

October 30/17

ESTONIAN CENTRE PROJECT UPDATE

Community meeting updates local ratepayers on proposed plans

An appreciative audience of area ratepayers filled the meeting hall at Tartu College for the community meeting on the Estonian Centre Project on the evening of October 30.

Many positive comments were received from those who attended on the quality of the project and the questions primarily centered on the uses for the building and the types of events that would be held there.

Holding this meeting is a required component of the planning process from the City of Toronto. Potential development plans must be shared with local residents so they are aware of the type of project that is proposed for their neighborhood.

Providing opening remarks at the meeting was Councillor Joe Cressy, who represents Ward 20 Trinity Spadina, and in whose area the proposed Estonian Centre on Madison Avenue is located.

“This project fits in extremely well with the neighborhood,” said Councillor Cressy. “We would be very pleased to have the Estonian Centre here in the Annex.”

He noted that many current development projects are much taller, and the proposed Estonian Centre with its modest two-storey structure and attractive modern design would be well received in the community.

Also providing details on the potential plans were David Kalm, Estonian Centre Project Manager, the architecture team and the planning consultant.

“We are working hard with all the organizations involved in a project of this nature and complexity,” David noted. “The Estonian-Canadian community is incredibly proud to be here in the Annex and continue the tradition of being part of the Bloor Street Cultural Corridor.”

Alar Kongats, of Kongats Architects Ltd., is the architect for the Estonian Centre Project. There were descriptive presentation boards set up at Tartu College so those in attendance could see what the proposed centre would look like.

Joining him on the team is heritage architect Robyn Huether, who specializes in projects that have a heritage element, like the site on Madison Ave.

Landscape Architects Alissa and Peter North of North Design Office Inc. is looking at the design for outdoor spaces, which are an integral part of the proposed plans.

One of the project assets that is most interesting is the public outdoor space, the inspiration of which came to Alar from Paley Park, an urban oasis in New York City.

“When I would visit my aunt in New York City, this was one of my favorite places to go,” Alar said. “It ultimately led to my interest in urban design.”

He explained in some detail how the building would be constructed and how the heritage house at 11 Madison would be integrated into the design.

The final speaker was Peter Smith, project planning consultant, from Bousfields Inc., who outlined the process for city approvals.

Anita Nippak Genua, a long-time Annex resident, attended the meeting and spoke about her enthusiasm for the project.

“I have a foot in both camps, being an Estonian-Canadian and a resident of the Annex for 18 years,” she said. “This project is a wonderful addition to this neighborhood with the way it blends history with a modern aesthetic. It will also serve our community’s diverse needs now and for future generations.”

The project team would like to thank all those who have submitted questions and comments via the website. If questions are raised, these will be addressed in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section of the website so that everyone can benefit from the shared information.

For more information, including a detailed list of questions and answers on the project, please go to www.estoniancentre.ca

You are also welcome to email questions and comments to info@estoniancentre.ca



Councillor Joe Cressy speaks in favour of the Estonian Centre Project at the Annex Ratepayers meeting held at Tartu College on Oct. 30.



Architect Alar Kongats presents to a full house at the Annex Ratepayers community meeting on Oct. 30 at Tartu College.



Alar Kongats describes proposal for Estonian Centre Project.