

News & Views

A NEWSLETTER FOR BIA STAFF AND BOARDS | June 2012 | Vol. 3 No. 6



photo credit: Yvonne Bambrick

Pedestrians rule the road in the Kensington Market BIA, see p. 2

THE COMMUNICATIONS SURVEY

By John Kiru, Executive Director, TABIA

A year and a half ago, we created the newsletter you are reading. Our original intention was to share hard news, upcoming events and issues that concern us all.

Right after we started *News & Views*, we sent you a survey asking what you – the staff and Board members of your BIA – needed to know, how you preferred to receive that information and how often you needed it. We'd like to

compare your responses then and now and ask you a few new questions. This will help us to help *you!*

Last year we only wanted one person from each BIA to respond. This year we welcome as many responses as possible. And each response will be entered into one of two random draws – one for Board members and one for staff – to win a dinner for two, worth \$100 at the unusual Ballroom Restaurant (and luxurious bowling

alley) in the Entertainment District, courtesy of the Entertainment District BIA and TABIA.

If anyone prefers to fill out a hard copy rather than an online survey, we can fax a copy to that person. And you can fax it back. Just let Patricia know your needs either by email at pmccartie@toronto-bia.com or call her at 416-263-3229. Please respond to the survey **by July 20**. We hope to have feedback to you in the September issue.

TAKE THE SURVEY TODAY!

YOU COULD

WIN DINNER FOR 2 at



RESPOND BY JULY 20 at

<http://fluidsurveys.com/surveys/deborah-w/2nd-annual-tabia-communication-needs/>

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KUDOS!

This regular column recognizes significant accomplishments taking place in our BIAs. This month we highlight the **Kensington Market BIA's Pedestrian Sunday Festivals**. Let us know if you've got a story to tell!

PEDESTRIANS RULE!

On May 31, *Toronto Star* columnist David Macfarlane's glowing article about Kensington Market, 'Where Toronto is at its liveliest,' noted... Pedestrian Sundays in Kensington Market are a wondrous spectacle... The article went on to say that because there's no real hoopla or drama, just people enjoying themselves as they always do, but without cars to worry about, "alleys become concert venues, sidewalks become performance space. People sit out on balconies to watch the dancers and street performers..."

Eight years ago, this idea took root. The only change is that there are now two distinct events that put a priority on pedestrians (or foot traffic) – **Pedestrian Sunday Festivals** with one Sunday in May, July and September and **Market Sundays** throughout August and September from noon to 6 p.m.

MERCHANTS CAN DO THEIR OWN THING

"Festival days are a chance to bring creative energy to the streets. People are celebrating as well as noticing what the shops of Kensington have to offer and then have been returning later to experience the market more fully," said Yvonne Bambrick, Kensington Market BIA's bike-friendly coordinator.

Part of the unrehearsed aspect of this festival is letting the merchants do their own thing. They bring in local groups, for the most part, with entertainment as diverse as belly dancing and yoga. There'll be sidewalk and on-street sales of all types of goods along with delicious food from the existing cafes, bars and restaurants.

Market Sundays are the new event on the block. They are just like the regular Sundays in Kensington, without the influx of cars. Yvonne says that these days will allow more room for people to enjoy and support the market's 245 local independent businesses. In partnership with the Office of the Public Realm, the BIA will soon install new temporary swing gates cum planters to control vehicular access. Existing cars can remain in and exit the market as needed. Access to the parking lots on St. Andrew and Bellevue will be maintained.

More info at: <http://kensingtonmarketbia.ca> or <http://pskensington.ca>



photo credit: Yvonne Bambrick

MARKETING, CITYWIDE

By Liana Ling, TABIA

The TABIA 2012 Citywide Campaign is well underway! As BIA events are happening and being planned in Toronto, the media buzz is already palpable. Many TABIA members are taking advantage of the attractive advertising rates that TABIA has negotiated with key media including

print, television, radio, TTC subway cars and stations and online event listings.

Has your BIA explored the special rates and offerings exclusive to TABIA members? Did you know you can get involved in these advertising campaigns for seasonal promotions as well as events throughout the year? Even though the choice is yours, everyone benefits because the more advertising purchased, the lower the price for all!

We want to encourage you to garner your resources, develop a good media strategy and start advertising across multiple media vehicles

right away. Regardless of your budget, there's something for you. These opportunities are too good to pass up!

Call or email me, Liana Ling, at 647-778-3589 or lling@toronto-bia.com to discuss how you can maximize exposure for your BIA with the TABIA 2012 Citywide Campaign. When you're planning your event, contact me in advance so we can work together on a cohesive strategy to build excitement among your target audience. Looking forward to hearing from you.



Sheppard East Village BIA will have an LRT in a few years

PROFILE: SHEPPARD EAST VILLAGE BIA

Even though each BIA appears to have a similar mandate of improving its main street and attracting customers to the businesses, some BIAs and their staff and Board have unexpected challenges along the way. After working with his BIA colleagues for so many years on a planned light rail transit line (LRT) and having been appointed to the Expert Panel on Transit by City Council, Ernie McCullough, the part-time Executive Director of the Sheppard East Village (SEV) BIA could possibly add “Transportation Consultant” to his resume.

Here’s how it began: This BIA with more than 500 businesses on a stretch of Sheppard E. from Midland to Markham close to the 401 and the DVP with four major north-south arteries and five bus lines was poised to start doing all the things BIAs do. “We completed our strategic plan back in 2007,” said Ernie. “After we prepared the mission statement, finalized a vision of maintaining an appealing business district and did some initial branding, we also completed a top level streetscape plan,” he said. The BIA started to put money away for streetscape improvements, all within the space of a couple of years.

PLANNING FOR AN LRT

By 2008, they got the first hints that an LRT was planned for Sheppard. The SEV team asked two very wise questions to the TTC: tell us all about your plans and tell us how you intend to fund this project. Obviously, they were concerned that they’d face the same hurdles as the St. Clair businesses. Remarkably, the TTC folks wanted to listen to what the BIA had to say. The BIA met with the TTC and communicated to its members regularly for the next two years, until Metrolinx, the provincial agency, took the lead as the major funder.

“The transportation plan was to minimize disruption and maximize benefits”

Ernie said that Metrolinx was happy to entertain suggestions from the SEV team such as why not penalize suppliers who don’t come in on time. Or if penalties weren’t possible, how about providing incentives if they finished ahead of schedule? They even made this guarantee to the BIA: there will be access to every business throughout the work, the parking lots will also be accessible and they would only work with qualified contractors. Ernie circulated lots of notes to keep everyone on track, so to speak.

The BIA also decided that in addition to Mark Bozian, the Board Chair at the time, and Ernie attending all meetings and making the BIA views known, the BIA needed to do some serious advocacy work. After hiring a firm, they were able to speak with Provincial Cabinet Ministers as well as senior people at City Hall to ensure that their plan was as good as it gets and that the needs of business were considered.

By 2010, some preliminary work began. In anticipation of street widening, BIA banners had to be removed from Hydro poles but Metrolinx agreed to fund the removal and re-installation. The BIA’s thinking at this stage was to recommend commuter detour signs and to continue the BIA’s “stop, shop, see” program for customers and residents. But the major streetscaping was going to have to wait until the end of the construction. With Metrolinx about to widen the street, there was an expectation they’d be putting in new poles, sidewalks, planting, bike paths and the foundation for new gateways.

OFF THE RAILS, AND THEN BACK AGAIN

And then came the decision in April of 2011: *No* LRT. Even though subways were always the preferred route, the BIA wondered about funding. After Councillor Stintz and the CEO of Metrolinx thanked the BIA for their participation to date, the BIA went back to pondering its streetscape plan that had been put on hold for three years and thought about replacing their five-year old banners. They decided to focus on a long overdue strategic marketing plan.

Once again, plans changed in late March of this year when City Council decided to recommend light rail on Sheppard Ave. E. As in the past, the SEV team focused on bringing awareness of the decisions to the businesses and the community and tried to ensure that the businesses could minimize their lost revenues.

By the end of June 2012, Provincial Cabinet will decide if this plan is going to “fly.” If it does, the construction might not start till 2014 with a completion date as far off as 2018. That means that streetscaping will continue to be a short-term dream for the BIA. But the BIA is not complaining. They are confident the Metrolinx plan will revolutionize transit construction in Toronto as well as include substantial streetscape improvements.

This BIA has nine Board members and two vice chairs. Active committees are streetscape, marketing, construction planning and admin & finance.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Vice-Chairs:
Councillor Chin Lee and Kal Brach

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UPCOMING EVENTS AND DATES TO KEEP IN MIND

HERE'S THE INFO YOU NEED NOW, FOR YOU, YOUR BOARD AND YOUR MEMBERS

Third Tues. of each month-TABIA inter-departmental meetings
City Hall, from 2-4 p.m. These are great sources of information on the latest news coming from City Hall or issues affecting BIAs. Questions? Contact Patricia at TABIA at 416-263-3229.

Enterprise Toronto – free programs and seminars for business people.
www.enterprisetoronto.com/index.cfm?linkid=99&linktype=mainlink&fromurl=boxes&content_id=2580

AT THE BIAS

June 8-10-Dundas West and Little Portugal BIAs' Festa on Dundas –
www.DundasWestBIA.ca and www.littleportugal.ca

June 9- Yonge-Lawrence Village Day – sidewalk sales and entertainment.
www.YongeLawrenceVillage.com

June 14-16- Summer Fling in the Kingsway Sale at Royal York subway station from 9-6. www.kingswaybia.ca

June 16, 10-6 (with some later options) Roncy Rocks – One-day festival of local art and music. www.roncesvallesvillage.ca

June 17 – 3rd Annual Bloor Yorkville Exotic Car Show – 150 examples of classic and exotic cars. www.YorkvilleExotics.com

June 21-23- Bloor West Village Sidewalk Sale. www.BloorWestVillageBIA.ca

June 23-24- Fairbank Village Multicultural Summer Fest – Eglinton Ave. W from Dufferin to Chamberlain. Exotic animals, Dr. Draw and much more.
<http://fairbankvillagebia.ca>

June 26 from 12-9 – Mt. Pleasant Village Restaurantacular – Fine foods to give taste buds a tour, from \$2-6. www.mtpleasantvillage.ca

July 14- Bloor West Village July Festival – Petting zoo, rides, shows and much more. www.BloorWestVillageBIA.ca

LET US KNOW ABOUT YOUR UPCOMING EVENTS.

Send details to Patricia at TABIA who will publicize it on the TABIA website and share the info with *News & Views*. info@toronto-bia.com

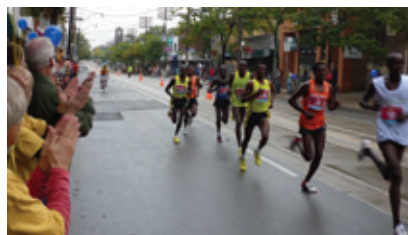
NEWS TO USE

GOOGLE MAPPING

Has Google Mapping approached your BIA yet to get permission to take exterior shots of businesses and to have you sign a waiver permitting them to do so? If so, please let Patricia at TABIA know at pmccartie@toronto-bia.com

RUNNING IN YOUR HOOD?

The Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon might be adding a few more neighbourhoods this year. They are working to develop a new route that will include parts of Church St. and Bloor St. that will extend west from Church St. to Parkside Dr. Like any event, your businesses might have mixed reactions to a closed street, but it's in your interest to find out how you can parlay the best result for everyone on that day – Sunday, October 14. To find out how you can get involved as a business community as well as a neighbourhood cheering section contact Bonnie Taylor at Tornadotaylor@icemice.ca



Elite runners hit The Beach

FOR BUSINESS OWNERS AND MANAGERS

HYDRO UPDATE

Want to know the latest? Come to the TABIA's June interdepartmental meeting to hear Hydro reps hopefully tell all and answer all.

TONNY LOUIE, A TOP CANADIAN IMMIGRANT

Tonny Louie, Chair of Toronto Chinatown BIA, a TABIA Board Director and a founder of the Toronto China Street Festival, was one of 25 community leaders who were selected in a national people's choice award recently, as winners of the fourth annual Top 25 Canadian Immigrants awards presented by *Canadian Immigrant* magazine and sponsored by RBC. More than 28,000 Canadians voted online. These winners will receive a commemorative certificate and a \$500 donation towards a registered Canadian charity of their choice. You can out about all entrants at www.canadianimmigrant.ca

MICROSOFT DELEGATES, HERE IN JULY

Techies from around the world will be in Toronto for a conference between July 9-13. If you think they might be exploring in your BIA, why not make them most welcome, with a welcome sign or nod. Think how that would make you feel, if you were acknowledged in a similar way!!

SEND PHOTOS! WE'RE HAVING A BIG, EYE-POPPING SUMMER ISSUE IN AUGUST SO PLEASE SEND PHOTOS OF YOUR EVENTS TO: DETSTEN@TORONTO-BIA.COM

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Contact TABIA at info@toronto-bia.com or 416-263-3295.
Website: <http://www.toronto-bia.com>

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This newsletter is also produced electronically and can be found at www.toronto-bia.com