



DMRI NEWSLETTER- SPRING 2026

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER

To all of our members, we would like to acknowledge that our website is long overdue for an update, and that our Facebook and Instagram accounts could be better used.

However, in reading this issue, you will find that DMRI board members are extremely busy working on behalf of your interests and those of the wider community. The hours of work spent on the development at 895 Lawrence Avenue East is simply overwhelming, not to mention the multitude of City meetings.

Our goal, still, is to provide community opportunities for our members. To this end, the work on regenerating Macklin Hancock Park, which you will read, is going forward. We have been in contact with Councillor Burnside about a future dog park in the area, and are hoping to have Officer Joel Roberts back before the summer to give us a talk on fraud and identity theft. As well, we hope to work on the possibility of re-opening Don Mills CI for community use, as in the past, Learn4Life offered Monday lessons and the pool was open for City-run aquatics.

Our neighbourhood is close to nature (as evidenced by the deer who ate my rose bush this winter), so it is not uncommon for us to literally run into wildlife. What may be little known, however, is what to do when you see an animal in distress. If you find a stray pet, call Toronto Animal Services at 416-338-PAWS or animalservices@toronto.ca. Local rescue organizations, the Toronto Humane Society, or your local vet can also give assistance. If you find a dead animal, call 311 for assistance. For wild animals that are injured, call the Toronto Wildlife Centre hotline at 416-631-0662 or <https://www.torontowildlifecentre.com/>

They have a complex response system based on the animal size, need, urgency of the request, and available response teams. FYI - Did you know that there are over 20,000 feral cats in Toronto and that euthanasia due to homelessness is the largest cause of deaths in cats? Several organizations belong to the Toronto Feral Cat Coalition, who wish feral cats to live their full lives with trap neuter return programs. Want to help our feral cat colonies in the Don Valley? Contact: <https://www.torontoferalcatcoalition.ca/>

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Lastly, I am asking you to speak to your neighbours and urge them to become a member or renew their membership. The more we grow, the more we can do. For membership options, see the last page of the newsletter.

To enquire about your membership, contact membership@dmri.ca. We are also seeking a volunteer to help with the production of our digital newsletter. Contact me at: dmripresident@dmri.ca.
Happy Spring!

Vanessa Quinn
DMRI President

The Opening of the Eglinton LRT and TTC Bus Services

For those who live within walking distance or a short bus ride to the Eglinton LRT, travel to Eglinton Station has become a lot easier. However, the alteration of several bus routes has had a negative and far reaching impact to residents living in Central Don Mills, Underhill/Laurentide, and even Scarborough, with continuous travel across Lawrence Avenue severed between Don Mills and Leslie, except between 2 am to 5:45 am, when the 345 Lawrence night bus runs. This impacts travel to Don Mills Library, Shoppers Drug Mart (emergency 24 hr, 365 day location), St. Bonaventure Parish, Toronto Botanical Gardens and connections to North York General Hospital, Sunnybrook Hospital, and Pearson airport. As ludicrous as it sounds, there is better access to Pearson Airport at 3 am than at 3 pm! It seems that the TTC has focused travel routes towards downtown and has forgotten that riders may wish to travel in other directions. It has also meant that our neighbourhood has, in effect, been severed by Don Mills Road, along east-west lines

A summary of the new routes is as follows:

191 Underhill

This new route replaced the Underhill-Laurentide-York Mills service of the 91 Woodbine bus. The new route from Don Valley (Science Centre) station does not stop at Lawrence & Underhill in both directions, so riders cannot easily transfer to buses travelling east along Lawrence and can no longer travel to Line 2 (Woodbine). Instead to travel east, riders must get off at a stop before Lawrence and walk a distance to a transfer point or actually travel west to transfer at The Donway E to go east. So, now, riders do not connect directly to line 2 and have difficulty travelling east to places like Victoria Terrace (No Frills, Dollarama & Bulk Barn).

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162 Lawrence-Donway

This bus no longer loops around The Donway, but turns south from Lawrence at the Congee Queen Plaza towards Don Valley station, which means that most of Central Don Mills can no longer access a direct bus to Lawrence station on Line 1, but must travel south, then west, then north to get to it and the 952 Lawrence West Express (Pearson Express to Terminal 3) in order to stay within the TTC system (UP Express connects with the LRT at Mount Dennis). Also, those riders wishing to go to Sunnybrook Hospital no longer have the option of this bus to Bayview & Lawrence to catch the 124 Sunnybrook bus, which forces riders to get there via Eglinton, adding an extra transfer and more time.

54 Lawrence East

This bus now terminates at Don Valley station and no longer runs between Don Mills and Leslie. As stated above, the TTC has severed continuous travel along Lawrence, except very late at night. The lack of transit along Lawrence means that people east of Don Mills have no quick access to services like the library, Shoppers, BMO, ScotiaBank or CIBC. Although the 51B Leslie loops around the Donway, it is less frequent than the 54 bus, so riders will also have longer travel times to places like: Toronto Botanical Gardens, St. Bonaventure Parish and School, North York General Hospital and Sunnybrook Hospital. Condominium residents on Leslie at Eglinton will now have to rely on the more infrequent 51B to access services and schools in central Don Mills, now that the 54 Lawrence East bus route does not exist for them.

51B Leslie

This name is a misnomer, as this bus spends very little time on Leslie and does not terminate at Leslie station. Instead, after its Donway loop, it returns south to Donlands station, via Laird station (on the LRT) and through Leaside. So, to get to North York General Hospital or Leslie station on Line 4, riders would need to take the 51B Leslie bus to Leslie and transfer to the 51 Leslie bus (north), which is confusing and time consuming.

Don Valley (formerly Science Centre) Station

Given the time it took to open the LRT, one would think that the developers would have integrated accessibility into its design. The distance from the LRT train to the bus terminal is not only long, but at a steep incline, which is challenging for anyone with mobility issues or small children. The elevator is out of order on the north side of the station due to the Ontario Line construction, and will probably stay that way for years, which surely must have been known in advance.

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Truly, this is not a station for those with mobility devices nor for those with heavy bags or groceries. There is very limited signage on how to access the 25 Don Mills bus, how to exit to the streets, or indeed where to wait for your bus. Even though there is an available bus bay near Bay #1, adjacent to the indoor terminal, 162 and 191 riders must wait across from the bus terminal at a small unheated bus shelter, which is very dark at night.

Given the problems with the bus schedules and the inaccessibility of the Don Valley station, the DMRI is working to improve service. At Councillor Rachel Chernos-Lin's virtual town hall on Feb. 24th, a TTC representative stated that feedback on the new services would be reviewed with changes happening in 2027. Frankly, that timeline is not acceptable, especially given issues of accessibility.

To make your views known, contact your local councillor, your local MPP, and/or go to the TTC webpage: <https://www.ttc.ca/customer-service/complaints-compliments-suggestions>.

If you have feedback on the cancellation of 34C Eglinton bus, please contact me at dmripresident@dmri.ca. Together, we can make change happen!

Don Mills Area Regeneration Study

A virtual public meeting took place on March 5 regarding the Don Mills Area Regeneration Study. It was the third meeting in a round of public discussions on proposed zoning changes for two Don Mills areas. The proposals would change the areas from being zoned for employment to being mixed use. The meetings were also to study land use, parks, open space, streets, community services/facilities, and built form.

The first 8.3 hectare area concerns the lands of the former Wrigley building and the neighbouring office buildings at 1121 and 1131 Leslie Street, just north of the fire station. The proposal is to zone about a quarter of the most northern area as Natural Areas, in order to maintain a pedestrian link to the Don Mills Trail. The rest of the land would be zoned for Mixed Use, which would include a central park, streets, residential buildings, retail stores and restaurants. The City is also considering installing another set of traffic lights on Leslie at the entrance to this area.



Residents voiced concerns about the height of any new towers (including shading), the possible future use of the neighbouring CPR rail line as a high speed rail link to Ottawa, the necessity for more than a token amount of shops, the lack of a school plan, and the need for compulsory community spaces (i.e. community centre). The City seems to be relying on POPS (privately owned public spaces) to provide community spaces, which is always risky when the public does not own the land and, therefore, cannot influence either design or use.

The second area is the 3.5 hectare block of land surrounding 15 Gervais Drive, 39 Wynford Drive, and 1200 Eglinton Avenue East (south of Wynford, north of Eglinton). Many proposals for this area currently fall under the Wynford-Concord Focused Area Study, which has already had public input from Wynford-Concord residents, so those proposals were not duplicated in this regeneration study. The entire area is proposed to be moved to Mixed Use, including stand alone retail stores, restaurants and shops, with large scale buildings (i.e. box stores) prohibited. The City intends to preserve pedestrian access to the Aga Khan complex. Residents expressed concerns about density and wanted clarification whether the Wynford stop on the LRT would fall under the provincial transit hub guidelines (this was not answered). In this area as well, the City is relying on POPS to provide community spaces, which is not always reliable.

To access the Focused Study:

<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/8f41-city-planning-wynford-concorde-community-meeting-presentation-part1.pdf>

Both proposals go before North York Community Council on April 29th and City Council on May 20-22.

To have your views known, you may post comments at DonMillsPlanning@toronto.ca (before March 20), contact Councillor Jon Burnside, or attend the City meetings in person.

See the website: click “Don Mills” <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/regeneration-area-studies/>



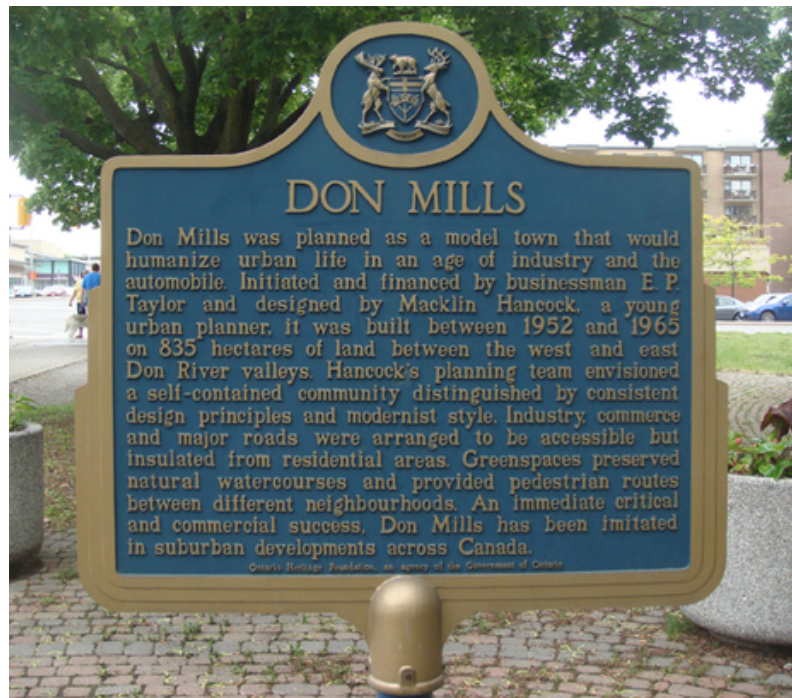
Macklin Hancock Park Update

After significant time and effort, Macklin Hancock Park is now on its way to a facelift. Councillor Burnside has allocated Section 37 funds to revitalize the park and make it more in keeping with our green community. With input from the DMRI park subcommittee, The City's Parks and Recreation department is currently working on designs.

You may have noticed that the maple tree closest to the intersection is being removed. While the tree had been pruned repeatedly, after weathering its last storm, it was badly damaged. We will ensure that under the new designs a replacement tree will be planted.



The maple tree in its former glory at the opening of the park.





FoNTRA-FoSTRA Planning Forum

In January, Allan McKellar and Richard Ng attended a presentation by Toronto's Chief Planner, Jason Thorne and by Valesa Faria, Head of Development Review.

The city has been planning for growth. It expects that by 2051 Toronto will have a population of around 3.7 to 4.1 million. The City has approved 740,000 residential units that are unbuilt, enough to meet the increased population. Unfortunately, many of the units are too expensive for the people who will need housing. The average price of a home in 2000 was 2.9 times the average household income, whereas in 2024 it rose to 5.3 times average household income. Many of the unbuilt housing units have only one bedroom or bachelor units. This is a significant problem. It is possible that this may only be solved by a greater number of publicly built residential units.

The City's review of development proposals has been changed in order to handle them more quickly. Unfortunately this has meant a decreased involvement of Residents' Associations, such as the Don Mills Residents, Inc. We will continue to press for more appropriate developments that take into account the concerns of area residents.

See, also, the articles on 895 Lawrence Avenue East and the Don Mills Area Regeneration Study virtual meeting in this newsletter.

Programs & Courses for Seniors and Adults

Learn4Life - Adult Interest Courses (Overland School - 55 Overland Drive)

Courses start April 7, 416-338-4111

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Adult-Learners/Learn4Life>

Better Living - Programs, Trips & Events (1 Overland Drive)

Phone: 416-447-7244 ext. 622

<https://mybetterliving.ca/community-centre/programs-trips-events/>

City of Toronto

<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/children-parenting/seniors-services/seniors-recreation-and-things-to-do/>



DMRI Fights for Sensible Growth: 895 Lawrence Avenue East Update

Over the past six months, the DMRI has been working on behalf of our shared community regarding the massive redevelopment proposal for 895 Lawrence Avenue East at The Donway West (The “Congee Queen Plaza”). After a new developer acquired this property, applications for an Official Plan Amendment (OPA) and a Zoning Bylaw Amendment (ZBL) were submitted to the North York Planning Department. The Department recommended to North York and City Council that the amendments NOT be approved. A decision by City Council was not reached within the time frame dictated by Provincial legislation. This allowed the applicant to appeal the new proposal directly to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT).

Our team stepped up to ensure the residents of Don Mills have a strong voice in the process.

Here is a brief summary of our recent actions and the current status:

Securing Our Seat at the Table

In October 2025, the DMRI formally applied for and was granted "Party Status" at the OLT (Hearing OLT-25-000319). This is a crucial milestone, as it allows us to engage in the Tribunal hearing process.

Reviewing Updated Plans

In December 2025 and January 2026, DMRI had discussions with the Developer. While we noted some minor changes in response to the concerns we brought up, core issues with the development remain unresolved.

Our Primary Areas of Focus

We have also continued discussions with Councillor Jon Burnside. He and his staff have been very helpful and supportive on behalf of the community.

In our recent communications with the parties involved, we have firmly outlined our primary concerns:

- **Excessive Density and Design:** The proposed Floor Space Index (FSI - density, height, area) is grossly excessive. We noted that the site is outside the Provincially defined transit hub radius. Sufficient existing and future necessary transit capacity is not able to support such high density. The bulky design, with a large ground floor plate, is also criticized for creating a big “wall” effect and reducing visual and pedestrian permeability.



- **Retail Concerns:** The proposed retail space is extremely small compared to the existing highly utilized plaza;
- **Traffic, Safety, and Parking:** The design will block driver sight lines at the busy Lawrence East and The Donway West intersection. Traffic congestion will increase, particularly at Marie Labatte Road, which leads to Shops at Don Mills opposite the entrance to the proposed development. Furthermore, the proposed number of parking spots (235) for over 1,000 apartments (virtually all underground) is clearly too few for this development which will push parking issues onto local streets and negatively affect retail operations. Retail parking is nearly non-existent.
- **Pedestrian and Construction Management:** Concerns exist regarding the lack of a pedestrian volume study and the possibility of crowding at bus stops and signalled intersections. There is poor connectivity planned within and through the development. Lastly, the likely construction management plan relies on sole excavation access via The Donway W. This raises significant traffic and pedestrian safety concerns for the duration of the build.

Where We Stand Now

An OLT Case Management Conference (CMC) for a negotiated resolution was scheduled for early February 2026 but was adjourned at the Developer's request. In the meantime, we will be working to meet again with the City staff responsible and with Councillor Burnside. We are concerned that the City will agree to a "compromise" settlement which may be very harmful to our community. DMRI has not been invited to the table for these compromise discussions.

How You Can Help

If the community is presented with a settlement which does not address the main concerns (as we fear is likely), we may need to retain professional planning and legal services, particularly if this issue continues at the OLT. Please consider a donation to DMRI and if you haven't already, please renew your DMRI membership. Your support is crucial and directly funds your community association's ability to challenge inappropriate developments and keep Don Mills a safe, well-planned community.

Please also remember to write to our councillor, Jon Burnside to express your views at councillor_burnside@toronto.ca

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Will Power By Susan Goldenberg

Long-time Don Mills resident Susan Goldenberg had her eleventh book, WILL POWER, published February 3 by Dundurn Press (Toronto) and gave a power point presentation on it at the Don Mills Library on March 2. The subtitle is: “The Most Baffling Bequests, Ludicrous Last Wishes, and Daft Declarations in final testaments.” It’s at independently-owned bookstores, Indigo (in stores and online), and Amazon Books Online.

“Will Power -two words because my book is about the power of wills,” she told DMRI board member Tom Yarmon, the person who suggested a number of years ago that she move to Don Mills, a great idea. “I wrote it to inform, entertain, amuse, and sometimes shock and horrify. It’s a collection of recent and past unique world firsts, funny, eccentric, vindictive, family dividing, precedent- setting, dead hand–controlling, and provocative instances of wills that were unknown of before, except for brief mentions of a couple. To the best of my knowledge, WILL POWER is the first book of its kind in Canada. As I say in it: Wills don’t have to be a morbid topic. There are wills of well-known figures and “ordinary” people.”

Regarding the genesis of the book, she told Tom: “I’m pretty sure it’s unique because the inspiration came from a parrot. I had read a nineteenth-century book by an English author on British eccentrics and wondered if there were Canadian versions. I found that a rich Victoria, British Columbia recluse had willed her yellow and blue macaw parrot, the love of her life since she was a child, her mansion and its grounds, which greatly upset developers who had wanted to get their hands on them after her demise. I wrote about this unusual will for Canada’s History Magazine and subsequently explored if there were additional unique instances that I could write about in a book. It took considerable time and extensive research into primary and secondary material including locating and reading wills and going through court cases as well as archival records and putting the wills into the context of their time.”

Susan has won a Canadian Author’s Award. She was a business reporter and won a Canadian Business Press Editors’ Award before turning to books.

She writes North York heritage stories for the North York Historical Society’s website, www.nyhs.ca, and newsletter and is the Society’s membership director.

She told Tom: “I’m very glad you suggested I live in Don Mills. I’m near the excellent Don Mills Library and TTC transportation to other research facilities. And Don Mills is a great place to take a break: a walk along the quiet, tree-lined streets radiating from Don Mills Road or a stroll through the vibrant Shops At Don Mills.”



Donate to The DMRI

Member Support enables the DMRI to achieve our objectives and to maintain Don Mills as one of the best places to live in the City of Toronto. Member are encouraged to participate in the Annual General Meeting. The membership runs from the date of joining.

Membership fees are \$30.00 per household per year. Please also consider adding a donation when you join or renew your membership with the DMRI. Your support helps to pay for the legal and other costs associated with representing Don Mills and all its residents at the municipal and provincial level.

There are two ways to join Don Mills Residents Inc.

Payment via Canada Post

Return the membership form along with a cheque to:
DMRI P.O. Box 47528, Don Mills ON M3C 3S7

Online Payment

www.dmri.ca/become_a_dmri_member
Complete the form on the membership page.
Select and pay by credit card. If you'd like to make

a donation, please do so at the same time.

You can also scan this QR code with your cell phone and the web page will load automatically for you.



Note that the DMRI is not a registered charity, therefore, tax receipts are not provided.

If you have any questions, please contact membership@dmri.ca

DMRI Application/Renewal

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Address _____ Postal Code _____

Phone # (____) _____ Email Address _____

Annual Memberhip \$25.00 Donation \$_____ Total Amount \$_____ Date: _____

Please Note: The DMRI is not a registered charity. Tax receipts are not provided.

Comments: _____

The Newsletter is sent by Email to save costs.

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Or pay electronically via the DMRI website