



This Week in the Annex:

May 04, 2022

AGM Roundup

Last week we reported on the four formal presentations at the AGM – the Brown + Storey re-imagination of Avenue Road, the early findings of the West Annex Heritage Project research, the first results of the Digital Public Square pilot test, and the introduction to the ARA Planning Principles Guidelines.

But that's not all that transpired at the meeting, and we'd like to take a moment this week to honour those pieces of the agenda that we omitted.

In the Spotlight

We'll begin with a nod of gratitude to our Chair, Rita Bilerman, who was the driving force behind the event, dealing with the logistics beforehand and, more important, emceeding the show so smoothly in real time. Being ARA Chair is virtually a full-time job, and Rita is unstinting with her hours, attending multiple meetings weekly, firing off emails late into the night, liaising and negotiating with her team of directors. And for that and more we give her hearty thanks.

Also in the spotlight was our Councillor, Mike Layton, who rehearsed the many developments currently underway or in prospect in our neighbourhood. An exhausting list! A question from the audience regarding recent vandalism in St Alban's Square gave the perfect segue from his report to remarks from the Toronto Police Services representatives who were also in attendance.

Toronto Police on the Case

As many of you know, the Annex is bifurcated from a policing point of view with 14 Division servicing the territory west of Spadina while 53 Division is responsible for the section to the east.

Representatives from both divisions were in attendance and listened intently to audience members' concerns – particularly related to the recent incidents of the destruction of the roseway planted years ago in honour of Jane Jacobs. (If you want a refresher on the whole sorry saga, check out the [recent newsletters page](#) on our website and read the Feb 16, Feb 23, and Mar 16 editions.)



A mere three days post AGM found Constable Scott Bacon of 14 Division meeting with a cluster of nine community members in St Alban's Square. It turns out that Constable Bacon is a graduate of Royal Saint George's College and has a strong personal connection to the space. He and his supervisor are committed to doing all they can do to protect the square from more harm.



If ever there was an indication of the devastation felt by the community at the vandalism of the roseway it's this poignant sign in a child's hand marking the spot where the formal brass plaque was once affixed before it was levered from its moorings.

Parks Trees and Environment

And while we're speaking of parks, our Chair of the Parks, Trees, and Environment Committee, Terri Chu, also spoke at the AGM. Hers was an uplifting message, celebrating her success in securing the necessary funds to initiate the tree survey – a large chunk of that money coming from the generous pockets of our own ARA members. So for that, much thanks!



To underline the importance of our tree canopy, Terri prepared a slide indicating the value of trees and their impact on our health. Who knew that research has found that heart attacks are less common in greener neighbourhoods?

Behind the Scenes

But the AGM couldn't have happened without some considerable behind-the-scenes support. So we'll leave you at this point with a shout-out to three key players. Membership Chair, Tija Dirks, and her daughter Ramona provided and manned (personed?) the Zoom platform. Only those who've had to handle registrations or manage a Zoom waiting room or spotlight speakers know what skill is involved in making that operation seamless. And, as always, ARA Board Secretary, Micky Fraterman, juggled the attendance list and took detailed minutes. Where would we be without those stalwart volunteers?

Making the Annex a Better Place

As at past AGMs, another uplifting moment was the presentation of the Community Builder Award. This annual award celebrates those volunteers who work tirelessly to keep our community thriving. While many are deserving, each year we seek to shine a light on the most outstanding contributors (with the stipulation that current ARA Board members are themselves not eligible.)

The pandemic intervened to prevent us from nominating a winner for 2021. So it's only fitting that we honoured two for 2022. We'll save our second award winner for next week's newsletter. But here follows the citation for the first:

The Avenue Road Food Bank (ARFB)

The 2022 Community Builder Award has been won by the staff and volunteers of the Avenue Road Food Bank (ARFB). It is given in acknowledgement of their unceasing passion, dedication, and hard work to nurture with dignity those in our community who are battling food insecurity.

They've done this by soliciting, collecting, and distributing each and every week thousands of kilograms of donated food. And in so doing, they've made the ARFB a community hub of service, generosity, and hope in its Church of the Messiah home.



Chair Rita Bilerman was on hand (second from the right) to officially present the award as volunteers were gathering to prepare supplies for guests coming that

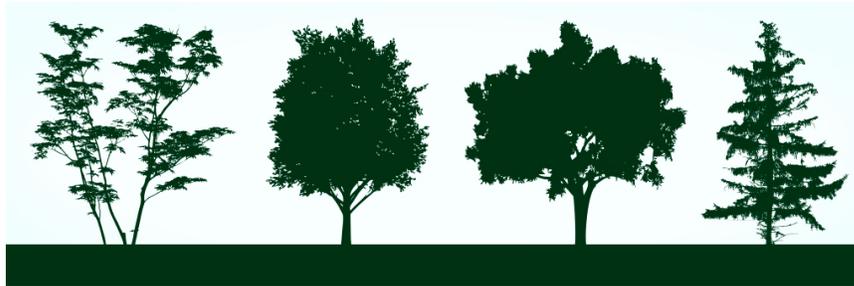
afternoon. Accepting the award on behalf of all involved in the cause was super volunteer Alexander. "Super" is a well-deserved moniker. Despite the fact that he has a full hour's commute to get to the Church of the Messiah, Alex has not missed a single distribution day throughout the pandemic.

Notes and Queries

Choose Toronto's Official Tree

You have until Tuesday May 10 to help decide which tree will become Toronto's official arboreal emblem. Anyone who lives in Toronto can vote on the City's website: www.toronto.ca/officialtree. But you are asked to choose just one – and only once – from among the four different species in competition.

To help inform your decision, the City has posted helpful commentaries. These include brief informational videos featuring the Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and City staff who helped narrow the choices down.



Without peeking at the [City's website](#), can you identify the four types from their silhouettes in the image above?

Trees Get the Axe on Davenport

It was a devastating spectacle last Friday as workers took down a small forest of backyard trees to prepare the site at number 321 Davenport for the next stage of construction: digging the foundation. If you've got the stomach for it, [click here](#) to watch the workers in action.



Are You Cooking With Gas?

Turns out that researchers are coming to Toronto homes the week of May 9 as part of an international study to test the quality and components of natural gas in residential kitchen stoves. If you're interested in giving 30 minutes of your time to this research, then [click here for more information](#).



University Rosedale All Candidates Debate

Local Residents' Associations have united to sponsor a provincial electoral forum and debate on **Tuesday May 10** from **7 to 9 pm**. The forum will follow the

format that has been established over the last 25 years – but this time it will be held on Zoom.

Harbord Village reps Rory Gus Sinclair and Robert Brown will act as moderator and timekeeper respectively. The candidates will make opening and closing statements, and audience members can pose questions through the chat window. Register using the zoom link posted on the [ARA website Events page](#).



Election day in Ontario is Thursday June 2, 2022.

Toronto Police Community Service Contacts

The TPS representatives who attended our AGM were kind enough to leave their contact information in the chat window. Obviously if there's an immediate emergency, then 911 is the route to go. But if you want to report less urgent issues, then feel free to reach out:

14 Division: S/Sgt Izzy Bernardo

Direct Line: 416-808-1415 Email: Israel.Bernardo@torontopolice.on.ca

53 Division: PC Timothy Somers

Direct Line: 416-808-5337 Email: 90023@tps.ca



The Annex Residents' Association is a volunteer organization of residents committed to improving and preserving the distinctive character of our neighbourhood. Our strength depends on our base of support in a well-informed community.

This email was sent to gillianbartlettara@gmail.com. To stop receiving emails, [click here to unsubscribe](#).

The Annex Residents' Association