



The West Bend Community Association
Minutes of March 19th, 2008
285 Indian Road Crescent - Indian Road Crescent Public School

Chair: Duncan Farnan

Minutes: Aileen MacDonald

Guest Speakers on **Sustaining Our Urban Tree Canopy**

The group welcomed **Janet McKay**, Executive Director of **LEAF** (Local Enhancement & Appreciation of Forests) and **Uyen Dias**, Urban Forestry Planning Assistant from Toronto's Urban Forestry Services.

Trees

- improve air quality
- provide protection from damaging UV rays
- provide habitat for wildlife
- reduce the need for air conditioning in the summer
- reduce storm water run-off
- increase the value of real estate

Two programs available to West Bend area residents were outlined. The City will plant trees, upon request, on city street allowances in the front of residential properties. LEAF makes planting a tree in your backyard easy.

LEAF is an incorporated, not-for-profit organization dedicated to the protection and improvement of Toronto's urban forest. It offers several programs and services for Toronto residents. The **Backyard Tree Planting Program** offers native trees and shrubs to property owners at a subsidized cost to residents of Toronto. LEAF certified arborists assist residents in making educated decisions about the type of tree that suits their property and where it should be planted. Since the first planting season in 1996, over 11,000 native trees and shrubs have been planted in backyards throughout the City of Toronto.

Complete details on this subsidized program and a complete list of the small trees and shrubs available, can be found at www.leafontario.org.

LEAF also offers **Workshops and Training Sessions** which cover a wide range of urban forest issues.

Urban Forestry Services staff are professionals and experts in the field of urban forestry management and arboriculture. Urban Forestry Services employs certified arborists, professional foresters, highly skilled professional tree climbers and a host of other staff who have experience, and are trained to perform a broad range of forestry-related operational and management tasks. A major responsibility of Urban Forestry Services is the maintenance of City owned trees, particularly trees that grow on the City road allowance and in parks. Urban Forestry Services actively seek out opportunities and locations for new tree planting sites throughout the City.

Urban Forestry Services will plant a free tree upon request, on city street allowances in the front of residential properties. For more information regarding a free tree for City property, please call (416) 338-TREE.

The meeting included a discussion with respect to how TWBCA, with the assistance of these two organizations, could promote tree planting and tree health within our area. The priorities reviewed were as follows:

- Organize a group of volunteers interested in trees and the greening of our neighbourhood. It was agreed to devote a portion on the April TWBCA meeting to continuing the discussion on trees.
- Promote education of the above programs that already exist.
- Increase the awareness for the need to water and care for City trees on private property.

- Develop a program to water trees, particularly newly planted trees, on public property.
- Consider how to begin a tree inventory of the neighbourhood.
- Further investigate City grants for tree planting.
- Determine the status of trees in our two parks – Chelsea and Baird
- It was agreed David White would complete a TD Friends of the Environment grant application on behalf of TWBCA.

Other Business:

1. **Minutes from the February meeting were distributed.**

2. **Junction Centennial Celebrations 2008**

Junction Forum for Art and Culture is holding the annual general meeting and community forum, Wednesday April 2, 2008.

3. **Status of area property developments**

Bloor Street West Avenue Study Report – City Council approved and will proceed with the Avenue Study. Public consultations will begin in the summer.

4. **Committees and Reports**

Communications

We agreed based upon the success of the trials on the group email to convert the entire TWBCA list to the new format.

The Communications group should put together a list of upcoming initiatives and report back to TWBCA.

Treasurer's Report – Tim presented the March report. The majority of the funds in the account are restricted use meaning they are already allocated.

5. **Upcoming TWBCA Meetings**

We agreed to delay a presentation re the Waterfront until the fall.

Hilary agreed to contact GO to determine if they would present at an upcoming meeting to update on GO's proposed plan to connect to the TTC at Dundas and Bloor and to provide an update on the progress of the railway expansion at Dundas and Dupont.

We agreed to use the April meeting as a working meeting. Topics for discussion included communications and the development of a neighbourhood tree strategy.

6. **April Clean and Beautiful Month and The West Bend**

We agreed to promote beautifying the neighbourhood by communicating initiatives already in place by the City and to send out requests to both clean up our area poles of signage

Aileen agreed to draft an email to encourage neighbourhood participation.