

SOUTHAMPTON RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

February Newsletter

After a mild January, Mother Nature corrected the balance and now we have lots of snow. All the outdoor activities are in full swing, making up for lost time. After several weeks of heavy snow, our patroller expressed concern on snow loads on some of the older cottages. We sent out a special advisory to all the people on the patrol list by email or mail, suggesting that owners get their places checked and snow removed as necessary.

Association Business

The increased activity by the Association has put a strain on our resources. In the interest of better serving our members we have been involved in many new activities:

- Official Plan surveys and input.
- Beach and Water Quality review by The Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation
- Dune and grass planting.
- The Common Reed awareness and control.
- Streetscape and the new lighting along High St .
- Southampton 150th Anniversary Committee.
- Communication with the Town on important problems such as by-law enforcement, beach issues and policing.
- Assisting residents in raising their concerns with the Town.
- Increasing the number of newsletters per year from three to four.
- Expanded website for better communications. Check it out www.southamptonontario.org

We have mitigated some of these higher costs by running two successful golf tournaments and will continue with this event. The Association is exposed to some liability for the patroller and holding various events. We need to take out insurance to cover this. This will necessitate a modest increase in the fees this year. As far as we can determine, these fees have not been raised in many years. We will finalize the fee level in April.

For the golfers in our midst, please mark down Thursday, August 2nd and plan to join us for the Southampton Residents Tournament at Saugeen. It is open to all and not just those in Southampton. For the non-golfers, please join us for the dinner portion. The funds raised previously have been used to cover costs of the Official Plan, Beach Report, Streetscape and now the Southampton 150th Celebration. Your support for these important activities is greatly appreciated. We had 70 golfers last year and would like to increase this to 100 this year!

New Developments

An application has been made for a Tim Hortons to be built on the south west corner of Highway 21 and Emerald St. While we don't oppose this type of development we have expressed a number of concerns to the Town to ensure all aspects of good planning are enforced in the site development plan:

- The building should be designed in keeping with the architectural heritage of Southampton as referenced in the Official Plan. There are examples of Tim Hortons in other locations which are more appealing than the standard design.
- It should be well set back from the highway and have ample parking to prevent the problems seen in Port Elgin.
- The impact of odor, noise and lighting on the residential properties behind the site must be solved. The proposed site is not ideal due to its lack of depth.
- Heavy traffic flow, especially over the summer months must be addressed in a proper traffic study. Will traffic lights be needed? Will a residential street be used as an entrance?
- Truck parking is another issue. It is wrong to allow trucks to park on a busy street and corner where there already have been a number of accidents.
- An extensive vegetation barrier should be mandated as indicated in the Official Plan as an attractive physical separation between the site and roads. The existing berm should be retained.

We have also expressed our concern on the process to be followed to allow public input, given that no variances to the Official Plan are apparently needed. We feel it is very important for the Town to actively seek out increased public input into any significant development. The Mayor has replied that the process used follows the Planning Act. We disagree and will make further submissions on the process we feel would be superior. He also said our site concerns would be considered in the site development plan.

A group of concerned citizens on Emerald have also been active. They are rightly concerned about air and noise pollution from idling cars in a drive thru, traffic congestion and safety. Several municipalities are looking at banning drive thru's or banning idling to reduce pollution and greenhouse gasses. We have been working with them in meetings with the Town. This group will be making a presentation to Council on March 12th. Everyone who wishes to make their concerns known should contact the Town and plan to attend this meeting.

An OMB meeting was held February 21 on the Wal-Mart application. There are a number of groups raising important issues and it will be interesting to see the results. Again, we all want good planning principles to be the main driving force for all new development, not growth at all costs.

An OMB hearing on the application for a windmill on the CAW property will be held later.

Southampton 150th Anniversary Celebration.

Meet Me at the Flag in 2008

1. Vision

On July 26, 1858, the Village of Southampton was proclaimed by Province. It was elevated to the status of a Town in 1904. A celebration of the 150th Anniversary is planned for August

14 to 17, 2008 to recognize the rich history and culture of Southampton that has evolved from its origin as a village to the vibrant and proud community as part of Saugeen Shores. Other events will be supported through the year to involve as many service clubs, local arts and cultural organizations and sporting clubs as possible.

This program will strengthen the strong heritage and pride in our Town and bring many friends, family and lovers of this beautiful area to join in our celebration. Southampton is a generous community and many people, organizations and local business interests have indicated their support. Any surplus revenue will be donated to support local cultural and heritage projects.

2. Organization and Activities

An ad hoc committee of local residents, including three SRA directors has been working diligently to map out this program and many more volunteers will be needed to make all these events happen. The Southampton 150th Anniversary Committee has been set up as a sub-committee of the Saugeen Shores Chamber of Commerce and their help has been invaluable. This committee is seen as a steering committee to work closely with local groups and organizations that will run their individual events as part or in addition to their regular programs. This will help these groups financially or in promotion of their existing programs.

Several fund raisers have been held to date to cover up front expenses. Groups such as the Southampton Residents Association and the Chambettes plus several individuals have already donated money. A special 18 month calendar, incorporating new and old scenes of the Town is being finalized and will be available for purchase in May 2007. As well as being a beautiful souvenir and pictorial record of Southampton, it will help generate funds to support the Celebration. A historical brochure is also being planned. Other sponsors will be approached in the fall of 2007 for specific events.

A tentative program has been developed and involves a major parade, dance, fireworks as well as beach and river activities for all ages. Other events include a school re-union, cultural events involving the Museum, arts and musical groups. Several community BBQs and breakfasts are also planned. A special celebration of the Incorporation will also be held. The year will be kicked off with a New Year's Eve Party and Dance.

Many of these programs are currently concepts that will be fleshed out over the rest of this year with input from individual groups and sponsors. All sponsors will be properly acknowledged and promoted. The Town of Saugeen Shores has been approached and is very keen to see this Anniversary Celebration succeed in its aim to strengthen the whole community, local businesses and profile as a beautiful and fun visitor destination.

You can check details at the website www.saugeenshores.ca/southampton150

Southampton Art School & Gallery

The Art School and Gallery is an important part of the culture of the Town and has an interesting history. Michael Hills provided us with an outline of its development. James Howe settled in

Southampton during the 1850's and built the building at 20 Albert St in 1888 as a private library. Having amassed a large collection of books, he operated as a private library until 1892 when a Mechanic's Institute was organized. In 1896 it opened as a public library. Mr. Howe donated the building to the Municipality in 1912 on the condition that it was only to be used for cultural purposes. It continued as a library until the Etta Shields Memorial Library opened on High St in 1955.

The Southampton Art School began as a vision of Bert Henderson at a time when other art schools were emerging throughout the country. He conceived the idea of starting an art school in the area and originally taught art classes in The Bruce County Museum. Bert's art school venture eventually received the Southampton Council's nod to use James Howe's vacant library building in 1957.

Since its inception as The Southampton Summer School of Fine Arts, the Art School has continued to enrich and enhance the skills of thousands of students from the local area and far beyond. From young beginners to seasoned professionals, many artists credit The Southampton Art School with nurturing their professional art and teaching careers.

From an initial enrolment of a couple of dozen students over a two-year period, the Art School is now hosting over 900 registrants within 100 classes in the school year. The financial impact of the Art School enrollment revenues in the community is estimated to be in the excess of \$600,000 annually. It is certainly a key part of the culture and heritage of this area and deserves our full support as it enters its fiftieth year in James Howe's historic building.

Beach and Water Issues

The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement between Canada and the USA is being reviewed and will be updated from the 1972 version. It has helped to stem the flow of nutrients, particularly phosphorous from getting into the Great Lakes. Much more remains to be done and a stronger Agreement will help this to happen. All the Great Lakes except our lake have Lakewide Area Management Plan to focus on specific issues and as a result, Lake Huron is referred to as the Forgotten Lake. The State of Michigan is more active than the Governments of Ontario and Canada in implementing programs to prevent further degradation. The Lake Huron Center has identified several areas for improvements and presented them to the Government. These focus on preventing environmental damage, protecting endangered species, controlling invasive species, dealing with new toxins and climate change. The SRA has written to the Government in support of the Lake Huron Centre submission and have raised our concern on the drop in Lake level and need for flow control through the St Clair River.

You can find out more from the Center's web site www.lakehuron.on.ca and look for the February report.

Tim Andersen for the Board

February, 2007