

Bloor West Village Residents Association

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November 23, 2021

To: the Chair and members of the Planning and Housing Committee
From: Bloor West Village Residents Association

Attention: Nancy Martins, Secretariat Contact

Re: PH29.2 – Agenda Item Nov. 25 Changing Lanes: The City of Toronto’s Review of Laneway Suites –Zoning By-law Amendments – Final Report

Dear Madam Chair and members of the committee:

By way of introduction, the Bloor West Village Residents Association represents several thousand households in part of Ward 4 extending from Bloor Street to Annette Street, and from Gothic Avenue to the Humber River. We are writing to express our agreement with of all of the concerns raised by CORRA in its letter to the Committee dated November 18, 2021.

First of all, to be clear, Our Board fully supports the need to expand residential opportunities in the so-called "missing middle" of our city, and we applaud Council and staff for their efforts in this regard. However, this should be done responsibly, taking into account established neighbourhood character, the larger regulatory framework including the OP policies and the Tree Protection By-law, as well as the emerging impacts of climate change on storm water management. Need we look any further than the disaster in the lower BC mainland, and more recently St. John New Brunswick, to understand the consequences of not being ready for similar major storm events in Toronto?

More to the point, and without reiterating the detailed objections in CORRA'S letter, our main concerns are summarized as follows:

- 1) The potential for 180 sq. m. of finished living space contained within two floors above grade and one below grade, **which could result in a building larger than the existing principal dwelling**, clearly doesn't fit any reasonable definition of a "suite" or "ancillary building", and is already much too big, based on the original by-law. We therefore object to any increase above the maximum height of 6 m. as already prescribed in the original by-law.
- 2) There are no references in either the original by-law or the proposed amendments, as to how the substantial additional storm water run-off resulting from the imposition of a large laneway suite and associated hardscaping will be accommodated on-site or in the City's storm

sewer system. We therefore object in the strongest possible terms to any increase in hard surfaces that are currently permitted.

3) There are also no references to how the provisions in City's OP and Private Tree By-law will be applied to protect the City's invaluable tree canopy. This is of particular concern in our area where the pre-development old-growth Red Oak forest comprises a major part of our canopy. We therefore request that the amended by-law incorporate the necessary protections to ensure that healthy mature native trees are NOT destroyed or harmed to enable the construction of a Laneway Suite.

In closing, we wish to thank the committee for the opportunity to provide feedback on this important City planning initiative, and are looking forward to its thoughtful consideration of our concerns and those of other residents associations.

Yours truly,

Steve Dewdney,
Vice-chair, Bloor West Village Residents Association: