

President's Message - Fall 2020

Our lives continue to be upended by the Covid-19 pandemic. Our regular routines, clubs, groups – to say nothing of our ordinary social gatherings – have been cancelled or seriously altered. While we appreciate connecting online, many of us are “zoomed out”. But we know that this is way better than nothing as a way to stay connected. One consolation is the realization that if this pandemic had happened 15 to 20 years earlier, we would have none of the technology that we do have today to keep things going.

Neighbourhood groups like OUNRA are trying to pivot to find ways of connecting. Here are some of the ways your OUNRA Executive has been involved in our neighbourhood and our City. You might also wish to be part of these initiatives. Let us know!

1. Did you know that OUNRA reviews and comments on every application that goes to the Committee of Adjustment from this neighbourhood? It could be a request for making two lots out of one or minor variances in regards to building an addition. Just to note, we generally support most applications, supporting neighbours who are wanting to enhance and improve their properties. We believe we have developed an expertise and a credible voice with the Committee and that our voice is listened to. Our suggestions are often followed.
2. We continue to monitor and comment on the Bylaw Review that is currently underway in the City. The province has mandated that cities like Guelph must increase density. And so, for example, the city is looking at changing bylaws to permit accessory apartments and “Granny” accessory buildings. We have added our voice to these deliberations.
3. You may have heard that City Council is currently considering reconfiguring itself. Possible changes include:
 - increasing the number of city wards (there are currently six wards with two councillors per ward) and then reducing the number of city councillors from 2 to 1 councillor per ward.
 - making city councillor positions full-time.

OUNRA Executive has considered these changes and has delegated to City Council with the position that the current configuration works well. We will continue to follow this debate and let our voice be heard.
4. We continue to be an active member on the Town and Gown Committee. This groups considers issues relating to university students in our

neighbourhood. We have had a long-standing and credible voice around the table.

5. The City is shaping a plan for future growth over the next decades. (Guelph's population is slated to grow by one third over the next three decades.) We want to learn more and so we have made it a topic for our Online Fall General Meeting – see information above.

John Lawson, OUNRA President

Connect with us...

The ways that we need to gather look different. But life in our neighbourhood and city continues. We want to hear from you and your perspective on the issues that concern you about our Old University Neighbourhood.

Email us anytime at guelphounra@gmail.com

Check out our Website. <https://ounra.org/>.

Look us up on our Facebook Page – [OUNRA Facebook](#).

Plan to join our General Meeting ONLINE on November 24th at 7PM.

Become a Member!

We would welcome your household membership of \$20. We usually are able to collect this membership at one of our Community Meetings – either in the spring or fall.

Obviously, that has not happened. Please renew online. (<https://ounra.org/contributing-members/>) This pays our zoom membership, rental costs for in-person meetings, etc. All members, including the executive, are volunteers and do not get paid.