



This Week in the Annex:

February 21, 2024

The Clock Is Ticking

New rules come into effect on January 1, 2025 that will see the heritage status of quite literally thousands of buildings in Toronto be diminished. That's why the City is hosting a virtual public meeting this coming **Monday, February 26** from **6:30 pm to 8:00 pm**. And if you are at all concerned about the protection of heritage properties, you are [urged to attend](#).

And now, some explanation.

The City's heritage register, which was started in 1973, includes approximately 4000 properties from across Toronto that are classified as "listed" rather than "designated."

For those of you not familiar with the distinction: **listed** properties are those that the City feels have or may have cultural heritage value; **designated** properties, on the other hand, have been thoroughly researched and are offered some protection under law. You can think of the difference as being akin to getting on the shortlist versus actually securing the job.



The York Club at 135 St George is one of the Annex's iconic **designated** buildings. *Photo credit: Jonathan Blizzard*

In the Annex there are 115 **listed** properties that stand outside the already designated areas known as the [East Annex Heritage Conservation District](#) and the [Madison Avenue Heritage Conservation District](#). (Sticklers will note that the latter is more properly entitled *West Annex Heritage Conservation District Phase I: Madison Avenue*, but we trust you'll forgive our shorthand.)

Examples of these 115 buildings include the historic mansions and apartments on St George and Huron and all but one of the Uno Prii mid-century modern apartment buildings on Walmer, Huron, and Prince Arthur. (The Uno Prii exception is the apartment building at 100 Spadina on the southwest corner at Bernard. It was designated in 2007.)



This aerial view of the Annex graces the cover of the final report of the [West Annex Heritage Project](#) issued in 2022. For those of you who are curious about which properties in our neighbourhood are currently on the register, the easiest way is to consult the map available through the [Heritage Register Search](#) link. Use your cursor to zoom in on the Annex. Then click on the dots for details on each property.

Amendments to the Heritage Act

Recent amendments to the [Ontario Heritage Act](#) came into force on January 1st of 2023. Most notably, the amendments prohibit properties from being listed for more than two years. After that, there's a cooling off period of five years before they can be returned to the register.

Furthermore, if a building does not have a heritage listing and an owner wishes to demolish or substantially modify that building, the Act decrees that a municipality can no longer move to quickly designate the property in order to protect its heritage assets.

Although they were enacted just over a year ago, these rules do not come into full force until January 1, 2025 — a tad over ten months from now. As you can imagine, the Heritage staff at the City have been busy reviewing their substantial register while working with heritage consultants from ASI (the team who oversaw our recent West Annex project) to develop their preservation strategy.



Uno Prii's fanciful gem, The Vincennes, surrounded by generous green space, is one of the hallmarks of our community at 35 Walmer. Currently listed but not designated, it will lose its status and perforce be removed from the registry if nothing is done by January 1, 2025. As we said, the clock is ticking.

Public Meeting this Monday

You can learn more about the processes of heritage listing and designation on the City's website [by clicking here](#). But to get a better understanding of the implications of these changes, do plan to attend that public meeting.

Once again, it is to be held this coming **Monday, February 26**, from **6:30 pm to 8:00 pm**. To register, it's easiest to start by [clicking here](#). Then scroll down the

list to find *Heritage Register Review: Public Information Session* and use the registration link provided there.

Notes and Queries

Call for Nominations

The ARA Board inaugurated its Community Builder Award in 2017, and you can read about past recipients [on our website](#). You'll see that Covid took its toll, so there was no winner for 2021. But we got back on track in 2022 with two recipients — Edward Leman and the Avenue Road Food Bank — and again in 2023 to honour the community leaders at 250 Davenport.

Our Board is now reaching out to ask for nominations for 2024. Do you know someone who has contributed substantially to the betterment of life in the Annex? Are you aware of an initiative that makes this place special? If so, please write to info@theara.org with the subject line "Community Award" and explain why this individual or group or initiative deserves recognition. The winner will be announced at our Annual General Meeting to be held online on the evening of **Thursday April, 18.**



Helen Goldlist earned the Community Builder Award in 2020 for having co-founded the Bloor-Borden Farmers' Market in 2008, as well as for her continuing work over the intervening years to establish it as a vital and much-loved community resource.

Stump Removal Begins

Micky Fraterman and neighbours had been fretting for months now, wondering when the City would finally come to remove the stumps on Brunswick. These poignant reminders of the grand old trees that once stood there made replanting impossible. Just as the group was preparing to petition City Hall, crews from the Parks Department arrived to begin the removal. As you can see, it's no simple process. Thanks are due to Micky for the photos.



Alternative Arts – Alternative Address

Sandwiched between two sushi joints, the popular [Alternative Arts](#) was featured in an article in [Blog TO](#) last week. Apparently loyal customers were dismayed when they saw a “for lease” sign in the window. Was the venerable framing gallery going under after thirty years on the Annex scene? Not to worry, reports Blog TO. The business is just re-locating a hop, skip, and a jump across the way and a bit further west to 474 Bloor to move into the spot recently vacated by the home decor store SOCCO. So it will still be able to claim its Annex bona fides: in fact, even more so by having transferred to the north side of Bloor!



Once the current storefront is vacated, what are the odds that another sushi place will fill the middle spot to make it a hat trick?

Word on the Street

Remember that warm spell a couple of weeks back? Our Reporter at Large was out and about and encountered a crew of at least fifteen workers clearing mouldering leaves from Annex curbsides.



Mike, who's been a LEO 1 (aka a **l**ight **e**quipment **o**perator) for 10 years with the City, explained when asked. "What else is there to do? There's no snow. We also

been clearing sewers and removing graffiti under bridgeways and pathways."

Long time resident Maria (age 89) was happy for the initiative, but also not quite so impressed. She went on the record to say, "They no clean good. They should use a broom. But ... better than nothing."



Five minutes later, she'd finished the job.



She's the best!



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