

DPRG NEWS

THE VOICE OF OUR COMMUNITY 🌿



NOTICE

Annual General Meeting

June 7 at 7pm

Calvin Presbyterian Church, 26 Delisle

Plan to attend and bring your neighbours!

Hear reports on your Board's activities

Approve the 2022 Financial Report and approve your 2023 Board

Ask your questions and share your idea

Guest speaker tba

Only members can vote - join or renew your membership!

Working together for a better Deer Park in changing times

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Mark your calendars for the DPRG AGM on June 7. We will review the highlights of the year and ask for your comments and suggestions, as well as your approval of the 2022 Financial Report and of Board members for 2023. We will update you with our special confirmed speaker(s) as our Councillor, Josh Matlow, will be not be able to attend given that he is running for Mayor. (The Board does not support candidates.) See the Membership Drive report below to ensure your membership fee is up to date.

2023 will continue to provide us with both challenges and opportunities in our changing City and times. We will continue to push for improvements to development applications, making improvements on Avenue Road and at the intersection of Lonsdale and Oriole Parkway and helping with the implementation of ActiveTO on Yonge, making needed improvements to our Vale of Avoca ravine and working with the Yonge+St. Clair BIA to improve the Yonge and St. Clair intersection, and addressing noise issues such as gas-powered leaf blowers. As most of the Deer Park residents are tenants, we will continue to develop the voice of our Tenants Advisory Committee

We need new Board members asap to help achieve these objectives and others that will arise. Please consider joining the Board now - bring your ideas and help manage our organization. If you are interested or have any questions – please contact me through info@deerparkresidents.ca.

June 26 is our Mayoral Election. This is your opportunity to choose a new Mayor who can to meet all the challenges we are facing in Toronto. Make sure you vote! Watch for further information on the June 1 Mayoral Debate sponsored by the Federation of North Toronto Resident Associations (FoNTRA), in partnership with the Federation of South Toronto Associations (FoSTRA) and the Ontario College of Art. This event will also be shown on UTube, Instagram and other platforms. Deer Park Residents Group is a member of FONTRA.

Cathie Macdonald
President

TENANT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tenants keep your eyes and ears open for our next Tenant Advisory Forum to be held this spring. Topics will include Mayoral election and Josh Matlow's Tenant Support Program and other commitments from candidates running for mayor and their tenant election plans. All tenants welcomed in the Deer Park neighbourhood. No fee will apply.

An open forum on tenants' issues and reviewing past Tenant Forum objectives will form the fall session.

John Plumadore
Chair

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The development industry has certainly slowed down! We have seen no new development applications this year.

1366 Yonge (at Balmoral) – Many residents objected to the application due to the size and the loss of the Balmoral Medical Arts facility, important for our area. A new Vale of Avoca Residents Association was formed to fight the loss of the Medical Arts

Building and hosted a very successful petition. The DPRG submitted a letter and deputed at the Toronto and East York Community Council April 12 to support City Planning's recommendation to refuse this application as being far too big and tall, and for not having parking. The loss of the medical building the major issues for the community but unfortunately Ontario planning legislation does not permit protection of such important community uses. The Community Council also supported Councillor Matlow's motion to obtain the assistance of City staff with relocation of the medical offices in our area. At this point we do not know whether the applicant will appeal the decision.

49 Jackes – We have just learned that there will be a case management meeting for the Ontario Land Tribunal hearing on the City's refusal of the application on June 6. There had been some unsuccessful attempts to resolve issues of height and impacts on the David Balfour Park. The DPRG has registered as a Participant in the hearing to provide information and be sheltered from any newly legalised potential costs if our objections are overridden. We support the City Planning position and they will lead the appeal. Unfortunately, in the last year we lost our two key Board Member leads in presenting our objections, Jack Diamond and Michael Vaughan.

Amica redevelopment – The demolition hoardings are finally up at Balmoral and Avenue Road! Amica has been consulting with abutting neighbours on how to best protect them from construction impacts.

Multiplexes - The new City Planning proposals for multiplexes (duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes) were approved at the April 27 Planning and Housing Committee meeting and City Council will make its decision at its May 17 to 19 meeting. The Deer Park area has many older multiplexes - duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes - but none built recently. Also, many large houses have been converted into apartments. But multiplexes have never been permitted in the "suburbs". Permitting multiplexes across the City is part of its "Enhanced Housing Opportunities in Neighbourhoods" initiatives. The new regulations increase the now permitted depth and density regulations but the new multiplexes may be not much different in scale than the existing ones in our area. As well, development charges were eliminated. The Federation of North Toronto Residents Associations was unsuccessful in its recommendation for deferral. FoNTRA wanted consideration of more restrictive changes that would help ensure a better fit with many different neighbourhoods of the City. City Council will vote on the matter at its meeting of May 17 to 19.

Improving the Yonge St. Clair intersection area - The DPRG has now established links with the Yonge + St. Clair BIA, which is already planning much needed

improvements to the area. We look forward to participating in some of their initiatives. We are now looking at proposals for “gateway” markers on Yonge and St. Clair.

We thank Councillor Matlow for ensuring we will have a City Construction Management Manager, as is provided for Yonge and Eglinton, to oversee the impacts of construction of many development projects that have been approved and ones still in the approval process. But given the current major construction slowdown, it is not clear what will happen in the near future.

Cathie Macdonald

Chair

STREET SAFETY COMMITTEE

The DPRG is a member of the Avenue Road Safety Coalition, which was formed to address safety concerns on Avenue Road south of St. Clair, our western boundary. Our members regularly drive on this road and use its sidewalks and our children use them to walk to school. The March Community Council meeting, with our help, supported the motions of Councillors Matlow and Saxe:

1. To reduce the speed limit on Avenue Road, between Bloor Street and St. Clair Avenue West, from 50 kilometres an hour to 40 kilometres an hour.
2. To request enhanced speed enforcement on Avenue Road.
3. To request that the City report by Q4 of 2023 on the results of its Avenue Road Study and public consultation, Phase 2, on options for improving pedestrian safety on Avenue Road between Bloor Street and St. Clair Avenue West that could begin by Q2 2024, and an 18 month pedestrian safety pilot study to materially improve pedestrian safety such as through a combination of speed management, physical barriers, signs, sidewalk extensions, on-street parking, dedicated delivery or construction zones, and other measures where appropriate.

NOISE & POLLUTION ACTION COMMITTEE

Spring is here and with it the return of those tranquility-killing, environmentally damaging gas-powered leaf blowers.

Councillor Diane Saxe's motion approved by the Infrastructure and Environment Committee requested that the City Manager report by the end of May with a plan to implement a ban on the use of two-stroke engine leaf blowers, lawnmowers, and other small engine equipment. Seven Councillors, including Josh Matlow, Alejandra Bravo, Shelley Carroll, Mike Colle, Chris Moise, Gord Perks, and Jaye Robinson have indicated they support our initiative.

The Toronto District School Board released its Climate Action Annual Report in December of last year. We are very pleased that its Facilities Services and Planning Group intends to convert from gas to electric as a power source for its property maintenance equipment. Kudos to TDSB for showing leadership in protecting employees, students, and the environment!

Other upcoming City initiatives regarding noise in the City include:

- The City review of its Noise Bylaw will now be in Q4 and hopefully new regulations will then be put in place to effectively ban gas-powered leaf blowers.
- The City "Night Economy" review is now underway and is addressing excessive noise from bars and night clubs etc. Better regulations are to be recommended. One of the main issues being raised in the consultations is the need for more and better enforcement.

Chris Keating

Chair

RAVINE COMMITTEE

The DPRG is part of the Midtown Ravines Group – a combination of the 5 residents' groups which border the Yellow Creek or Vale of Avoca section of the Ravine. The Midtown Ravine Group (or MRG) is the focal point for advocating with City Hall for work to improve the ravine, in terms of ongoing erosion/slope stabilization, control of invasive species, addition of native species (including native trees instead of the ever-present Norway Maple) and accessible paths.

Invasive species are threatening to overtake our ravines. As they are not native to the area, insects, birds and animals do not benefit from these invasive species, and the invasive species block the natural spread of native species. Invasive species do not hold the soil on the slopes the way that native species would (and previously were

doing) so are at the root of the accelerating erosion which threatens property along the top of the ravine, both city-owned and private.

Clean up day!

The MRG is also a hub for a group of volunteers who make a huge difference in the ravine. For 2 wet, muddy weekends in late April, a group of +20 stalwart volunteers (including from DPRG) participated in a purely volunteer effort to clean out the trash



that accumulates in the ravine from north of St. Clair, all the way down to Mt. Pleasant. They removed dozens of contractor garbage bags as well as many items too large for bags – mattresses, bicycle wheels and many bits of metal were among this haul. This is hugely beneficial to the ravine as garbage is toxic to native species as well as undermining the calming effect of the green space for all our residents.

As part of their advocacy, the MRG met with key councillors recently on the ravines. The Deer Park Residents Group supported Councillor Saxe's motion (and the MRG) at the Infrastructure and Environment Committee to seek a report to the June Committee on options for ensuring there is fairness in how the private lands of the ravine are improved. The motion is potentially a useful step towards getting beneficiaries of City investment in the ravines to share in their costs.

The DPRG has also supported the U of T Urban Forestry Department's study and advocacy for the ravine through donations totaling \$5,000 over the last 4 years. These efforts have led to the development of the Toronto Nature Stewards program, which brings together volunteers to clean up dozens of sites across the city, including within our local ravine system, to address critical invasive species/lack of native species issues. While the City has a Ravine Strategy, funding has been sparse and the work of ravine remediation is massive – the Toronto Nature Stewards program is making a

significant difference in our ability to turn the tide on the threats to our ravines. At our April meeting, the DPRG decided to donate \$1,000 to the Toronto Nature Stewards program.

Cynthia Crysler

Chair

OUTSTANDING NEIGHBOUR AWARDS

The Honourable Carolyn Bennett MP for Toronto St-Pauls presented 2023 Outstanding Neighbour Awards to DPRG President, Cathie Macdonald and Vice President, John Plumadore. These Awards are made in Federal Ridings to people nominated by others in their communities for making a difference, connecting and supporting community. Cathie and John both enjoy working with our community to make it better for all and thank their nominators.



MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Help support our community. Not a member of the DPRG? Membership is vital our on-going work. Your low-cost membership fee (\$20) helps ensure that the DPRG continues to shape and enhance the quality of life in our community. Membership fees are used for newsletters, web support and operations, advocacy work fostering community initiatives such as events, and supporting communications and outreach. Members keep in touch with what is happening in Deer Park, can vote at the AGM, and can contact us at any time at info@deerparkresidents.ca. Pass this newsletter on to your neighbours so they can join too.

Join us here: <https://deerparkresidents.ca/join-us/>



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