

Feb 24, 2023

Planning and Housing Committee,
Nancy Martins
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Via email: phc@toronto.ca

February 24, 2023

Dear Members of the Planning and Housing Committee

Re: Item PB2.6 City Planning Division - Study Work Program Update

The Annex Residents' Association (ARA) notes that on page 26 of the workplan that the West Annex Phase Two Study/Plan is on HOLD. It has been on hold since Council directed its inclusion in 2015. While the ARA is cognisant of the current pressures on City Heritage Planning Staff, we would like to recommend a modest start to the HCD study/plan in 2023 covering the three blocks of Spadina Road between Bloor Street West and Dupont Street.

In 2020, the ARA, through a letter of understanding with the City, was authorized to use section 37 funds from the 2005 One Bedford development settlement, which was originally approved for a community led HCD study/plan. As a change in City process in 2012 required such plans to be City rather than community led, the funds were authorized for the hiring of a team of cultural heritage experts to produce an historical context statement and a survey of more than 1000 properties. Calls for proposals led to the engagement of ASI Heritage. ASI, with help from the ARA and the Annex community, completed the work in December 2022 after receiving final approval from Heritage Planning Staff who ensured the products met City standards.

The work cost more than \$100,000, and as requested by the City provides the research foundation for a full study. This is a sizeable percentage of the section 37 money and we do not want the data to become dated. Clearly the expectation was that the City would start the formal study of the West Annex with so much work completed in a timely fashion, and we believe the City had the same intention in 2020.

The reason we have suggested a modest start with Spadina Road is that the study shows the outstanding blend of architectural and social history, which would have been lost had the Spadina Expressway been approved. Further study is recommended to understand the impact of transportation on the development of the street. Here are some examples of what is found on Spadina Road:

- The houses that were expropriated by the Province and the City for the expressway, in many cases, have been converted to social housing, social service agencies, and City office space. These include Interval House, the first women's shelter in Canada; the Children's Aid Foundation; Community Living Toronto, and Sheena's Place,
- Private institutions such as the Montessori School, and Alliance Française also located in heritage houses,
- The Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, the first Indigenous community organization in the City,
- 41-45 Spadina Road, constructed in 1905, the first purpose-built apartment house in the Annex and one of the first in the City of Toronto, designed by A. R. Dennison. Over the decades it housed Sir Henry and Lady Pellatt, Lionel and Hart Massey, the Gooderhams, and celebrated Canadian artists such as Maureen Forrester,
- Several mid-century modern midrise apartment buildings, including 100 Spadina Road and 35 Walmer Road (corner of Spadina and Lowther) both designed by architect Uno Prii, and infill apartments fronting Spadina Road;

- The TTC entrance to the University Spadina line 1, originally a private home.

The ASI study gathered the following data:

- Ten properties having Part IV designations,
- Nine listed properties that will lose their heritage listings on January 1, 2025, because of the change in the Ontario Heritage Act.
- Nine listed and unlisted properties dating from before 1903 that require designation. Heritage properties—houses and small apartment buildings—owned by the Province, are boarded up and should be restored as housing stock.

By the end of this decade, modern high-rise towers will stand at the northwest and northeast corners of Spadina and Bloor providing a range of apartment and house styles that span more than 125 years.

We ask that the Planning and Housing Committee requests City Planning to modify their work plan to activate the West Annex Heritage Conservation District Phase Two study/plan with a commitment to research the three blocks of Spadina Road between Bloor Street West and Dupont Street in 2023 with the intention of designating the listed buildings, and determining the heritage value of properties neither listed or designated as meriting either Part IV or Part V designation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Elizabeth Sisam and Henry Wiercinski
Co-Chairs Planning + Development Committee, Annex Residents' Association

Cc: Councillor Dianne Saxe, Ward 11