

**Annual General Meeting CMGRA
7:00 p.m. Wed. Nov. 9, 2011
Maple Grove United Church**

Minutes

Present: Mel Erlindson, Tim Hyde, Doug MacKenzie, Moira Matsubuchi-Shaw, Anthony Molinaro, Dani Morawetz, Alex Murphy, Kim Nenniger

Councillors Keith Bird and Dave Gittings were also in attendance.

Meeting called to order by Dani M. at 7:07 p.m.

Introduction of current board of directors: President Dani Morawetz; Vice-President Anthony Molinaro; Treasurer Mel Erlindson; Director of Communications Moira Matsubuchi-Shaw; Secretary Kim Nenniger; Directors-at-large Doug MacKenzie; Alex Murphy; Tim Hyde.

Nancy Robertson standing for board, currently on board of C4CA

Motion to elect board: Ken Williamson moved; Bernard Shaw seconded; motion carried.

School Lands, Parks and Recreation Plans, Ward Boundaries

Dani presented information on development relating to school lands, Parks & Rec plans, and ward boundaries:

Ward 3 is under-served with recreational facilities compared to newer neighbourhoods; All 5 W3 RA's are supportive of enhanced recreational facilities here; Centennial Square (site of Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts) needs renovation and the vacant school lands and hospital site provide opportunities to develop new community services;

Parks & Rec master plan is to be presented Nov. 29, and we hope that this need will be addressed.

Town is currently undergoing ward boundary review with a consultant;

There are currently 3 wards north of the QEW and 3 south of QEW, each with 2 councillors;

Town presented Options for new ward boundaries at public open houses; some plans had only 2 wards s. of QEW;

All Ward 3 RA's attended, and considered new options: Plan W3 expanded Wards 1 and 2 northward, leaving Ward 3 intact;

Town will release its final report in January 2012, followed by more information sessions.

Budget

Alex Murphy presented information on the Town budget, based on his review of the budget and annual reports, his meetings with Town staff, and his presentation to the Budget Committee of the Town Council:

He noted that the financial information is difficult to interpret. Specific concerns are: (a) the use by the Town of two accounting and reporting systems (one a modified cash system and the other a mandated and audited system which generates the published financial statements) and (b) a lack of data which adds and compares the operating and amortized capital per program.

Using the published and audited numbers, Alex highlighted the following key items:

- (1) Between 2006-2010, taxes for the Town of Oakville's own expenses increased 38.5%; this is exclusive of Regional and School Board assessments;
- (2) Contributing to this increase was a 36% increase in salaries and benefits;
- (3) Oakville residents' taxes per capita are much higher than in other Ontario cities with populations exceeding 100,000;

He expressed CMGRA's recommendation that:

- (1) future annual expense growth of the Town's own expenses should be limited to annual inflation plus population growth;
- (2) per capita taxes to cover Oakville's own expenses should be reduced to average levels for comparable communities;

In response to a resident's question as to whether any expense category stands out, Alex responded that Oakville's transit spending appears to be particularly high in absolute growth and in comparison to other cities.

In response to resident's question about whether the town auditor was questioned concerning the use of the two accounting systems, Alex responded that although he finds it peculiar to have two accounting systems, what matters most is the increase in expenses and the comparable taxes per capita.

The meeting was informed that the Budget Committee has asked town staff to provide clarification of the numbers.

Alex noted that during the time period when Oakville's taxes for its own expenses grew by 38.5%, the taxes for expenses for the school boards and Halton region have been in line with population growth;

Resident's question: have the councillors addressed the disproportionate tax increases at the Town? Alex noted that the average increase in taxes in Ward 3 were likely much higher than the approximate 38% average across the Town levied for Town expenses.

Keith Bird responded that taxes haven't changed from 1% of house value in Southeast Oakville; expenses are largely determined by unions; region has kept costs in line through transfer payments; Oakville has invested heavily in transit, and no one wants to touch that; also we have a financial commitment to the new hospital, which hasn't yet appeared on the books, so further increases are to be expected.

Dave Gittings: let's push for answers to CMGRA's questions.

Zoning and the Committee of Adjustment

Tim Hyde spoke about zoning and Committee of Adjustment issues:

Tim regularly attends meetings of the Committee of Adjustment (CofA) which hears requests for minor variances;

Over past 2 years, Ward 3 has been the source of much of the activity at CofA;

We review the requests affecting properties within our grid; as a RA we have an interest in maintaining existing neighbourhoods;

Area residents have expressed general misgivings about larger than allowed homes; CMGRA doesn't fight all variances;

Side yard variances are in general not as concerning as height variances and front-yard setback variances, as the goal is preservation of the streetscape and neighbourhood character;

What may seem like a private matter between neighbours may be an issue for residents associations when potential changes would have an impact on streetscape and character of the neighbourhood;

Liveable Oakville Official Plan has been passed and the town is revising existing zoning by-laws;

The initial estimate for completion of by-law review was 4 yrs, but a more recent estimate is 2 yrs.;

CMGRA will monitor amendments and keep residents informed;

A resident in attendance suggested that those present indicate their support of or opposition to CMGRA's ongoing involvement in CofA proceedings. A show of hands indicated overwhelming if not unanimous support, and there was no opposition.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

(Mayor Burton arrived after the close of the meeting and spoke with those still in attendance.)

2011/12/12