

MANOR PARK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Manor Park Community Association

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FROM THE DESK OF:



Manor Park Community Association President
ELIZABETH McALLISTER

What a glorious summer that let us once again safely visit friends and family! I hope you all were able to take full advantage of the long days.

As we head into September, the abiding undercurrent is vulnerability – our own and others. We grieve the loss of our normal lives. Can we bear this pandemic through a Canadian winter? We can!

Manor Park has done a great job so far of being kind to each other and generous to those who have been hit the hardest. We will get this through winter by keeping up our momentum on caring.

Back to School: lobbying for safety!

We are in an educational *crisis*. A crisis demands the highest priority by governments, the private sector and community organizations. Use all available space for smaller classes in churches, community and office buildings! Hire substitute teachers! Help parents to support learning! Target vulnerable kids with special learning supports! What can be more important?

MPCA has called on the Mayor, OCDSB and elected officials to take quick and specific action to protect kids getting to school. More parents will be driving kids along with buses and more kids walking and biking to avoid buses. MPCA committees have made specific recommendations to make active transportation safer for our school kids (See [Manorparkcommunity.ca](#)).

The Story behind the story: Housing and Development

Housing is part of the urban ecosystem. It is a “social determinant” of health. The Ca-

nadian Medical Society recommends that health impact studies be part of all urban planning.

Social factors – such as the ability to distance and isolate yourself, feel safe in your home, have access to safe transit, healthy food, primary health care – are fundamental determinates of good health. Health, housing and environmental sustainability are interconnected and can be mutually reinforcing. They constitute one system and need to be addressed as such.

Communities need to get involved early on with *each* project to advocate for design elements that incorporate human needs. Each project requires the same tiresome negotiation and trade-offs between the size and design of the buildings and community concerns for adequate setbacks, safety, climate protection and vital retail space.

City Densification Plans

In the city’s planning for densification or in its planning regulations, we have yet to see serious consideration of environmental, mental and physical health, safety factors or inclusiveness. The city plans its densification with water and waste, transport, transit and road plans.

For densification to work, we also need social infrastructure plans to ensure adequate access to green space and other public services like clinics and libraries.

There is insufficient appetite for overarching community-level plans that simplify and harmonize downstream construction decisions. Solid community-driven plans for main streets developed across



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the city have been ignored because they are not “legal” documents.

The building-by-building planning approach is exhausting for communities. It cannot be cost effective for the city.

It is not good for developers either. Project approvals can take two or three years at a cost of 8 to 10 percent of overall costs according to Mazyar Mortazavi, a Toronto developer. Some developers know that the foundation of strong democracies is resilient communities whose infrastructure design creates relationships among a range of demographic and income groups.

But designs that integrate amenities, environmental services, schools, cultural opportunities and workplaces within walking distance often cannot compete with profit-driven developments that do not prioritize design of resilient communities. Progressive developers cannot build resilient communities alone or one building at a time.

Public interventions are necessary. CMHC, provinces

and municipalities need to collaborate to create a vision for resilient communities with specific measures that benchmark health status, diversity, environmental assets, safety and well-being. They need to lower the costs of housing construction (up 20 to 30 percent over the last decade) through a more innovative and integrated vision of housing within a simpler regulatory framework.

Governments need to encourage research on sustainable and more affordable building products and adopt funding policies that level the playing field for those builders who want to leave behind a positive legacy.

Manor Park development

Lalit Aggarwal will introduce his approach to the redevelopment of Manor Park Estates in this edition of the *Chronicle* and Charl-Thom Bayer, MPCA’s Chair for Development, will present MPCA’s thinking and describe our role in his companion article.

I am encouraged by Lalit’s recent collaboration with our counterparts in Vanier, his articulation of his family’s commitment to Manor Park and his early consultation. As Charl-Thom says, “Let’s work hard and constructively to make changes for our community that are as healthy, safe, climate-smart and inclusive as is possible...within our fragmented policy environment.”

Gratitude

MPCA thanks **Mike Coxon**, Third Sector Consulting, for facilitating a productive MPCA retreat!

MPCA applauds **Nic Fortier** and **his neighbours** for taking the initiative to convince the city to implement additional traffic-calming measures on Sandridge Rd.

Thanks to the **Beechwood Village Alliance**, led by **Tony Stikeman** with representatives from communities bordering Beechwood Ave. and Hemlock Rd., for its hard work to bring back vitality to our main street and to ensure our communities have a say in the future.

Now... go and see your friends outside while you still can!

Manor Park’s tennis courts are busy at all hours with players coming in pairs or with their families to enjoy a safe, fast-paced game.

Photo: Marie-Frédérique Caron

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