

## Harbord Village Residents' Association Board Meeting

December 20, 2022, 7:00 pm

by Zoom call

### APPROVED MINUTES

**Attendees:** Elizabeth Chen, Sue Dexter, Anne Fleming, Karen Laurence, Susan McDonald, Cathy Merkley, Lena Mortensen, Christian Mueller, Jane Perdue, Nick Provart, Jody Salomon, Gus Sinclair, Robert Stambula

**Special Guests:** Ian MacKenzie and Diane Saxe

**Regrets:** Kerry Clare, Frank Davis

1. **Chair's Welcome:** Anne called the meeting to order 7:07
2. **Approval of Agenda:** Amended by Bob. **Moved by Gus, seconded by Bob. Agenda approved.**
3. **Approval of minutes:** **Moved by Susan, seconded by Jody. Motion passed unanimously.**
4. **Guest Speaker:** Ian MacKenzie presented three HVRA letterhead / logo redesign choices. The board chose the logo that offered the most information, i.e. post-box number, website and email.
5. **Business Arising from past minutes**
  - 5.1 **Nov 21 Safe Streets Letter to Mayor and Councillor:** Anne reported that the Safe Streets Letter (appended) had been sent to The Mayor and to Councillor Saxe.
  - 5.2 **Nov 21 letter to new Councillor (wish list & meeting)** Anne reported that the letter to the new councillor (appended) had been written and sent.
  - 5.3 **Nov 16 letter to Standing Committee on Heritage Infrastructure and Cultural Policy re: Bill 23:** Anne reported that an email vote had been taken on the motion to send this letter (appended) and passed by the board, and the letter had been sent.
  - 5.4 **Nov. 16: Joint HVRA and Annex Residents' Association analysis of Bill 23, sent to City Council, legislature and printed in the Annex Gleaner:** Anne reported that an email vote had been taken on the motion to send and publish this analysis

(appended) and passed by the board, and the document had been sent and published.

Gus congratulated the association, and especially Sue, for being ahead of the game and putting so much effort into giving us such great commentary on what is happening with Bills 23 and 39 (above and under New Business below).

- 5.5 Board Vacancies:** Gus reported that he is continuing to work on finding replacements for Simon and Nick and expects to have positive results soon. Anne mentioned that she was responsible for finding a Vice-Chair. Gus reminded the board that he would be away for all of February, and also for 5 months starting in June, so will be gone for much of 2023.

Anne reported that, stemming from the November 21<sup>st</sup> letter noted above, efforts were ongoing to set up a meeting with the Councillor and her staff. Meanwhile, Diane Saxe had asked to attend this meeting just as it was beginning and had now been admitted.

## **6. New Business**

- 6.1 NetZero artist:** Sue said the Net Zero committee wanted to create lawn signs for people with heat pumps (similar to the Bullfrog Power signs) and asked if anyone knew of young artists that might be interested. It was decided that Anne would put a “contest” type notice in the next e-blast and reach out to her contacts at Central Tech. **Action item.**
- 6.2 1st Narayever and Tree Protection Zone contravention:** Anne summarized the information in Nicole’s report (appended) regarding damage to the tree in front of the synagogue. Diane Saxe added that she had received an arborist’s report from the contractor, claiming very little damage had been done to the tree, but clearly this should not have happened. She has requested further information, but so far received none. Sue said there could be a fine of up to \$100,000 but it was highly unlikely in the case of this tree.
- 6.3 Entering into record email votes on the following:** Anne reported that email votes had been taken on motions to send the following letters (appended). All motions were passed by the board, and the letters sent.
- i. **Nov 20 letter to Councillor Saxe opposing Bill 23**
  - ii. **Nov 24 letter to Council opposing Bill 23**
  - iii. **Nov 28 letter to Mayor and Council re: special council meeting to debate Bill 39**
  - iv. **Dec. 7, letter to legislative committee on heritage impacts of Bill 23**

**6.4 Email voting procedure:** Anne observed that the urgency of the issues being voted on by email over the last month meant that procedures were not always followed, so reminded the board that the subject of the vote should be in the subject line, that the motion needs to be clearly stated in the body of the email, that there has to be a mover and a seconder, that there should be a deadline for votes to be submitted, and that the final draft of whatever is being voted on should be copied to herself and Karen.

**6.5 Special Guest Councillor Saxe:** As Diane Saxe could only stay for half an hour, time was taken at this point for a question and answer. The councillor talked about the challenges of setting up her office with all new support staff, and very slow delivery of essential office equipment, at the same time as dealing with Bills 3, 109, 23, and 39, which have dominated everything else. She reviewed the achievements and disappointments of her first weeks on Council and clarified the effects of Bill 23 on various city policies.

Sue asked if there was any hope for Osgood Hall Garden, and the councillor said Metrolinx had given a commitment that they would do nothing until a study came back on whether there were other viable options. That study has not yet been received, but bottom line – Metrolinx can do what they want; they own the project, and they own the land.

Bob summarized the Boulevard Project for the councillor. She said it sounded very exciting. Bob said he would send her office a briefing package on the proposal. The councillor said she would be happy to convene a meeting on this if HVRA would provide a list of all the people who should be there. Bob said he would do that.

**Action Item.**

Anne asked how to move forward on the meeting about traffic safety issues. The councillor said to contact her office next week when her assistant would be back. He could make the meeting happen, and that should allow her to take the matter to the Community Council meeting on January 30<sup>th</sup>. Anne said she would get the area reps to help her follow up on this. **Action item.**

Anne raised the issue of Todd Irving's concerns about the contractors hired by the city to prune city trees, and the damage that is being done by bad pruning practices. The councillor said this was very timely as she is having a briefing with the tree people tomorrow, so the arborist should send her an email that she can use at the meeting. **Action item.**

Susan finished by asking about what could be done, and who we should speak to about saving the Burr Oak at 61 Brunswick St. Saxe said she would raise the issue at her meeting the next day.

The board thanked the councillor for joining the meeting.

- 6.5 FoSTRA Annual Meeting:** Susan attended this meeting and wrote up notes about it which have been circulated to the board (appended).
- 6.6 Graffiti/public art:** Anne said Nick had been contacted by an NE resident about whether there was any chance of reviving the practice of painting over graffiti within 24 hours of it going up. Several board members said this sort of thing was now too complex and too expensive to maintain. The city provides some services; informing people of that is the best we can do.
- 6.7 Golden Horseshoe Organization:** Sue suggested that HVRA might want to join the Friends of the Golden Horseshoe, pointing out that it would cost us neither time nor money, but would show support for a worthy cause. **Sue so moved; Gus seconded. The motion passed. Action item.**
- 7. Committee and Area Rep Reports:** Acknowledgements of receipt only unless action or discussion required.
- 8. Other Business:**
  - 8.1 1<sup>st</sup> Narayever synagogue security cameras:** Anne reminded the board that some time ago we had written a letter of support for the synagogue when they were applying for a federal grant for security measures. This HVRA letter was written with the understanding that 1<sup>st</sup> Narayever would consult with the neighbours prior to installing security cameras. Anne said she intended to follow up on that letter to make sure the synagogue did have plans to inform the neighbours proactively. **Action item.**
  - 8.2 Fall Fair Permits:** Anne informed the board that Karen and Kerry were taking over the permit application process from Christian.
- 9. Adjournment:** Gus moved that the meeting be adjourned; Susan seconded. The motion was passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 8:30.

Minutes prepared by Karen Laurence, Secretary, 2022 - 2023.

## **APPENDICIES**

- 1.** Nov 21 Safe Streets Letter to Mayor and Councillor
- 2.** Nov 21 letter to new Councillor (wish list & meeting)
- 3.** Nov 16 letter to Standing Committee on Heritage Infrastructure and Cultural Policy re: Bill 23
- 4.** Nov. 16: Joint HVRA and Annex Residents' Association analysis of Bill 23, sent to City Council, legislature and printed in the Annex Gleaner
- 5.** Nicole Schulman Report on the 1<sup>st</sup> Narayever Synagogue Tree Protection Zone Contravention
- 6.** Nov 20 letter to Councillor Saxe opposing Bill 23
- 7.** Nov 28 letter to Mayor and Council re: special council meeting to debate Bill 39
- 8.** Dec. 7, letter to legislative committee on heritage impacts of Bill 23
- 9.** FoSTRA Annual Meeting Planning Committee report
- 10.** Area Reps Reports
- 11.** Safe Streets Committee report

# HARBORD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Box 68522, 360A Bloor St. W.  
Toronto, ON M5S 1X1



November 18, 2022

John Tory, Mayor

Dianne Saxe, Councillor for Ward 11

Toronto City Council

Dear Mayor Tory and Councillor Saxe,

**Re: Traffic Issues Stemming from Poor Communication Around Local Construction**

I am writing on behalf of the Harbord Village Residents' Association, in response to numerous complaints by residents about the rerouting of vehicular traffic due to construction around our neighbourhood. It is inevitable that roadwork will cause traffic issues. However, clearer signage and some traffic control officers are necessary to prevent confused (and often angry) drivers from behaving in illegal and dangerous ways.

On November 3rd we had an emergency repair along Harbord, at Sussex Mews, requiring the westbound lane to be shut. All the traffic on Harbord (a major East/West thoroughfare) ended up rerouting into the one-way residential streets, which form a traffic maze. Cars were required to make several turns to reach a major road, but as there was no signage and no oversight, there was a stream of traffic taking the straightest route. I personally saw several cars ignoring both the stop sign and the do not enter sign at Sussex and Robert in order to reach Spadina in a more direct fashion. Wrong way driving is always hazardous, that most was in front of a children's playground made it even worse. A traffic officer at that intersection, at least during times of heavy traffic, would have prevented this.

Meanwhile we have had the ongoing construction along College St, which has required considerable rerouting of traffic. Although the road closures there were planned, and residents were given forewarning of the closures, the results have been much more chaotic than they should have been. Only after repeated complaints by residents was appropriate signage erected, and even then it was often placed inappropriately. Perhaps the most egregious example was after the crossing at Spadina reopened to vehicles. Although westbound traffic could only progress to Major, there were no signs at Spadina indicating that cars should reroute there. Consequently they had to reroute at Major St, and navigate the one way local streets. And predictably, many chose to disregard the directionality of Major in order to get to Harbord (and be able to progress westward again) as directly as possible.

These are not isolated incidents. They are examples of a larger problem that affects more than just Harbord Village. It should not be a battle to get appropriate signage erected to guide traffic when there is construction. However, **it is clear that the current mechanisms to communicate changes of route due to disruptions are broken.** Given the amount of construction and related traffic disruption in Toronto, the city needs to come up with better, clearer, guidance for the placement of signage (as well as ensuring that wayfaring apps are apprised of closures). And when heavy traffic must be rerouted through residential neighbourhoods where there are many stops and one-way streets, we need human oversight to ensure compliance to the law.

**The Harbord Village Residents' Association asks you to address this failure to reroute traffic in a safe fashion by committing to improve how rerouting is communicated and enforced.** The current situation is dangerous and unacceptable. I look forward to your response.

Thank you for your consideration.

Anne Fleming

Chair, HVRA

CC: Tracy Cook, City Manager

Eric Jensen, Downtown Construction Hub Coordinator

## 2. Nov 21 letter to new Councillor (wish list & meeting)

Hi Dianne

The Harbord Village Residents' Association would like to congratulate you on being elected our new Ward 11 Councillor. I hope your first week has not been too overwhelming!

We have enjoyed a good relationship with our previous councillors and look forward to working with you to create and maintain a vibrant neighbourhood. We would love for you to join us at an upcoming board meeting so you can meet with us to discuss some of our priorities. If that is not available, a smaller number of us can meet with you at a more convenient time. Our next meeting is **Tuesday, December 20**, from 7 to 9 pm (you would be free to join at your convenience); we meet the third Tuesday of each month, on Zoom until further notice.

In the meantime, here is a list of some of the issues we have been working on and / or would like to advance:

### **Safe streets:**

completion of contraflow cycle lanes and additional traffic calming features  
speed hump installation on Sussex

### **Multi-tenant housing:**

inspection and enforcement  
specific concerns at 60 Borden and 57 major

### **Greening:**

Green Master Plan  
city flanks  
increasing park / green space  
tree inventory / planting / saving  
boulevard project

### **Environmental:**

mitigating heat islands and storm-water runoff  
backyard paving

### **Heritage:**

district and listing issues  
College St  
Knox Church

Note that **Planning & Development** is a large file on its own - that committee will contact you separately.

As you have discovered, you have arrived in the midst of quite a bit of upheaval, both at City Hall and locally. You will be receiving more than the usual onslaught of emails from us over the next while - please bear with us!

Looking forward to seeing you.

Anne Fleming  
Chair, HVRA  
416-624-7890

### 3. Nov 16 letter to Standing Committee on Heritage Infrastructure and Cultural Policy re: Bill 23

#### HARBORD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Box 68522, 360A Bloor St. W.  
Toronto, ON M5S 1X1



To: Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy

Re: Bill 23

Dear Members:

Nov. 15, 2022.

Harbord Village Residents' Association represents members in a central Toronto catchment on the western flank of the University of Toronto St. George campus.

We urge the government consult with residents before moving ahead with a bill that affects policies ranging from

- heritage
- rental protection
- conduct of City planning
- green standards for new buildings
- development charges on new buildings

We do not disagree on the goals, but the remedies are harmful and fall far short of the needs. We have grave concerns that the bill will simply advantage developers by unacceptably extending development to the Green Belt, while not producing the affordable rental or lowering the cost of house prices province-wide.

To bring in such legislation with no advance warning, in a time when municipal councils are not yet sworn in creates an unnecessarily adversarial climate. Yesterday's announcement of a 30%+1 standard for passage of a bylaw as part of the strong mayor provisions, while in the midst of two days of subcommittee hearings, is unprecedented, insulting to democracy and must be called back.

Please re-consider. Withdraw the bill and consult.

Yours,

Sue Dexter,

Board,

97 Willcocks St.,

Toronto, M5S1C9. Cell: 416-

985-0222 cc. Dianne Saxe,

Councillor

Mayor John Tory

Jessica Bell

**4. Nov. 16: Joint HVRA and Annex Residents' Association analysis of Bill 23, sent to City Council, legislature and printed in the Annex Gleaner**

Nov. 11, 2022.

Annex and Harbord Village Residents' Associations have analyzed the Province's recently announced changes to planning and heritage. If you share our concerns, please circulate.

Henry Wiercinski, Vice President, Annex Residents' Association

Sue Dexter, Board, Harbord Village Resident's Association

The Province's Big Lie

Bill 23, the Provincial government's promise to build 1.5 million homes by 2031 is nothing short of an early Christmas gift to developers.

There's no guarantee homes will be built, nothing to ensure they will be affordable and there's no help for renters.

Here's what Doug Ford delivered on his pre-Christmas sleigh to his developer buddies:

-- right to evict existing tenants with no obligation to take them back

-- rights to demolish buildings that are listed heritage unless the city designates them

--the sole right to appeal planning decisions

--relief from \$200 million in city charges that ensure new residents will have basics like sewer and water and providing parkspace

-- a pass on making their new buildings energy efficient so Toronto won't meet its climate change emergency targets.

The province has even expanded the boundaries of some cities to allow for building and given a green light to pave over parts of the Green Belt the size of the City of Guelph.

Little wonder radio ads from the development industry are exultant. In return for this grab bag of blessings, developers are not required to deliver on anything.

They now say they will start building to serve newcomers and give people hope. Which newcomers and what hope? Without built in social services and communities to support the adjustment to Canadian life, this bill looks to promote a ghetto in the sprawl, serving only prosperous Canadians and rich immigrants who can afford their own transportation.

It's scattershot legislation designed to rid the development industry of their perception of price penalties, land frustrations, meddling neighbours, and interfering bureaucrats.

Toronto needs 40,00 rental units, 18,000 deeply affordable units, and 4,000 affordable ownership houses in the next seven years. Last year, it

built 17,000. In the first six months of 2022, 1,436 units of rental housing were started.

Where is the requirement that any of the proposed housing be the rental, affordable, deeply affordable needed to get residents off urban streets, and students, low income tenants, those on fixed incomes and newcomers into units they might be able to afford?

The 2021 census showed 48.1% of the population of Toronto are renters, hanging on in a city where average rents have increased 27% in the last year according to Bullpen Research. A CBC home financial columnist tells her clients the income now needed to carry the average \$2,474 rent on 1-bedroom units in the open market in Toronto would be more than \$120,000. For cheaper accommodation, the Nov. 6, Rentals.ca website listed 15 units available between Dufferin Grove and Leslieville under \$1500, and one at 230 square feet for \$1475.

Until now, Toronto by-laws guaranteed tenants displaced by development a subsidy from landlords during construction, and the right of return to the new building at the same square footage and their original rent. A few days ago, the minister removed similar protections from the Ottawa official plan to allow developers to evict and leave tenants to the mercies of the overheated rental market. Toronto will not be far behind.

There are 130 tenants who will be displaced if the 145 St. George development is approved, who would be hard pressed to remain in Toronto, let alone return home once the new building is complete. This means Bill 23 will almost certainly reduce the lower income renter population—at least in the parts of the City of interest to developers. We

will lose our residents. They will lose their homes, their communities and us.

The bill further diminishes the capacity to create affordable rental in new buildings even though cities can pass by-laws to create such housing. The changes in the City cannot require more than 5% of affordable units in those areas. By comparison, the Mirvish Village development, which has become the poster child of progressive city building, has set aside 40% of its 916 units as affordable, with contributions from the developer and CMHC.

The bill also acts on the chronic but unproved complaint that zoning appeals have stood in the way of development. This, when Ontario Land Tribunal reports its caseload down 50% in the last four years, and a minority launched by individuals.

Where is the justification for taking away all rights for the members of the public or interest groups to appeal when there are tens of thousands of units ready to be built. Between 2016 and 2020, 140,848 residential units were approved but only 76,513 built—a completion rate of 54%. Close to 600 units between 316 Bloor St. West and the Just Desserts site at 306-326 Davenport are stalled. Three years later, the existing house form building at Just Desserts has been demolished and replaced by a surface parking lot. Are developers banking permissions, playing the market for better gains?

The province puts up not a dime to build the housing it says it wants. Instead, it has put existing Toronto taxpayers on the hook for \$200 million in lost revenue—fees charged on developments to pay for necessary upgrades to provide vital services like subways, water and sewage for the new residents. Likewise, parks and other infrastructure

for benefit of new and existing residents are now up to local taxpayers to finance. The only added rental in the amalgamated cities of Toronto from Bill 23 will be in scattered basement units and granny suites—and those will be up to individual property owners to finance.

Finally, 3,973 buildings in Toronto have been given heritage listing status, which protects buildings from demolition for 90 days to allow time for Heritage Preservation Services to decide whether a time-consuming and exhaustive full heritage designation is warranted. Under new rules, unless the City designates, present listings would expire in two years and the affected property would be exempt from heritage consideration for the next five years.

This bombshell of changes to planning and heritage was brought down without any hint or signal to the provincial electorate who voted only five months ago; it was introduced the day after a municipal election where these ideas would have been the hot debate, and at a time when new councillors were still trying to find their new offices.

It is an avalanche of random change, incoherent, seemingly vengeful, autocratic, tailor-made for a single sector, that does piecemeal violence to the coherent city plans that have emerged after years of consultation and rips asunder the democratic process.

We all agree sensibly priced housing of all kinds is an urgent need.

Our priorities are simple:

We need to

- plan our cities in considered ways
- protect our most vulnerable

The province needs to put money in the game and build the rental housing we need and embark on a fullscale public consultation process before Bill 23 becomes law.

Should you wish to write your concerns, the legislative committee is accepting letters until Nov. 17. Follow the procedures here:

<https://www.ola.org/en/apply-committees>

## **5. NICOLE SCHULMAN REPORT ON THE TREE PROTECTION ZONE CONTRAVENTION AT THE 1<sup>ST</sup> NARAYEVER SYNAGOGUE CONSTRUCTION SITE**

The situation so far:

- Crew took down TPZ fencing and dug about five feet into the root zone on the East side of the tree, and about two feet on the South side with an excavator
- Crew leveled the area, lay rebar and poured concrete into the area which had been the root zone of the tree, which they later began to lay stone finishing upon
- Calls were made to 311 and the Councilor's office, and at least one member of the Narayever wrote to the president of the Synagogue (as did I)
- The president wrote a letter to those who had written her stating that everything that had been done was permitted as part of the Tree Protection Plan (although this was patently not the case)
- Urban Forestry came and put a stop work order within 5.4 m of the tree
- The crew finished paving the paved pathway (well within 5.4 m of the tree)
- Councillor Saxe called me to thank me for alerting her, and said she was extremely angry and would stay on the case. She had tried to get explanations from the past president and the rabbi as to why the TPP was not followed (she's a member of the Narayever)
- Crew used a circular saw to cut through the laid stone and concrete to the East of the tree and removed maybe 11 inches of paving. Then reinstalled the TPZ fence along the edge of what they had paved (not where it had originally been)
- Councillor Saxe forwarded me correspondence with the president of the Narayever as well as the representative of the construction company. The correspondence indicates that the cutting and reinstallation of the TPZ fence was done at Urban Forestry's behest and that the Narayever's president places responsibility for everything on the construction company. The Councillor responded asking about why the TPP was disregarded (but I don't know what reply she received).

My impression is that the Narayever has done whatever it is that they are going to do to remedy the damage, and that they probably have had to pay a fine or something. Given the expenses of this project (which is in the millions) I suspect that even a few thousand dollars are just the costs of doing business. The inspector from UF said that they would have a lot of trouble getting their deposit back for the tree — but I do not know how much this is. It clearly did not deter them from completely disregarding their own Tree Protection Plan. I have asked the Councillor to tell the community what consequences there have been for this pretty wanton disregard for the TPZ, but have not heard back.

The president's attempt to distance the Narayever from the decision to disregard the TPZ and their TPP lacks credibility since one of the Narayever members who has been supervising the construction (he is on their building committee and is an architect) was on site when the excavator went to work, and was on site when the Urban Forestry inspector came (and he tried to argue with him).

The reality is that the damage has been done — even if the Narayever removed all the paving, they've already removed almost a foot of roots from the surface. If there is any good to come of this it would be that the punishment of the Narayever might deter others from doing the same thing, but as it's unclear what that punishment was I don't see that happening. Quite depressing.

# HARBORD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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## 6. Nov 20 letter to Councillor Saxe opposing Bill 23

November 20, 2022

Dianne Saxe

Councillor for Ward 11 University Rosedale

Toronto City Council

Dear Councillor Saxe:

The Harbord Village Residents' Association is deeply concerned by the Mayor's recent request and agreement to pursue a 30%+1 majority on council votes that advances the provincial agenda.

With Bill 23, the province seeks to upend City processes including heritage, rental replacement, greenspace, green building standards in a theoretical bid to create housing.

With Bill 39, the Mayor has requested powers to overturn the democratic vote at council.

In our view, while Bill 23 lies entirely within the power of the province, with Bill 39 it is within the power of the Mayor and Council to renounce the additional powers and restore the normal democratic standard of 50%+1.

We urge you as our councillor to work toward that end.

Thank you for your consideration.

Anne Fleming

Chair, HVRA

## 7. Nov 28 letter to Mayor and Council re: special council meeting to debate Bill 39

### HARBORD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Box 68522, 360A Bloor St. W.  
Toronto, ON M5S 1X1  
email: [info@harbordvillage.com](mailto:info@harbordvillage.com)  
website: [www.harbordvillage.com](http://www.harbordvillage.com)



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Dear Mayor Tory and Councillors: Nov. 28, 2022.

Harbord Village Residents' Association requests you institute a special council meeting to allow representatives of the residents of Toronto to express their opinion on Bill 39. There is no time to waste.

The Province has put the passage of this bill on an aggressive timetable. The public consultation is limited to two days later this week, and clause-by-clause consideration of the bill is scheduled for Dec. 5. If Council waits until the regular meeting Dec. 14, the voices of the representatives of residents of this City are almost certain to be silenced.

The notion that the mayor would have signoff on all legislation—deciding which items would be subject to a 33%+1 standard for a majority—is without precedent and undermines decades of practice in parliamentary democracy. That the entire basis for majority government could be overturned without full airing at City council is a grave affront

Convene a special meeting immediately, to ensure this matter can be fully canvassed by the elected representatives of residents of this city before the provincial legislature acts.

The people of Toronto deserve this measure of respect.

With thanks,

Sue Dexter,  
Board,  
Harbord Village Residents' Association.

c.c. Mayor Tory  
Toronto Councillors,  
City Manager Tracey Cook,  
Director of Planning Gregg Lintern  
Annex Residents' Association  
FONTRA Residents' Organization

## 8. December 7, letter to legislative committee on heritage impacts of Bill 23

### HARBORD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Box 68522, 360A Bloor St. W.  
Toronto, ON M5S 1X1  
info@harbordvillage.com  
harbordvillage.com



To: Heritage Branch

Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism

400 University Avenue, 5th floor

Toronto

M7A 2R9

Re Proposed Changes to the Ontario Heritage Act and its regulations

Bill 23 (Schedule 6)—the Proposed More Homes Built Faster Act

Attention: Paula Kulpa, Senior Policy Advisor

December 7, 2022

Harbord Village Residents' Association opposes the changes that have been made to the handling of Heritage in the City of Toronto. In particular, we are concerned about the potential loss of our architectural and cultural history should listings have to be converted to designations within two years.

As you are aware, the City has amassed a list of close to 4,000 buildings to protect them against quick demolition. Listing has never stood in the way of development. Rather it has been a safeguard, to ensure against quick demolition, to allow a city pressured by development, a window of 60 days to decide whether to proceed with designation. And designation has not been a club to prevent building, but a tool to ensure good adaptive reuse. Should Bill 23 go forward as written when the City is without the staff resources to create designations, there is a certainty we will lose many precious heritage buildings.

The presumption that heritage protection is an obstacle to building is simply wrong. You need look no further than the Mirvish development on our western border, with its combination of rental, affordable, tall and midrise and heritage houseforms. We were full participants in that process and were quite aware that while the adoption of heritage was not a sticking point, its retention greatly enhanced the

final design. Similarly, the University of Toronto residence at Sussex and Spadina benefitted from the retention of heritage in the podium. In neither case was housing lost.

### **The Harbord Village Area**

Harbord Village is an 1885 Victorian era community, lying between Bloor and College, and Spadina and Bathurst in downtown Toronto. Within those boundaries, we have two Heritage Conservation Districts. We also have a number of individually listed heritage buildings. Three stand out as being at immediate risk. Two groupings emerged from multi-year avenue studies, while a third standalone building and its manse have been on the books for many years. To lose the protection of any of these buildings would be a significant degradation of a historic asset.

### **College St. Spadina to Bathurst**



The north side of College could easily become a district. At present it is protected from unconditional demolition.

The 50 heritage listings along the north side of College Street arose out of a multi-year street study. It is a virtually intact long stretch of 19th century business addresses, with commercial at street level and residential above. Toronto has little of this characteristic streetscape remaining. Both the College St. OPA and TOCore allow for sympathetic increases in height above the three and four-storey historic street wall while respecting the fundamental mainstreet heritage character.

Historic infill including the loss of the buildings between Brunswick and Major, has not always been congenial. Should listings lapse, individual owners would be able to tear down their buildings on the issuance of a demolition order. There could be no 60-day pause to consider whether to designate to save heritage.

### **Bloor Bathurst Intersection Southeast Corner**

The 13 wraparound buildings flanking the southeast corner of Bathurst and Bloor, north of B Street condominiums, across the street from Mirvish, and extending eastward along Bloor are prime for

redevelopment. Without the protection of listings, we would lose the opportunity to marry extra density with heritage preservation and design features that would compliment the Mirvish development.

### **Knox Presbyterian Church, 1909, 644 Spadina at Harbord**

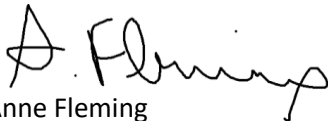


Knox Church and the historic manse are an active development site. The buildings have both architectural and cultural value. The church and its stained glass windows capture the sensibilities of its congregants which included many major figures of turn-of-the-century Toronto. Both are presently listed, both could be lost or degraded without the protection under present heritage rules.

### **Balance Housing and Heritage**

We urge the provincial government to stay the implementation of Bill 23, to allow a made-in- Toronto solution to the need for housing while preserving heritage. If it is permitted to go forward with no change, we will surely suffer a significant loss of heritage assets in the city.

Thank you for your consideration.

  
Anne Fleming

Chair  
and Development Committee

Harbord village Residents' Association



Planning

Harbord Village Residents' Association

cc. Councillor Dianne Saxe

Mary Macdonald, Toronto Heritage Preservation Services

Tamara Anson-Cartwright, Toronto Heritage Preservation Services

## 9. FoSTRA Annual Meeting Planning Committee report

**Fostra Annual Meeting** – Wednesday, November 23, 2022

Greg Lintern, the Chief Planner for the City of Toronto's Planning Department, was the guest speaker.

### **Legislative Changes:**

He commented briefly on all the legislative changes happening the Province and the City. Bills 197, 109 and 23.

Bill 197 basically changes section 37 - the rule book on community benefits derived from height density negotiations. There will no longer be any height density benefits in the planning process.

Bill 109 was passed in April 2022. Implemented punitive refunds to development projects if municipalities take too long to make decisions on project applications. Greg is against this. He argues that it shuts down any dialog around development projects. This regulation will come into play in January 2023.

Bill 23. Wide ranging omnibus bill that has been discussed widely in the news. He noted that concerns about this bill have been amply articulated by community groups, concerned citizens and the press. He noted that these 3 bills add up to a serious dumbing down of the planning process. They will make it very confusing and difficult in the city planning division. Administration of planning rules will be way more complex.

He noted that Bill 23 threatens Heritage and diminishes revenue by 230 million per year to Toronto. These funds are typically used to fund infrastructure and parks etc. He agreed that it means that the city could be quite thread barren and that affordable housing may well be threatened. He said that this is a very frustrating moment for planning in the city.

### **The next 10-15 years:**

He then turned to reflect on where the city will be in 10-15 years. He asked what kind of growth will the city experience? He believes that all the new enhanced transit project happening in the city will allow 60% of new development (housing) to take place outside the core of the city. He thinks this will lessen pressure in the core and will result in less pressure to pursue more density in the core of the city. He thinks this could be quite positive for Toronto.

He also thinks there will be more focus on sustainability and inclusivity. He argues that we need to continue to advance these goals.

### **Community Engagement:**

He said he thinks that community engagement is vitally important to the planning process and believes the city will be forced to find new ways to engage communities in the planning and development process. He thinks that going forward community engagement will take place in the PRE-application phase. He sees some sort of return to broad community engagement. At least he hopes for this. He said the local lens is so important for Toronto.

He said that communities should continue to identify issues and concerns and identify community needs (i.e. pools, parks, library and community services). New local infrastructure projects usually happen because of sustained community pressure.

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The rest of the annual meeting was a series of quick reports:

### **Treasurer's Report**

#### **Nomination Report** for Fostra Board:

Mary Hirst – New Vice President

Graeme Parker – New Treasurer

Ken Sharratt – Ward 4 Director

Don Young - Ward 11 Director

Paul Garrelly – Ward 13 Director

There is still a vacancy for the position of Secretary.

There was a recap of Fostra's Strategic Initiatives.

### **Fostra's Mandate**

- Help shape the creation of policies at all levels of government
- Preserve and enhance the quality of life for Torontonians
- Promote neighbourhood identity and vitality
- Ensure responsible and respectful development within its boundaries

They have developed four Strategic Initiatives (Committees):

**Infrastructure (Parks)**

Advocate for safety and security, transit, by-laws and Parks.

Increase more green space.

Encourage better maintenance of existing parks and infrastructure.

To engage the city regarding capital and operating budgets

**Homes-4-All**

Press for overall low-income/subsidized housing and overall affordable mid-income housing.

Draft a definition of affordable housing.

Invite local Affordable Housing advocates to meetings.

Connect with city councillors on housing issuers.

**Intensification**

Monitor density targets.

Review and respond to Provincial Legislation

Monitor the new City Housing Development Committee

**Environment**

Monitor air and water quality.

Promote sustainable transportation.

Meeting adjourned at 8pm.

## 10. Area Reps Reports

### AREA REPORTS – December 2022

#### NW

As of a few days ago, Christmas trees had entirely sold out at the corner of Brunswick and Bloor. Tree sales generated approximately \$47,000 this year. For over 25 years the money raised from such sales has gone to support Out of the Cold. The total amount combined for all of these years approaches nearly \$1,000,000.

In other news, repairs to the front of Sweet Pete's on Bloor appear to have been completed. It now features a very large window facing the sidewalk.

Christian Mueller, Kerry Clare

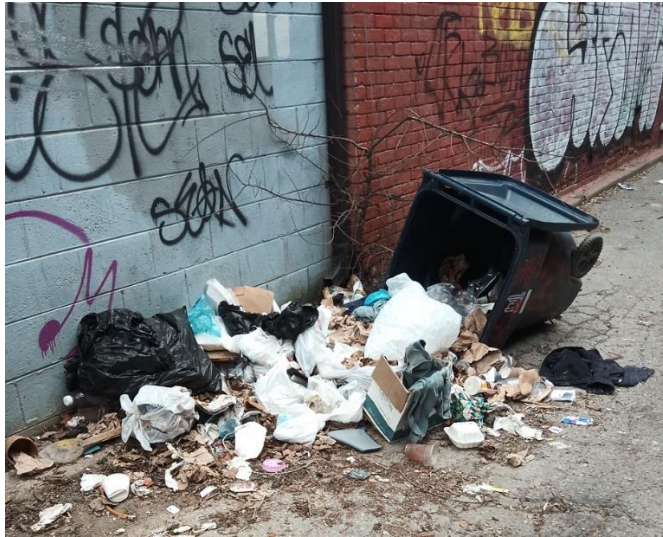
#### NE

Construction proceeds for U. of T.'s Spadina-Sussex residence. In order to meet a Sept. 2024 opening, Daniels, the contractor, is starting work earlier, with staff on site at 6, working commencing at 6.30 am, on concrete pour days. We are monitoring this and seeing how it goes in terms of noise. In other residence-related news, Sussex Mews has been reopened to traffic after being closed to connect the geothermal array under the Robert St. field to the nascent residence.

The building crew at 666 Spadina (Ashford) responded to a request to turn off blinding lights on their crane overnight.

Esso seems to be open until midnight now? Frank Davis has followed up with the city bylaw staff as the agreement was until 11 pm.

A nasty bin full of garbage was abandoned in the Sussex Mews alleyway, just north of Harbord, beside 92 Harbord St. (former River Thai restaurant). It was tipped over last week. Several reports to 311 have not really resulted in action. Maybe I made the mistake of saying this was on private property? Saxe's office escalated this, but a bylaw officer said a letter needed to be sent to the owner of 92 Harbord first...the rats will have a feast in the meantime.



Nicholas Provart, Frank Davis

**SE**

Nothing to report other than a new restaurant at Robert and Harbord which is now up and running and they are so far a very good neighbour.

Cathy Merkley, Jody Salomon

**SC**

Susan McDonald

**SW**

Robert Stambula, Jane Perdue

## 11. Safe Streets Committee report

### SafeStreets Report December 2022

Still waiting to actually connect with the Councillor's Office to review the various projects that have been promised but not yet delivered. There were hopes of a Zoom meeting but this has yet to materialize.

Good news -- the city has sent notification of imminent construction to begin on Borden, which should include the long awaited raised intersection.

Sidewalk snow ploughing by the city is a boon. People should still be encouraged to shovel their walk because it takes time to occur (and people need to get by in the interim) but it has made the sidewalks much easier to navigate.

Our thanks for approving and sending the letter urging action on construction-caused traffic chaos. I think it was a factor in Councillor Saxe's recent motion addressing the impact of construction on vulnerable road users of the Bloor St Bike lanes

<<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2023/mm/bgrd/backgroundfile-230412.pdf>>. Obviously the issue is much larger than Bloor St, but it suggests that we got her ear, so that's something.



