



SAHRA Report for 2019 presented at the SAHRA Annual General Meeting October 21, 2020

Here are a few highlights of the many challenges addressed by the South Armour Heights Residents' Association (SAHRA) in 2019.

Community Safety:

One of the outcomes of the survey which we ran in 2018 was an increase in our efforts in the area of community safety. In late 2018, Ron Johnson and Jim Sadler joined the **Community Police Liaison Committee**. This committee provides an opportunity for us to bring our concerns to the police and for us to find out what the police are seeing in terms of crime and what actions they are taking. Meetings are monthly, except over the summer, but were halted in March 2020 with the pandemic shutdown.

In May 2019, SAHRA partnered with the Upper Avenue Community Association (UACA) to host a **Community Safety Event** at Lawrence Park Collegiate. Trending of crime data was presented for 32 Division as a whole and also for SAHRA's and UACA's areas. We also presented crime prevention techniques. Information from the evening can be found on the [Information/Crime Prevention page](#) of our website – search for "Community Safety Night".

One of the most effective ways of reducing crime is to know your neighbours and watch out for each other. Criminals are much less likely to strike if they know that there is a network of neighbours who recognize each other and question when something appears to be amiss. To this end, SAHRA and UACA jointly launched a "new, improved" **Neighbourhood Watch** concept at the Community Safety Event. We are supporting Group Captains to form small groups of residents who communicate with each other primarily through online means, such as email.

We already have several **Neighbourhood Watch Online** Groups up and running but are still looking for more volunteer Group Captains. We estimate the time commitment as a few hours to set up the group and then minimally after that to co-ordinate a few communications per month. We provide training and documentation. Interested in being a Group Captain? Please contact us at info@sahratoronto.com and help us make Neighbourhood Watch Online a reality throughout SAHRA's neighbourhood.

We would like to thank the following merchants for their support in hosting the Community Safety Event: Fortunes Fine Jewellers, Hole in the Wall Clothing, Baskin Robbins, Dickson Home Hardware,



Padella Italian Eatery, TD, Bank of Montreal, BMO Nesbitt Burns, Avante Security and Garrett Florist.

In several of our eBlasts, we've provided information on how and when to **contact the police** and through which channels. One way we've described is how to enter different kinds of crimes and driving complaints on the Toronto Police Service's [Citizen Online Report Entry website](#).

Crime updates, including local statistics, and crime prevention information appear about monthly in our eBlasts and on the [Information/Crime Prevention page](#) of our website.

Traffic and pedestrian safety:

Over the last several years, there have been several near misses at the corner of Joicey and Harley. SAHRA worked with the neighbours, Councillor Colle and Traffic Services resulting in improved safety by the installation of an **all-way stop**.

Traffic continues to build in our area, leading to concerns for pedestrian safety as well as vehicular safety. We are pleased that Councillor Colle has initiated a **traffic study** for Avenue Road between Brooke and Highway 401 and which will include streets close to Avenue Road. This study has been delayed due to the pandemic: city traffic engineers need to measure traffic rates but traffic needs to return to "normal" before any measurements will be meaningful. It is expected that the study will be completed in mid-2021. We would like to have community involvement in the study. If you would like to participate, please let us know at info@sahratoronto.com.

Development:

During 2019, SAHRA actively reviewed 13 **Committee of Adjustment (CofA)** applications. In one case we negotiated with the owner to replace a concrete driveway with permeable materials.

The size of houses in SAHRA's neighbourhood is limited primarily by two **by-law provisions**: lot coverage is limited to 35% and the number of stories is limited to two. In recent years, there has been a number of proposals for three stories.

In each of 2017 and 2018, SAHRA participated in Toronto Local Appeal Body (TLAB) appeals to maintain the **two-storey limit**. We were successful both times. In 2019, we objected to a proposal which included a variance against the two-storey limit, as well as several other variances. The owner deferred at the CofA hearing but reapplied in July 2020. SAHRA made a submission against the third storey proposal and the Committee refused it. Since then, the owner has appealed to TLAB. We are awaiting a hearing date. There is also a TLAB hearing scheduled in November 2020 for yet another appeal of a three-storey variance.



SAHRA also dealt with two other appeals to the TLAB in 2019. Unfortunately, the parking variances at the rear of 1560 Avenue Road were approved; at 159 Ridley, SAHRA's concerns were addressed by changes to the plans.

In 2019, the OMB approved an application for **250 Lawrence Avenue West**. SAHRA, UACA, the Lytton Park Residents' Organization (LPRO) and Bedford Park residents had fought this application and we were at least able to have its approved height reduced. SAHRA was involved with the Site Plan Working Group to help mitigate impacts from the development on the community. As a result, the developer will be responsible for completing a small public park and has stated that they will not request closing of traffic lanes on Lawrence during construction. We are also very concerned from a safety perspective that traffic exiting the condo will be allowed to turn left onto Lawrence in this high-traffic and student-intense area, close to Avenue Road and Rosewell Avenue.

SAHRA worked with the City, the Bedford Park Residents Organization (BPRO) and the owner of the property at the **northeast corner of Avenue Road and Lawrence** (1507 Avenue Road) to design landscaping which ensures that unsafe access to the parking lot from city streets is not allowed. Then in 2020, a significant proposal was made for this corner of Avenue Road and Lawrence, encompassing the properties from, but not including, the medical building at 272 Lawrence West around the corner to Royal Lighting, again not included. Two condo towers, with lower retail floors, would be built at 15 stories (46.4 metres) on the corner and 10 stories (34.8 metres) adjacent and to the north on Avenue Road where Pusateri's is today. Four residents' associations, BPRO, LPRO, UACA and SAHRA have been assessing the significant impacts the current proposal would have on the area. Expect to hear more as time goes on.

While an updated proposal for the **northwest corner of Yonge Street and Wilson** occurred in 2020 and not 2019, it is significant enough to let our membership know at this time. The proposal includes a 35 storey condo and a 21 storey hotel. Again, a number of residents' associations are addressing this development and we will provide more info in the future.

SAHRA is a member of and supports **FonTRA**, the Federation of North Toronto Residents' Associations. This organisation deals with structural issues at the Committee of Adjustment and TLAB, and also addresses city-wide issues, such as zoning by-laws.

Enhancing the environment and social life:

In June 2019, we hosted our 14th annual **Neighbours' Night Out** in a new location – at the corner of Belgrave and Armour. This is our annual opportunity for new and old neighbours to meet. We served ice cream, handed out balloons, and the Fire Department and the Police visited to the delight of the children. Unfortunately, this year's Neighbours' Night Out was cancelled due to the pandemic.



In mid-October 2019, we participated in the first **Avenue Road Fall Fest**, organised by Councillor Colle and his office. We hope that the Fall Fest will return next year.

In the Fall of 2019, SAHRA began a **membership drive**. We asked several volunteers to canvas door to door to collect email addresses for our eBlasts. The campaign was quite successful in the areas covered. We need to cover the remainder of our area but not during the pandemic! Many thanks to our volunteers.

SAHRA undertook a number of **initiatives regarding Avenue Road**, including assessing a gap between the street furniture installed and the city's policy. (Street furniture includes benches, garbage bins and bike rings.) We also have assessed tree health and weeds and have communicated our findings to the city which is slowly responding. Graffiti has also been identified and dealt with. We are continuing to assess the cleanliness of the Avenue adjacent to some businesses, particularly with respect to cigarette butts.

SAHRA took an inventory of **faded city signs** within our boundaries and submitted requests to the city to have them replaced. All have been replaced to date, except for two No Stopping signs on the north side of Wilson in front of Armour Heights Public School.

Communication:

We released our new **website** in 2018 and hope that our members are taking advantage of it. We are continuously updating it with information as it becomes available. This information is also included in our eBlasts. Of particular focus in 2020 has been information related to COVID-19. We have also posted or linked to eBlasts from our councillor, MPP and MP.

In September 2020, we migrated our **eBlasts** to Mailchimp, a service which helps us manage these emails more effectively. Part of this migration was to reduce our use of our old email address, sahratoronto@rogers.com and increase our use of info@sahratoronto.com. If you used to receive our eBlasts but don't seem to anymore, please check your Spam or Bulk Mail folder. It may be necessary for you to "white list" the new email address.

Governance:

SAHRA developed and started using two **new policies** in 2019: third-party publicity and determining which information from the Toronto Police Service is forwarded to our members.

We also updated our **privacy statement** to, "SAHRA will never disclose your personal information to any third party."