GYRA – The Greater Yorkville's Residents' Association

www.GYRA.ca

Annual Report 2015

URBAN PLANNING

Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Planning Framework & Implementation Strategy

The Framework, presented by members of the Bloor-Yorkville Community to Councillor Wong-Tam and Planning staff, was well received. Highlights of the Framework include:

Fundamental components of the vision include:

- Heritage value of context and built form
- Pedestrian Realm Network to achieve the requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act
- Enhancing the Pedestrian Realm Network and interconnectivity within the Area and adjacent areas

Intent and Objectives of the Plan
It is the intent of this Plan to promote:

- Compatible development
- Built form as the determining factor for types of development permitted
- Building transition as a key determining factor for compatible development
- Capacity of the site and Area to accommodate publicly accessible open space, community facilities and available municipal infrastructure

City Planning will initiate a Secondary Plan Study to examine the Framework's key insights and principles, together with Cumberland Reimagined, the East of Bay Study, Policy 211, and the TOcore recommendations on how the downtown should grow in the next forty years, to formulate a prescriptive Secondary Plan for the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area.

TOcore Planning Toronto's Downtown Study

Phase One Taking Stock analyzed existing conditions in Downtown that included a review of the current planning framework for Downtown (Official Plan, Secondary Plans, Site & Area Specific Policies, Urban Design Guidelines, etc.), an analysis of the development pipeline and growth projections, and an inventory of existing infrastructure in the Study's key building blocks.

Phase Two Planning & Analysis commenced this year to develop draft infrastructure plans and strategies and a draft Downtown planning framework. During this phase, the City hosted community consultation meetings to introduce the study's goals and to provide an opportunity for the public to share questions, comments and feedback.

The eight study goals: Balancing Growth, Creating Complex Communities, Sustaining a Robust Economy, Increasing Mobility, Improving Parks & Public Space, Enhancing Community Services & Facilities, Creating a Resilient Downtown, and Ensuring Capacity in the Pipe.

Phase Three Implementation running from 2016 to 2017, will make recommendations to City Council on a planning framework and infrastructure growth strategy for Downtown, with potential implementation of quick start projects. Public consultation will take place to review the recommendations.

Toronto Ward Boundary Review

The Toronto Ward Boundary Review will look at the size and shape of Toronto's wards. The Review is being undertaken to ensure that each person in Toronto is fairly represented at City Council. A key focus of the Toronto Ward Boundary Review is to make sure the number of people in each ward is similar to all the other wards in the city. The Review will also look at communities of interest and neighborhoods within the city. Ward boundaries should not split up well-established communities. Other factors such as a ward's history and physical or natural features will also be considered as part of the Review of Toronto's ward boundaries.

Why is this being done now?

Currently, in the City of Toronto, there is a wide range in the number of people living in each ward. Due to factors such as population growth and new construction, some of the city's wards are 30 percent to 45 percent above the population of the average city ward. As a result, one person's vote does not necessarily have the same value or weight as that of someone in another ward.

The boundaries report predicts Toronto will add 600,000 residents by 2031, mainly in the downtown waterfront and major avenues. The proposed options are:

- Increase wards to 47, with an average population of 61,000
- Maintain 44 wards but change boundaries, with average population of 70,000
- Increase wards to 58, with average population of 45,000-55,000
- Reduce wards to 38, with average population of 75,000
- Reduce wards to 41 based on natural boundaries e.g. rivers, expressways and hydro corridors, with average population of 70,000

Feedback from the 2014/15 public meetings and on-line survey will inform the Final Ward Boundary Review Report. This Report will include a recommended option and be presented to the Executive Committee and City Council in May 2016. For more information visit: www.drawthelines.ca

TRAFFIC

Bay & Davenport Pedestrian Crossings

The latest measure to improve pedestrian safety on the north-west leg of the intersection, adopted by City Council in December, is the prohibition of eastbound right-turn movements on a red signal at all times, and the prohibition of northbound right-turn movements on a red signal at all times. GYRA will monitor the prohibitions for effectiveness.

DEVELOPMENT

35-45 Avenue Road & 140-148 Yorkville Avenue (York Square)

Proposal: 38-storey mixed-use building with 342 residential units. The developer, after several working group meetings, opted to appeal to the OMB. OMB details unavailable at this time.

The One (formerly Stollery) 1 Bloor West

Proposal: 80-storey mixed-use building with retail on concourse level and first eight floors, and 544 residential units. Ingress and egress problematic and traffic generated also problematic. Traffic studies in progress. The façade of the 774-776 Yonge Street heritage building will be preserved.

2-8 Cumberland Street & 826-834 Yonge Street (Eight Cumberland Limited)

A 64-storey mixed-used tower with 531 residential units. The developer is currently fine-tuning its original plans. The facades of the Yonge Street heritage buildings will be preserved.

Bay & Scollard

Proposal: 43-storey rental building with 112 units. The Bay Street heritage building will be fully restored, moved onto Scollard, and will house a children's library, shared studio space and other community-oriented uses.

GYRA Executive Committee 01 January 2016 to 31 December 2017

President: Michael Landry
Vice-President: Alan Baker
Secretary: Barry Campbell
Treasurer: Laurence Bernstein
Immediate Past President: Gee Chung

It has been a pleasure to serve my community for the past eighteen years, thirteen of those in the role of president. During these years, GYRA's voice and stature grew in the Bloor-Yorkville Community, and today GYRA is well respected in its many endeavors at municipal and provincial levels.

Under my leadership GYRA secured a Section 37 contribution of $1.5 million (to celebrate Yorkville's sesquicentennial) to re-green our streets; initiated the passage of Official Plan Amendment 203, of benefit to all Ontarians and future generations, that protects the silhouette of the Ontario Legislative Building from new developments protruding above its roofline; joined with the Bloor-Yorkville BIA and other Bloor-Yorkville Community members in creating the Bloor-Yorkville Urban Design Guidelines in 2001, and lately participated in the creation of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Planning Framework & Implementation Strategy.

To commemorate Yorkville's historical and cultural past, I initiated a series of heritage plaques including the Yorkville Town Hall and Yorkville Map in Town Hall Square; the 11,000 year evolution of Davenport Road from ancient animal trail to urban street on three glass panels erected in Frank Stollery Parkette; and the Yorkville Coffee Houses and Music Scene series – inaugural plaque the Riverboat Coffee House – with three plaques (the Penny Farthing where Joni Mitchell launched her career and where Leonard Cohen read his poems, the Purple Onion where Buffy Sainte Marie wrote her highly acclaimed "Universal Soldier" and the fourth plaque describing the Yorkville bohemian counterculture scene) in the works. A public dedication for these three plaques will take place in 2016.

GYRA's concerted efforts over the years to protect Yorkville's cultural and built form heritage, enhance the pedestrian realm, mitigate traffic congestion, tackle safety & nuisance issues, and collaborate with our Bloor-Yorkville Community partners to ensure Yorkville is the premier place to live, work and play, is evident.