



This Week in the Annex:

December 07, 2022

People Power at Work

The Annex Tenants Community Meeting held last Saturday at the Friends' House on Lowther drew quite a crowd despite the inclement weather. Organized jointly by MPP Jessica Bell's office and the 145 St. George St. Tenants' Association, the program involved presentations from local organizations focussed on supporting tenants' rights, particularly in the face of Bill 23's removal of protections related to affordable housing.

Long-time ARA member Susan De Rosa managed the registration desk while Rebecca Gimmi – one of our newest ARA Board members – hosted the proceedings, aided by other residents of the 145 team working in the background to keep things running smoothly. Jessica Bell's office supplied swag bags containing helpful office supplies as well as a welcome hot meal to take away at the end.



ARA Board member Charlotte Mickie (representing Spadina Gardens) and MPP Jessica Bell applaud one of the speakers. Between them in the background is Patricia Johnstone from 145 St. George who played a starring role in [our MPP's news conference of November 2nd](#) decrying the impact of Bill 23 on renters.

Strength in Numbers

In addition to the delicious food, one of the most useful takeaways ([available by clicking here](#)) was Susan De Rosa's contact list of tenant-focussed resources. It's a comprehensive roundup of helpful organizations, running the gamut from urban services to think-tanks -- from the likes of the Shelter and Housing Justice Network all the way to U of T's Centre for Urban and Community Studies.

The fifty or so Annexonians in attendance represented a significant number of rental buildings in the 'hood. And the buzz in the room was palpable as residents looked about and saw that they were by no means alone. Jessica Bell's affirmation of the power of the people versus that of the government was positively emboldening.

In fact, inspired by the tenants at 145, several in attendance said that they were heading home to start organizing their neighbours knowing that there is a real threat to older apartment buildings in the Annex given the present government's development policies.

Palpable Support

No wonder several of the audience members asked when the next meeting would be convened. No doubt that will happen sooner rather than later. Rarely have we had an MPP in our riding so intimately involved with the community. In fact, one item in the swag bags was an invitation to Jessica Bell's end of year party to be held this evening at College Street United Church. She knows the issues, and she's clearly here to listen and to help.



Battling Food Insecurity

It's been quite some time since we've featured the work of the Avenue Road Food Bank (ARFB) operating from the Church of the Messiah on Dupont at Avenue Road. But that doesn't suggest that food insecurity has been reduced in our community. Quite the contrary. Food bank use has skyrocketed with well over 500 individuals now seeking assistance each week. And it's during these dark December days that need is felt most.

ARFB couldn't function without a cadre of dedicated volunteers. If you'd like to join the team, they work Wednesdays from 7:30 am to 6:30 pm, opening for guests at 3:00 pm. Whether you'd enjoy setting up in the mornings or serving guests in the afternoons, a rewarding job awaits you.

Or if you don't have spare time to give but do have financial means, ARFB also relies heavily on donations. Food partners like [Daily Bread](#), [Second Harvest](#), [COBS](#) and [Pure Foods](#) supply basic goods, while individuals donate much needed money, some on a monthly basis, to supplement the supplies.

If you are able to help, please either send an email to foodbank@churchofthemessiah.ca or make a financial contribution directly through Canada Helps. Just [click here](#) and select ARFG. It's a gift to everyone in our community.



Photo courtesy Avenue Road Food Bank.

Upcoming Community Consultations

Dec 8: 38 Walmer Road (Walmer Road Baptist Church)

Last week, despite our best efforts, the link for tomorrow evening's community meeting re the Walmer Road Baptist Church project proved a dud. So just in case you want to attend but still haven't managed to register, we'll print out the url in full:

<https://toronto.webex.com/weblink/register/r1ab754e57ff99693d96bcab3e4b962c9>

And just in case that particular link fails, you can [click here](#) to see the official notice of the meeting. Note that it is scheduled for 6-7:30 pm.

Dec 14: 914 Bathurst Street

Details of the official application for this project are [posted on the City website](#). In brief, the proposal is for a 10-storey residential building with 124 dwelling units (yes – that works out to an average of 12.4 units per floor) situated at the northwest corner of Bathurst and Barton with plans for accommodating 79 vehicles underground.

The registration link for this consultation meeting

is: <https://toronto.webex.com/weblink/register/r4418328ff846e7c9a54427e9a518823f>

Once again, the meeting is scheduled for 6-7:30 pm on Webex.



Architectural rendering of proposed building at Bathurst and Barton.

Notes and Queries

RSGC's Community Carol Concert

Royal Saint George's College is opening its doors to the neighbourhood on **Monday, December 12** for its annual carol concert. The choristers have a stellar reputation, admission is free, there's a reception following, so what's not to love? If you want to attend, the concert begins at **7:00 pm**, but you should plan on getting there early as seating in the chapel is limited.



Batteries Not Included?

Manufacturers are getting pretty savvy about including ready-to-go batteries with all those electronic gifts that folks like to exchange at this time of year. On the other hand, wonders long-time ARA member Marcia Cuthbert, what to do with those batteries once they've run dry?

They're officially banned from regular household waste, and the City's hazardous waste disposal sites are an inconvenient drive into the 'burbs. Closer to home is **Staples** (down on University at Armoury Street) which provides a box for dumping electronic waste. And it turns out that even nearer, the **Canadian Tire** at Yonge and Davenport offers a similar service. But Marcia asked whether we knew of a site more convenient to the Annex.

A bit of ferreting led us to Hazelton Lanes **Rexall** at **87 Avenue Road** and a quick telephone call confirmed that the pharmacy still, indeed, offers this community-minded service. But do our readers know of other local businesses willing to take dead batteries off our hands? Can't imagine how long the Rexall staff would keep accepting those discarded AAs if all of us suddenly walked over to them with piles in hand for disposal.



Photo courtesy Home Depot (whose stores also accept dead batteries)

Graffiti Explosion

Since Annexonian Nicole Stoffman (sometime contributor to this newsletter) departed last summer to take up a position with the *Timmins Daily Press* we've unfortunately lost our chief graffiti stalker. When she was living here, Nicole carried out clandestine eradication forays, armed with a home-made kit of paints and cleaners. But now that she's firmly ensconced in the North, graffiti has proliferated at a great rate in the 'hood.

That said, we stumbled across a link in the City's website (an impressive behemoth if you've ever had need to consult it) that allows residents to report unsightly graffiti. So if you see some that bothers you, take a picture, if possible, and then file a report [by clicking here](#). Do let us know how it goes...



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