

## **This Week in the Annex:**

**February 15, 2023**

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## **This Week in Politics**

You've been out of the country if you haven't heard (and even then, it was hard to miss) that on Friday evening Mayor John Tory – the one who asked for those undemocratic powers granted in Bill 39 on the grounds that we could trust him – announced that he would resign because of a personal scandal after only four months in office.

Well, that bit of news put on the back burner the rollercoaster of injunctions and decisions regarding Metrolinx's plans for the Ontario Line. And it certainly put out of mind anxiety over omnibus Bill 23, *More Homes Built Faster Act*, with its hydra-headed assault on the Greenbelt, municipal budgets, tenants, and heritage.

But the big question – in the parochial context of this newsletter, that is – is why should the ARA care?

And that was certainly at the heart of the thoughtful discussion at last Thursday's Board meeting when members debated whether we should provide official support for BOLD and its pursuit of an injunction against Metrolinx.

## **ARA Mission**

It is the policy of this newsletter to include only items that directly affect the Annex. To our mind, we live in a small town with distinct geographical borders that is animated by interesting characters – of the two-footed, four-footed, and winged variety – who share more or less harmoniously our trees and green spaces and pavements. Few if any of our newsletter stories would ever be featured in the mainstream press.

And if you read the [ARA constitution](#), you'll see that it describes the ARA as a volunteer group of residents *committed to improving and preserving the*

*distinctive nature of the Annex.*

Nothing there about Osgoode Hall nor the Greenbelt nor strong mayors.

## **Taking a Stand**

But what came out of Thursday evening's Board discussion was a palpable concern on the part of all members over the inexorable chipping away at the democratic process that's characterized these past months. And there arose a consensus that, as a group of concerned citizens, we needed, we almost had a duty, to make our disquiet heard.

So that's the background to the ARA letter sent to the BOLD community coalition (Build the Ontario Line Differently) under Chair Rita Bilerman's signature. [Click here](#) to read our public thanks to BOLD for championing fair process.

But more important, and looking to the immediate future, we urge our members to become actively involved in the upcoming selection of a new mayor – no matter whom you support. "Use it or lose it" applies equally to our democratic rights as to our physical and mental well-being.



Minus 22 degrees couldn't keep your intrepid reporter and Councillor Dianne Saxe (who was first up at the podium) from the February 3<sup>rd</sup> vigil at Osgoode Hall. Other Annexonians braving the brutal cold included ARA Board member Charlotte Mickie and the Rt Hon Adrienne Clarkson and John Ralston Saul.

## Redistribution

The numbers have been crunched, the lines tweaked, opinions weighed, and, after all that, the new federal electoral boundaries for Ontario have been declared.

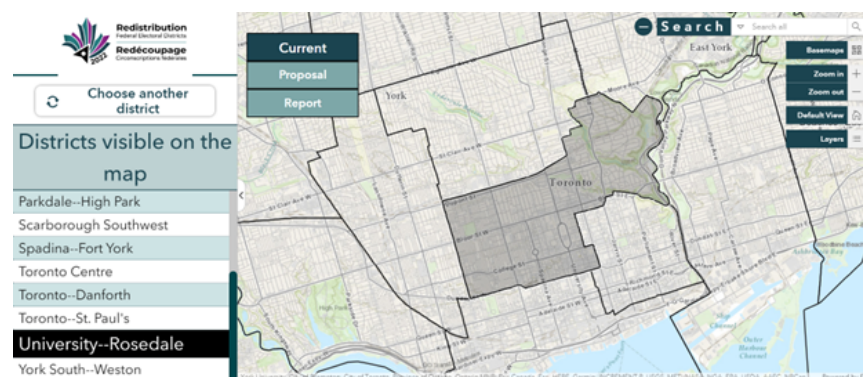
This round the commissioners were working with an allotment of 122 seats (up 1 from the last redistribution in 2012) for a population of 14,223,942 Ontarians. That gave a Quota (their capitalization) of 116,590 – the target number for each riding.

## Re-Designing University-Rosedale

Our own riding of University-Rosedale was subject to some re-design at both the preliminary proposal and the final report stages. The Annex remained untouched, all the volatility and horse-trading taking place on the north-eastern margins.

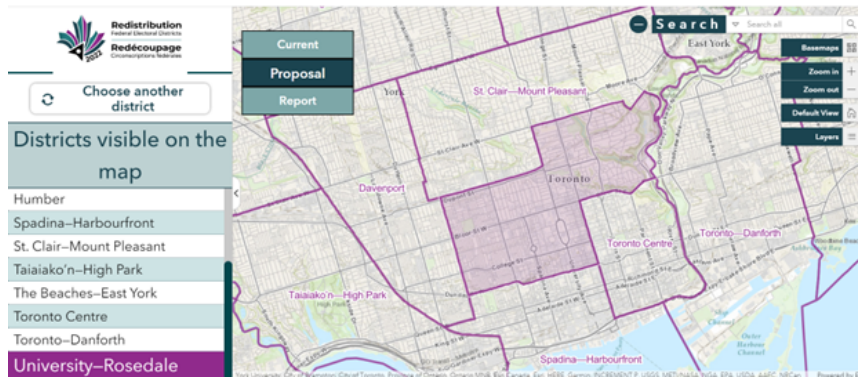
You can download a pdf of the full report [at this website](#). To read our riding boundaries, [click here](#). And if you want the process in pictures – scroll on.

**This is now:** that is, the boundaries established in 2012:



The following is what might have been according to the preliminary proposal:

Population: 117,119 (Deviation of + 0.45% from the Quota)



**But this is what it's going to be.**

Population: 123,244 (Deviation of + 5.72% from the Quota)



## In Short

At the end of the day, University-Rosedale emerged with an increase of 6654 residents over the Quota. Not extreme, actually, when compared with the rest of the province (see page 18 of [the report](#)).

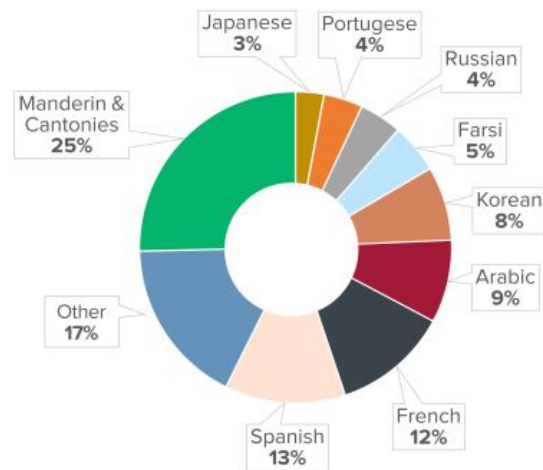
On the other hand, some argue that the 2021 Census count in Toronto was artificially depressed during the Pandemic, giving an anomalous boost to the population up in cottage country. But we'll have to wait until 2031 to test that theory.

## Notes and Queries

### The Annex by Numbers

This week we asked Alex Topp to give us a picture of the linguistic reach of the Annex. Likely no big surprise – it turns out that 87% of our population speaks primarily English at home. So Alex crunched the data on the remaining 13% to produce the following pie chart. Any guesses as to how many different languages are included in that slice labelled "Other"?

### Annex Minority Languages



Statistics Canada 2021 Primary Language Spoken at Home

## A Neighbourhood Service

We couldn't persuade the owner to pose for a picture despite entreaties made in Cantonese through Google Translate, but we did want to honour her skill in packing and thank her for her exemplary service. Her buggy was a model of efficiency, balance, order, and opportunity. Quite the most impressive collector and collection we've seen in the 'hood to date.





## Stirrings

If you've a green thumb you're certain to have been peering eagerly at your garden soil for the first signs of Spring, even though in the normal course of events we'd have to wait a week or more before spotting a leaf sprouting upwards. But Mother Nature has been preternaturally busy this year, and there are shoots and leaves in abundance around the neighbourhood. Just look at the crocuses below, already well out of the ground! And if you examine the image closely, that might just be a tulip poking through a few inches to the left of the clump. Or perhaps not. Whatever, these are the MOST welcome signs of spring!



## The Other End of the Cycle

Micky Fraterman sent us the following image foretelling the removal of the grand silver maple that lost a giant limb last summer (see the [July 6<sup>th</sup> newsletter](#)). City staff have said that the tree will be cut fully to the ground today rather than lingering, as have so many others, as a branchless trunk. And in happier news – the tree is to be replaced this Spring.



## Ice Time

There's been such a deal of community industry (not to speak of water) expended in the so-far-fruitless attempt to create a smooth skating surface at Jean Sibelius Park: the yo-yoing temperatures have made the job almost impossible.

Still, that doesn't mean the effort was for naught. We caught Leo and his dog on camera this past weekend in a classic moment of boy and dog running and sliding gleefully on the surface. Ah to be so young and carefree! But of course Mom Stephanie intervened quickly to snap the leash on Fido's collar. We didn't even get properly introduced to the pup. But you can watch that brief moment of freedom [by clicking here!](#)





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.

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The Annex Residents' Association