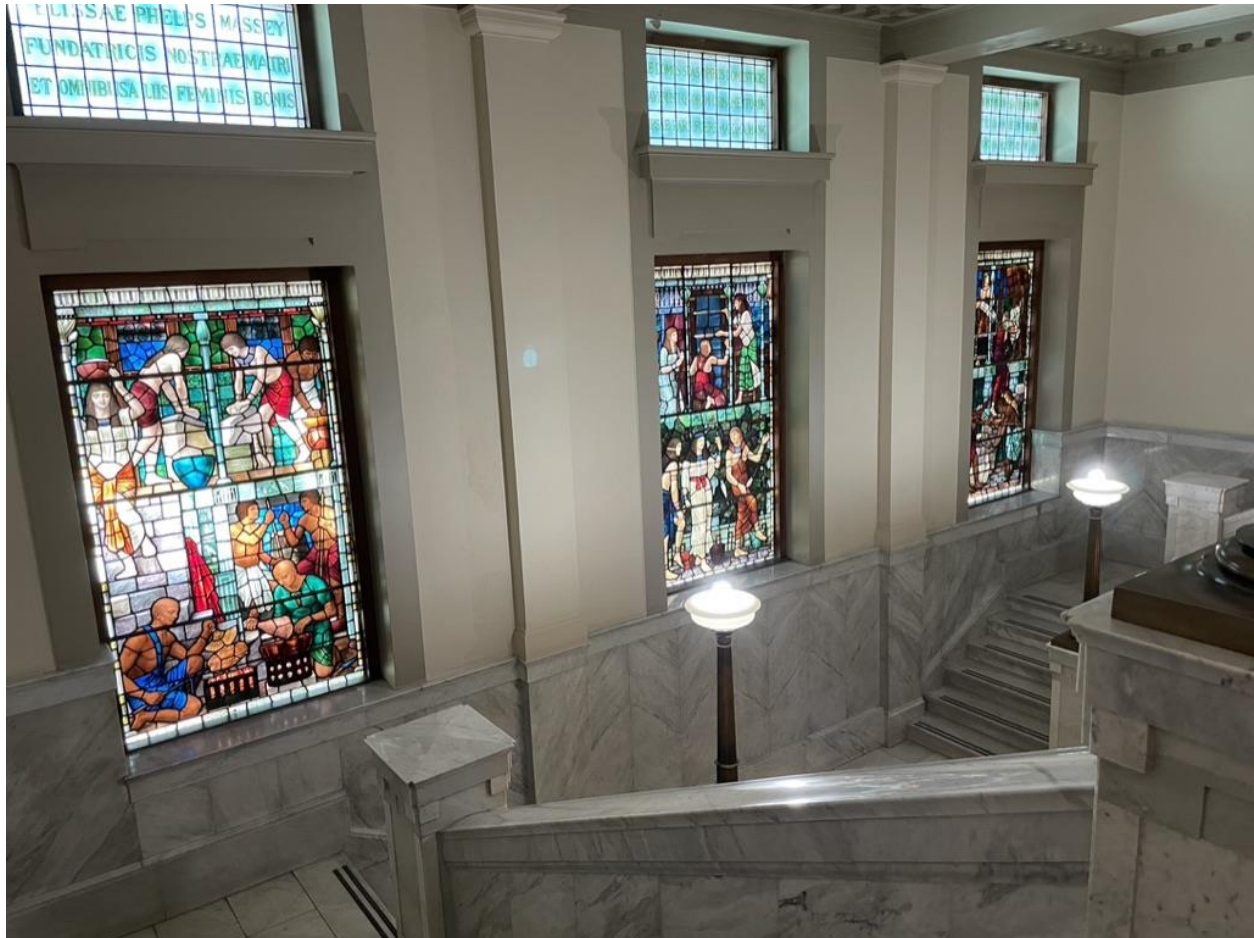




**The Queen's Park frontage has more presence with portico, greater length:**



**Inside Lillian Massey a grand marble staircase with three stained glass windows created by a man who also did stained glass at Westminster Abbey in London.**



## Safe Streets Committee June 2022 Report

- As was reflected at the Spring meeting, **eBike delivery vehicles remain a hazard** to pedestrians — particularly along Bloor where there are now groups congregating on the sidewalks waiting for orders. Kerry's letter made the Bloor St BIA aware of the issue, and they had sent a request for enforcement to the police, but the problem continues. Given the overall lack of enforcement by the police, we need to think of alternative approaches to mitigate this problem. The SSC is open to suggestions!
- The city has responded to the **concerns of local residents at Sussex and Robert about wrong way and excessively fast vehicular traffic** by installing a four way zebra crossing and accelerating the speed study that is a necessary precursor to the installation of speed humps (which have been offered). At least one resident feels that these will not be sufficient and would like to press for further changes, especially given the increased foot traffic by children using the new park on that corner.
  - SafeStreets has offered to meet with the resident to discuss the issue, and would like to reach out to the city to explore what kind of alterations are possible for that intersection, and potentially other intersections.
  - SafeStreets would also like to organize a modest traffic study of that intersection, with volunteers, to collect data over a few hours.
- At the spring meeting Councillor Layton said that he would be reaching out to the HVRA to discuss the **modifications that are planned for parts of Harbord Street**. We are looking forward to participating in that discussion.
- As our April query about our **participation in the working group for College Street** remains unanswered, should we assume that we are still prohibited from communicating with the city on this topic? If so, we would like to know who is participating to express safety concerns.