

GLENS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



Newsletter – Fall/Winter 2010

Community News

GLENS TRAFFIC CONCERNS



Our peaceful neighborhood has been the scene of two serious traffic accidents lately. One ended up in a fatality, and in another one the car was totaled and a resident's lawn and trees were heavily damaged. Our Community is becoming increasingly concerned that speeding, careless driving and ignoring traffic signs is becoming a serious problem. Interestingly, it was identified as a major problem in our ward by the police and supported by statistics. The issue will be followed up with the community police to ensure residents safety. In the meantime speed display boards will be deployed at Merivale, Tennyson and Pineglen creating road profile allowing for better police enforcement.

PRINCE OF WALES - GROWING CONTROVERSY

Prince of Wales Drive is often seen as a scenic route along the Rideau River providing access to the city from southern communities that are currently undergoing explosive growth in both residential and commercial sectors. Plans predict that the Barrhaven population will grow to 104,000 by 2031 and that the airport, RCMP and South Merivale Business Park expansion will increase commuter traffic.

It is expected that the Prince of Wales project "will be a mega-million-dollar project". Voices are being heard "that it is an unlikely public project for Ottawa at a time of hyper-concern about traffic congestion, air quality, urban sprawl and the unaffordable car commute". Many residents are opposing the project and the central core councillors have indicated they might not be interested in supporting the project that could increase traffic congestion in their neighbourhoods and in the downtown area. Yet others conclude that because "Ottawa is half the size of Prince Edward Island, no matter how sophisticated a public transit system we have, suburban areas will continue to rely on personal vehicles".

The main discussion focuses on the fact that the newly widened road will remain two lanes from Fisher Ave north to Baseline and two lanes from Fisher (going toward Hog's Back), continuing north to Baseline where it will run into a bottleneck at Dynes Rd. Opinions in the media stated that "it is nonsensical to widen the road, thus inviting more drivers to use it, only to have it narrow near the downtown, causing great frustration for those drivers". Although some are advocating cancelling the entire project, others are pointing towards an alternate solution that would see the Strandherd bridge providing crossing options: Woodroffe twinned with Strandherd to POW and River Road twinned with Manotick to Riverside Dr (which is already four lanes).

In the meantime a number of controversies have arisen in communities along POW. There are concerns with noise and proposed mitigation measures as the validity and findings of the noise study have been questioned. Communities are also disputing any need for expropriation beyond the city's right of way. As well, they have raised vibration concerns related to the existence of leda clay which is prone to liquefaction and sliding when exposed to vibration and excessive soil moisture. Alignment and pattern of servicing roads, some cutting through residents' properties, are causing some disputes among neighbours. The re-alignment of Waterbend and Deakin was considered and not recommended since the impacts on private properties (at 2 Waterbend Lane and Metropolitan Church) were deemed too excessive. The recommendation is to have a right-in/ right- out access at that intersection for safety reasons given the high volumes of traffic projected by the planning horizon (2031) in that location.

Finally, there are financial and environmental concerns associated with the proposed sewer and water main construction as the possible impact (well drying, septic damage due to rock blasting, dewatering and aquifer disturbances) has not been addressed at this stage. Hunt Club Road, and the bridge in particular, is at its capacity during rush hours, so the next step would be to widen Hunt Club from four to six lanes, another massive and costly project (to be done by 2032). There are many issues that may increase the projected costs such as: need to widen VIA bridge, cattle crossing (culvert construction), service roads and their realignment, noise barriers and vibration measures. It is not surprising that there are calls to cancel the project. The timing for implementation of our segment (Merivale Road to Hunt Club Road) is currently 2023-2031. It could be closer to 2023 than to 2031 pending review and council and budget approvals. Due to higher than anticipated growth in Ottawa South, it has been determined that more time is needed to examine future transportation trends.

The City is currently in the process of conducting a detailed analysis of transportation issues in this area thus extending the timing of this project.

VIA RAIL FENCING PROGRAM CREATES A LOTS OF NOISE



Residents of Pineglen awakened to a noise from the chippers, slashers and other heavy machinery chewing its way through the "Greenbelt Forest" that for over 30 years grew beside VIA tracks. Gone were the trees and bushes, ducks and other forms of wildlife. Residents ran in panic as huge chunks of trees and branches began to fly in the air and landing in their pools or on their lawns. Eventually we all learned that VIA has decided to embark on a safety fencing program and was clear cutting its way through years of trees, shrubs and undergrowth. Pineglen residents' intervention resulted in VIA notifying the Grenfell residents late Friday evening advising them that the cutting would commence in Grenfell on Saturday morning.

Up to now, we are not sure why our good environmentally responsible and supposedly green neighbour VIA needed to go to such extremes,

especially since they were able to install the fence in other areas by merely cutting a swath of land to gain access. Although we are happy with VIA's stand on safety, many feel that at least a risk assessment and proper notification should have been provided. Environmental protection is an explicit objective of the new declaration of the National Transportation Policy stressing respect for the environment and commitment to addressing the need to preserve the natural environment for current and future generations. Furthermore, VIA and the Canadian Transportation Commission have a commitment to respect the environment and work closely with communities - "through the communities it serves, the partnerships it forges and the actions it takes, VIA takes the environment and Canadian communities to heart".

A VIA spokesperson stated that environmental assessment was not required because "while birds may have lived very temporarily in the trees that were cut down, they likely did not nest there for long because of loud sounds and vibrations from the trains". Residents have observed and enjoyed many species of mammals and birds that inhabited this wooded area and they surely miss the nesting ducks (migratory birds) that had their home there for many years. Based on wildlife centre experience this may also mean that wildlife, with little other alternative, may seek access to people's homes over the winter months and during next spring's birthing season, causing problems for them and the residents. It is ironic that VIA's website promotes its commitment to the environment through Earth Day partnerships and other initiatives that extol its 'passion for the environment in every corner of the organization'. Residents certainly did not perceive VIA actions as good for the environment. VIA's exploits affected drainage, damaged culverts and fences, caused problems with pools and worst of all removed many mature trees and damaged others (beyond repair). VIA has issued a number of conflicting statements justifying its actions. Residents are left wondering did Via Rail really need to decimate hedges, remove mature trees and shrubs and generally leave nothing behind only to now say that they will allow it to "re-grow naturally". No one questions VIA rights to deal with safety concerns, but many "really green" rail companies are committed to protecting natural resources and to conserving biodiversity on their land, they employ arborists and plant vegetation that does not require such drastic interventions. Perhaps VIA would like to meet with residents and discuss company plans for "greening" the greenbelt through VIA's corridor once again and provide a valuable wildlife environment. Let's hope, as it is stressed in VIA's corporate site, that "beyond policies and procedures, VIA's commitment to the environment expresses itself through concrete action".

GLENS CHILDREN'S GARDEN: PLANTING THE SEED!



Glens residents are considering the creation of a Children's Garden at the Pineglen Park. Its purpose will be to educate children about our relationship with nature while having fun in the process. The options are endless - a woodlawn or butterfly garden, a variety of plants, stone pathways, etc. It could be a teaching garden or a giving garden, simply a place for community gathering. Pineglen Park as it is today beside the playground does not offer much space to stimulate family

functions, community picnics or otherwise engage. The inception meeting is planned for November. Please let us know if you are interested.

FALL CLEANING THE CAPITAL

Many thanks to Glens residents who came out on September 25 to help clean up our two parks. Garbage, dried branches and leaves were collected and removed, especially near or at the playground. Let's hope that the Spring cleaning will have good weather and increased participation from residents!

A NEIGHBOUR'S HELPFUL HINT: STOP THAT SULPHUR SMELL

If you're experiencing the smell of rotten eggs when you turn on the tap, consider asking your water heater supplier to replace the existing anode rods to ones made of aluminum. Typically, the rods are made of magnesium or a magnesium/aluminum alloy. They work best for softer water. In the Glens, where the well water is hard, insist on aluminum rods in your hot water tank. These have a small amount of zinc in them which fights the sulphur smell. Have the supplier also drop some zinc pellets at the bottom of the tank. It'll make a big difference to the smell and taste of the water. Anode rods are important in a hot water tank because they protect the metal tank from rusting out. However, a by-product of the process can be gases that are unpleasant. Anode rods have a lifespan of maybe five years, depending on how much hot water you use, so get them inspected occasionally and replace them when they're worn out. When aluminum/zinc rods are installed, it's good to do a chlorine wash of the heater tank to get rid of any lingering smells. For more information, check out: www.hot-water-heaters-reviews.com/anode-rod.html.

City News

ELECTION 2010: PLEASE VOTE!! IT'S WORTH THE EFFORT!!



Monday, October 25th, 2010, we get our democratic chance to elect a new mayor, city councilors and school board trustees. There appears to be 20 mayoral candidates and 10 councilor-hopefuls registered in our ward 9.

KNOXDALE – MERIVALE
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REGISTER FOR A FREE TREE!



Register and receive a tree delivered right to your door. One tree per year will be delivered on a first-come, first serve basis while quantities last. There is no charge for the tree or delivery. Registrations for 2011 will be placed on a waiting list pending 2011 budget approval. Registered residents will be contacted in early 2011 with information on the status of this

program. Trees will be in pots and will arrive with planting instructions, a rodent guard, and a small bag of compost and mulch. You may register on line or by calling 3-1-1.

STRANDHERD-ARMSTRONG BRIDGE



It took more than 15 years, but the Strandherd-Armstrong bridge is officially under construction. The bridge will be built on the east shore and slid into place when completed. The 143 metre bridge will have 10 lanes (four for traffic, and two each for buses, bikes, and turning). The bridge will cost \$50-million, shared by all three levels of government. The bridge will be completed and in service by the spring of 2012. Please note: during the construction, the speed limit along Prince of Wales Dr. has been reduced from 80 km/h to 60 km/h.

CALL 3-1-1:

- To report a street light outage - in order to expedite repairs and reduce confusion, please provide a municipal address that references the street light.
- To report any road deficiencies such as potholes.
- When the snow banks restrict sightlines, travel widths and pedestrian traffic or to relieve trapped water on the roadway or sidewalk.
- To pickup dumped garbage (e.g.. Pinhey forest area)

WINTER BY-LAWS

By-laws prohibit the disposal of snow or ice on roadways, across the road or in any park. It is also prohibited to place markers on any portion of a road. Residents may continue to define their property line by using wooden markers that should be no larger than a hockey stick.

After snow accumulation of 7 cm or more, roads will be plowed within 10 hours. Accumulation of 10 cm will result in a cleaning crew visit within 16 hours. Roads will be plowed to a snow packed surface and de-icing materials might be applied to keep roads safe. City crews will not plow residential roads every time there is a snowfall.

SAFETY AUDIT



You can request police representatives (from your community police centre) to visit your home to provide a safety audit - assessing ways to make your home safer. The audit is based on a checklist, and participants are provided with a booklet that identifies safety improvements, provides crime prevention tips and promotes other crime prevention initiatives offered by the Police Service. Our police centre is located in Barrhaven at 100 Malvern Dr. Call Const. Tara McDougall at 613-236-1222, ext 2342.

Provincial News

TIME-OF-USE RATES

Residents in our area will be transitioning to Time-of-Use rates as of November 1st. Time-of-use pricing is introduced to provide

incentives to conserve electricity. However, it seems that the strategy is not working. Premier Dalton McGuinty indicated that Ontario might rethink its time-of-use hydro pricing strategy. It looks like that off-peak rates are too high and the night time and weekend rates are not low enough to provide meaningful savings. If you plan to use major appliances in the night hours ensure that they are not colliding with your softener recharging cycle as soft water is not available during recharging in the older models. Make sure that your septic can handle extra weekend loads.



THE GREEN ENERGY ACT contains a feed-in-tariff (FIT) program that makes it easier for Ontario residents to install solar power. Go Solar is an education program for homeowners in Ontario who are interested in solar thermal and photovoltaic systems for their homes. Homeowners who purchase and install such systems may earn some extra income to help pay for their systems. Under the microFIT Program, residents will be paid a guaranteed price 64.2 cents/kWh for all the electricity their project produces for at least 20 years for Rooftop, Ground Mounted or BIPV Solar System. While some of Ontario's first distributed electricity generators were hit with property tax re-assessments, systems installed under the FIT program will be exempted. As such, an increase in home value will not be accompanied by an increase in property value or property tax rates.

Community Businesses for Hire

The GCA board has decided to dedicate space in the newsletter and possibly the website for Glens Residents (only) to provide an opportunity to advertise their local business. This year there is no charge.

“Serving you in the Community for all of your Real Estate needs”



Sue Briard
Sales Representative





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Important Contacts

City of Ottawa call 311
 Province Of Ontario call 211

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 2010/2011**

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Neighbourhood Watch Reminder

To report:	Call
• a life-threatening emergency or crime in progress	911
• an ongoing incident (no violence or threat of violence)	230-6211
• an incident.....	236-1222, ext.7300