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continued pressures

You would think that with our volatile winter weather, developers might be taking a breather and sunning in the south. However, the flurry of development activity in the Davisville area tells a different story. Witness the fact there are six active proposals – plus the NE corner of Davisville-Yonge.

When we tally the resulting growth for this area, since the 2016 Canada census at 9,000 residents, we forecast the population to grow to 15,000 residents within the next seven years. That growth alone would be roughly the equivalent of all the current population in the SERRA East area (Eglinton to Merton, Mt. Pleasant to Bayview). It would also rival the 2016 census density of the St. James Town apartment neighbourhood. This does not bode well. Additional development applications are likely to follow as sure as spring follows winter. We can well imagine the pressure this will create on an already over-capacity Yonge Line, the Davisville station, Davisville and Hodgson schools, access to a neighbourhood grocery store, with the potential loss of the only grocery store in the area, and even on the pedestrian and cycling routes inside and out of this already dense neighbourhood. Never mind whether there will be trees and usable green space in the area.

Clearly, Davisville is in the crosshairs of the development industry, which seems to view Davisville Village as the new Yonge & Eglinton.

For more about what actions SERRA, our Councillor and the City planners/solicitors are taking, please read the article below.

Transit planning in the GTA

Almost daily we are reading or hearing about the uploading of the TTC (or parts thereof) to the province – a prospect which certainly looks threatening when the possibility exists that the City/TTC will potentially lose control over the TTC lands at the Davisville and Yonge-Eglinton stations.

But in this newsletter, we are focusing instead on an update of the various transit projects in the city. Read a recent [Metrolinx Relief Line Update here](#).

Our interest is in how severe the Yonge Line 1 crowding will become before relief lines are completed. The transit update states that Yonge Line 1 will be able to handle ridership well into the future, while we all know how crowded the Yonge Line 1 already is. Will it be able to accommodate all the new residents expected to move here, and handle the impact of the Eglinton Crosstown LRT? We suspect that by 2023 the Eglinton station in the morning peak hours will resemble the current overcrowded – and dangerous – state of the Bloor-Yonge station.

We suspect that it has been awhile since the TTC has really done a comprehensive forecast of the ridership demand for the Yonge Line 1. Luckily, the Transit update mentions **A REVIEW OF THE YONGE LINE 1 RIDERSHIP DEMAND BY THE END OF THIS YEAR. LET'S KEEP OUR EYES ON THAT DATE!**

Andy Gort,



President, SERRA

P.S. Please share this newsletter with your friends and neighbours.

2019 SERRA Annual General Meeting

Book the date .. our AGM date is April 30!

Our AGM is a must-attend event for members – and interested non-members – to learn more about our community and the actions SERRA is taking to ensure Davisville Village remains vibrant. Expect to hear important updates from Councillors Josh Matlow and Jaye Robinson.

The AGM will take place from 6 p.m. (doors open) to 9 p.m. at The Greenwood College School, 443 Mt. Pleasant Road.

Schools update

Construction starts soon on new Davisville / Spectrum schools!

Progress continues on the rebuild of Davisville Jr Public School / Spectrum Alternative School.

On February 15, 2019, the Ministry of Education gave the TDSB final approval to proceed with construction.

This follows close on the heels of the recent completion of a shared use agreement between the TDSB and the City of Toronto, plus a 49 year lease agreement between the TDSB's real estate arm, Toronto Lands Corporation, and the City of Toronto. The lease covers the southwest section of the Davisville/Spectrum site and will enable the building of a Community Hub and aquatic centre.

The City is also funding an expanded gym for the school, plus costs involved in making the school a three storey building and placement of parking underground. This makes it possible for there to be space for the aquatic centre on the

Davisville/Spectrum site.

Trustee Shelley Laskin said, "The end result is truly a long-term community hub that will bring a multitude of benefits and enhancements to the students and the community at large for years to come."

With demolition of the old school building nearing completion, the way is clear for construction to begin!

Below: North elevation of the Davisville and Spectrum Alternative School (March 2018)



A Big Step Forward on a Community Centre for Davisville

With the signing of a shared use agreement and a land lease between the TDSB and the City of Toronto, Davisville Village and all of Midtown Toronto are a major step closer to having a community hub with an aquatic centre.

Trustee Shelley Laskin has confirmed that an agreement has been signed by the TDSB's real estate arm, Toronto Lands Corporation, and the City of Toronto. The agreement includes a 49-year lease of the southwest section of the Davisville/Spectrum site to the City. This enables the City to build a community hub including the aquatic centre, community space and a roof deck.

Construction will begin soon on the new school building for the Davisville Jr and Spectrum Alternative schools.

A start date for construction of the City community hub / aquatic centre has not yet been announced.

It's worth noting that the former City ward 22 was the only ward in Toronto without a community centre.

We congratulate the TDSB, City of Toronto, Trustee Shelley Laskin, Councillor Josh Matlow and local residents who have worked together for years to make this long-needed facility a reality for our community!

Tall Homes in our 'hood

New Location for Committee of Adjustment Hearings

SERRA has worked together with many local residents over the last five years to help ensure that new residential infill developments in our area are in close compliance with the zoning bylaws. If a proposed development exceeds the bylaws, the application must be reviewed at a [Committee of Adjustment](#) (COA).

Throughout the history of Davisville Village, these hearings have been held at the Toronto City Hall location. With the recent new ward boundaries, SERRA is now split between two city planning divisions. If the application is for a property located west of Mt. Pleasant, there will be no change in the planning staff and the Committee hearing location.

If the property is located east of Mt. Pleasant, the application will be reviewed by North York planning staff and the Committee hearing will take place at the North York Civic Centre. Councillor Jaye Robinson and her staff will be available to assist with questions and concerns related to Committee of Adjustment hearings.

SERRA continues to be available to assist its members with any issues related to pending Committee of Adjustment hearings at either location. We are also available to assist with [Toronto Local Appeal Body](#) (TLAB) hearings in those cases where the Committee decision is appealed to the TLAB. The TLAB hearings are held at 40 Orchard View Boulevard.

Reach out to us at tallhomes@southeqlinton.ca with any questions related to COA or the TLAB.

Tall and mid-rise development update Davisville area and our “Avenues” (Yonge, Mt. Pleasant and Bayview)

Over the last few years most of the tall development activity has been concentrated in the Eglinton-Soudan neighbourhood, but now a second area for intense development has opened up in the Davisville area, with seven concurrent applications, plus a tall affordable housing site application (at 140 Merton) and indications of more applications to come.

Until recently Davisville was a relatively stable neighbourhood (2016 Canada census population of 9,000 residents), characterized by a 1960s-1970s-era “Tower in the Park” architecture and neighbourhood design. “Tower in the Park” specified dense development, but surrounded by a lot of open, green spaces. We are now under threat of much denser development with a loss of almost all the open, green spaces and with little chance of finding other patches of open, green space in the immediate neighbourhood.

From a mobility perspective, this area relies heavily on public transit. With the current morning peak hours’ overcrowding of both the Yonge Line and the Davisville station itself, we are concerned that transit capacity to accommodate the

projected population growth from 9,000 to 15,000 residents over the next seven to 10 years will be insufficient. Those concerns extend to the ability at peak hours to safely walk or cycle around the neighbourhood with its narrow sidewalks, lack of mid-block connections and choked Yonge-Davisville intersection. The only bright spot is the new Davisville School (under construction) and the recently approved Davisville Community Hub (see article in this newsletter). However, concerns are already surfacing whether the new school will already be at capacity when it opens and whether the Hodgson Middle School will be able to accommodate this population surge.

Our Councillor, Josh Matlow, the City Planning group, City solicitor and SERRA, with wide support from the community, have made our concerns heard loud and clear to the area developers. What makes our opposition more difficult is that five of the current seven applications were submitted just before the abolition of the OMB (Ontario Municipal Board). As such, these applications will be heard under the old, and development-permissive OMB regulations. To make matters worse, the new planning blueprint for our area (Midtown In Focus), which was submitted to the Provincial Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) as “OPA 405,” has not yet received provincial approval and as such all current applications can claim “grandfather” status under the existing, permissive planning regulations for this area.

The City Solicitor (with instructions from City Council) and SERRA have both sought and received official status to oppose the five applications at the LPAT (under the old OMB rules), but it is very likely that “something” will get approved for all these proposed sites. Having a residents’ association such as SERRA appear at so many tribunal hearings at the same time is unprecedented in the city, and we do ask for a show of your support by joining or renewing your SERRA membership, and if possible, donating to our legal fund. Fighting for better, more appropriate area development has become a near full-time activity for some of our volunteers.

We would be remiss not to mention that a third development front is opening up on the iconic retail streets of Yonge, Mt. Pleasant and Bayview with the submission

of five new mid-rise development applications (three on Yonge at Manor Rd. and Hillsdale, one at Mt. Pleasant just north of Soudan and one on Bayview between Merton and Balliol). This is in addition to a recently approved mid-rise development on Bayview at Soudan (which is now under construction). Mid-rise applications tend to be in the 8-10-storey range. We will be reporting more on this third development front in future newsletters.

Heritage in Davisville Village

Why is the Beltline Trail located where it is?

The Beltline Trail was once a railroad line that circled from downtown Toronto to the northern villages which included Davisville's Merton Street station. The construction of The Toronto Belt Line Railway in the early 1890s caused a great deal of land speculation and drove up local land prices. A real estate sales brochure "The Highlands of Toronto" that was published in 1891 by the Toronto Belt Land Corporation, extolled the benefits of the Belt Line and the picturesque nature of the bucolic suburbs.

The railroad line was completed in 1892, but soon fell victim to an economic recession and closed passenger operations in 1894.

The parts of the rail line remained open to commercial businesses on Merton St. for several decades.

Today, many people enjoy the Beltline Trail. Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation are currently working on a "Lost Stations" initiative that will provide three rest areas along the trail. These Lost Stations will be located near the original passenger stations, including Davisville's Merton St. Look for further updates of this project in Councillor Matlow's newsletter.



Time to renew!

Just a reminder that we need your support as a member, so please renew now. Your membership adds to our voice when we work to improve our neighbourhood. Perhaps you can also consider a donation to our legal fund to help us cover the cost of opposing developments at the various tribunal hearings

To access our website membership and donation page, please click here:

[Membership](#)

We look forward to hearing from you about how we can support your interests. If you would like to contact us, click here:

[Contact](#)
