

OLD UNIVERSITY NEIGHBOURHOOD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2019

OUNRA Fall General Meeting

Thursday, November 14, 2019 at 7:00 pm

Gymnasium, Harcourt United Church, 87 Dean Avenue
(please use the back door of the Church beside the children's playground)

A G E N D A

GUEST SPEAKER:

Jeff Buisman - Jeff is an Ontario Land Surveyor who provides the additional service of helping people through the severance process as a consultant and advocate. He helps to provide the whole picture in terms of process, budget, third-party consultants as well as provide guidance on whether or not the project is worth pursuing.

Jeff is a partner with VanHarten Surveying & Engineers. He lives in the Old University Neighbourhood and is a proponent of positive and appropriate development within the neighborhood

SPEAKERS TOPIC:

Change and Intensification in the OUN: A Development Consultant's Perspective

QUESTIONS FOR THE OUNRA EXECUTIVE:

John Lawson, OUNRA President, and the rest of the executive committee will respond to any question that residents wish to raise.

COUNCILORS' CORNER:

Leanne Piper and Cathy Downer will bring us up to date on developments in Guelph and will respond to questions from the floor.

An Interview with Jeff Buisman

1. As an Ontario Land Information Professional (OLIP) what is your role in the kinds of development projects we are seeing in the OUN?

I help people through the planning process of a smaller development such as a severance and/or a minor variance This includes a review of relevant Planning Policies and By-laws along with information about the property including survey information, servicing (water, sanitary, etc.)

information, trees, character of neighbourhood and so on. I provide an evaluation of whether it is a realistic development and then assist with the appropriate sketch, preparation of application forms, site design, preparation of planning justification, presentation to the Committee of Adjustment and guidance on completing the conditions of an approved severance and/or severance.

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Message from the President

In early July about 50 or so residents gathered to share our concerns about speeding traffic along Forest Street in our neighbourhood. There was a special concern about the intersection of Forest and Maple streets where many children cross on their way to school. Our ward counsellors, Cathy Downer and Leanne Piper, as well as representatives from the traffic department of the City of Guelph were also present at that meeting.

I thought we had a good conversation. It seemed like a four-way stop at the corner of Maple and Forest would be a way of addressing the concerns. But the subsequent decision of the city was clear: we did not meet the required threshold of traffic (as outlined in the guidelines) for such a stop. Furthermore, we were told that a stop would likely not work in reducing speed along Forest Street given its wide avenue style compared to most residential roads.

It felt like we were supplicants begging for hearing and action and being told to go back and be quiet and leave it to the experts. I've been thinking about that ever since. What stake does the city and its staff have in our neighbourhood? Yes, they want to keep the traffic moving on the major arteries that surround and bisect our neighbourhood. That is legitimate. But what possible stake does the city have in regulating every stop sign on the smaller neighbourhood streets where most of us live, drive, walk, and play beside? Surely, that is a kind of bureaucratic overreach.

The real reason behind decisions like the one we received about Forest Street, it seems to me, is that we have come to prioritize traffic over everything else. In the city of Toronto in 2018 there were 41 pedestrians and five cyclists killed and over 2000 pedestrians hit by cars. (To put this in context, there were 47 people who died in gun violence in 2018 and most of those people were targeted killings. The pedestrian killings, however, were random.) These pedestrians were people driven down by motorists who were in a hurry, who were texting or who were impaired. It has been shown that changing the focus from cars to people and pedestrians makes all the difference. New York City has dramatically decreased the carnage on city streets with a broad-based strategy (Vision Zero) that has led to a dramatic drop in pedestrian deaths.

While we can be grateful that the corner of Forest and Maple now has newly painted road markings to signal a place where pedestrians cross, I think this does not go far enough. A new focus must happen also in Guelph – and it can begin in neighbourhoods such as ours where we might embrace new strategies alongside other cities who are testing pilot projects. Our city and its officials need to sit down and work with the community and neighbours to find solutions for our particular concerns. Our hope is that OUNRA can be part of that effort in helping us all to enjoy our neighbourhood and keep us all safe.

John Lawson, OUNRA President

Guelph's Goose Management Program

Councillors Downer and Piper met recently with the OUNRA Executive. They were asked about the effectiveness of the goose management program that the City implemented last spring. They investigated and received the following report from City staff.

“The goose management program was highly successful at reducing recruitment [hatchings] of goslings. An estimated 80% drop

in recruitment in the downtown parks we were targeting. Our monitoring of the goose population will inform our approach for next year. Although successful, the program will extend an extra week next year as a small number of geese re-nested.

As expected for entrenched urban geese, few, if any of the adults left the City this summer. Rural geese sometimes migrate to Ungava Bay.

The population will diminish slowly over time as the birds live a long time. We are in the long road to a more sustainable population. We will continue to modify the shoreline through plantings to reduce the attractiveness to the geese.”

Canada Geese have quite a long life-span: 10 to 24 years in the wild. The road may indeed be long.

COUNCILLOR'S CORNER

Happy Fall - we are looking forward to joining you at the OUNRA AGM in November! It is our opportunity to share with you all of the local projects that are underway, and get your input and ideas on initiatives in our community.

Homecoming Debrief The U of G's Homecoming Committee was created to plan for the 2019 Homecoming. This committee is made up of many stakeholders - representatives from the U of G, City of Guelph, student associations, Guelph Police and neighbourhood groups. It is chaired by Carrie Chassels, Vice-Provost, Student Affairs. Our Ward 5 rep is Cathy Downer. This group will review the success of this year's initiatives and begin planning for 2020

Centennial Pool On September 23 City Council voted (7-5) to withdraw from its agreement with the Upper Grand District School Board to operate the pool, and therefore will not fund the \$1.2 million cost of repairs and accessibility upgrades. Unfortunately, this means the closure of the pool in early 2020.

New Main Library and Baker Street Project

The new downtown Main Library moved one step closer to reality after City Council voted (9-4) to begin the detailed design process for a library component up to \$67.1 million. This figure will be added to the 10-year Capital Budget as a placeholder for the Library. Good so far, but the deal is not yet secured.

Fall Leaf Pickup The City will begin Fall Leaf Pickup the week of November 11th. For dates and a map of pick up areas, download the City of Guelph Waste App on Google Play or iTunes at <https://guelph.ca/living/garbage-and-recycling/resources/waste-frequentlyaskedquestions/waste-collection-lookup-tool/>

Guelph 2020 Budget What are your top priorities for our 2020 budget? We would love to hear from you...your needs, your suggestions, your input. We will begin to deliberate our 2020 Budget in October and the budget will be finalized in early December.

For more information about how we do budgeting check out "Get to Know Your City Budget" at <https://guelph.ca/city-hall/budget-and-finance/city-budget/> and then weigh in with your thoughts to Cathy at cathy.downer@guelph.ca and Leanne at leanne.piper@guelph.ca. We are here to listen!

Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw Review

"Zoning" covers a wide variety of conditions that affect our neighbourhoods - everything from the width of your driveway to how big you can make an accessory apartment. We need your input on changes to our Zoning Bylaw - visit <https://guelph.ca/city-hall/by-laws-and-policies-2/draft-by-laws/zoningreview/> for more information.

Cathy and Leanne

An Interview with Jeff Buisman

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2. What do you see as the main development trends in the OUN over the next 10 years?

I see a continuation of several existing trends.

- Purchase of an existing older, run-down home to be demolished and replaced with a modern home.
- Purchase of an existing older, run-down home on a good-sized lot to be replaced with two modern homes.
- Although I am not involved in larger developments, continued growth of condo/apartment buildings outside of the OUN which are focused on students. This will likely lead to a decline in individual houses as student homes in the OUN, except for the houses on the busy roads of Edinburgh and College.

3. You frequently represent developers when they apply to the City of Guelph for project approvals. What insights have you gained into how planners at the City are seeing development in the OUN at the present time? What forms of development are they currently encouraging?

I work with developers as well as individual land owners who are developing for the first time. City Planning staff are not really encouraging development in a specific direction other than what we see in the formal planning documentation such as the City's Official Plan. The primary incentive from Planning is to see Intensification and that the development fits.

4. What, in your view, are the most important things residents in the OUN need to understand about development and change in the neighbourhood?

Development and change are good things. They allow more residents to enjoy the overall amenities of OUN. Change will keep the neighbourhoods updated and in demand. If the development is reasonable (fits the character, there is adequate size, trees are saved, ...) the development will happen. When the development is near to you, look for opportunities to comment at the Committee of Adjustment. You are free to oppose the development but be mindful that most applications are successful. In that case, be prepared to provide suggestions for how the development can be improved. Ask for changes that are reasonable. I always advise project developers to be responsive to neighbour concerns when they are expressed in constructive terms.

5. As an OLIP and resident of the OUN, what do you see as the most important role for the OUNRA to play in representing the interests of our members?

Continue to appreciate that good development will continue to happen. Work with it and provide suggestions on details that are reasonable. Speak to the applicant or developer if there are specific concerns. Build relationships with the active builders. Highlight things that are important to OUN. Working with developers can bring positive growth.

Brooklyn/College Hill Heritage District in the OUN: Look for the Matthew Bell Houses

by Sylvia Watson

One of the early residents of our neighbourhood was Matthew Bell, a stone carver and mason, who arrived in Canada in 1850 from Newcastle.

There are three Bell homes to be discovered on a neighbourhood walk: 49 Albert St., 96-98 Water St., and 40 Albert St.

Bell's first family home, at 49 Albert St., was constructed in the early 1850s. Look for fluted pilasters (flat columns) that flank the front door as well as the pediment above with a central lamb's head. The two front windows are also embellished with carved details and are supported by double scroll brackets.

Bell's next home was the famous "House of Heads" at 96-98 Water St. Bell built this house (now duplexed) in the late 1850s to accommodate his growing family of six sons and four daughters. The carvings of the heads were a way for Bell to advertise his skill as a carver. Note the dress stone facade and the rubble stone side along Mary St: this would have been done to save on construction costs. The house also displays details from the Gothic style of architecture which was popular at this time: the carved vergeboard (gingerbread trim along the eaves) and the pointed arch details above the windows.

Bell worked on his final home at 40 Albert St from 1867-1872. His workshop was at the rear of the house and during the winter he would carve decorative architectural details here. Looking at the facade, notice the round pediments above the windows and the carved brackets below. The front door features a triangular pediment above with unusual pilasters made of blocks to each side. There are also three carved heads to discover on the facade

Bell died in 1880 after falling from scaffolding as he worked on the Church of Our Lady. (now the Basilica of Our Lady)

If you wish to wander a little farther afield, then Bell's handiwork can be seen on the portico from Moreton Lodge which stands to the north side of the U of G's Johnston Green.

Learn About OUNRA



Send an Email:
guelphounra@gmail.com



www.OUNRA.org
(new version, still
under development)



Facebook:
Old University Neighbourhood
Residents Association

BECOME A CONTRIBUTING OUNRA MEMBER (A PLEA FOR FINANCIAL HELP)

Under the OUNRA By-Law, everyone who lives in the OUN is a Member of the OUNRA and has full voting privileges. But we encourage members to become Contributing Members by paying an annual Contributing Membership Fee of \$20. The money from these fees is used to print the twice-yearly newsletters and to provide some operating money for the Association. Costs are incurred when we pay for our twice-a-year general meetings, for maintaining our website, for our membership in the Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods of Ontario, and for covering expenses associated with legal and other help involved in appeals to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (which has replaced the OMB).

OUNRA Contributing Membership Form

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Address: _____ Postal Code: _____

Email: _____

Yes, I would be willing to help deliver the newsletters in the future.

The annual Contributing Member fee is \$20.00 / year. Payment can be made via:

- ✓ PayPal / Credit Card on our website (ounra.org)
- ✓ Cheque made payable to OUNRA (mail to Lisa Alberico, OUNRA Treasurer, 28 Dean Ave, Guelph, ON, N1G 1K7)
- ✓ Cash at the General Meeting