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SOUTH ROSEDALE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

# NEWSLETTER

## Major Rosedale Streets Face Zoning Change

Pressure is growing from all levels of government to build more housing to address Canada's housing crisis. Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods (EHON) is a City of Toronto initiative to facilitate more low-rise, medium density housing in residential neighbourhoods that have traditionally been low rise and low density.



The Major Street Study is one component of the EHON initiative. The Major Streets study focuses on permitting gentle density on major streets in low-rise neighbourhoods across Toronto. South Rosedale has low density and as a result of the study, zoning could change for: **Sherbourne Street North, Mount Pleasant, Rosedale Valley Road and Aylmer Road**, allowing for 6 storey buildings and increased density. Including Rosedale Valley Road is puzzling since much of it is parkland. The South Rosedale Residents Association is exploring the possible implications for our community.

## Protecting Rosedale's Heritage

Rosedale's unique character comes from its winding streets lined by stately heritage homes, bearing testimony to Toronto's architectural inheritance. Together with Cabbage Town to its south, it forms our city's largest Heritage Conservation District (HCD).

Developed as an early picturesque suburb of Toronto, South Rosedale's varied architectural styles represent upper class housing from its origins in 1880 through to the 1930's. Home to many of its most prominent citizens, buildings were commissioned from leading architects of the time.



In recognition of our neighbourhoods historical and architectural significance each property has been evaluated and given a heritage

*(continued on page 2)*

## A Life of Service to our Community

By Annie Lawton-Scurfield

Alex Murray was a much respected and admired South Rosedale resident, who served his local community tirelessly from shortly after he moved here in 1963 until he passed earlier this year, at the age of 95. He was also my neighbor.



Attending McMaster University, King's College London and the University of Pennsylvania, Alex became a Professor Emeritus of York University's Faculty of Environmental Studies. Here, he co-founded the Department of Urban Studies and the Faculty of Environmental Studies. Alex was an early adopter of finding solutions to some of society's greatest issues, from homelessness to food security.

His education uniquely qualified him to serve on the South Rosedale Residents Association (SRRA), which he did from 1969 to 2024, as its longest serving member. His institutional knowledge on the history and fabric of Rosedale was unrivaled and his leadership and contributions to the SRRA were unmatched. Alex was particularly involved in residential applications at the Committee of Adjustment and Heritage. He almost always attended City Hall meetings for neighbourhood issues, based on his keen understanding of what is and is not acceptable.

His personality made him an ideal representative of the SRRA. He was the epitome of a decent human being: smart, measured, practical,

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**Join SRRA/Renew your membership at: [www.southrosedale.org](http://www.southrosedale.org).**

## Protecting Rosedale's Heritage

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rating of A, B or C depending on its architectural and historical significance.

- "A" properties are individually outstanding and have actual or potential national or provincial significance
- "B" properties are noteworthy for their overall quality and have citywide significance
- "C" properties contribute to the heritage character and context of the neighbourhood



## Renovating a Heritage Home

Living in a Heritage Conservation (HCD) District has implications when looking to alter your property. It's the responsibility of the homeowner to comply with Heritage guidelines when altering or demolishing a building on their property. Details of these restrictions are found within the Ontario Heritage Act. There are different requirements for properties that have individual designation (known as Part IV properties) and for properties within a HCD (Part V properties).

Because of South Rosedale's HCD designation, all drawings submitted for a building permit will be reviewed by Heritage. However if you own an individually designated (part IV) property, you may need to submit a heritage permit prior to your submission to Toronto Building. To find out if your property alterations require a heritage permit, you should contact Heritage Planning staff at [heritageplanning@toronto.ca](mailto:heritageplanning@toronto.ca).

Failure to take out a heritage permit has significant consequences. Individuals can be liable for fines of up to \$50,000 (\$250,000 for a corporation) or 1 year in prison. The Minister or council can also force you to restore your property to its previous state.

## How can we help?

The SRRA can help homeowners work within heritage guidelines. Our heritage team can be contacted for guidance at: [southrosedalesidents@gmail.com](mailto:southrosedalesidents@gmail.com). Equally if you are concerned that a property doesn't seem to be following guidelines, you can alert us. We work closely with the City to ensure the integrity of our neighbourhood is maintained.

## A Life of Service to our Community

(continued from page 2)

rational, and reasonable. When emotions ran high, he almost always brought the discussion back to the facts, though he was always direct and forceful when needed. Despite his many contributions to the community, Alex remained modest. He continued as a director until he passed away, weighing in on issues as recently as December of 2023.

In 2010, a submission was made to the City of Toronto to name the parkette at the corner of Crescent Road and South Drive after him, as a tribute to all the community accomplishments he had achieved through his many hours of volunteer service. The following is from the proposal and says a lot about Alex:



Neighbours Annie Lawton-Scurfield and Laura Murray at the Alex Murray parkette

"Mr. Murray ... has been instrumental in shaping various elements of South Rosedale in particular. In 1960, Mr. Murray realized that the SRRA had significant potential to be a positive influence in the community. (As a member of its board, he played a key role in establishing South Rosedale as Toronto's first District Heritage designation.) The Association received a Community Heritage award in 2003 for the time and research spent on composing and archiving a remarkable database of South Rosedale. Mr. Murray was also prominently involved in negotiations for the redevelopment of the Canadian Pacific Railway Marathon lands at Summerhill, which formed a portion of South Rosedale's northern boundary."

When I moved to Rosedale, I was lucky enough to find myself living across-the-street from Laura and Alex Murray. We met his wife Laura early on, who informed us that Alex wasn't able to get out much anymore, but that he'd enjoyed watching our house renovations. Shortly after, I joined the SRRA and learned that Alex was also a longtime member and past president. It made me happy to think that Alex approved the work we did on our house, all according to heritage requirements. He would certainly have spotted if we did anything untoward! It's wonderful to see people resting and enjoying the neighbourhood in the Alex Murray Parkette and knowing that his legacy lives on.

A celebration of life will be held for Professor Murray on June 8 at Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

## South Rosedale Heritage Walking Tour

Saturday June 8<sup>th</sup> 2.00pm - 4.00 pm

Join architectural historian and Heaps Estrin real estate agent Alex Corey for an exclusive walking tour of South Rosedale and explore the area's rich architectural and cultural history.

This complimentary tour organized exclusively for South Rosedale residents will introduce the people, architects and events that have been instrumental in making the area what it is today, and highlight some of South Rosedale's most storied homes.

The tour will start at Alex Murray Parkette (at Crescent Road & South Drive) and wrap up at The Lobby by Heaps Estrin where you are invited to stay for wine, cheese and conversation. Please come equipped for the elements as the event will proceed rain or shine!

Numbers are limited. To register for the tour email: [SouthRosedale@heapsestrin.com](mailto:SouthRosedale@heapsestrin.com)



## Glen Road Pedestrian Bridge and Tunnel Delayed

The construction timeline for this project has been extended, with anticipated completion pushed to the end of 2024. Weather conditions, paving supply issues and the unforeseen discovery of a storm sewer on Rosedale Valley Road have contributed to the delay.

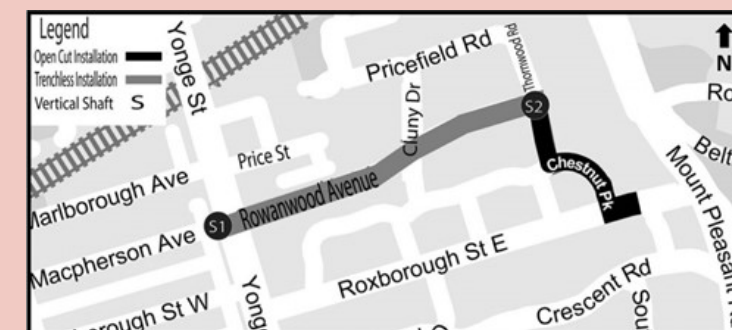


At the end of April, the work zone for the tunnel reconstruction will shift from the north side of Bloor Street to the south side, with similar traffic restrictions on Bloor and access to Sherbourne Station remaining open throughout the construction period to minimize inconvenience to commuters. Once re-opened, residents can look forward to improvements such as enhanced safety and lighting features, a new planting area and a bike share station.

A public art competition was held and Inuit artist Couzyn Van Heuvelen's proposal was selected to provide meaningful artwork. The design is centered around the theme of migration and travel, and references Inuit stonecut printmaking techniques and stone carving. Couzyn chose this concept because the bridge and underpass provide a way of moving through the city in an area that would otherwise be very difficult to traverse. Additional information can be obtained from the city webpage and residents can subscribe for email updates: [toronto.ca/glen-rd-ped-bridge](http://toronto.ca/glen-rd-ped-bridge)

## Watermain Construction Causes Road Closures

The City is replacing the 100-year old cast iron water main along Rowanwood Avenue, Thornwood Road, Chestnut Park and Roxborough Street with a newer, larger diameter water main. This will improve the reliability of water supply to the neighbourhood.



Construction is expected to begin in September 2024 and will take approximately 20 months to complete. The work will involve underground tunneling and excavation of sections of roads and sidewalks within city rights of way as highlighted on the map.

While access to properties in the work zone will be maintained at all times, the project will have a major impact on local residents as planned closures of stretches of Rowanwood, Chestnut Park, Roxborough and McPherson are rolled out over the 2 year construction period.

Further information on this project can be found on the City website under: "Rowanwood Transmission Watermain Construction"

## Help Our Local Food Banks

Many in our city struggle to put food on their tables. The issue of food insecurity, compounded by recent rise in grocery prices, affects far too many households in Toronto.



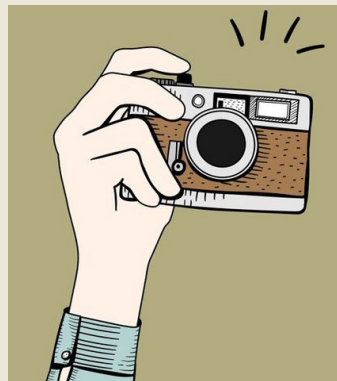
Food insecurity, the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, affects individuals and families across various demographics in our city. According to recent studies, nearly 1 in 7 households in Toronto experience some form of food insecurity.

Toronto, like many urban centers, has experienced a significant increase in the cost of essential food items, placing an additional burden on already strained budgets. Staples such as fruits, vegetables, dairy, and protein have become increasingly unaffordable.

In the face of these challenges, our community can come together and take meaningful action. Toronto is home to a vibrant network of community organizations, food banks, and outreach programs working tirelessly to alleviate food insecurity. By volunteering time, donating resources, or supporting local food drives, we can directly contribute to these efforts.

## Photos Wanted!

Are you a keen photographer? We are actively rebuilding our SRRA website, and are looking for photos of our neighbourhood to use on it. We're interested in shots of local buildings, parks, ravines, events and streetscapes, both historical and current.



If you have any photos of South Rosedale that you're happy to share with us, please send digital copies to us at [southrosedaleresidents@gmail.com](mailto:southrosedaleresidents@gmail.com)

If you would like to help in our community, options in or near Rosedale include:

- Every Wednesday from 3-6pm, the Avenue Road Food Bank at 240 Avenue Road operates out of the Church of the Messiah. They provide weekly food support to community families and individuals. They regularly welcome new volunteers for many roles, including drivers for local pickup and deliveries. Also non-perishable food donations on Wednesday mornings at the "Bell Tower" door.
- St. Paul's Bloor Street delivers about 225 individual meals to two meal programs in the area, The Common Table and Sanctuary Toronto. They are looking for volunteer drivers to help deliver meals.
- The mission of Allan Gardens Food Bank at 353 Sherbourne Street is to provide nutritious food in a safe and compassionate environment for members of our community struggling with food insecurity and poverty. It offers volunteer opportunities, fundraising events and accepts donations.
- The Lourdes Food Bank at 275 Bleecker Street operates on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10am-12pm. You can direct questions about donations to 416-972-0630.
- ICNA Relief Food Bank at 1 Leaside Park Drive is a community-supported project, completely dependent on donations of cash and non-perishable foods. They organize food collection drives throughout the year to keep their Food Bank well-stocked and open to those in need.



## Group of Seven Studio

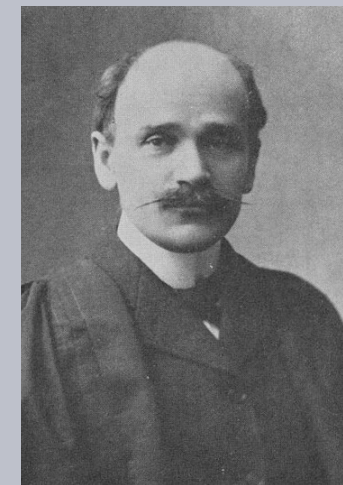
Many Rosedale residents are unaware of the existence and significance of the Studio Building at the top of the Rosedale Valley ravine. Nestled to the north of Lawren Harris Park, this building was the home and working studio of many prominent Canadian artists, including members of the Group of Seven.

Constructed in 1914, it is the earliest purpose-built artist studio in Canada. The non-profit facility was the brainchild of artist Lawren Harris and his friend and patron of the arts, Dr. James MacCallum. Together, they envisioned a living, working and socialising hub where Canadian artists could gather. In the early twentieth century, a new modern style was emerging from the traditional European approach to painting the Canadian landscape, eventually coalescing as a movement with the formation of the Group of Seven. It was within the Studio Building that this new art would be painted.

The building was designed by renowned Arts and Crafts architect Eden Smith, who was responsible for many prominent homes in Rosedale and surrounding neighbourhoods. It contained six purpose-built studio spaces with its rents pegged at \$22/month to cover expenses only. Designed with a simple, functional modernist aesthetic, it captured the natural sunlight valued by artists such as Tom Thomson, A.Y. Jackson, Lawren Harris, J.E.H. MacDonald and Harold Town through the careful placement and size of its north facing windows.



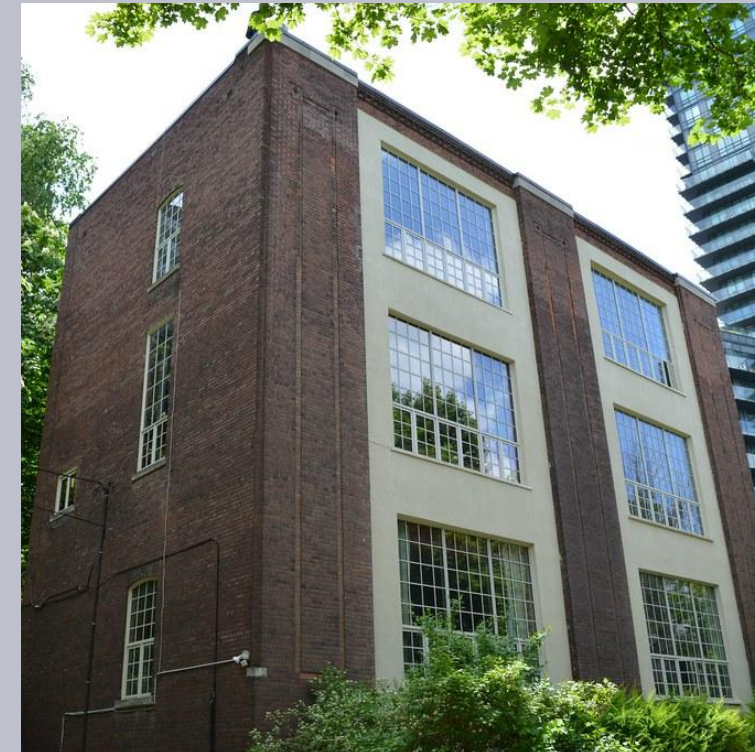
Lawren Harris



James MacCallum

Each year the artists returned from their trips studying the landscapes of northern Canada to the Studio Building and settled in to complete their bold paintings that now hang in art collections throughout the world.

The building passed into private hands in 1948 when it was sold to lawyer and artist Gordon MacNamara for \$20,000. In 2004, the Studio Building was designated as a National Historic Site. Since 2006, it has been owned by art collector and underwater photographer James Matthias, who uses it to store his incredible collection of works of art and historical artefacts.



Art Studio: an incubator for Group of Seven artistic talent

## Stiffer Fines for Traffic Violations

Starting August 1st Toronto drivers will no longer be able to park on city streets for free on public holidays.

This is just one initiative announced by Toronto Police Service, in response to the evolving needs of our growing city and its traffic congestion problems. They cited streetcar corridors, bike lanes and CafeTO as reasons why there is increased competition for curb space, in addition to "other infrastructure developments".



In all, City council voted 36 dangerous traffic violations to carry increased fines, along with 89 non-safety violations. The stiffest parking fines were raised to \$200 for stopping or parking on pedestrian ways, footpaths, bicycle paths and intersections, representing a significant jump from previous fines for these offenses which started at \$60 and maxed out at \$150. Overstaying in parking machine spaces was raised from \$30 to \$50. A more modest increase than the \$75 that was recommended.

This will be the first increase since 2005. Other raises could follow shortly, as the City approved a motion to assess the impacts of these fines in the Fall and increase fines further if necessary.



Spring has arrived, flowers are pushing up, and there are so many ways to enjoy beautiful University-Rosedale. This spring, we want to highlight great local music venues, festivals, and park and environment events. HotDocs, Fringe, Jazz Fest—these and other Toronto arts organizations need your support if they are to survive.

I am proud to see that the City Council has endorsed a number of my initiatives. Top of the list is that staff will report back this year on using the Toronto Green Standards (TGS) to ensure that all newly approved buildings will be designed for net-zero operations by 2040.

I have positive news on the noise issues frequently raised with my office: council will improve enforcement of motor vehicle noise, work with residents associations and community groups to monitor it, and report back on whether the new measures adequately protect human health. There is a new, streamlined process to request speed

humps from the city. First, consult with other residents affected by the road in question and then send our office the results through your residents association, including detailed drawings.

Auto thefts have been another top-of-mind issue for Ward 11 residents. We had a strong turnout for our town hall on the subject at the beginning of the year. I continue to monitor reports from the Toronto Police Service and city officials, including enforcement actions taken in the city and at Canadian ports. Please write to my office to be put in touch with the 53 Division officers directly assigned to this file.

Circle Sunday, May 12 for the Community Environment Day at Central Technical School. This program helps reduce the amount of reusable or recyclable waste going to the landfill and allows for the safe disposal of household hazardous waste.

Watch my newsletter and diannesaxe.ca for other spring events. Remember to subscribe at councillor\_saxe@toronto.ca to keep updated on happenings around the ward. Have a wonderful and prosperous spring!



I recently held a press conference at Queen's Park with former patients of the Taddle Creek Family Health Team who were suddenly left without a family doctor when their physician moved to a for-profit, executive health clinic called MDDirect. The clinic charges patients \$4,995 per year just to see a family doctor.

The rise in executive medical clinics like MDDirect are a warning that Ontario is moving to a two-tiered health care system, where those with means get better access to the care, and the rest of us are left with less.

Many University Rosedale residents don't have a family doctor, or are losing their family doctor because their doctor is retiring. In total, about 2.3 million people across Ontario don't have a family doctor, and that number is expected to nearly double in two years.

This is Canada. We strive to build an excellent public health care system where you get good care based on need, not on how much you earn.

The Canada Health Act is very clear. Health care providers cannot engage in extra billing or charge for medically necessary services like this.

The government should be investigating these private clinics. They should be enforcing the Canada Health Act and banning exorbitant annual fees.

The government should also be investing in primary care to ensure everyone in Ontario has a family doctor they can see with their OHIP card, not their credit card.

We have consulted with doctors, patients, and healthcare workers to propose practical measures to fix primary care. We are recommending include expanding the number of nurse-led practitioner clinics in Ontario, fast tracking the credentialization of internationally trained family doctors, increasing the number of family residence positions, and reducing the administrative burden on family doctors by providing them with more administrative staffing support so they can see more patients.

Everyone benefits when Ontario has a strong public health care system.

I welcome your feedback and suggestions on this issue, and other provincial issues that affect you.

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### Street Art at Scrivener Square Underpass

A mural project is underway to decorate the Yonge Street pedestrian underpass adjacent to the Summerhill LCBO at Scrivener Square.

This project has been developed in conjunction with StreetARToronto (StART), which is a City of Toronto initiative that uses a suite of innovative programs, along with a diversity of Curators and Mural Artists, to co-create exhibits on privately owned walls and City infrastructure throughout Toronto.

Once the artist proposals are completed, the City will arrange an on-line and in-person community engagement event (mid June-July 2024) for the community to review and provide feedback on the artist's mural proposals. The mural is scheduled for completion by the end of August.



Example of StART mural in Ward 11 by Frannie Potts, Sharon

### Spring Security Tip!

Seasonal reminder to check all externally mounted cameras around your premises and cut back any Spring plant growth that could be obscuring their lenses. It's also a good time to clean camera lenses as they need a wipe once or twice a year.



### South Rosedale Needs You!

Do you care about the beautiful neighbourhood we live in? Do you have time to help build and preserve our thriving downtown community? We are always looking for new Directors for our board and volunteers to help with the many and diverse projects we are involved with.

**If you are interested in volunteering your time for our community, we'd love to hear from you.**

**Contact: southrosedaleresidents@gmail.com**

## SRRA's Annual Spring Cleanup

A huge thank you to all who turned out for the SRRA's Annual Spring clean up on April 13th. Volunteers arrived armed with rakes, garden gloves, energy and determination to make a difference to Severn Creek park and ravine. What a difference they made!

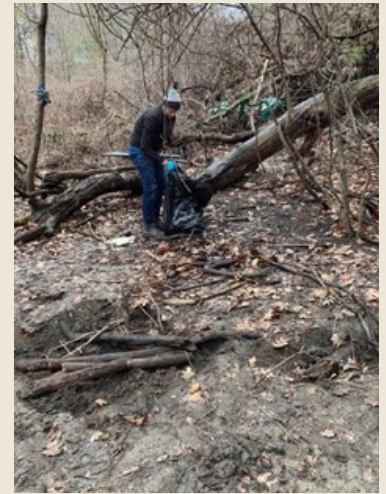
Our spirited residents toiled for hours, scrambling around the park in slippery, muddy conditions to remove litter from ravine slopes and around encampments. Despite the chilly weather, spirits were high, especially when the amazing results of their hard labour became clear to see. Our community salutes you!



*one of the piles of garbage collected*

The SRRA would also like to thank Toronto Nature Stewards whose volunteers helped with the clean up and who gave us a chance to try out their extractigator! This impressive garden tool is used to extract the invasive buckthorn that is choking out indigenous species in our local ravines. TNS meet weekly in Severn Creek Park to carry out the vital work of returning our ravines to their natural ecosystem, to volunteer contact lead steward Finn Barr at: [tnssevernecreek@gmail.com](mailto:tnssevernecreek@gmail.com).

Want to be involved next time we have a clean up? Let us know at [southrosedaleresidents@gmail.com](mailto:southrosedaleresidents@gmail.com)



*Before and after: just one small patch of park that was cleaned that day*



*some of our volunteers*

## Can You Help Out?

Our City is in a period of exponential growth and as a downtown neighborhood we are on its front line. High rises are popping up around Rosedale at a rate never



before experienced and at a time when building regulations and public consultation processes are being relaxed or revised to fast-track permits. While most of them are on our borders, their height and density means they will majorly impact our neighborhood.

Whilst the South Rosedale Residents Association understands the urgent need for more housing and increased density in our city, we also need to ensure the interests of our neighborhood are represented at all stages of planning and community consultation. To manage the increased workload, we need to expand our heritage and planning sub-committee.

If you would like to volunteer some time to represent your community, especially if you have experience or a background in planning, development and/or heritage, please contact us. Subcommittee members will share the property development portfolio and report to the Board member for housing, development and heritage.

For further information, email: [southrosedaleresidents@gmail.com](mailto:southrosedaleresidents@gmail.com)

## Membership Matters!

The SRRA works hard to protect and enhance South Rosedale as a great place to live. Through actions large and small, we protect the heritage character of our neighbourhood, enhance our parks and ravines, manage traffic, parking and security issues, and do much more.

To do all this, we need your financial support. You can help us by ensuring you take out or renew your annual membership of \$100.

To join or pay your dues, please visit our website at [www.southrosedale.org](http://www.southrosedale.org) and click on "SRRA Annual Membership".