



SOUTH ROSEDALE RATEPAYERS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Fall 2009

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

South Rosedale's canopy of colourful leaves is falling from the trees as the weather cools to the inevitability of winter. Though the summer didn't produce much sunshine or warmth, in some respects we were fortunate given the garbage that piled up in garages and parks during the now-settled City workers strike.

Since our last Newsletter, the South Rosedale Ratepayers' Association has been active on many issues affecting our neighbourhood.

Many of the issues relate to renovation and development in South Rosedale, including a review of Committee of Adjustment applications and associated heritage matters. The SRRA Board works closely with City Preservation Services staff to ensure the guidelines established by the South Rosedale District Heritage Designation are followed.

In addition, safety and security matters in the South Rosedale area continue to be first and foremost in the minds of residents. The Association is working closely with Toronto Police Services to ensure the neighbourhood is adequately patrolled and that we are informed of all appropriate steps which can be made individually and collectively to deter and prevent criminal activity.

The Association's Board is committed to providing the South Rosedale community with a strong voice to preserve and enhance the area's unique position as one of Toronto's most desirable residential communities. In that regard, Board members volunteer hundreds of hours of their time to stay on top of the issues and ensure our voice is heard. I am always glad to hear from residents who may have concerns about our neighborhood, and encourage you to contact me.

The Board of Directors looks forward to seeing you at the SRRA's Annual General Meeting. The meeting will be held at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, November 11th at the Toronto Lawn Tennis Club, and will be followed by an informal reception where members can meet the Association's Directors and Executive.

*David M. Townley, CA, CF
President*



Craigleigh Gardens in Colour

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SAFETY AND SECURITY TIPS

See page 2 for simple ways to improve your own safety and security.

SIMPLE WAYS TO IMPROVE SAFETY AND SECURITY

Personal safety and crime in our neighbourhood are ever-present concerns. Toronto Police Service is here to assist and protect us. There are a number of simple steps all of us can take to improve the security of our homes and neighbourhood. Constable Richard Langstone, Crime Prevention Officer at 53 Division, which covers our area, offers the following recommendations and resources:

1. Report:

Many of us choose to not report minor incidents and suspicious activity. Constable Langstone has asked that we encourage residents to report all matters. More complete information on criminal activity would assist with police awareness, prevention, protection and apprehension.

2. Neighbours:

Your neighbours are a very important part of your personal protection and crime deterrence and prevention. Get acquainted with your neighbours and take an active role in safeguarding each other's property, particularly during vacation or weekend absences.

3. Neighbourhood Watch:

Consider organizing a more formal Neighbourhood Watch program. This would be a step up from reliance upon your immediate neighbours. Help organize and sustain awareness and prevention strategies among the residents of your street or block. Post signs to indicate that your household is a member of the program.

4. Security Audits:

Constable Langstone conducts free inspections of residences and offers recommendations on improving residential security. For this service, Constable Langstone can be contacted at 416-808-5337 or at richard.langstone@torontopolice.on.ca.

5. TPSlinks:

53 Division is one of two Police Service divisions piloting TPSlinks, a new, automated community notification service replacing the "Auto Dialer" program. TPSlinks is used to notify the public about safety concerns, emergencies, missing persons, amber alerts, road closures and community events. Notifications are received by telephone - either voice or text message. Residents can register for TPSlinks through the Police Service website at www.torontopolice.on.ca or by submitting a completed hardcopy form available at the 53 Division Office (Eglinton and Duplex, one block west of Yonge).



6. Community Bulletin:

The Community Bulletin, another service offered by 53 Division, is a monthly newsletter on crime prevention programs, contact coordinates, crime and arrest reports and news releases, tips, alerts, events and other information. You can sign up for the Bulletin through the Police Service website or by contacting Constable Langstone.

7. Police Services Website:

A more complete source of information and contact coordinates may be found in the 53 Division portion of the Police Service website at www.torontopolice.on.ca/d53.

Constable Langstone encourages you to contact him directly with any questions or concerns you may have.

SRRA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Featured Speaker: Toronto Star Architecture and Urban Issues Columnist Christopher Hume



The SRRA's Annual General Meeting will be held at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, Nov. 11th at the Toronto Lawn Tennis Club, 44 Price Street.

This year's speaker is Christopher Hume, the Toronto Star's architecture critic and urban issues columnist. Hume appears frequently on radio and television as a commentator on city issues. He was named Toronto's best newspaper columnist by NOW magazine in 2005 and Eye magazine in 2006, and has been nominated for four National Newspaper Awards.

The meeting will be followed by an informal reception where members can meet the Association's Directors and Executive.



WHATEVER HAPPENED TO?

Whatever happened to the threatened demolition of 40 Maple Avenue?

In May 2001, the SRRA Newsletter featured the magnificent H. H. Fudger House on its cover, with an enlargement of the “For Sale” sign, which read, “THIS LOT FOR SALE...TO BE DEMOLISHED OR TAKEN AS IS...”. Today, the Fudger House remains standing at its original 40 Maple Avenue location in all its majestic glory, with manicured gardens and underground parking. So what happened?



H.H. Fudger House in 2001

The short version of the tale is that the old home had been privately owned for years before a tax change caused the elderly couple to sell. Developers recognized the enormous potential of the superb location and lot size, and suddenly the property was ‘in play’. Demolition was a real possibility if the new owner could not get the approvals he sought for the redevelopment because South Rosedale had not been named a Heritage Preservation District at that time.



The redeveloped home as it is today

The SRRA naturally weighed in on the issue, opposing demolition and promoting preservation. Many other concerned parties also participated in the struggle: residents, neighbours, City Council, City planners and Heritage Preservation staff. As the battle raged on, it became clear that the developer did not want to demolish but wanted more development than the City planners and the Committee of Adjustment were willing to approve. So the developer went to the OMB, where he got much of what he wanted.

Ultimately, as is shown in the photo from this year, the building’s exterior was preserved and is beautifully maintained. However, the interior was gutted and turned into a multi-unit dwelling with few of the original features preserved. Pre-existing outbuildings were removed to make way for parking and extensive additions.

In the end, an issue that was controversial was resolved. Whether or not the outcome was the ‘right’ one is a question that will have as many answers as there were opinions along the way.

ROAD REPAIR ONCE, TWICE...

Some residents have wondered why Cluny, Crescent Road and Rosedale Road were repeatedly ripped up and re-paved during this past road repair season. So we asked the City, which provided the following explanation:

At the beginning of each year, there is a general meeting of City departments involved in neighbourhood upgrades and repairs. The departments include Parks and Recreation, Technical Services, Water, Transportation and others. For Cluny, Crescent Road and Rosedale Road, it was decided that the water mains required replacement and sewers needed cleaning. And so the saga began...

A contractor hired by the Technical Services Division opened parts of the streets to install new water lines. The contractor then filled in the holes and roughly repaved the surface. Then, contractors hired by Toronto Water dug again to clean the sewers. Once again, the streets were roughly repaved. Final repaving, which is under the control of the Transportation Division, was last. The rough pavement was removed and a final surface was applied.

In addition, the sod in front of some houses adjacent to the roadwork was replaced twice or more by subcontractors. Apparently, this was at the request of homeowners.

By all appearances, the multiple phases of this work appear to have been unavoidable, though perhaps it could have been communicated better to residents.



SOUTH ROSEDALE RATEPAYERS’ ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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TLTC PROPOSAL TO EXPAND COURTS & BUBBLE GOES QUIET

Almost eight months has passed since the Toronto Lawn Tennis Club proposed at a public meeting to expand its court area and bubble. Since then, the proposal appears to have gone dormant as there has been no indication from the club that it intends to proceed with the project.

The club had applied to the Committee of Adjustment for permission to undertake the work. However, several nearby residents voiced firm opposition to the expansion during a meeting in March with the Club's lawyers, Manager and President.

PLAYING AROUND AT CRAIGLEIGH?

Residents often ask why a lovely neighbourhood park like Craigleigh Gardens does not have a children's playground or even a sandbox or swing set. As a fellow curious resident and mother of a young child, I asked an expert who kindly researched the history of the park to reveal a surprising answer.

The land title to Craigleigh Gardens indicates that most of the park property was granted to the City of Toronto by the executors of the Sir Edmund Boyd Osler Estate in 1926. The Deed contains conditions and restrictions that were accepted by the City.

A particular element was that the park lands would be held in perpetuity for "park, botanical or other garden purposes only, and will not be used as playgrounds". Barring a proposal that does not violate the Deed covenants or a future amendment to the covenants, this would seem to quite clearly rule out use of any portion of the park as a children's "playground".

So, for the moment at least, it seems as if dogs are the only ones playing around at Craigleigh.

Yvonne Catty (SRRA Secretary)



Last of the fall colours at Craigleigh Gardens

ACTIVITY BUILDS AT EVERGREEN BRICK WORKS

Whether you are driving by on Bayview Avenue, biking, walking or hiking the ravine, or simply going to the bustling farmers' market, it's clear that there is quite a bit of activity at the Evergreen Brick Works site.

SRRA is represented on the Evergreen Brick Works Community Advisory Committee. This committee meets periodically to review progress of the project, as well as provide community feedback for upcoming plans relating to both development and programming.

The 2009 season was a busy one. Despite extremely limited parking due to construction, hundreds of visitors came by shuttle bus, bike and on foot to enjoy the site each weekend. Running from Doors Open in May until October 31st, the farmers' market and Sun-Ripened Saturdays family programming offered eco-crafts, face-painting, gardening, stewardship and cooking activities. An average of 50 local vendors and 40 volunteers helped create the relaxed and welcoming atmosphere the site is known for. New this year, on Tuesdays, the site played host to The Chefs' Market, a wholesale market and networking opportunity for local producers and chefs. And this fall, the second annual Sustainability Fair focused on leaving a lighter footprint, and the spectacular third annual Picnic at the Brick Works was a celebration of local food in support of Evergreen and Slow Food Toronto.

With the end of the season, the countdown to the grand opening of Evergreen Brick Works begins. In 2010, the site will be a year-round destination for experiential learning, collaboration, fun and celebration on the themes of nature, culture and community. With summer camps, school programming, heritage interpretation and cutting-edge green design, this environmental community centre will lead the way toward more sustainable cities.

To follow the Evergreen Brick Works construction journal and learn more about events and plans for the site, visit www.evergreen.ca.

