

DPRG NEWS

THE VOICE OF OUR COMMUNITY 🌿



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Your Deer Park Board wishes you all the best over the holiday season and for 2022.

I am pleased to be your President for the 2021-2022 year and to work closely with our new Vice President, John Plumadore. Both of us are Past Presidents. Please keep John and me informed of any issues and opportunities for our area. We can be reached through info@deerparkresidents.ca.

We thank former President Cynthia Crysler and Vice President John Taranu for their important contributions in leading the DPRG. Cynthia helped strengthen our board through development of strong policies and procedures but has taken on other major commitments. We are pleased that she remains on the Board and is leading the Ravine Committee. Vice President John Taranu helped with increasing tenant membership, improving street safety, and bringing ActiveTO and CurbTO to Yonge Street. He has moved south.

This year, the Board's priorities include the continued growth of the DPRG membership to better reflect our community of home owners, condo owners and tenants. A new Tenant Relations Committee is being established. Given City Council will again consider banning leaf blowers, the DPRG is reactivating its past advocacy for a ban due to established harmful health and environmental impacts of leaf blowers. We will continue to improve our communications with you through our website, eblasts and newsletters, to promote preservation of heritage buildings, to promote your participation in the review of the too many development applications, as well as to improve our street safety and deteriorating ravines. We appreciate the ongoing support our Councillor, Josh Matlow.

Cathie Macdonald
President

INTRODUCING NEW BOARD MEMBERS

PIOTR SEPSKI

Hi everyone. My name is Piotr Sepski. I'm the new chair of the DPRG Street Safety Committee. The previous chair, John Taranu, left for New York. My partner and I moved to Deer Park last November and live in an apartment tower next to Oriole Park. In my free time I enjoy looking at TTC trains in the Davisville yard from the Yonge overpass. I also enjoy and all the green spaces - especially the Beltline trail and the ravines. When it

comes to street safety in the neighbourhood, the installation of the complete street pilot on Yonge helped a lot. I'm optimistic that we can bring this level of safety to Avenue Road. I'm currently studying Electrical Techniques at George Brown College. Street safety is my interest because exploring neighborhoods should be enjoyable and safe for everyone. I encourage anyone with street safety concerns to contact me at: piotr.sepski@gmail.com.

AJ DIAMOND

A. J. Diamond is a principal of Diamond Schmitt Architects Incorporated. The firm has a world wide practice with offices in Toronto, Vancouver and New York with a staff complement of 300. Jack Diamond is an Officer of The Order of Canada and a member of the Order of Ontario. He is a Royal Architectural Institute of Canada Gold Medallist.

There have been three exhibitions of his water colours, which were published in Sketches from Here and There. His lecture tours include Australia, New Zealand, the UK, Italy and South Africa. In addition to his practice he has acted as an Ontario Human Rights Commissioner, and was a member of the Golden Commission reporting on the reformation of the Ontario Planning Act, regretfully discarded by the Harris government.

STREET SAFETY COMMITTEE

AVENUE ROAD SAFETY COALITION

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING WITH COUNCILLOR JOSH MATLOW AND COUNCILLOR LAYTON AND CITY TRANSPORTATION STAFF

We're thrilled to hear that the City has hired a consultant to do a 10% redesign of Avenue Road. The City plans 2022 to be the year of research, design, and consultations with stakeholders. Beginning in the spring of 2022, Avenue Road will also start getting "tactical" safety interventions (for example concrete blocks or pylons in selected places) to improve the street for residents as soon as possible.

YONGE STREET ACTIVETO/CURBTO COMPLETE STREET PILOT REVIEW

STAKEHOLDERS MEETING ORGANIZED BY THE CITY

Community members heard data about the Yonge Complete Street Pilot for the first time, and it's very encouraging. Midtown Yonge had 26 restaurants taking part in the CafeTO program, which the City has voted to continue indefinitely. Data collected by the city after the complete street installation is mostly positive: people are walking more and riding more bikes on Yonge. The street feels much more hospitable and lived on. Some concerns about traffic were brought up, and the city assured attendees that the pilot is being constantly modified to help with any concerns. During the meeting, DPRG street safety committee was advocating for leading pedestrian intervals for traffic lights on main Yonge intersections that are in the scope of this project. Thanks to this, pedestrian start crossing before cars and are better seen, thus reducing the number of collisions. These can be seen in action at Yonge next to Chaplin Crescent/Davisville and several others.

BELT LINE IMPROVEMENTS

City Council voted on Improving Cycling and Pedestrian Safety on the Kay Gardner Beltline. Trail. The improvements will happen mostly on the part of the trail west of Spadina.

NOISE RADAR TO BE STUDIED

At the October City Council meeting, Councillor Ana Bailão's motion was approved to explore noise radar - an automated instrument for excessive noise enforcement. Devices like that are being tested in UK and France. A report from staff is to come in the first quarter of 2022.

NOISE AND POLLUTION COMMITTEE

The Committee has been promoting the banning of gas powered leaf blowers in advance of the upcoming vote at City Council on the issue, carrying on the tradition of the DPRG for decades. They are reaching out to other residents associations and individuals who support this initiative.

COUNCILLOR MATLOW'S SUPPORT OF THE BAN

SEE NOVEMBER 18 NEWSLETTER

We've reached that point in the Fall season where many of the leaves have fallen off the trees, and a hum throughout the city can be heard in almost every neighbourhood. The hum is not of the coming holiday season, but of two-stroke gas powered leaf blowers.

From our office's correspondences with the community, I know that this is something that you feel extremely passionate about. I was proud to support a motion in September of 2020 asking staff to study a ban on gas-powered leaf blowers. The use of gas-powered lawn equipment on a daily basis is a detriment not just to the health of us and our neighbours, but also to the climate as a whole.

According a 2011 study, a half hour yard work session with a two-stroke gas-powered leaf blower produces the equivalent carbon dioxide as driving from Texas to Alaska in a pick-up truck.

While the motion asked for an early 2021 deadline for staff to report back, the city's second major lockdown due to COVID-1, spread staff resources thin. As many of us have now done our part to get vaccinated, and follow all other public health regulations, staff's focus has shifted and they aim to bring the recommendations to the *Infrastructure and Environment Committee* early next year. I will work with my colleagues to hold staff to that date and will be among the loudest voices on council advocating for this ban.

For the daily yard work that many of us face during this season, I've always felt that you can never go wrong with a rake. Feel free to read more about my thoughts on two-stroke

gas-powered leaf blowers in [this piece from the Toronto Star](#). If you would like to receive periodic updates of City Staff's reports on the progress of the ban, I encourage you to reach out to my office at Councillor_Matlow@toronto.ca for more information.

RAVINE COMMITTEE

UPDATE ON PROPOSED DON VALLEY LAYOVER

The Don Valley Layover (DVL) is planned as part of the Go Expansion program, to park and service diesel trains from the Milton Line, serving areas west of Toronto. The facility will be built on a retaining wall up to 35' high adjacent to the floodplain east of the Don River and just north of the Prince Edward Viaduct. It will require two access roads, to service the trains at track level and for employees and vehicles to access the parking lot.



Rendering of proposed Don Valley layover facility, based on publicly available information from Metrolinx website, drafted by T. Grydziusko

A number of residents' groups and individuals worked this summer with the Toronto Councillors Mike Layton and Paula Fletcher to demand the Federal Government step in and provide a thorough and independent environmental assessment of the Metrolinx plans and the impacts to this green area; unfortunately, this was denied.

Why are we concerned? Well, there are a number of reasons why many neighbourhood associations and community groups are concerned about this proposal. And while this layover is not right in our backyard, it is connected to the Vale of Avoca Ravine.

Above all, destroying ravine parkland for infrastructure projects is simply the wrong approach – green space converted to rail corridors and parking lots to accommodate urban sprawl? While we all agree improved public transit is essential as the city of Toronto continues its rapid growth, and world class transit must keep pace, BUT it must not be achieved at the expense of the largest remaining natural area in downtown Toronto. We are blessed in our neighbourhoods with ample green space; many further south are not, while density continues to increase. The City's Parkland Acquisition Strategy speaks to the difficulty of finding and funding green space in the city core. Moreover, conservation and restoration efforts in the last few decades have successfully been returning these areas to natural urban greenspace. The Lower Don Master Plan and The Making of the

New Don River by Waterfront TO continue on this restorative path to create the largest contiguous park space in the city. The negative impact of the layover on ravine ecology, the magnificent vistas that define our city and the integrity of the park corridor will be considerable and permanent. The views of the iconic Prince Edward Bridge alone are worth preserving. The Parkland Trail proposal describes a vision for a specific extension of the current trail network; the proposed layover would prevent the fulfillment of an even broader vision for the Don parkland running both north and south from the Brickworks.

Many residents' and other groups do not believe that Metrolinx has made a convincing case for locating this layover in the Don Valley. Independent transit experts share our concerns. Limited efforts at public consultation by Metrolinx to date have failed to adequately notify both park users and surrounding residents, failed to provide important information to the public, and failed to address community concerns. For example, Metrolinx has provided little if any analysis of alternatives to the proposed layover. Interestingly, the GO Expansion business case is largely based on ridership forecasts developed in 2017 or earlier. Since then, COVID-19 has had a dramatic impact on overall transit ridership arising from expanded opportunities for individuals to work from home or other remote locations. A survey by Metrolinx itself from earlier this year found that "the usual nine-to-five travel pattern may be a thing of the past". Many commentaries on downtown office space reach similar conclusions. Yet Metrolinx's overall business case depends on peak ridership quickly returning to pre-pandemic levels, and then more than doubling by 2031. Metrolinx has stated that procurement and construction on the layover could begin as early as the New Year. So now is the time for both members and local residents to understand the layover proposal and its implications for the future of the Don Valley.

So, what are the next steps? The DPRG is engaging with other concerned neighbourhood associations, community groups, and individuals who share the same concerns about the proposal by Metrolinx to locate a GO train layover facility in Don Valley parkland. We will continue to support continuing dialogue with Metrolinx and public officials at all levels of government to safeguard the unique Don Valley parkland resources, while finding workable solutions to transit expansion imperatives. We have provided several links at the end of this article for you to both learn more and take an active interest in this issue of keeping trains out of parks and preserving our urban green space for future generations. Members and residents can get involved with the DVL opposition campaign, express their views by phone or mail to provincial or municipal elected officials, and raise concerns with others in your social networks. See below for more links and information sites.

GET INVOLVED TODAY!

No Trains in Parks website; consider signing-up on the website to stay in touch with the continuing campaign: <https://www.notrainsinparks.ca/>

Some additional website links that are relevant to the Don Valley Layover issue:

Website of Don't Mess with the Don: <https://www.dontmesswiththedon.ca/>

A better vision for the Don Valley:<https://wonscotonachtrail.ca>

Evergreen Brick Works and the Lower Don Master Plan:
<https://www.evergreen.ca/our-projects/torontos-ravines/>

Metrolinx layover web page:
<https://www.metrolinxengage.com/en/engagement-initiatives/don-valley-layover-facility>

Political representatives to contact with your views on the layover proposal:

Our local councillor: councillor_layton@toronto.ca

Our Mayor: mayor_tory@utoronto.ca

The Provincial Minister of Transportation: caroline.mulroney@pc.ola.org

The Premier: premier@ontario.ca

Local MP: Chrystia.Freeland@parl.gc.ca

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

2021 is rapidly drawing to a close and your 2022 annual membership renewal fee of \$20 will be soon due.

The DPRG has been a major influence advocating for our area and City Hall takes notice. Did you know that all sidewalk snow clearing of Toronto city streets -which starts this winter- was an initiative which began at the DPRG? The current ban proposal on gas-powered leaf blowers, soon to be voted on at City Hall, was started 20 years ago by the DPRG board and is currently gathering support throughout the city by board director, Chris Keating's 'Noise and Pollution Action Committee,' and their growing number of "Gas Busters."

We are extremely fortunate to have Councillor Josh Matlow as our Councillor, who has tirelessly represented our local concerns at development meetings. Despite Covid restrictions, Zoom AGMs and Town Hall meetings, over the past 2 years the DPRG has increased membership. Without your participation as a member, the Deer Park Residents Group would be less effective in representing the community.

I encourage you to click and renew, with PayPal, EFT, or a mailed cheque. Please renew your membership so we can continue to represent you and the issues that affect the quality of life in Deer Park

Thank you for your support

Diana Midwinter
Chair, Membership Committee

[CLICK TO RENEW](#)

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Board's objectives are to provide you with information to be able to make your voices heard, to participate in working groups and meetings on applications of interest, and to represent your views. The Committee includes members with special expertise in various aspects of development, such as architects and landscape architects. Let us know if you are interested in joining. See the DPRG website for updates on all current applications.

Recent events include

December 8 - Committee of Adjustment hearing on for an apartment building at 101-103 Heath St. West The Board will be objecting to this application as the needed changes to reduce impacts on Deer Park Crescent neighbours and to protect trees have not been made. While the recently historically designated house at 103 is incorporated, the building is too long affecting existing trees and reducing open space, and is too close to neighbours on Deer Park Crescent, contrary to City policies for neighbourhoods and neighbourhood intensification.

December 14th at 4.00 pm - Councillor Matlow's Community Consultation meeting for I Delisle re Construction Management Plan and Site Plan Approval application

December 14th at 6:00 pm - City Community Consultation meeting for a 39 storey tower at 1406 -1428 Yonge – Home Hardware block Read the Preliminary Report on the application for a 39 storey building. See the report at <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.TE29.29>

November 12 - City Council approved of 29-39 Pleasant Boulevard at 35 stories

At the November 2 Councillor's Community Consultation, issues were raised about the podium height, balconies and landscaping details. At a subsequent meeting with 40 Rosehill reps, City staff and the applicants, the podium height was reduced to 2 stories and the floor area added to the height. The agreed changes were incorporated into City Council's approval. There will be further consultations at the site planning approval stage and for construction management.

Upcoming application to relocate the sign on the roof of I Delisle to the north wall of 2 St. Clair East

The Board supports this relocation as it will be temporary and taken down once the new tower to the north, part of the Wittington block project, is built.

DPRG SECRETARY VACANCY

Deer Park Residents' Group, is in need of a volunteer secretary for our Board. If you have the required skills you are welcomed to apply.

The secretary should have typing skills, computer literate, organizational skills and likes working with others. The Secretary will keep record proceedings of all meetings, have charge of all other property and documents of the DPRG. Issues a notice to Members of all general and special meetings, maintain and file corporate documents and perform such other duties as may be required.

The Secretary works closely with the president on all communication pieces. If interested please apply to info@deerparkresidents.ca.

**The DPRG Newsletter was produced
by the Communications Committee:**

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