

Residents group challenges bid to narrow Lansdowne

Councillor says a door-to-door survey he did found only 20% opposed plan

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A newly formed residents group is challenging Councillor Adam Giambrone's claim that he carried out a door-to-door survey before pushing a plan to narrow Lansdowne Ave. between Bloor and College Sts.

The Toronto Lansdowne Residents Association wants council to reconsider its April decision to narrow the street by removing parking on the east side.

In response to complaints that he hadn't consulted residents, Giambrone said he'd gone door to door. The result, he said, was that half didn't care, 30 per cent supported narrowing and 20 per cent were opposed.

"Nobody can find any proof of this survey," said Sam Galati, who is leading the fight to have council reopen the issue.

"What we've done subsequently, after he made that statement, is we've gone door to door to each household," Galati said yesterday. "We have not found any evidence that a door-to-door survey (by Giambrone's office) took place."

Galati said there are about 200 properties on that stretch of Lansdowne and fewer than 10 per cent of residents support the narrowing.

In an interview Tuesday, Giambrone insisted he had done his survey last August or September, which included a visit to the Galati household.

"I personally am the one that did it," he said. "It took me two days."

Lansdowne, which carries 17,000 vehicles daily, is a route for transit and fire vehicles and not a good candidate for narrowing, Galati said.

Narrowing the road from 11.6 metres wide to 10.2 metres this year will make room for a wider boulevard on the east with trees, a new planting bed at the southwest corner of Bloor and Lansdowne, and a new entry to MacGregor Park at Whytock Ave.

"This is a road with a bus route on it," Galati said. "Maybe on a quiet residential street it makes sense because you're not contending with 17,000 vehicles a day."

A staff report said the street has two bus routes, the 47 Lansdowne and 402 Parkdale. Traffic volume peaks at 900 vehicles an hour in the morning and 600 vehicles in the afternoon rush.

There's a fire station just north of Queen St. and the stretch is a primary response route, the report said.

Fire officials are concerned the plan "will reduce the available road width, increase congestion on Lansdowne Ave., reduce space for their vehicles to manoeuvre around stopped vehicles and increase response times."