

## HARBORD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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To: Members, Toronto Preservation Board  
Re: PB 15.6, 191-199 College Street.

March 17, 2024.

Harbord Village Residents' Association applauds the way this file has been handled. From building identification in 2017, to listing in 2018, to designation in 2023 when a development on the site arose. The same happened with 281-89 College. Two designations in six years, 10 addresses. That process, as we all know, will not be available to us in future.

The Harbord Village catchment is bounded by Bloor, Bathurst, College and Spadina. Like many Downtown neighbourhoods, it is entirely captured in an MTSA area. With sites on both College and Bloor east of Spadina being built out, development is moving west. This agenda item reminds us there is a lot to lose.

The College Street study listings cover 9 buildings including 17 addresses west of Spadina. On five previous occasions since 1975, the City has thrown a blanket of protection on the Victorian business district between Spadina and Bathurst. Now there is a total of 22 listed buildings comprising 41 addresses under threat of losing that safeguard. (see link below). Harbord Village has a total of 50 buildings, comprised of 83 addresses: think Brunswick House, College itself, Spadina to Bathurst, 666 Spadina (Uno Prii). And Knox Church already has a development proposal.

We have only nine months to act.

To see what's there and develop a research strategy, a team from HVRA has begun work assembling the information needed to designate this virtually intact Victorian business strip, along with the other listings in Harbord Village. Yesterday, ahead of trees leafing out and blocking views, we completed photographs on all listed buildings in our neighbourhood. We need to know what to do next.

We welcome the decision by staff to bring in the public. Given the challenge facing us, we seek ways to engage with Staff to design an efficient, accurate process for

communities to assist the City in its efforts to protect heritage. We append a list of preliminary questions.

We stand ready to help.

With thanks

Sue Dexter

Harbord Village Residents' Association

1. <https://harbordvillage.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/HPB-32.3-HVRA-letter-college-st.pdf>
2. Preliminary questions of staff:
  1. To avoid duplication, what work has been done to date on individual listings? Is there additional information in HPS files on historic listings?
  2. Is there a template? When might we expect to see it? Could we use 291-99 as a template for current designations?
  3. If there is the anticipated level of public uptake, are there provisions for adding extra staff at the Archives, to prevent a possible roadblock accessing assessment rolls—what gaps might trained volunteers fill?
  4. To avoid wasting time gathering information that is not pertinent or needed, we would welcome specific direction on what archival or Might's directory or other sources materials would be essential.
  5. Have staff considered implementing a pilot programme to establish the most efficient collection and delivery system of information leading to designation? A quick test run of the model? If so, would they consider working with groups who are already in the field? Has staff considered training sessions for volunteers.
  6. What are the specific metrics that will be utilized to evaluate proposals for designation (protection)?
  7. Have these metrics been tested against the type and scope of data that are reasonably available? Theoretical or academic benchmarks that are unachievable would serve little purpose other than to eliminate many properties that would otherwise gain protection if an array of secondary or proxy data was in play.
  8. Is there a potential role for recent graduates or upper level students at educational institutions?
  9. Certainty should be built in wherever possible. Engaging the public in research efforts only to turn down eventual designation would create

disappointment. Is there a City list of critical buildings? Could there be a community list for buildings residents would like considered?

Full court community engagement is an opportunity to renew a City-wide commitment to heritage. A good process is critically important.