

NOTI NEWS

A NEWS UPDATE FROM THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF Niagara-On-The-Lake

Issue # 166 – February 3, 2009

EQUIPMENT PURCHASES RECOMMENDED

The Public Works Advisory Committee endorsed a staff recommendation to move forward with equipment purchases. Purchases include a five-ton truck and a tandem truck, both with box, plow and wing, a tractor with mower, a pick-up truck, and various small equipment items. In response to comments and questions from Committee regarding the status of reserve funds, staff advised detailed information on all reserves will be provided to Committee during the 2009 budget process and direction for the future funding of reserves will be required.

GERDEN DRAIN CONCERNS

Pursuant to a Council request in January 2009 regarding a landowner's concerns about the cleaning of the Gerden Drain and the placement of spoils (drain soil and debris) on the landowner's property, staff reported back to the Public Works Committee. The report provided background to the development of the drain in accordance with provincial legislation and ongoing maintenance in accordance with the engineer's report prepared for the drain. Spoils from the drain are managed in accordance with the engineer's report. Staff met with the owner to explain the options and advised that if an agreement is made with a neighbour to receive the spoils, the agreement needs to be filed with the Town and registered on title for direction when subsequent maintenance occurs. In receiving the report, Committee also directed that staff investigate the possibility of billing affected land owners for spoil removal and to review the engineer's report for possible options with respect to dealing with spoils. Direction was given to staff to investigate the possibility of registering drain access requirements on land titles to ensure land owners are aware of drain requirements when they purchase the property.

PORTABLE SIGN REQUIREMENTS

The Corporate Services Advisory Committee endorsed a staff recommendation which would require identification of the placement and removal dates for portable-type signs. The by-law states portable signs may be displayed for a period of 30 days and must then be removed from the site and not displayed for a period of 90 days. The tag will be provided by the Town at the time of approval and will aid in the enforcement of the provisions of the by-law, including the removal of signs which are not displayed in accordance with the by-law.

In a related matter, direction was given to staff to update Council on the regulations applying to temporary real estate directional signs which are placed with some regularity in the Old Town.

COURT HOUSE LEASE

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee endorsed a staff report to enter into an agreement with Public Works Canada to continue to rent office space at the Court House. The staff report advised Parks Canada has rented space since 1984 with a 5-year lease agreement, including a 2-year option extension. The current lease expires in August 2009. The proposed lease is for two years with two six-month extensions with a 3% increase.

TREE INVENTORY

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee received the 2009 tree inventory report noting in 2008 the Queen Street Tree Maintenance Program included the removal of two trees and three stumps and the planting of nine trees. The report advised through competitive pricing for the new trees, savings were realized which provided for the modification of equipment for soil fertilizer injection. This would result in future savings as fertilizing work may now be done in-house. The report noted the 2009 operating budget will include \$10,000 for the tree program, which is \$5,000 less than 2008.

RETIREMENT DEVELOPMENT

The Planning Advisory Committee endorsed a staff report to adopt a subdivision agreement and site plan control agreement to provide for the development of 20 single family residential lots and a three-storey 84-suite retirement residence on the former St. Vincent de Paul school site (120 John Street). An Official Plan Amendment and a zoning by-law amendment were adopted by Council on June 30, 2008, and gave draft plan of Subdivision approval for the 'Lancer – Origin Subdivision'. Prior to the Planning Committee endorsing the staff report, a representative of Lancer appeared as a deputation and advised Committee the tendering for the project will commence shortly with construction on the main retirement building scheduled for May 2009, and completion targeted for approximately May of 2010.

COUNCIL SUMMARY – JANUARY 26, 2009

Lord Mayor Gary Burroughs noted the Town has commenced the visioning process for the Old Town and Dock Area. In this regard the Town is looking for 30 Grade 8 students to participate in the exercise and thereby strengthen their connection to the community they helped design. Interested students should contact the Planning Department at the Town to register. The workshop session is scheduled for February 10, 2009, at 7:30 p.m. in the Library at Niagara District Secondary School. A speakers series associated with the visioning process featuring topics such as 'Quality of Place, Quality of Life' and 'Tourism for Tomorrow – Where Does the Old Town Fit In' will be held on February 11, 12, 17 and 18, 2009, with additional details available in the soon-to-be-published 'Citizens' Bulletin'.

The Lord Mayor's 'Mardi Gras' fundraiser is scheduled for March 6, 2009, and the plans for a very special party are taking shape. Discussions are underway with the Niagara Culinary Institute at Niagara College to provide fresh crawfish. Ticket information is available through the Lord Mayor's office.

The Lord Mayor noted the Town has been attempting to effectively communicate information to encourage enrollment at NDSS in order to keep the school open. By the end of January residents will receive a mailing titled 'Can You Handle This?' containing important information which all parents and children should review when considering high school intention sheets.

Mr. John Dyck, accompanied by Gary Iggulden and Dave Dick Jr., representing the Virgil Business Association, presented a cheque in the amount of \$10,000 to the Lord Mayor and Mr. Mike Cockburn, Principal of NDSS, in support of the International Baccalaureate (IB) program intended for NDSS. Mr. Dave Dick Jr. noted the Niagara United Mennonite Church, located on Niagara Stone Road, will be hosting an information evening on February 11, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. to provide information on billeting opportunities for local residents to house international students associated with the IB program. Information on registration, support, screening, remuneration, etc., will be provided to interested residents.

Ms. Marian Landry, RN, of Niagara Regional Public Health Department Walkable Communities made a presentation to Council regarding the iCANwalk campaign. The program is designed to encourage communities to provide opportunities for residents to exercise more. She noted the lack of exercise is directly related to heart attacks, diabetes, and stroke, and approximately 52% of residents in Niagara are overweight or obese. She noted one-third of today's children will be diagnosed with diabetes in their lifetime. Her presentation was aimed at planting the seed to encourage communities to think about and plan for opportunities to provide exercise trails which are safe, accessible, aesthetically pleasing, and interconnected. She noted the campaign provides walkability checklists, information sessions, workshops, and a tool kit for interested groups. More information is available on their website at www.icanwalk.ca.

The Planning Advisory Committee Minutes of January 19, 2009, were adopted with corrections made to the Comprehensive Zoning By-law Status Report. The balance of the recommendations for the Committee of the Whole were adopted without change.

Under 'New Business' Council endorsed a motion adopting a wage freeze for the Lord Mayor and Councillors for 2009 and to petition Federal and Provincial elected representatives to do the same.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 9, 2009. Additional information on meeting schedules and deputation procedures may be obtained by contacting the Clerk's Department or visiting the Town's website at www.notl.org.

**Lord Mayor Gary Burroughs, Councillors: Jim Collard, Dennis Dick, Terry Flynn,
Andrea Kaiser, Jack Lowrey, Martin Mazza, Art Viola, Gary Zalepa**