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SOUTH ROSEDALE RATEPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is a wonderful time of year in South Rosedale with early Summer days upon us.

This issue of the Newsletter focuses to a large degree on a major development proposal in the area of North St. James Town. While the multi-tower development lies outside the boundaries of South Rosedale, the scale of the project will create significant overlook issues for South Rosedale residents living in the southeast area of the community and more specifically, the streets of Dale, Maple, Castle Frank, MacKenzie and Glen Road.

While the area is ripe for redevelopment, the proposed density of the project will also put pressure on nearby public transit and traffic in the area.

The SRRA is taking an active role in the public consultation process associated with the project and is working closely with other neighbourhood groups to ensure the reasonableness of the project and the amenities which could be achieved for both South Rosedale and St. James Town.

We are also pleased to report that our annual renewal of SRRA memberships is progressing well with approximately 32% of all single family residences being current members of the Association. We would encourage all South Rosedale residents to consider renewing their membership for 2011, or joining if they have not previously been members. In addition to the basic membership fee of \$75.00, many members have included an extra financial contribution which is much appreciated as additional assistance in funding the activities of the Association.

The Association's Board is committed to providing the South Rosedale community with a strong voice relative to the area's unique position as one of Toronto's most desirable residential communities. I personally welcome the contact of residents who may have any concern as it relates to our neighborhood.

David M. Townley, CA, CF
President

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North St. James Town Development The View of the SRRA

In the Winter issue, we reported on two development proposals for sites on the south side of Bloor, one just west of Sherbourne and the other between Sherbourne and Parliament. Of the two, the proposal for the major overhaul of Bloor and Howard Streets between Parliament and Sherbourne ("North St. James Town") is attracting much attention and is the one of most concern to many South Rosedale residents, particularly those with homes closest to that site, on Dale, Maple, Glen, McKenzie, Castlefrank Road and Castlefrank Crescent, among other streets.

Lanterra Developments filed an application with the City last year for a very involved redevelopment of most of North St. James Town. The proposed development includes the construction of four large residential hi-rise buildings, a 50 storey tower at the northeast corner of Sherbourne and Howard and three towers at the opposite end of Howard, within the triangular parcel bounded by Bloor, Parliament and Howard, with heights of 56, 53 and 46 stories. Also included in the development would be a 5-storey residential building, semi detached row housing, a low-rise mixed-use building and retail uses along Howard Street, east of Sherbourne. The residential buildings would accommodate as many as 1,840 units.

The City issued a Preliminary Report in December, 2010 in which it identified no less than 26 issues it had with the proposal and by which it indicated that the application, as submitted, was not supportable. That report and more recent information pertaining to the proposal can be viewed at:

<http://www.toronto.ca/planning/stjamestown-apps.htm>

The proposed development does not conform to the Official Plan nor to the applicable zoning and relevant development guidelines. The towers, as proposed, would loom over South Rosedale, dominate the southerly vista and at times cast shadows through Rosedale Ravine and into the neighbourhood. The increased density would tax an already overburdened public transportation system and the additional motor vehicles expected to result from the development would add stress to traffic in the area and through the streets of South Rosedale.

On the positive side, North St. James Town should be improved and an appropriate project would be beneficial to South Rosedale. A sensible development would revitalize the area. The right retail would be very attractive and convenient to South Rosedale residents. The pedestrian bridge could become more secure and useful. Funds should be available for the betterment of the St. James Town environment.

The SRRA Board is following this proposal very carefully. The City is aware of our interest and has invited us to participate in the public aspects of the process. The developer has also been apprised of the need to take South Rosedale into account. The Board has met with our Ward Councillor and will meet with the Councillor responsible for North St. James Town. Communications have taken place among SRRA directors, City staff, various South Rosedale residents, St. James Town residents and St. James Town interest groups. SRRA has taken a seat among the Working Group organized by the City to consider and comment upon the project.

Jon Venutti,
SRRA Director

North St. James Town Development The View of a Maple Avenue Resident and SRRA Director

I'm a mother, businesswoman and wife of one of the "Maple Gang", the group of Maple Avenue residents concerned with the scale of the proposed North St. James Town development. I'm also a director of the SRRA and the representative of the SRRA on the Working Group organized by the City to assess and comment on the project. This is my perspective on the Lanterra Development proposal presently with the City.

We all know that the North St. James Town area is in desperate need of a major fix. We would also love to have a decent restaurant within walking distance and perhaps a green grocer. The Glen Road pedestrian bridge must be made safe. Crime must be reduced. The question is, do we want four extremely large condominium towers looming over our backyards? That's too many new people, too many new cars and new congestion.

We would support a reasonable, attractive development. A 30 storey tower at Sherbourne Street would likely be acceptable, with shorter buildings at the Parliament Street end. Bigger is not better. A more creative approach to green space both within and outside the boundaries of the proposal lands must be sought. Also, more public space for the new and existing residents of the area must be made available.

We would like to see proper streetscaping along Bloor and retail that would invite residents into the area. We also want to resolve the issue of security at the pedestrian bridge and the Sherbourne Subway Station entrance. Let's face it, that Glen Road Bridge is scarier than the germ count at a McDonald's playland. We also wish to assist the St. James Town residents to benefit from the development, by having funds available for the improvement of their existing neighbourhood. The conditions there are appalling and now is the time to make it right.

Change is happening. North St. James Town will be redeveloped. Let us know what your views are. The more we hear from you the better we can represent your interests on the Working Group.

Heather Senst,
SRRA Director



Location map showing block bounded by Bloor Street East, Howard Street, Sherbourne Street and Parliament Street, which includes the sites that are the subject of this application.

North St. James Town Development The View of a Long-Time Resident of South Rosedale

As a resident of South Rosedale since 1983 and a long-time member of South Rosedale Ratepayers Association (“SRRA” or the “Association”), I have watched the continuous revitalization of our neighbourhood with great pride; and, I have applauded the involvement of SRRA in protecting our fabric of shared values within our historically significant neighbourhood.

In light of the proposal for development along Bloor and Howard Streets (from Parliament Street to Sherbourne Street), the residents of South Rosedale (from Castlefrank Road to Mount Pleasant Road) urgently need the SRRA to represent our neighbourhood interests! And, to protect our interests, the SRRA requires your vocal and financial support.

The development proposal would see three residential towers of 56, 53 and 46 stories erected along the south side of Bloor Street, west of Parliament Street. This sliver of land is currently zoned ‘Neighbourhood’, with a height limit of 3 stories. In addition, the proposal would have a 50-storey tower constructed on Howard at Sherbourne, just south of Bloor. While we would all welcome improvements in this area, the four towers proposed would overwhelm our South Rosedale neighbourhood to the north of the Rosedale Valley.

For many residents whose principal view is downtown, the three towering buildings proposed for the east end of Howard Street would create a giant curtain-wall that dominates the immediate skyline; and, the 50-storey tower proposed for the west end of Howard would dominate, if not obliterate, any south-westerly view. The height and density of the towers is unprecedented anywhere in downtown Toronto, including the Bay Street Financial District.

Of course, the proximity of South Rosedale to downtown Toronto exposes us to the constantly changing cityscape and skyline; and, we are all accustomed to the presence of towers in our visual panorama. However, while improvement of Bloor and Howard Streets (between Sherbourne and Parliament) is long overdue, improvement that dominates and overwhelms our neighbourhood is neither desirable, nor acceptable.

Among other considerations, the proposal will be assessed within the context of the Tall Building Guidelines. City Council has endorsed the use of a document “Design Criteria for Review of Tall Building Proposals” which sets out design guidelines. As an extension of the Tall Building Guidelines, City Planners commissioned a consultants’ report entitled “Tall Buildings Inviting Change in Downtown Toronto” which drew upon the guidelines and proposes “a vision and a set of performance standards for tall buildings in Downtown Toronto”. According to City Planners, the vision and performance standards are intended to add “a finer grain of detail” to the review of tall building applications in Downtown Toronto. The report, while not yet City Policy, specifically identifies the stretch of Bloor Street East from Sherbourne to Parliament as an area where future development should be restricted to a maximum range of 15 to 25 stories (with no subway station premiums).

According to the authors of the report and to City Planners, this range of heights was specifically recommended in recognition of development pressures on this stretch of Bloor Street and the impact on the existing St James Town community and South Rosedale. The City Planners’ vision is clearly enunciated in recognition of the impact of development on South Rosedale. Tall buildings should not be located on sites where they create negative visual impact on historic residential environments.

This is not the first development imposition that South Rosedale has encountered. Fortunately, the SRRA has a record of protecting our interests. We need the SRRA to be actively involved with all parties, the City Planners, politicians, developers and our neighbours in St James Town, to address our concerns and significantly modify the current proposal.

Every resident of South Rosedale, and especially those in the primarily affected area, must get on board through membership

in SRRA and by attending meetings to command the attention of the City, the politicians and the developers. Anything less than an outpouring of support for and involvement with SRRA will indicate to the other parties that the boundaries of Rosedale are open for unlimited development, at any height or density. This is not the message that will lead to a bright future for South Rosedale.

Please join the SRRA or renew your SRRA membership today. Join your neighbours to protect our neighbourhood interests. Your neighbours will be calling on you shortly to encourage your support and involvement. Thank you for your interest and support.

Tom Goldspink,
South Rosedale Resident

Three residential towers of 56, 53 and 46 stories erected along the south side of Bloor Street, west of Parliament Street.



South Rosedale Residence Looking South to St. James Town.

North St. James Town Development The View of a South Rosedale Resident and Architect

Lanterra Developments has recently announced its intentions to develop approximately 1,840 residential condominium units on the south side of Bloor Street East, between Parliament Street and Sherbourne Street. Currently the site is zoned for considerably less density and height and in fact the eastern-most portion of the site is zoned for low rise residential within a "neighbourhood" designation. It is estimated that the site will house between 3,000 and 4,000 persons.

There is considerable pressure within the downtown area to increase densities and heights, especially along Avenues (Bloor is considered an Avenue) and within close proximity to the subway system in order to accommodate population density and the influx of persons moving to Toronto. Currently, the most important measure of the reasonableness of a project is the examination of possible negative impact as opposed to an examination of previously prescribed limits to use, height or density. The City has studied where best to allow very tall buildings and this particular development site is east of the areas captured within tall buildings guidelines. With respect to impact, the key factors under examination are shadow, wind, privacy and view. Beyond these potential negative impacts, consideration should be given to access to public transit, community services and traffic. The negative impact of this development relative to light, view and privacy is minimal since it is on the south side of Bloor and the homes north of Bloor are more than 1,000 feet or 300 meters away. There is more separation between the planned buildings and existing buildings than is typically required to satisfy the City's guidelines for view and privacy. The developer will argue that given the proximity of the subway and downtown location there will be minimal traffic impact. This will require more in-depth study by both the developer and the City. The main cause for concern is the additional burden on community amenities, services and public transportation. The developer will provide private amenities for the new residents to reduce the demand on public amenities.

The re-zoning required for the development will allow the City to cause the developer to provide for facilities, services or other matters. This contribution can be in the form of cash or the construction of public amenities and improvements, such as parks, street-scaping and public buildings. This offers a very significant opportunity for the communities north and south of the site to benefit, provided the funds or the installations are clearly directed toward specific and meaningful projects.

For South Rosedale, the following should be considered:

- a) Glen Road Pedestrian Bridge improvements to increase security/safety, repair the bridge and provide for a much better entrance to the Sherbourne Subway Station;

- b) Bloor Street improvements, beyond the public space in front of the development (as the developer will have to finish the public spaces around the development in any event). Consideration should be given to extending the Bloor Street improvements east to Parliament, on both sides of the street. This should include better sidewalk finishes, better lighting, new street furniture etc. similar to the Bloor improvements west of Jarvis Street;
- c) Major improvements to the St James Town Community. This precinct has been recognized as an area in need of significant investment/improvement for many years by the City and the community. South Rosedale would greatly benefit by the re-appropriation of the ground plane between the existing buildings, including removal of all dead-end conditions, the elimination of surface parking, driveways and open garbage storage and significant, safe and clear connection to the network of public streets. These elements could be replaced with open green space, playgrounds, outdoor athletic facilities, indoor and outdoor amenities, including daycare, meeting rooms, sports and recreation space. These types of improvements and better public access to them would have an enormously positive effect upon the immediate and surrounding areas, including South Rosedale.

**It is estimated
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persons.**

The affected communities must ensure that the contribution by the developer is fair in amount, directed to the immediate area and to very specific projects. The community must work with the City and the local Councillors to develop a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for the area that includes a Master Plan design, identifies very specific priorities and includes buy-in from private land owners for all worthwhile improvements. This will allow the City to earmark specific funds directly to specific projects identified in the Plan. The City is currently undertaking a CIP for this area but it is in a draft form and not yet complete. The CIP the City will prepare will at best only have suggestions for the improvement to the private lands and will focus on City lands. The challenge will be to invest at least some of the developer's contribution to improvements to private lands.

As for the design of the development, serious consideration should be given to the inclusion of street-related retail along Bloor Street. The developer appears reluctant to invest in retail, citing the speed and volume of traffic and the one-sided nature of this section of Bloor Street. The addition of possibly 4,000 or more residents, the large number of existing under-served residents north and south of Bloor Street within walking distance of the site and the proximity to the two major subway stations would suggest that retail establishments would be supported and therefore would be commercially viable. Traffic on Bloor Street could be calmed where needed, crosswalks could be added and the street could be improved for pedestrians. The inclusion of retail space should be a prerequisite to any development approval.

Dermot Sweeny,
SRRA Resident and Architect

North St. James Town Development The View from St. James Town

Many will remember St. James Town as the place to be in the 1970s, an exciting, innovative design which attracted many singles and students to mid-town Toronto. Thirty years later, its population has swelled to at least 3 times planned capacity, becoming a point-of-entry to New Canadians from over 67 cultures and countries, plus long term residents, many on low incomes and some living with mental and physical health challenges. Many chose to live here given its proximity to public transit, jobs and services but decry the overcrowded elevators, lack of green space and the ubiquitous outdoor garbage bins.

Since receiving notice of a proposed development of 1840 units in 4 tall towers ranging from 46-56 stories, over 1000 residents of St. James Town have been contacted to discuss the potential implications given the project's complexity and the challenges and potential for the area. Residents from nearby neighbourhood associations and groups have joined us in reviewing the planned project.

We all agree that the subject area needs development. Abandoned, poorly kept property attracts negative elements and eliminates the potential for pride and hope in one's own community. We want to improve the health of this community and integrate this new development so it enhances what is already here. We do not want to repeat the mistakes made with St James Town.

The proposed development can be a catalyst to address and resolve the fundamental structural issues which face St. James Town as a whole, blending the new community into both St. James Town and South Rosedale. We believe we should work in conjunction with associations such as the South Rosedale Ratepayers Association, the developer and other interested parties to develop a gateway to Toronto and place of diversity which can live in harmony with its neighbours. The residents of St. James Town appreciate the willingness of the SRRA to involve itself in this process and we look forward to working with SRRA to achieve the appropriate outcome.

Margaret Coshan and Chris Hallett
Community Matters - An Organization Representing the Interests of the Residents of St. James Town



North St. James Town, With the Buildings as Proposed



Aerial of Evergreen Brickworks

Evergreen Brick Works

One of the Top 10 Public Spaces in Canada (announced recently by the Canadian Institute of Planners) is right in South Rosedale's backyard. National Geographic last year chose the same spot as one of the best 10 "geotourism" destinations in the world, just a short stroll from South Rosedale down Milkman's Lane.

Ever since it officially opened in September 2010 in the heart of Toronto's ravine system, Evergreen Brick Works has garnered attention for a variety of reasons: the unique adaptive reuse of heritage industrial buildings; its efforts to attain LEED platinum status; the fact that it is the region's only community environmental centre; and of course the spectacular setting.

Many exciting programs and public events are drawing visitors to the site: the Saturday Farmers' Market—which has moved back outdoors for the season—the evening and weekend local-food cooking workshops, the sustainable gardeners' store, Evergreen Garden Market, plus the stunning new outdoor children's play space called Chimney Court. Opening soon is Café Belong, which will offer local dining in a dramatic setting.

Evergreen Brick Works operates as a "social enterprise," a not-for-profit operation that takes any revenues it generates and invests them back in the programs and activities at the site. Thanks to the generosity and support of visitors, tenants and donors, Evergreen Brick Works is providing a social and environmental return to the community in the form of accessible programs and services for everyone, plus specialized programming geared to nature-deprived urban kids, new Canadians, First Nations youth and other deserving Torontonians.

Established as a charity in 1991, Evergreen has been working to make Canadian cities more livable ever since. One of its earliest projects—20 years ago—was to lead tree-planting activities in the Lower Don Watershed. In 1998, Evergreen was among a handful of groups helping to create the wildflower meadows in Don Valley Brick Works Park. And in 2002, the organization began to explore the ideas that are now flourishing at Evergreen Brick Works.

Working collaboratively with Torontonians of all backgrounds, and with some of Canada's leading non-profit organizations, corporations and government institutions, Evergreen Brick Works is offering visitors the chance to experience nature, culture and community in the city.

Lea Anne Armstrong,
Evergreen Brick Works

Craigleigh Gardens to be Restored

The City's Parks Department has scheduled a "complete renovation" of the flower beds in Craigleigh Gardens late this summer.

As long-time visitors to the park can attest, the state of the park has been in gradual decline for several years, due largely to inadequate maintenance of the flower gardens along Craigleigh's South border. By last fall, the gardens had reverted to an almost wild state, with numerous weeds and overgrown shrubs. With input from several residents, SRRA recently brought these concerns to the attention of the Parks Dept.

Parks crews devoted a couple of days in May to continuing a cleanup and pruning that was initiated last fall. The next step is to re-plant and restore existing plantings to their former beauty. City workers have also been busy at other sites including traffic islands throughout the neighbourhood.

We look forward to seeing the results of the promised Craigleigh Gardens restoration, for all to enjoy.



South Rosedale Community Cleanup

Despite cold and rainy weather, about 30 volunteers participated in the SRRA-organized Community Cleanup Day in South Rosedale in mid-April. Kids of all ages and many parents picked up almost a bag of litter each at two locations around Craigleigh Gardens and Rosedale subway. SRRA would like to thank all the volunteers who helped make South Rosedale cleaner and greener.

Don Hogarth
SRRA Director



Bike Paths Connecting South Rosedale

In 2009, the City of Toronto commissioned a survey asking City residents if they wanted separated bicycle lanes on roads. A total of 66% of all respondents and 77% of commuting cyclists supported bicycle lanes separated from vehicular traffic.

In cities such as New York and Amsterdam, separated bike lanes have been implemented, resulting in a dramatic reduction in injuries to cyclists and pedestrians. Usage of bicycles has also increased dramatically because of the safety afforded by the separated bike lanes.

The Public Works and Infrastructure Committee is proposing a route north and south on Sherbourne Street from Elm Avenue in Rosedale to Queens Quay. This route will also interconnect to separated bike lanes running along Wellesley, Beverley and John Streets to an East-West path on Richmond Street.

Councillor Wong Tam supports "separated bike lanes in principle", however she will "consider all road improvements in their totality and not in isolation."

At this point, there is no plan by the City to extend bike lanes through Rosedale.

Sheldon Hellin,
SRRA Director

Please Join and/or Renew Your SRRA Membership Now!

The South Rosedale Ratepayers' Association ("SRRA" or the "Association") is a non-profit volunteer organization created by South Rosedale residents for South Rosedale residents. The Association promotes the exchange of information on community issues and pursues our communities' perspectives/positions on the issues that affect our South Rosedale neighbourhood.

We invite you to become a member of the Association. If you are already a member, we hope that you will continue to support the Association and renew your membership for 2011 if you have not already done so.

Membership in the SRRA is open to all residents living between Yonge Street and the Don Valley and between the first Rosedale Ravine at the south and the second Rosedale Ravine to its intersection with the railway line.

The annual membership fee is \$75.00 per household. Fees are used to fund the cost of communication, a wide range of SRRA initiatives and nominal administrative expenses.

If you would like to join SRRA, please fill out the form with this Newsletter and mail your cheque payable to SRRA in the enclosed envelope. You may also join or renew online at www.southrosedale.org

Mary Lamon,
SRRA Director and Treasurer