

Trinity-Spadina federal by-election

THE RACE IS ON

By Sarah Ratchford

With **Olivia Chow's** former federal seat vacant, the race to replace her in Trinity-Spadina has begun. While there is no word yet when the by-election will be held, both the Liberals and NDP are gearing up to win the riding where affordable housing and public transit are pressing priorities, according to the local councillors.

First out of the gate is Stephen Lewis Foundation senior advisor **Joe Cressy**, who has announced his intention to seek the NDP nomination at the party's April 10th meeting. Cressy's goal is to pick up where Olivia Chow left off.

"[Chow] had a reputation, and built a legacy, as somebody who stood up every single day as a tireless representative for the people of Trinity-Spadina," Cressy tells *NRU*. "I'm hoping to carry on that legacy."

Cressy says we need a more "progressive cities agenda in this country." Because 80 per cent of Canada's population now lives and receives services in urban centres, he says, it's time to focus on initiatives like a national transit strategy and fixing the country's \$171-billion infrastructure deficit with a long-term federal plan. He says affordable housing will be at the top of his list too. He also criticizes the absence of childcare from federal discussions. Cressy says downtown

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Development Permit System

INDUSTRY POSITIVE

By Edward LaRusic

As Toronto's consultation process ends, the development industry remains cautiously optimistic about the proposed official plan amendment to allow a development permit system as an alternative to traditional zoning.

If implemented, a development permit system would allow the city to create development permit "by-laws" that would replace the current zoning with a process that effectively combines zoning compliance, minor variances and site plan approval. Consultation and studies would be done upfront, creating a fully built-out vision for a defined area.

BILD policy and government relations vice president **Paula Tenuta** said they are "extremely supportive" of implementing a development permit system. She said that other cities in the country—such as Vancouver—use a similar process.

"Where it has worked in other areas of the country, it facilitates a process to bring stakeholders together and to accelerate applications for cities that bring together excellent planning principles and concrete visions for city building."

"We are looking forward to working with the City of Toronto. We're pleased that it is thinking along these lines, but we at BILD recognize that it is very early on in the process and there are issues [with implementing a

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UPCOMING DATES

APRIL 5

Toronto/TTC Relief line project assessment and Metrolinx Yonge Relief Network Study, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Sheraton Centre, Dominion Ballroom, 123 Queen Street West

APRIL 7

Government Management Committee, 9:30 a.m., committee room 1

APRIL 8

Etobicoke York Community Council, 9:30 a.m., council chamber, Etobicoke Civic Centre

North York Community Council, 9:30 a.m., council chamber, North York Civic Centre

Scarborough Community Council, 9:30 a.m., council chamber, Scarborough Civic Centre

Toronto and East York Community Council, 9:30 a.m. committee room 1

APRIL 9

Public Works and Infrastructure Committee, 9:30 a.m., committee room 1

APRIL 10

Planning and Growth Management Committee, 9:30 a.m., committee room 1

Toronto/TTC Relief line project assessment and Metrolinx Yonge Relief Network Study, 5:30-9:30 p.m., Riverdale Collegiate Institute, 1094 Gerrard Street East

University of Toronto Friends of Planning 18th Annual Spring Social, 6:00-9:00 p.m., Hart House Great Hall, University of Toronto, 7 Hart House Circle

APRIL 12

Toronto/TTC Relief line project assessment, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Holy Name Parish, 71 Gough Avenue

NOVÆ res urbis
CITY OF TORONTO EDITION

Public asked to set terms

RELIEF WIKI

By Edward LaRusic

The public are being asked to get very hands on with the creation of the “terms of reference wiki” for the proposed relief line, but the challenge may be proving to be too daunting.

On Monday, staff created a [public wiki](#) for the proposed relief line project assessment to inform the study process and what will become the final version of the project’s term of reference.

Senior public consultation coordinator **Mike Logan** said in an email to *NRU* that the wiki was an attempt to create dialogue and consensus, which sometimes can be challenging.

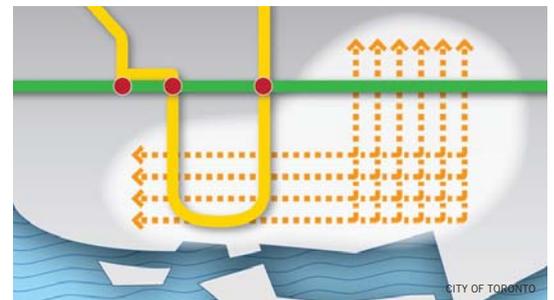
“We know that there are many Toronto-nians who have valuable expertise and feel strongly about our projects, but it’s hard for people to see how the long email they sent to a staff person was incorporated into a final document. Likewise, it’s hard for staff to effectively incorporate different comments that we receive. We felt that a wiki might be a great way to direct that expertise and interest into dialogue.”

Logan hopes that users will spur discussion that will be helpful to staff in drafting the final document. He said the wiki can be accessible for users who want to get around the technical jargon and “city-hall-speak” and create a “shared vision” between the

city and interested stakeholders.

Staff enthusiasm may be greater than public enthusiasm however. Despite having been active since Monday, staff is still waiting for the first edit. As of mid-afternoon Thursday, 30 members had joined, but only the host “reliefline” account had made any changes.

“Since this is the first time that the city has tried this approach, it is, of course, a learning experience,” said Logan. “Ultimately, it’s up to users to show how this tool can be



City and TTC looking for input on a proposed relief line

effective—so please, log in to the wiki and help us write the terms of reference.”

The city and **Toronto Transit Commission** will be jointly consulting the public on the proposed relief line, in collaboration with **Metrolinx**, on April 5 and 10. An additional meeting involving just the city and the TTC is scheduled April 12. The commenting period for the wiki ends April 17. **nruc**

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CITY OF TORONTO • GREATER TORONTO • VANCOUVER

Creating a culture corridor

ICONIC BLOOR STREET

By Megan Kevill

What do you do when twelve major cultural destinations are located closely together but don't have a distinctive label? Brand them as a culture 'corridor'. That's just what **Heather Kelly** did as the originator and director of the recently launched [Bloor Street Culture Corridor](#), which is a collaboration of cultural groups located along Bloor Street between Bathurst and Bay streets that include museums, community centres, art galleries, music halls and theatres.

As the marketing director for the **Royal Conservatory of Music**, Kelly quickly realized that there was something missing in terms of the connectivity of Bloor Street's cultural destinations and knew something had to be done to raise awareness.

"There's often an 'ah-hah' moment for people when we realize that there are 12 major arts and culture organizations so close together on Bloor Street. People haven't really thought of it [as a corridor] until now," she told *NRU*.

At Wednesday's launch at L'Espresso Bar Mercurio, members of city council also showed their support for the collaboration.

"This stretch of Bloor is special and so strong because of the people behind it," Ward councillor **Adam Vaughan** told the crowd attending the launch.

But how does such a large collaboration of diverse groups work together? It helps to have the same ultimate goals, Kelly says.

"We have all come together willingly and enthusiastically to achieve a shared vision. Yes, [it] is a partnership between 12 destinations [but] by working collaboratively, we believe that we will attract Torontonians, tourists and media to the Bloor Street Culture Corridor and establish it as a vital and accessible arts and culture destination. Each of our organizations contributes to and will benefit from [it]."

Kelly says there are certain elements that need to be in place to make it work, such as uniqueness, diversity and location, so it might be challenging for other areas or streets in the city to create their own distinct corridor to attain these benefits.

"On Bloor Street, we have a very special mix of arts genres and cultural diversity being offered by a dozen organizations all located within an easily walkable stretch. [The groups including Aboriginal, Francophone, Jewish, Italian and

Japanese communities] are all quite different from each other and together we offer something unique and special in the city."

City councillor **Kristyn Wong-Tam** reflected on Bloor's uniqueness at the launch saying, "I can't think of a neighbourhood more iconic or that has more cultural treasures than this one."

Kelly hopes the project will make people aware that so many cultural activities exist within such a walkable distance.

"[It] will help Torontonians, as well as tourists visiting Toronto, to be aware of and take advantage of the extraordinary wealth of cultural experiences that are so easily accessible on Bloor Street. We can easily take the TTC to get here, and walk from a museum to an art talk or exhibition, do a bit of shopping, have lunch or dinner, and enjoy an inspiring concert or film, all within just a few blocks."

Describing the corridor in terms of a regional brand, Kelly believes it will "benefit the public and neighbourhood, by making it easier to navigate and find the arts and culture in the area, and help people connect with what's happening [in the city]."

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre marketing director **Bruce Hutchinson** told *NRU* that distinctive street signage would be a good idea because even he didn't know that all of the cultural destinations were so close together.

"We hope in the future to have signs. We'd love to have street banners, but for now, we're just trying to get the word out and do tours."

For now, Kelly said they will be relying on social media and websites for promotion. Also **Tourism Toronto** will be distributing brochures for international exposure.

One of the collaborators, **Japan Foundation** program officer **Toshi Aoyagi**, also stressed the importance of raising awareness and the benefits of the project.

"Downtown Toronto has a lot to offer. The shopping mall is not the only place to go. The collaboration is not just about promotion, it's about improving the quality of life in the city," he told *NRU*.

To determine if this strategy is working, Kelly told *NRU* they will have quantitative indicators to measure the project's success.

COMMENTARY

Toronto Governance

CITY: TOO BIG, TOO SMALL

By Enid Slack and Zachary Spicer

As Toronto's municipal election campaign begins to take shape, the city's 15-year old amalgamation still looms large.

A new report by the Institute on Municipal Finance and Governance looks at the legacy of amalgamation in Toronto and Montréal. In both cases, the Province pursued restructuring as a means of reducing the number of local governments and politicians and finding efficiencies and cost savings.

We evaluated the legacies of both amalgamations based on four criteria: efficiencies and cost savings, service levels and tax burden, accountability and local responsiveness, and regional coordination. There is little evidence of efficiencies and cost savings in either city. In Toronto, we found that expenditures on many of the lower-tier services that were merged, such as fire and garbage, actually increased after amalgamation. There was limited scope for savings in the first place, as many of the city's largest expenditures—welfare, transit and policing—were already the responsibility of the upper-tier government (Metro Toronto).

However, we did find that there was greater equity in the distribution of services and tax burden across Toronto, although this has not been the case in Montréal. Prior to amalgamation, the municipalities of York and East York were experiencing declining tax bases and lower service levels than Metro Toronto's other lower-tier municipalities. Amalgamation likely increased the level of services for residents in these two areas, resulting in increased equity.

Finally, local accountability has probably improved in Toronto while responsiveness has likely diminished. The number of political representatives in Toronto has significantly decreased, falling from 106 elected officials under Metro Toronto to 58 in the new City of Toronto and subsequently to the 45 we have now. As each elected representative has far more constituents, we can assume that citizens have less access to decision-makers. Additionally, community councils—a structure put in place to ensure local responsiveness in the wake of consolidation—have been reduced and each is now the size of a large city. While responsiveness to citizens has likely diminished, there has been a strengthening of institutional accountability mechanisms, with the creation of accountability

officers, a lobbyist registry and a Code of Conduct.

While amalgamation was hugely unpopular in Toronto, little has been done to reverse or amend the restructuring process. In Montréal, local resentment led to de-amalgamation referenda that reversed the reforms in some former municipalities, and forced the creation of an upper-tier 'agglomeration' government to coordinate the messy governance arrangement on the island.

Still, perhaps the most important legacy of the amalgamations in both cities was the failure to address regional issues. In Toronto, amalgamation failed to tackle the need for planning and coordination across the broader metropolitan region, with the 'Megacity' representing only about half of the population of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, with growth and service responsibility spilling over into the surrounding large, fast-growing suburban municipalities. In Montréal, the situation was similar. The provincial government attempted to bridge this gap by creating the Communauté Métropolitaine de Montréal, a regional body that serves 82 municipalities in and around the city and has broad jurisdiction for coordinating a range of economic, social, environmental and transportation services.

Today, Toronto remains too small to tackle big regional issues. The GTHA is highly fragmented, with 26 municipalities of varying shapes and sizes, each with unique economic and demographic characteristics, challenges and political dynamics. No GTHA-wide governance body exists to enable planning and decision-making among these municipalities, and with the other orders of government. Metrolinx, a special-purpose agency created to plan the regional transportation network and operate the GO commuter network, has been hamstrung by a lack of financial tools and the absence of a regionally representative, accountable mechanism for GTHA decision-making.

The upcoming municipal election campaign will focus heavily on issues like transportation, infrastructure, growth planning and economic development—all of which need to be coordinated across the broader region. But ultimately, the city and the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area municipalities will continue to struggle in planning,

TORONTO BRIEFS

[On successful regional transportation systems](#)

Complaints about transit can draw just about any two Torontonians together in mutual ire. It's widely

acknowledged that our population is growing much faster than our transit system, so **The Neptis Foundation** and the **Toronto Region Board of Trade** are

teaming up to bring former **Transport for London** board member and designer **David Quarmby** to the Toronto to talk about his successes in London.

Transport for London is responsible for the vast majority of transportation planning and operations in Greater London and

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ICONIC BLOOR STREET

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“We will be tracking attendance at each of the cultural destinations, as well as visits to the websites and social media activity. When we run special promotions, we will track both interest and attendance directly generated by the promotion. We are also hoping to work with the local BIAs to track increases in economic activity along this stretch of Bloor Street.”

The Bloor Street Culture Corridor organizations from east to west are **Bloor Hot Docs Cinema**, **Tafelmusik Baroque**

Orchestra and Chamber Choir, **Toronto Consort**, **Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre**, **Native Canadian Centre of Toronto**, **Alliance Française de Toronto**, **Instituto Italiano di Cultura**, **Royal Conservatory of Music**, **Royal Ontario Museum**, **Gardiner Museum**, **Bata Shoe Museum**, and **Japan Foundation**. They are working together with community partners including the **Bloor-Yorkville BIA**, **Bloor-Annex BIA**, **Tourism Toronto**, **Ontario Arts Council** and **City of Toronto**. 

CITY: TOO BIG, TOO SMALL

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coordinating and financing regional services without a rethink of its governance arrangements.

So, as the 2014 municipal election campaigns take shape, a key question for mayoral and council candidates across the GTHA is: how do you propose to tackle this regional governance gap? More specifically, what governance and coordination mechanisms do you think are necessary to improve planning among GTHA municipalities, to enable better service coordination and to allow for joint decision-making?

There are plenty of options to look at. An elected upper-tier regional government could be created like the Greater London Authority, with a mayor and assembly and responsibility for coordinating metro functions such as transport, police and economic development across 33 lower-tier governments. In many city-regions around the world, voluntary cooperation

arrangements have been formed by municipalities to enable coordination. Metrolinx's governance structure could be enhanced to include provincial and local representation so there is some accountability for transportation planning decisions and other special-purpose agencies could be created to coordinate regional economic and growth planning.

Of course, another important question is how to engage the Province in regional governance reform? This is clearly an issue that's time has come. Prospective local leaders should be eager to start this conversation and when better than during an election campaign.

The report, [Too Big, Yet Still Too Small: The Mixed Legacy of the Montréal and Toronto Amalgamations](#), can be found on the [Institute on Municipal Finance and Governance website](#). 

THE RACE IS ON

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Toronto needs federal leadership to help tackle these issues.

Cressy is not yet facing any contenders from within his party, but COPE lawyer and occasional *Toronto Star* columnist **Glenn Wheeler** confirms to *NRU* that he is planning to run for the Liberal nomination.

“I’m just in the process of getting together my nomination papers,” he says.

“I think generally, in the Trinity-Spadina riding and in Toronto [as a whole], the federal government has been sort of absent, even though there are vital federal issues in this riding.”

Wheeler says the country needs both a national housing strategy and a national transit strategy and once those are developed they’ll benefit all of Canada, not just Toronto. He said addressing the transit funding gap is critical.

“Cities are the financial engines of the country, but the federal government is doing nothing to nurture the infrastructure we need to sustain these economies.”

The dates for Conservative, Green and Liberal parties’ nomination meetings have yet be set and there is no word about potential candidates to represent the Conservative and Green parties in the upcoming by-election. But it is early days with Chow only having resigned March 12. The Prime Minister has six months from that date to call the by-election.

Among federal Liberals there has been some jockeying for the nomination. As widely reported in mainstream media last week federal Liberal Party leader **Justin Trudeau** sparked some controversy when he reportedly blocked **Christine Innes** from running. Innes is chief of staff for provincial tourism, culture and sport minister **Michael Chan** and spouse of former MP **Tony Ianno**, who Chow defeated in 2006 to represent Trinity-Spadina.

Initially, Cressy was planning to work on Chow’s campaign before he announced his intention to run for the NDP nomination.

Cressy aligns himself closely with the philosophies of Chow and the late **Jack Layton**. *NRU* asked him what he will do to differentiate himself from Layton and Chow, and Cressy said his track record should stand for itself.

“I’m active in the local community on issues like local transit and poverty—issues that matter,” he tells *NRU*. He also points to his work on social justice issues in Canada and in Africa as setting him apart.

Trinity-Spadina by the numbers

Population: 140,375

Number of immigrants: 51,040

Visible minority population: 52,250

Total population (over 15) with postsecondary certificate, degree or diploma: 92,100

Average income: 54,422

Public transit users: 28,465

Individuals speaking non-official languages at home: 65,385

Total number of occupied dwellings: 75,845

- Owned: 35,640
- Rented: 40,210

Percentage of tenant households in subsidized housing: 10.4 per cent

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey.

Note: Municipal ward boundaries and federal riding boundaries are not aligned.

I think generally, in the Trinity-Spadina riding and in Toronto [as a whole], the federal government has been sort of absent, even though there are vital federal issues in this riding.

• Glenn Wheeler

At the time Chow stepped down, there was speculation that Councillor **Mike Layton** would put his name forward, but Layton’s support is behind Cressy.

“I support him wholeheartedly. He’s a great candidate, and he’s a star in Trinity-Spadina—and across the country, really,” Layton tells *NRU*. “He’s been involved in [social] issues since he could lift up a sign, and he’s made it his life’s work to fight for the causes he believes in.”

Layton says he hasn’t heard of any confirmed challengers to Cressy’s nomination within the party.

The Trinity-Spadina riding comprises both Layton’s Ward 19 and Councillor **Adam Vaughan**’s Ward 20. *NRU* asked both councillors about the priorities for Trinity-Spadina that require federal involvement. Vaughan stresses the need for the federal government to commit to a national housing strategy and Layton agrees. He says the city needs Ottawa’s support for affordable housing, but transit is “the most critical need for the city right now.”

Layton says Cressy is the sort of strong voice needed to represent these concerns in Ottawa. [nrU](#)

INDUSTRY POSITIVE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

DPS] specific to the City of Toronto. We will work with them to ensure the system works for everyone involved.”

Toronto developer **TAS** project manager **Brandon Donnelly** told *NRU* that he sees value in implementing a development permit system.

“It’s going to improve efficiency in terms of the approvals process,” he said. “It takes years to see [developments] approved. And those costs don’t disappear, they just get transferred to the cost of the housing.”

Donnelly said that, done well, development permit by-laws can help increase the supply of housing, and can improve transparency for neighbourhoods, but he is concerned with how inflexible development permit by-laws could be when it comes to making adjustments once they are implemented.

“You lay out this master vision upfront, and you don’t see how things evolve in an incremental way.”

DiamondCorp executive vice president **Bob Blazeovski** told *NRU* that “anything to streamline the process” would be a good thing, but said he has concerns over whether a development permit by-law might inhibit creativity.

“Are all the buildings going to be this one datum line? Are we going to get too generic? Are the limitations put on development going to take away from the quality of materials and level of design excellence?”

Despite concerns, Blazeovski remains positive.

“I think there will be a dialogue, there will be due process, and some level of negotiation on what [implementing the development permit system] means.”

Plazacorp solicitor **Leslie Yager** said that the current system is “way too adversarial,” and therefore is excited about the development permit system.

“I certainly think everyone applauds planning for taking the initiative here, because [development] does take a long time. Our current system often produces a winner and loser, that’s never good,” she said. “We really find that it is helpful and good to work with the neighbourhood. And with the development permit system, that’s what you’re going to be doing.”

She shares Donnelly’s concern about the potential inflexibility of development permit by-laws, for things such as the number of parking spaces the city may require.

“In today’s world, if we go to the market and find out

[buyers] don’t want parking, we have the ability to go back to the committee of adjustment and reduce [the number of parking spaces that need to be provided]. Under the development permit by-law you wouldn’t be able to do that and that’s one of our concerns.”

Symmetry Developments vice president **Sayf Hassan** told *NRU* that he feels “quite positive” about the potential of a development permit system, saying the current process is too cumbersome for developers who want to create mid-rise buildings.

“The current system is mired in consultations with community associations who will fight any application that deviates from the existing zoning by-law. It’s good to have that front-end consultation that can be vigorous.”

Hassan said that his only concern is one shared by some community associations.

“The developer can challenge the [development permit by-law] and they cannot. That’s the only concern. We should be able to level the playing field by saying that at the front-end consultation, there can’t be a challenge to [the development permit by-law]. That’s an inequality.”

Goldman Group development vice president **Guy D’Onofrio** said that the development industry was “trying to be positive” about the development permit system.

“If the city can make it workable, [similar to] as-of-right zoning to build within certain parameters, then it could possibly work in this city.”

D’Onofrio is concerned that developers might be boxed in if meeting the criteria that a development permit by-law requires proves difficult.

“What happens if the property that you own can’t meet that criteria, and you can’t acquire any other properties? Then you’re faced with making an application to amend the [development permit] by-law as a whole. So it could still be as cumbersome as doing a rezoning application in the first place.”

While he doesn’t believe that the system can eliminate tensions between developers and the community, D’Onofrio is trying to remain positive.

“I hope it goes well; we’re all trying in the development industry to look at it from a positive point of view. We’ll see how the dialogue develops as the city puts forth its draft [official plan] to enable this legislation.”

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CITY COUNCIL ROUNDUP

Porter expansion still up in the air

At council on Tuesday, the question of whether to expand the Billy Bishop airport was discussed at great length—again. Tuesday night, the discussion drew to a close with a unanimous vote on the motion as amended, but no resolution as to whether jets should be allowed. Council directed staff to continue negotiations and stipulated that Waterfront Toronto be involved in the negotiations, the impact of expansion on bird populations in the Inner Harbour Area and Tommy Thompson Park be studied, and infrastructure costs of tripartite negotiations not fall on the city, or use funds otherwise available to the city, including the Build Canada Fund.



Council approves funding to expand BMO Field

In a 39-3 vote, council decided to expand the city-owned BMO Field at its meeting Thursday. The city will invest \$10-million into the facility, and Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment will chip in \$90-million. Currently home to Toronto FC, Maple

Leaf Sports has its eye on making the field home to the CFL's Toronto Argonauts too.

Councillors **Doug Ford** and **Mike Del Grande**, alongside Mayor **Rob Ford**, voted against the expansion.

Clearing up Community Benefits

Council adopted, with amendments, improvements to the *section 37* implementation process. The changes are meant to bring a bit more clarity and consistency to the city's existing implementation guidelines.

Potholepalooza

The winter has been long and hard, and has created more than a few unnatural speed bumps. Council approved a motion by Councillor **Mary Fragedakis** to provide a million dollars to each of the city's four districts for road repairs.

Potheadpalooza

The winter has been long and hard, and... wait I lost my train of thought. Zoning by-law amendments to allow medical marihuana production facilities in employment areas—subject to conditions—were adopted by council. **NRU**

INDUSTRY POSITIVE

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Some city councillors, such as **Peter Milczyn** and **Adam Vaughan**, have been pushing for development permit by-laws as an option to manage growth in Etobicoke and downtown Toronto. (See *NRU Toronto, March 7, 2014*.) However the approach has drawn mixed reviews from residents, some of whom see value in envisioning a fully built-out neighbourhood, while others are concerned about the loss of their rights to appeal. (See *NRU Toronto, March 14, 2014*.)

With the end of the public consultation on the proposed official plan amendment to allow the city to implement development permit by-laws, staff will be reporting back to the planning and growth committee at its April 10 meeting. **NRU**

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STANDING COMMITTEE AGENDAS

GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Government Management Committee will consider the following at its meeting on Monday, April 7 at 9:30 a.m. in committee room 1, City Hall.

SCHEDULED REPORTS

9:45 a.m.

Apportionment of property taxes—Report recommends council approve the redistribution of outstanding property taxes from one parcel of land to many newly created properties.

Cancellation, reduction or refund of property taxes—Report recommends council approve individual tax appeal applications which resulted in tax reductions for properties that underwent changes such as fire or demolition.

REPORTS

Guidelines and policies for property transfers to Build Toronto—Chief corporate officer **Josie Scioli** recommends the committee receive for information the report on the guidelines and policies related to the transfer of properties to Build Toronto.

Financial planning analysis and reporting system update—Deputy city manager and chief financial officer **Roberto Rossini** recommends the committee receive for information the report on the implementation of the financial planning corridor analysis reporting system.

Largest property tax debtors—City treasurer **Giuliana Carbone** recommends the committee receive for information the report on property tax accounts with outstanding receivables of \$500,000 or more as of December 2013.

2013 annual report on sole source purchasing activity—City treasurer Carbone recommends the committee receive for information the report on the sole source purchasing activity greater than \$3,000 in 2013.

186 Caribou Road and 3011-3019 Bathurst Street—Report recommends council authorize the acquisition of 186 Caribou

Road and the creation of an easement for nine feet of land at 3011-3019 Bathurst Street to construct and operate a 24-space surface parking facility.

Procurement of emergency services in response to 2013 ice storm—Solid waste management services general manager **Jim Harnum** recommends the committee receive for information the report on the emergency non-competitive procurement of various services related to the emergency clean-up of the 2013 ice storm.

PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

The Public Works and Infrastructure Committee will consider the following at its meeting on Wednesday, April 9 at 9:30 a.m. in committee room 1, City Hall.

REPORTS

Street guidelines—Report recommends council direct transportation services general manager **Stephen Buckley** and chief planner **Jennifer Keesmaat** to develop guidelines for “complete streets,” which are streets designed and operated to enable safe access and functionality for all users.

Waste collection—Solid waste management services general manager Harnum recommends the committee receive for information the report on the financial and operational impacts for waste collection for charities, institutions and religious organizations.

Strategy to reduce litter—Solid waste management services general manager Harnum recommends the committee receive for information the report on strategies to reduce litter city-wide.

Gardiner expressway and Don Valley Parkway closure—Report recommends council approve the closure of the Gardiner Expressway from the Humber River to the Don Valley Parkway and also the closure of the Don Valley Parkway from the Gardiner to York Mills Road for the “Ride for Heart” events in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

STANDING COMMITTEE AGENDAS

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External research collaborations for transportation services—

Report recommends council authorize transportation services general manager Buckley to execute agreements regarding the city's participation and funding for research and projects on road and sidewalk improvements.

Eglinton environmental assessment—

Report recommends council authorize transportation services general manager Buckley to file a report for an Eglinton Avenue class environmental assessment study and advise **Metrolinx** to recommend plans for any reconstruction on Eglinton Avenue for the crosstown LRT project.

Levels of service for winter maintenance of bikeways—

Report recommends council confirm the proposed levels of service for 2015/2016 winter season cycling routes and signage.

Update on implementation of wastewater systems—

Toronto water general manager **Lou Di Gironimo** recommends council receive for information the report on the initiatives taken to implement the new federal wastewater systems effluent regulations which impact the city's wastewater treatment plants and sewers.

By-laws for paying for parking by mobile device—

Report recommends council amend various by-laws to enable the implementation of payments by cell phone or other devices for on-street parking machines and off-street parking lots.

Environmental assessment of Bayview Avenue extension reconfiguration—

Report recommends council direct transportation services general manager Buckley to undertake an environmental assessment to identify potential improvements to the Bayview Avenue extension that address traffic concerns.

Improving safety for cyclists—

Councillor **Mike Layton** recommends the committee request transportation general manager Buckley to report on the progress of developing policies that protect cyclists in construction areas.

PLANNING AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Planning and Growth Management Committee will consider the following at its meeting on Thursday, April 10 at 9:30 a.m. in committee room 1, City Hall.

SCHEDULED REPORTS

10:00 a.m.

Zoning by-law amendments for group homes—

Report recommends council amend zoning by-laws to remove the policies regarding separation distance between group homes and the minimum number of occupants.

REPORTS

Electronic and illuminated sign study—

Report recommends council amend the sign by-law to permit the display of electronic and illuminated signs.

Draft transportation policies reviews—

Report recommends the committee use the draft official plan transportation policies for public consultations as part of the review process of the "Feeling Congested?" initiative.

Eglinton connects planning study—

Final directions report recommends council approve the study recommendations of the Eglinton Connects Plan that respond to the future Eglinton LRT.

840 and 860 Dupont Street—

Preliminary report recommends staff be directed to review the application for 840 and 860 Dupont Street with respect to the Dupont Street regeneration area study.

8 Oak Street—

Preliminary report recommends staff schedule a community consultation meeting with the ward councillor.

2150 Lake Shore Boulevard West and 23 Park Lawn Road—

Preliminary report recommends staff schedule a community consultation meeting with the ward councillor.

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STANDING COMMITTEE AGENDAS

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6 Lloyd Avenue—Preliminary report recommends staff schedule a community consultation meeting with the ward councillor.

2013 Toronto Employment Survey—Chief planner and executive director Keesmaat recommends the committee receive for information the report on the 2013 Toronto Employment Survey.

Implementing a development permit system—Report recommends a public consultation meeting be held June 9 concerning the proposed official plan amendment to allow the implementation of a development permit system.

Request to eliminate the Gardiner Gateway special sign district—

Letter from councillors Layton and **Gord Perks** recommends the committee request the chief building official and executive director **Ann Borooah** report on the amendments to the *Municipal Code* to eliminate the Gardiner Gateway special sign district.

West Toronto/Georgetown rail corridor— Letter from Councillor Layton recommends the committee request chief planner and executive director Keesmaat, in consultation with transportation services, parks, forestry and recreation, economic development and culture, the TTC, and Metrolinx/GO Transit, coordinate planning initiatives to optimize the potential along the West Toronto/Georgetown rail corridor to improve transit, active transportation and green space. **nru**

TORONTO BRIEFS

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Quarmby led the design of its governance and organization 15 years ago. Since it came into existence, there has been a major shift in the ways people use public transit in Greater London. There has been a 70 per cent increase in bus use, 40 per cent increase in commuter rail travel, and 35 per cent increase in underground travel. At the same time there has been a 10 per cent decline in car use.

April 9 Quarmby will discuss how he brought those changes to fruition at a Toronto Region Board of Trade breakfast from 7:30 to 9 a.m. Register [online](#).

Reimagining the city's laneways

From Thursday through Sunday this week, **Spur 2014** is taking place in the city. The festival bills itself as one of “politics, art and ideas,” and this year one of the highlights will be a panel examining the architectural and community possibilities of Toronto’s laneways. The panel includes Fortune editor **Leigh Gallagher**, who wrote *The End of the Suburbs*, University of Toronto John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture professor **Brigitte Shim**, and urbanist **Shawn Micallef**. Panelists will imagine what the city will look like in seven years, with a pop-up gallery by illustrator **Michael Cho**.

Register [online](#).

Lessons in creative place-making Artscape is holding a [webinar series](#) called “Innovators in Creative Placemaking.” The second in the series features

a discussion with **Project for Public Spaces** vice-president **Cynthia Nikitin**. She speaks about how her organization approaches placemaking. The webinar is now available [online](#). **nru**

Economic Drivers Versus The Cities We Want



Pamela Blais
Author, and Principal, Metropole Consultants Ltd.

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TORONTO OMB NEWS

Increased height for Highland Creek village

In a decision issued March 24, board member **Richard Makuch** allowed an appeal by **1051023 Ontario Limited** of the City of Toronto's approval of an official plan amendment and zoning by-law which implemented recommendations for the Highland Creek Village Area study. 1051023 appealed the amendments because it wanted increased height and density for properties located at 1610, 1614, 1620, 1622 and 1650 Military Trail. The lands are located between Old Kingston Road, Highway 2A and Military Trail.

Planner **Martin Rendl (Martin Rendl Associates)** provided evidence on behalf of 1051023 and planner **Franco Romano (Franco Romano and Associates)** provided evidence on behalf of the city. Both planners agreed that the issue was to determine whether five-storey buildings should be allowed on the properties at 1614, 1620 and 1622 Military Trail as the properties at 1610 and 1650 were agreed to be properly designated and zoned. The city stated that three storeys were appropriate while 1051023 sought permission for five storeys.

Rendl told the board the proposed height was consistent with provincial plans and that it would be a better use of the properties. He told the board that council had no rationale for the reduced height decision.

Romano told the board that the area should remain at three storeys to provide a better transition between the main street and south village as described in the Highland Creek urban design guidelines and also to maintain the character of the neighbourhood. His opinion went against the city planning department's recommendation but was consistent with council's decision.

The board allowed the appeal but withheld its final order until it receives amended documents.

Solicitors involved in the case were **John Alati** and **Meaghan McDermid (Davies Howe)** representing 1051023 Ontario Limited and city solicitor **Gary McKay** representing the City of Toronto. (See OMB Case No. PL130037.)

Variances for Lytton Park house

In a decision issued March 24, board member **Mary Anne Sills** allowed an appeal by **Allan** and **Susan Seidenfeld** of the City of Toronto committee of adjustment's failure to approve a minor variance application. Seidenfeld sought permission to demolish an existing home and construct a three-storey

dwelling with a garage. The variances include a decrease in lot frontage and side yard setbacks and increases in building length, lot coverage, building height, number of storeys, first floor height and porch projection and permission for a below-grade garage. The property is located at 7 Forest Wood in the Lytton Park neighbourhood.

Neighbour **Anatoli Plotkine** opposed the proposed house. He thought it was too close to the property line and had concerns with the potential loss of trees and privacy and damage to the foundation of his house.

Planner **Franco Romano (Franco Romano and Associates)** provided uncontested expert planning evidence in support of the variances. He told the board that below-grade garages were common in the area and the proposed development represents the changes taking place in the neighbourhood. He added that the building's size was higher because the proposed terraces were a significant portion of the calculation.

The board accepted Romano's evidence. It allowed the appeal and authorized the variances with conditions including obtaining a ravine permit to protect the trees on the property.

Solicitor involved in the case was **Adam Brown (Sherman, Brown)** representing Allan and Susan Seidenfeld. (See OMB Case No. PL131000.)

Variances allowed for new house

In a decision issued March 25, board member **John Atcheson** allowed an appeal by **Lesley** and **Frederick Thouret** of the City of Toronto committee of adjustment's failure to authorize a minor variance application. Thouret sought permission to demolish an existing dwelling and construct a two-storey detached dwelling with a garage. The requested variances include increases to the gross floor area, side yard setbacks and building height. The property is located at 175 Stibbard Avenue just south of the Lawrence Park neighbourhood.

The board was informed that Thouret had requested amendments to the variance application to address concerns raised by neighbours. The changes include reductions to all of the proposed variances.

Planner **Janice Robinson (Goldberg Group)** provided evidence in support of the revised variances. She told the board that many other houses in the area have been reconstructed and vary in size and character. She added that the proposed house was part of the "reinvestment

TORONTO OMB NEWS

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[that] characterized the nature of new development occurring along this street within the neighbourhood.”

Neighbours **Leonard Kubas** and **John Bonner** opposed the variances. Kubas had concerns with the proposal impacting trees located near the property and both said that the proposed house was too large for the neighbourhood and would impact views from their decks.

The board was satisfied that the variances were minor and allowed the appeal. It authorized the variances with conditions including satisfying tree protection by-laws and constructing the house in accordance with site plans prepared by **Richard Wengle Architects Inc.** dated February 27.

Solicitors involved in the case were **John Alati (Davies Howe)** representing Lesley and Frederick Thouret and city solicitor **Mark Crawford** representing the City of Toronto. (See OMB Case No. PL131063.)

Second storey denied

In a decision issued March 25, board member **Reid Rossi** dismissed an appeal by **Nicholas Whistler** of the City of Toronto committee of adjustment’s failure to approve minor variances. Whistler sought permission to construct a second-storey addition on top of an existing single-storey house. The variances include an increase to floor space index and a decrease to yard setbacks. The property is located at 59 Barton Avenue near the intersection of Bloor Street West and Bathurst Street.

Planner **Christina Tang (Christou Group)** provided evidence on behalf of Whistler. She told the board that the variances maintain the general intent and purpose of the official plan and zoning by-law and reinforces the existing

character of the neighbourhood.

City planner **Kevin Friedrich** provided evidence on behalf of the city and planner **Paul Johnston (Litavski Planning Consultants)** provided evidence on behalf of neighbours **Abdalla** and **Helena Ruken** who opposed the variances. The city had previously refused an application for a second-floor addition to the same property because of difficulties maintaining the intent of the zoning by-law. The neighbours had concerns with the building’s size and how it would create shadows.

The board agreed with Tang but found the variances were not minor because of the size of the second floor. It dismissed the appeal and did not authorize the variances.

Solicitors involved in the case were city solicitor **Ellen Penner** representing the City of Toronto and **Patrick Harrington (Aird and Berlis LLP)** representing Abdalla and Helena Ruken. (See OMB Case No. PL131108.) 



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TORONTO PEOPLE

Mark Sterling is the new principal of the recently established firm **Acronym Urban Design and Planning**. Prior to January 31st, Mark was a partner with Sweeny Sterling Finlayson &Co Architects

Inc. That firm is now called Sweeny &Co Architects Inc.

Joseph Cressy has confirmed he will stand for nomination to be the New Democratic Party candidate in the upcoming

Trinity-Spadina by-election.

Liberal MP **Jim Karygiannis** has announced his resignation as a federal member of parliament and his intent to run for city

council as the councillor in Ward 39. Karygiannis has represented the Scarborough-Agincourt federal riding since 1988.

Urban Strategies has announced five new

promotions within the firm: **Mary Castel** and **Leigh McGrath** are now senior associates and **Yang Huang, Christine Fang-Denissov** and **Daniel Comerford** are associates.