

This Week in the Annex:

Feb 07, 2024

Board Meeting Thursday

How did that happen so fast? Yes, it's time once again for the ARA Board to meet — tomorrow evening, **Thursday, February 8th** on Zoom from **7:00 to 9:00 pm**. As always, ARA members are more than welcome to attend and observe the discussions.

One item on the agenda that could be of note is [Councillor Saxe's letter](#) regarding the spending of Section 37 money in the Annex. Just send an email with the subject line "Board Meeting" to info@theara.org by noon tomorrow and our indefatigable Board Secretary, Micky Fraterman, will send you the link. Hope to see you there.



Crossed Signals

We witnessed what could have been a terrible tragedy last week when a crowd of eager students, fresh from their classes at the Royal Conservatory of Music, flooded across the intersection at Bloor and Bedford to reach the St George

subway station for the journey home. They were cheerful, chatting, preoccupied, as they hurried towards the lights and streamed across the pavement. And they captured in their wake an otherwise spry 81-year-old classmate who hurried along with them against the impending red light.

Trouble was, the students in their distraction and haste had mistaken the cobbled patch in the image below for a pathway to the lights. They didn't note that they should move a metre or so further west to the other side of the orange cone to reach the designated pedestrian lane. And in following them blindly, their octogenarian classmate tripped on the raised curb of the bike lane and crumpled to the ground.



It was truly heartwarming to witness the half dozen students, a ROM security officer, and two passersby leap to the aid of the injured party. An ambulance was summoned via 911, and she was sped with dispatch to Mount Sinai emergency where her copiously bleeding forehead was glued shut, broken kneecap braced in a Zimmer splint, and cracked ribs taped. The hospital kept her overnight for observation before sending her home in a Voyago van with a follow-up appointment set for this week — just in time for her to get her broken eyeglasses replaced.

It's a good news story in so many ways — but also one that's cautionary. If you examine that image of the crossing, you can understand how, in their youthful distraction, the students hurrying from the east streamed prematurely across the intersection.



As road design gets increasingly complex along Bloor in a bid to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists as well as vehicles – not to speak of ongoing construction — it pays to take your time crossing the street. Fair warning.

Safety Audit Opportunity

You can always call on a commercial company to survey your premises and make recommendations for alarm systems and other protective devices. But why not start with a free audit, one offered by the crime prevention units of Toronto Police Services? Officers are intuitively aware of every home's weak spots having attended, unfortunately, any number of robberies and "B&E's" as the parlance goes.

The official moniker for these audits is *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* or CPTED for short. Police Constable Sarah Robertson of 14 Division tells us that these are most often requested by businesses, but the audit is also freely available to residents. Note that you don't have to live in a private house to take advantage of this service: residents living in apartments or condos are equally eligible.



The general principles of CPTED are outlined in the brochure available by [clicking on this link](#). Also of interest to you might be one or more of the following three brochures: [Apartment Condo Security](#), [B and E Prevention](#), and [Personal Safety](#).

To arrange for an audit, email [Police Constable Somers](#) if you live in 53 Division (east of Spadina) or [Police Constable Robertson](#) if you live in 14 Division (west of Spadina). You might well be grateful for their advice.

Notes and Queries

Meet 'n' Eat Tonight

Whether you're awake or not, this newsletter lands in your inbox each Wednesday morning at 6:00 am. So if you're reading these words on the day of its arrival, there's still time for you to consider joining the crowd of twenty or so ARA members who have registered for this evening's Meet 'n' Eat.

Seats have already been secured for those who earlier reserved a spot. But since the restaurant is capacious, it might be worth taking a chance and turning up at [Signatures](#) at **6:00 pm** if you thought to join us at the last minute. After all, if the

restaurant turns out to be full, there'd still be time to find another eatery in the 'hood. Both [Blu Ristorante](#) and [Joni](#) in the Park Hyatt are offering Winterlicious menus until tomorrow, **February 8th**.



Spadina Crossing Guard

This just in from Special Assistant, Holli Butrimas, in Councillor Dianne Saxe's office: "I wanted to let you know that through the advocacy of a constituent case, we worked with the TTC to finally instate a crossing guard at the temporary crosswalk near the Spadina Station Easier Access construction. This TTC-hired guard has started and is expected to be there on school days for the morning, lunch, and after-school shifts. Hopefully, this will help with some of the safety concerns folks were having about this area." Thank you for this, Holli. Every little bit helps.

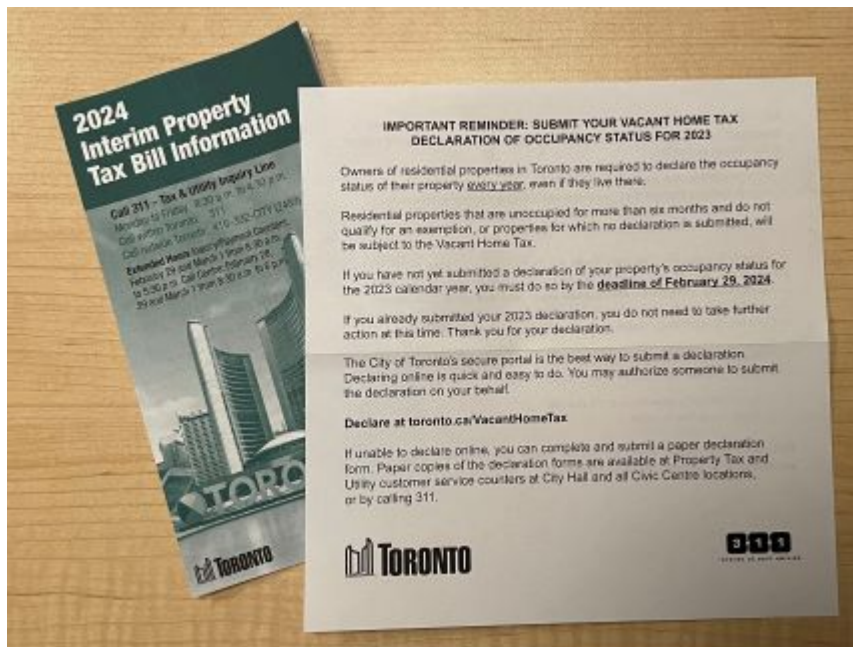


Wilfred stands on guard, ready to help pedestrians across this notoriously tricky patch of Spadina.

Occupancy Status Declaration

We gave you a heads-up last December. We mentioned it again when property tax notices were mailed last month. But this is your final warning. The City has published a press release reminding residential property owners to declare their 2023 occupancy status before the **February 29 deadline**.

Owners have until Thursday, February 29, to declare the 2023 occupancy status of their residential property and are encouraged to submit their declaration through the City of Toronto's secure [Vacant Home Tax \(VHT\) portal](#). A fee of \$21.24 will be imposed on those who fail to submit a declaration of occupancy status by the deadline. And while the fine may seem a pittance, who wants to deal with the bureaucracy after the shock of receiving a massive tax bill just because they failed to make their declaration on time?



Avenue Road Safety Study

Perhaps you remember completing an online survey about Avenue Road last fall? Or you might even have attended one of the in-person community sessions. Well, the preliminary results of that second phase of public consultation are now published. It's going to take the team at ARSC (the Avenue Road Safety Coalition) a few days to convene and digest the report. But while we await their response, you might want to check it out for yourself. The complete report is [available 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