

# GLENS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



Newsletter – Fall/Winter 2009-2010

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It is an interesting and challenging job to preside over the Glens. Our community is one of the largest privately serviced neighbourhoods surrounded by urban, agricultural and industrial land. Glens' urban location further exposes this unique community to a myriad of challenges. As our distinctiveness is only narrowly acknowledged by the city, privately serviced urban neighbourhoods do not enjoy the same level of protection afforded rural residents. Hence to protect our bio-diversity we had to become agile and versatile monitoring changing City of Ottawa policies and planning strategies. But we also have to cautiously observe federal and provincial activities especially those related to water legislation and environment. As former "Nepeanities" for years we have been collectively waiting for the perceived benefits of amalgamation - that have yet to materialize - but cost us losing our debt-free City of Nepean and its many benefits (water/septic grants in particular). It is now painfully obvious that low tax rates and other measures implemented to alleviate urban and rural resistance toward amalgamation need to be addressed as aging infrastructures, transit, drainage, roads, river pollution require generous financing. Substantial tax increases are being considered and the City staff is coming up with creative ways to raise revenues. As a community we will be facing many existing and new challenges and it is critical to be aware and prepared. Therefore it is good to know that we are one of the most civic minded communities, ready to stand up for our way of living. I hope residents will continue to speak up, comment and question plans and initiatives undertaken by the City that will directly impact our community. In the meantime let us continue to trust that 2010 will bring new solutions and peace and stability to the entire community.

## GLENS 2009 AGM

It was the best attended AGM in years (standing room only and rows of residents occupying low benches after the school ran out of chairs) proving once again that residents know what they want and can speak their mind when it is needed. The meeting was heavily focused on water, servicing and related issues. It was obvious looking at the large crowd that municipal servicing was not the

option endorsed by the community. Substantial costs not readily offset by an increase in property value, altering community character and finally the perceived unfairness of having to pay for the infrastructure being owned by the city and located on the city property resulted in the large majority endorsing the status quo. Many who could not attend sent letters and e-mails or simply called to register their discontent. Residents were also adamant that the issue should not be argued again. However, this debate was needed to assess residents' expectations and the strength of the community position and to give the executive board a mandate to devise the long-term strategy.

This was the first time that an AGM meeting was attended by our MPP Lisa McLeod. She shared with residents her concerns regarding the harmonized tax proposal and listened to our concerns regarding water safety and the environment.

## GLENS WATER SURVEY RESULTS

The 2009 survey was delivered to all households within the community. The analysis was adjusted for those receiving partial services and those who are renting in the community. Several households chose to respond anonymously. To be able to assess those responses, the surveys were coded indicating the general response area (Grenfell, Pineglen East and West and Clearview). This allowed for a better interpretation of final results. Results clearly indicate that a great majority of residents prefer to remain on private service. Most residents indicated satisfaction with their septic and well water. Pineglen West and Grenfell had the highest number of respondents, with entire streets providing feedback on servicing. These two areas seem to be united in their desire to preserve the status quo. Respondents from the Pineglen Annex and Pineglen East also preferred private services. Some interest in considering alternate servicing was expressed in those areas with high concentration of shallow wells. Clearview residents (some being partially serviced) were underrepresented in the survey.

Residents are understandably shocked at the high cost of a local improvement project. But most interesting, the survey asked whether residents would consider connecting to municipal servicing if there was no cost implication to doing so, the response remained negative. The survey clearly found that there is more to consider than just cost and convenience. Many residents have already invested in new well/septic systems or in

improvements to the existing ones. Consequently, they indicated strong opposition to municipal servicing.

The survey outcome was shared with the City staff and will be further discussed on the community website.

## **WATER STUDY**

Many residents took advantage of the water study being currently conducted by the City of Ottawa and had their water tested. The results are private hence the findings will be generalized to preserve residents' anonymity. The study is nearing its completion. GCA had also asked that the findings be accompanied by an information session to clarify the study results and to suggest possible solutions to common problems dealing with water quality and quantity. We also asked the consultants to try to identify possible sources of impact on the community aquifers. With many new residents, information session may also be beneficial to address common misconceptions, offer useful tips how to care for their well and address other relevant issues.

## **SERVICING STUDY**

The City has recently initiated a \$140,000 study led by Robinson Consultants Inc. to identify specific public water and sewer servicing options for the Glens and Merivale Gardens communities, which together represent the largest privately serviced urban area (inside the greenbelt). In the last year, among about the 550 or so households in the Glens, some property owners indicated an interest in connecting to both the public water (6 households) and sanitary sewer systems (5 households). The study will ensure a site specific request in the context of system-wide impacts and constraints. The servicing study is not intended to be used to promote central servicing. The cost of the study will be recovered over time from the interested households, subject to successful petitions.

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFETY**

Residents may have noticed increased police presence. Bike patrols and unmarked cruisers were involved in the safety blitz on our streets. Several stop signs were targeted (especially the one near the playground and the tennis crossing). Speeding along Pineglen, MacFarlane and Merivale has also been monitored. GCA accompanied community police in a drive through Pineglen and Grenfell Parks to point out problem places. The police patrol also visited Pinhey Forest parking lot #15 on many occasions. Observation and discussions with parking lot visitors at any given time resulted in a

proposal for a special joint project between the Ottawa Police and the NCC to ensure the safety of all residents visiting this area.

Please note that pranks like eggs throwing, spreading feces or burning garbage bags may look "hilarious" from the teenage perspective, but if a window breaks or fire spreads to an abutting structure, consequences might be huge. In some cases, parents could be held responsible for any legal costs incurred as well as for resulting damages.

## **CITY NEWS**

**New Fees/Taxes Proposed.** The City is reviewing the method used to recover costs for the delivery of drinking water, sanitary and stormwater services. The proposal calls for charges related to stormwater/ditches service and maintenance that residents in the unserviced areas are apparently receiving "free of charge". Two options were presented that will result in charges between \$6 and \$11 per month. Should the property tax model be chosen those charges might be higher as the average property value of \$292,750 was chosen to calculate charges. During the course of public consultations different levels of servicing in the rural and urban unserviced areas were mentioned. Questions were also asked regarding contributions to the Capital Tax Levy (35% of which indirectly finances water/sewer infrastructure). Comparison of servicing levels resulted in City staff initially agreeing with the residents' position and suggesting the addition of an Option "E" suggesting that drainage costs in unserviced areas be rolled into the total Roads Budget and applied city-wide. At this time it is unclear whether this option will be brought forward to the council. The City claims that the proposed rate structure change is intended to be rate neutral; improve revenue stability; rate transparency and fairness. For more information call 613-580-2424 ext. 23307 or visit: [www.ottawa.ca/ratestudy](http://www.ottawa.ca/ratestudy).

**The Urban Tree Conservation By-law.** As of September 1, 2009 residents who want to remove a "distinctive" tree must obtain permit from the City. The by-law applies to all species of trees on all privately owned properties within the urban area of the city. Distinctive tree is defined as a tree having more than 50 centimetres (20 inches) in diameter and having a circumference of 157 centimetres (62 inches). There is currently no permit fee but you have to hire an arborist to evaluate a tree and prepare a report. This may change in 2010 as the Planning Committee is considering a permit fee of \$50 to recover the costs of the by-law's administration.

**Trees for Tomorrow.** Ottawa's final year of Reforestation and Environmental Enhancement Program is aiming at planting 100,000 trees in the City of Ottawa by 2010. Residents are eligible to register for a tree to plant on their property and have it delivered at no charge. The program is accepting registrations for the spring 2010 delivery. To celebrate the final year of the

program, residents who have previously received a tree through the program will now be eligible to receive a second tree! For more information call 311 or visit: [https://ottawa.ca/survey/tree/delivery\\_en.html](https://ottawa.ca/survey/tree/delivery_en.html)

**Rural Clean Water program.** The program is currently under evaluation and the report presented to the council included vital recommendations that a separate program be established for residential well and septic rehabilitation. Infrastructure Services and Community Sustainability staff were instructed to ensure that any modified well and septic program includes equitable treatment of all residential properties with private well and septic systems in Ottawa (there will be no discrimination based on properties located inside or outside the urban area). GCA has been actively lobbying for this change for several years and was involved in various aspects of this review as were two councillors Jan Harder and Gord Hunter both familiar with our unique characteristics.

**Green Bins.** The new bins arrived in our neighbourhood and the pickups have started. Green bins have already created controversy from rural residents to environmentalists and even to some participants in a pilot project. Some of the dissatisfaction relates to insufficient consultations and to the associated costs. A fairly broad definition of organic waste and processing issues has overwhelmed the project before it even started. Our area has many environmentally conscious residents and avid composters. Some have refused to participate in the program even though they are supporting the recycling ideals and have been composting for years. Residents living alone and seniors also expressed concerns with the program.

The list of acceptable items is long and overlaps extensively with composting and other programs. The tips how to operate are included with the bin and can also be accessed at: [www.greenbin.ca](http://www.greenbin.ca).

Time will show how successful the program will be. Let us hope that residents will continue to compost and be environmentally responsible. We can also hope that the city will find the right balance of incentives rather than use coercive measures such as the "garbage police."

**Budget Discussion.** The proposal calls for a 3.9 per cent increase, which is a far cry from the proposed no-tax hike policy. An out of court settlement for transit in the amount of \$36.7 million and the costs associated with the green bin program are largely responsible for the tax increases. Funding is also needed for information technology (expanding eServices) and number of social initiatives. You can attend the budget meeting at Nepean Sportplex

on January 20 from 7 to 9 p.m. (Salon A). Councillors Hunter, Harder, Desroches and Chiarelli will be attending,

**Municipal Election.** On Monday, October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010, Ottawa residents will have a chance to elect a new Mayor, City Councilors and school board Trustees. Mayoral candidates to date include: (1) Alex Cullen who will run on a platform of transit, transparency, and "reasonable" tax increases; (2) Jim Watson, who plans to outline "a thoughtful and affordable plan to help restore the city's sense of purpose and stature". He is not comfortable with the costs of the current transit plan, and he will "support an agreement to redevelop Lansdowne Park as long as the final plan meets the conditions set out by city council, as well as the needs of taxpayers"; and (3) Robert G. Gauthier, former publisher of the independent newspaper National Capital News who is running for mayor as "a matter of principle," but he has no platform. Gauthier is describing himself as "just an ordinary guy."

## PROVINCIAL NEWS

Ontario Tire Stewardship is to implement and operate the Used Tires Program to divert scrap tires away from burning and landfills. The program will eliminate the "disposal fee" currently paid to get rid of old tires – whether or not the new tires are purchased – making it easy and free to get old tires recycled. They can be dropped at the registered Collectors points across Ontario. More at: <http://www.ontariots.ca/?q>AboutOTSNew>

As of January 1, 2010 the province is cutting personal income taxes for 93 per cent of Ontario taxpayers, lowering tax rate for from 6.05 per cent to 5.05 per cent (for the first tax bracket). The province introduces a new permanent Ontario Sales Tax Credit up to \$260 per year and provides increasing property tax relief for seniors and low income earners. As of July 1, 2010 GST and Ontario sales tax will be merged into a single harmonized sales tax (HST) of 13 per cent. Basic groceries, most health and education services, prescription drugs and childcare, prepared food and beverages up to \$4.00 and print newspapers will not be subject to the HST.

## FEDERAL NEWS

Greenbelt consultation entered the "visioning stage" to define the vision for the National Capital Greenbelt for the next 50 years and beyond. Following the National Public Forum, the NCC will organize three public consultation sessions in late January (26, 27 and 28) to obtain public input on the future vision for the Greenbelt. Residents are invited to attend and provide their vision of future greenbelt. For example, should it be expanded, offered legal protection, how to address environmental concerns and preserve bio-diversity, preferred land uses etc. Initial ideas concentrate around the preservation of the environment and the importance of farming in the Greenbelt.

## Community Contacts

**Tennis Club** can be contacted by calling: Richard Lovatt  
613 225-3636 or Amie Lee 613 224-3096  
[www.glenstennisclub.ca](http://www.glenstennisclub.ca)

### Your Elected Officials

Can be reached at:

**Gord Hunter Councillor  
Knoxdale - Merivale**

110 Laurier Avenue West  
Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1  
Ph: 613 580-2479; Fax: 613 580-2519  
Gord.Hunter@ottawa.ca  
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**Pierre Poilievre M.P.**

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**Lisa MacLeod M.P.P. Nepean-Carleton**

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### Easy Access Calls

311 - municipal servicing  
211 - provincial servicing

## Glens Community Association Executive Committee Members 2009 – 2010

<b>President</b>	Agnes Warda .....	226-9576
<b>Secretary</b>	Mary O'Donohue .....	225-7984
<b>Treasurer</b>	Betty-Anne Wilks.....	226-5021

**Directors**

<b>City Liaison</b>	Michele Lajeunesse.....	225-9630
<b>Planning</b>	Susan Briard.....	226-8790
<b>Septic Issues</b>	Elizabeth O'Connor.....	225-3187
<b>Transportation</b>	Carol Ermanovics.....	226-4811

**Directors at Large**

Penny Hammell .....	224-5159
Nardin Ghahary.....	224-8014

<b>Past President</b>	David Perron.....	225-7325
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<b>Task Force on Clean Water</b>	Dick de Jong.....	224-5593
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<b>Community Events</b>	Wilma McCormack.....	274-0143
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### Glens Community Association

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[www.glenscommunity.ca](http://www.glenscommunity.ca)

### Neighbourhood Watch Reminder

**To report:**

- |                                                                 |                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| •..a life-threatening emergency or crime in progress .....      | <b>Call</b><br>911 |
| •..an ongoing incident (no violence or threat of violence)..... | 230-6211           |
| •..an incident .....                                            | 236-1222, ext.7300 |