



The

WALKER REPORT

St. Paul's

SPRING 2006

From CITY HALL

The Leadership Challenge at City Hall

As we head into a municipal election year, a number of issues continue to challenge the standard of leadership at City Hall, all of which have an impact on the quality of life we value in St. Paul's.

The urgent need to come to grips with a growing culture of violence driven by guns and gangs is certainly one of them, as is the City's ill-advised decision to transfer \$320 million of commercial taxes onto residential taxpayers. I continue to press for implementation of municipal campaign finance reform, improved legislative protection for tenants, and stronger regulation of development that is incompatible with existing neighbourhoods.

I have no doubt that the introduction of new powers in the form of a revised *City of Toronto Act* will occupy much of our attention in the days ahead. While the assignment of increased powers to the Community Councils is a positive measure, I have opposed the increasing centralization of power in the Office of the Mayor, and the risks that it poses in terms of the politicization of the public service, the weakening of the role of individual Councillors, and the potential for the introduc-

tion of formal party politics at City Hall.

In this newsletter, I have included timely information on a number of concerns that many constituents have raised with me, as well as an update on a variety of City-wide and local issues. In each, I continue to set out the position that I have taken on your behalf. As always, I am interested in hearing from you on any of these matters.

For further information on these and many other matters affecting St. Paul's and our City, please visit www.michaelwalker.ca.

Yours sincerely,
Councillor Michael Walker



City Shifts Tax Burden Onto Homeowners

There are legitimate concerns over lost tax revenue as a result of jobs leaving the City of Toronto, as business continues to relocate to the lower-cost suburbs and the wider GTA. On the basis of those concerns, City Council approved a package of amendments to the City's tax policy on October 28, 2005. The amendments will have the effect of shifting \$320 million in property tax burden from the commercial tax class onto the residential tax class.

The staff report: *Toronto's Business Climate: It's Everybody's Business*, indicated that some 100,000 jobs had vacated the City over the last 15 years. Its four public consultation meetings held from mid-August to mid-September 2005 were poorly attended, with only 150 people participating in what should have been one of the most important financial policy debates in years. Worse, both the preliminary and final reports

were available only within a couple of days of the Committee meetings, denying the kind of wider public consultation that I would have preferred to see.

In my opinion, this proposal was rammed through at breakneck-pace. I voted against it after my motion to defer the matter for further improved public consultation was defeated by City Council.

The process for dealing with this important matter was bad enough. In addition, there were actually fewer than 100,000 jobs lost over the last 15 years – the data collectors admit that many people are self-employed and are probably still living in Toronto. Further, there are many other reasons other than the tax burden that a company may relocate to the wider GTA – gridlock, pollution, roads/infrastructure condition, and service fees among them.

Substantively, the proposal was ill-

considered and unwise: it has the effect of pitting one class of taxpayers – the residential sector – against another class of taxpayers – the commercial sector. Further, it fails to deal directly with the clear need to lower commercial taxes over time in order to be competitive with our competing jurisdictions.

In my opinion, this will result in an unnecessary hit for homeowners in St. Paul's. On a home assessed at \$400,000, this is a compounded, incremental increase of \$13/year adding up to approximately \$553 when fully implemented; and these increases are in addition to the routine increases due to re-assessments and City Council budgetary tax increases.

I remain opposed to this shift in the tax burden. It will do nothing to help stabilize our neighbourhoods. Worse, it is unlikely to stem the continuing flow of businesses out of Toronto.

Money and Elections: Campaign Finance Reform in T.O.

I believe in a game that is fairly played. When the game is politics, the introduction of money and the influence it can buy can make the game very unfair.

It is a fact of modern life that money buys influence at all three levels of government, and especially in Toronto, to gain support for things like film studio complexes, computer-leasing contracts, soccer stadiums, mega-developments, Olympic bids, garbage-bin contracts, bus shelter contracts, and the list goes on.

What's the time when this influential funding support is needed and supplied most? Election time. And who are the easiest to influence? Incumbents – those politicians who are currently in office and who are offered the lion's share of corporate and union donations. The problem is that this creates an unfair advantage over challengers and newcomers.



December 2005: In addition to meeting with Minister Gerretsen, Michael sought all-party support by holding a press conference at Queens Park with Councillor Cliff Jenkins, NDP Leader Howard Hampton and MPP Michael Prue.

Even though I am an incumbent myself, it seems to me that a fair game serves us all. Furthermore, given the widespread concern over alleged wrongdoing at City Hall, the time is right to reform the way City politicians raise and spend money during election campaigns.

In April 2002, I started City Council on a process that would eventually lead to September 2004's approval of a package of election campaign finance reforms for Toronto. As is normally the case, these can only have effect if they are given Provincial approval at Queen's Park. The three key points of the reform package are:

- A ban on all corporate and union campaign donations to any candidate for election;
- Donations surplus to a candidate's campaign will not be carried forward to the next election, but be applied to the City's campaign donation rebate program; and
- Much tighter spending limits on a candidate's fundraising events.

Mayor Miller and I met with the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Honourable John Gerretsen, on April 21, 2005 to urge Provincial action. The meeting went well and a rough timeline for approval in the fall was discussed. Nonetheless, the Province has not yet acted. Election Finance Reform amendments to the Ontario Municipal Elections Act have not been made. Thus, the 2006 municipal election will not be governed by these new rules, and this is a great disappointment.

While the City has made some progress on its own in banning election contribution rebates to corporations and unions, this is insufficient, and we can do better. I will continue to work for reform on behalf of all those who believe in a fair game.

Centralizing Power at City Hall: The Wrong Way to Go

There is always room for improvement in the management of City Hall, and for new processes that improve efficiencies in the way that City Council goes about its business on your behalf. Unfortunately, the centralizing proposals contained in a November 2005 report of a 3-person panel selected by Mayor Miller are the wrong way to go about it.

Approved in principle by City Council over my objections, those of former Mayors David Crombie and John Sewell, and many others in November 2005, the panel's proposals would fly in the face of some fundamental principles that have guided Toronto's government for decades.

One of these is to allow the Mayor, instead of City Council, to personally appoint and dismiss the City's top bureaucrat. This would effectively politicize the position, and, in the process, threaten the neutrality and non-partisanship of the entire civic service. In

turn, that deprives us all of the kind of fair minded, professional advice we expect from public servants, free from political interference. It also means that the civic service would increasingly carry out the wishes of the Mayor, rather than the entire Council.

Another proposal is to allow the Mayor, instead of City Council, to personally appoint and dismiss the Chairs of the City's Standing Committees. That is simply an open invitation to the introduction of party politics at City Hall. If that is the route we intend to go – a route I oppose – then we should debate it openly rather than letting it slip inside the back door.

Third, the panel proposes a four-year rather than three-year term for Councillors. Why? The best influence that citizens have over the Council that represents them is the accountability of an election. To stretch the term to four years weakens and worsens that accountability, disengaging people

from citizen involvement even further than they are now.

It seems to me that this all comes down to greater powers for one Mayor at the expense of forty-four Councillors. In turn, that means less influence by local people through their local Councillors, a move that would fly in the face of the grass roots democracy that has served Toronto well for decades. Remember that the stubborn insistence on the merit of a "city-wide" policy as opposed to the "narrow" interests of citizens very nearly brought us the set of inner-city expressways, of which the Spadina was one. It is also premature even to consider such centralization of power before we have a chance to consider the province's new City of Toronto Act.

Public consultation is to follow this winter/spring. Copies of the panel report are available from my office; I encourage you to review it and to help cast it aside.

Another Successful Environment Day!

On Saturday, July 16, 2005, I held my annual Environment Day at the North Toronto Memorial Arena together with Councillor Karen Stintz. Holding our event together attracted the best volunteer turn-out we've ever had and it saved the City money.

Thousands of residents attended on that hot, humid summer day to donate their unneeded clothes, house wares and electronics, and to get rid of their hazardous waste and recyclables. People also enjoyed the free compost and environmental advice from the various information tables. It was great to see everyone out for a common cause: *Environmental Sustainability!*

While we all think of the future more and more, it's good to remember that little phrase: "*Think Globally, Act Locally*" – together we will make a difference.

The little things we all do combine together to help reduce our 'envi-

ronmental footprint' on this planet. Every green-bin we fill is one less going to land fill. Every used battery we properly dispose of amounts to fewer chemicals going into our soil. Bit by bit, we are changing our practices so our children's grandchildren can enjoy the same beautiful Toronto that we are all fighting for.

It is important that we all divert our waste from landfills and trans-

form it into usable compost, metal, glass, plastic, paper and eventually, generated energy for our local neighbourhoods. This realised potential from our cycle of recycling will lead us into the future with our health and the planet's health in mind.

For future Environment Days please check www.toronto.ca/environment_days, or contact my office.



Michael with Councillor Karen Stintz and residents of North Toronto at Environment Day.

Future of the Ontario Municipal Board

On December 12, 2005, the provincial government released proposed changes to the functions and authority of the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB). As proposed, the changes include a hearing process in which content is limited to the same information as was before City Council; the current process begins "de novo", involving a total review of any and all matters the Board considers relevant. Committee of Adjustment appeals are no longer to go to the OMB, but to a new citizen panel. The 6-month timeframe for the City to rule on the application begins when the final supplementary report is received instead of when the application plans are submitted. The City must update its Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw every 5 and 3 years respectively. Finally, the OMB must now "have regard to" the City's planning decision – an oversight shocking by its absence. The proposals do not affect the appointment process for Board

members or deal with other measures that would provide public accountability for this appeal body.

I must return to my thoughts of 2001: Abolish the OMB for Toronto. Toronto has a sophisticated planning process and government with a greater population than most provinces. The planning and development side of this city has gone haywire due to the bargaining and hedging occurring in the shadow of the OMB. For example, planners are inhibited in making recommendations to City Council when they know their recommendations will be treated as a floor of an appeal discussion at the OMB. Worse, some Councillors oppose developments to curry local favour, knowing full well that the OMB will come riding to the rescue of their developer friends.

Over the last year, I have been working with an umbrella group of 21 resident associations, FoNTRA (Federation of North Toronto Residents' Associations), and a group

of six Councillors to lobby the provincial government for reform of the OMB. We have met at Queens Park with MPPs from all three provincial parties to discuss these changes. The provincial government's actions to date are just not good enough and in my opinion, they know they are not. I will continue to bend their ear on this topic.

To The OMB Or Not To The OMB, That Is The Question...

O'Neighbourhood,
O'Neighbourhood,
Apparent target of the OMB,
It becomes more and more difficult
To protect your homes and
your many trees.
Vigilance be our virtue
And may hope be our guide,
May we always fight for truth
And may we turn this unwilling tide!

Published in Globe & Mail Topic Feature

St. Clair West Streetcar: \$100 Million Boondoggle

As I'm sure many of you are aware, the St. Clair Streetcar line running from Yonge St. west to Keele St. is in desperate need of repair and replacement. The question is, at what cost to the taxpayer?

A draft proposal was brought to City Council back in early 2003 with an estimated cost of \$30 million for construction and implementation of new streetcar lanes, centre-pole overhead wiring, platforms and shelters, intersection reconfiguration, upgrading traffic signals and improving the appearance of local streetscapes and landmarks. This figure soon escalated to \$65 million with the introduction of a raised Right-of-Way (ROW) for the Streetcar. In my opinion, a predetermined public consultation process was undertaken and the project was approved by City Council in October 2004 at a cost of \$65 million.

Residents and local businesses who were vehemently opposed to the ROW formed a group called Save Our ST. Clair (SOS) and mounted a legal battle which brought the ROW construction to a standstill in the summer of 2005.

With the City and the TTC in preparation for an appeal, Councillors Mihevc and Moscoe approached the Mayor's Policy and Finance Committee on November 29, 2005 with a request for an additional \$30 million over and above \$65 million for even more expensive upgrades. When you factor in \$2.75 million that the City and TTC have budgeted for legal expenses to fight SOS as well as contract cancellation fees, the total bill for this "Cadillac" of Streetcar lines has grown to nearly \$100 million.

This year, the City will be borrowing close to \$350 million for capital

improvements - money taxpayers will have to pay back. Can we really afford \$100 million on St. Clair when the savings in time per trip is one minute? Can we really afford to spend this kind of money that we do not have for a streetcar line, especially when parts of Scarborough and Etobicoke have little or no transit?

From the November 29th Policy and Finance meeting, the request for this additional \$30 million was discussed at City Council on December 12, 2005. I spoke strongly against this increase and we were able to stop its approval.

If you have questions or comments, please visit www.michaelwalker.ca for a more detailed chronology of events including video footage from both meetings.

The construction will be halted until summer 2006.

School Investment

Hodgson Senior Public School Greening

I believe in supporting our public school system and that includes providing clean, beautiful and safe places of study. Over the past year, I supported the students, parents, staff and the Principal of Hodgson (Davisville Ave./Mt. Pleasant Rd.) to improve that school's front yard by adding more trees, benches and landscaped areas. Half of the funding for this capital improvement is provided by the City through approved residential developments to be built in the area.

Northern Secondary School

I have begun to work with the Principal and the Parent Council to renew Northern Secondary's front yard and grounds. This school's high enrollment takes a toll on its grounds, most particularly the front yard lawn and hedges. An improved walkway and additional seating areas are possibilities. The students need to have a school in good repair, inside and out, and to have pride in the building they're learning in.

School Sports Field Upgrades

Both Deer Park Public School and Brown Public School installed new synthetic-turf sports fields funded by the private sector in 2005. For

years, the children have been trying to play their games on dirt, asphalt and concrete. This is another community effort that enriches our neighbourhood through enriching our childrens' development.



Michael greeting kids at Brown Public School.

St. Paul's Local Artists

On September 20, 2005, I had the opportunity to attend a truly inspirational art exhibit at 183 St. Clair Avenue West held by artists who use their mouth and feet to paint.

Mouth and Foot Painting Artists (MFPA Ltd.) is the Canadian subsidiary of the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists that has over 600 members in over 70 countries!

Founded in 1956 by a polio stricken German mouth painter, Erich Stegmann, whose vision was to create an organization where disabled artists could support themselves financially while pursuing a meaningful artistic career. Currently 13 artists make up the membership of the MFPA across Canada.

Every year members of the MFPA work tirelessly to create numerous works of art that are available for purchase and that make wonderful gifts. Hardcover books, calendars, prints and greeting cards are some of the products available at the MFPA. As the MFPA runs as a democratic cooperative which is fully governed and owned by its members, all net profits from sales go back to these extraordinary artists.

To support this local jewel located in St. Paul's, please contact the Mouth and Foot Painting Artists Ltd., 183 St. Clair Ave. West, 416.362.9992, mfpa@on.aibn.com or you can check out the MFPA website at www.mfpacanada.com.

Our Streets, Our Traffic

Oriole Park Traffic Management Study

The traffic study that was the subject of a November 2004 traffic management public meeting with the residents of Oriole Park is ongoing. Over 2,000 copies of a Traffic Study Questionnaire were distributed to the entire neighbourhood; of those, 400 Questionnaires (20%) were returned with comments. My office compiled these responses into chart form and made them available on our website. Over the summer and fall of 2005, Transportation Services reviewed the Questionnaire responses as well as conducted additional traffic speed and volume counts on streets for which we did not have data. A further report will be discussed at the public meeting to be held this February. On the basis of that meeting, I will continue to work with residents to inhibit commuter traffic.

Increased Police enforcement of the existing turn prohibitions and "stop" signs is a must, but we know too well that policing resources are spread thinly. It is clear that residents on Chaplin Crescent and Duplex Avenue are fed up with the volume of traffic on their streets. The hard fact is that solutions are limited because both the roads are classified as high-capacity and non-local, and the Chaplin Crescent bus route precludes traffic calming measures such as speed humps, chicanes or additional parking. For other streets, requests for speed hump installation will be dealt according to City policy that allows for petitioning residents to start a process that includes a public meeting. Please visit www.michaelwalker.ca/staffreports for the compiled Questionnaire responses and reports on the current traffic study.

The Deer Park Traffic Study

The Deer Park Area Traffic Management Study was completed this past Spring with final City Council approval in May 2005. The 3 public meetings held on this issue were well attended and the many residents who corresponded created a sound, inclusive process to make Deer Park safer for pedestrians and drivers alike.

The consultant's study on this issue concluded that the area is being used as a rush-hour route – no surprise. Some streets have a speeding problem (i.e.- Oriole Rd. avg. 50 km/h; Rosehill Ave. avg. 53 km/h), while other streets have a high volume problem (i.e.- Heath St. W. avg. 5,900 cars/day; Deer Park Cres. avg. 4,140 cars/day). Other streets handle very few cars per day (i.e.- Wilberton Rd. avg. 450 cars/day; Duggan Ave. avg. 480 cars/day). The streets with high speeds and/or volumes identified areas that need bolstered pedestrian safety measures.

The measures will be completely installed by the end of 2006 and are aimed at allowing resident access, improved pedestrian safety, and deterring commuter-traffic. In May 2005, installation started with the total reconstruction of Heath St. W.'s street and sidewalk; a raised intersection was installed at Deer Park Crescent and there will be an additional raised intersection installed in 2006 at Deer

Park Cres. and Delisle Avenue. A new pedestrian cross-over (PXO) and delineated cross points will be installed on Rosehill Ave. Pleasant Blvd. will be improved and I am continuing to try to reroute the TTC buses from Pleasant Blvd. to the St. Clair East streetcar turn-about.

New Roads and Sidewalks

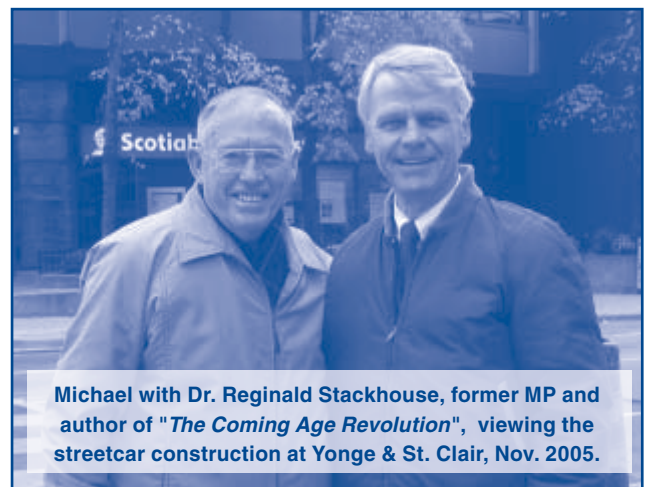
Several streets and sidewalks in St. Paul's were repaired or reconstructed in 2005. These include: Anderson Ave., Avenue Rd., Banff Rd., Belsize Dr., Broadway Ave., Cleveland St., Colin Ave., Davisville Ave., Deer Park Cres., Duplex Cres., Eastbourne Ave., Forest Hill Rd., Forman Ave., Heath St. W., Highbourne Rd., Hillsdale Ave. E., Lascelles Blvd., Lonsdale Rd., Manor Rd. E., Oriole Gdns., Oriole Rd. and Soudan Ave.

The unfinished section of Heath St. W. at Yonge St. is waiting to be reconstructed after the townhouse development at 33 Heath St. W. is completed – this will be at the expense of the developer.

Also, the missing link of sidewalk at 267 Merton St. near the Public Works yard is finally completed.

New Traffic Signal – Spadina Rd. at Kilbarry Road/Burton Road

The City's Transportation Services periodically conduct safety audits of roads and intersections throughout the City to determine need for traffic signals. The intersection of Spadina Road, Kilbarry Road and Burton Drive was flagged by staff in 2000 and several City reports stated it met provincial warrants for installation based on volume of traffic, both vehicle and pedestrian, as well as safety. The light was approved by City Council in February 2005. Funding was allocated and installation will be completed early in 2006. In response to this new signal, residents also requested speed humps on Kilbarry Road between Spadina Road and Dunloe Road to deter speeding motorists approaching the intersection; those too have been approved and should be installed in 2006. The ongoing North Hill traffic study will continue to monitor this intersection.



Michael with Dr. Reginald Stackhouse, former MP and author of *"The Coming Age Revolution"*, viewing the streetcar construction at Yonge & St. Clair, Nov. 2005.

Stronger Tenant Protection Urgently Required

For years, I have actively advocated in favour of a return to real rent control on behalf of the tenants of St. Paul's. Tenants do not receive a fair shake from the *Tenant Protection Act*, the Provincial legislation that presently governs their housing.

For example, this *Act* permits rents to skyrocket in times of high vacancy, like the period we are in now. Landlords can set any rent level they wish once a unit becomes vacant, thus providing a benefit in having apartments vacant. Affordability must be a key indicator in protecting our rental housing stock.

In response to this Provincial failing, I spearheaded the establishment of the City's Tenant Defence Fund and Tenant Defence Subcommittee in 1999. The Tenant Defence Fund supplies funding for tenant outreach support, as well as tenant grants for applications made to the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal (ORHT).

Today, I continue to champion the support for tenants' rights here at City Hall. I placed a detailed package of reforms for City Council to endorse requesting the Province to repeal the *Tenant Protection Act* and to replace it with real rent control legislation containing the following provisions:

- Elimination of *Vacancy De-Control*, so the rent of a unit does not increase when a tenant moves out.
- All eviction applications to be heard in Ontario Civil Court.
- Give municipal governments final decision on proposed rental building demolitions and conversions to condominiums – with no appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board.
- Provisions to heavily fine a landlord for poor maintenance conditions, especially on long-standing maintenance orders.
- No *Above Guideline Rent Increase* if there is an outstanding municipal work (maintenance) order on

the property.

- Reform of the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal (ORHT), such as:
 - increased hearing notification periods involving evictions to 20 working days from 5 calendar days;
 - accountability of Tribunal members;
 - the method of appointing Tribunal members;
 - fast-tracking tenant maintenance applications.
- The establishment of a Provincial Rent Registry (database) of rental rates of every unit in every rental property in Ontario so new tenants can determine the previous legal rent before making a decision to rent.
- Permanent removal of the 2% base component of *Guideline Rent Increases*.
- No *Guideline Rent Increase* allowed except as per the Consumers Price Index (CPI) three-year average.
- Provisions for *Costs-No-Longer-Borne* as they relate to rent increases for utility-cost spikes and paid capital expenditures.
- Not more than one application for *Above Guideline Rent Increase* to be allowed within a prescribed amortization period.
- *Above Guideline Rent Increases* to be based on a predetermined *base level rent* for a unit and not allowed to compound expense upon expense, year after year.
- Mandatory *Capital Reserve Fund* registered to property not property owner.
- Provisions to *License Apartment Buildings* in Toronto.

Tenants need assurance that the Ontario Government is listening to them. Real Rent Control to replace the *Tenant Protection Act* is the answer – NOW. Watch for notice of the City-wide Tenant Forum this spring.

Free Parking

Free Parking for Canadian War Veterans

On November 5, 2004, the Honourable Albina Guarnieri, Minister of Veteran Affairs, declared 2005 the "Year of the Veteran" in honour of those who served this country in recognition of the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. After taking a cue from the City of Hamilton, I moved a motion at City Council so Canadian Veterans could enjoy free parking throughout the City of Toronto. During permitted hours, all vehicles bearing a valid Ontario Veteran License Plate will be exempt from standard parking fees at all on-street parking meters and in municipally operated parking facilities for 2005. I am pursuing free parking privileges for Canadian Veterans to be continued indefinitely. For information regarding obtaining a Veteran's License Plate, please contact the Provincial Ministry of Transportation (416.235.2999). If you have problems receiving free parking, please contact my office or Maurice Anderson, President of Toronto Parking Authority, at 416.393.7276.

Noisy Leafblowers

Noisy and Polluting Leafblowers Are Unfortunately Still OK with City Council

My third attempt to limit the use of leafblowers by a Notice of Motion for a Board of Health recommended 10 month ban (except Oct. and Nov.) was not permitted to be discussed at City Council. The motion was referred to the City's Planning and Transportation Committee where it was voted down 7 to 1, denying even my request for report Jan. 9, 2006. Pollution caused by leafblowers extends beyond noise to dust, debris, mould, hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide, and ground level ozone, all of which increase the levels of pollution in the City resulting in a loss of quality of life for all residents; a gas, 2-stroke leafblower running for 1 hour generates the same air pollution as a car idling for 24 hours. Vancouver initiated a city-wide ban in Nov. 2003, yet we continue to spin our wheels on this issue as many Councillors still support the use of leafblowers. Please send your comments on this issue to councillor_walker@toronto.ca.

Local Developments

18 Brownlow Avenue

This application is for a 26 storey residential tower and podium around the existing 19 storey residential tower. The site does not flank Eglinton Ave. E. and borders homes on Soudan Avenue. This scale of development is out-of-keeping with the surrounding neighbourhood and has, in my opinion, nothing redeeming about it. Please watch for public meeting notices regarding this development.

79 Dunfield Avenue

This application consists of one 25 storey residential tower on Eglinton Ave. E., next to the York Event Theatre where a parking lot now sits. At almost double the permitted density, this is not the kind of development I would want here or any other lot on Eglinton Ave. E. Please watch for public meeting notices regarding this development.



Michael with project architect, Robert Reimers, and senior City planner, Tim Burkholder, at the ground-breaking ceremony.

36 Whitewood Road – New Bethel Baptist Church & Residences

This is a 4 storey senior's residential development at the corner of Millwood & Whitewood Roads that will retain the use of a functional church. The development keeps a church in the neighbour-

hood as well as adding much needed senior's housing to the area. Construction began in October 2005.

North Toronto Collegiate Institute

The time has finally come to fix this school. The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) and developer, Tridel, have partnered to rebuild this 1912 high school. The application consists of a reoriented playing field with massing of the new school in the north east corner of the property with one residential tower over the school and another separate residential tower directly south of the school; the height of the 2 towers is proposed by the school to be

no greater than 24 and 27 storeys. The public consultation process with the City is about to begin. You will be notified in the coming months of public meetings in the community.

200 Russell Hill Road

City Council refused this application in November 2005 and I am thankful. This application consisted of 2 condominium buildings, at 4 & 5 storeys, containing a total of 22 units with 44 underground parking spaces. The triple-lot site is mostly ravine land situated far south of St. Clair Ave. W. amongst single family homes in an area zoned low-density R1. The proposal would have destroyed over 120 large trees, the natural habitat of a rare, red-tailed hawk and would have unfortunately created a precedent for future excessive development in the heart of a low-density residential neighbourhood. This developer can appeal the City's refusal to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB).

Yonge & Eglinton – Bus Station Redevelopment

I have been working with the community since 2002 to establish development guidelines for the Yonge & Eglinton intersection, most particularly the south west corner, by participating on a steering committee comprised of residents, City & TTC staff. The sluggish process is due to the many property ownership interests involved. Parkland and fairly dense development is planned, including 5 storey retail podiums with residential towers along the Eglinton Ave. W. frontage. Approval of these guidelines should occur this year for completion, I expect, of the first phase by 2010, after the City's development approval process is completed. You will be notified of the public meeting in the community I will be holding hopefully in the first half of this year to review these development guidelines.

Proposed Conversion: Brentwood Towers - 17-25 Lascelles Boulevard

This application to convert 957 rental units to condominiums was refused by City Council. The owner is appealing the City's decision at the OMB hearing in May 2006. I am fighting this conversion to protect our dwindling stock of affordable housing and to prevent a major precedent.

Please go to: www.michaelwalker.ca for updates and information.

Senior's Rent Supplement Program-Minto Development

When this development was approved against my and nearly everyone's will in North Toronto, \$1 million in community benefits earmarked for senior's housing in the area was also approved. This amount is meager compared to what should have been given to the City (\$6 – 8 million) for approving a development of this size. However, the deal was done and I have worked with City staff and the developer to put this money to work in St. Paul's for senior citizens. As of March 1, 2006, a senior's rent supplement program will

come into effect; 14 units in apartment buildings near Russell Hill Rd. and St. Clair Ave. W. will be offered to seniors already on the City's social-housing waitlist at half the market rent for a period of twelve years. I would have liked to establish the rent-supplement program closer to Yonge & Eglinton but we could not find suitable units at affordable rents to make the rent-subsidy effective. With all that our neighbourhood will have to put up with in the years to come, at least this rent supplement program will do some good for senior citizens who need it most.

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THE OFFICE (from left to right): Blake Webb, Chris Sellors, Andrew Steele-Moore, Councillor Walker, Pierre D'Aoust, Bree St. Arnault

YOUR 2005 PROPERTY ASSESSMENT

On average, the assessed value of the homes in St. Paul's increased slightly more than the citywide average increase of 12%. If you don't agree with the accuracy of your assessment, you can:

- File a **Request for Reconsideration** of assessment with MPAC (**deadline: Dec. 31, 2006**) – Contact MPAC at 1.866.296.MPAC (6722) or www.mpac.ca. *No fee required.*
- File a **formal appeal (Notice of Complaint)** with the Provincial Assessment Review Board (ARB) (**deadline: Mar. 31, 2006**) – Contact ARB at 1.800.263.3237 or 416.314.6900 or www.arb.gov.on.ca. *A \$75 filing fee is required but is refunded if you withdraw after receiving a satisfactory reduction in assessment via the MPAC reconsideration process.*

Please contact my office for further information.

Federal Member of Parliament - St. Paul's
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June Rowlands Park Dedication: Michael with former Mayor June Rowlands, Mayor Miller and Parks Department Director, Don Boyle, in September 2004

Important Numbers

INFO Toronto:.....	416.338.0338	Tree Pruning:.....	416.338.8733
Community Services Information:.....	211	Road Info:.....	416.599.9090
Police (Non-Emergency):.....	416.808.2222	Prop. Tax & Water Bill Enquiry:.....	416.338.4829
Police (53 Division):.....	416.808.5300	Gas Emergency:.....	416.447.4911
Parking Enforcement (Police):.....	416.808.6600	Hydro Emergency:.....	416.222.3300
Elder Abuse (Police):.....	416.808.7040	Water Emergency:.....	416.338.8888
Fraud (Police):.....	416.808.7300	Kids Helpline:.....	1.800.668.6868
Identity Theft (Phonebusters):.....	1.888.495.8501	Volunteer Toronto:.....	416.961.6888
Fire Safety:.....	416.338.9050	Ont. Rental Housing Tribunal:.....	416.645.8080
Public Health:.....	416.338.7600	Ont. Works (Social Assistance):.....	416.397.1800
Bylaw Enforcement:.....	416.392.6940	Lawyer Referral Service:.....	416.947.3330
Garbage Collection:.....	416.338.2010	Ont. Human Rights Commission:.....	416.326.9511

