

## ANALYSIS

## Old Ottawa East will be torn apart by City's draft Official Plan proposals

**Our "Model Community" gets drawn and quartered in the new draft plan...**

**RON ROSE**

In the December issue of *The Mainstreeter*, Alain Miguelez, the City of Ottawa's manager of policy planning, praised Old Ottawa East (OOE) as a model community and a demonstration of what the City would consider a planning success. In support of his glowing conclusions, Miguelez cited the intensification around Greystone Village and the infrastructure improvements within OOE that encourage active transportation.

How ironic it is, then, that this model community is being torn apart by the very draft Official Plan it is supposed to personify. Recent planning proposals by Ottawa city planners set out in the draft plan would, if approved by City Council, tear away various parts of our community and allocate them elsewhere for planning purposes. And these proposals have been developed "in the dark", without any consultation with OOE residents or with Capital Ward Councillor Shawn Menard.

To be clear, geographically and socially,

the community of Old Ottawa East will continue to exist, but, if these changes in the new Official Plan are implemented, our community's ability to continue planning for its future development would be rendered far more difficult.

Compounding the harmful impact of these proposals is a recent decision taken by City Council to carve out the portion of Old Ottawa East lying east of the Lees Avenue LRT line and to transfer planning jurisdiction over the area from Capital Ward to Rideau-Vanier Ward (*for more details on this decision, see John Dance's article below*).

### Community gets divided

The first Official Plan proposal involves the scrapping of the 2011 Secondary Plan for Old Ottawa East and dividing the community going forward between two new Secondary Plans. A Secondary Plan is the City Council-approved planning document that implements the vision of a Community Design Plan and provides guidelines for the development of a community.

For example, a Secondary Plan provides guidance on matters such as the limits on the height of buildings, on the

type of housing allowed, and where commercial development should be encouraged.

But in the new draft Official Plan, City planners have unilaterally discarded OOE's 2011 Secondary Plan, and have instead divided our community in two. The area north of Highway 417, and the area east of Brunswick Street would now be included in the downtown area for planning purposes.

Included in this northern area of OOE are the King's Landing development, Greenfield Village, and the streets north of Highway 417, as well as Springhurst Park, the Lees Avenue apartments, and the open space between them, part of which is still earmarked for the Alta Vista Transportation Corridor (AVTC).

Under the draft Official Plan these areas would now be covered by a new Secondary Plan being prepared for an area mostly on the western side of the Rideau Canal to be known as the Central and East Downtown Core. They would be subject to the same planning guidelines as are applied, for example, to the area between Elgin Street and the Rideau Canal known as the Golden Triangle.

Many OOE residents have been

concerned that policies included in the existing (2011) Secondary Plan would not be reflected in the new Secondary Plans covering our community. When asked if this would be the case, Miguelez stated "No, the approved policies are carried over into the new Secondary Plans".

### OOE now "transected"

The second contentious proposal, also a component of the new Official Plan, would split OOE into separate planning areas called "transects". While a Secondary Plan covers a defined community, a transect covers a range of communities. Consider transects as layers of an onion. The outermost transect is called Rural, the next layer is called Suburban, and subsequent layers are called Outer Urban, Inner Urban, with the last or inner transect called the Downtown Core.

Old Ottawa East has been split between two of the transects, the Downtown Core and the Inner Urban transects. Again, those parts of our community north of highway 417 and east of Brunswick Street will be included in the Downtown Core transect.

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### Art Beat

## Climate change photographer Jim Lamont

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*With no consultation, it's a real whodunit!*

## Mayor Watson asked to undo mysterious transfer of Lees Avenue campus from Capital Ward to Rideau-Vanier Ward

**JOHN DANCE**

City Council has approved the transfer of the University of Ottawa's Lees Avenue campus from Capital Ward to Rideau-Vanier Ward, but the Old Ottawa East Community Association (OOECA) has requested that the change be reversed.

OOECA says the move to remove the Lees campus from Capital Ward was poorly consulted on, nor does it meet any of the criteria that would justify the transfer to Rideau-Vanier.

The University of Ottawa was not

involved in this ward boundary change," the University's media relations informed *The Mainstreeter*. Rideau-Vanier Councillor Mathieu Fleury commented, "I did speak about the boundaries of the University to the consultants, but as you know, their conclusions were driven by multiple consultations including with my colleagues and other residents." However, neither Councillor Fleury nor the City of Ottawa consultants spoke about the boundary change with the University or with either of the community associations of OOE and Sandy Hill. "The fundamental criterion for mak-

ing ward boundary changes is to 'achieve voter parity' but the transfer of the Lees

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# MEET THE SNOWS

They arrived in Old Ottawa East early one wintry morning in January, without much notice, a wave of frosty aliens dropping from the sky like snowflakes, staking their claims to front yards throughout the community. Some arrived solo, others came with their families; some stood boldly in the open beside trees or garages, while others barricaded themselves behind hastily erected walled forts or within icy igloos. The Snows aren't a talkative lot, they're more the strong, silent type. But all in all, we're delighted they chose Old Ottawa East to land, though we expect their stay in the community might be a short-lived one, because the Snows are as fickle as the weather!

MELINDA NEWMAN, PETER CROAL PHOTOS





From Spenceville & Archville to Greystone Village

# The "villages" of Old Ottawa East have evolved for more than 150 years

JOHN DANCE

After about 150 years of settlement, the development of Old Ottawa East (OOE) has resulted in about 10 linked villages, each with distinct characteristics and relatively clear boundaries. Few other communities in Ottawa have such varied, defined and linked components.

OOE's evolution has been chunky, as particular areas such as Brantwood Place and Greystone Village have been built, and residential areas have replaced farming, industrial and institutional uses.

Street and south of the institutional properties.

Meanwhile several substantial homes were built in the area south of Clegg Street and west of Main Street. Gradually, the land south of Clegg Street was built up, some parts spottily, but other parts intensively. In the 1940s, Merritt and McNaughton avenues were built up with repetitive styles and Mason Terrace, Mount Pleasant Avenue and Mutchmor Road were populated with Rupert McClelland designed houses featuring

***"A particular aspect of Old Ottawa East is its aggregation of smaller communities – a village of villages...Each of the parts...have their unique histories, architectural and design styles, socio-economic profiles, landscapes."***

***- Anthony Leaning  
OOE resident, architect***

This article refers to the disaggregated components of OOE as "villages" simply because the definitions of "community" and "neighbourhood" are somewhat overlapping, and the term "village" is already in lasting use within OOE. Also, as architect Anthony Leaning, an OOE resident, commented, "A particular aspect of Old Ottawa East is its aggregation of smaller communities – a village of villages, sort of. Each of the parts, Spenceville, Archville, Brantwood, and now Greystone, have their unique histories, architectural and design styles, socio-economic profiles and landscapes."

The first village was the "subdivision" known as **Spenceville**, founded in 1868 and named after Rev. Alexander Spence of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Ottawa's first Protestant church, which owned the land. Spenceville extended from Hazel Street to Clegg Street along the Rideau Canal. The second neighbourhood was **Archville** founded in 1873 and named after Archibald Stewart, son of the owners of the land. This village extended from the Rideau Canal to Harvey Street.

In 1888, these first two villages became the "police village" of Ottawa East and, by being so incorporated, avoided - for nine years - annexation by the City of Ottawa.

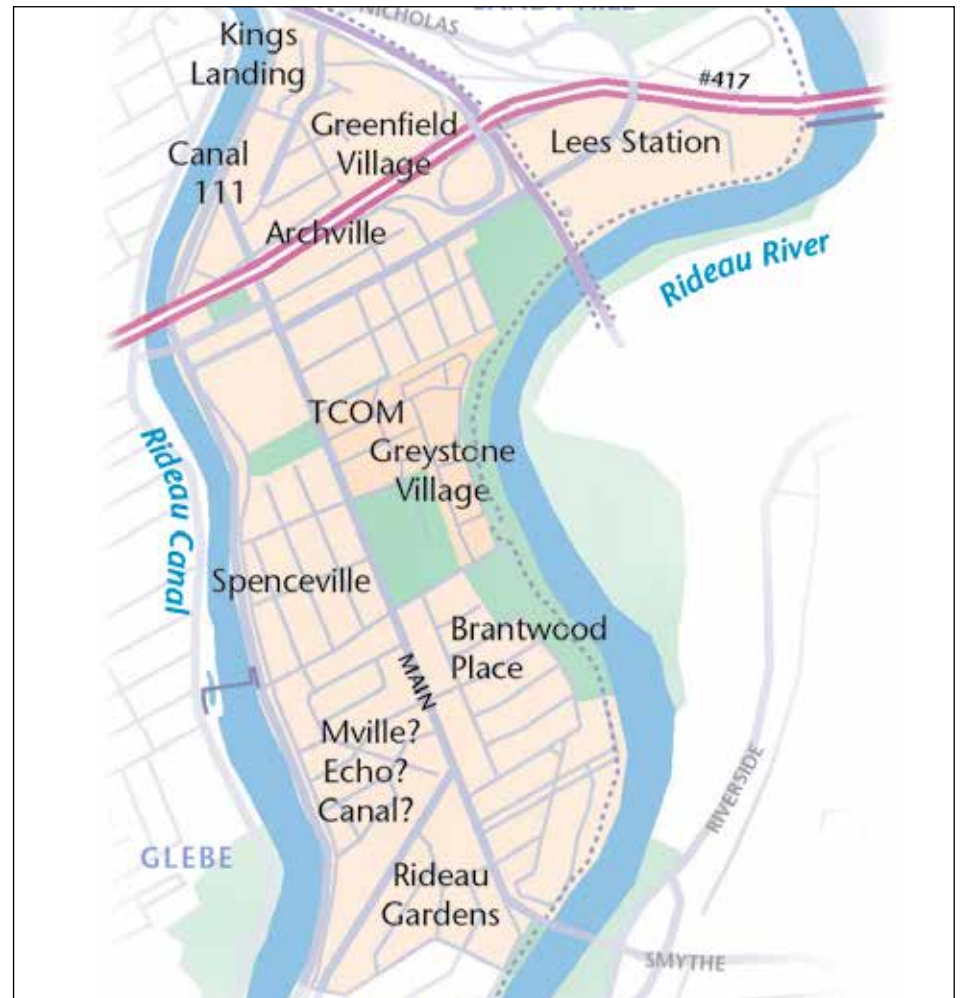
**Brantwood Place** became the next distinct village with Robert Sibbitt launching the development in 1911 - but it was a slow process to build this "exclusive" residential area, east of Main

distinctive rounded front doors.

In the 1950s and 60s the area south of Brantwood and further along the river on the west side of Main Street was developed like a modern subdivision, albeit with large and lovely lots. From a real estate point of view, this area was deemed **Rideau Gardens**, although the original Rideau Gardens - which provided much of Ottawa's fresh produce - was strictly on the west side of Main. This reality did not, however, deter the city's toponymists from creating Rideau Garden Drive (singular for reasons unknown) on the east side of Main.

Meanwhile, in the 1940s, the original Spenceville and Archville villages were filled in and extended to include Chestnut Street's bakers' houses of the Walker's Bread factory. Over the next few decades, the various industries of Old Ottawa East, primarily located near the eastern section of Lees Avenue, shut down, thus freeing up land for residential and other uses, including the Eastern Ontario Institute of Technology, which became Algonquin College and is now the Lees campus of the University of Ottawa. Five large apartment towers were subsequently built on Lees Avenue.

The section of OOE north of the Queensway was also transformed in the late 1980s and beyond, with the new developments of **Canal 111** (on the site of the demolished Morrison Lamothe Bakery), **Greenfield Village**, the Brownstones and **Kings Landing**.



STEVE FICK MAP IMAGE

The ten "villages" of Old Ottawa East each have their own unique characteristics, styles and feel about them, as John Dance explains.

Meanwhile, vacant lots in the neighbourhood were filled with new multi-unit rows, and small houses were demolished to make way for larger or multiple dwellings.

Other major changes were the construction of large apartment buildings and condominiums along Main Street, the first being at the corner of Main and Lees Avenue in the 1970s, with the luxury condominiums - 10 Main and the Glassworks - north of the Queensway following decades later. These buildings, like Canal 111, are in some respects like mini-villages, with residents who have lived there for long periods and with condominium corporations providing governance and community.

The Old Ottawa East community design plan of 2011 paved the way for the newest villages: Domicile's The Corners on Main ("TCOM") and The Regional Group's **Greystone Village**, the former on the site of the convent of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart and the latter occupying the Oblates lands. The Greystone name was devised for marketing purposes, but it does relate to the impressive grey stone Deschâtelets Residence at the heart of the new development and of the OOE community overall.

So what remains to be built? Both Greystone Village and TCOM are about half completed but the City wants much more development near the Lees Avenue LRT Station. Most of the available land near the **Lees Station** area is owned by the University of Ottawa, and the notion is that the university's existing structures and facilities, including the sports field, will be replaced by towers even higher

than the existing apartments just to the west.

The character of the various villages of OOE is diverse. Archville, for instance, has an intimate "everybody-knows-everybody" feel, similar to what you experience in Spenceville. In the villages south of Clegg Street, with larger homes on larger lots, there is an open and quieter feel, especially as you move into Rideau Gardens. And given the wide range of housing prices, including some of the highest in Ottawa along Echo Drive, there is considerable economic diversity from one village to another.

Most of the villages have enduring names but the one bounded by the Rideau Canal, Clegg Street, Main Street and Riverdale Avenue remains nameless. Some options are Mville (given the large number of streets beginning with the letter M), Echo or Canal. Founding families of historical note who pioneered the area could also lend their names to this as yet unnamed village: Brownsville, Slatterytown or Bower Village.



**Readers of The Mainstreeter are encouraged to provide their perspectives on their villages, suggest names for**

**the unnamed village and correct any aspects of this story, which is largely based on Rick Wallace's excellent A History of Ottawa East (on the OOECA website), a review of OOECA minutes and an analysis of the historic aerial photos on the City of Ottawa's GeoOttawa site.**



# THE MAINSTREETER'S SOCIAL ISSUES SERIES...

## Sustaining Biodiversity in Old Ottawa East

**Old Ottawa East webinar panelists, participants were eager to explore what individuals can do to protect our local environment**

**PIPPA NORMAN**

Supporting biodiversity in urban environments can be as easy as planting a native shrub to prevent harmful pollutants from entering nearby storm sewers, 70 participants in the latest community webinar presented by *The Mainstreeter* and two other Old Ottawa East organizations learned.

Held on January 20, the webinar was the second in the six-part Social Issues Discussion Series put together by *The Mainstreeter*, in association with the Mauril-Bélanger Social Innovation Workshop of Saint Paul University and the Community Activities Group of Old Ottawa East. This series is intended to inform residents on topics of relevance



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

**Moderator Jayson MacLean (left) and panelists Mary Trudeau, Robb Barnes and Amy MacPherson shared advice and recommendations on how to preserve and protect our community's (non-human) ecosystems. The next community webinar takes place on March 17th.**

to their community, according to Lorne Abugov, the Editor of *The Mainstreeter*.

Biodiversity is the variety of plant and animal species that coexist in a natural environment, and in Old Ottawa East (OOE) this environment includes both land and water bodies.

Armed with a metaphor, Jayson MacLean, Chair of Sustainable Living Old Ottawa East (SLOE) and moderator for the evening, helped explain this concept to participants. "Just like a woven tapestry,

the strength comes from the presence of many fibres that are interwoven together," MacLean said.

OOE resident Mary Trudeau, director of the environmental consultancy, Envirings Inc. and one of the three panelists, sought to remind members of the community that anything flowing into the storm sewers from the streets goes directly into either the Rideau River or Rideau Canal. "A lot of people think that it goes into some kind of wastewater treatment facility, but it doesn't, it goes right into the river," Trudeau said.

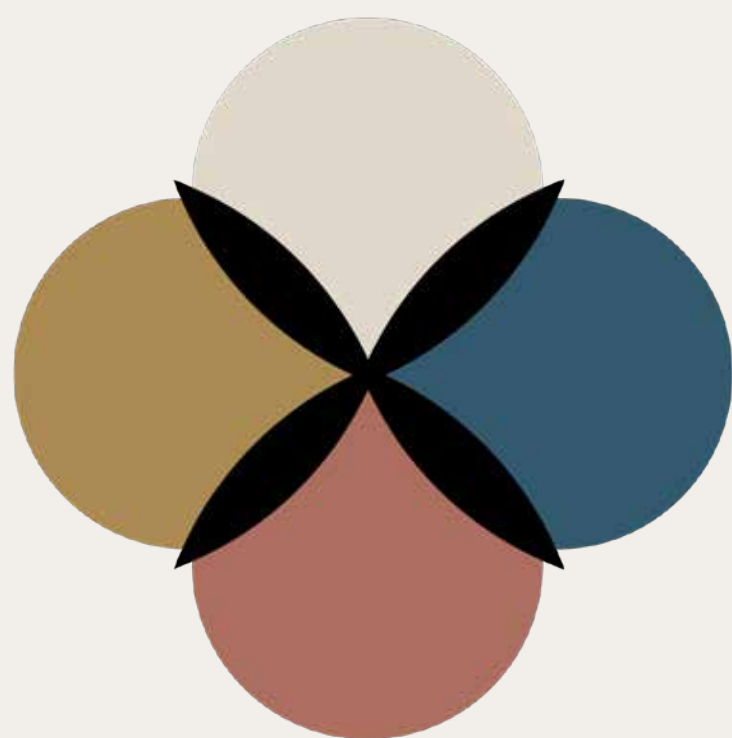
She explained how aquatic species can be harmed by pollution, increased water temperature, and increased water flow, as a direct result of residents' actions. To remedy this, Trudeau joined the second panelist, Amy MacPherson, in recommending residents plant native plants around their property to help water absorption.

"We have all of these problems and sometimes they seem overwhelming, but the solution really is to get back to nature," MacPherson said. "If you can't plant a tree, then a shrub, and if not a shrub, then a native flower."

MacPherson, an environmental biologist at the City of Ottawa's Natural Systems & Rural Affairs unit, called attention to the importance of pollinator species, and had an unusual tip for residents on how to protect them. "Take a break from your yard work, do less. It's very important for pollinator's sake, that you do not tidy up all of the leaf litter and all of the dead stems, since all of that provides habitat and shelter for pollinators," she said.

Another Old Ottawa East resident, Robb Barnes, Executive Director

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PETER FOWLER PHOTO

**Community interest in sustaining the natural ecosystems of Old Ottawa East produced an engaging webinar for registrants to *The Mainstreeter's* Social Issues Discussion Series.**



# OOE torn apart by Official Plan

Continued from Page 1

When asked if the two parts of Old Ottawa East would be treated differently under the two separate transects, Miguelez replied “Yes, the transects defined in the new Official Plan propose to establish overall policy directions that are better tailored to different areas’ location within the city.”

The final planning rupture to our community comes with the decision to create a Special District for the Rideau Canal UNESCO World Heritage site. All of the houses currently on Echo Drive will be included in that Special District. If the creation of this Special District meant that new development along Echo Drive had to respect the historic context of the Rideau Canal, that would be a positive move. However, houses along Echo Drive may be subject to planning criteria separate and distinct from criteria applied to houses on neighbouring streets. When asked about this, Miguelez, confirmed that “they may, in time, [differ] as special district policies get further developed.”

An additional decision that will significantly affect the way planning is undertaken for Old Ottawa East was made a few years ago with the approval of Transit Oriented Development areas (TODs) for which special rules allow for greater development near transit stations, including the Lees transit station.

In the end, these changes will only affect planning documents. They neither change the actual geography or territory of Old Ottawa East, nor the pride we feel for our community. What they will change, however, is the nature of this community. With so many parts of Old Ottawa East being subjected in future to different planning policies, for example, on maximum building heights, the relative homogeneity of our community will

change. Moreover, if a planning document includes a number of communities, the ability of any one community to influence the drafting of that document is diminished.

One implication of these changes is that the community will lose some degree of control over the development of Springhurst Park and the lands designated for the AVTC, since they will be covered under separate planning documents from those covering the bulk of OOE. Planning for the development of Greenfield Avenue and the streets north of Highway 417 will be similarly affected. “Springhurst Park is such an important part of our community, and residents have invested so much time and effort in its development, that we, as a community, must do all we can to retain control over its evolution,” said Ania Kolodziej, a resident of Chestnut Street.

Oh, and one more thing. Citizens are requested to forget the term “intensification”. From now on, we are asked to think of adding more housing units as “regeneration”.



**The draft Official Plan for Ottawa can be found at Engage Ottawa: <https://engage.ottawa.ca/the-new-official-plan>, and residents can make comments until February 17th. Once approved by the City and the Province, the Official Plan cannot be appealed. The views of individual residents are critically important now and letters to the City and to City Councillors are influential.**



## Biodiversity in Old Ottawa East

Continued from Page 4

at Ecology Ottawa and the final panelist, championed OOE as one of Ottawa’s most environmentally active communities. His advice was to never underestimate the power of local politics. “It’s important that our elected representatives hear from us continuously and know that there’s a constituency of people watching and expecting action on important topics like protecting nature in our communities,” Barnes said.

Sundaure Alford-Purvis, a Vanier resident and landscape designer,

attended the webinar because she was curious to see what hands-on ideas the panelists would offer residents. In a post-event interview, Alford-Purvis said she was impressed by the speakers and eager for more. “It was very much political action, which is the background that the speakers come from, and is really, really important,” she said. “But I’m always sort of looking for where’s the communication for what you can actually do in your own space?”

Peter Croal, a retired geologist and webinar attendee who resides in Old Ottawa East, agreed with Alford-Purvis. He praised the information provided by the panelists, and hoped that in future panels, even more practical tools would be given out. “If biodiversity is an issue in Old Ottawa East, which it is, because of climate change, and all these things, then what can residents do to help make a worsening situation better?” he asked. “Perhaps in future panels, there’ll be more conversations on practical solutions that people can take.”



**The Mainstreeter’s next free webinar will be held on Wednesday, March 17 and is entitled “Affordable Housing and Healthy, Diverse Communities.” Registration is now open at: [https://bit.ly/affordablehousing\\_ooe](https://bit.ly/affordablehousing_ooe).**

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## SANTA COMES TO OOE - RAIN OR SHINE!

Dear Editor:

Since 1976, the Brantwood Park neighbourhood has hosted Christmas Eve Carols and Sleighride. This year, against all odds from nature (the pandemic and the rainy weather), the event was held once again, while respecting COVID protocols. Many thanks are extended to Santa, Mrs. Claus, Santa's Elves, the musicians and Sundance Ranch. The response of neighbours to support Sundance exceeded our expectations; Old Ottawa East is blessed with such kindness! Un gros merci à tous.

*Johanne Lalonde,  
Centennial Boulevard*



KATHY ULLRICH PHOTOS

## FORGOTTEN, BUT NOT GONE

Dear Editor:

This is a friendly reminder that Main Chiropractic and Personal Training Centre has been on Main Street for 21 years now (and advertising in *The Mainstreeter* for 21 years) with the same owners.

While we started in 1999 in the Main Medical building, in 2005 we moved next door to 186 Main Street into our own chiropractic office fronting Main Street and continue to provide the same services.

Sincerely,

*Sylvia Craston,*

*Main Chiropractic and Personal  
Training Centre*

Dear Sylvia:

Hard as it may seem to overlook a constant and valued presence in the pages of *The Mainstreeter* for the past 21 years, we managed to do exactly that in our December issue. We extend our sincere apologies to Main Chiropractic and Personal Training Centre for omitting to include this Old Ottawa East (OOE) business mainstay in our 35th Anniversary article reprint and update, entitled The neighbourhood storefront scorecard - 15 years later.

Your local chiropractic office has helped many OOE residents over your 21-year existence, and your kind support of *The Mainstreeter* throughout that period has helped to sustain our community newspaper.

*The Editor*

## A MODEL COMMUNITY?...IT'S REALLY NO MYSTERY

Dear Editor:

I was happy to see in your last issue that the City of Ottawa's top planner feels Old Ottawa East is a model for the rest of the City. However, his pointing to massive new development (Greystone) and major new infrastructure (Flora Footbridge) as the basis for his claim overlooks and misunderstands what we who live in this community already know. What makes Old Ottawa East (OOE) special, and what makes us a model for other communities, is really no mystery.

First and foremost, it is OOE residents who have worked and advocated tirelessly to preserve and enhance this wonderful community - and indeed, when necessary, to protect it from plans proposed by developers or urban planners that might have compromised quality of life. It was the people of this community who worked diligently to promote a complete Main Street, just as it was our community members who for decades called upon local politicians and planners for a footbridge across the canal. It was community members who worked alongside the caring Oblate Fathers who engaged planners and architects to create a secondary plan that more accurately reflected the character of our community. It was, and still is, our community members who recognize the social value of OOE's natural features - the beautiful shoreline, the adjoining parks, and the green spaces along the historic Rideau River. And finally, it's been community members - and not urban planners or developers - who have for years championed the cause for enhanced community access to and across our greatest 'social' resource - the Rideau Canal. That we can now boast a beautiful footbridge, docks, and safe crossings along the Canal has little to do with business development or government initiatives.

The primary reason OOE is a model for the rest of the City is because of the many and varied achievements of the people who live in this community. There are many among us who deserve credit for safeguarding our natural ecosystem against those who would sacrifice it for private gain over social benefit, if given the opportunity.

*Jamie Brougham,  
Letchworth Road*

## THIS HEART IS MADE OF BARK



I discovered this tree with a heart on Greenfield Avenue near the corner of Main Street while on my walk through Old Ottawa East.

*Ursula Gass,  
Havelock Street,*



# THE MAINSTREETER

www.Mainstreeter.ca

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High school volunteers should submit papers for signature to Daniel Racicot.

## OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

**Councillor Shawn Menard:** Shawn.Menard@ottawa.ca

**Community Activities Group:** Call Old Town Hall at 613-564-1078 and leave a message for Carol Toone

**Community Police (for non-emergency concerns):**

613-236-1222 x5287 or huntmr@ottawapolice.ca

**Old Town Hall:** 613.627.0062

## Opinion

# Neighbourhood Plans are key to residents' quality of life

**ERWIN DREESSEN**

In 2017 and 2018, the TVO network broadcast a fascinating series by Canadian-Danish urbanist Mikael Colville-Andersen entitled “The Life-Sized City.” In each of the twelve cities he visited around the world (including Windsor/Detroit and Montreal), a common theme was that empowering neighbourhoods resulted in more innovative solutions to urban form and more satisfactory living. A neighbourhood's quality of life improves when its residents are intimately involved in shaping its future.

Empowering neighbourhoods was much in fashion in Ottawa in the 1980s and '90s. Key to reaching that goal was to develop neighbourhood plans that embodied the vision, key principles and specific land use designations of the area, within the framework of the municipality's main Official Plan. Through developing neighbourhood plans, residents gained a real sense of ability to control what their neighbourhoods should look like and how they should evolve.

Before amalgamation, the old City of Ottawa as well as Nepean dedicated significant resources to developing neighbourhood plans. Through extensive consultation with each community, a consensus resulted. The plans were then distilled into so-called Secondary Plans (SPs) which were approved by Council, which gave them the force of law. Smaller Ottawa-Carleton municipalities, including a number of incorporated villages, had their own Official Plans.

By the time of amalgamation, in 2001, the new Ottawa had about 36 SPs on the books, including former municipalities' Official Plans, all collected in what was termed Volume 2 of the new City's Official Plan that was adopted in 2003. Since then, some 26 additional SPs have come into force.

In addition, much effort has gone recently into development of so-called Community Design Plans (CDPs). In greenfield

communities such as Kanata North and Riverside South, these efforts have been led by developers -- part of progressing from designated Urban Expansion Area to more detailed planning of the new community. In established areas, the term is essentially the new name for neighbourhood plans. Although CDPs are approved by Council, they have no force in law unless they are translated into a Secondary Plan.

Question: Have such planning efforts over the past 30 years served to empower neighbourhoods? Answering that question would be a useful research topic for urban planners. An equally interesting question is whether the amendments to SPs, old and new, which have been numerous, have enjoyed significant consensus within the communities in question.

Recent events suggest that the answer to both questions is “no” -- that the trust that had been built up between the City, landowners and the community in first achieving the Plan, has subsequently been broken. That was clearly the case when, in July 2018, Ottawa City Council approved an amendment to the Bayview Station SP (originally adopted in 2013), allowing three high-rises of 65-, 56- and 27-storeys as the proponent wished, in place of the 30-storeys height limit specified in the SP. Community members came out in droves, protesting lack of information -- clearly, not enough effort had been put into achieving a consensus. The planning department's rationale was that it would amount to the same number of units -- missing the point completely.

In June 2019, four items before Ottawa's Planning Committee each involved disrespect for SPs. The one that received the most media attention was the shocking failure of Regional Group, facilitated by City planning staff, to respect the agreements that had been built up over many years regarding the development of the former Oblate lands in Old Ottawa East. Another decision changed the Scott Street

SP (originally adopted in February 2014) and a third modified the Wellington Street West SP (originally adopted in 2011), both over the objections of the local community associations and citizens. A fourth item involved an interpretation of “transition” in the SP for Riverside Park that ignored building heights; the Plan had been adopted before amalgamation.

These actions by planning staff and City Council are ominous signs of a willingness to breach a social contract and counteract any objective to value the empowerment of neighbourhoods. They reveal a fundamental misunderstanding of what neighbourhood planning is about, and feed into public disillusion with the planning process.

As part of the desire to come up with a brand new Official Plan, City staff has suggested that the Volume 2 of neighbourhood plans and policies “will be reviewed to remove duplication or conflicting policies and directions.” Will that involve seeing the existing SPs only as technical details and ignoring that they represent the aspirations of a community? Given the time frame involved (the whole project is to be wrapped up by March 2021), there will be little opportunity to ask what the neighbours think or to build on community visions. In fact, as two Councillors have said in light of the events of June 2019, citizens see little incentive to participate in planning exercises when they witness how readily City Council sides with whatever a development proponent wants, regardless of what the community thinks.

Nothing less than a culture change for both planning staff and City Council is required to turn this around.

*[Erwin Dreesen is a long time community activist. This op/ed article was first published in the Ottawa Citizen in 2019 and is reprinted here with his permission, since it remains as timely today as ever.]*

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**Greenfield, Main, Hawthorne**

# OOE Community Association urges need for delay and improvements to massive roadwork redesign project

**JOHN DANCE**

The \$20.6 million reconstruction of roadways and underground services for much of the northern part of Old Ottawa East - known as the Greenfield, Main, Hawthorne (GMH) project - has been delayed by at least a year and the OOE Community Association (OOECA) has requested that it be further delayed until dangerous and inadequate design features are fixed.

"This is the time to get it right," Tom Scott, OOECA's transportation chairperson stated at the association's December meeting. The sentiment was echoed by others at the most recent public advisory committee on the project, as they hammered away at design deficiencies that remain in the City's plan for the GMH project.

Specifically, five major deficiencies were raised at the advisory committee: failing to reinstall a safe crossing of Colonel By Drive at the northern end of Main Street; inadequately improving the pedestrian crosswalk on Greenfield Avenue; maintaining the unprotected and narrow southwest corner of Main Street and Hawthorne Avenue; maintaining the dangerous southbound gap in the Main Street cycling track between the Queensway and Graham Avenue, and failing to bury the hydro wires on Hawthorne Avenue.

Councillor Shawn Menard has responded to the concerns, all of which were raised at the advisory committee by his advisor Jonathan McLeod, and some progress has been made.

**Added Improvements Sought**

As outlined by Scott McAnsh in his article in *The Mainstreeter* a year and a half ago: "There will be changes to the water and sewer infrastructure, and many of the streets will have cycling infrastructure added. The plans include a westbound bike lane on the north side of Hawthorne, cycle tracks on both sides of Greenfield and on Main, and a two-way multi-use path along the east side of Colonel By Drive from Graham Avenue to Hawthorne." But residents continue to seek additional improvements to address long-standing deficiencies.

As well as wanting to "get it right," two extenuating factors have also prompted OOECA to ask for a further delay on the project.

First, the provincial Ministry of Transportation (MTO) plans the separate \$500 million Queensway bridge replacement project affecting both Hawthorne Avenue and Main Street. To accomplish this work, MTO is purchasing Hawthorne Avenue properties that could, after the bridge replacement project is completed, provide additional space to make long-sought-



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

**Barbara Greenberg of Bike Ottawa says the southwest corner of Main and Hawthorne is "incredibly dangerous" for cyclists and pedestrians and should be fixed during the planned reconstruction.**

ter safety improvements, including fixing the substandard and unprotected southwest corner of Main and Hawthorne.

The second extenuating factor is the City's need to defer projects in light of the extraordinary municipal expenditures on the pandemic.

"If someone is looking for a candidate to reduce cash-flow demand by a project deferral until the City gets back on its fiscal feet after COVID, then this [GMH] project should be one to be seriously considered - and then use the time to come up with a more rational design and plan with a better chance of consensus acceptance," noted Scott in a recent letter to Mayor Jim Watson.

**Changed Schedule**

Originally, the City's roadway reconstruction was to have begun last year. According to the new plan, it will begin this summer but, rather than starting with work focused south of the Queensway on the Greenfield area as originally planned, it will begin with sewer, water and road reconstruction on Echo Drive and Colonel By Drive (Immaculata to Graham Avenue); Hawthorne Avenue (Colonel By Drive to Main); and sanitary sewer outlet replacement on Main Street (Hawthorne to Harvey Street).

Next year, the components begun in 2021 will be completed, as will the

remaining sewer, water and road reconstruction north of the Queensway on Main Street (Echo Drive to Harvey); full sewer, water and road reconstruction on Greenfield Avenue (Main to King Edward Avenue), and Echo Drive (Queensway to Concord Street North), Concord Street North (Echo Drive to Havelock Street), Montcalm Street (Greenfield to the dead-end) and Harvey Street (Echo to Main).

In 2023, final road and landscaping reinstatements will be completed. In 2025, the Province's Queensway bridge replacement project could begin and affect the major routes rebuilt during the GMH project.

**Colonel By Drive Crossing**

Last year, Parks Canada created a safe crossing of Colonel By Drive at the northern end of Main Street, but this was done to allow a cycling detour necessitated by canal wall refurbishment work. When the work was completed the safe crossing was removed and so Colonel By is again "a nightmare to cross," as one resident remarked.

To this complaint, City staff responded that the City "is exploring opportunities to install an interim crossing as part of this project, similar to the temporary crossing that was used with the canal wall rehabilitation project."

Responding to this, Councillor Men-

ard has now advised that "(r)ecently we secured provincial and federal funding that should allow for a full and protected crossing at the Main and Colonel By intersection." So, finally, a permanent safe crossing is on the horizon.

**Greenfield Avenue Crossing**

Residents requested that there be a speed bump at the twice-destroyed pedestrian crosswalk on Greenfield Avenue and that the speed limit be reduced to 30km/h, but City staff say other improvements would make this crossing safer and, because Greenfield is an arterial roadway, it can have neither "vertical deflection" nor a 30km/h speed limit.

In pursuit of this issue, Councillor Menard subsequently met with residents in the Concord Street and Greenfield Avenue area to discuss how to create a better permanent crossing there. "We hope to make progress on this," says Menard.

**Main Street and Hawthorne Avenue Safety**

"The Main and Hawthorne intersection, particularly the southwest corner, is a concern for people on bikes, but also from an accessibility perspective, it's incredibly dangerous," says Barbara Greenberg, the Bike Ottawa representative on the advisory committee and also a regular user of OOE cycling routes.

The dangerous corner was also highlighted in the 2018 Main Street safety audit that the City conducted. Since that time, Councillor Menard championed flexible stakes installed at the corner to help protect pedestrians, but the stakes are routinely run over and have to be removed for winter snow clearance.

In terms of the "missing cycling links", City staff responded after the advisory committee meeting that it is not a "feasible option" to remove a lane to accommodate a new southbound cycle track between the Queensway and Graham Avenue because of ensuing traffic flow problems, particularly "intersection blocking."

Greenberg commented that "intersection blocking" is illegal and that staff are giving priority to illegal driver behaviour rather than to the impacts of the proposed design on more vulnerable cyclists and pedestrians. She says that it's "(b)ackwards in the approach that should be taken when creating safe streets."

To address the cycling connectivity and dangerous corner issues, Councillor Menard says, "We are trying to get [MTO] to give us some of this space [on Hawthorne] when they are finished with

*Continued on Page 13*



# Progress made on Grand Allée park design planning

**JOHN DANCE**

The plans for Grand Allée park in the heart of Old Ottawa East now include distinctive entrance features, carefully designed stall areas for the Main Farmers' Market and naturalized plantings to help protect the large maples that line the allée that runs from Main Street to a second park that will be in front of the Deschâtelets Building.

Representatives of the community association, Sustainable Living Ottawa East (SLOE) and the Farmers' Market recently met Regional Group staff and City representatives to review the latest design - and they responded favourably.

Community consultation on the park began in 2015 and the vision for an "urban, linear" park has been carefully developed to ensure the view of Deschâtelets and the heritage trees are well maintained.

Landscape architect Jessica Palacios says the park will be a place to grab a coffee and sit - "it's more a European style park ... a beautiful path between the trees." The park is intended for pedestrian

use with temporary vehicular access to set up special events such as the Farmer's Market or conduct operations and maintenance.

The park will use similar site finishes and furnishings as those used on Main Street to visually tie the two areas together, such as, pavers, benches, bike stands and lighting standards.

Two steel structures replicating the proportions of Deschâtelets' windows will be placed on each side of the Grand Allée to mark the Main Street entrance to the park.

Given the City of Ottawa's policy of minimizing operational expenditures, SLOE will be seeking volunteers to help with maintaining the new park's native perennials and shrubs.

While the new park will have electricity available for the market vendors and others, no washrooms are planned. "Washrooms and a hand washing station [in] the Grand Allée are constrained due to heritage trees, size and configuration," noted Regional's Erin O'Connor. "We may need to consider temporary solu-

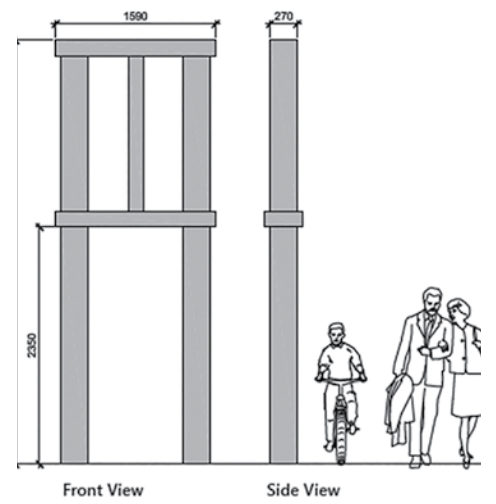
tions until the Forecourt Park and the City recreation facility in the Deschâtelets Building are built."

The targeted park opening is set for 2023 once Regional's new buildings along des Oblats are completed. Regional says there may be cafés and restaurants on the Grande Allée side of the new buildings where park users could pick up a coffee or food. Residents will be able to walk between the two new buildings to reach the new park from des Oblats.

Suggestions raised through the recent consultation session included: providing picnic tables; ensuring safe night lighting and snow removal in the winter; creating a long-term succession/replacement plan for the large old maples; and adding a pediment feature on the entrance structures to reflect a key design element of Deschâtelets.

With the conspicuous success of the large colourful GLEBE lettering that was recently installed at the community's northern Bank Street entrance, one resident has suggested that a similar OOE/VOE installation near the entrance to the Grande Allée "would certainly heighten our community profile, enhance community pride and give everyone a handy spot to meet."

The design and consultation process for the Grand Allée park is markedly



REGIONAL GROUP IMAGE

**Distinctive entrance features based on proportions of the Deschâtelets Building's windows are proposed for the new park.**

different than the scant consultation that OSEG and the City have done for Aberdeen Square in Lansdowne Park. Unlike the OSEG case, in Old Ottawa East, Regional, the City and community groups have worked over a number of years to produce a satisfactory design.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

**Hydro wires appear to be growing up and out from the canopy of one of the community's most charming trees that graces Centennial Boulevard.**

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## The Building Bridges workshops

# Anglophones and Francophones in Old Ottawa East forge links to identify and resolve community issues

JOCELYNE CALOZ & ÉLISABETH BRUINS

Building Bridges, a unique series of bilingual ideation online workshops, was staged successfully during November and December, bringing together diverse communities of Old Ottawa East that have not had frequent opportunities to work together in the past.

The three Building Bridges sessions, conducted as weekly Zoom meetings, were the brainchild of the Mauril-Bélanger Social Innovation Workshop (the "Atelier"), with the support of the Association des communautés francophones d'Ottawa's Bilingual Ottawa funding program.

Organizers of the series developed three workshops, held between November 18 and December 3, to allow members of OOE's Anglophone and Franco-

phone communities to address issues they cared about related to 1) environment and sustainability; 2) urban transformation; and 3) community equity. Working together, session participants from the community were able to begin collectively developing bilingual projects that might resolve the issues. Participants were invited to express themselves in the language of their choice.

The online workshops allowed Building Bridges participants to find ways to connect various local actors and advocates with one another and with the Atelier.

During the sessions, several common highlights emerged: find ways to communicate (especially during the pandemic); create a platform to pool existing resources and projects; create a vision for success; ensure a clear message in communications, i.e., what needs to be accomplished; when dealing with government, in addi-

tion to clarity of message, address the appropriate level of government (municipal, provincial, federal); find ways to engage people who are not already connected to activist groups; and identify commonalities or intersections to bring together people working on different issues that would allow for cross-functioning.

In addition, during the discussion on environment and sustainability, the need to map the OOE ecosystem and the importance of benchmarking was reinforced. The efforts undertaken by several neighbourhood residents were highlighted, particularly the efforts of the Sustainable Living Ottawa East group which promotes green and sustainable initiatives, among them the elimination of invasive species such as burdock along the Rideau River.

During the discussion on urban transformation, some participants noted that

densification results in the loss of green space and light, increases noise pollution, and heightens a lack of affordable housing. Nevertheless, others pointed out that the city offers great social amenities on the ground, as evidenced by the growth of stores on Main Street. They concluded that urban density must be balanced between losses and sensitive implementation.

Discussions on community equity indicated the importance of fostering deep listening and the need to empower citizens to take responsibility for the future of their community.

Organizers and participants agreed that Building Bridges was successful in initiating links between the Atelier and community residents and in encouraging bilingualism. Many have indicated that they would like to continue the collaboration in 2021!

## Les anglophones et les francophones du Vieil Ottawa-Est forgent des liens pour identifier et résoudre des problèmes communautaires

JOCELYNE CALOZ & ÉLISABETH BRUINS

Construire des ponts, une série unique d'ateliers en ligne d'idéation, a été mise en scène avec succès en novembre et décembre, tissant des liens entre les diverses communautés du Vieil Ottawa-Est qui, au préalable, avaient eu peu d'occasion de se côtoyer.

Les trois sessions de Construire des ponts, menées sous la forme de réunions hebdomadaires de Zoom, ont été conçues par l'Atelier d'innovation sociale Mauril-Bélanger, connu sous le nom de l'Atelier, avec l'appui du programme de financement Ottawa Bilingue de l'Association des communautés francophones d'Ottawa.

Les organisateurs de la série ont mis sur pied trois ateliers lieu entre le 18 novembre et le 3 décembre afin de permettre aux membres des communautés anglophones et francophones du Vieil Ottawa-Est d'adresser des enjeux qui leur tiennent à cœur liés à 1) l'environnement et la durabilité; 2) la transformation urbaine; et 3) l'équité communautaire. En travaillant ensemble, les participants ont pu commencer à élaborer des projets bilingues qui pourraient résoudre ces enjeux. Les participants ont été invités à s'exprimer dans la langue de leur choix.

Ces rencontres ont permis aux participants de trouver certains moyens de créer des ponts entre les différents acteurs locaux et avec l'Atelier.

Au cours des sessions, plusieurs points saillants communs sont ressortis : définir des canaux de communication (surtout en temps de pandémie); créer une plate-forme pour regrouper les ressources et les projets existants; créer une vision de la réussite;

assurer un message clair lors des communications, c'est-à-dire ce qui doit être accompli; lors de communications avec le gouvernement, en sus de la clarté du message, s'adresser au palier approprié des gouvernements (municipal, provincial, fédéral); trouver des moyens d'engager des personnes qui ne sont pas déjà liées à des groupes d'activisme; et identifier les points communs ou les intersections afin de réunir les personnes travaillant sur des questions différentes qui permettraient un fonctionnement croisé.

En sus, lors de la discussion sur l'environnement et la durabilité, on a renforcé le besoin de cartographier l'écosystème du Vieil Ottawa-Est et l'importance du benchmarking. Les efforts entrepris par plusieurs résidents du quartier ont été soulignés, surtout ceux de l'organisme Viabilité écologique d'Ottawa-Est qui fait la promotion d'initiatives écologiques et durables tels que ceux liés à l'élimination des espèces envahissantes comme la barbane au long de la rivière Rideau.

Lors de la discussion sur la transformation urbaine, certains participants ont indiqué que la densification entraîne la perte d'espaces verts et de lumière, la pollution sonore, ainsi que le manque de logements abordables. Néanmoins, d'autres ont souligné que celle-ci offre de grandes commodités sociales sur le terrain, comme le montre la croissance de magasins sur la rue Main. Ils ont conclu que la densité urbaine doit être équilibrée entre les pertes et une mise en œuvre sensible.

Les discussions sur l'équité communautaire ont indiqué l'importance de favoriser l'écoute profonde et le besoin de responsabiliser les citoyens sur le devenir de leur communauté.



Construire des ponts a réussi à amorcer des liens entre l'Atelier d'innovation sociale et les résidents de la communauté tout en encourageant le bilinguisme et d'établir une belle collaboration. Plusieurs ont indiqué qu'ils souhaitent poursuivre la collaboration en 2021!



## Mayor asked to undo Lees campus transfer

*Continued from Page 1*

campus will be detrimental to voter parity because Rideau-Vanier is forecast to grow faster than Capital and it's already more populous," OOECA president Bob Gordon says.

At the January OOECA meeting, board members unanimously voted to request that Mayor Jim Watson reverse Council's decision to transfer the Lees campus before the related by-law was scheduled to be proclaimed on January 27, 2021.

Beate Bowron, the City's consultant responsible for the boundary change recommendations that went to City Council in December, says, "The shifting of the ward boundary to the River does not affect voter parity, since there will be no residents in the affected area during the project timeframe."

But Bowron's contention ignores the planned intense development on the Lees campus which will be accomplished by building on the sports field site, replacing the existing buildings with much taller ones, and building over the parking lots.

The second criterion for effective representation resulting from ward changes is "respecting natural/physical boundaries" City staff say. In this regard, the report for City Council said, "#417 is not a big boundary; use the River instead." But in his letter to Mayor Watson, Gordon deemed this reasoning "ludicrous."

"The river doesn't become the new boundary - the LRT line does," wrote Gordon. "In absolutely no way is the LRT line as significant a physical boundary as is Highway 417."

"A third major criterion of effective representation [for determining ward boundaries] refers to communities of interest," Bowron said in a written response to *The Mainstreeter*. "[T]he information we were given is that the Gee-Gees sports field south of Highway 417 is directly associated with sports facilities to the north in the current Rideau-Vanier Ward."

In response, Gordon wrote: "The actual dominant community of interest is Capital Ward's Old Ottawa East that has included the Lees campus area for more than a century."

"The poorly-conceived Lees campus ward transfer fails to satisfy the three criteria required for a boundary change. Indeed, the transfer violates what ward boundary changes are supposed to achieve. The request for the transfer was from an unknown party and is strongly opposed by the Old Ottawa East Community Association," concluded Gordon.

In reviewing the City's documentation, *The Mainstreeter* learned that the "Recommendations Report" spoke of transferring just the "Gee-Gees sports field."



MAP - CITY OF OTTAWA

### The new approved ward boundaries cut uOttawa's Lees campus out of Capital Ward.

Councillors were misled by this wording because, as the report's map shows, the boundary change is for the entire Lees Avenue campus of the University of Ottawa.

Capital Ward Councillor Shawn Menard was one of six councillors who

voted against the ward boundary changes approved by City Council in December. In line with his views, OOECA passed a motion at its February board meeting to file an appeal on the boundary transfer to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal.

### Fall 2022 completion date projected

## New Community Centre approvals a key step

### JOHN DANCE

Ottawa City Council's approval in December to proceed to negotiate a deal with the Conseil des Écoles Catholiques du Centre-Est (CECCE, the school board) for a new community centre in the Deschâtelets Building and an adjacent new "sports facility" is a key step on the road to Old Ottawa East's replacement of the inadequate Old Town Hall.

Council had previously approved the demolition of the chapel wing of Deschâtelets on the condition that a school and a community centre would be accommodated in the main part of the building. The new approval satisfies this condition, assuming the French-language elementary school and the community centre are built.

"We wanted to ensure that any changes to the historic building would be contingent on this direct partnership being confirmed and we are happy to see the project progressing," commented Capital Ward Councillor Shawn Menard.

Background material provided to City Council gives new details on how the project will tentatively proceed. The school board, rather than the City, will build and own both the community centre and the sports facility, which will have a combined area of about 21,000 square feet. However, the construction work for both will be funded through a multi-year lease with the City.

The community centre will occupy the northern half of the ground floor of the fully renovated Deschâtelets Building,

and will include office spaces, meeting rooms, a lobby, washrooms and multipurpose rooms. The new school will occupy the rest of the ground floor and the second and third floors. The use of the fourth and fifth floors of the building has not yet been finalized, though Councillor Menard is advocating that it be used for seniors affordable housing.

The sports facility will be a new building linked with Deschâtelets and, tentatively, will have a gymnasium, change rooms, washrooms, storage and other ancillary spaces.

"There has been exemplary partnership in this project, with complementary needs and opportunities in respect of a recreational space," Menard commented in the report to City Council. In terms of the "complementary needs," the school will use the sports facility primarily during the day, Monday to Friday, while the community use would primarily be in the evenings and on weekends.

"Council has approved \$11.5M in 2020 and 2021 for the design and construction of a community centre in Old Ottawa East, and an additional \$1.7M toward the [adjacent] Forecourt and Grande Allée parks in the 2021 budget," Menard emailed after Council's decision. "We feel very proud of this accomplishment."

The ambitious, multi-step timeline for the project forecasts completion of the final design by the end of May, with construction beginning by the end of August and completion of construction in the fall of 2022.

## Safety concerns mitigated Elgin-Pretoria gets cycling improvements

### MAINSTREETER STAFF

Cycling infrastructure at the south end of Elgin Street leading onto Pretoria Bridge has been changed with the replacement of the eastbound cycling lane with an off-road link in the little island just east of the TD Bank.

The other significant change is the bike lane constructed along the west side of Elgin Street north of Catherine Street and Isabella Street and along the east side of Elgin Street between Argyle Avenue and Isabella Street.

"The additional facility connects the existing cycling lanes north of Argyle and on Queen Elizabeth Drive, mitigating various previous safety concerns with cyclist/motorist interactions along this stretch," says Tara Blasioli, the City of Ottawa's acting director of infrastructure services.

Originally, the City planned to keep the eastbound cycling lane leading to Pretoria Bridge. However Blasioli says the cycling facilities were modified "to give cyclists the option to use a new off-road link between Isabella Street and Pretoria Avenue, a location where traffic volumes can sometimes be high. The new configuration also included the installation of a new speed hump in the right-hand turn lane at this intersection, which will assist in slowing down traffic and improving safety."

While the new bike lanes on Elgin under the Queensway and beyond are welcomed by most cyclists, the removal of the lane to Pretoria has not been as well received.

"If you are coming south on Elgin or turning on to the street from Isabella, and then continuing on to Pretoria Bridge, a bike lane would be the first choice, the fastest, and the safest," says OOE cyclist Don Fugler. "Diverting to a shared facility/multi-use pathway, and then crossing awkwardly at the intersection, will only be the preferred option for those who fear any sort of contact with traffic."

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CAROL ALETTE PHOTO

The hillside and riverbank behind the Rideau East apartment tower at 170 Lees often looked like this before the building's management finally removed the offending garbage containers in early January.

*At the 170 Lees Avenue tower...*

## Local apartment complex finally begins to address refuse blight

### CAROL ALETTE

Far too often over the past two decades a mess of scattered water bottles, boxes, shopping bags, packing materials and other trash has greeted users of the Rideau River Nature Trail behind the Rideau East apartments at 170 Lees Avenue.

Until very recently, the source of the garbage was an uncovered dumpster located at the river end of the building's front parking lot. The lighter materials in the bin regularly blew onto the hillside below and across the multi-use path to the riverbank. Aesthetics aside, a good deal of this accumulated garbage wound up in the river, where plastic and Styrofoam, in particular, proved hazardous to

fish, turtles, waterfowl and other aquatic animals.

Most of the garbage removal over the years has been undertaken by community volunteers, who have saved countless bags of trash from floating downstream into the Ottawa and St. Lawrence rivers and, finally, into the Atlantic Ocean.

As far back as 2009, with a letter to the apartment tower's property manager, the Old Ottawa East Community Association (OOECA) had attempted to rectify what was back then already a long-standing situation. At that time, building renovations at the Lees Avenue tower were resulting in particularly egregious amounts of garbage. OOECA asked that the garbage

be contained, and that the dumpster be moved away from the river, but neither of these things happened.

By autumn 2011, in his article in *The Mainstreeter*, John Dance reported that "The [building] management . . . has committed to a number of measures that will transform the one unsightly portion of the nature trail." These measures included a temporary fence to contain construction materials; a permanent fence and hedge to follow; trees planted on the hillside; and regular cleanups. However, the temporary fence didn't last, and neither the permanent fence nor the hedge were ever installed.

In a sternly worded letter to the City

***"The irresponsible behaviour of the apartment building owner has gone on too long..."***

***- John Dance, 2018***

of Ottawa in autumn 2018, Dance wrote "The irresponsible behaviour of the apartment building owner has gone on too long... for the City to allow a dumpster on the edge of a park is wrong." But nothing came of this complaint, either.

Cut to fall 2020, when Councillor Shawn Menard and the City of Ottawa began to take complaints more seriously. Menard's office indicated that bylaw officers had contacted the offending party, and happily, in late November the dumpster disappeared. Unhappily, it was replaced by a much smaller wooden crate, also uncovered, which led to garbage scattering to the surrounding area.

Last month, *The Mainstreeter* contacted the apartment building's facility manager, Doug MacLean, who mentioned that there had been discussions with bylaw officers and advised that he was addressing this issue. MacLean explained that bins for residents are located in an enclosed area, and that the outdoor dumpster was intended solely for larger objects. He blamed the dispersed garbage on unauthorized use of the dumpster by people from outside the building. Claiming to be unaware of the wooden crate that replaced the dumpster in late November, MacLean said "I will have my staff remove it immediately." Later that day, the crate was gone.

Has this lengthy, distasteful saga finally come to an end? Will the management at 170 Lees Avenue finally own up to its responsibility to properly maintain its grounds? Only time will tell . . .

## Improvements, delays urged for massive GMH road redesign

*Continued from Page 9*

their project." In related discussions with MTO, he says "We've also inquired about keeping the heritage gas station - to be put back after construction... We have talked to MTO about a different construction type for Hawthorne so that they don't need to expropriate several buildings that they were originally going to."

### Hawthorne Avenue Wires

The issue of the City being unwilling to bury hydro lines on Hawthorne Avenue continues to thwart the community. Even though the Old Ottawa East secondary plan calls for "undergrounding" on Hawthorne, the City refuses to fund the effort. However, as noted in the June 2020 issue of *The Mainstreeter*, the wires will be buried on the northern part of Main and on part of Greenfield, so this is a positive

development.

Since that time, Mayor Jim Watson celebrated the burying of overhead wires on Elgin Street when it was reconstructed as a complete street. Hawthorne also is to be a complete street, but if the current plan is approved it will be blighted by hydro poles and lines and, as OOE planning expert Paul Goodkey has pointed out, it really will not be complete because there won't be an eastbound cycling track.

"We have met with Hydro Ottawa about potential burial [of hydro wires] on Hawthorne," says Menard. "Right now only one pole is set for burial. We are trying to get the other five buried, associated with the new Official Plan which calls for burial on traditional main streets."

The City has committed to a "public information session" in early 2021 to present the design. As of this writing, however, no details are available.





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# BE THE CHANGE

## On reducing plastics - just keep on doing your best

### ROWAN & BRIANA AIRD

In this instalment of Be The Change, we answer a common question that many readers in Old Ottawa East can relate to, especially during these COVID times.

**Q.** I made a New Year's resolution to go plastics-free, but in practice it seems almost impossible. How do I stay motivated?

Forgot my reusable bags AGAIN.

**A.** A cold-turkey declaration can be compelling, but unless you're strongly motivated by absolutes, we suggest you use a modified version of the Pareto principle - it takes about 20% of the effort to reduce your plastics use by 80%, but it's four times as hard to go 100% plastics-free.

Here are some strategies you can use to have a bigger impact without exhausting yourself:

- Focus on reducing single-use items and excessive packaging, rather than plastics specifically. Simply substituting biodegradable but carbon alternatives like glass, cloth, or paper can do

as much harm as good.

- Avoid cheaper impulse-buys that might not last long or see much use;
- Buy in larger quantities when possible. For example, if you normally get mini yogourt cups, instead buy regular-sized tubs and use a reusable lunch container to portion out single servings - larger containers normally have a better packaging to contents ratio. Better yet, you can buy in bulk using reusable containers, like at our local Nu Grocer;
- Squeeze more uses out of single-use items - if you forget your reusable totes, get the plastic shopping bags, but re-use them as bathroom garbage bags.

Most of all, don't beat yourself up if you fall off the wagon once in a while - just keep on doing your best. Reducing waste is a vital part of the work towards a livable future, but it's important not to exhaust yourself in one area when every part of our lives must be re-examined with the lens of sustainability. And ultimately, what you buy is more important than what packaging is used.



VIVIANNE LEMAY IMAGE



*Want to eat local, but still love California avocados? You sort your recycling, but don't know what to do with pesky plastic bags? Eager to reduce your ecological footprint, but feeling overwhelmed? Send your sustainability conundrums to [sloe@ottawaeast.ca](mailto:sloe@ottawaeast.ca) and we'll help you figure out the facts and the actions you can take to be the change.*

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**Renovation plans revealed****Here's what's in store for the Deschâtelets Building****MAINSTREETER STAFF**

The transformation of the Deschâtelets Building into the new central elementary school of the Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est and a new community centre requires changes to the heritage structure, and some residents are objecting to a number of the proposals.

The proposals are tied to the demolition of Deschâtelets' chapel wing, the operation of the school and the updating of the building's various systems.



A key change would be the modification of the main entrance so that it would meet today's accessibility requirements with the installation of depressed ramps that would lead to the ground floor. The entrance would have "new masonry piers supporting the existing entrance pediment," which is the distinctive triangular feature over the entrance.

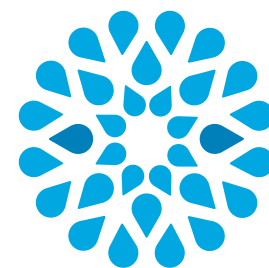
At the rear of the building the hole resulting from the removal of the chapel wing would be covered with a "protruding bay providing entry to [the] future community centre facility." This would have a glass "curtain wall" at the ground level and above would be dark metal panel siding with windows.

Some residents have questioned whether the metal panelling is appropriate and suggest that the stone from the demolished chapel should be reused here.



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## Old Ottawa East Volunteers

# Meet Lynda Colley

*The Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County*



THERESA WALLACE PHOTO

**Lynda Colley, pictured here on her front steps in Old Ottawa East, has volunteered with The Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County since 2008, and has chaired the organization's Board of Directors for the past four years.**

### THERESA WALLACE

Sometimes one moment is branded on the heart. The phone call with your mother when she forgot you have three children. That first time your father went for a walk and got lost. The day your spouse drove home an expensive new truck that was far beyond your budget, and you had to return it, embarrassment overshadowed by the painful knowledge that your lifelong partner was disappearing.

For Lynda Colley, this moment of reckoning for her family—which, in truth, can be one of many such moments as a loved one declines—came during a home visit by a worker from the local public health authority. “My sister was with Mom when the assessor asked Mom questions to determine what her needs were, including a question about who was sitting beside her. Mom turned to my sister, paused and eventually said, ‘Oh, this is my friend.’ A heartbreaking response for my sister, for all of us.”

Colley, a litigation lawyer who worked in private practice for a number of years in Toronto, then in Ottawa for Fraser and Beatty (now Dentons) before joining the federal public service, had two very young children and was working full-time when her mother was diagnosed in 2000. She says her sister

and father took on most of the burden of care during the 10 years her mother lived after her diagnosis. The family also received much-needed guidance and support from the Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County.

In 2008, Colley started volunteering with the dementia society. She's been on the board for close to six years and chair for almost four, but emphasizes she's just one of many supporters and the rewards she gets from helping out—meeting new people and learning new things—vastly outweigh the hours she puts in. The Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County serves more than 5500 people per year and relies on hundreds of donors and volunteers as well as funding from the provincial government through the Ministry of Health.

“Our core services are provided through our dementia care coaches, who are experts in dementia care and support,” Colley explains. “They provide one-on-one counselling, lead support groups for caregivers and people suffering from dementia, and give guidance to people who aren't sure what services are available or where to turn.”

The dementia society also offers recreational programs. There's a pedal power program, one of the society's most popular, that allows clients to

cycle at home, as well as instructor-led art, music and dance programs. Like so many organizations, the society has moved all its programming online and introduced new programs due to COVID-19. Colley notes the pandemic has been difficult for those suffering from dementia and for their caregivers. “Isolation can worsen dementia and people's ability to deal with it because it can remove social contact, upset routine, and stretch the reserves of caregivers to the limit.”

The dementia statistics are daunting (see sidebar) but Colley says research shows even small lifestyle changes can help improve brain resilience and reduce the risk of dementia. “What is good for your body is good for your brain and it's never too early or too late to take action to prevent dementia.” Colley, who lives on Merritt Avenue across the street from a teammate on her women's ultimate frisbee squad, obviously takes her own advice because she's often seen in the neighbourhood heading out for a walk, a hike, a bike ride, a ski, or a skate on the canal.

If you worry that you or someone close to you is experiencing memory troubles, or if a family member has recently received a diagnosis, Colley encourages you to contact the dementia society. You don't need a referral or a

diagnosis of dementia, and during the pandemic all programs and services are free. For more information, please consult the website [dementiahelp.ca](http://dementiahelp.ca), phone 613-523-4004 or email [info@dsorc.org](mailto:info@dsorc.org).

### What is dementia?

Dementia is an umbrella term used to describe a group of symptoms that occur when brain cells stop functioning properly. The symptoms of dementia vary but usually involve changes in cognition (memory, thinking, language), in behaviour, and in physical functioning such as movement, vision, coordination, and balance. The five most common types of dementia are Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, dementia with Lewy bodies, frontotemporal dementia and mixed dementia.

- Every hour in Canada, nine people are diagnosed.
- Approximately 420,000 Canadians over the age of 65 are currently living with dementia.
- Nearly 24,000 of those people live in the Ottawa region.
- One in five of us has experience caring for someone with dementia.

*Source: The Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County*



# COMMUNITY ADVOCACY

## Quest for Quidditch

# Grassroots opponents to the Alta Vista Traffic Corridor emerge

**An unusual coalition of community and recreational groups now seek to block the use of the Springhurst-Lees Park greenspace for a new four-lane roadway**



VANESSA KRAUS PHOTO

**The University of Ottawa's quidditch team, a long-time user of the Springhurst-Lees field, has launched a letter-writing campaign to convince politicians to cancel plans to build a four-lane road through the area.**

### JOHN DANCE

An unexpected community ally in the form of the University of Ottawa quidditch team has vigorously joined the chorus of those opposed to the use of the Springhurst-Lees Park greenspace for a new four-lane roadway dumping more traffic onto Nicholas Street and into Old Ottawa East and Sandy Hill.

For more than 40 years the Old Ottawa East (OOE) community has fought

against the construction of the Alta Vista Transportation Corridor (AVTC), but now other parties – notably the quidditch team and a rugby club – have launched a letter-writing campaign to once and for all get the AVTC removed from the City's transportation master plan.

Quidditch was the intense flying sport played by the young magician Harry Potter of J.K. Rowling's blockbuster bestsellers, but it has been adapted into a real

game, loved by many including some very passionate uOttawa students who for the past decade have practiced and played on the Lees-Springhurst greenspace.

"Springhurst Park is and has been an epicenter of community gatherings, practices, tournaments, and other events for our team, our guests and the larger Old Ottawa East community," Savannah Campbell, president of the uOttawa quidditch team, wrote to Mayor Jim Watson.

Many other members of the team have sent similar messages to Mayor Watson.

"The proximity of the public greenspace to uOttawa has been invaluable for students, as a space we can go to exercise, relax, socialize and engage with others and nature," wrote Campbell. "It is also a space where the high foot traffic draws a lot of positive attention, interest and joy at seeing our unique sport in action, and has been integral to our continued success as national qualifiers, and regional and national gold medalists over the last 10 years."

The team plays year-round and its sport is a mix between dodgeball, rugby and ultimate Frisbee. It's also co-ed and full-contact "with no Harry Potter knowledge required."

"The Springhurst Park area has served as pivotal green space over the years for rugby training as well as for uses by various community groups around the area," Lucas Bloess, president of the Ottawa Beavers and Banshees Rugby Football Club, wrote to Watson and others.

"It would be a devastating loss to the community if the area was repurposed as a transportation corridor, and this is especially true given the impacts of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the newfound importance of large outdoor gathering spaces to maintain social distancing," concluded Bloess.

The OOE Community Association has continued with its multi-pronged campaign against the AVTC. The pandemic has made it increasingly obvious that the Lees greenspace is needed for recreation, a need that is accentuated by the rapid growth in OOE's population.

## Lansdowne Park

# Aberdeen Square public consultation has been ignored

### JOHN DANCE

Despite a consultation meeting and many suggestions from residents, the Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group (OSEG) has to date refused to alter its design for improvements to Aberdeen Square, the City-operated area just to the north of Lansdowne Park's Aberdeen Pavilion.

Originally presented to the Lansdowne Community Consultation Group back in August, the proposed improvements were front and centre at a public consultation in October which was followed by an opportunity for residents to submit their suggestions. Then, at the November 30 meeting of the Community Consultation Group, OSEG presented its "What We Heard" report, summarizing the consultation.

And the conclusion? To proceed with what was presented back in August. OSEG's failure to budge prompted a protest by community members of the consultation group, and Councillor Shawn Menard requested that the design be modified to reflect the consultations. Specifically, he called for smaller and fewer entrance structures, a small stage, electrical infrastructure to support stage events, some permanent seating and thriving trees.

Mark Gowdie, OSEG's CEO, responded that any modifications to the design would require Casino Lac-Leamy's consent because the casino had already agreed to the origi-

nal design and they were providing key funding for the project as part of the sponsorship/naming rights deal they have for the square.

Asked recently if any decision has yet been reached on the design, Dan Chenier, the City of Ottawa's general manager of recreation, cultural and facility services, responded that "[T]he City and Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group are still reviewing the requested changes to the proposal and discussions on this matter have not yet concluded."

"A possibly more fundamental issue than OSEG's intransigence is why OSEG has been a primary actor in the process related to Aberdeen Square at all - as opposed to the City more actively engaging and representing the public interest," says Doug Macaulay, a member of OOECA's Lansdowne committee.

In other Lansdowne news, in December, City Council approved a 10-year extension to its deal with OSEG and a variety of other provisions to help OSEG weather the pandemic's dire business effects. As a result of Councillor Menard's initiative and as had been suggested by the Glebe's June Creelman, OSEG committed to keeping the RedBlacks and the Ottawa 67s at Lansdowne for 10 years longer than had previously been agreed.



# COMMUNITY ADVOCACY

## What's next for the Convent building?

# Some options worth considering to preserve the historic roots of Old Ottawa East

PETER FROOD

Domicile Development, the current owner of the former Convent of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus at 15 des Oblats Avenue, is in the process of selling its property, a move that raises questions about the future of this site. Will the new owners respect the Old Ottawa East (OOE) Secondary Plan? When can the community expect remediation work or the possible demolition of the Convent? Does future development on the Convent site create an opportunity to implement the vision and objectives set out in the OOE Secondary Plan without being ambushed by zoning amendments deviating from jointly developed, approved plans.

The answers to these questions will be revealed in time, but it is also time for the OOE community to be clear about its expectations.

Currently, the zoning for the Convent property provides for low density residential development (up to four floors) on the part of the property facing Springhurst Avenue and for medium density residential development (up to 6 floors) on the property facing des Oblats Avenue. The current zoning for the Convent site is the same as what was in place to guide the development of The Corners on Main (TCOM) project, so it is quite conceivable that a similar scaling and mass of a building could be proposed for the adjacent site.

There are a number of measures that could be taken to make the redevelopment of the Convent site consistent with the OOE Secondary Plan.

First, the Convent should be nominated for inclusion in the Ottawa Register of Historic Places. At the very least, this will generate research on the Convent building, providing a better understanding of its heritage value and its association with other early buildings in OOE that have defined the evolution of this community. A heritage assessment would also assist the community and the City to evaluate planning and design proposals for the site.

The Secondary Plan specifically states that the statue of the Blessed Virgin and the associated grove of trees should be retained to commemorate the Sisters of the Sacred Heart. Part of the existing building could be deconstructed to create a greenspace corridor that would extend from Springhurst Avenue to des Oblats Avenue. As identified in the Secondary Plan, this would enhance bike and pedestrian connectivity between the surrounding neighbourhood and the Greystone development. Adoption of this measure would also demonstrate a commitment to the 15 minute walking neighbourhood priority identified in the draft Official Plan. Thoughtful landscape design could integrate the commemorative and connective functions as well as providing privacy screening for the TCOM Building. On des Oblats Avenue, the greenspace corridor would also break up the streetscape, facilitating the movement of air, increasing light and reducing the tunnel effect of a street lined on both sides by bulky buildings.

Based on the heritage analysis of the Convent, serious consideration should be given to adaptive reuse of at least part of the Convent building. The Convent



**ABOVE:** The former Convent of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart on des Oblats Avenue. It is time for the Old Ottawa East community to be clear about its expectations for the future of the property, says Peter Frood, who believes that the opportunity to develop the site provides the City of Ottawa and developers with a way forward to repair the social contract with OOE residents that was breached by the cavalier decision to demolish the Chapel wing of the Deschâtelets Building. **BOTTOM LEFT:** The Convent as it was back in 1926.

was one of the early defining structures in OOE around which the community evolved. Retaining part of the Convent would complement the commemoration of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, reflect the relationship between the Convent and the Deschâtelets Building and preserve the community's past for current and future residents. An adaptive reuse strategy would reduce somewhat the carbon footprint of the project, while also providing a source of building materials for reintegration in the project or in public spaces.

If the Convent building cannot be reused, the heritage assessment could be used to inspire design elements into the new structure that echo the Convent building through references to the scaling, mass and details of the original building.

The OOE Secondary Plan clearly supports affordable housing, targeting 25% of future rental and ownership housing units. The intensification target for the Greystone development and Sacre Coeur is 1000 units. Applying this target, the development should include approximately 250 affordable housing units. Thus far, there are none. With the exception of some proposed assisted seniors housing on the top floor of the Deschâtelets

Building, Greystone Village is an affluent ghetto. And it seems that the proposed Ottawa Official Plan amendments are retreating from a commitment to affordable housing for OOE. These trends are disturbing and not consistent with an ethos of fairness and equity deeply embedded in the OOE community. It is time to stop ignoring the target by taking a stand to ensure that affordable housing units are incorporated into the Convent redevelopment.

All of the foregoing options are grounded in or consistent with objectives clearly set out in the OOE Secondary Plan. Now is the moment in time for the community to affirm its expectations and expect the best from project proponents looking to develop the Convent site.

Importantly, the proposals noted above also present a way forward through which the City and developers can repair the social contract with residents of OOE that was broken through opportunistic bylaw amendments and the cavalier decision by Council to demolish inconvenient parts of the heritage-designated Deschâtelets Building.





# Community Activities Group of Old Ottawa East (CAG)

... making Old Ottawa East an even better place to live, work and play

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# COMMUNITY COLUMNS

## TINA RAYMOND PRESIDENT, COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES GROUP (CAG)



### MAKING OLD OTTAWA EAST A MORE ENGAGING PLACE TO LIVE, WORK & PLAY

The Old Ottawa East Community Activities Group (CAG) is proud to introduce our new column in this first issue of *The Mainstreeter* in 2021. With this column, we hope to keep the community updated about our activities and work throughout the year. As you can imagine, our current focus continues to be on the impact of COVID-19 on our activities.

Last year, our team at CAG worked hard to provide continued programs and activities as we adjusted to lockdowns and testing. We moved many of our courses online and hosted about 200 participants each week. We almost tripled the number of summer camps offered and continued to provide after-school care to interested families. We also moved the very popular Main Event online, and had over 200 members of the community participate, and also held an equally well-attended online Halloween Party.

We hope to be as successful with our endeavours this year. Our goal at CAG is always to meet the community's needs and make Old Ottawa East an even better, and more engaging, place to live, work and play.

And we will go on adapting our programming to meet those needs during these challenging times. After-school care services continue as possible. Online

fitness programming carries on, with a range of registration options - from day pass to multi-class pass.

#### **Registration for Upcoming Activities**

Registration for March break camps, summer camps, and spring-summer programming is now open on our website. We continue to work with the City of Ottawa to ensure that we meet public health regulations and offer safe activities, and we remain confident that we can provide engaging activities in a secure environment. You can learn all about these, and the other activities available to you, on CAG's website at <https://www.ottawaeast-cag.ca>.

#### **Supporting CAG**

Your continued engagement with CAG — whether by volunteering, participating in our programming, telling your friends about what we do, or sharing ideas for programming — is what makes us successful. As an organization whose success is based on community participation, CAG truly is what you make it. So, we invite you to get involved in whatever way you can.



## ROB GORDON A/PRESIDENT, OLD OTTAWA EAST COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (OOECA)



### GET INVOLVED - THERE'S AN OOECA COMMITTEE FOR YOU

We are well into the New Year and winter - Brantwood Rink is open, new ski trails have been created on the eastern side of the river, and, as of this writing, the sidewalks and roads have been in good shape.

Our January Board meeting dealt with two issues pertaining to how Old Ottawa East (OOE) is being treated by the City. The first is how the new Official Plan proposes to deal with development in OOE and its secondary plan that was the result of years of work by the community, the City and other interested parties. As things have been drafted, some of the limitations that were carefully negotiated are being set aside. In the upcoming month, a ward-wide meeting will be held to review this plan that includes an opportunity to engage with City staff based on questions that have been raised.

The second is the transfer of OOE's University of Ottawa's Lees campus from Capital Ward that covers OOE, Old Ottawa South, the Glebe and Heron Park to Rideau-Vanier Ward. The City did not consult with the community on this change and its reasons for the transfer are dubious, at best.

Details on both of these issues are reported on within this issue of *The Mainstreeter*, and both fall under our planning committee, which is key to the community's response to development proposals and the City's ever-changing planning policy framework. Our current chair, Ron Rose, who fills several other key board roles, is doing so on interim basis, so we are looking for a new chair.

The planning committee reviews and comments on: all major land-use developments in Old Ottawa East; minor developments when residents have raised concerns or that have implications for the OOE community; and City and provincial planning policies which

have or may have a perceived effect on OOE. In addition, the planning committee discusses issues, proposals and policy with City of Ottawa staff and the ward councillor and his/her staff and liaises with developers and their representatives.

The chair, or their designate, represents the OOECA at the City's planning committee as well as at meetings of the Committee of Adjustment and may be called upon to present the board's position at these meetings.

Recent files include: coordinating the successful appeal of the city's decision to allow a nine storey building in front of the Deschâtelets Building, defending the community's views on the proposed demolition of the Chapel wing of the Deschâtelets Building, and responding to provisions of the proposed new Official Plan.

The planning committee meets monthly although members are called upon to provide their perspectives as new issues and proposals arise.

To add, the ward-wide meeting on the new Official Plan is not limited to some but is open to all who are part of our community. The details for accessing the meeting will be available on our website.

Over the last few years our committees have grown in membership and effectiveness. All of them deal with issues that have lasting impact on residents. Along with planning, several committees would benefit from additional members, and new members are always welcomed.

I would encourage anyone who wants to become engaged to start by reviewing the committee list on our website at [ottawaeast.ca](http://ottawaeast.ca) and, if you have any interest, please contact [info@ottawaeast.ca](mailto:info@ottawaeast.ca).



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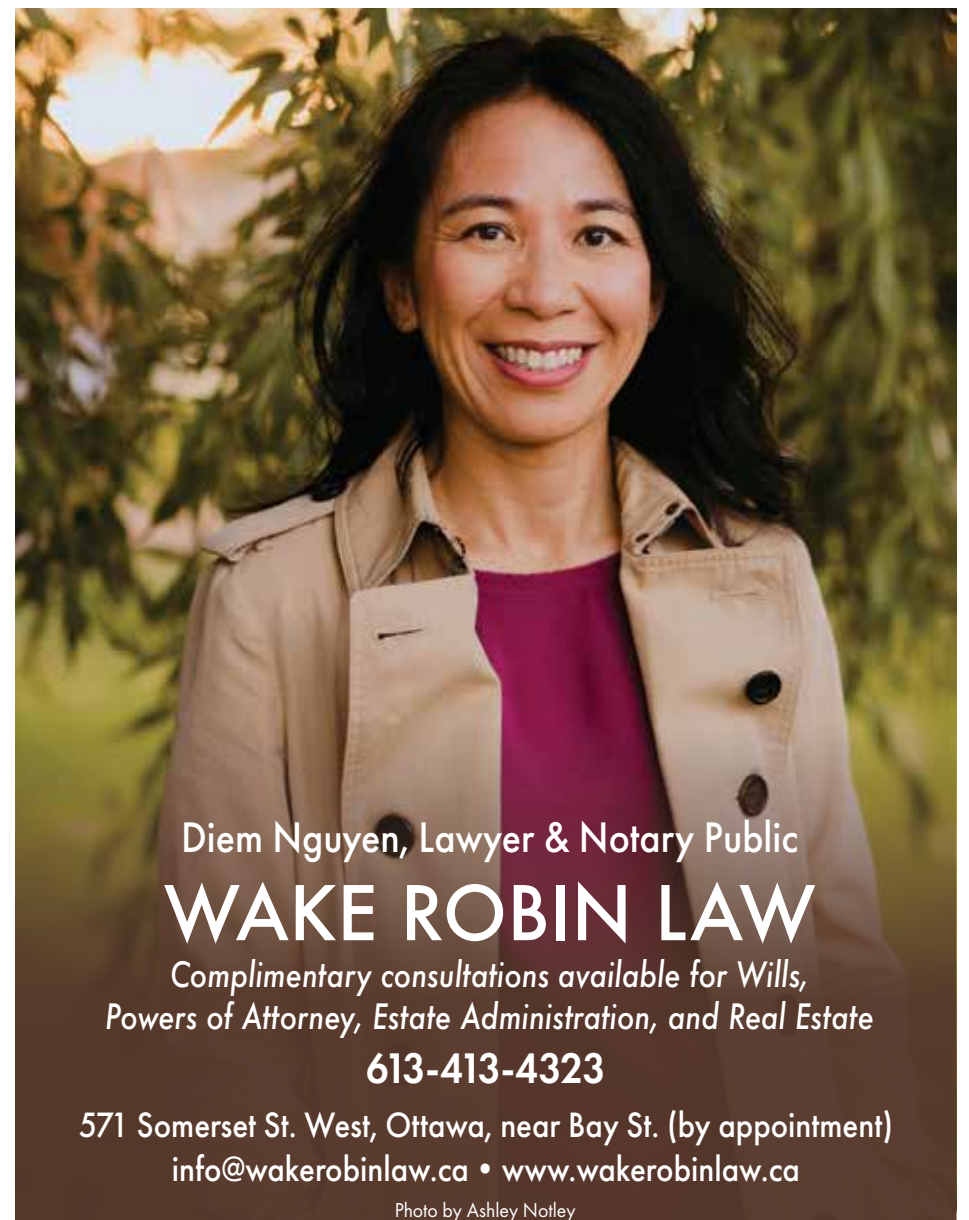
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Photo by Ashley Notley



# The Rideau Winter Trail is a recreational gem that's right on our community's doorstep



## TERRY & PEGGY WEST

There's excitement in the air as outdoor enthusiasts in Old Ottawa East (OOE) discover that when it comes to winter activities, far away fields aren't always greener. The recent exhilaration, and what some are calling a post-Christmas gift, stems from the Rideau Winter Trail.

Newly opened, and similar to the cross-country skiing trail along the Sir John A. MacDonald Parkway, this initiative brings grade A trail grooming to our community's doorstep. Those who have already tasted it—skate and classic cross-country skiers, hikers, big-wheeled bikers, snowshoers—are delighted.

The same outdoor enthusiasts who began grooming trails last year in neighbouring Overbrook have extended

the network south of the Queensway, to a point opposite the end of Centennial Boulevard in OOE. This new extension runs along the river with extra loops—especially, in the wild area opposite OOE—for a total of close to nine kilometres of trail. The trail is appealingly wide with tracks set along the edges separated by a machine-packed pathway for skate-skiers, walkers, snowshoers and fat bikers. The long-term goal is to have the Rideau Winter Trail run all the way to the Mooney's Bay ski centre, offering residents a lovely, lengthy ski trail at their doorstep.

For cross-country skiers, whether you are a beginner or more advanced, there's something here for you. The flatter sections close to the river present the option of a leisurely ski or a heavier workout. Those interested in hill and dale terrain can take the loop that begins under the hydro line close to the McIlraith Bridge (Main Street) over to the "mountain" southeast of Hurdman and back down to the river.

The winter trail is the result of a lot of hard work by dedicated volunteers and seed money from the National Capital Commission (NCC), the City of Ottawa, and from donations from a number of politicians, businesses and individuals. In 2019 Councillors Mathieu Fleury and Tobi Nussbaum and Nicki Bridgeland, the CEO of Rideau Sports Centre on Donald St., initiated a single groomed track along the river north of the Queensway. Last year, Rawlson King, who had replaced Nussbaum (now CEO of the NCC), began a pilot with weekly trail groomings. Overbrook resident Peter Nor is the volunteer chair. In addition to coaching at Nakkertok, Eastern Canada's largest x-country ski club, Nor and his two children now enjoy having fine skiing at their doorstep.

Hired professionals groom the trails once a week, with supplemental grooming after heavy snowfalls. This comes with a cost. Although seed money has been provided by the City of Ottawa and the NCC, it has been necessary to appeal to the public for support. Those interested in making a contribution can do so by googling, *Rideau Winter Trail – GoFundMe*.

For many residents of OOE, having fine skiing this close to home is an answer to a prayer. To quote OOE resident Jamie Brougham: "It was amazing. In areas I've skied on for years, from my tracks too often being the only ones, to having real trails, is a dream come true."

While excited, Brougham expressed concern for what might lie ahead. He wonders if this gem in the heart of the city, having been overlooked by outdoor enthusiasts for so long, might already have caught the eye of high-rise developers who see it as unused terrain.

Assuming that this could possibly be the case, what is the best course for outdoor enthusiasts to take? The old adage, "use it or lose it," comes to mind. The more it is recognized as a people place, the greater the chances of it remaining so. Sharing something that's treasured isn't always easy to do. It's human nature to hush-hush a good thing. In this case, it may be in the best interest of the community to spread the word.

Old Ottawa East residents can access the trail by crossing the river on either the LRT bridge or the McIlraith bridge. Some of the more adventurous, reassured by the presence of people out ice fishing, have taken to crossing over on the ice. Anyone attempting this should exercise extreme caution.

As *The Mainstreeter* went to press, the trail was in good shape having bene-



SUPPLIED MAP

**The Rideau Winter Trail now stretches nine kilometres ending opposite Centennial Boulevard in OOE.**

fitted from several snow falls in February. Let's hope that mother nature continues to deliver more powder.

*Viva winter!*



JAMIE BROUGHAM, PEGGY WEST PHOTOS

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# ART BEAT



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## OOE ARTIST FEATURE: JIM LAMONT'S PHOTOGRAPHS CAPTURE CLIMATE CHANGE, INSPIRE ACTION

Some of us got a glimpse into the world and work of photographer Jim Lamont last winter when he was the second-last artist to hold an exhibition at The Green Door Restaurant before COVID locked us out for a time. In Lamont's own words, his photographic interest is: "the rediscovery of the Sublime in the context of global climate change." When he refers to "the Sublime" he means not only the beauty of nature, but also its most overwhelming and frightening elements.

COVID has bumped Lamont's newest exhibition, *DAZZLED! Images from Iceland*, to 2022. But COVID hasn't only meant rescheduling shows. "I recognize that I have a privileged existence," Lamont says. "Due to my age and socio-economic position I am not experiencing the terrible devastation and hurt that some people are experiencing with COVID-19. But my work has been affected since travel has been shut down. The Sublime, for me, is best found in the mountains, the sea, and in the Arctic, particularly Baffin Island."

As Raymond Aubin wrote in a review

## A finger on the pulse of the arts in OOE

of Lamont's exhibition *A place Apart* in 2015, "the photographer goes to extremes to select the points of view as well as the times of year and day that will open up the compositions he is looking for."

"Baffin Island terrifies me," Lamont says. "It makes me aware of how easily the environment can hurt you. And the Arctic itself shows the impact of climate change in a more obvious fashion than anywhere else in the world." When Lamont and a friend travelled to Central East Baffin Island in 1997 they stood beneath a 100-foot-high glacier that went back for several kilometres. When Lamont returned 16 years later the glacier was gone and in its place, a muddy plain. "I was in a river valley, I had GPS and topographic maps, so there was no question...the glacier was gone."

This year, Lamont sent out a photograph with his Christmas greeting of a place recently named Warming Island. "Nobody knew that it was an island until the ice started melting and revealed that it was not connected to the mainland," he explains. Similarly, when Lamont travelled to South East Baffin with a friend in 1999 they were constantly struggling against sea ice that forced them off the water multiple times. "When I returned to the same place in 2003, I didn't see a single piece of floating ice in three weeks of travel!"

Lamont points out that we do not realize the effect of climate change in our urban lives because we are sheltered from it. "But the Inuit have been telling us about it," he says. "Scientists have been telling us about it. The ever-increasing number of severe hurricanes and fires and extreme weather events have been telling us about it."

According to Lamont, travelling in the mountains, in the Arctic, and on the



Boulder on glacier edge, Baffin Island, 2013

sea teaches patience. "You can't always get where you want to go or when," he says. "COVID has been like that too. The COVID experience for me has been like entering into extreme old age. Your world shrinks. You can no longer do things that once defined you. And you are forced to find other ways to remain true to yourself."

"My wife has had a long-standing involvement with books and children. She is a retired children's librarian. During COVID, she has found ways to reach out to young people and families. For example, she created a window display of stuffed animals that she changes regularly for the children who come by to see them."

So far, Lamont has not had to rethink his photographic interest. "I haven't done much new photography in the past year, but I've worked on personal photo book projects to review what I've done over the years, to clarify my philosophy, and to better understand where I want to go next."

"I believe that we need to have hope during the pandemic and hope in the fight against global climate change. Humanity, the world and its systems are far more complex than we can fully

understand and therefore *cannot* be fully predictable. All we can do is act on our hope—perhaps even a 'radical hope' (as Harvard University historical psychoanalyst Jonathon Lear put it) and trust that things will work out if we act responsibly."

"Increasingly, now, a message of global climate change is what defines my work. I am hoping, in a very small way to urge people to act to protect the environment for our children and for our children's children. Hope can lead to effective change. Look what we've done with COVID! When we have a shared global experience we can respond, and we can prevail. We only need the political will (regardless of political parties) to act upon that hope and give the powerful the *responsibility* to act."

In Lamont's next exhibition he uses the words of poet Mary Oliver who says:

"Still, what I want in my life  
is to be willing  
to be dazzled—  
to cast aside the weight of facts  
and maybe even  
to float a little  
above this difficult world..."

*Continued on Page 27*



View through iceberg, 2019



Approaching Warming Island at dawn, 2019



# ART BEAT



## TIM HUNT'S MAIN STREET SKETCHES

Tim Hunt explores his community outfitted with a small sketchbook, pen, and watercolour kit. He is a part of the Urban Sketchers global community of artists who practice drawing on location in cities, towns and villages they live in (or travel to). Hunt captures Old Ottawa East live—and with true Ottawa spirit—as he strides, bikes, skates, or paddles through it! In this new regular feature, he will share



the pages from his sketchbook and tell the stories behind his work.

**Tim Hunt:** Often, when I mention that I live in Old Ottawa East I am met with a blank stare. I list various landmarks in the area which elicit vague nods of the head, but it's usually not

until I mention "The Green Door" that the lightbulb comes on. This Saturday morning sketch represents a quieter version of what we're all used to on this familiar block.

Winter presents its own set of challenges for outdoor sketching. The best

thing to do is get down the details, then retire to a warmer spot to finish the job.



**To see more of Tim Hunt's urban sketches on Instagram go to: @timhuntottawa.**

## JIM LAMONT'S PHOTOS



In this photograph, Lamont captures a sea lion on rocks amid waves.

*Continued from Page 26*

Author Tanis Browning-Shelp (<http://www.browning-shelp.com>) pens her Maryn O'Brien Young Adult Fiction series, published by Dog-Eared Books, from her home in Old Ottawa East. Contact [tanis@browning-shelp.com](mailto:tanis@browning-shelp.com) if you have information about artists or art

events that you believe would enrich our community members' lives.



**To see more of Jim Lamont's work go to: [www.jalamont.ca](http://www.jalamont.ca)**



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## At the St. Eugene Residential School

# My Deschâtelets "ah ha moment" in B.C.

### PETER FROOD

My "ah ha moment" occurred in a KOA RV park near Cranbrook, B.C..

During the COVID-19 summer of 2020, my wife Francoise and I road-tested an RV that we purchased the previous fall. We navigated COVID-19 regulations across Canada, taking advantage of provincial parks whenever possible.

Our mission was to get to Whistler, BC to introduce ourselves to our new grandchild, expected in early August. He arrived on his own time and did glance at us, but quickly drifted off to nap time. We did, however, spend some time with our daughter and her family - but after a week or so, it was time to move on. We were eager to get back home.

When we arrived at the RV park near Cranbrook, we were surprised to learn that it was located on First Nation land and was associated with the St. Eugene Golf and Country Resort, which included a luxury hotel and spa and a golf course. We discovered that this facility was originally the St. Eugene Residential School, run by the Oblate Order from 1912 to 1970, during which 5,000 students attended the school. The school, which was built by Ottawa but turned over to the Oblates for its ongoing operations, closed when federal government policy shifted to support community schooling.

The vacant buildings were taken over by the Ktunaxa Nation in 1990. The Ktunaxa Nation then engaged in an intense healing and consensus-building process regarding the future of the facility. As the resort website notes, elder Mary Paul commented that the school took culture away, so it should be within the building

that it is returned. That is exactly what happened.

Chief Sophie Pierre became the champion, working with Ktunaxa members to adapt the school to meet their needs, including training, jobs and economic benefits. A referendum confirmed broad support for the bold development. In quick succession, the main elements of the resort opened - the golf course in 2000, the casino in 2002 and the hotel in 2003. The RV park began operations several years before our visit.

There were eerie similarities between the Deschâtelets Building and the St. Eugene Residential School, reflecting I suspect similar approaches to institutional residential buildings constructed in the late 19th and early 20th century. Like Deschâtelets, access to the St. Eugene school was along a tree-lined Grand Allée. There was an imposing set of stairs leading to the main entrance on the second floor. It must have been awe-inspiring and terrifying for six-year-old children arriving for the first time, alone, to this imposing place.

From their base in Old Ottawa East (OOE), the Oblate Order actively sought to extend the reach of the Catholic Church in Western Canada. I was struck to actually see the reach of the Oblates from their benign presence in OOE. The St. Eugene Residential School was one of a number of residential schools the Order operated in the west with tragic consequences for students and their communities.

It was a sombre experience exploring the hotel and the grounds. A friend, who had stayed at the resort, said that he felt



PETER FROOD PHOTO

**ABOVE:** The St. Eugene Residential School near Cranbrook, B.C. was run by the Oblates from 1912 to 1970 and is now owned by the Ktunaxa Nation. **BOTTOM LEFT:** A quietly dramatic sculpture of a boy and a girl is placed outside the St Eugene Residential School main entrance. A brother and sister, they will soon be separated. They touch each other for solace and security, and the girl clenches her fist, clutching her culture, but also perhaps expressing anger and resistance.

he was never really alone when walking through the halls. I was saddened to learn of the healing process the survivors of the school experienced as they struggled with the consequences of the destructive policies that had been inflicted on them.

I am also awed by the way in which the Ktunaxa Nation have re-appropriated an institution of assimilation to create an enterprise for economic sustainability and cultural renewal.



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# Conquering household clutter cuts stress, reduces costs

**"...the problem is rarely about the amount of storage space, and more about the amount of stuff."**

## MAINSTREETER STAFF

Unopened boxes filled with memorabilia stacked in the back of your basement. Mystery bins in the pantry. A coat closet with a black hole that swallows mitts, gloves and the occasional boot. A guest room that doubles as the family dumping zone for all-things-with-no-home. A garage that is more of an additional storage shed than a place to park your car. And kitchen cupboards that repeatedly defy your organizational attempts.

If all of the foregoing sounds familiar to you, take heart – you are not alone, according to Martha Tobin, a resident of the Glebe who has established her own company – Room to Breathe – in order to help people come to grips with conquering their household clutter.

"Many people think the issue is that they don't have enough storage space. Interestingly enough, the problem is rarely about the amount of storage space, and more about the amount of stuff," says Tobin. "Whether you live in an apartment, a condo or a three-storey home, the problem of clutter is the same – people think about it, worry about it, move it around and repeatedly try to organize it. In short, clutter causes stress."

Stressful, and costly, Tobin says: "Think about all the storage bins, containers and



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

**Pictured here are the before and after results of decluttering a home office of one of Martha Tobin's Room to Breathe clients**

shelving you've bought over time. What about the duplicates you've had to purchase when you couldn't find the original? And think about the money made by storage companies every month." She notes that there's a very good business reason behind the growth of storage companies in Ottawa.

The cost of clutter can also be measured in time wasted, says Tobin, spent looking for stuff buried somewhere in your home – the library book you wanted to return, the shoes you wanted to reheel, the stamps you bought last week and the Tupperware you borrowed. She quotes from a book authored by Eisenberg and Kelly entitled, *Organize Your Life*, in which the authors observe that "(c)lutter is the number one impediment to having more free time. We are drowning in our possessions".

According to Tobin, the root causes of household clutter are over-purchasing and the lack of maintainable systems that

work with people's busy lifestyles. She offers the following tips and tricks to help conquer clutter:

One in, one out. For every item you purchase, make a pact with yourself that you'll discard or donate another item that you no longer need or want.

Would you move with it? If you were to move right now would it be worth packing up and unpacking that box, bag or bin again? Why are you hanging on to items that you've not looked at in years? The answer will help you discover those items that are truly meaningful and those that you can take a photo of and let go.

Donations that do good. It's difficult to let some items go because of sentimental attachment. By donating them, they don't wind up in a landfill, and they benefit someone less fortunate in the community who needs them. With the colder season upon us, coats, scarves, mitts, boots, blankets, and sleeping bags are just some of the items desperately required.

You can also sell your items on the GIVESHOP app, receive a tax receipt for them and direct all the sales proceeds to local charities.

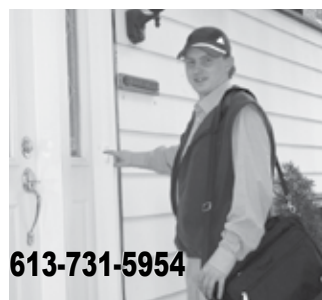
The 15 Minute Sunday Sweep. Each Sunday take a bin and walk through each room picking up items that belong somewhere else and then distribute those items accordingly. This exercise will not only reduce clean up time in general, but it will also save you time and stress when trying to locate items in future.

Tobin considers the current pandemic an ideal time to begin the process of decluttering your home. "While we are all staring at the same four walls this winter, it's a great time to take stock of all the stuff we possess," she says. "Perhaps try and declutter one room at a time, or if you are finding the thought of conquering your clutter too overwhelming, reach out to a professional organizer and declutterer. In a surprisingly short period of time, they will help you determine what to keep and what to let go of, create order, and give you back functional space."

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# POLITICAL COLUMNS

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## LOCAL AND CITY-WIDE ISSUES LOOM IN A CHALLENGING YEAR AHEAD

This past year has been tough, and this coming year will continue to pose more challenges for residents of our city and the world. And while we continue to fight the pandemic, the work at City Hall continues on. There are both local and city-wide issues that will be of interest to residents of Old Ottawa East.

### *Official Plan Update*

The City is currently updating our Official Plan. This is the master planning document that guides city-building efforts—from development to transportation to housing—for the City of Ottawa. Late last year, the City released a draft version of the new Official Plan, as well as an assortment of One-Page documents explaining various aspects of the new plan.

The City has proposed a new approach to planning and development. They intend to split the city into five different transects. Transects are different geographical areas within the city. The five transects are: Downtown Core, Inner Urban, Outer Urban, Greenbelt, and Suburban and Rural. City planning will now be tailored to each transect. Of note for Old Ottawa East, City planners are proposing two transects for the neighbourhood. The area north of the Queensway would be part of the Downtown Core transect, while south of the Queensway will be in the Inner Urban transect.

You can review these documents and provide feedback by visiting the City's website, <https://engage.ottawa.ca/the-new-officialplan>.

### *Greenfield-Main-Hawthorne Update*

As many of you know, the City is finalizing plans to re-design and re-build Greenfield Avenue, Main Street (north

of the Queensway) and Hawthorne Avenue (between Colonel By Drive and Main). The designs are coming along, but there are still a few outstanding issues that we're working on with the community association and City planners.

We need a proper protected crossing at Main Street and Colonel By Drive. Recently, I secured significant funding through a federal/provincial infrastructure fund to do just that, and now we need to work on a design that satisfies the City, community and the National Capital Commission.

We continue to have discussions with City staff and Hydro Ottawa about burying the hydro wires along these streets. We are happy to see the wires will definitely be buried on Greenfield Avenue, and a portion of Main Street, but we're still working on getting them buried on Hawthorne.

We're looking to fix a missing cycling link between Hawthorne and Graham Avenue on the west side of Main Street, as well as improving the pedestrian space at Hawthorne and Main. These issues were neglected during the previous Main Street reconstruction project.

We're also working with the Ministry of Transportation on their Queensway Bridge replacement and trying to preserve buildings along Hawthorne.

### *New Bus Route along des Oblats*

As work continues in Greystone Village, bus service has begun servicing the development. Greystone will now be the end point for Route 16. The bus will turn off Main Street onto Hazel Street. The bus will stop on Hazel near Deschâtelets, before turning onto Main Street and continuing on its normal route. In addition, there will be two midday runs of Route 56 to King Edward that will begin on Hazel near Deschâtelets.

## JOEL HARDEN MPP, OTTAWA CENTRE

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## A GOVERNMENT AT SEA: WHERE IS PREMIER FORD ON LONG-TERM CARE?

On December 9, the Ford Government recessed the Legislature until February 16, 2021.

As 2021 approached, one could identify a sense of hope and possibility. Vaccines were arriving, and people could imagine a post COVID-19 future.

But in just a few days, the picture has dramatically changed. Instead, we see evidence of a government at sea -- in literal terms for one of its former cabinet ministers. They are missing in action when people need them the most.

COVID-19 cases have now reached all-time highs in Ontario, and 40 per cent of long-term care (LTC) homes are in outbreak. The rollout and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines has been ham-fisted at best or damaging at worst.

Over 70 seniors have recently died at Tendercare, a for-profit LTC home in Scarborough. On January 3, I heard the searing testimony of Reed Zhao who lost his grandmother the previous day at Tendercare, who complained of being refused water.

Sheila Yakovishin, a Personal Support Worker from Windsor, Ontario (with over 30 years seniority) died three days ago from COVID-19 at a for-profit LTC home. This happened as Ontario sits on tens of thousands of COVID-19 vaccines.

Where is the Ford government? Dr. Vivian Stamatopolous, one of Ontario's LTC experts, likens the Tendercare outbreak to a "downed plane", but there has been no government response. We hear brief expressions of concern, but nothing by way of focused action.

This is a "call in the military" moment, but we see no urgency from the Premier's Office. Instead, we've seen astounding decisions in the wrong direction.

We learned that the Ford government is withholding information from its hand-picked Long-Term Care Commission and awarding former Premier Mike Harris -- widely seen as the architect of profiteering in LTC -- with the Order of Ontario for 2020. This beggars belief.

LTC residents are dying, and some are

still in wards with three or four to a room. LTC workers are still working short, still lacking appropriate PPE, and terrified of losing their lives or infecting their families.

What explains this situation? To me, it is the cozy relationship between for-profit LTC homes and the Ford government. At least five top Ford staffers have worked as lobbyists for private LTC in recent months. Clearly, the piper is calling the tune.

We can't let Premier Ford muddle his way through this moment.

We must demand better for seniors, people with disabilities, and workers in LTC. On the evening of January 25<sup>th</sup>, we hosted a virtual town hall about the state of LTC, and what must be done to change it. A full video of the event is available for viewing on our Facebook page.

### *Stay-at-home order lacks supports for working people, long-term care*

The Ford government declared a second state of emergency and issued a "stay-at-home" order that took effect on January 14. In doing so, they ignored the advice of their own public health experts who warned that such measures would be less effective without new supports for people.

Most notably, Premier Ford has refused to guarantee paid sick leave, meaning that precarious workers face financial pressure to keep working even when ill. We need a lockdown that helps people lock down safely. It's not enough to simply tell people to stay home, the government needs to provide working folks with the supports they need to do so.

There were also no new commitments accompanying the state of emergency to address the outbreaks in LTC. This is a crisis, and it must be treated like one. We need 10,000 more personal support workers, infection control and prevention experts in every nursing home, and assistance from the Canadian Armed Forces.



# POLITICAL COLUMNS

## CATHERINE MCKENNA MP, OTTAWA CENTRE

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PHONE: 613-946-8682

TWITTER: @CATHMCKENNA

FACEBOOK: MCKENNA.OTTAWA

INSTAGRAM: @CATHMCKENNAOTTEN



## PROGRAMS IN PLACE TO HELP YOU MEET THE COVID-19 CHALLENGES

Going into the new year with added restrictions in Ontario and beyond has not been easy but has been necessary. Our COVID-19 case numbers in Ottawa spiked significantly over the holidays and it is critical that we continue to follow public health directives and stay home.

In hopeful news, vaccines are being administered in Ottawa Centre to long-term health care residents and essential public health workers, with a total of 80 million doses arriving over the coming months. Our government is focused on supporting provinces and territories so they can distribute these vaccines as quickly as possible to protect Canadians. We are on track to give every Canadian a vaccine who wants to receive one by September.

While this is good news, additional vaccines won't help anyone who contracts COVID-19 now. Until everyone is protected from this virus, we need to continue to follow public health advice, including wearing masks, download the COVID Alert app – and stay home whenever possible.

Throughout the pandemic, the federal government listened to Canadians. We developed programs to support businesses, workers, individuals and various sectors to get us through these hard times. In speaking with business owners, local organizations and many constituents, I hear your frustration and I know how challenging this has been.

Our federal government programs are available to provide support to businesses and individuals throughout the pandemic (see [Canada.ca/Coronavirus](https://Canada.ca/Coronavirus)).

### **Federal Government Programs:**

**Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS):** Maximum subsidy rate of 75% and it is extended until June 2021.

**Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy (CERS):** Rent and mortgage support until June 2021. Additionally, eligible

businesses restricted by a mandatory public health order can receive an additional 25% of rent support through the Lockdown Support.

**Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA):** Loan of \$60,000 in which \$20,000 is forgivable if paid before Dec 31, 2021.

**Regional Recovery Relief Fund (RRRF):** provides liquidity in the form of loans for businesses unable to access relief benefits.

**Employment Insurance (EI):** program has changed to support more Canadians through the pandemic.

**Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB):** Income support if you are self-employed or are not eligible for Employment Insurance.

**Canada Recovery Caregiver Benefit (CRCB):** Income support if you must stop work to care for dependents due to closures, high risk and caregiver availability.

**Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB):** up to two weeks of support if you are sick or must self-isolate due to COVID-19.

### **Provincial Government Programs:** (see [covid-19.ontario.ca](https://covid-19.ontario.ca))

**Ontario Small Business Support Grant:** \$10,000-\$20,000 grant which will help small businesses who must close or significantly restrict services due to Provincewide Shutdown.

**Rebates for PPE,** property taxes or energy bills: The province will provide grants for eligible businesses to help cover the cost of personal protective equipment and property taxes and energy bills.

**Main Street Relief Grant:** will help small businesses with 2-9 employees with the cost of PPE.

If you need assistance to access any of these programs or gain information, please call my constituency office at 613-946-8682 or email us at [Catherine.McKenna@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Catherine.McKenna@parl.gc.ca). My staff is ready to help.



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

**ABOVE:** Happy Goat at Corners on Main now has a liquor licence and offers take-out beer and wine. Manager Bess Kennedy holds two varieties of local beer now available. **BELOW:** James and Leo grab a breather from some heavy "black box" snow fort construction on Marlowe Crescent. That's Bob Snow lurking in the background.



LORNE ABUGOV PHOTO



**So, what's a piezometer?**

## An answer to the mystery of the Rideau River hitching posts

**PETER CROAL**

One obvious benefit of the COVID-19 pandemic is that the virus has motivated Old Ottawa East residents to find creative ways to get outdoors and exercise safely.

With all the walks, and now cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, available to us in this community, you might have noticed some strange-looking objects along the Rideau River. A friend went skiing recently and had this conversation with his partner: "I think they are here to cordon off the x-country tracks from the rest of the trail." His partner replied: "I don't think so - they've always been here".

To some, they are reminiscent of hitching posts, but not so; they are neither a spot for hitching horses nor a deterrent to walking on ski trails.

These objects are in fact important scientific instruments with an exotic



PETER CROAL PHOTOS

**Measuring the water table, and not hitching horses, is the reason why these piezometers line the cross-country ski trails along the Rideau River.**

name - "piezometers". They are used to measure the depth to the water table and water pressure, and also to obtain water samples for chemical analysis. Scientists insert probes down the white plastic tube inside the protective casing to extract water to perform the required analyses.

The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority and the City of Ottawa use data from the piezometers to base their important forecasting of floods, and to facilitate construction planning needs.

Needless to say, piezometers should not be tampered with, as they are part of our collective flood management toolkit! With unpredictable weather systems due to climate change, we face the increasing possibility of floods, so instruments such as piezometers are now more important than ever, and they should be treated with care and respect.

## The Ottawa Tennis & Lawn Bowling Club Restoring one of the City's architectural gems

**JENNY MITCHELL**

Nearly a century ago, a prominent Ottawa architect – John Albert Ewart (1872-1964) – built the Ottawa Civic Hospital in this neighbourhood. He is the same architect who stepped forward in 1922 to design a clubhouse for the Ottawa Tennis Club in Old Ottawa South. Ewart was a big deal in early-20th-century Ottawa. The son of Dominion architect, David Ewart, he designed many of Ottawa's finest civic buildings in his day. In recognition of that, Ottawa recently recognized the clubhouse in Ottawa South as a designated heritage building.

The Ottawa Tennis and Lawn Bowling Club (OTLBC) is itself a national treasure. Especially now, with the closure of two other major clubs in Ottawa in the past three years, it remains the dean of Ottawa tennis clubs, with people coming from all over the city to play. At the same time, the club is recognized nationally for having more high-quality clay courts than any club in the country and has the capacity to hosts national and provincial tournaments.

When the City of Ottawa awarded the building a heritage designation in 2019, the honour recognized the clubhouse not only as an outstanding example of

an old-style sporting venue but also an important cultural landmark in the city of Ottawa.

The designation underscores the importance of the club to the city's heritage, both architectural and cultural. It also highlights the role of today's club as the steward of physical heritage. In that light, the club has for several years now been planning and fund-raising for restoration and renewal of the clubhouse.

In 2019, the OTLBC was honoured by a substantial federal heritage grant from Canadian Heritage, given in part to help restore the clubhouse and also to enhance its usefulness as a year-round facility where the community can host a variety of cultural events. The grant is for a maximum of \$375,000, depending on how much the club is able to provide in matching funds.

The City of Ottawa stands to benefit from this restoration and not only through the preservation of an architectural landmark. OTLBC has a vision to restore the club as a year-round facility and meeting place for the whole Ottawa community, and it has made great progress. The initial goal was to raise \$1 million by 2020. Donors have proven very generous, and to date the club has



SUPPLIED PHOTO

**ABOVE: During restoration, the Ottawa Tennis and Lawn Bowling Club (OTLBC) clubhouse will be restored to the original grandeur of 1923.**

raised close to \$700,000. If it reaches its target, the first phase of the project will be launched as soon as 2021. A second phase of work will depend on the club's ability to raise another \$1.6 million

The OTLBC invites the community of Ottawa to come on board as partners in the exciting work of restoring a clubhouse that has local and national significance and opening it to new and broader kinds of use. As a tennis club and now, more and more, as a community meeting place, the OTLBC is planning, working and actively raising funds to ensure that it can go on helping people of Ottawa to live more satisfying and connected lives. Help the club to fulfil that mission.

[Jenny Mitchell, an Old Ottawa East (OOE) resident and President of the Ottawa Tennis and Lawn Bowling Club (OTLBC), serves as Chair of the OTLBC's Fund-Raising Committee. The Club boasts many active members from OOE, including family members and seniors.]



**To donate to the Clubhouse Restoration Project, please visit [OTLBC.com/donate](https://otlbc.com/donate) and click on the "Donate Here" button. Tax receipts can be issued.**



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## Snow Moles take to OOE streets as key winter walking safety campaign begins

### DIANNE BRETON

For the third year, the Council on Aging of Ottawa (COA) is organizing a unique winter walking audit project to improve dangerous winter walking conditions, especially for older adults. The Snow Mole Campaign is now underway and will be active from January to the end of March.

Snow Moles are pedestrians of all ages, but especially older adults and those with mobility challenges, who volunteer to report on winter walking conditions in their neighbourhood, using an online or paper questionnaire. The data compiled by Snow Moles is submitted to the COA, analyzed, and shared with the City. The goal is to recommend practical improvements to snow clearing practices, and to make winter walking safer for everyone.

This winter will be especially important because of the opportunity to direct data to the City's review of the Winter Maintenance Quality Standards (WMQS), which were last reviewed in 2003. Changes to snow clearing policies are needed to respond to climate changes which have created unreliable and extreme winter conditions and increasing freeze-thaw cycles resulting in dangerous walking conditions. City Council will consider

proposed changes to the WMQS, as well as budget implications, later this year in the fall.

The Snow Mole Report 2020 – Winter Walking in Ottawa was published recently. The report summarizes more than 450 Snow Mole audits from across the City that were received and analyzed during the past two years. Most audits were completed by senior women, many of whom attached ice grips to their boots and used walking poles while traversing the City streets. Mobility aids, such as a walker or a cane, were used by 12 % of respondents. The 2020 Report, which is available on the COA web site, contains a number of practical snow clearing and safety recommendations for the City to consider during its upcoming WMQS review.

Some of the most common problems reported include: ice and snow banks blocking sidewalks and forcing pedestrians to walk on the road; icy and dangerous sidewalks particularly on hills, with a lack of adequate sanding or salting; inaccessible crosswalk buttons due to high snow banks or ice surrounding the post; and high snow banks near corners causing blind spots for children or people in wheel chairs. Many Snow Moles stated

that fear of falling kept them from going out for a walk, and 20% reported having fallen while walking in the past two years.

This winter has started with warmer than usual temperatures and less snow and ice build up. COVID-19 restrictions continue to challenge the community, and it is more important than ever to encourage everyone, especially those most vulnerable, to get outside to walk and exercise for both physical and mental health.

[Dianne Breton, an Old Ottawa East resident and active Snow Mole is an active member of the Pedestrian Safety & Walkability Committee, (sub-committee of the Ottawa Seniors Transportation Committee), The Council on Aging of Ottawa.]



**You are invited to advocate  
for healthy, accessible  
and safe winter walking  
conditions in Old Ottawa  
East, by joining the 2021**

**Snow Mole Campaign. For more  
information on how to become a  
Snow Mole: [www.coaottawa.ca/  
snowmoles/](http://www.coaottawa.ca/snowmoles/) or email: [snowmoles@  
coaottawa.ca](mailto:snowmoles@coaottawa.ca)**



SUPPLIED PHOTO

**Slow and careful single file walking  
is required to navigate this  
treacherous stretch of sidewalk on  
Clegg Street heading east to  
Brantwood Park.**

**INTERN with  
The Mainstreeter**

CONTACT: Lorne Abugov  
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**Rideau Canal Skateway opens**

# Lacing up the blades for a 51st season of skating

**MAINSTREETER STAFF**

The 2.4 kilometre section of the Rideau Canal Skateway between the Pretoria Bridge and the Bank Street Bridge, opened to activity-hungry OOE residents and others on the morning of January 28th, marking the 51st season of outdoor fun on the world's largest skating rink.

Special rules and restrictions are in place for the 2021 skating season which

is expected to run to early March, subject to weather conditions. For example, most amenities usually offered, such as change huts, cubbies, food and beverage concessions, rentals and picnic tables, are unavailable this season.

Limited capacity washrooms are open with mandatory masks required, and 100 benches have been added. Skaters are required to carry their own belongings.

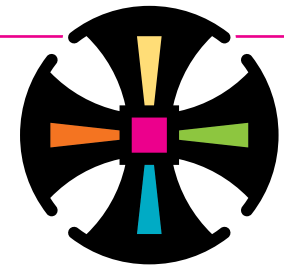


Since opening day, seasonal weather featuring cold evenings and bright, crisp daytime conditions have combined to entice thousands of skaters to the Canal to help combat COVID lethargy. For the most part, skaters are conscientiously adding masks to their normal bundled winterwear and maintaining safe distances from their fellow skaters.



JOHN DANCE PHOTOS

**ABOVE;** Old Ottawa East resident Julia Sneyd sports a bright COVID mask as she laces up the blades on opening day at the Canal Skateway. **LEFT:** Those longing for the opening of the Canal Skateway were finally rewarded on January 28th when a cold wave combined with clear blue skies to mark the opening of the 51st season of skating.



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# ASCENSION



**JUDY FAULKNER**  
Broker of Record/Owner

What a fascinating year it's been for the residential real estate market, where a hot sellers market led to quick sales and record-high prices across the country, from coast to coast.

The availability of five-year mortgages under two percent fueled buyer demand while the fear of COVID-19 kept the supply of listings low in the spring, normally the season that brings the highest number of listings to the market.

In late March of last year the Province of Ontario deemed real estate an essential service. By May, the number of listings started to gain momentum as the public gained confidence that COVID-19 safety precautions were in place and effective. However, buyer demand continued to outweigh supply for the balance of the year. Ottawa realtors worked hard to make up for the early spring pause and, by year end, the total sales volume set a record-breaking \$10 billion compared to \$8.2 billion in 2019. The average sale price of residential properties in the entire Ottawa region increased by a whopping 19.7 percent.

Unlike many other neighbourhoods in the Ottawa region and nation-wide, homeowners in Ottawa's urban, 'walkable' communities have been enjoying robust seller market conditions for the better part of two decades.

## Real Estate Immune to Pandemic



*Communities bordering the Rideau Canal remain hot spots for out-of-town buyers for their unique lifestyle, such as being able to skate and commute on the world's largest naturally frozen skating rink at 7.8 kilometers long.*

They are accustomed to aggressive buyers and nail-biting bidding wars. At the end of 2020, the average house price in Old Ottawa South, Old Ottawa East and Canal communities was \$932,006, whereas the average house price in the region was \$582,267.

Many out-of-town buyers, particularly those coming from higher-valued markets, favour the communities bordering the Canal and are not shy to compete with local buyers or to set record prices. Faulkner Real Estate's marketing effectively reaches buyers all over the globe at the same time as local buyers. These far away buyers often need to rely on virtual viewings, as there isn't time for them to get here.

What will happen in 2021? I don't know, there are so many variables. It comes down to the basic economic principle of supply and demand and affordability.

What can cause an increase in the number of homes listed this spring?

- Homeowners who planned to go to market last spring but were deterred by COVID-19 might go this spring.
- New construction projects underway may provide the alternate housing many have been waiting for.
- Some homeowners may want to cash out rather than risk the uncertainty of what the future may bring.
- Buyers may not be ready, willing and able to pay the prices that sellers want.

If you would like to keep abreast of listing and sales activity, or you are seeking representation, please do not hesitate to contact me at 613-231-4663 or [Judy@HomesInOttawa.com](mailto:Judy@HomesInOttawa.com).





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Now installed at the Lees LRT Station...

## A first look at *The Mainstreeter's* avant-garde newspaper box!

### MAINSTREETER STAFF

*The Mainstreeter's* nearly new newspaper boxes have started rolling off the assembly line.

Well, not quite. In fact, not at all!

After more than 50 hours of painstaking effort, Old Ottawa East “calligraphiti” artist, Luke Goldsmith has put the finishing touches on his ground-breaking, hand-painted creation, which has already found its new forever home outside the Lees Avenue LRT Station.

The re-purposed Ottawa Journal newsbox, now decked out in two shades of green, gold and flecks of blue, was a donation from OOE resident Wendy Bardach in memory of her late husband, James.

Creative work by other local OOE artists has already begun on four other newsboxes which will pop up around the community later this month and in early March.

*The Mainstreeter's* volunteer, Andy Shelp, has lent a major helping hand with

the newspaper box project by sanding and prepping four of the five newspaper boxes in his garage on Riverdale Avenue, but not Goldsmith's box.

“Yes, it was a fair bit of work, for sure,” says the young artist, who toiled both indoors and outdoors at the family's Bower Street home. “But it was a very rewarding project, and I would do it again, if asked.”

According to Wikipedia, “calligraphiti” is an art form that combines calligraphy, typography, and graffiti. It can be classified as either abstract expressionism or abstract vandalism. It is defined as a visual art that integrates letters into compositions that attempt to communicate a broader message through writing that has been aesthetically altered to move beyond the literal meaning.”

Like other Calligraphiti artists, Goldsmith has gone beyond a simple transformation of English-language words into visual compositions by inventing his own language. So, while you may not recognize your street name on the box, rest assured, it's there!



TANIS BROWNING-SHELP PHOTO

Volunteers like Andy Shelp, pictured here, have been key to *The Mainstreeter's* newspaper box project. Shelp has contributed hours of time and effort in readying the boxes for local artists.

In the April issue of *The Mainstreeter* Art Beat editor Tanis Browning-Shelp will profile all of the local OOE artists who have willingly stepped forward to

participate in the newspaper box public art opportunity and will display their distinct and unique creative styles.



JOHN GOLDSMITH PHOTOS

ABOVE: Local artist Luke Goldsmith poses with his meticulously-crafted newspaper box which now sits proudly outside the Lees LRT station. RIGHT: Goldsmith and editor Lorne Abugov are pictured here with the first of five newspaper boxes that *The Mainstreeter* will be placing throughout Old Ottawa East.







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