

# CONDO OF THE YEAR – fourth quarter finalist

Harbourside, YCC #510

By MICHELLE RAMSAY-BORG

*Something for Everybody, Created By Everybody!*

CCI Toronto is thrilled to announce that Harbour Square (HarbourSide) has been announced as the fourth quarter finalist of the newly launched Condo of the Year Award. The following article was written as part of the corporation's submission for entry to the contest. Our congratulations are extended to YCC #510!

Further details on this contest may be found on page 32 or on the CCI-T website at [www.cci-toronto.org](http://www.cci-toronto.org). The 2009 annual grand prize winner will be selected from amongst the four quarter finalists in the early fall of 2009 and will be announced at CCI Toronto Annual General Meeting in November 2009..



Jane Jacobs famously said:

*“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”<sup>1</sup>*

Although not as big as a city, thirty-year-old HarbourSide, one of Toronto's first waterfront condominiums, is a full-fledged community with a population of about 2,000, making it the size of the village of Grand Bend on Lake Huron.

Our ‘village’ has long held the belief expressed so aptly by Ms Jacobs. We have encapsulated it in this guiding principle: *What our Condominium will be depends on its owners and residents.*

The beauty of this principle—which headlines the “President’s Message” in every issue of our newsletter—is that it encourages both vision and inclusion. It is the key to our success in *“providing something for everybody”*.

## Introducing HarbourSide

Near the foot of Bay Street; steps from the financial and entertainment districts; and minutes from access to trains, planes, ferries and highways; HarbourSide combines the best of many worlds.

Completed in 1979, the 37-storey HarbourSide complex contains 602 suites that range from efficiency studios to penthouses and terrace homes.

Amenities include the:

- comfortable HarbourSide Lounge and elegant Tiffany Room, both wonderful venues for events;
- south-side 7th floor landscaped terrace with patio furniture, BBQs and a deck overlooking the lake;
- quiet north-side garden terrace;
- billiards room and library-conference room;
- 60-foot saltwater pool;
- fully-equipped gym with change rooms, saunas, a squash court and a fitness classroom; and,
- a car wash bay and free visitor parking in the garage.

We also appreciate a 24/7 concierge, well-lit enclosed parking—accessible only by people with security fobs—and excellent round-the-clock security services, including parking garage patrols.

## What We Are and Will Be

### 'All-in' Governance

Close to 50 residents, including owners and tenants, contribute their time and efforts to the Board of Directors and seven Board committees, which in total hold 100 or more meetings a year.

Our Directors have always shared two highly prized skills: professional expertise and governance experience. As a result, their commitment to meeting or exceeding all legislated, fiduciary and ethical expectations has always



A mandatory annual maintenance inspection of each suite includes verifying the condition of balcony railings and checking for potential fire hazards.

been exemplary.

One of the Board's key responsibilities is providing direction and oversight to Brookfield Residential Services Ltd., with whom we share a relationship characterized by trust and respect. The Board also oversees the work of seven committees, including:

1. **Communications:** which has



A comprehensive resident survey resulted in a number of new amenities, including a large deck that overlooks Lake Ontario, and BBQs and additional furniture on the terrace.

published our award-winning<sup>2</sup> *UPDATE* newsletter ten times a year for 28 years, and sponsors several popular events such as the annual photo contest.

2. **Energy:** responsible for the recently-completed Phase I Energy Retrofit which is expected to reduce our natural gas consumption by 40%, representing an annual saving of \$216,500 and a carbon footprint decrease of 700 tons per year.
3. **Finance:** whose goals include keeping the annual maintenance rate below the cost of living and handling major expenses without depleting the reserve fund.
4. **Human Resources:** whose responsibilities include matters related to our 35 full- and part-time staff, and our IS contracted security and cleaning staff.
5. **Property:** whose projects—such as the Lounge and Tiffany Room renovation, slated for 2009, are closely followed by residents.
6. **Security:** which is responsible for our recognized leadership in adopting new safety and security technologies; putting in place effective emergency preparedness measures; and, setting high standards for security and crime prevention.
7. **Waste Management:** ad hoc sub-committee planning the implementation of the 'Best Practices' recommendations that resulted from a site-wide waste management audit conducted by Spinnaker Recycling Corp. consultants.

The Harbour Square Joint Committee—which includes the



## Do you think your condominium has what it takes to be named as the CCI Toronto Chapter Condo of the Year?



CCI is pleased to announce the condo of the year award, open to all CCI Toronto & Area Chapter corporate members. The contest will open July 1st, 2008 and will run until June 30th, 2009. Quarterly finalists will be selected by the CCI-Toronto Membership Committee and the winner of each quarter will be featured in an upcoming quarterly issue of the CCI CondoVoice magazine. The Grand Prize winner will be selected from amongst the four quarterly finalists by the Public Relations Committee and will be announced in the fall of 2009. The grand prize winner will be announced at the 2009 Annual General Meeting and will receive a street entry sign for their corporation – a prize worth up to \$5,000.

Judging Criteria for this award will include any or all of the following:

- Good Governance
- Social Fabric of the Community
- Energy Initiatives
- Effective Use of Committees
- Communications
- Forward 'Thinkingness'
- Consistency
- Environmental Concerns
- Any other unique approach or program

Interested applicants should forward their submission, including photos and an article outlining why they feel their corporation is worthy of this award to:

CCI Toronto and Area Chapter, 2175 Sheppard Ave. East, Suite #306, Toronto, ON M2J 1W8 or email to [ccitoronto@taylorenterprises.com](mailto:ccitoronto@taylorenterprises.com)

president and one director from each of three condo corporations: YCC 288 at 33 Harbour Square; YCC 510 at 55/65; and MTCC 949 at 77/99-completes our governance structure.

The Joint Committee meets every quarter to discuss services and expenses in common to all three corporations, including the popular transportation service provided by our fleet of four buses.

A Tradition of Forward Thinking and Open Communication

The Board's forward thinking led it to purchase defibrillators. As a result of that purchase, and the subsequent in-house training, two staff members recently saved a resident's life, for which they received a Toronto Emergency Medical Services Citizen Award.



Many get-togethers, like our Canada Day picnic and kids' Christmas party, are powered by volunteers who set up, cook, serve, clean up and make sure that Santa drops in.

Additionally:

- The Board reviews its priorities regularly, adjusting its spending to take into account urgency, cost, and government requirements.
- Committee Chairs stay informed on upcoming legislation in areas such as waste management, energy consumption, privacy, etc. to ensure that our condo is prepared to make the transition to changed requirements at a minimum cost.
- The Board continuously encourages residents to offer suggestions, many of which have been implemented.
- Additionally, the Board holds regular resident update meetings, chaired by the President.
- Day-to-day, we post operations and special event notices in elevators and high-traffic areas.
- Month-to-month, residents are informed of the business of the

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Board and its committees via reports published in our newsletter and, of course, Board Meeting Minutes are available for viewing at any time.

## Something for Everybody

### HarbourSide Community

No week goes by at HarbourSide without several opportunities for interaction and sharing in a social setting:

- Our Communications Committee stages special events throughout the year including the Annual Photo Contest.
- The 7th Floor Lounge Steward plans frequent social get-togethers and parties.
- Volunteers organize our Annual Arts and Craft Show.
- Dozens of residents and owners, ranging in age from teens to seniors and singles and couples alike, initiate, lead or help out with clubs, classes, hobby groups, parties, fundraisers and outings.
- A succession of devoted volunteer librarians have, over the past three decades, built and maintained our library of thousands of books – all of which were donated by residents.
- Volunteers organize affordable bus trips to the Orillia and Niagara Falls casinos.
- A group of our volunteers, nicknamed the ‘HarbourSide Grannies’, supports the global organization, *Grannies in Lesotho*.

- Residents have our pick of several free fitness classes sponsored by our Condo Corporation.

### Waterfront Community

HarbourSide has long been a hatching ground for community-builders. A large group of our residents is very active in organizations along the Central Waterfront, notably the York Quay Neighbourhood Association and the Queens Quay Harbourfront BIA (Business Improvement Area). One resident, Ulla Colgrass—who was the founding Chair of the YQNA—was recognized by the *Toronto Star* for her community service.



HarbourSide residents are amongst the waterfront's most dependable supporters of events such as the Mayor's 20-Minute Clean-Up.

Among their results are improvements of parks and monuments, removal of illegal posters, recognition of history and landmarks, and plans for new parks and connections to the city.

In addition, HarbourSide residents:

- Support Harbourfront Centre and the Harbourfront Community Centre;



YCC 510 residents make up a large contingent of volunteers who have worked tirelessly to build a community along the Central Waterfront over the past three decades.

- Attend and participate in consultation sessions and meetings hosted by elected officials, the City, Toronto Port Authority, Waterfront Toronto, Community Air and others; and,
- Turn out for neighbourhood events such as the Giant Community Fundraising Garage Sale.

As you can see, leading and nurturing our ‘village’ requires commitment and time and thanks to a large corps of great volunteers. We are gifted with both in abundance. Add the dedicated staff—including a few who have celebrated 25 years of service with us—and you have HarbourSide: a vibrant community worthy of CCI’s Condo of the Year Award.

<sup>1</sup> *Jacobs, J. The Death and Life of Great American Cities. Random House, New York, NY, USA, 1962.*

<sup>2</sup> *UPDATE won the 2007 CCI Award for Most Outstanding Condominium Newsletter.* ■



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