



SAHRA's Comments on the Review of the Avenue Road Avenue Study Recommendations May, 2017

In Dec, 2014, the South Armour Heights Residents' Association (SAHRA), asked for a status report and action plan for the outstanding Recommendations from the Avenue Road Avenue Study which was published in 2009. 21 recommendations were made in 2009 but only 7 had been implemented...all of which related to development on Upper Avenue.

At SAHRA's Annual General Meeting in April, 2015, the Councillor advised she would put forward a Motion at the May, 2015 meeting for the Planning Department to do a complete review and report back on their findings by Quarter 4 of 2015. A Public Meeting was held on Nov 12, 2015 at which time Planning presented a review of the Avenue Road Avenue Study Recommendations implementation status and Zoning By-law 107-2010 amendment. SAHRA's analysis of that report was as follows:

	Recomm Count
Implemented Recommendations (Official Plan/Zoning By-law changes) to allow development	6
Implemented Harmonized Sign By-law	1
# Implemented	7
# Will not happen (#11, 13, 14 and 20 – parks/greening/traffic related)	4
Will not likely happen (#10, 12 and 19 – parks/greening/parking related)	3
Possibly...but now as part of 250 Lawrence West development negotiations (#7, 8 and 9 – Douglas Greenbelt Ravine)	3
Something may be done...if monies found #15 Street furniture #16 Public art at 'gateway' locations #17 Art on utility boxes #18 More Upper Avenue street signs	4
# Questionable as to whether will be done	10

As SAHRA was not satisfied with the Report, in March, 2016 we asked that a serious Review be done defining actions items, sources of funding and an implementation plan. The results of that Review were presented at the May 2, 2017 meeting of the North York Community Council.

A positive result of the Review is that the various City departments (Transportation Services, Public Realm, Parks, Recreation & Forestry) completed some greening, park and streetscaping tasks that should have been on-going from 2009. Some work has been done on the trees lining Avenue Road, some improvements have been made in Brookdale Park, and additional street furniture has been added (TTC shelters, benches and bicycle rings).

SAHRA found the 'Recommendations' to be 'underwhelming' – they deal with some 'easy' actions – meaning that funding exists, not expensive items, standard improvements the City should make for an Avenue, can be done in the near future. They deal with tree canopy issues and Brookdale Park improvements. It also includes starting to take action on the elimination of boulevard parking – this will be a difficult issue that will take some time – many of the store owners and tenants will be very upset if their boulevard parking is revoked. SAHRA is doubtful that anything significant is going to change on the 20 locations that provide over 69 boulevard parking spaces.

The Report takes the opportunity to **Close or Reject** seven (7) of the original Recommendations. The three (3) Douglas Greenbelt Ravine recommendations will now become part of the 250 Lawrence Avenue West development negotiations. Four (4) additional Recommendations have been Rejected by the City, with explanations.

Recommendation #10 to convert the Roe Avenue Bus Loop into a parkette is actively being pursued by the Old Orchard Grove Residents Association along with adjacent neighbours. If TTC will in fact declare the loop as surplus, there is a possibility that this area could be converted into a parkette rather than being used to expand the TPA parking lot.

In SAHRA's opinion, the four remaining Recommendations dealing with greening, public art and parking issues will likely not happen. No money exists to support these projects.

The summary now appears as follows with 9 recommendations implemented out of 21

	Recomm Count
Implemented #1-6 Official Plan/Zoning By-law changes for development #15 Street furniture (TTC shelters, benches, bicycle rings) #18 Upper Avenue street signs (\$19.5K of Section 37 monies) #21 Harmonized Sign By-law was implemented - no Billboards eliminated as yet of 22	9
# Implemented	9
Closed (now part of 250 Lawrence Ave West development negotiations) #7, 8 and 9 – Douglas Greenbelt Ravine	3
Rejected by the City #11 – Closure of Dunblaine Avenue on the east side to create a village square park #13 – Closure of laneways to create parkettes #14 – Provide landscaped areas within the painted centre lane medians on Avenue Rd #20 – Undertake an Area Traffic Study	4
# Closed and Rejected	7
May happen #10 - Roe Avenue Bus Loop conversion to parkette	1
In SAHRA's opinion, will likely NOT happen #12 – Landscape and improve spaces between curbs and rights-of-way (15 locations) #16 – Public art at 'gateway' locations #17 – Public art on utility boxes (2 done/4 recommended but no funding) #19 – New public parking lots and underground structures	4

There were some new ideas/suggestions in the report ...'easy' recommendations that could be done in 2018:

- Plant street trees at 2175, 2177 and 2181 Avenue Road (the apartment buildings near the 401) in the boulevard area
- Plant street trees at 1997 Avenue Road (Comtech Fire Credit Union) along the south side of Haddington
- Continue on-going improvements to the Cranbrooke Avenue entrance to Brookdale Park and general park improvements including curbs and bollards, lighting and signage at the Cranbrooke Avenue park entrance
- Continue on-going improvements and installation of a pedestrian trail in Brookdale Park between Grey Road and Fairlawn Avenue

It is important to note that the Report also provides a number of NEW recommendations regarding PARKING

A Parking Working Group initiated by the local councillor could bring together staff from Transportation Services, the Toronto Parking Authority, and representatives from the local commercial and residential community, including representatives from the BIA (Business Improvement Area), if established. The mandate could be to review and report on opportunities to provide additional **on-street parking on side streets in the Avenue Road Study Area that could be located in close proximity to Avenue Road**. The Parking Working Group could also be tasked with reviewing and providing an assessment of any impacts that may result from **removal of the existing midday parking prohibition on side streets along Avenue Road from between Brooke Avenue to Ridley Boulevard**.

Bedford Park - Removing lay-by parking in front of the Beer Store (1580 Avenue Road condo development) to widen sidewalk. Transportation Services to study adding more parking on the **south side of Bedford Park Avenue abutting the Beer Store site** (1580 Avenue Road condo development); street parking already exists on the south side west of the Beer Store.

Douglas Avenue - Douglas Avenue between Avenue Road and Grey Road has no on street parking (there is on the south side of Douglas on the east side of Avenue Road). Transportation Services to study **adding street parking on Douglas within 100 metres west of Avenue Road**.

Dunblaine Avenue - Staff also recommend that the TPA consider installing on street parking **on the north side of Dunblaine Ave between Avenue Road and the north south lane east of Avenue Road**.

Section 37 monies

The following information (as of Feb 14, 2016) summarizes Section 37 allocations for developments on Upper Avenue.

1717 Avenue Road was assessed \$400,000 In Section 37 monies.

- \$250,000 to the Heart Park (1400 Avenue Road)
- \$14,000 to Upper Avenue street signs / additional \$5.5K spent in April, 2017 to complete installation
- \$64,000 Dog Off Leash Area improvements on Jedburgh
- \$100,000 (includes interest) to capital budget for Woburn Avenue Playground (east of Yonge Blvd) and Cortleigh Parkette (south of Lawrence)

1684-1704 Avenue Road was assessed \$200,000.

- \$50,000 to Allenby Public School (south of Lawrence)
- \$50,000 to John Wanless Junior Public School
- \$50,000 to Blessed Sacrament School (east of Yonge Blvd)
- \$50,000 to Ledbury Park

Only \$19,500 of the \$400,000 was assigned to the Upper Avenue area.

The Report states that Section 37 monies are required to support a number of the Recommendations but no Section 37 monies are currently available and no re-allocations are going to be done. The 1580 Avenue Road condominium project will not provide any Section 37 money. It will likely be some years before we will see any additional Section 37 assessments on Avenue Road.

Summary

The Review Report states that Upper Avenue is **tree canopy deficient** (less than 10%) as well as **park deficient** (the lowest and second lowest levels of parkland - SAHRA in fact has NO parks). Our Avenue is also **disfigured by boulevard parking** – 20 locations for over 69 parking spaces...but the actual number of cars is often in excess of the permitted! In some cases, it becomes a safety issue for both drivers and pedestrians.

The 'Recommendations' section includes some 'easy' actions – meaning that funding exists, not expensive items, standard improvements the City should make for an Avenue, can be done in the near future. They deal with the tree canopy issue and Brookdale park improvements. It also includes **starting** to take action on the elimination of boulevard parking – this will be a much more difficult issue that will take some time but must begin at renewal of permits time in Jan, 2018.

But SAHRA feels that **ALL** recommendations related to **tree canopy** and **parks** should be considered as **PRIORITY** items.

At the North York Community Council meeting on May 2, 2017, SAHRA asked that Council direct the City to take action not only on the items listed under Recommendations but also on tree canopy and park tasks listed under On-going Initiatives and Other Initiatives. This request was refused – the only Recommendations that the City has been directed to act on are:

- 1(a) Paint murals on four traffic control boxes
- 1 (b) Explore conversion of commercial boulevard parking permits on 6 street corners
- 2 (a) Plant trees at 2175, 2177 and 2181 Avenue Road (apartments near the 401)
- 2 (b) Plant trees at 1997 Avenue Road (Comtech Fire Credit Union)
- 2 (c) On-going improvements to Cranbrooke Avenue entrance to Brookdale Park
- 2 (d) On-going improvements to Brookdale Park

The Recommendations implemented and to be acted on are underwhelming and disappointing!

For details on the Review Report comments on each of the Outstanding Recommendation, please review the spreadsheet '**ARAS Outstanding Recommendations Status**'