



June 28, 2109

Planning and Housing Committee
10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Sent by email: phc@toronto.ca

Dear Planning and Housing Committee Members;

**Subject: PH7.1: Changing Lanes: The City of Toronto's Review of Laneway Suites-
City-wide Expansion of City-Initiated Official Plan Amendment and Zoning
Amendment - Final Report**

The ABC Residents Association is a volunteer organization committed to enhancing the quality of life in our neighbourhood through active participation in municipal issues. Originally established in 1957, we serve the residents, including condo and apartment residents, living in Toronto's Yorkville / North Midtown community between Yonge Street west to Avenue Road and Bloor Street north to the CPR tracks.

We are writing specifically with regard to the section of the Staff Report with respect to SASP 211. Our objective is:

1. To share with you a more accurate characterization of the situation and our perspective
2. To gain your support to honor the City Council's earlier specific direction with respect to the SASP 211 review and laneway suites

WHAT WERE OUR CONCERNS IN GENERAL AROUND LANEWAY SUITES?

Some of you are aware of ABCRA's submissions. We were not opposed to laneway housing in principle, but had practical and policy concerns. These included the following:

- Why not City-wide and other forms of secondary housing as other jurisdictions had?
- SASP 211 and neighbourhood character
- Fire and emergency
- As of Right/ Committee of Adjustment/ Neighbour Relations

- Modest Homes/ Affordability/ Accessibility
- Height & Overlook
- Soft landscaping/ Encroachments & Awnings/ Tree Protection
- Lane size/ Rear set back/ Traffic
- Street Parking Permit & Front Yard Parking Pad Pressure
- Severance
- Implementation: Guidelines & Monitoring

Some concerns were addressed, and some areas of concern were incorporated into the monitoring and review process to see what the actual experience was.

WHAT WERE OUR CONCERNS SPECIFIC TO SASP 211 AND OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS?

The Neighbour sections of the Official Plan set a baseline for what is expected throughout Toronto. Secondary Plans and Site and Area Specific Policies (SASP) set out more refined and detailed expectations and criteria that are specific and unique to an area. SASP 211 goes beyond looking at just building structure and placement on lot and includes unique features and aesthetic aspects as highlighted below:

a) Neighbourhoods

Ramsden Park, Yorkville Triangle & Asquith-Collier

New development in the Ramsden Park, Yorkville Triangle and Asquith-Collier Neighbourhoods will respect and reinforce the stability and the established low-rise character of these areas containing tree-lined streets and houses of two and three storey height, consistently setback from the street line. All new development will be ***contextually similar and appropriate to the individual settings, patterns of development, unique features, architectural and landscape character, and heritage significance*** within these areas.

What may be wonderful in one area may not be an appropriate fit with the character of another. Any laneway suites built in SASP 211 should be consistent with character of the area. To illustrate the point, a picture of a street in the SASP 211 area and a picture of a laneway suite recently built in Toronto is shown in Attachment 1.

WHAT DID COUNCIL APPROVE REGARDING SASP 211?

As part of TO Core approval May 2018, City Council adopted the following regarding SASP 211:

“25. City Council direct the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning to report to the Toronto and East York Community Council in the second quarter 2019 with recommendations on updates to Site and Area Specific Policy 211 and City Council direct staff to continue to use the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Planning Framework and Implementation Strategy to inform the evaluation of development applications until such time that the updated Site and Area Specific Policy 211 is approved by City Council.”

As part of Changing Lanes approval June 2018, City Council adopted the following regarding SASP 211:

“16. City Council direct the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, to consider any necessary policies and/or by-law standards to permit and regulate Laneway Suites as part of the review of Site and Area Specific Policy 211.”

EXPECTATIONS ABOUT WHAT WOULD BE INVOLVED IN AN SASP REVIEW

- It would involve more than planning or legal internal reviews.
- Planning or legal reviews would be made available for information and comment.
- Community Planning would have a work plan and schedule for: a policy review, assessment of impact of new policy directions, public engagement, development of a draft Site and Area Specific Policy and then a final report.
- Public engagement would occur through a number of different types of consultations
- The Final Report would go to Council for approval.

RECOGNITION OF UNIQUE NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER

Sample SASPs that speak to character – look and feel:

- **198. Portions of the Area Bounded by Bloor Street West, Avenue Road, Davenport Road and Spadina Road**
a) Residential, institutional and commercial uses are permitted in house-form buildings in the Huron-Madison Area, the St. George Area and the Prince Arthur Area. Development in these areas will conserve the valued heritage buildings, ***reinforce the architectural unity that characterizes each area, and maintain the character of the heritage landscapes.*** b) In the Old Village of Yorkville Area the ***heritage buildings and landscapes will be conserved and any development or redevelopment will be consistent with the special architectural and streetscape characteristics***
- **199. Side of Avenue Road Between Pears Avenue and Dupont Street and 2-26 and 1-51 Baldwin Street and 164-170 McCaul Street**
Development will take the form of street-related retail and service uses, and residential uses, in house-form buildings. ***Any changes, additions or new construction will respect the architectural and design character of existing buildings*** and be compatible with the scale of adjacent neighbourhoods.
- **200. 283 and 285 Spadina Avenue, and 393-479, and 396-484 Dundas Street West**
Development will be ***compatible in form and character including decorative elements***, with the three and four-storey buildings generally built to the street line often with closely spaced split level entrances to the sidewalk.
- **495. South of Wellington Street West, West of Spadina Avenue, North of Front Street West and East of Draper Street**

URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES – iv. The proposed Wellington Street buildings will be designed so as to create ***a variety in the architecture of these buildings to reflect the varied massing, design and materials found in the buildings on the north side of the street.***

Other Jurisdictions:

- Oakville has been involved in a Residential Character Study to better understand neighbourhoods.
- The Oakville study has identified 5 best practice examples elsewhere: Burlington, Mississauga, Ottawa, West Vancouver, and Hobson's Bay, Victoria, Australia.

We request the 2018 City Council direction that Laneway Suites be looked at in the context of the SASP 211 review, which we are awaiting, be honoured. Nothing has changed since the date of the City Council's direction that would warrant a change in that direction.

Thank you for your consideration,

John Caliendo & Ian Carmichael
Co-Presidents, ABC Residents Association

Attachment 1

Cc: Councillor Michael Layton
Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam
Gregg Lintern, Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division

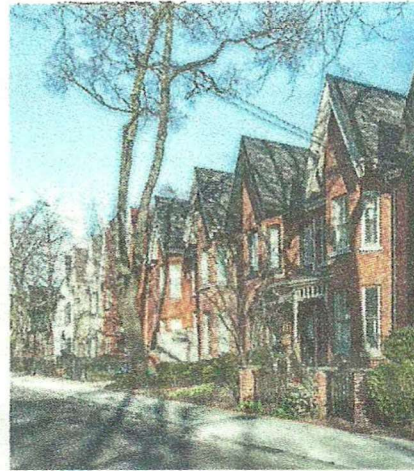
Toronto's 20 Best Streets TO CALL HOME



SUMMERHILL

Gables and bays at their best

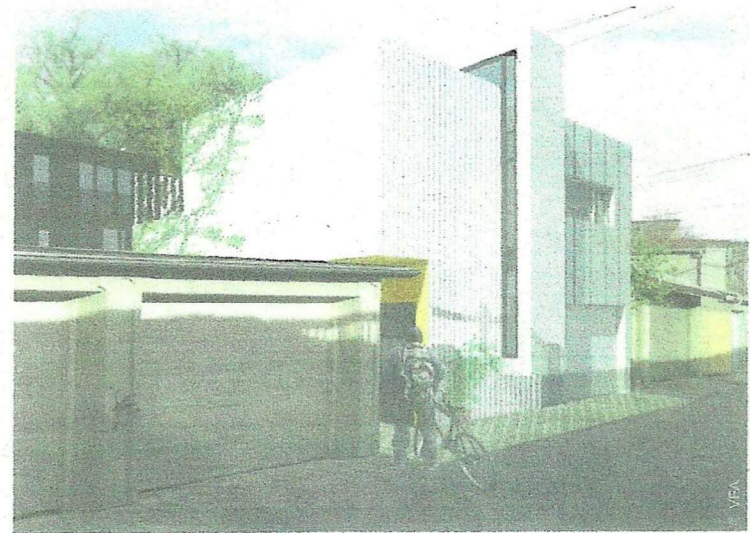
Ever heard of a bay-and-gable home? This nugget of information is something any proud Torontonians should possess. Bay-and-gable is a distinct style of residential architecture that is unique to our fair city. It's easy to spot these homes, especially in the older parts of town. The homes are tall and narrow, with gothic vibes, and feature prominent bay windows. For the architecture or history buff, a perfect place to find a bay-and-gable home is on Summerhill's MACPHERSON AVENUE. The homes were commonly made with red brick, and many of them remain that way today. Macpherson does have more to offer than just architecture though. Apart from the fact that it's merely a hop, skip and a jump from



Macpherson

two subway stations and downtown also home to some great retail. For sweet tooth, there is My Favourite Ice Cream Shop, at 3 Macpherson Ave. For the health nut, there is Greenhouse Co., at 5 Macpherson Ave. And for the fashion fan, there is the Narwhal and Co., at 1130 Yonge St., respectively.

T.O.'S LANEWAY HOME GOLD RUSH



Clockwise from top: a rendering of Fung's laneway suite; two other laneway designs

Laneway homes are trending in Toronto as work has begun on the city's first laneway abode under its new bylaw that clears the way for secondary suites on hundreds of kilometres of laneways. Vanessa Fung is the architect behind the first suite. Although she described the lead up as a "hair-pulling" process, it is happening. And to help navigate the new rules, Fung even set up a side business called Ukkei, for those interested in creating their own new laneway suites. Some industry insiders think the addition of laneway suites could increase the value of laneway homes drastically.