

## This Week in the Annex:

July 26, 2023

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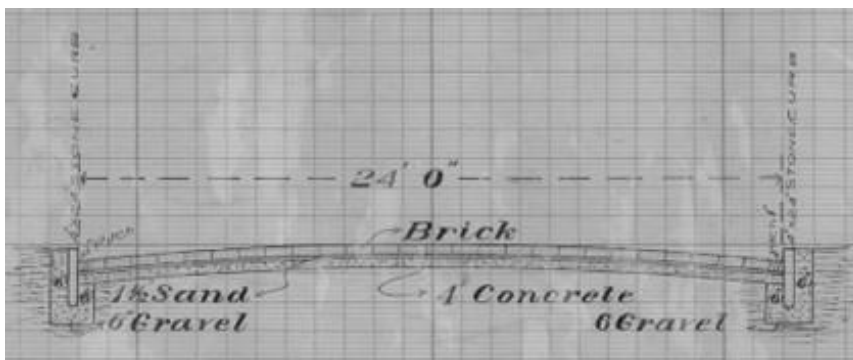
### Déjà vu All Over Again

Correct us if we're wrong, but wasn't Bloor Street just recently in a turmoil of construction? We thought so. And now, once again, City crews are poised to inflict more chaos as they "reconstruct" the street from Avenue Road to Spadina.

According to [the official notice](#) issued July 7<sup>th</sup>:

*Reconstruction involves replacing the entire road pavement structure, including the asphalt and concrete road base, and repairing road drainage, curbs, boulevards, and sidewalks. The upcoming work includes the installation of permanent raised cycle tracks from Avenue Road to Spadina Avenue on Bloor Street West, the construction of a protected intersection at Bloor Street West and St. George Street, and improvements to green infrastructure and streetscaping.*

So we can expect turmoil on Bloor until well into the summer of 2024.



To be fair, road building has increased in sophistication since 1902 when the brief sketch reproduced above was deemed sufficient to guide workers paving Carlton Street. Just flip through Toronto's Transportation Services [Pavement Design and Rehabilitation Guideline](#) issued in 2019 to get an idea of how complex the task has become.

If you want to learn more about the current project on Bloor, the City invites you to attend a virtual Public Information Event next **Tuesday August 1<sup>st</sup> from 6:30 to 8:00 pm**. Register at [www.toronto.ca/BloorStreetConstruction](http://www.toronto.ca/BloorStreetConstruction). And to receive ongoing construction updates, [click on this link](#).



Food for thought: Not only is the road being reconstructed, but also several new developments are coming on board like the one pictured above approved for 210 Bloor. Final word? Pack your patience!

## Writing Change Redux

After a highly successful debut last June 11, emerging historian Lindsay Chisholm is set to repeat her engaging walking tour of the Annex that begins at Seaton Park (19 Albany) and ends at Paul Martel Park (10 Madison).

Lindsay will lead participants to places referenced and lived in by such prominent women writers as Carol Shields, Elizabeth Smart, Katherine Govier, Kim Moritsugu, and Gwendolyn MacEwen, shedding new light on the sites and stories that showcase the rich mix of people, buildings, events, and landscape that have characterized our neighbourhood over the past fifty and more years.

The tour – which costs \$8 plus tax to cover such expenses as the headsets issued to participants – is scheduled to run from **6:30 to 8:00 pm** on **Thursday August 10**. Though it is possible to pay on site, advance registration is advised. [Click here](#) to access the form.



At the end of last June's debut walk, Lindsay posed with our own Sandra Shaul (centre) and Suzanne Kavanagh (right), member of the board of Heritage Toronto, sponsor of the event. NB: If you can't make next Thursday's version of the walk, not to worry: it's set to be repeated twice more this summer.

## For a Good Cause

And while we're talking books. . .

Those in the know (like ARA Board Secretary Micky Fraterman) have long enjoyed the annual book sale held by [Esther Myers Yoga Studio](#) up on Dupont. A part of the Annex community since 1979, the Studio has a strong commitment to community outreach in addition to offering yoga and meditation classes, teacher training, and local and international retreats. That's why the proceeds of the book sale have been donated in earlier years to support such worthy

organizations as Sistering and One City Scholarship and the Daily Bread Food Bank.

While rummaging through the offerings this past July 16<sup>th</sup>, Micky was delighted to find several Annex related books that are out of print and hard to get, books like Jack Batten's *The Annex* and Katherine Govier's *Fables of Brunswick Avenue*. She also took time out to snap pictures of the action – see below. Alas too late for 2023, we promise to give you advance warning of the sale next year so you can indulge in some treasure hunting of your own – all in a good cause.



## Baby Steps

Much to the delight of the [Gasbusters Organizing Committee](#) based to the northeast of us in Deer Park, Toronto City Council voted on July 19 to “pursue” a ban on two-stroke-engine small equipment such as gas-powered leaf blowers. But that’s a long way – months if not years, in fact – from imposing an out-and-out prohibition. Still, there’s considerable public support for the initiative if you [read the record of the agenda item](#).

In order to sustain pressure, Gasbusters are strongly encouraging residents to file complaints with the City whenever they are adversely affected by such noisy, polluting equipment.

Alas, it's not as easy as calling 311 unless the equipment is operated outside permitted hours. (The bylaw currently allows a window of operation from 8:00

am to 7:00 pm on weekdays and 9:00 am to 7:00 pm on Saturdays, Sundays, and statutory holidays.)

Instead, to make sure your discomfort is put on the official record, Gasbusters recommend that you send an email to [MLSfeedback@toronto.ca](mailto:MLSfeedback@toronto.ca) including the date, time, location, and nature of the complaint (er: excessive noise from leaf blowers, unacceptable toxic emissions from lawn mower, etc.).



There's no denying the convenience of gas-powered leaf blowers such as Home Hardware's model above. But the City of Toronto does offer advice on how to wean yourself from them. [Just click here](#). The simple garden rake may yet make a comeback.

## A (Sadly) Done Deal

We knew it was coming, but that doesn't ease the pain one whit. All-too inevitably, Toronto City Council last Thursday adopted TE6.9, the by-law amendment allowing the demolition of 145 St George Street. It's a grave disappointment, not only for its current tenants, but also for every other resident in the city living in similarly older but viable apartment buildings.

Kudos are due to the 145 St George Tenants' Committee which has worked tirelessly to lobby politicians and engage the full community in efforts to recognize the terrible precedent this approval represents. The pressure at least resulted in the developer, Tenblock, sitting at the table with tenants and agreeing to a "Summary of Understanding" regarding next steps and compensation. The agreement is not legally binding, and its terms still fall short of what tenants feel they will need in the expected low-vacancy market. But at least they have been given a voice.



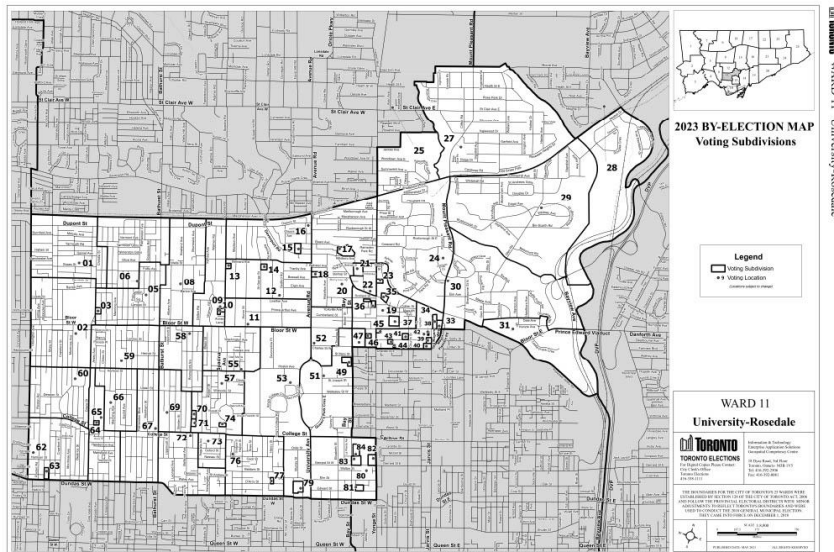
This sign presaging the demolition first appeared two years ago in June 2021. Tenblock has said that eviction notices will not be forthcoming for at least another year. So the earliest the community can expect the wrecking ball to swing is Fall 2024.

## Notes and Queries

### Tenant Town Hall Tomorrow

Councillor Dianne Saxe has worked closely with the tenants at 145 St George since her election last year. But because this is just one of hundreds of rental buildings in her bailiwick – large and small – she is holding a Town Hall tomorrow evening (**Thursday July 27**) focussing squarely on tenants' issues across the entire swath of **Ward 11**. Starting at **7:00 pm** on Zoom, representatives from Downtown Legal Services, the City of Toronto's RentSafe Team, and the Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations will be present to

answer questions about how the City of Toronto can assist tenants with the full gamut of issues in their units and buildings. To register, [click on this link](#).



## Meet and Eat August 15<sup>th</sup>

Those who gathered on the Ides of March at Famosa restaurant for the first post-pandemic *Meet and Eat* will tell you it was a most enjoyable affair. In fact, the response was so positive that ARA member Fiona McHugh has volunteered to organize a reprise – this time at [Indian Desire](#), 469 Bloor Street, to taste some of the best Indian food in Toronto. The reservation is for 6 pm. But please [RSVP on our website](#) so that we know how many seats to hold.



## Critter Corner

Principal Critter Corner correspondent Sarah Potts spotted this cute cottontail seeking comestibles at the construction site of 321 St. George late last week. The vegetation may be thin, but that's to the camera's advantage. Our fingers are crossed that the critter knows to take cover quickly if a neighbourhood coyote comes calling.



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](mailto:gillianbartlettara@gmail.com). To stop receiving emails, [click here to unsubscribe](#).

The Annex Residents' Association