

The VIEW from BLUE

Published by Blue Mountain Ratepayers' Association

The largest ratepayers' association in The Blue Mountains

www.bluemountainratepayersassociation.com

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December 2010

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The challenges that lie ahead

By Michael P. Seguin

Another municipal election has passed and it looks like the Mayor and her Council will face many challenges over the next four years in the Blue Mountains.

There will be financial challenges as this new Council examines unique ways to part with your money. One of the key platforms in this election was the need for fiscal responsibility and a freeze on all new hirings over the next year or so. With only two new faces on Council (Ardiel and Halos), however, I have my doubts that there will be many financial constraints, based on previous spending habits and rising debt over the past four years.

There will be several planning challenges as developments such as Terrasan, Thornbury Gate, Telfer, Pinery Plaza and Georgian Gate move to the forefront in 2011.

The Terrasan development is proposed as a large, mixed use development in the Craighleith community along Highway 26 that will not only challenge the make-up and quality of life enjoyed by residents in surrounding neighbourhoods but also the environmentally sensitive wetlands of the Silver Creek Watershed and the Georgian Bay shoreline. A majority of the old Council chose to ignore these challenges and approved it anyway.

The Thornbury Gate development is a proposed high density residential development in the Thornbury community comprising a 5-storey, 126 unit apartment building and a 3-storey, 43-unit apartment building. If approved, this development would have contravened the Town's height restrictions, and the density would have been eight times more than the current zoning and three times the maximum density allowed in Thornbury. The old Council was ready to debate approval of this development but at the last minute, the developer temporarily withdrew his submission for fear of losing it.

We have learned that there may be a commitment by the town, and so the challenge for the new Council will be to approve/disapprove this development based on a commitment to provide for increased densities vs. the opposing voice of the community and the threats to the small town character, historic significance and architectural integrity of the community.

The Telfer development is a proposed "barracks" style high density townhouse development comprising of 97 units to be situated on leased land in the south end of Thornbury. The details are discussed in another article in this newsletter (see page 2). The entire neighbourhood is challenging this inappropriate development, but the biggest challenge will be the town's acceptance or rejection of the planning process – the examination of isolated and/or self-contained proposals with no connectivity vs. a master plan which provides connectivity and integrates, over a much larger parcel of land, a multitude of essential needs and services which fit in with the character of the existing community.

See *President's Report* page 2

President's Report

Continued from page 1

The Pinery Plaza is a proposed major commercial retail expansion (including a designer mall) along the Highway 26 corridor just west of County Road 19 (Blue Mountain Road). The challenge will be to allow commercial sprawl that will threaten the growth and stability of designated commercial core areas like Thornbury and Clarksburg and will threaten the safety and health of the traveling public.

The Georgian Gate development, if approved, would involve approximately 747 residential units located along the north side of the County Road at the south end of the Blue Mountain resort area and east of the roundabout. You will hear more about this development in the next 2-3 months. The size of this development alone will offer many challenges: loss of significant woodlands, traffic flows, threats to the wetlands of the Silver Creek Watershed, etc.

Of course, there will be many other challenges worth considering immediately and over the next four years, such as: a review and reassessment of the old town hall; continuation of the OMB Short Term Accommodation hearing and the need for a licensing regime; the need to expand and refurbish (screening) the existing landfill site; and, a potential need to expand the existing Thornbury sewage plant.

These are just a few of the challenges ahead. I will continue to keep you informed as they develop and we find the need to debate them.

If you know of any challenges that are worth considering and sharing with your fellow members of the BMRA, please do not hesitate to contact me through our web site (info@bluemountainratepayersassociation.com), or send me a message via the Association's mailing address. Your thoughts will be kept confidential and I will always respond.

As I have always said, you are the heart and soul of the Association and we value your opinion.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to wish everyone a happy and safe holiday and all the best in the new year.

Short-term accommodations —

Final round of OMB hearings due in January

By Lester Posen, Vice-President, BMRA

You may recall that the Ontario Municipal Board was not able to complete its summer hearings regarding the challenge to the interim control by-law for short-term accommodations. This case is still open. Hearings are set to resume and be completed the week of Jan. 10, 2011 at the Marsh Street Center in Clarksburg.

During previous hearings we heard testimony from the appellant as well as from several experts. BMRA

President Michael Seguin together with several individuals provided statements on behalf of the town and in support of the interim control by-law. Listening to the participants, it was clear there is overwhelming support for the by-law and a tremendous need for control of this type of business in our community.

It is important to note that there is no challenge to the existence of this type of business. The challenge is to restrict it to appropriately zoned areas and regulate it to provide peaceful enjoyment of life by nearby residents in private properties. Remember that there is still support for the business community so that it can grow and be part and parcel of having sustainable communities inside our town.

We will send out an email blast to remind you of the date and time of the proceedings. Please continue to provide your support.

- Remember the dates: January 10-15, 2011.
- Remember the location: Marsh Street Center, Clarksburg.

What you should know about Thornbury's Telfer development

By Michael P. Seguin

In case you don't already know, here are some details. An "uncharacteristic" leasehold townhouse residential development has been proposed in isolation on a 10.8 acre abandoned orchard property located at the south-east corner of Napier Street West and Victoria Street in the south-west extremity of the old town of Thornbury.

The proposal will consist of 97 units built in 17 blocks of four to six units. These townhouse units will have only one bedroom and contain approximately 1,200 sq. ft. above grade (a crawl space but no basement). The land will be owned and operated by the developer. The townhouse units will be privately-owned, while the unit owner will lease the land from the developer for a 21 year period. The development will also include a clubhouse and an indoor pool.

The developer is promoting this proposal as an "Adult Lifestyle Community" with an expected and what they say is an "affordable" price range starting at \$250,000 per unit (you be the judge).

In order to provide for this so-called "aging in place" development, the developer wants the town to provide a zoning by-law amendment to allow for this medium density development and to provide a blanket consent to allow 21 year leases on these units. In addition, the developer wants an Official Plan Amendment that would provide for a reduction in the rear-yard setbacks and an increase in lot coverage. Finally, to make the development more profitable, the developer wants relief from the development charges that are now in place and required for important infrastructure needs of the community. If they get this relief, then you and I will probably

Is the Town living a lie, or lying to the living?

By John Greenhough, Napier Street Resident, Thornbury

Strong words in this headline, but we need to ask the question, particularly as we view the proposed Telfer development against the Sustainable Path publication released by our Council so recently. The Sustainable Path publication eloquently articulates the Green objectives we should be striving for as our future unfolds.

The available development lands now lying vacant will be part of the Town's future. We need new development to support the wonderful infrastructure our Town is so fortunate to have. We have the marina, the community centre and arena, the library, the baseball and soccer fields, a community golf course and of course our school. Previous Town councils along with Thornbury's community groups have worked hard to build these assets as a foundation for our future.

Now we have the opportunity to build on this strong foundation.

All of us have to be sure any new developments are in complete harmony with existing neighborhoods and build on the green objectives we want to strive for.

The Telfer project, as currently proposed, does not meet the existing design standards of the Town or the objectives of the Sustainable Path. If it is approved there will be 97 small area units covering virtually all of the available land with absolutely no green space or connecting roads or sidewalks to future developments, which may be built on adjoining properties. It will stand as an isolated island. The bare backyards will face the front yards of their neighbors on Napier and Victoria streets. There will be no design harmony with adjoining areas and, as the ownership concept is for leasehold, there is a real possibility of problems with short-term accommodation.

The Town's dire need for additional family homes is real. We must have new developments with connecting roads and sidewalks to enable our children to walk to school safely. They must be designed in such a way that our neighborhoods can "talk" to each other.

If the Telfer project is approved as currently designed a precedent will be set and there will be other "silo" style developments; neighborhood barriers will quickly become the norm for Thornbury.

This is not the way to build communities. This is not the way to meet our Sustainable Path objectives.

As we are about to enter the year 2011, we are at a critical point. Will new, non-conforming Sustainable Path developments be given the go-ahead? We say NO to them!

Will our decision makers make sure any planned developments meet the objectives of the community for attractive, harmonious family neighborhoods where citizens can easily communicate with one another easily and safely? We say YES!

Let us not lose the opportunity we have for sensible development now!

pay for these needs!

Does this sound like a good planning proposal to you? There are more than 100 taxpayers and residents in this neighbourhood and throughout the Town who don't think so. They are "aghast" that the Town would even consider a proposal like this – one that is truly out of character with the neighbourhood, the Town, and does not promote a "Sense of Place," which is the theme of our current Official Plan.

There are certainly many more negative impacts on the neighbourhood which I haven't touched on, but I think it's easy to draw the same conclusion as one owner who eloquently stated: "Might this development and many more turn from a field of dreams into a field of schemes."

This brings me to one of the Town's ultimate needs: a more sustainable path involving a master plan for servicing and development. People are now questioning the Town's existing open-door approach to planning and development. It's time to examine all the vacant land in both the south and west ends of Town and develop a master plan that provides connectivity and more viable neighbourhoods (for families, seniors and young adults) or a series of secondary plans that would be acceptable

to the community.

Let's put ourselves in a position in which the Town tells the developers: "Here is what we envision as responsible planning and development for our Town and we will assist wherever possible in encouraging this type of development."

If you want to know more about this proposed development and the impact it may have on the surrounding neighbourhood, I suggest that you visit the town Website – www.bluemountainratepayersassociation.com – and view the details under Planning and Development Projects. Special attention should be given to the Urban Design Peer Review.

If you want more of my opinion, do not hesitate to email me at mpseguin@rogers.com.

INFOLINE: 211

Need help? Got a question?
Simply dial the INFOLINE at 211
anytime – day or night!

Election 2010 — growing forward

by Lester Posen

Even though October 25th has come and gone and the election is over, we need to keep ourselves focused on the issues, the mandate and the direction that we have given to this council.

The Blue Mountains had a 38.8% voter turn-out. This was just under 5% more than in the last election but was between 5 to 10% below turnouts seen in many other jurisdictions. One could make up all sorts of reasons for this turnout but the reality is that 61.2% of the people out there in The Blue Mountains did not cast a ballot.

The run for mayor and deputy mayor was interesting as both incumbents retained their seats. However, it is important to note – and more important for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to take notice of – that their closest candidates came within 10% of their combined votes. This is a signal that a substantial number of constituents want to see a change in the Town. These are the people who will be keeping a close eye on the activities of this council and will be affecting and influencing the thoughts of other residents.

There were couple of changes at the Councillor level. This was reflective of the work done by returning members during their tenures, and the views that the voters had for the Town and what they believed the new faces would bring forward.

The Blue Mountain Ratepayers' Association had a great showing in this election. Several of our members put themselves forward on the ballot to offer their time and expertise for the opportunity to lead this Town. The most notable of those who tossed their hats into the ring were Paul Mitchell and Michael Seguin. In their respective runs for Mayor and Deputy Mayor, both were hot on the heels of the incumbents.

This was a tremendous showing in their first time out; the voters were in favour of the challenges that both of these candidates provided to the status quo.

It is now incumbent on the Mayor Elect and the Deputy Mayor Elect to carefully digest the vote and reflect on what 40% of the electorate has said through their ballots. The issues raised and debated as well as many of the questions posed hold the keys to what we as citizens are looking at, very closely.

It was interesting to hear the platforms of many of the candidates morph to include components of the platforms that our members had put forward in their campaigns. This shows that not only does the public have the ability to influence the minds of those who lead us but, more importantly, we must be diligent in maintaining a constant vigil over our elected representatives. They must never be allowed to forget who put them in office and to whom they are responsible.

The Board of the BMRA made a resolution not to support any one candidate over another. This resolution

allowed several of our members to run for office and have their platforms heard.

It is unfortunate that some of the media outlets decided not to take the same position. There is a need to provide information to the general public so that they can make informed decisions. If the media begins to make these decisions then they have shifted their social responsibility.

This discussion is left to their social conscience and to yours as to what you believe and how you support those news outlets.

You may think that Election 2010 is over. In reality, Election 2014 has just begun, and there is hope from a great many that those who put their hands up before and came close will remain vigilant. The Town needs you more now than ever.

We hope that Paul and Michael are listening to this call! Just as important, we hope that the council hears all of us loud and clear.

Note: for more on the election, please turn to page 9.

TAYLOR, JANET LYNN (nee COVENTRY)

Janet Taylor of Thornbury passed away peacefully at her home on Saturday, November 6, 2010.

Cherished and loved by her husband Bruce Taylor of Thornbury (a member of the BMRA Board of Directors); niece Richenda Ellis and her husband Bob, and great nephews James and Sebastian of Feversham. Fondly remembered by her sister Julia Bishop and nephew Gavin Bishop of England.

She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

A funeral service to say goodbye to Janet, officiated by her friend Reverend Canon David Clark, was conducted at St. George's Anglican Church in Clarksburg on Wednesday, Nov. 10, 2010.

Craigeith Community Centre

Restored 1860s one-room schoolhouse

Designated as a heritage building

Includes kitchen facilities

Ideal for:

Business meetings, Weddings,
Social events, Anniversaries

For rental information, please contact
Bruce Loveless at 705-446-4673

BMRA MEMBERSHIP – ITS TIME TO RENEW

Dear Member:

The winter season is quickly approaching once again and we are now asking you to renew your family membership for 2011. Your membership fee is important to YOU so that your Association can continue to provide YOU with ongoing information on events and issues in YOUR community and can strongly represent YOU.

If you have already sent us your application form and cheque, we thank you for your continued support. If you haven't renewed, then please fill out the application form below and mail it along with your cheque to the address shown on the form.

When you have completed your review of this newsletter, please share it with a neighbour and encourage them to join. If they wish to join, please provide us with their mailing address and we will send them an application form. An application form can also be obtained on the Association Website at **bluemountainratepayersassociation.com**.

If you have any questions regarding your renewal, please do not hesitate to contact: Michael P. Seguin, President, at **mpseguin@rogers.com** or call 519-599-7179. You can also access us at **info@bluemountainratepayersassociation.com**

**BMRA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM FOR 2011**

Please enclose a cheque for \$25 as your annual family membership fee and send it with this application to: **Blue Mountain Ratepayers' Association, Box 405, Collingwood, ON L9Y 3Z7**

Name: (Last/First) _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ **Postal Code:** _____

Phone No: _____ **Blue Mountains Phone #** _____

Email: _____

Blue Mountains Residence Address _____

Neighbours Wishing to Join _____

Would you prefer to receive your newsletter electronically? Please check one: Yes ___ No ___

A ratepayer's view:

Things we need from Council and from BMRA

By Ron Hartlen, Clarksburg

From Council:

First, we need our Councillors to think for themselves and vote accordingly.

We've heard a lot in the past about the "cohesive council." Sorry, but the term "cohesive council" is just shallow, empty words.

Should Council function with civility and respect? Of course it should!

But "cohesive?" Voting in unison on just about everything brought forward? Of course not!

If a councillor (or two) stands alone, the "cohesive" members might see that as not acting as a "team player." Well, guess what? That Councillor might be the one best representing the ratepayer's interests after having identified those interests by keeping in touch. That's what we need.

Second, we need an explicit staffing policy designed to nip bureaucratic growth.

Any bureaucracy will grow naturally even if there is no additional, real work to be done. It happens everywhere.

There should be an explicit policy of never making permanent hires for work that could be done satisfactorily by contractors.

This would have two benefits. The Town would have more flexibility in meeting its workload, and be able to make a change at contract renewal time, when necessary. The contractor could provide similar services to other customers, leading to the birth and growth of a successful small business.

A second area is in the level of effort put into meeting requirements such as those mandated by higher levels of government. A typical bureaucrat might say: "We have to do this, so we have to add staff." But too often such requirements are just bureaucratic paperwork and provide no real benefit to the workplace or the community. These things should be done in such a way as to just meet the letter of the law at minimum cost. Anything more is bureaucratic waste.

One fine day, providing the Town does the right things and moves in the right directions, it could become a larger employer, providing services that are highly valued by ratepayers. In the short term, Council must resist the tendency to become a large employer by bureaucratic default.

Third, there should be a critical review of study recommendations

The Town should really have a Strategic Planning Committee. Unfortunately it does not. As a result, there appears to have been some rather fuzzy think-

ing going on. For example, in the "perspective" type of material in the TBM budget documents there are statements and positions that appear arbitrary, unjustified and possibly not defensible. This may be "consultant-speak" from studies, committee output, or the administration's positions; the specific source doesn't really matter at this point.

There should be an immediate critical review by a review panel commissioned by Council. This group's first role would be to make sure the starting assumptions, analyses, conclusions and recommendations are soundly-based and defensible.

This would not be a new Committee, but rather a one-time review focused on strategic and rational thinking and objective assessment. A second step, perhaps by a separately-constituted group, would be to look at costs before moving forward with implementation.

From the BMRA:

First, it should continue to do what it's doing so well . . . and expand a bit.

The BMRA performs a very effective and critical function of keeping ratepayers informed. We receive timely information about current issues, emerging issues, Council Agenda and Council's actions. Better-informed ratepayers are a plus for the Town.

One specific addition to this activity would be to compile a full voting record for all Councillors over their full term. What Councillors say is important. But it's how they vote that really counts.

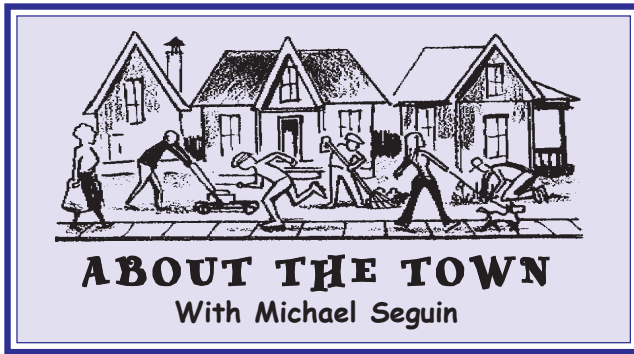
Looking ahead, an important factor to help voters assess incumbent Councillors in the next election would be to look at their complete voting records. BMRA could compile it, inform us of particularly significant votes through the term, and have the full record available at election time.

Second, the BMRA should grow and broaden.

It goes without saying that a larger membership would be a benefit. Information provided would reach more ratepayers via a direct route and in a timely manner. Also, increased revenue from dues would help support Board-approved activities and initiatives with a cost attached.

A broader membership base would be a big plus. To some, BMRA is viewed as still being the "Craigleith" Ratepayers. Further broadening of the membership base to include – and be seen to include – a broader cross-section of the Town would strengthen the BMRA.

We can all work toward this larger, broader Association. Be a recruiter!



The Town has a new tree preservation By-Law

The Town has enacted a new tree preservation by-law (By-law No. 2010-68) in order to protect landscaped amenities, especially in wooded areas, ravines, valleys, steep slopes, shoreline, floodplains and other similar natural features which are essential components of our open landscape character.

The By-law was considered necessary to satisfy the regulations of Section 3.10 of the Town's Official Plan and to help facilitate education and awareness and, more importantly, to assist in enforcement endeavours when non-compliance is determined. It appears that developers, builders and lot owners have been notorious for ignoring tree preservation provisions in subdivision agreements and plans.

Source: Staff Report PL.10.96 10/04/2010

Thornbury Health Centre is put on hold

The North East Grey Health Clinics (NEGHC) have announced that construction of the Thornbury Health Centre – scheduled to start this fall – has been postponed until the spring of 2011. The Board was taken aback by contract bids, which were several hundred thousand dollars higher than anticipated because of the coming winter. The goal now is to start construction in the spring with a much-needed health care facility in place come the fall.

Source: Courier-Herald 11/3/2010

Silver Creek Wetlands and the Terrasan proposal

The Town has approved a new Zoning By-law and an Official Plan Amendment (OPA #20) that provides the framework for the new Craigeith Village Community – a mixed use development comprising residential, institutional, local and highway commercial land applications with complementary community uses. The new framework includes substantially reduced setbacks that do not adequately protect the Silver Creek wetlands and the various species at risk.

The Blue Mountain Watershed Trust Foundation (BMWTF) appealed the proposed By-law, voicing their environmental concerns to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) and seeking greater or “equivalent protection” as achieved in the Silver Creek Consulate East Lands in

Collingwood. After some negotiating and discussions with the Terrasan Group, the County has now made the following modifications to OPA#20:

■ **Section 2.28.2(19) to read:** “Prior to any development and/or prior to draft approval being considered for any future Plan of Subdivision or Condominium application, a study must be completed to the satisfaction of the Town, the County, the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Niagara Escarpment Commission, and the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority with respect to endangered, threatened, special concern and rare plant and animal species consistent with the provincial Policy Statement, the natural heritage Reference Manual of April 2010 and the Wildlife Habitat Development Criteria.”

■ **Section 4.28.3.3(7) to read:** “The Provincially Significant Wetland will be afforded varying setbacks from development as identified in Schedules #A-20-C, #A-20-D and #A-20-E; however, the actual setbacks from Provincially Significant Wetland will be determined prior to draft approval of any future Plan of Subdivision or Condominium applications(s).”

What do these two modifications mean? Lots of uncertainty until the Plans of Subdivision or the Condominium application is submitted for draft approval. The BMWTF is being asked to drop their Zoning By-law appeal and any appeals to the modified OPA#20 in exchange for uncertainty.

Source: Watershed News Fall/Winter 2010 and Notice of Decision 42-42-OPA-20

Studies, Studies, Studies!

The next big one is an Official Plan Review

The Blue Mountains is seeking a consultant to help with its five year Official Plan (OP) review. The project is expected to cost \$224,000 with an allowance for any OMB appeals that would be filed so that the town could defend its OP. With developers continuously challenging the old Official Plan and complaining about all the restrictions to their “wants,” this review is expected to be very controversial – one that the BMRA will continuously monitor and request the taxpayers' input.

Source: Courier-Herald 10/20/2010

Town programming at the Plunge Aquatic Facility

The Town has developed a partnership with the Blue Mountain Village Association (VA) to make the Plunge Aquatic Facility available to the municipality in 2011 for recreation-based programming for its residents. The VA has agreed to offer up to 280 hours of annual time, including staffing by three people, for public programming to support Water Jogging and Aqua Fit Classes, Scuba Classes and a school program for Grades 1 through 5 from the Beaver Valley Community School.

Town program fees are to be structured in a way that will maintain the programming at a very affordable level and yet have little or no impact on the town's recreation

budget. For more information, contact Shawn Everitt at 519-599-3131 Ext 281. It is important to note that this private/public partnership will help avoid huge capital and operating costs for an owned pool in the future as well as provide better utilization of the Plunge Pool.

Source: Staff Report DOR.10.36 -08/30/2010

For your viewing pleasure and education

The Blue Mountain Watershed Trust Foundation (BMWTF) is co-sponsoring with Elephant Thoughts (ET) a "Be the Change" documentary film series at the Gayety Theatre in Collingwood on the third Wednesday of the month from October 2010 to May 2011. These educational films are about environmental-focused challenges in the world.

Admission is only \$7 per person and students get in free. Live music starts at 6.30 p.m. followed by the film at 7 p.m. For more details contact the BMWTF at 705-445-0357. Five films are left:

January 19, 2011: Time for Change – An "Optimistic alternative to apocalyptic doom and gloom."

February 16: Dirty Oil – "Behind-the-scenes into the strip-mined world of Northern Alberta."

March 16: The Clean Bin Project – "Is it possible to live completely waste free?"

April 20: Dirt! The Movie – "The glorious and unappreciated material beneath our feet."

May 18: The End of the Line – "The devastating environmental effects of over-fishing due to our global affair with fish as food."

Real estate news

According to the Georgian Triangle Real Estate Board MLS statistics, there were 1,516 sales for the first nine months of 2010 versus 1,390 in 2009 – a 9.06% increase. Sales volume reached \$430 million compared to \$357.50 million in 2009, reflecting a 20% increase and an average price of \$283,737. What does this mean? There is still a very strong buyers' market, especially for modestly-priced product; one of every three listings finds a buyer.

The Blue Mountains has been very consistent, with 116 transactions to date in 2010, compared to 117 in 2009.

The average sale price in 2010 was \$492,161 compared to \$458,415 in 2009 – a 7.36% increase. Collingwood saw 223 sales in 2010 compared to 210 in 2009 and the average sale price was much less at \$269,886 in 2010 compared to \$248,493 in 2009 – a 8.61% increase.

The real estate industry was expecting the market to stabilize in the second half of 2010 given the new mortgage rules and the introduction of the HST. However, the increase in the number of sales and sales volume would indicate that there has been little or no effect on the trade in Collingwood and the Blue Mountains.

Karen Poshtar provides a quarterly newsletter that generally deals with new developments and real estate trends in Collingwood and the Blue Mountains. You are

welcome to visit her web site at www.collingwoodhomes.ca to see more links or to share with her some of your interests in the real estate market.

Quick Hits!

1. A local group has continuously lobbied the local municipal government to construct a new Curling Club facility. The Council of The Blue Mountains has agreed in principle to provide a site next to the Beaver Valley Skating Arena. The catch: the working group must raise about \$3.5 million to build the facility and no monies can come from taxes or development charges in accordance with an agreement with the town. Stay tuned!
2. We are advised that the Georgian Bay Animal Rescue (GBAR) is in the process of being renamed as the Georgian Triangle Humane Society (GTHS) to reflect, in the new Board's opinion, more typical humane society procedures, such as taking in animals and adopting them out, versus actual rescue situations. How do you feel about this change?
3. The impending closure of the Buttonville Regional Airport in five years is expected to increase traffic at the Collingwood Airport. The local facility's chair, Charlie Tatham, said recently the Collingwood Airport has seen a 15% increase, year-by-year, and that recent improvements to the runway will accommodate larger commercial aircraft and greater volume.
4. The new Georgian College Campus is scheduled to open for students in September of 2011. This will be a great opportunity for youth in the local community to obtain post-secondary school courses that will help them gain entry into a college or university program.

PASS IT ON

After you have read this newsletter, please pass it on to a neighbour and suggest they join our Association – the best way to keep up-to-date on what's happening in our community.

Emergency & Information

Immediate response: 911 (Do not call unless it's an emergency or you will be assessed a response charge of \$300)

OPP (Collingwood & Blue Mountains): 1-888-310-1122; (Administration): 705-445-4321. Blue Mountains Resorts Security: 705-445-0231 x8281/8911 (24 hours)

Fire Department: Thornbury Fire Station # 1, (519) 599-5411; Craighleith Fire Station #2, (705) 444-2244;

Municipal Offices: Thornbury 599-3131. Paul Graham, Chief Administration Officer, x234; Robert Cummings, Treasurer, x245; Corinna Giles, Town Clerk, x232; David Finbow, Director of Planning and Building x246.



What to take to bed with you!

By an anonymous Neighborhood Watch Coordinator

Put your car keys beside your bed at night. Tell your spouse about it, your children, your neighbors, your parents, your doctor's office, the check-out girl at the market – everyone you run across.

With your keys beside your bed, if you hear a noise outside your home or someone tries to enter your house, you can press your car's panic button. The alarm will be set off, and the horn will continue to sound until you turn it off or the car battery dies.

This tip comes from a Neighborhood Watch Coordinator. Next time you come home for the night and you start to put your keys away, think of this: It's a security alarm system that you probably already have and requires no installation. Test it. It can be set off from most everywhere inside your house and will keep honking until your battery runs down or you reset it with the button on the key fob chain.

It works if you park in your driveway or garage. If your car alarm sounds when someone is trying to break into your house, odds are the burglar/rapist won't stick around.

After a few seconds all the neighbors will be looking out their windows to see who is out there – and sure enough, the criminal won't want that.

And remember to carry your keys while walking to your car in a parking lot. The alarm can work the same way there. This is something that should really be shared with everyone. Maybe it could save a life or a sexual abuse crime.

It also would be useful for any emergency, such as a heart attack, where you can't reach a phone. My Mom has suggested to my Dad that he carry his car keys with him at all times in case he falls outside and she doesn't hear him. He can activate the car alarm and then she'll know there's a problem.

Ratepayers host all-candidates meeting

As you know, the Blue Mountain Ratepayers Association held its own "All-Candidates" meeting prior to the October election. Candidates were asked to introduce themselves and their platforms and then address seven questions drafted by the Election Committee (Lester Posen as Chair together with Bruce Taylor and Peter Sharpe). Catherine Sholtz-Seguín presided as Moderator (as a last minute stand-in) and did an excellent job of controlling the flow within the allotted time period.

A number of our members who could not attend have asked about the meeting and so we have provided excerpts from an article dated Oct. 6, 2010 and written by Erika Engel, staff reporter for the Courier Herald, to help summarize some of the discussions that took place.

Just in case – The successful candidates were: Ellen Anderson, Duncan McKinlay, Bob Gamble, Michael Martin, John McKean, Gail Ardiel and Joe Halos. This article may give you some clues as to your Council's mode of management for the coming four years:

CANDIDATES RUNNING for The Blue Mountains council were almost unanimously against support for high-density developments in residential areas at an all-candidates meeting hosted by the Blue Mountain Ratepayers Association on Saturday, Oct. 2.

In addition to a brief introduction, candidates were asked to answer a list of questions with "yes" or "no."

The first question asked candidates if they would support high-density development such as the previously proposed three and five storey buildings on land in Thornbury on Elgin and Huron Street.

All candidates said they were opposed to that type of high-density development. However, candidate for mayor, Marshall Heatherington, did not answer this or any of the questions submitted to the candidates by the Blue Mountain Ratepayers Association.

The second question was based on taxes and water/waste water user fees. Candidates were asked if they would oppose any proposed increases, outside of inflation, in those areas.

Mayoral candidates, Ellen Anderson, Paul Mitchell and Sheldon Rosen said they would oppose tax and user fee hikes greater than inflation. Anderson said she couldn't promise to oppose any hikes indefinitely as there was no way of telling what kind of costs the future would bring.

Deputy Mayor candidate Duncan McKinlay said that he supported the concept not to hike rates, but couldn't predict the future.

Seguín said he would oppose hikes unless those hikes were for essential services in the town.

John McGee, candidate for Councillor said he couldn't promise that he would oppose every increase above inflation, but he would strive for balance in his decisions.

Glenn Stewart, candidate for Councillor, said he wouldn't always oppose tax increases, but there should be no more increases in sewer and water user fees.

Jim Uram, candidate for Councillor, said tax and user fee increases were sometimes necessary, whether "we like it or not."

The third question from the BMRA was about environmental setbacks for development.

Candidates were asked if they would oppose developments that seek to reduce buffers on natural wetlands.

Uram said that in his experience working as a town planner, there are situations where altering environmental features can enhance them. He is not opposed absolutely to changing setbacks, but said they should be arranged on a case-by-case basis.

Candidate for mayor, Sheldon Rosen, and Councillor candidates, Cameron Kennedy and Joe Halos, also said environmental setbacks should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. The other candidates said they would oppose altering environmental setbacks for development.

The fourth question asked candidates if they supported and would vote in favour of all the requirements from the Town to establish, implement and enforce a licensing regime and regulations for short term accommodations.



Blue Mountain Ratepayers' Association

Whether you are a permanent or seasonal resident, we encourage you to join the BMRA.

Membership offers you the following:

1. Information about current local issues
2. A voice to improve the performance of local government
3. Monitoring of costs and benefits of our public services
4. Proactive involvement in bettering the environment
5. Information for effective participation in local elections
6. Opportunity to assist local government in getting a better deal for our tax dollars
7. Regular mailings of *The View from Blue*, our newsletter, with information on current issues, politics, development projects, news events and more.

Please send a cheque for \$25 as your annual membership fee to: Blue Mountsain Ratepayers' Association, Box 405, Collingwood, ON L9Y 3Z7.

P.S. While you're at it, why not bring a friend? Encourage your neighbours to join too.

Ellen Anderson, Duncan McKinlay, Michael Seguin, Gail Ardiel, Bob Gamble, Joe Halos, Jack Harris, Michael Martin, John McGee, William McKetrick and Glenn Stewart said they would support the regulations.

Cameron Kennedy, Alex Maxwell, John McKean and Jim Uram said the matter was before the Ontario Municipal Board for a decision, and was therefore on hold until that decision is made. Sheldon Rosen gave no comment on the issue.

The fifth question from the BMRA asked candidates if they were aware of recent studies, such as the sustainability plan and economic development plan undertaken by the town. Each candidate said he or she was aware of the studies.

The sixth question asked candidates whether or not they supported a ward electoral system for The Blue Mountains. A ward system would have Councillors representing specific areas of the town rather than the town as a whole.

Candidates for Councillor Gail Ardiel, Bob Gamble, Joe Halos, Jack Harris, Cameron Kennedy, Alex Maxwell, John McGee, John McKean and Glenn Stewart said they were not in favour of a (ward) electoral system. Deputy Mayoral candidate Duncan McKinlay and mayoral candidates Sheldon Rosen also said they were not in favour of a ward system.

Ellen Anderson, Paul Mitchell and Jim Uram said they didn't have an opinion on the ward system for The Blue Mountains.

Deputy Mayoral candidate, Michael Seguin said he is in favour of putting a question on the ballot in 2014 to let the public decide on the feasibility of a ward system for The Blue Mountains. Michael Martin and William McKetrick said they were in favour of a ward system.

Moderator Catherine Scholtz-Seguin arranged candidates by turn and maintained order through the event.



Be a Community Leader with the Blue Mountains Community Watch

Organize your neighbours in an effort to discourage break-and-enters, fraud, vandalism and rowdyism in your community.

Community Watch includes Neighbourhood Watch, Business Watch, Road Watch and Rural Watch programs covering six zones in The Blue Mountains.

To find out more, visit

www.thebluemountains.ca

and click on the Community Watch headline or call: Lisa Kidd 519-599-3131 ext 282, or Sgt. Charlie Watts 519-599-6644.

It won't happen without you!