

The Northcliffe Village Residents' Association supports the Regal Heights Village BIA request for police to address recent concerns to businesses, property owners and community members. Read the full letter from the BIA below.

Dear BIA Members,

Over the last several weeks, some of you have approached the BIA to raise concerns about the increase in vagrancy, intoxicated individuals and groups, and unruly people entering businesses and causing disruption along St Clair Ave West and its side streets. As a result of these concerns, I contacted Sergeant Peter Wallace of Division 13 of the Toronto Police Service to specifically request a response to the situation, citing the marked increase in intoxicated individuals and vagrants causing disturbances within local businesses, harassing people walking on the sidewalks, and scaring children. I also mentioned this had become a serious issue for the general sentiment of the area as a whole by shoppers and patrons hoping to use struggling businesses and services in our area during the pandemic reopening. Some of these individuals have been aggressively panhandling, walking into businesses and causing scenes, are directly confrontational to business owners and patrons, and have displayed a total disregard for the community. They are even seen in parks where children would normally play, and their presence is disruptive to families with young children.

Despite this email communication being sent on July 9th, 2021 and having been responded to with the following comment "Hi Connor, I will ensure officers patrol the area on a regular basis whenever they are available. Thanks.", it is quite evident that there has been little regard to the concerns raised. Today as yet another example of these concerns, two businesses in the center of our BIA (Barista & Chef and Latin Fiesta) have fallen victim to the specific concerns raised in early July. Their properties were damaged this morning as a result of physical confrontation, with blood on the sidewalk, tables destroyed, windows smashed and planters seriously damaged. As this was obviously done in the late evening, I was quite surprised to have seen it at 8am as I was walking to our business, with no visible police response between the evening and 8am despite "regular patrols". I contacted 13 Division and requested officers attend and address the damage, contact the property and business owners, and begin the process of assessing the events that led up to the damage and begin the cleanup process.

This morning I have send a follow-up email to Sergeant Peter Wallace and the Community Response lead for 13 Division detailing the damaged properties I discovered this morning and the conclusions that can be drawn from them. I also reiterated the concerns I raised on July 9th and highlighted that today's events were directly related to and a result of those original concerns. I have requested a formal response to the community, businesses, and property owners on these matters as well as a detailed action plan for the area to address these apparent shortfalls in police response.

I would also encourage any businesses, property owners, or community members who would like to add their voice to these concerns to share your thoughts and experiences directly with Sergeant Peter Wallace via email at peter.wallace@torontopolice.on.ca at your convenience, to ensure formal action is taken to address these areas of community concern and safety.

Kind regards,

Connor Pierce
Chair (Acting), Regal Heights Village BIA
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