

Update on the City's plans for our community¹

An estimated 200 local residents attended the May 23, 2016 public meeting.

The City's position

Basement Flooding: The City was unable to provide the addresses where the reported flooding occurred or document whether the cause of the floods had been from deteriorating sewers, poor construction techniques, grading issues from new builds, or aging house infrastructure.

Sidewalks: The City's plan still envisions one sidewalk for each of St. Leonard's, Dawlish, Glenallen and Pinedale as proposed at last year's May 2015 public meetings. However, the City is now recommending a 7.2 meter road with two sidewalks on Mildenhall.

Trees and Tree Canopy: Information provided by City staff was essentially unchanged from that provided in May 2015. City staff now classifies 106 trees as 'to be removed' but has reclassified 247 trees as ***"To be preserved, if possible"***. The overall number of trees impacted has actually increased from 349 to 353. City staff did not provide any information on the percentage of tree canopy that will be destroyed as a result of the tree removal.

"Protect Our Tree Canopy" Signs and Proposed Fines: Prior to the public meeting the City notified the LPRA that it faced fines of \$475 per sign (approximately \$215,000) if the "Protect Our Tree Canopy" signs were not removed. To our knowledge no other signs in our area were targeted with this threat. At the public meeting we were initially told the signs must be removed within 48 hours but we were fortunate to have Mayor Tory's intervention and the City's demand was retracted.

Lawrence Park Ratepayers Association (LPRA) position and comments

The LPRA Board has informed the City that it has adopted the following positions:

1. We support any work necessary to correct basement flooding issues;
2. We support a 7.2-meter road with one sidewalk on Mildenhall; and
3. We believe a comprehensive survey of residents must to be undertaken before any further response is made to the City's proposals.

Our Next Steps

Basement Flooding: Having met with the City's Engineering staff, the LPRA's Infrastructure and Drainage Committee understands some flooding events were caused by house specific issues (cracked foundations etc.) not sewer and other City responsibilities. We want the City to gather comprehensive information on the flooding events so that an accurate determination of the causes is made allowing for an appropriate plan for their solution.

¹ The City's complete presentation is available at www.toronto.ca/lawrencepark.

Sidewalks: Mildenhall has been designated as a collector road by the City. However, by the City's own admission, traffic volume on Mildenhall is on the low end of the range for such a designation. The LPRA believes that with a narrower road and proper traffic calming measures, traffic volume and speed on Mildenhall could be further reduced to levels more in keeping with a local road designation. As such, the LPRA believes there are common sense measures available to address pedestrian safety, parking, and other traffic related issues on Mildenhall that are not being addressed by the City. We believe our survey will demonstrate widespread support for a 7.2-meter road with one sidewalk on Mildenhall.

Trees and Tree Canopy: In 2013 Toronto City Council approved goals to protect Toronto's existing tree canopy and to increase tree canopy coverage from the current 28% to 40% across the City by 2050-2060.² We have asked the City to provide us with its environmental assessment of the impact to the local tree canopy of the City's proposed tree removals. We have also asked for the City's environmental assessment of the impact of additional greenhouse gasses that will be released after up to 353 trees are removed. To date these reports have not been provided and it appears that the City's Urban Forestry Department has not been involved in this project to date.

Arborist: We have retained the services of a professional arborist to provide an unbiased report documenting the impact of the City's proposals on the Lawrence Park tree canopy, its biodiversity, and whether the plans meet the City's stated environmental goals.

Door-to-Door Survey of Affected Residents: The LPRA invited the City to participate in a comprehensive door-to-door survey of residents. Initially, the City declined. Following the public meeting, in recognition that a professional firm will undertake the survey, the City has expressed a desire to participate in order to ensure the questions posed provide for adequate response. Given the dramatic changes the destruction of the tree canopy will bring to the rural ambiance of our neighbourhood we believe it is essential to be able to accurately portray the position of residents on road expansion, road resurfacing, the addition and location of proposed sidewalks. We encourage everyone to participate to ensure that the results accurately represent the views of Lawrence Park residents.

“Protect Our Tree Canopy “Signs: At this time, we believe the signs have served their purpose in putting the City on notice that Lawrence Park residents believe our concerns have not been heard. In the interests of restoring the uncluttered beauty of our neighbourhood we will be removing the signs (and storing them in case they are needed in the future!).

We ask for your monetary support (\$100+) due to the cost of the arborist report and the door-to-door survey, both of which are essential to sustain our collective opinion that resident input is crucial to assisting the City determine its final recommendations. If you are not already a member of the LPRA, please consider joining.³ Contact Rick Hutcheon at rhutcheon@sympatico.ca for more information.

² The City's 2015 Toronto Environmental Progress Report can be viewed at: https://www1.toronto.ca/City%20of%20Toronto/Environment%20and%20Energy/Action%20Plans,%20Policies%20&%20Research/PDFs/City_of_Toronto_EPR_2015_FINAL_ACC.pdf

³ Membership form is available online at: <http://lpra.ca/membership/>