

MIDTOWN CRIER

COUNCILLOR WALKER'S ARTICLE – SEPTEMBER 2006

In addition to the outrageous construction of the St. Clair West Streetcar Right-Of-Way project, the many ongoing development sites, the Ontario Municipal Board hearing of incompatible development such as 200 Russell Hill Road (5 & 4 storey condominiums proposed in a low density residential area), and a garbage truck falling into a sinkhole that developed in the laneway adjacent to Minto's Yonge & Eglinton construction site – St. Paul's is humming with activity as fall arrives.

We have been working for months with City staff to get a new playground for Sir Winston Churchill Park because the playground has not been replaced since the pressure-treated wood structures were removed years ago; for this size of park and this dense an area, the playground needs to be much more complete to pique a child's interest. The new playground should be installed by early spring 2007 to be ready for next summer's fun.

Another initiative we've been working on is to give a name to the small park on Avenue Rd. just north of the train-tracks. Robertson Davies, the renowned Canadian author (i.e. - *Fifth Business*), lived out his final days in this area and the suggestion came in to my office that this park should be named in his honour. I thought this was a great way to commemorate this great Canadian's contribution to our society as well as to keep his name alive for generations to come. A meeting was held with area residents and the idea has been embraced by the community. City Council approved this renaming at its September meeting.

More good news: the controversial Toronto Parking Authority development approved for 453 Spadina Rd. at Thelma Avenue has now been cancelled. Apparently, the developer could not sell the condo units or just couldn't make it work. The residents in the area have long wanted this deal cancelled because the existing surface parking lot would have been replaced by a slightly augmented underground parking lot topped by dense townhouses with new retail stores at street level. Given the low density residential neighbourhood all around this site, the proposal did not fit and this intensification was not worth the few new public parking spots included in the proposal.

For further information, please visit www.MichaelWalker.ca or contact my office at 416-392-7906 or councillor_walker@toronto.ca.