

Riverdale Heritage Conservation District

Volume 1

The Newsletter

Issue 5

Spring Issue



May 2012

Hello RHCD Neighbours!

Spring is here again. The neighbourhood is greening up and our rather 'winterless' winter is pretty much behind us. We've been waking up to Robins singing for more than a month now and I'm sure I'm not alone when I mention how difficult it still is trying to decide what to wear each day. We have some great news in this issue so please read on!

Heritage Plaque

Here is a big 'Thank You!' to Gerald Whyte (Riverdale Historical Society) for his hard work in procuring the Riverdale Heritage Conservation District our official plaque to celebrate the area.

The plaque is one of three being set up in Riverdale by Heritage Toronto and paid for by funds arranged by Councillor Fletcher. Our plaque will be unveiled (location as yet to be chosen) on a neighbourhood historical walk which Gerald Whyte will be leading on August 25th.

Please try to set aside time to be a part of this important event for our neighbourhood.

riverdaleheritage.ca

Our website is up and running!

We are very pleased to announce that the Riverdale Heritage Conservation District website is awaiting your visit! Next time you're on the computer, iPad, or whatever you access the web with type in www.riverdaleheritage.ca.

It's pretty basic at the moment however, as time goes on, we hope that this site will be of great use to our neighbourhood as far as up-coming events, local news, information, even lost pets or missing articles. Those neighbours who are on our e-mail list have already taken advantage of the "Local News and Up-coming Events" section. (Just another reason to get on the e-mail list!) In the future we also hope to publish a list of 'neighbour recommended' tradespeople who have demonstrated their skills working with our heritage homes. We have also received offers from a few of our neighbours to write some articles dealing with a number of different topics including local history and home maintenance. So, this is definitely a site we hope you will want to visit often!

Before you call the Contractor!



Now that winter is on its way out and any spring or summer renovation/construction plans you may have are beginning to solidify, your Riverdale Heritage Conservation District Advisory Committee felt it timely to remind you about the protocols involved before you get your tools out of storage or pick up the phone to hire a contractor.

Please be reminded of the following:

1. Even if the exterior renovations or repairs you may be considering (replacing windows, doors, lighting, walkways, mailboxes, etc.) do not require a City of Toronto Building Permit, any work contemplated that will visually alter the front façade of your house (or any part of the building that can be seen from the street) does require a City Heritage Permit. The Heritage Permit does not cost anything; however, the importance of applying and allowing the City's Heritage Preservation Services staff to make sure the work is within the Heritage Guidelines for the

District is extremely important, and is also the law. Please remember to go through this process as early as you can!

2. Where a Building Permit is required and granted, a Heritage Permit will be granted at the same time and at no extra cost.

For more information, contact City of Toronto Heritage Preservation Services at:
416-338-1077
heritagepreservation@toronto.ca

While this process may seem tedious and yet another bureaucratic step to overcome, our neighbourhood was designated as an HCD for reasons other than the amazing fact that our streetscape happens to retain much of its original Victorian flavour. More than this it is very much an insurance against owners or developers wanting to renovate or even tear down homes and erect something totally out of character with the streetscape. We have all seen the 'Lego' type houses that have been parachuted into neighbourhoods all over the city. Fortunately, with the Heritage Conservation Designation that will not be happening in our neighbourhood.

Heritage Guidelines

For a reminder of the Riverdale Heritage Guidelines agreed to through public consultations held at three public meetings in 2006 and 2007, please click on "Riverdale Phase 1" at:
www.toronto.ca/heritage-ge-preservation/heritage_districts.htm

For copies of previous newsletters, upcoming events and more – visit our website at www.riverdaleheritage.ca

Dispelling the Myths

Using the experts at Heritage Preservation Services.

It seems to me that, in a time where everything costs more than you normally care to spend, when something comes along that is free it should be embraced with great joy. The officers at City Hall's Heritage Preservation Services do not bill you for their time. Just the opposite – they will give you the benefit of their experience because that's why they are there. Please use them! Check things out so that you can make informed decisions regarding your home and its maintenance. For example, did you know that the mortar used to tuck point (fill the spaces between the bricks) should not be the mortar used in today's building practices? The mortar used today is totally different and can actually damage the soft brick used in most of our homes.

If you plan on any work that is visible from the street (in some cases this includes the side of your house) you are required to request a Heritage Permit. That said, it is always to your benefit to check with the experts at Heritage Preservation Services. It really doesn't make a lot of sense not to avail yourself of free expert advice that will undoubtedly save you money (i.e. repairs to your repairs) in the future.

E-mail List

If you would like to be on our e-mail list please let me know.

I promise your e-mail address will not be sold, borrowed, misplaced, misspelled or otherwise misused and will be used for the sole purpose of informing you about what's going on in the RHCD and surrounding neighbourhood. That might include emergency meetings, street parties, RHCD updates, reminders or special events.

If you'd like to be kept informed just let us know. It will be a real bonus to the RHCD if everyone is on the list!

What's Up?

While this has been a problem in the area for quite some time it doesn't hurt to make a plea to those drivers who feel that ignoring the one-way signs in our area is acceptable for any reason. Please consider the children and some of our elderly neighbours. It doesn't matter how many times you tell them to look both ways, if they are used to traffic coming from only one direction then that's the only way they will look. I'm quite sure I am not the only one who has witnessed some close calls. This also involves drivers who, frustrated by not being able to find a parking spot, back up a block in search of the last one they passed. If you feel the need to reverse your vehicle, then please take your time and let others know by honking your horn. Just because you can't see anyone in your rear-view mirror doesn't mean they are not about to step off the sidewalk.

Neighbourhood safety is up to all of us!

Special Events

The Riverdale Historical Society is presenting ***Treason and Passion: Riverdale during the War of 1812***

Guylaine Petrin, reference librarian at York University, Glendon Campus will speak about lovers, bigamous wives and traitors living in Riverdale during the War of 1812.

This event will start at 6pm with the AGM.

May 29, 2012 at 6 p.m.

Location – St. Matthew's Clubhouse, Riverdale Park, East at Langley

Admission: free to members / non-members entrance fee applies

Membership: available at door. This is the last chance to purchase an annual membership for \$10.00 before the price increases.

Spring Safety Tips

Be an expert griller

Whether you use a propane or natural gas barbecue, keep safety in mind. Before starting the unit, check all the connections to make sure they are tight. Then, check for leaks by applying a mixture of soap and water to the hoses and gas cylinder head — growing bubbles indicate a leak. And before lighting the grill, remember to open the lid so gas can't build up underneath it. Never hold a match or cigarette lighter over the grill: the quick ignition is sure to cause serious burns. Never barbecue in an enclosed space and keep children away from a hot grill.

Replace your Batteries

Check smoke, carbon monoxide and security alarms, and replace their batteries. Check the date of manufacture on smoke alarms -- if older than 10 years, replace them.

Vents and Fans

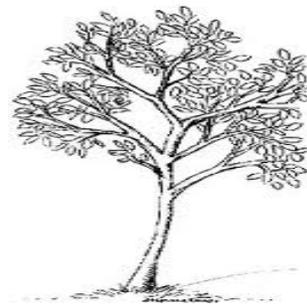
Make sure outdoor air vents for exhaust fans, heat recovery ventilators, clothes dryers, furnaces and hot water tanks are clear of debris. Check that dampers operate freely and close properly.

Eavestroughs

Clean debris from eavestroughs and downspouts, reattach any loose sections and ensure they are securely attached to your home and the flow of water discharges away from your foundation.

Feed Me Please!

Just a note to remind everyone that, due to the small amount of snow we received this winter, it would be a good idea to make sure your gardens and especially the big trees are watered. It may seem odd to be concerned about feeding your gardens this early but this is when roots (especially the trees') really need some TLC.



Contact us

If you have any questions you'd like to see answered in the next issue or something you think would be of interest to the neighbourhood then PLEASE let us know. Send me an e-mail or just drop it in my mailbox!

Scott A. Smith,
Chair

Riverdale Heritage Conservation District Advisory Committee,
181 First Ave.

Toronto, ON M4M 1X3

E-Mail:

tapdancer@sympatico.ca

Watch for our next issue and don't forget to visit our website!

www.riverdaleheritage.ca