

Mayor rejects communities' call to extend debate

New Official Plan really rankles OOE residents

JOHN DANCE

No other City project has rankled Old Ottawa East residents as much as the draft Official Plan (OP). Yet, despite the growing public concerns about the OP's inadequate consultation and questionable propositions, Mayor Jim Watson has categorically refused to delay City Council's vote – set for this September - on the 25-year blueprint for Ottawa's urban development. Extensive coverage of the proposed OP within this issue of *The Mainstreeter* lays out key objections and suggestions that OOE community members have already voiced in writing to the City.

The OP “provides a vision for the future growth of the City and a policy framework to guide the City’s physical development.” When something gets approved in the OP,

developers can then build accordingly with little risk of a community or an individual successfully challenging the building plan.

Over the last two months, many OOE residents and their community groups have written lengthy, thoughtful letters to protest various proposals in the draft OP.

Key concerns are that the OP: retains the Alta Vista Transportation Corridor, diminishes the OOE secondary plan by transferring two key neighbourhoods to a huge downtown secondary plan, fails to consider the impacts of the pandemic, and concentrates future intensification in central communities without corresponding increases in central greenspace, tree canopy and recreational amenities.

Although the policy thrusts underlying the new OP were well-received back in 2019, the application of these ideas in the on-line

draft has been poorly received.

Part of the problem is the inexplicably short time the City has allowed for public review and discussion of the complex 264-page Plan, all the more so in these difficult pandemic days (see the related article at page 4 of this issue of *The Mainstreeter*). The Federation of Citizens' Associations, which is supported by community associations like the Old Ottawa East Community Association, asked Mayor Watson to delay the OP timeline for more than a year.

In a seven-page response, the Mayor denied the request citing various consultations that have occurred to date, noting, “We are very, very pleased to say that our experience throughout this New Official Plan process is that the Council-approved approach that has been undertaken has not only provided opportunities for meaningful

consultation well beyond the legal requirements of the Planning Act, it meets what residents and community groups were looking for ...”

The remaining part of the OP process consists of City staff revising the draft using recent input, holding a public open house in August, followed by consideration by the Planning Committee in September with the revised package going to City Council for approval later that month.

One glimmer of hope that community input may be having some impact is City staff’s acknowledgement that it is “willing to reconsider” Springhurst Park and the area north of the Queensway being returned to the rest of Old Ottawa East for planning purposes. The draft OP currently has

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Agricola Co-op Farm's 'next gen' growers

produce fresh local food for Old Ottawa East



From left to right: Natalie Childs, Heather Syposz, Hannah Hunter, and Caleb Langille, in their field of organic carrots at the Agricola Cooperative Farm. *The Mainstreeter's* Theresa Wallace reports on the four vibrant, young owners and operators of Agricola, which produces an abundance of food that finds its way to many dinner tables in Old Ottawa East - See page 14.

Art imitates life...

Tim Hunt's funky "Flora" newsbox

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SPENCER COLBY'S THE VIEW FROM LEES AVENUE

With great pleasure, *The Mainstreeter* introduces our readers to Spencer Colby, an Old Ottawa East-based award-winning photojournalist who specializes in news, features and sports. Colby's photos have appeared in *Ottawa Magazine*, the *Pigeon Publication* and Carleton University's independent newspaper, *The Charlatan*. We look forward to featuring his urban imagery in future issues of our print publication and our social media platforms. In this photo collage, Colby offers readers some COVID-19 images from the Lees Avenue neighbourhood he calls home.



Melting hearts at many households!

The Pandemic Puppies are settling in to Old Ottawa East

LORI GANDY

If you've been out walking in Old Ottawa East this past year, you will have noticed an increase in the number of dogs strolling with their proud families. The pandemic – and people working at home with more time on their hands – has produced a significant surge in dog ownership, and the OOE community is no exception.

Here's a peek at a few of the canine cuties gracing our neighbourhoods these days.

Meet Poppy

Catherine and Aaron Shackelton and their daughters, Claire and Emily recently welcomed Poppy into their home, a Hungarian Vizsla from a breeder in Hamilton - OnPoint Vizslas. They had put their name on the breeder's list *before* the pandemic rush hit. So they were thrilled when they were contacted last September about a recent litter.

Poppy arrived in the Shackelton home in November, and they are enjoying having an energetic puppy around. They are diligent about walks, even when Poppy is less enthused. "She hasn't taken to the snow or cold," Catherine says. "She wears a coat, but she won't tolerate boots! She doesn't like long walks and she won't walk through puddles of slush."

Claire says that Poppy is a troublemaker: "She does puppy things," she says with a giggle. Poppy is a true pandemic puppy, as Catherine explains: "If we turn our backs for a minute, she's up to something. If we didn't close the bathroom doors, Poppy would get

in, and then we'd have toilet paper all over the house. So we *were* really short of toilet paper during the pandemic."

Besides the impact of a puppy in his home, Aaron, a veterinarian, has seen an impact on his business:

"The veterinary/animal service community is seeing an increased demand for veterinary services at a time when veterinary hospitals are not able to see as many clients due to COVID-19 related health and safety protocols. Most clinics have seen an overwhelming increase in demand and have a back-log of appointments and elective surgeries."

Meet Timber

Ben and Kelsey Mahon had wanted a dog for some time but had felt it would be unfair to leave a dog alone while they were at work. "When the pandemic hit and we began working from home, we thought this might be a good time to start searching for a puppy." Their search for a breeder came up empty – so many people with the same idea meant long wait lists. "So we decided to wait and see what happens," says Kelsey.

Well, Timber happened. Ben's cousin and his wife have two Australian Shepherds who produced a litter in mid-November. Ben and Kelsey did some research about the breed and fell in love. So they headed over to the farm in Shawville, Quebec to meet the puppies, all of whom had been given names.

As Kelsey relates: "Timber just kind of fell into our laps." Or between her feet more accurately. Kelsey recalls how they were looking at all the pups when she noticed



one of them nestling between her ankles. "I asked who this little guy was as he seemed to like me." Besides the adorable name, they also loved his colouring – brown, white and black.

"Timber has his quiet moments, but he's energetic and he has traits common to an Australian Shepherd," says Kelsey. A strong

herding instinct, for example. Timber will nip at their ankles or walk in front of them to get them to walk in the direction he wants to go.

Kelsey and Ben have had to adjust to the daily ritual of the early morning walk. So too the bathroom breaks during the winter.

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SUPPLIED PHOTOS

TOP: Claire and Emily hug new family member, Poppy, as they prepare for her first walk in the neighbourhood. **ABOVE:** Jynx, a sweet-tempered bulldog mix, is a rescue and a perfect fit for her new family. **LEFT:** Timber, an Australian Shepherd puppy and the epitome of cute, "just kind of fell into our laps," says first-time dog owners Ben and Kelsey Mahon.

IN DEPTH: OTTAWA'S NEW OFFICIAL PLAN

Like their counterparts across the City, Old Ottawa East residents have a lot to say about the City's draft Official Plan that, once implemented, will govern Ottawa's development until 2046. With only a limited window of opportunity afforded to them to express their views in response to the Official Plan, OOE householders unleashed a torrent of written comments and criticisms about a variety of aspects of the urban development blueprint - from concerns about the process to calls for a re-think of divisive proposals to split the community for planning purposes. In our special coverage, The Mainstreeter presents many of the views that you, our readers, have expressed to the City.

The process: "This is no way to plan for the future.."

LORNE ABUGOV

Dozens of Old Ottawa East residents have let the City of Ottawa know in plain words that they are concerned and, in many cases, displeased by proposals for change in the City's new draft Official Plan.

In letters submitted to the City, residents were not shy to inform City staff that the plan was riddled with major flaws and contradictions in areas such as transportation planning and infrastructure and greenspace and tree canopy coverage. Equally unpopular was the City's elimination of community-developed Secondary Plans, the imposition of arbitrary and divisive boundaries, and the disregard for affordable housing.

But if there was one common denominator in the blizzard of letters with an OOE postmark, it was our citizens' frustration from the procedural steps the City adopted - or failed to adopt - to allow for meaningful debate and understanding of the 25-year blueprint for the City's future.

For example, comments about the City's planned schedule for bringing the plan into law included words such as "unfair", "sneaky" and "undemocratic". Even those who supported the City's underlying planning principles questioned the need to rush the massive and consequential changes contained in the Plan through to City Council for approval in September in the absence of public debate.

In her letter, Lynda Colley of Merritt Avenue wondered "Why did we not receive a notice from the City advising us of the proposed transformational changes to the City's official plan and asking us to review and provide our feedback?"

We receive a notice in our mailbox if the City is turning off the water in the area for half a day!" wrote Colley. "I only heard about the proposed changes to the official plan from a neighbour just over a week ago, and I consider myself to be a reasonably well-informed member of the community."

Colley "was shocked to see that the proposed changes are set out in a 264-page document with no executive summary." Likewise, Linda Pollock observed that the "proposed plan is complex, and I feel the

City has significantly underestimated the time needed by citizens to understand it and assess its impacts on our communities." Like many others, Pollock recommended that the time allowed for feedback from citizens on the plan be significantly extended.

Several OOE commenters felt that the City's determination to push through massive and consequential long-term changes during the COVID-19 pandemic was an affront to democracy. Tara Wheeldon, a 12-year resident of Old Ottawa East, questioned the speed and volume of the changes which denied "people enough time to process or even notice what's happening, especially when stressed out by employment or health concerns."

Ian Sadinsky of Bower Street was one of several to question the City's approach to governance and management of the new Plan. "The Official Plan should be broken down into a minimum of five 5-year plans to allow for consultation, innovation, recalibration and reflection," Sadinsky suggested. "Any period beyond five years is inherently undemocratic and may bind future generations to outdated or unworkable ideas and concepts."

In his letter to the City, Sadinsky felt "the timeframe for producing the new Official Plan (or mini-Plans) should be extended to December 2023 to allow for greater citizen input, more research on collateral issues, assessment of the permanent impacts of the pandemic, and integration of other Plans such as economic development, public health or climate change."

Mitch Vlad and Deborah Moriarty Vlad of Hazel Street felt that the release of the draft plan during the pandemic served to further undermine trust in our elected municipal officials. "Under cover of COVID, planning issues with serious long term implications will not be subjected to the truly public scrutiny and engagement that would otherwise be the case."

They concluded with a common sense plea to City Hall to "hold your proverbial horses...make these vital issues 2022 election issues...Rein this in and wait until we can all meet openly, hear presentations, pose questions, call experts. This is no way to plan for the future."



LORNE ABUGOV PHOTO

COVID-19 forced temporary closure of the Springhurst Park play structure; will the proposed Alta Vista Transportation Corridor (AVTC) prove to be the death knell for the community's remaining public recreational spaces? OOE residents have voiced concerns to the City about retaining the AVTC in the Official Plan.

Springhurst Park

AVTC threatens OOE's essential recreational greenspace

PHYLLIS ODENBACH SUTTON

Old Ottawa East residents have spotted a number of inconsistencies in the City's draft Official Plan (OP), but none is more glaring than the disconnect between the inclusion of the Alta Vista Transportation Corridor in the OP alongside the City's stated intention to maintain or expand green space in the inner core, mitigate climate change concerns and promote active transportation and public transit.

Anne-Raphaëlle Audouin noted in her letter to the City that "(w)e strongly request the removal of the obsolete proposal of the Alta Vista Transportation Corridor. The community needs Springhurst Park to remain a pristine green space. The construction of a four-lane roadway is an antiquated city planning proposal which goes against other City objectives, such as the reduction of transportation-related GHG emissions and the creation of more green space."

Linda Pollock wrote: "I do not understand why the Alta Vista Transportation Corridor remains an element of the City's Official Plan. With the huge investment that has been and is being made into the construction of the light rail system and your stated objectives to encourage sustainable mobility, why does the City continue to plan for a new roadway through existing greenspace?(...) the field between Springhurst Park and existing apartment buildings along Lees Avenue is an essential public space for people living in the area."

John Dance was concerned that "(t)he draft retains the Alta Vista Transportation

Corridor which will: provide for a four-lane roadway covering valuable central greenspaces; dump traffic into established communities, undermine the use of the new LRT system; and be in violation of what we must do to fight climate change and support biodiversity."

For her part, Alexandra Gruca-Macaulay expressed her concerns about parks planning proposals. "There has been a concerning trend (...) that has seen the installation of artificial 'turf' and 'multi-purpose' paved spaces in lieu of natural grass in City parks. The potential for exacerbating or creating urban heat islands is significant - artificial turf alone has been measured to heat considerably more than natural grass and, as a plastic product, does not provide the carbon capture function of natural grass."

Furthermore, she noted that "it is deeply concerning to see that (...) suburban areas are to be accorded opportunities for 'recreation, sports and community programming', whereas urban areas would see mixed-use spaces that focus on a mélange of 'recreational uses... cultural development opportunities, [and] seating' (...) Yet people have identical needs for recreation space. Put in simplest terms, in high-density urban areas there often is no place currently where a child can go to play, and 'cultural development opportunities and seating' is not going to meet this fundamental human need," wrote Gruca-Macaulay.

And, in a community that has been celebrating our favourite trees, it should be no surprise that the need for protection

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A 25-YEAR BLUEPRINT FOR DEVELOPMENT

AVTC threatens Springhurst Park

Continued from Page 4

of, and increase in, our tree canopy is very important to residents.

“We are particularly concerned by the environment issues and there seems to be little mention about the tree coverings, gardens, walking space and green space around each house in the Plan,” wrote Yves and Lise Morneau in their submission to the City.

“You say you have a vision of environmentalism and all kinds of other things, which are not reflected in the plans,” Tara Wheeldon pointed out. “In terms of green space and environmentalism, it is harder to maintain tree canopy if buildings are squeezed tightly into the neighbourhood.”

Support for strengthened protection of the City’s tree canopy was voiced by several members of the Parks and Greenspace Committee of the Old Ottawa East Community Association who wrote: “While we support the City’s proposed

cover target of 40% for the urban forest canopy, we ask that stronger language be put in the plan to ensure this 40% target is met on a neighbourhood-by-neighbourhood basis. Trees form an integral part of the character of Old Ottawa East and the City must ensure development occurs around them, not at their expense.

“While the City took important steps towards reaching a 40% urban tree canopy by adopting its first ever Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) in 2017, more efforts are needed,” concluded the OOECA Parks and Greenspace Committee.

According to Krista Broeckx, “(t)he Draft Official Plan must support the UFMP by using stronger language and more concrete guidelines for protecting and growing the tree canopy, especially in inner urban neighbourhoods and the downtown core, which face intense pressure from regeneration/intensification.”

Without substantial OP revisions...

For 15-minute communities, “uncertainty will reign”

JOHN DANCE

Old Ottawa East residents like the existing Old Ottawa East (OOE) Secondary Plan (SP) and the Community Design Plan (CDP) that was its basis. By contrast, residents don’t like the City’s proposal in the draft Official Plan (OP) to diminish the OOE Secondary Plan by moving two large sections of the community to the downtown planning area.

Ironically, the City’s unilateral consolidation and modification of extensively consulted-on Secondary Plans seems to undermine the draft OP’s key goal of having “walkable 15-minute neighbourhoods.”

“[T]he draft fails to identify what are the existing and potential 15-minute neighbourhoods. It’s time for the City to fully assess the importance of neighbourhoods and neighbourhood streetscape character,” noted OOE Community Association (OOECA) President Bob Gordon in the OOECA response to the draft plan.

“Rather than consolidating and eliminating Community Design Plans and Secondary Plans, the City should be working with community associations to ensure each neighbourhood/community has such a plan and that this plan establishes what is necessary to get to effective ‘15-minute-ness,’” Gordon noted.

Back in 2012, Mayor Jim Watson told a gathering of hundreds of community representatives and members of the development industry that “(w)e need greater predictability and certainty when it comes to development in our City.” Two years later he said, “[Residents] want certainty and predictability when it comes to planning issues because when someone buys their home it’s usually their most expensive investment in their life and they want to make sure that they know the rules of the game and they don’t constantly change.”

Now the City wants to change the rules and, as many OOE residents have eloquently concluded, the consultation on the draft Official Plan and its rules

For planning purposes...

Residents strongly opposed to splitting the community

PHYLLIS ODENBACH SUTTON

In addition to concerns about the process adopted by the City to implement a new Official Plan, many other troublesome issues have been raised by Old Ottawa East (OOE) residents. The Plan’s proposal to split our community into two secondary plans, two transects (the Downtown Core and Inner Urban) and one special district – the Rideau Canal – is clearly not popular either.

For example, Jim Strang commented that “(i)t was surprising to learn that the area of Old Ottawa East north of the 417 and east of the Canal was planned to be stripped away from the rest of our well-established community for planning purposes. To remove this long-established area of OOE from the Old Ottawa East Secondary Plan (SP) and add it to the Central and East Downtown Core SP without any consultation came as a bit of a shock.

“From a community perspective,” Strang continued, “the sector of Old Ottawa East north of the 417 has historical and well-established ties with the rest of OOE to the south. The residents both to the north and south of the 417 have shared interests in the coordinated planning and future of our entire OOE community. Certainly, the northern sector of OOE should not be arbitrarily hived off from the OOE Secondary Plan.”

In their letter to the City, Barbara Kirk and Francine Leduc asked a number of questions: “What is the rationale for this exclusion? What of significance has

occurred to warrant excluding this area from OOE?” They went on to note that “(i)t appears that this is just another arbitrary decision based on no objective reasoning. In our view, there should be a single Secondary Plan (SP) for the entire community that includes the features of the existing SP, and it should be included in the same transect as OOE.”

Linda Pollock indicated that, “despite going through the plan carefully, I am still not certain I clearly understand all its ramifications. For example, the concepts of transects and overlays are quite confusing.”

Lynda Colley is concerned that “an important piece of greenspace in the community, Springhurst Park, would no longer be part of Old Ottawa East for planning purposes, and our ability as a community to influence its development would be lost. Why this is being done has not been made clear in the document and leaves residents to wonder about the real motivation behind the change.”

Joseph Zebrowski wrote: “I am opposed to the attempt to cut out sections of the Old Ottawa East community for future planning purposes. Removing these lands from Old Ottawa East for planning purposes does not make sense and will complicate planning for transit and park development. It would turn current planning issues into trans-border planning issues.”

None of the 24 letters to the City that OOE residents shared with *The Mainstreeter* supported the division of the community.

has been rushed and inadequate, contrary to the Mayor’s claims. For example, Lise and Yves Morneau have asked, “What will be the impact of the new Official Plan on Merritt Avenue?”

In 2011, after four years of hard work, OOE residents had an approved CDP and SP and, as a result, thought they had the certainty that Mayor Watson promised. Over the last 10 years, OOE development has been substantial but with clear limitations established by the SP. Unless the draft Official Plan is substantially changed, uncertainty will again reign and the result will be taller buildings and more intensification than what the OOE SP established.

As former editor of *The Mainstreeter* Joseph Zebrowski commented, “I feel this response from the City does a lot to breed cynicism about the City’s planning process and public consultations and also to discourage the public from participating in public consultations.”

Although 15-minute neighbourhoods are mentioned repeatedly in the draft OP, the City makes no attempt to identify the neighbourhoods, which, according to the draft OP are “complete communities that support active transportation and transit, reduce car dependency, and enable people to live

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SAGE WORDS OF ADVICE FROM THE OTTAWA HUMANE SOCIETY

[Editor's Note: If you've fallen in love with the pandemic puppies featured in this issue, and are considering getting a canine friend yourself, here is some sage advice provided by the Ottawa Humane Society]:

When looking for a new pet, the Ottawa Humane Society always encourages people to adopt, don't shop. That is giving an animal from a reputable shelter or rescue a second chance.

If adopting isn't an option and hopeful pet parents decide to purchase their new best friend, we strongly recommend they research the seller before handing over any money.

Many unscrupulous businesses both local and international are taking advantage of the demand for puppies during the pandemic. This leads to suffering for the animals who are bred, housed and transported in inhumane



SUPPLIED PHOTO

conditions and it also leads to the suffering of the buyer who may be facing a future of mounting vet bills and heartbreak due to their new pet's hidden medical and genetic history.

Protect animals, protect yourself — be patient and diligent when looking for a new pet; meeting with a seller in a parking lot is a sure sign of something amiss.

Bruce Roney,
OHS President & CEO

RECALLED TO LIFE (MAY 2008)

[Editor's Note: Newcomer to Old Ottawa East, Vinay Chander has submitted her poem, Recalled to Life for readers of The Mainstreeter. The poem, written to celebrate the recovery to health of a dear friend more than a decade ago, seems especially timely today during the COVID-19 pandemic.]

For seven long weeks,
she was induced to sleep
to fight the microbes
inside her body.

It was a full assault indeed,
carried out at a great speed.
First, the lungs, then her blood,
kidneys next, in the toxic flood.

Seven long weeks, she lay asleep,
while the army of immunity
battled the alien impunity.
With medicines rushing through her veins,
respirators oxygenating lungs and brain.

Seven long weeks, the struggle continued,
until the deadly microbes were subdued.
One fine day, she opened her eyes,
and asked herself "where am I?"

Vinay Chander,
Avenues des Oblats



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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

A newcomer to OOE shares her concerns

Trying to make sense of the City's draft Official Plan

KRISTINE HOUDE

I moved to Old Ottawa East from the downtown core only a few days before the COVID-19 lockdown began last March. I am one of the people who has benefitted from the City's intensification goals - or what is now being termed regeneration. My partner and I had been looking for a few years to purchase a condo in a neighbourhood that we could grow old in that would also meet our immediate needs for a reasonable commute to work downtown by active or public transportation, access to greenspace and parks, and stores and services within walking distance.

We lucked out when we were able to purchase a condo behind St. Paul University in Old Ottawa East, a vibrant and welcoming community with an equally engaged community association.

I've lived in Ottawa's urban core on and off for over 20 years. I share my background with you to provide some context while I continue to try and make sense of the recently revised draft Official Plan, the Old Ottawa East Secondary Plan, the Central and East Downtown Core Secondary Plan that now includes parts of Old Ottawa East, and the many one-pagers and other documents that are referenced and cross-referenced with the hope of gaining a better understanding of what my 'forever home' might look like when 2046 rolls around.

While I agree with the goals that City of Ottawa planners have put forward, I do have some concerns:

1. Old Ottawa East seems to be unjustly impacted by the implementation of transects into the New Official Plan with parts of the existing community now being split off into multiple secondary plans; There appears to be no logical rationale for this decision, nor do any consultations appear to have taken place to support these changes.
- Old Ottawa East should be covered under one single transect in the New Official Plan.
- Old Ottawa East should also be represented under one single secondary plan that includes the features of the existing plan.
2. The downtown core and surrounding areas are slated for significant regeneration; however, these are also the areas that have been greatly impacted by COVID-19. As we are not likely to return to 'normal' in the next year, the City will need to be innovative in its thinking to reimagine how our communities should be designed once the 'new normal' sets in, rather than lock itself and its residents in to a 20+ year plan.
- The consultation period should be extended at least one year to better understand the impacts that COVID-19 might have on how we live and work in this capital city.
- The City should do targeted consultations in light of COVID-19 to understand how communities and specific populations (low-income earners, seniors, people with disabilities) are now navigating their neighbourhoods and using these public spaces to validate if the proposed Official Plan is nimble enough to adapt to this changing environment over the long-term.
3. The draft one-pagers on equity and inclusion, mobility, healthy and inclusive communities, climate change, and parks all put forward solid ideas to be inclusive of all equity groups, contribute to residents' quality of life, and make Ottawa a leading mid-size city. However, parts of



LORNE ABUGOV PHOTO

On the AVTC: OOE newcomer Kristine Houde says that she would be lost without the parks and greenspaces that she has had the chance to explore during the pandemic.

the Official Plan and Secondary Plans seem to contradict these goals, in particular, plans to build the Alta Vista Transit Corridor (AVTC).

- The City should permanently remove any plans to build the AVTC and amalgamate this greenspace as part of Springhurst Park's expansion, prioritizing people over cars, This will ensure the space can be used recreationally to support the rapid population growth in Old Ottawa East and future intensification near the Lees LRT station, while also ensuring that lowest income residents of our community are not cut off from the broader community.

With two workstations now permanently installed in our one-bedroom condo, and the building's common spaces closed indefinitely in response to OPH recommendations, I would be lost were it not for the greenspaces, parks and many unique areas throughout Old Ottawa East that I've had the opportunity to explore throughout the pandemic. I urge the City to reconsider their timelines and their draft Plans to ensure that Old Ottawa East and communities like it continue to grow and flourish, while still retaining the unique characteristics that attract people like me to their areas in the first place.

Next issue of
The Mainstreeter
Content and advertising
deadline is:

May 12, 2021

The Pandemic Puppies are settling in to Old Ottawa East

Continued from Page 3

“There have been times when we’ve had to rush out without our coats on,” says Kelsey.

While Timber’s folks are still adjusting to his routine, Timber is right at home. He now has loads of friends in the neighbourhood, including his best buddy Poppy. Winter hasn’t slowed him down either, as Kelsey explains: “He loves the snow, loves sticking his head into it, making little forts in the snow, which is adorable.”

Meet Jynx

Julie Greene and Phil L’Abbe had been looking to adopt a dog for the past two years. They wanted their sons to have the experience of growing up with a dog. “I had one criterion,” Julie confessed. “The dog had to be female because I live in a house full of males.”

They also wanted a small- to medium-sized dog so their youngest son Rhys could walk her comfortably. And they were looking for an adult dog that had been fostered, so somebody could tell them



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

ABOVE: Timber practices her snoozing skills after a tiring day of training her new owners; FAR LEFT AND NEAR LEFT: Both Poppy (L) and Jynx (R) have clearly mastered the essential skill of posing for the camera.

about the dog’s personality. “We wanted a dog who would be good around little kids as our neighbourhood has so many little ones now,” says Julie.

Julie recommends people consider getting an adult dog: “Someone else has done the puppy training. Jynx arrived house trained, crate trained and pretty good on a leash.”

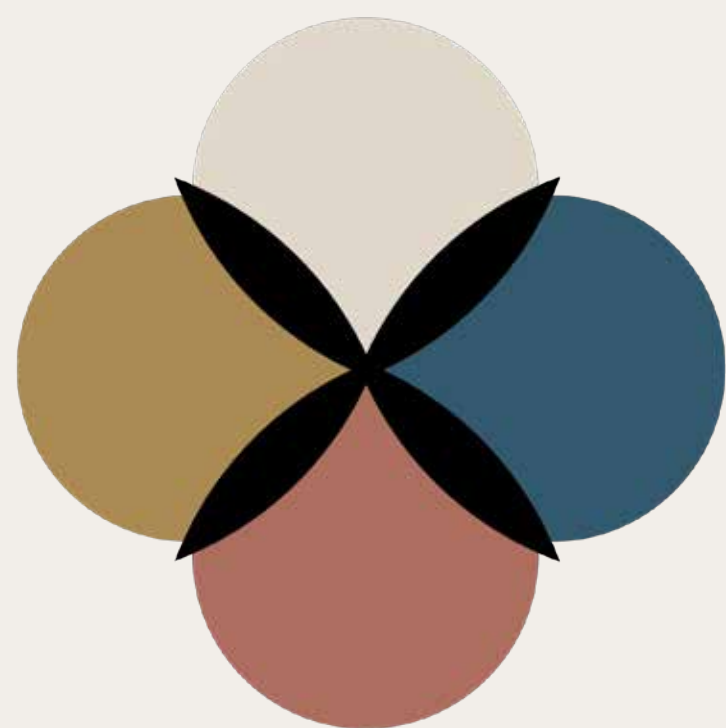
Enter Jynx, a bull dog mix, who came to them from Findingthemhomes.com, a dog rescue based in Barrie. Phil picked her up on February 1st and Jynx has since settled comfortably into her new family. Their eldest son Fin enjoys being woken up by her, and their younger son Rhys is in charge of feeding her. “She really likes affection,” says Julie. “She has a sweet temperament; she’s happy to see everyone. So we know she’s definitely had love in her life.”

In these days of social distancing and limited contact with other people, dogs are fulfilling an important role in many peoples’ lives. “You can pour so much love into them and they’ll give it all right back to you,” says Julie.

Don’t we all need a little more of that right now!



Whether you are looking for a puppy or an adult dog, be sure you are dealing with a reputable breeder and getting a dog that suits your household and life style. As Veterinarian Aaron Shackelton says: Getting a dog is not a short-term commitment. A dog’s presence in the family can last 15+ years. The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) has published a helpful COVID Puppy Survival Guide that is an excellent resource: <https://www.canadianveterinarians.net/documents/covid-puppy-survival-guide-doc>



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Official Plan really rankles residents

Continued from Page 1
relocated these areas to the “downtown core transect” (see the related article at page 5 of this issue of *The Mainstreeter*).

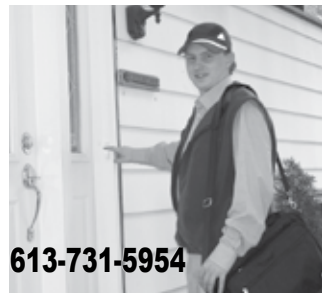
“We would like the City to ensure a stronger role for communities in the

future development of Ottawa,” Norman Moyer, president of the Lowertown Community Association wrote to the City. “To that end, we hope you will take into consideration our requests and suggestions.” It remains to be seen.

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OUR NEIGHBOURS

Community advocate is an impassioned defender of Old Ottawa East's shrinking recreational greenspace

Meet Alexandra Gruca-Macaulay



DOUG MACAULAY PHOTO

Alexandra Gruca-Macaulay enjoying a day out paddling on the Canal

BONNIE WEPPLER

"I've had a number of 'past lives' including an early career in international finance, followed by graduate studies at Saint Paul University (SPU)," says Alexandra Gruca-Macaulay who, with her husband, Doug, arrived in Old

Ottawa East five and a half years ago.

"We felt welcomed from the beginning and were impressed with the passion that Old Ottawa East has inspired in its residents for their neighbourhood."

Gruca-Macaulay holds an MA and PhD in Theology. "My work is in the academic study of biblical literature."

She is the author of *Lydia as a Rhetorical Construct in Acts* and her work can be found in academic journals; "an essay is coming out in a forthcoming issue of SPU's academic journal, *Theoforum*."

Her interest in biblical literature came early: "When I was in Grade 6, I attended boarding school in Montreal; there, in a class called *Scripture*, we spent one semester studying the Book of Exodus in the Hebrew Bible, another looking at Christian symbolism in C. S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and finished off with a semester of Greek and Roman mythology. For an 11-year-old with an enquiring mind who came from a Roman Catholic, pre-Vatican II, educational system, I found the freedom to raise questions about how humans have conceived divinity to be absolutely mind-blowing," recalls Gruca-Macaulay.

"Once the children left home, we began to think seriously about the type of lifestyle we were interested in; Old Ottawa East was an ideal fit for what we were looking for in this next phase of our lives."

But she does have a concern. "We have beautiful natural surroundings in this neighbourhood, but with the recent escalation of development, our greenspace is shrinking. While we have two nice parks, Brantwood and Springhurst, I've become aware that children who live west of Main Street

don't have ready access to recreation space."

Through community work, Gruca-Macaulay met long-time resident Gloria Fox who teaches piano. "I haven't been near a keyboard since my teens, but two years ago I asked Gloria whether she might take me on as a student and, although she may have come to regret it since, she agreed. During the shut-down we had to make the shift to online lessons, and it has been amazing to me how effective our lessons have continued to be."

With regard to Old Ottawa East's businesses, Gruca-Macaulay notes how wonderful it is to see "the business community ... grow in Old Ottawa East." She notes that they are regularly at the Main Market and that they "look forward to when the vendors can move into their permanent 'home' at the Grand Allée Park."

In addition, Main Haircutters is very important to her: "I've trusted my 'challenging' hair to Old Ottawa East hairstylist Brenda Martin for about 15 years now and we've become good friends over the years. Sometimes I think the main reason we moved to Old Ottawa East was so that I could walk over to get my hair done with Brenda!" She also gives a shout out to Only You Esthetics.

Draft Official Plan:

For 15-minute communities, "uncertainty will reign"

Continued from Page 5

car-light or car-free."

Local residents also object to the OP's focusing of intensification in the central areas of the City while not ensuring there are the same recreational and greenspace provisions that the suburban areas will have.

An unprecedented number of community associations - including OOECA - have provided hundreds of pages of suggestions for improving the OP and they have asked that the consultation process be extended.

The Mayor has dismissed a request from the Federation of Citizens' Associations of Ottawa to extend the process, even though a year was added for the development of the transportation master plan. The consultations on the OP have been extensive and better than with previous OP efforts, he has asserted in rejecting the request. Community associations dispute this.

Mayor Watson aims to have City Council "make the best decisions we can for the good of the City of Ottawa as a whole." Unfortunately, he appears determined to do this without adequately considering "the good" of the many communities that make Ottawa a wonderful city.



New Official Plan

Greystone Village Retirement health care unit now at full capacity

Many patients and staff are now receiving their COVID-19 vaccines

PHYLLIS ODENBACH SUTTON

When *The Mainstreeter* last provided an update on the transitional care hospital unit located in Greystone Village Retirement, the facility was just beginning to welcome patients. Today, with the passage of time, a clearer picture of the operations of the transitional hospital unit has emerged.

In terms of capacity, the facility has now reached its 120-bed capacity, with variances from week to week, depending on admissions and discharges. The unit is overseen by the Bruyère Centre, with patient services provided by Integrated Care Solutions, a division of Bayshore HealthCare.

Those patients at Greystone Village Retirement who currently have a confirmed admission to long-term care have now received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Patient-facing staff are also being vaccinated. This aligns with Phase 1 of the provincial COVID-19 vaccination roll-out, which prioritizes health care workers and alternate-level-of-care patients.

While general visitation is not allowed at any of the Bruyère campuses, Designated Care Partners can enter their facilities, including Greystone Village Retirement. The Designated Care Partner program was created to recognize the important role family members, friends, and loved ones play in the ongoing personal, social, psychological, emotional and physical well-being of patients during the pandemic. Designated Care Partners are considered an integral part of the care team and can enter the Bruyère campuses at all times, including during an outbreak of infectious disease, subject to Public Health orders. These individuals receive training on infection prevention and control measures, as well as the use of personal protective equipment.

We also enquired about the potential for community volunteers at Greystone Village Retirement but were told that volunteers are not permitted onsite at this time as a result of the pandemic. Under usual circumstances, volunteers would be welcomed as they are seen as a key component of the Bruyère's operations.

One of the issues raised at a public meeting when Greystone Village Retirement was first proposed was the adequacy of parking for residents, staff and visitors. Since then, employees have either been dropped off at the facility, driven themselves in their



SUPPLIED PHOTO

own vehicle, or used public transportation to address the parking shortfall. In terms of parking spaces, there are 40 spots underground at the retirement residence building, but Bayshore has secured another 60 spots for their staff at Saint-Paul University.

According to the Bruyère Centre, the Greystone Village Retirement facility is expected to continue to operate as a transitional health care unit for between 6 to 18 months. As of March 19, however, Bruyère Centre had not yet received confirmation from the provincial Ministry on an extension past March 31, 2021.

The Green Door takes its brief closure in stride

MAINSTREETER STAFF

Old Ottawa East's popular eatery, The Green Door Restaurant, which closed its doors temporarily on March 18th upon learning that staff had been exposed to COVID-19, has now re-opened for takeout business.

According to the Green Door's website, its staff team was "safe and healthy" throughout a precautionary isolation period that lasted until March 31st.

The restaurant's re-opening was delayed for a week at the start of April while the premises underwent minor renovations "to improve the layout of our current takeout model."



Some answers and questions about the new utility poles along Echo & Colonel By

Temporary placement is due to rebuild of unstable retaining walls

MAINSTREETER STAFF

Some residents in Old Ottawa East and pedestrians walking along Echo Drive between Clegg Street and Avenue Road have been puzzled by the installation of a series of telephone/hydro poles in the strip of land owned by the National Capital Commission (NCC) between Echo Drive and Colonel By Drive. The poles appeared without notice to residents and were ultimately topped with street lights and connected with various cables, some of which droop so low that they touch the tops of the bushes on the NCC land.

Although *The Mainstreeter's* calls and emails about this work to the NCC and Hydro Ottawa went unanswered, the NCC's website describes the project, slated for Spring 2021, to rebuild

the retaining wall on the east side of Colonel By Drive. The reason for the project is that "[s]ections of the wall are currently unstable and need to be repaired and rehabilitated; critical sections will be replaced." Further detail about the construction plan for the project is set out in the Notice to the Public regarding the proposed work posted on the Federal Government's site (<https://ceaa-acee.gc.ca/050/evaluations/document/135536>), as follows:

- Installation of necessary tree protection measures prior to construction;
- Limited tree and shrub removal within excavation zone;
- Implementation of traffic management measures during construction;
- Removal of approximately 400 metres of the existing wall system from the south side of stairway near Mount Pleasant Avenue to Avenue Road. The removal will include sidewalk slabs, light posts, and electrical cables;

- Excavation of soil behind the retaining wall and installation of slope stability measures;
- Construction of approximately 400 metres of new armour stone retaining wall;
- Installation of effective drainage system behind the new retaining wall;
- Deposition of new non-frost susceptible fill material behind the wall;
- Reinstallation of related items, such as sidewalk slabs, light posts, and electrical cables; and
- Light implementation of revegetation and landscape plan.

As the existing posts and cables are scheduled to be removed and replaced at the end of the project, it became apparent that the mystery poles (now with lights on them) were installed temporarily for the duration of the project. This was confirmed verbally with a Hydro Ottawa worker who was connecting cables to the poles in February. The timeline for the removal of the poles is not known.

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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eUpdate — www.ottawaeastcag.ca/eupdate

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AVTC AND STRONG COMMUNITY VOICES

A repeated theme in many residents' comments on the City's draft Official Plan (OP) is to cancel the Alta Vista Transportation Corridor (AVTC) and to transfer its reserved lands to Springhurst Park. For decades, the Old Ottawa East Community Association (OOECA) has been pushing for the removal of the AVTC from the City's plans and maybe now we will be successful.

Fifty years ago, the proposed four-lane roadway was the way of the future. It was conceived when "the car was king," LRT wasn't even a remote fantasy of City politicians, climate change wasn't a profound reality and the importance of protecting existing communities was not understood as it is now.

Now the idea is a relic and one in direct opposition to the fundamental goals of the new Official Plan. In no way would a completed AVTC contribute to 15-minute communities, enhanced sustainable transportation, improved community design or resilience in the face of climate change.

When you look at the specific plan for how the proposed AVTC would be built through OOE, you get a sense for how disruptive and divisive it would be; a four-lane bridged roadway over Lees Avenue with access ramps coming to and from, the effect of which would be massive and noisy, with congestion on Lees exacerbated as the University of Ottawa rebuilds its campus. Imagine walking or biking along Lees Avenue with this expansion spewing traffic in all directions, all the while losing a wide swath of greenspace which has proven so valuable during these times.

Councillor Shawn Menard has launched a campaign to remove the AVTC from the OP, an effort heartily endorsed by OOECA.

The community's strong reaction to the OP's proposed removal of the

Lees Station and the north Main/Kings Landing area from the OOE secondary plan may result in the City reconsidering its proposal, which would be good news.

The suggestions of many community members to improve the draft OP are much appreciated. Special mention to acting Planning Committee chair Ron Rose for crafting the Association's position and to Paul Goodkey for suggesting detailed improvements to the community's secondary plan.

Another City decision, on the transfer of University of Ottawa's Lees campus from Capital ward to Rideau-Vanier ward, led the OOECA to file an appeal against this action to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal. Special thanks to John Dance for his efforts in leading this campaign, and to several other residents who contributed; your efforts are always appreciated!

Since the beginning of the pandemic, our monthly meetings have all been done on Zoom. We've had good participation, but I am missing the informality and spontaneity of in-person meetings. And there is no follow-up discussion after the Zoom meetings let alone the opportunity to have a relaxing drink at the now-closed Royal Oak.

If you are interested in attending the monthly meetings, they are always the second Tuesday of the month, with access details posted approximately 2 hours before the 7pm start, including the agenda and previous meeting minutes. Let's hope that we are all vaccinated by the Fall and we can again get together.

Our lives have been changed by the pandemic, but it made many of us all that more appreciative of our very walkable community with our river parks and the businesses and restaurants that have struggled to stay open. Stay positive and stay engaged.

TINA RAYMOND PRESIDENT, COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES GROUP (CAG)



MEET CAG!

The Community Activities Group of Old Ottawa East (CAG) is a real community success story. Over the years, it has grown from a group of neighbours meeting in a kitchen to discuss the services and programs they wanted to see in the community, to a well-established community organization offering a range of programs. All along this evolution, one thing has remained the same: the goal of providing diverse, accessible programs to the residents of this great community.

CAG is truly an Old Ottawa East (OOE) organization. OOE residents make up the majority of program and activity participants. Our volunteers, including our board members and youth volunteers, are OOE residents. And many of our staff and instructors live in the community. We're also proud to work with community partners, such as the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre, to bring and maintain quality programming for the community.

If you've never seen our program lineup, here are some examples of what we offer:

- Childcare, including both afterschool care and camps during PD days, March breaks, and summer vacation
- Fitness classes including yoga, boot camps, and Pilates
- General interest classes and workshops, such as art classes, dance classes, and cooking workshops
- Events to bring the community together, like our yearly Main Event, barbecues, and Winter Party (when not interrupted by COVID, of course!)

For more information about CAG, our

programs, and our community events, or to register for a program (including the one highlighted below), visit us at www.ottawaeastcag.ca.

Program Spotlight

Did you know that CAG adult fitness programs are offered weekday mornings and evenings and on weekends throughout the year, to suit a range of participant schedules and preferences? We continue to adapt and stay safe during COVID-19 by offering these online where possible.

One of our morning programs is Cardio-Strength-Core Blast, with instructor Christine Johnson. Christine offers a beginner-level class on Wednesdays and Fridays, and an advanced-level class on Tuesdays and Thursdays. She has been teaching cardio and strength & tone classes in Ottawa for five years, including four years with CAG.

Her Cardio-Strength-Core Blast class gives a gentle but total body workout, with forty minutes of cardio and strength intervals, followed by twenty minutes of core exercises. This helps improve strength, muscle tone, and flexibility. The class also creates an ideal environment for social connections, which Christine considers as important as the physical and mental benefits of regular fitness classes.

If you are looking for a boost to start your day, come join Christine online! Or, you might be interested in one of our other fitness classes like Better Body Boot Camps with Katie Ireland, ELDOA with Pam Forth, and Hatha Yoga with Yuko Suzuki.

We look forward to having you work out with us!



At Agricola Farm Work hard, learn fast, work harder

THERESA WALLACE

Agricola Cooperative Farm, an innovation in community-supported agriculture that has brought huge benefits to Old Ottawa East and the broader community, is the creation of four people with big hearts, quick minds and strong backs, who met in 2006 at King's College in Halifax and decided to build careers together. They named their project Agricola partly as a nod to Agricola Street in Halifax's north end and their east coast connection.

Natalie Childs and Heather Syposz are from Ottawa, Hannah Hunter from Pugwash on the Nova Scotia north shore and Caleb Langille from St. Margaret's Bay, Nova Scotia. None of them grew up on a farm, but after finishing their undergrad degrees, all four were independently drawn to work on organic farms. They began to consider this a possible career path and spent years on other people's farms learning and training.

In 2019, they bought their property in Papineauville, Quebec in the Petite Nation region, about an hour from Ottawa. "It was love at first sight," Childs says. "It's a special, magical place." The previous owner, Guy-Louis Poncet, who remains a mentor to Agricola, is an artist; his asparagus sculptures remain on the land. He also planted many trees. "We are benefitting from his forty years of dedication to this property."



SUPPLIED PHOTO

From left to right: Heather Syposz, Natalie Childs, Hannah Hunter and Caleb Langille, in front of their barn in Papineauville, Quebec.

Childs says the farm—160 acres, much of it forested—has been an ideal place to live during the pandemic. They've made miles of cross-country ski trails. Syposz's partner, Ryan Lum, an Immaculata High School grad who has a job offsite, clears a skating rink on their irrigation pond in the winter. (Syposz and Lum had a baby boy in February, the first baby living on the farm in 35 years.)

The farm has a kiosk that's self-serve during asparagus season and open all summer and fall, but Agricola also needs a market presence to sell their produce. They applied to the Main Street Farmers' Market, were accepted right away, and have now been there for two seasons.

"I knew this team of organic farmers would be really successful," says Brett Weddle, manager of the market and owner of Cadence Ecological Farm. "They prepared for 10 years before founding their cooperative. Their expertise includes not just growing but also social media, logistics and sales. Their strong shared

skill set has very quickly made them a cornerstone of our market."

A typical day in the life of Agricola Farm

MAINSTREETER STAFF

In high season, the work day starts with the rising sun and ends long after it sets, but Hannah Hunter says the team is learning to work smart. "Our labour is the most valuable resource on our farm, so we really have to take care of ourselves and each other." She's in charge of the crop plan, organic certification and the CSA. (See sidebar.) Childs manages greenhouse production, marketing, communications and financing, while Langille takes the lead on the farm's soil fertility, bed preparation and business planning. Syposz plans and coordinates the harvest, and also manages their farmers' markets and the farm store.

They meet weekday mornings at 7:30 a.m. to work out the tasks for the day. Eight acres are under cultivation. Hunter says there's a lot of routine in farming, and once they find their rhythm, a normal day isn't that difficult. But because farming has so much to do with nature and machinery, they have to expect the unexpected. "Whether it's two people responding to a weather forecast calling for an early overnight frost or all four of us going out after dinner to install a new irrigation pump, those hard days are when the strength of being a cooperative comes through. I can't imagine doing this alone."

Agricola's weekly food basket

MAINSTREETER STAFF

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) connects local farmers and eaters, and under this system individuals or families sign up and pay in the winter for a share of vegetables. Agricola gets up-front money to buy the seed, compost, and equipment they need for the season ahead, and for \$600, those who buy Agricola CSA shares get a weekly basket of just-harvested vegetables for 20 weeks. Pick-up is in the Children's Garden in Robert F. Legget Park at the corner of Main and Clegg Streets every Wednesday after work starting in late June. (Pick-ups are also at the farm and in Chinatown/Little Italy.)

This year, they've launched a new Solidarity share program offering CSA shares to those with lower incomes. Everything about the program is the same except the cost is divided into thirds: \$200 is paid by the participating member, \$200 by Agricola, \$200 by donation. Natalie Childs says, "We've been blown away by the number of people donating, giving others the opportunity to have a steady supply of local food and a personal connection with the farmer." To learn more, please go to fermeagricola.com.

Note: As *The Mainstreeter* went to press, the CSA and Solidary Shares programs were almost full. But delicious products from local vendors, including Agricola, are available at the Main Farmers' Market, which runs May 29 to October 30, Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon, in the parking lot beside Singing Pebble Books.

Local seniors are concerned about health care needs

CAROLYN INCH

Many of us are concerned about not having a doctor who knows us. Given that doctors retire from practice, and since new doctors are increasingly locating in the suburbs, it is becoming progressively more difficult for residents of Old Ottawa East (OOE), Old Ottawa South (OOS) and the Glebe to find health care within their communities.

That's the conclusion reached by Senior Watch, a committee within the OOS Community Association in response to a question that the committee published in OSCAR, the OOS community newspaper. Senior Watch received responses from residents living within all three communities, and the stories were similar, unsurprisingly. After all, neighbours within the three communities live an easy bike ride away from each other, and doctors in the Glebe and OOE have long been prized by OOS residents.

An article by Dr. Nili Kaplan-Myrth published by *The Mainstreeter* in its June 2020 issue and by OSCAR in its July-August 2020 issue summarizes the fate of Ottawa family practitioners who are on a Fee for Service (FFS) model. To minimize costs, they are being forced to move to the suburbs. Likewise if they want to practice in a more effective, holistic manner in a Family Health Organization (FHO), since Ontario has chosen only to fund new FHOs if they locate in the suburbs.

In January 2021, an opinion article in OSCAR by Terrance Hunsley asked the question: "With population aging, is it time to explore a nurse practitioner-led clinic?"

As Senior Watch explores options for elderly patients through the political realm with the municipal, Ontario and Federal governments, the organization needs more information about health care needs. While Senior Watch is aware that health care costs will only increase in future as the population ages, they seek to learn more about the level of current health care costs.



If you or someone you know is concerned about health care for seniors, please respond by email to SWOOS2018@gmail.com.

Indicate "Neighbourhood Health Care" in the subject line, and say as much or as little about your concerns as you wish

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As major infrastructure projects begin...

Heritage properties in Old Ottawa East taking centre stage

JOHN DANCE

The future of Old Ottawa East's heritage properties has taken front stage as development proposals and major infrastructure projects proceed.

The Deschâtelets Building, the Grand Allée and Forecourt parks, the sale of the Convent of the Sisters of Sacred Heart, the threatened buildings of the northern side of Hawthorne Avenue, the future of Old Town Hall and the imminent demolition of OOE's first church all raise key heritage issues.

Unlike Sandy Hill and the Glebe, OOE has only four properties that have special heritage protection resulting from their designation under Ontario's Heritage Act. There are, however, other properties with important historical value that are listed on the Register of Historic Places (on the City's website) and community members are fighting to preserve them or, if demolition is approved, to ensure that their histories are commemorated and their "harvested" materials are re-used.

The four designated properties are Old Town Hall at 61 Main Street, the Deschâtelets Building including its chapel and the Grande Allée, the Brantwood Place Gates and the lovely brick house at 3 Bower Avenue. The City's Built Heritage Sub-Committee is recommending to City Council that staff determine if the Sisters' Convent also meets the criteria for designation.

There are many other Old Ottawa East properties on the Register, and most of

them were added over the last five years. No special protections result from being listed on the register, but property owners must notify the City within 60 days if they plan to demolish their buildings. The time allows the City to consider whether it should pursue a heritage designation.

The new additions to the Register primarily result from City staff's "drive-by" impressions of architectural value. "The City did not consider associations with persons or events of significance," says Peter Frood, OOE's passionate defender of local heritage. "From a community perspective however, these associations are important, and I think represent another layer of work to ensure that OOE history is recognized and, if possible, protected."

Key updates on various heritage properties are:

Brantwood Place Gates: The Main Street landmark has been fully reconstructed and is one of the monuments featured in an upcoming book of McGill-Queen's University Press (see article on page 18 of this issue of *The Mainstreeter*).

Deschâtelets Chapel: Demolition is scheduled over the next few months. The City has, however, requested additional historical and documentary research for the Deschâtelets Building and the Oblats order to support the commemoration of the chapel wing; and some of the chapel windows will be used in the new community centre.

Deschâtelets Building: The building is



JOHN DANCE PHOTOS

Holy Trinity Church at Echo and Main is slated for demolition shortly.

now being repurposed as the new Au Coeur d'Ottawa school with a new community centre on the ground floor and seniors' housing on the top two floors. While the Built Heritage Sub-Committee has approved alterations to the exterior, community members continue to push for a more sensitive modification of the main entrance and less visible roof-top projections.

Old Town Hall: With a new community centre in Deschâtelets what will become of Old Town Hall built in 1895? It is a valuable property in both real estate and heritage terms. "We have no plan or intent to dispose of Old Town Hall at this time," says city planner MacKenzie Kimm. "Should we be successful in establishing a new community centre for Old Ottawa East at Greystone Village, Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services will review program space requirements and ongoing operational needs in light of the new expanded capacity." Despite numerous upgrades to the building, a number of restorations are required including repairing the railing above the main entrance and deteriorating windows.

Holy Trinity Church - This church which has served many purposes over the years is now being demolished to make way for a new six-storey boutique apartment building at the northeast corner of Echo and Main. The developer will incorporate the church's bell in the building entrance feature and may provide the community with some of the church's stained glass windows for preservation elsewhere in the community.

Hawthorne Avenue Properties: As a result of the Highway 417 bridge replacement project, the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario proposed to demolish the Canal Royal Oak building and the old Shell gas station building at Main and Hawthorne. However, as a result of interventions by Councillor Shawn Menard, the Oak building may be saved and the old gas station could be removed, stored off-site, and returned to this corner.

The OOE secondary plan of 2011 stresses the importance of "built heritage"



The City has approved alterations to the main entrance of Deschâtelets.

and notes "Design guidelines will be prepared to encourage infill development that is compatible with adjacent buildings. The design guidelines will offer a means of conserving the cohesiveness of existing streetscape types and discouraging incompatible infill development."

The draft Official Plan also says, "Conserving cultural heritage resources and commemorating Ottawa's diverse cultural communities forms an integral part of the City's planning and decision-making." The proposed Rideau Canal special district of the Official Plan may also be a means of protecting heritage of the Canal, a UNESCO world heritage site.

One of the key suggestions of heritage advocate Peter Frood is that if there are any demolitions of buildings with heritage value, they be deconstructed "so that the building materials are available to be used as part of the commemoration and for the adaptive reuse of the Deschâtelets Building." He notes, "Other harvested materials could be used as architectural features throughout the site and in the community."



Old Town Hall's future is unknown when the new community centre is finished.

The Brantwood Place Gates

A “Monumental Memory” of a treasured OOE heritage legacy

The Mainstreeter is publishing a draft article on the Brantwood Place Gates written for tentative inclusion in two Carleton University professors' forthcoming book, entitled *Monumental Memories: A Critical Reading of Memorials, Monuments, and Statues in Canada's Capital Region*. The article, based on efforts of many Old Ottawa East residents, is a fascinating tale of perseverance to ensure the gates have remained a treasured heritage landmark. Footnotes have been removed to simplify the reading of this article.

JOHN DANCE

It is often a gray day, with the occasional snowflake in the air. Many residents wait for the sounds of the marching band on Ottawa's Main Street before grabbing their gloves and toques and rushing out to meet at the Brantwood Place Gates as part of an annual Remembrance Day ceremony. The ceremony lacks the Prime Minister and other dignitaries who gather two kilometres away at the National War Memorial, yet this local event is equally moving and just as important to those who attend.

The gates, the focal point of the ceremony, were built before the First World War. The Old Ottawa East monument has an intriguing history of creation, ongoing deterioration, periodic restoration, and, finally, reconstruction. The gates are still standing because of the efforts of generations of neighbours who have remained vigilant and assertive. Located on Main Street at Beckwith Road, the four fieldstone-covered pillars were built in 1912 as a “marketing ploy” to mark the entrance to Brantwood Place, “lending an air of exclusiveness and distinction to this high-class home section,” as a real estate pamphlet extolled.

Without consultation, the City of Ottawa decided 35 years later that the gates were in a state of disrepair and impeded “snow



JOHN DANCE PHOTO

Georges Winters of Branch 595, Royal Canadian Legion and Main Street resident Eugene Haslam are two advocates who have safeguarded the Brantwood Place Gates.

removal efficiency.” A City crew appeared on July 2, 1947 and began their demolition work. The reaction of residents was immediate, forceful and effective. In just one day, a petition protesting the demolition was signed by 285 “heads of homes” and presented to the local alderman. Over two days, the *Evening Citizen* ran four items on the residents' outrage, including a photo documenting “the pillage of the pillars.” [Editor's Note: Read excerpts from the 1947 *Evening Citizen* on the next page of this issue.] In response, the City reversed its decision, and the gates were saved.

Over the next two years, residents convinced the City to dedicate the gates as a war memorial. This ensured that the landmark, a key part of the community's identity, would be conserved under the aegis of civic remembrance. Door-to-door canvassing raised funds for a brass memorial plaque. “To the memory of those who made the supreme sacrifice and to the honour and glory of those men and women of this community who served in the armed forces,” the plaque read.

that, by the 1970s, had changed from two lanes of slow traffic to one of Ottawa's major four-lane arterials. Main Street's expansion, the vibrations of passing vehicles, and corrosive road salt led to their steady deterioration. Residents regularly complained about the state of the gates, concerns which the City periodically addressed.

By 1977, the war memorial plaque had tumbled off into the gutter, only to be retrieved by one of the leaders of the original save the gates effort. Residents now pushed for restoration. Two years later the gates were declared a heritage asset by the City and, in 1982, after \$5,000 of repairs, the Royal Canadian Legion, Strathcona Branch 595 led an event to rededicate the gates. New plaques in French and English and one designating the gates a heritage structure were added.

The next two decades saw further deterioration of the gates. Prompted by a concerned citizenry, the City prepared “deficiency reports,” which proposed long-term solutions, including the idea of reconstructing the gates in nearby Brantwood Park. But residents did not want the gates moved off Main Street. In 2010 the City commissioned a thorough analysis of the gates that, again, resulted in recommendations to fully reconstruct the gates. With the strong support of the community and a City investment of almost half a million dollars, the gates were finally reconstructed as part

of the transformation of Main Street into Ottawa's first major “complete street.”

As a result of enduring and effective community activism, the Brantwood Place Gates remain a local landmark that preserves and honours the memory of those who served in the two world wars.

Acknowledgments: While no individuals except developer Robert Sibbitt are mentioned in the draft article, some of the key contributors over the years are: E.P. Nunn and Art Humphries, who were instrumental in saving the gates from demolition and having them designated as a war memorial in 1949; Robert Kelly, who lobbied for heritage designation for the gates in 1979; Pierre Johnson, Susan MacPhee, Nancy Smith, Rick Wallace and Heather Moxsley, who led the restoration campaign in 2003; and Main Street resident Eugene Haslam and Branch 595's Georges Winters, both of whom fought for the full restoration of the gates more recently.

If you see any errors or omissions in the draft article, please inform The Mainstreeter or John Dance. The book - *Monumental Memories* - authored by professors Tonya Davidson & David Dean will be published by McGill-Queen's University Press.

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Over my dead body!

1947: Tear down the Brantwood Place Gates, will 'ya?

An excerpt from “Ottawa Easters Want Their Gates - Or Else,” in *The Ottawa Evening Citizen*, July 3, 1947

“When the city started to take down the stone pillars at Beckwith Road and Main Street, Ottawa East, it started something. In fact it started something it doesn't look as if it can finish. It took a long time for the people of Ottawa East to get their dander up, but we're plenty mad now...”

We are a rapidly growing community and we had almost no landmarks. There was one, however, that we loved. That was the big cobblestone gates at Beckwith Road.

“How do you get there,” a thousand people have asked a thousand of us Ottawa Easters.

“Well,” we'd say, “take a bus to the stone pillars then get off there and...” After that, the rest was easy.

First of all, Ottawa East is the least known part of Ottawa. “I live in Ottawa East,” you will say to somebody who is supposed to know Ottawa.

“Oh yes, that's out on the way to Montreal,” they'll dither.

“No,” we'll reply with none too much patience. “That's Eastview.”

“Oh,” they'll answer, and it's the fatuous “Oh” that means nothing.

Then we'll try to explain some more and tell them that Ottawa East is really not east at all but south.

“Oh,” they'll answer again, and they'll think you are a moron, while you are sure they are. We lose so many darn friends that way.

Anyway, we haven't got many landmarks over in Ottawa East. Actually, we are a going concern though, and if we don't know each other very well, it is because most of us haven't been there very long. I am an old-timer now and I've been there almost four years.

...

Meanwhile, we want our gate back, or here's our ultimatum - next election, a new mayor, four new controllers and a new alderman!

An excerpt from “Those Pillars of Haven,” *The Ottawa Evening Citizen*, July 4, 1947

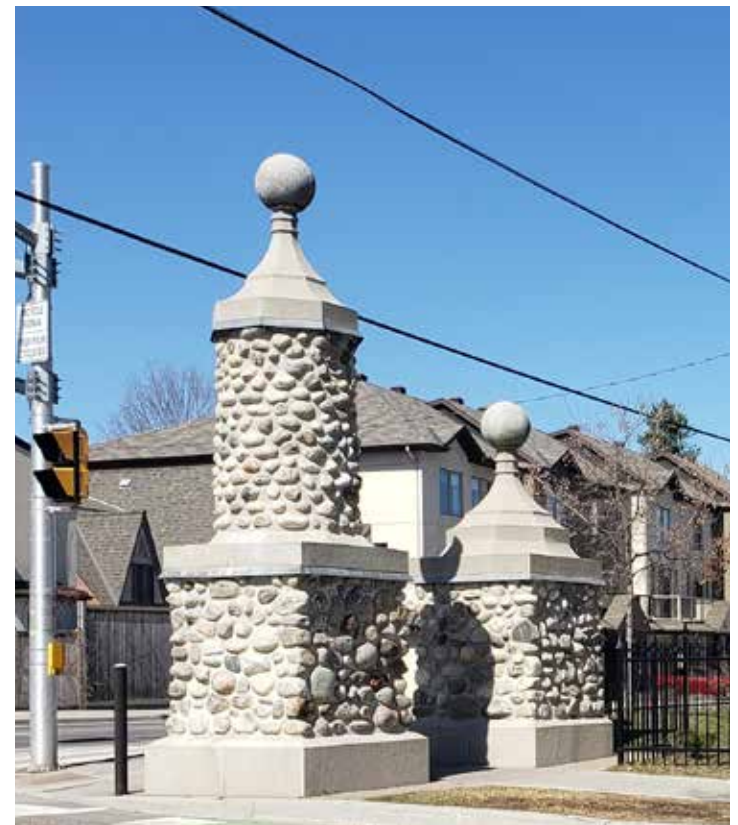
These solid and somewhat incongruous pillars have guarded the gates of Brantwood Beach residential development for some 35 years. They were erected at the instigation of an ambitious real estate developer who no doubt had a keen appreciation of human psychology.

What if the lots are small, the homes crowded together, and in the spring some of the cellars are flooded with water? Someday, he thought, those pillars would come to mean something to the residents, something that would transcend all that.

...

Ah! The Pillars! Haven, sanctuary, asylum, a familiar port after a long and stormy crossing. Once inside them and I am HOME.

Abolish the Pillars? Over my dead body!



LORNE ABUGOV PHOTO

The City's attempt to demolish the stone pillars of the Brantwood Place Gates met with instant and angry opposition from the residents of Old Ottawa East back in July 1947, as these excerpts from the *Ottawa Evening Citizen* clearly reflect.



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Photo by Ashley Noiley



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Peter Fowler's Travel Focus

Global travel has been a passionate pursuit of many Canadians, but the COVID pandemic has all but eliminated the opportunity for us to travel the world. So, we have dipped into our e-mailbag for this installment of our popular photo feature to showcase the work from the portfolios of three talented local photographers - Bonnie Weppler, Stephan Telka and our own Photo Editor Peter Fowler.

NOMANE, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

BONNIE WEPPLER: This picture was taken during an ordination service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the northern highlands of Papua New Guinea. I lived in Papua New Guinea for a decade and was privileged to attend this important ordination ceremony at which a number of pastors were ordained.

The women's headdresses include long black cassowary feathers. Their skirts are woven with fur from cuscus and tree kangaroos, and they have animal skins on their upper bodies. The man carrying the cross has a headdress with cassowary and light brown bird of paradise feathers.



MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

STEPHAN TELKA: When most people think of Mexico, their minds turn to visions of white sand beaches, swaying palms, endless margaritas, and mariachi bands. That's why Mexico City is one of my favourite North American cities - it throws those stereotypes on their head. With centuries of history, unique cuisine, stunning architecture, and warm sunshine even when we visited in November 2019, Mexico City charms quickly.

This photo is from the "Hibiscus Market", one of the largest flower markets in the city that also sold produce, which was one of the 30-odd stops on a food tour of the city.

LUANG PRABANG, LAOS

PETER FOWLER: The monks of Luang Prabang, Laos are sacred and receive the homage of passersby. Before sunrise each morning the monks wend their way through the streets of town and the local residents gather by the side of the road with offerings of food for the daily meals.

The town is situated at the confluence of the Mekong and Nam Khan rivers and is a beautiful and peaceful spot. There are many temples in Luang Prabang, both large and small, which sound their bells at all hours of the day for prayer.





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UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA IMAGES

ABOVE LEFT: The proposed uOttawa Health Sciences building will feature a striking entrance on the Lees Avenue side; **ABOVE RIGHT:** The design features of the new building's courtyard reflect the natural and cultural heritage of the area.

At 200 Lees Avenue

The rebuilding of uOttawa's River Campus set to begin

JOHN DANCE

This summer, the University of Ottawa plans to embark upon a large construction project on the Lees Campus in Old Ottawa East. The first phase of rebuilding the newly named "River Campus" of the University is estimated to last for the next two years and will include demolition of three old buildings, construction of a new five-story building, infrastructure upgrades and landscaping. The campus is located at the east end of Lees Avenue overlooking the Rideau River.

"The dynamic new building for the faculty of health sciences aspires to become the new face of the University of Ottawa at the revitalized, future-oriented River Campus, and to become a gateway and anchor to the future," Geoffrey Frigon, the University's Senior Director of Asset Management and Planning, told the many residents and other interested parties participating in a February Zoom consultation session.

The new building design has a central five-story portion flanked by two four-storey wings. It will be built on the site of the buildings slated for demolition, leaving two other existing buildings to the east along with the sports field. The key features include an angular raised entrance on three large pillars and a river-focused "social heart" on the south side. An estimated 120 employees and 750 students within the schools of nursing, nutritional sciences, and rehabilitation sciences will make the building their new home.

Residents and students had numerous questions for presenters during the Zoom session: traffic, parking, construction noise, use of adjacent areas for staging,

and soil contamination were at the top of the list.

"The new development will bring a lot more traffic and the accompanying speeding issues with it," says Lees Avenue resident Jana Trembinski. "I am following up with the City and my neighbours to request slower speeds on Lees in general as speed is already an issue today."

Others were concerned with whether the new building would have adequate parking, especially given the apparent removal of one of the existing parking lots. "Parking remains close to existing spots," responded Frigon. "It is within City code." University staff also stressed that the new LRT line would be the major means of access to the campus.

Several OOE residents noted that if enough parking isn't available on campus, more cars would be parked along residential streets meant for three-hour limited use, and not for faculty, staff and sports field parking facilities.

A major concern voiced by the Sandy Hill community association, Action Sandy Hill, is that the proposed plan does not provide any new and much-needed student residences despite the land being zoned to allow for 30 storeys. Frigon responded, "From a technical perspective, [we] cannot build on top of the building due to the sensitive nature of the science being undertaken."

But in subsequent phases the University may build residences on the River Campus, although it is currently looking

for opportunities to build more residences on the main downtown campus, Frigon explained.

Having only recovered from the noisy and lengthy LRT construction work and rebuilding of Queensway bridges, residents are leery of construction noise.

Students are concerned about how the construction and the new building will be affected by the soil and water contamination on the site, stemming from heavy industrial activity and a former landfill site. To this, Frigon responded that the University has a plan approved by the Ministry of the Environment for dealing with the contaminants.

No details were provided concerning how the waterfront would be treated, aside from saying that the trees will be protected and that the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority had been consulted. More than a decade ago, the University erected a chain-link fence at the top of the slope to the river and this fence prevented snapping turtles from accessing egg-laying areas, but the University said the fence was necessary for insurance liability purposes.

Two public pathways run through or adjacent to the River Campus, and these will not be affected by the new building, according to the university. In 2014, the City proposed a new footbridge from the middle of the campus over the Rideau River but, said Frigon, the City has removed that proposal from their plans because of the proximity of pathways on the rebuilt LRT bridge at the western edge of the campus.

OOECA appeals Lees boundary switch

MAINSTREETER STAFF


The Old Ottawa East Community Association (OOECA) has filed an appeal to Ontario's Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) to seek the tribunal's reversal of an Ottawa City Council decision to transfer the University of Ottawa's Lees Avenue Campus from Capital Ward to Rideau-Vanier Ward.

As reported in February's issue of *The Mainstreeter*, OOECA requested Mayor Jim Watson to reverse the decision but he ignored the request, and the related by-law was enacted on January 27, 2021.

In its appeal, OOECA cites several "clear and compelling" reasons to reverse

the City's decision to transfer the campus including the fact that the transfer will further enlarge the voter disparity between the two wards. OOECA also argues that the transfer undermines the community of Old Ottawa East which is the "community of interest" with the greatest stake in the area. Furthermore, the appeal notes that the transfer results in an inferior boundary between wards; instead of the boundary being Highway 417, it has become the LRT line.

The City has estimated its cost for fighting an LPAT appeal of the new ward boundaries by-law to be from \$15,000 to \$75,000. For its part, OOECA will spend just the \$400 that is required to file the appeal.



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BOOK REVIEWS

Rachel Décoste's new audio-book

The Year of Return, A Black Woman's African Homecoming

Rachel Décoste



THE YEAR OF RETURN:
A Black Woman's
African Homecoming

DIANNE WING

Rachel Décoste is many things, a software engineer with a Masters in Public Administration, a community activist, a motivational speaker, a Black History enthusiast, an Obama supporter, an Old Ottawa East resident, and a self-proclaimed diva.

In 2010, when her parents fortuitously survived the devastating Haiti earthquake, she recognized that “tomorrow is not promised” and it was time to follow her dreams, to go for the life she really wanted.

With its vibrant Black community and the excitement of an Obama White House, Washington, DC beckoned. Décoste enrolled at George Washington

University and soon found herself working in the American capital. When her visa was about to expire, she took advantage of a six month contract extension to work remotely - six months to follow another dream, to explore her roots.

Like most descendants of enslaved Africans, Décoste could not pinpoint her origins until technology evolved. Guided by her DNA ancestry test, she made plans to visit Senegal, Ivory Coast, Benin, Togo and Ghana. She admits that negative preconceptions about Africa, her assumptions of violence, sexism and political instability, scared her, but also made her more determined to discover her ancestry.

She anticipated that her first steps on African soil would be emotional, and they were. But not quite how she expected. The sight of two long-legged birds on the early morning horizon outside Dakar made her think of The Lion King, and Disney music filled her head.

In her newly-released audio-book, *The Year of Return, A Black Woman's African Homecoming*, Décoste tells of her journey and efforts to decolonize her mind and reclaim her heritage. In *The Year of Return*, Décoste speaks passionately about the tragic history of the slave trade and colonialism in West Africa. Her visit to Benin brings her to tears as she pays homage to

the slave prison where her ancestors were held before the voyages to the Americas. Only the strongest survived imprisonment, and they were the ones deemed fit to make the harrowing journey. Décoste sees faces in Benin that look like family members and she comes to the realization that she is a walking, talking miracle of a long history of survival. She believes that she owes it to her ancestral family to make the most of her life.

Even while learning about the tragic history of her ancestors, Décoste finds time to appreciate the everyday pleasures of travel. She braves the largest outdoor market in West Africa to find fabric and buy authentic African dresses tailor-made. In a world where nothing is fast or convenient, she is forced to slow down, look into the eyes of the people around her and really listen. Travel from town to town is made most often, hanging on for dear life to the back of her motorcycle driver. She eats in local spots, and samples yams in many forms during a yam holiday. On a brief jaunt to Togo, she enjoys a spoken word evening in a nightclub. And spoiler alert, this feisty, independent Canadian woman even finds love along the way.

Décoste's homecoming to Africa includes meeting royalty in Allada, Benin. It is here she learns that Toussaint L'Ouverture, the leader



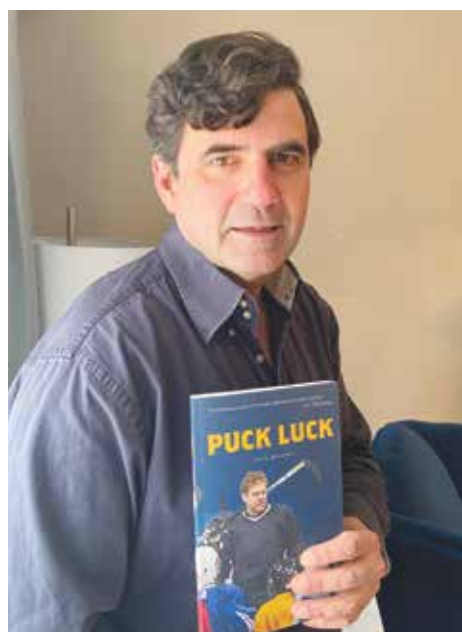
SUPPLIED PHOTO

Descendant of enslaved Africans, Old Ottawa East's Rachel Décoste spent six months tracing her family's roots across Africa.

of Haitian independence, is a direct descendant of this royal line. Later, in Porto Novo, she finds a quotation from L'Ouverture inscribed on the gates of the African History Museum: “In overthrowing me, only the trunk of the tree of black liberty has been cut down; its branches will shoot up again for its roots are numerous and deep.”

While Black History Month is celebrated each year in February, Décoste's exploration into her own Haitian/African history resonates year round and is well worth a listen.

Puck Luck is rollicking, reconciliatory, redemptive, ridiculous - and a good read



AFTON WYLYNKO PHOTO

Local author, David Wylynko, tells a tale from the beer league.

JOHN DANCE

In December, Old Ottawa South author Dave Wylynko's “Puck Luck” rolled off the presses and snuck into Christmas stockings around Ottawa.

It's a fine addition to the Canadian literary trove of hockey heroics and hysteria - in the tradition of Paul Quarrington's “King Leary” and “Logan in Overtime.”

But this hockey epic is about minor hockey rather than the quest for gold or the Cup. And it's the minor hockey that we parents have experienced as we huddled - pre-COVID days - in Brewer Arena and as we explored the eastern Ontario countryside with our hockey-playing children tagging along for the tournament. Wylynko's book

mocks and celebrates the shenanigans of parents, coaches and the curious bureaucracies that keep the enterprise tottering along.

Danny Wilde is the dubious hero of the book. He's been banished from his beer league, his marriage is a shambles, and his daughter is trying to pursue her passions. But one-time Junior B player Wilde gets to redeem himself by taking over behind the bench as coach of a floundering midget team (or are they, fortunately, no longer called midgets?). There is nothing politically correct about Wilde. He's an occasionally charming reprobate who, with a cigarette in hand and a drink nearby, manages to rip-off many of the parents while getting the players to mostly enjoy themselves. For those whose kids have graduated from the minor leagues

to real life but who still love that rather special game of hockey, Wylynko brings back the good, bad and humorous memories.

After the last Capital Ward Cup - emblematic of shinny supremacy in the nation's capital - Wylynko, who is the long-time general manager of the Old Ottawa South Moose, the team that somehow beat the Old Ottawa East Hosers that year, muttered that he was going to write a novel about the travesties of minor hockey. Well he has, and it's a fun read.

Wylynko's book is available at Black Squirrel Books on Bank Street and at Octopus Books on Third Avenue.

ART BEAT



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OOE ARTIST FEATURE: *THE MAINSTREETER'S* COMMUNITY ART PROJECT SPRINGS TO LIFE

Since calling on OOE visual artists this past winter to engage in *The Mainstreeter's* community art project, creatively-painted newspaper boxes have been springing up all over the neighbourhood.

Graffiti artist Luke Goldsmith was the first one out of the gate with his "calligraffiti" approach. His gold leaf detailed newspaper box, highlighted in our February issue, now graces the Lees LRT station, and got the project off to an exciting start.

Mixed media artist Karen Goetzinger, who was featured in our April 2020 issue, was the next to finish the artwork for the project. Goetzinger's newspaper box, initially placed in front of the Happy Goat Coffee Co. on Main Street, will be moved shortly to its permanent resting spot across the street to the block of local businesses that includes 3 Trees and The



LORNE ABUGOV PHOTO

The Mainstreeter's distribution manager, Dan Racicot and his furry friend, Bernie, take pause during their walk at Tim Hunt's whimsical newsbox located on the north side of Clegg Street adjacent to the Flora Footbridge.

A finger on the pulse of the arts in OOE

Green Door.

Goetzinger engaged in the project, in part, because she was looking for something different to do. But she also has a passion for Old Ottawa East. "I love our neighbourhood!" she says. "And I think this project is a fun thing for our community."

When Goetzinger first talked to *The Mainstreeter's* editor about the project, he wondered if she might paint one of her abstracts on the box. "But my abstract paintings are flat, and these boxes are three dimensional," she says. "I was afraid that my gestural abstractions would not work as well on a cube." Goetzinger went back to some sketches she had done in the past. "I had cut out map shapes with an X-Acto knife and made them into stencils. I put a canvass up on the wall and started playing with them."

Goetzinger points out that our community is made up of intersecting bike lanes, streets, and trails. "But it is even more layered than that," she says. "For example, it includes lights, people, activities, and nature." She was inspired by Brooklyn, New York artist Phillipe Halaburda, who makes geometric tape art, to add layers to her box painting. "I worked it all out on three pieces of canvass and then made minor alterations later, such as changing the widths of the streets and adjusting the angles as the streets and trails went around the sides of the box. I also played with the colours." To see more of Goetzinger's work go to: [http:// www.karengoetzinger.com](http://www.karengoetzinger.com).

Visual artist and urban sketcher Tim Hunt was the third artist to complete his newspaper box for *The Mainstreeter* project. His box sits at the base of the Flora Footbridge at Clegg Street and Colonel By Drive. Hunt was profiled in our December 2020 issue and now shares his work as a regular Art Beat feature in his Main Street Sketches.

Hunt likes the idea of having a piece of art out in the community that serves a useful purpose. He also likes providing equal access to art. "This is so different from having your art in a gallery, café, or restaurant," he says. "Some people don't go to art galleries. And with restaurants and cafés, people sometimes feel like they have to buy something if they go in to check out the art. But with the newspaper boxes, people get to see art on their way to work or school!"

Hunt wanted his design to catch peoples' attention. "I wanted it to stand out, so I chose colours that would pop," he says. "One of the criteria for this project was to think about the community," he explains. Similar to Goetzinger's approach,



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Local artist Karen Goetzinger is pictured above in her OOE studio. Her newspaper box incorporates geometric tape art to add a layered effect over a background of stylized intersecting bike lanes, streets and trails that characterize our community.

Hunt immediately thought of maps. "Not an accurate, 'find your way' kind of map, but more of a representation of our streets and water ways."

Hunt does not have a hard and fast plan for his art because he wants to remain flexible in the creative process. "I jumped right in and painted the entire box yellow," he says. "Then I taped down the streets and water, spray painted them blue, and tore off the tape. I've always thought of our community as an island. We are surrounded by bridges and water, and when there's a closure, we have to find another way around."

Painting the water led Hunt to include bridges in the design. "Pretoria bridge is such an iconic symbol in our community," he says. "The Flora Footbridge is more of a modern design and provides an interesting juxtaposition to the old castle-like bridge. The train bridge/transit brings people across the river. This got

me thinking about gateways in and out of the community. So, next, I painted the Brantwood gates. In the end, I think my box design is a metaphor for joining communities."

Additional photos of *The Mainstreeter's* newsboxes can be found on the following page. *The Mainstreeter's* June issue will present the final two newspaper boxes and will introduce the local artists who brought them to life.

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 if you have information about artists or art events that you believe would enrich our community members' lives.

ART BEAT



TIM HUNT'S MAIN STREET SKETCHES

Tim Hunt explores his community outfitted with a small sketchbook, pen, and watercolour kit. He is 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 life— and with true Ottawa spirit— as he strides, bikes, skates, or paddles through it! In our regular feature, he shares the pages from his sketchbook and tells the stories behind his work.

Tim Hunt: When I am searching for subjects to sketch, I'm usually drawn



to buildings with a bit of age; their interesting angles and architectural details are fun to get your pen around.

Peeling back the layers of a community, it is easy to forget that even the older houses were once new, supplanting what was there before. In this sketch from February, neighbourhood houses are nestled in

snow while a nearby crane sweeps the sky like a second hand, a reminder of change and growth.

Do you recognize this scene lying between Main Street and the canal? If you think you know the street corner in Old Ottawa East, email the answer to editor@mainstreeter.ca!

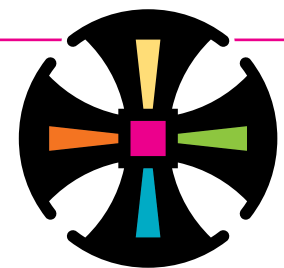
To see more of Tim Hunt's urban sketches on Instagram go to: [@timhuntottawa](https://www.instagram.com/timhuntottawa).

Newspaper boxes bring local art to life in OOE



SUPPLIED PHOTO

LEFT: Ron Rose, Chairperson of *The Mainstreeter* and Ahmet Oktar of the Happy Goat Coffee Company brave chill winds back in early March to mark the placement of Karen Goetzinger's eye-catching newspaper box outside the company's Main Street location. RIGHT: The gold-leaf calligraphic lettering of Luke Goldsmith's newspaper box at the Lees Avenue LRT station represents the names of 52 streets located within Old Ottawa East.




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ASCENSION



**Sandy Hill
Community Health Centre**
Centre de santé
communautaire Côte-de-Sable

2020-2021 Annual General Meeting

.....

Assemblée générale annuelle 2020-2021

June 23, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.
.....
Le 23 juin 2021 à 18 h 30

You are invited to our virtual Annual General Meeting!

We invite our members and community partners to virtually join our Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, June 23, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.

The business meeting will include the election of the Board of Directors, presentation and approval of the Board Chair's and Treasurer's reports, By-law review and appointment of auditors for the next fiscal year. More information will be posted on our website at www.shchc.ca, and sent by e-mail to our members and community partners at least 30 days before the meeting.

Get involved in our Community Health Centre and become a member! Only members in good standing may vote at the AGM. Membership comes into effect 30 days after the application is approved by the Board of Directors. If you're interested, send an email to Cristina Coiciu at ccoiciu@sandyhillchc.on.ca. Thank you for your continuous support!

..... Vous êtes invité à notre assemblée générale annuelle virtuelle !

Nous invitons nos membres et nos partenaires de la collectivité à participer virtuellement à notre assemblée générale annuelle mercredi, le 23 juin 2021 à 18 h 30.

À l'ordre du jour seront inscrits l'élection de membres du Conseil d'administration, la présentation et l'approbation des rapports de la présidente du Conseil et de la trésorière, l'examen des règlements administratifs et la désignation des vérificateurs pour le prochain exercice financier. De plus amples renseignements seront affichés sur notre site Web à www.shchc.ca, et envoyés par courriel à nos membres et à nos partenaires communautaires au moins 30 jours avant la réunion.

Engagez-vous dans notre Centre de santé communautaire et devenez membre ! Seuls les membres en règle ont droit de vote à l'AGA. Le statut de membre en règle prend effet 30 jours après l'approbation de la demande d'adhésion par le Conseil d'administration. Si vous êtes intéressé, envoyez un courriel à Cristina à ccoiciu@sandyhillchc.on.ca. Merci de votre collaboration soutenue !



**Sandy Hill
Community Health Centre**
Centre de santé
communautaire Côte-de-Sable

2020-2021 SHCHC Award for Excellence in Health Promotion

.....

Le CSCCS Prix d'excellence en Promotion de la santé pour 2020-2021

Recognizing outstanding contributions to the promotion of health in our community, and those who have supported others during the pandemic!

This year, the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre will present two Awards of Excellence in Health Promotion, as we are proud to honour those whose activities and initiatives have contributed to improving the health and wellness of our community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Submit a nomination today!

For complete details, including eligibility and award criteria, or to download the forms, visit our website at www.shchc.ca, or email Cristina Coiciu at ccoiciu@sandyhillchc.on.ca. Nominations must be received on or before April 30, 2021. The recipients will be announced at the Annual General Meeting on June 23, 2021.

..... Souligner les contributions exceptionnelles à la promotion de la santé dans notre collectivité, et ceux et celles qui ont soutenu les autres pendant la pandémie !

Cette année, le Centre de santé communautaire Côte-de-Sable décernera deux Prix d'excellence en Promotion de la santé, car nous sommes fiers d'honorer ceux et celles dont les activités et les initiatives ont contribué à améliorer la santé et le bien-être de notre collectivité pendant la pandémie du COVID-19. Soumettez une candidature aujourd'hui !

Pour obtenir tous les détails, incluant les critères du prix et d'admissibilité, ou pour télécharger les formulaires, visitez notre site Web à www.shchc.ca, ou envoyez un courriel à Cristina Coiciu à ccoiciu@sandyhillchc.on.ca. Les mises en candidature doivent nous parvenir d'ici le 30 avril 2021 au plus tard. Les noms des lauréat(e)s, seront annoncés à l'Assemblée générale annuelle, le 23 juin 2021.

ART BEAT

Artist Luke Goldsmith pivots from graffiti to calligraffiti during the pandemic

TANIS BROWNING-SHELP

Eight years ago, a group of high-school breakdancers helped Luke Goldsmith shift from feeling lost to feeling fired up about art. He found the students breakdancing in an out-of-the-way corridor of Canterbury High School, where he was enrolled in the vocal program and wondering who he was and where he belonged.

"Every teen searches for a purpose and a place to belong," he says. He approached the dancers apprehensively. But they let him in, and even taught him a few things. One of the dancers, Nicc, also did street art. "He painted funky cubist faces and I was super taken by that," Goldsmith recalls. "I asked a lot of questions and was pretty camera-happy at the time. Nicc was reluctant to share too much because he was active as an illegal artist. But he eventually invited me to go out painting with him."

One aspect of graffiti involves putting your name on things that do not belong to you. There are rules, though, even amongst illegal artists—no graffiti on churches, mosques, or houses, for example. But Goldsmith still considers this the "selfish" part of the art form. "It's about seeing your name plastered all over the place," he says. "I initially got a rush from painting illegally, but, eventually, I figured out that I could put a thousand percent more time and effort into my art and do it legally."

Ottawa-Gatineau has three legal graffiti walls: House of Paint (HOP) under the Dunbar Bridge, the Tech Wall on Slater Street, and The Worm, a 200-metre tunnel in Quebec. "Tech Wall is for artists of a higher calibre, while The Worm is the most relaxed location, with certain sections designated for the better artists," Goldsmith explains. "Graffiti artists know to paint accordingly."

According to Goldsmith, most passers-by think the work they do is "cool," but, occasionally, people threaten to call the police.

In the beginning, Goldsmith copied Nicc's artistic style. But his mentor eventually encouraged him to develop one of his own. "Nicc gave me two books, *Graffiti World* and *Graffiti Women*, both by Nicholas Ganz. "These books introduced me to hundreds of different styles from all across the globe. I found it thrilling to learn about the history of the art form."

Goldsmith was particularly drawn to the West Coast graffiti style which he describes as "bio organic" or "melty."

According to Goldsmith, it is like machines meeting flesh. "In the beginning, I used this style with its razor-sharp edges and 'gooey parts' to get my self-doubt and anxiety out into the world. It was a visual representation of my internal pain."

He also kept his work open to interpretation. "I like to provoke people into thought."

After pursuing graffiti art for several years, Goldsmith recently found himself drawn to the refined look of calligraphy. He had a natural love of letters but, at first, he was intimidated by the "fancy pens and nibs." He particularly liked the ornamentation or flourishes of George Bickham, whose book *The Universal Penman* is one of the most important works ever compiled on calligraphy.

When Goldsmith was laid off from his job during the pandemic, he decided to explore his new interest further. He studied the World Encyclopedia of Calligraphy and began dedicating himself to the mastery of lettering. He also studied the work of Pakras Lampas, a Russian painter



JOHN GOLDSMITH PHOTOS

Old Ottawa East artist Luke Goldsmith is finding innovative ways to bridge his graffiti roots with calligraphy and typography.

and calligrapher who created the art form of calligraffiti, which combines calligraphy, typography, and graffiti. Goldsmith loved the idea of keeping a sense of graffiti in his calligraphy by making the lettering almost unreadable. "I find the calligraphy attractive, elegant, and eye-catching and I love the idea that lettering and language stem from the core value of humanity communicating."

Goldsmith is currently working on two series of calligraffiti. One series, entitled *Seven Deadly Sins*, uses



a snake-like script on six by twenty-six inch canvasses—long canvasses playing with the shape of snakes. His series *Sacred Suns* uses gold leaf lettering with spherical shapes in the centres, painted on wood paneling.

Goldsmith's own style of lettering, as seen in his gold leaf painting of *The Mainstreeter* newspaper box on Lees Avenue, is inspired by middle eastern and Buddhist lettering. "There is a uniform look to my letters, but each one is unique. Like with the newspaper box, where his lettering spells out the names of 52 Old Ottawa East streets, a person who knows what the lettering represents might be able to figure out his altered lettering like they would when solving a newspaper puzzle. But it wouldn't be easy. "I like the mysterious quality of calligraffiti," he says.



To see more of Luke Goldsmith's art, his Instagram coordinates are @fill.graves.



ABOVE LEFT AND RIGHT: Several new artworks from Luke Goldsmith include selections from his *Sacred Sun* series which features spherical shapes and gold leaf lettering painted on wooden paneling.



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Bird Friendly Old Ottawa East

Your unauthoritative guide on how to start birding in OOE

TRISTAN KEYES

Birding is an odd hobby that will earn you questioning looks and the occasional half-interested question from the uninitiated. It is, however, hugely satisfying and an excellent excuse to go outside with purpose in these difficult times. I am here to provide my wealth of knowledge and expertise (Note to readers: the author has very little of either) to get you out and started this Spring:

1) Ducks are your friends. Ducks are wonderful for the beginner birder: they are big, sit still, and have distinctive features and behavioral patterns, plus the Rideau River is home to many varieties. Make your way down to Brantwood Park during the migrations and elbow a few Canada geese out of the way (disclaimer: do not elbow Canada Geese), and you can see a myriad collection of waterfowl in the river, nicely sitting there for you to see.

2) Sparrows are not your friends. The opposite of everything I said about ducks (disclaimer: I cannot emphasize enough that you should not elbow Canada Geese - they are mean!). However, for the ambitious and/or foolhardy, the pathway behind the Greystone development and most noisy evergreens contain all the small, unidentifiable birds you could wish for.

3) Appreciate the everyday birds. Blue Jays may be crows with fancy coats, but they are really fancy coats. Ring-billed Gulls may be most commonly seen eating second-hand French fries but taken in the proper context they are elegant and graceful seabirds equally at home on water or in the air. The Cardinal may have been

singing non-stop for three weeks, giving you a raging headache in the process, but hey, it might attract a Merlin.

4) Respect the birds. Birds are like any other animal: they are best observed when they feel comfortable, safe and are left to their own devices. Watch them from a distance, and never try to scare them up to have a better look.

5) Get a good field guide book or app. Knowing what you are looking at can only help. I learned from a board game (unorthodox, but surprisingly effective), but getting and studying a good field guide or birdwatching app can help you both locate and identify something out-of-the-ordinary ("expert" tip: go for both).

6) Set reasonable expectations. Not every pigeon is a falcon and most sweet songs belong to a robin, but each bird is wonderful and exciting in its own way. An expedition to see a rare or exciting bird that falls short of its goal is disappointing, but failure makes victory all the sweeter - so don't give up.

7) A decent pair of binoculars goes a long way. I am not saying break the bank, but quality of life is much higher when you are not using an old pocket pair with a misaligned lens you found under the bed.

8) Leaves are overrated. The transition from Winter to Spring can be rough when the snow melts and the fields turn to mud, but the trees remain bare. This is a good thing! Without leaves you will actually have the ability to spot the occasional bird among the treetops.

9) Get to know your local hot-spots. A short list includes Brantwood Park, Pig Island (for cormorant enthusiasts), the old train bridge by Highway 417, and Billings



TRISTAN KEYES PHOTO

Local denizens: male Wood Duck (foreground) and Mallards along the Rideau River near Windsor Park. These are two of the many birds that can be seen during the Old Ottawa East birding walks scheduled for the month of May.

Bridge. Alternatively, create your own with a bird-feeder and some seed.

10) Get involved! Should you fall in love with the hobby as I have over the last year, there are many organizations, local

and national that do wonderful work, including our very own Bird Friendly Old Ottawa East group which would love to have your support!

Bird Friendly Old Ottawa East neighbourhood birding excursions

MAINSTREETER STAFF

A good time to get acquainted with birds is during their Spring migration, and Old Ottawa East is ideally situated along the Rideau River shore. Bird Friendly Old Ottawa East is offering birdwatching excursions, led by Roger Bird (yes, that's his real name!), a neighbourhood expert.

On Saturday May 22 and 29, walks will start at 7:30 am and end at about 10 a.m. Meet at the bottom of Clegg Street at the Rideau River. The excursioners will then head downstream to the footbridge near Hurdman Bridge, cross the Rideau and head upstream a bit, all the while

looking for birds. The route chosen provides river views for ducks, gulls and shorebirds, and grass, weeds, shrubs and trees for the small, fast warblers, thrushes, woodpeckers, orioles, blackbirds, and many other varieties of birds found in our community.

Birders should bring binoculars, water, and a field guide if you have one. Due to COVID considerations, attendance will be limited to 10 people, and masks are recommended.

If you would like to participate, please contact Sandra at sandra.koch@rogers.com with your contact info and preferred date.

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INTERN with ***The Mainstreeter***

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POLITICAL PAGES

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FUND A SAFE, SUPPORTIVE RETURN TO SCHOOL

At its February 23 Board Meeting, the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) informed parents that we were returning to the quadmester system next Fall for high schools, with the continuation of cohorting, so students will only attend in person every other day. The OCDSB took this decision given trends in public health, and forecasts for future provincial funding.

I have written to Stephen Lecce, the Minister of Education, urging him to stop the cuts to education and maintain and expand the COVID-19 funding for schools to keep kids safe, invest in mental health supports, and guarantee that no education worker or teacher loses their job.

Staff in our public schools have worked tirelessly to keep our kids safe and to keep them engaged in learning, but the strain of doing so is considerable. Staff are exhausted, and in need of further support. The Minister's recent announcement that the funding given to school boards for COVID-19 costs would be withdrawn for Fall 2021 only makes matters worse. For the OCDSB, this cut will mean the loss of 167 teaching positions.

After a year of making hard sacrifices, people want a return to a semblance of normalcy. The plan to return to the adaptive quadmester model – which is not working for most students despite the best efforts of staff — is based on concerns around stability and adequate funding. We want this government to offer hope that we can return to a learning environment that helps staff and students be their fullest selves by

ensuring the funding required for a smooth transition back to full day, in-person learning as soon as it is safe to do so.

We also know a third pandemic wave has been here for some time: youth mental health is suffering at record levels. Health officials in Ottawa note a 60 percent rise in the number of youth reporting eating disorders, and a 30 percent increase in the need for youth counselling and addiction services. There is a corollary increase for youth admissions to emergency departments, suffering from anxiety, depression, self-harm and other mental health issues.

Now is not the time to be withdrawing funding from our public schools. Parents, students, and staff want a safe and supportive return to school in Fall 2021, and that requires maintaining (and increasing) current funding levels. This will enable, among other things, smaller class sizes, decent staff ratios, well-functioning infrastructure, continued COVID health and safety measures as required, and proper support for students with disabilities.

That's why we're insisting that the province maintain and enhance present COVID-19 funding for the 2021-2022 school year. Trends suggest the vaccine rollout will be well underway by then, but students and staff will still face massive challenges in readjusting to more fulsome in-person learning. This government must increase funding for public education and do right by students and staff, who deserve no less.

SHAWN MENARD COUNCILLOR-ELECT, CAPITAL WARD

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MORE PLAN CONSULTATION IS NEEDED

During this term of City Council, staff have been working on updating the Official Plan (OP). The OP is the City's most important planning document. It sets the direction for all City planning initiatives—from zoning to affordable housing, tree protection to transportation, and just about any other City issue you can think of.

The first decision council made on the OP was a disappointment. Last year, City Council agreed to perpetuate Ottawa's urban sprawl, expanding the urban boundary further into rural lands. This means there will be more expensive, unsustainable, environmentally damaging development in our future.

With that unfortunate decision, it will become even more important for the rest of the OP to be done right. During the winter, the City released a 264-page draft document and 21 supporting documents pertaining to the draft new OP. While there are some good elements in there – the focus on active transportation, 15-minute neighbourhoods and City-wide tree canopy targets – there are concerns, too.

First, staff have segmented the City for planning purposes, proposing to implement six context-specific “transects” that guide the planning approach and rules throughout the City. While that idea is sound, it is not being implemented properly.

Most of Capital Ward will be in the Inner Urban transect, except for the section of Old Ottawa East north of the Queensway, the area around Lees LRT station and the Glebe Annex. These areas, which are physically and culturally integrated into our Capital Ward, would be severed from the rest of the community and shuffled into the Downtown transect. We are pushing to change this.

Further, it is not clear that the new OP lives up to its promise of “recognizing the specific needs of neighbourhoods”. Neighbourhoods do have character, and that should be respected, while seeking modifications.

There will be a push for

intensification (now re-labelled, “regeneration”). This makes sense, as we will need to fit much of our expanding population into our existing City, if we are to limit the negative effects of sprawl. But it must be done equally across the City, and respectfully, getting communities on board and achieving buy-in.

And the process, itself, is concerning. While staff are working overtime producing material and responding to the extensive community questions and concerns, the Mayor and planning chairs have sent a letter rebuking the umbrella group of community associations' (the FCA) call to allow this the time it deserves and face an election on the draft plan. Consequently, the public consultation process is unclear. The upcoming meeting with public delegations in June was canceled as part of a three-month ‘extension’, while the September deadline for Council to vote on the plan remains.

The latest City memo offers some hope. Staff have committed to reviewing the transect approach and adjusting some boundaries. Minimum density requirements will be less prescriptive than originally proposed, with the push for density happening near transit stations and major corridors. Intensification in the next draft of the OP will be more context-sensitive at the neighborhood level, and now governed by zoning by-laws and updated secondary plans. These are all positive developments, which have been achieved through the tireless work of committed volunteers pouring through the plan. We continue to be inspired by that level of engagement, knowledge and commitment to our communities.

The fight on the OP is far from over – ideally the final version would be voted on when residents feel confident in the product. We will continue to push to improve the process, and to integrate the feedback that has been so thoughtfully offered in our communities.

POLITICAL PAGES

CATHERINE MCKENNA MP, OTTAWA CENTRE

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ACCESS TO LIFE-SAVING VACCINES

As we say goodbye to winter and welcome spring, I hope you are doing well and staying safe and healthy. With the days getting longer and temperatures rising, I hope you are able to get outside safely and enjoy a walk or other physical activity.

Our government shares the urgency of Canadians to ensure access to life-saving vaccines as rapidly as possible, and we are operating with this sense of urgency every single day.

By the end of March, Canada had received more than 9.5 million vaccines. We will be receiving 36.5 million doses by the end of June. This puts us on track to

have enough vaccines for every Canadian who wants one, by the end of September.

As vaccines become more available, Ottawa Public Health is working extremely hard to ensure our most vulnerable communities are prioritized to receive the vaccine as quickly as possible.

As well, the launch of the provincial booking system marks an important milestone in the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines. To find out if you are eligible and to book a vaccine appointment for yourself or someone else, visit: covid-19.ontario.ca/book-vaccine/.

As we move closer to providing vaccine protection for everyone, it's important

to remember that we aren't out of the woods yet. It continues to be critical that we follow the public health measures in place. This includes maintaining physical distancing from those you don't live with, wearing a mask, washing your hands, and staying home if you're sick, except to get tested.

In other news, I am very happy to share that the federal government is continuing to invest in active transportation through the **Active Transportation Fund**, the first national project of its kind! I was glad to make this announcement at Bushtukah, a local bike and outdoor adventure shop in Ottawa Centre.

The fund will invest \$400 million in new and expanded community pathways, trails, and pedestrian bridges. Just like our investment in the Flora Footbridge, this initiative will make it easier for people to get around on foot, bikes, scooters, wheelchairs & e-bikes. It will also create jobs, connect communities, and protect the environment, in Ottawa and across the country.

Additionally, in March, the federal government announced an investment of \$2.75 billion to help transit agencies acquire **new electric city and school buses**, including **new charging**

equipment that will support Canada's electric vehicle charging network. These 5,000 new electric school and city buses will help tackle climate change, create good jobs, and support manufacturing right now, here in Canada.

Locally, Ottawa is acquiring four 40-foot battery-powered New Flyer buses this year and is looking at the potential to add more electric buses. These buses have the latest electric-bus technology that is significantly better and more reliable.

It's now been over a year since COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic. On March 11th, we held a National Day of Observation to honour and mourn those we have lost. Together we remember them, and together we will get through this.

A reminder that my constituency office is virtually open and ready to assist, call us at 613-946-8682 or email us at Catherine.McKenna@parl.gc.ca.

A huge thank you to the frontline workers, healthcare and essential workers who are working so hard to keep us safe. And a thank you to Ottawa Centre residents, for doing your part. I know this has been really hard and we will get through this. Let's continue to keep supporting each other!

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Holy Snow-Rollers in February!

Perfect weather conditions yield rare OOE ice sculptures

PETER CROAL

Old Ottawa East (OOE) residents may have been surprised on an early February morning to see an array of tennis ball- and basketball-sized snowballs in some of the fields around the community.

Were these the result of a mass snowball-making event during the night by late night winter revellers? Was this some sort of COVID-19 safe outdoor event? These are possible answers, but the truth lies actually in a very rare weather phenomenon that happened in OOE and in other parts of Ottawa during the night of February 5th.



PETER CROAL PHOTOS

These two large, naturally-created snow sculptures known as Snow-Rollers, a wave pictured to the left and an igloo pictured to the right, are the result of unusual winter weather conditions occurring in the early hours of February 5th, as Peter Croal explains.

Giant naturally-made snowballs called “Snow-Rollers” formed overnight under very specific weather conditions. There has to be a strong wind that picks up fresh snow that is at 0 degrees Celsius. Below the near-melting snow layer there has to be a layer of fresh powder snow that is below freezing. Gusts of wind start picking up the warm snow and it forms a ball. More wind and momentum continues to keep the ball rolling and it proceeds to get bigger and bigger. Then Voila! A Snow-Roller is formed. If there is a hill on the snowfield some Snow-Rollers can grow to be as big as a car!

OOE was lucky to have these rare objects form in our community!

A concerned reader takes issue with our last issue

MAINSTREETER STAFF

On April 3rd, *The Mainstreeter* received an email from one of our readers who expressed concerns regarding the use of the term ‘ghetto’ in our February 2021 issue in the article on the future of the Convent of the Sisters of Sacred Heart building. The reader, whose name is being withheld upon request, expressed the view that the term was “pejorative” in nature and that it was “insensitive and inappropriate” to divorce the term from its historical context, in which it has primarily been used to characterize marginalized, frequently racialized, communities.

In response, *The Mainstreeter* contacted our contributor, Peter Froom seeking clarification for his use of the term “affluent ghetto” in his February 2021 opinion article.

The Mainstreeter received the following response from Froom:

The Editor of The Mainstreeter shared a Letter to the Editor regarding the use of the term “ghetto” in the February issue. I recognize the choice to use this term was not appropriate, and I apologize for its use.

With leadership from Councillor Catherine McKenney, the City of Ottawa declared an affordable housing and homelessness emergency in January. This statement provides a context for an updated housing and homelessness action plan which includes a number of

strategies to address affordable housing issues in the coming years. There will be continuing conversations about housing affordability in Ottawa, and it will be interesting to see how this issue evolves.

Our community newspaper, The Mainstreeter, recently convened a helpful webinar on the subject of affordable housing and healthy, diverse communities. I hope there will continue to be similar discussions within Old Ottawa East, including the identification of actions the community could take to promote affordable housing.

[Editor’s Note: Language, and its evolving usage, is the stock in trade of reporters and the publications within which they report. The use of words and phrases which evoke images or create analogies in the reader’s mind is commonplace in newspaper reporting and would appear to have been the intention of Mr. Froom, in his column in the February issue. In this particular case, other wording could have been employed that would have been as evocative but more appropriate.

The editor, and not the volunteer contributor, bears ultimate responsibility for the content published in *The Mainstreeter*. As a publication that endeavours to serve all residents of Old Ottawa East, we sincerely regret this particular lapse and any hurtful impact it may have caused to the reader in question and possibly to other readers.]



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If you love to garden with children and families and work well with little supervision, please send a cover letter and resume to ottawachildrengardeninfo@gmail.com by April 15, 2021.

THE MAINSTREETER'S SOCIAL ISSUES DISCUSSION SERIES

OOE cited as a welcoming community, but not an affordable one

Affordable Housing & Healthy, Diverse Communities

Panelists delve into Old Ottawa East's housing, diversity and inclusiveness during a wide-ranging and entertaining webinar



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

LORNE ABUGOV

Old Ottawa East ranks high as a diverse and inclusive community but spiraling housing prices and a limited mix of available housing options limit the ability of young people and immigrant and refugee newcomers to buy or rent affordably and make the community their home. Those were the key conclusions of a panel of local residents with varied perspectives and backgrounds who shared their knowledge on March 17th during the third free community webinar in *The Mainstreeter's* Social Issues Discussion Series.

Panel moderator Phyllis Odenbach Sutton set the context for the panel discussion, which was entitled, *Affordable Housing & Healthy, Diverse Communities*, by reviewing community-specific data from the Ottawa Neighbourhood Study and the 2016 Census comparing Old Ottawa East (OOE) to the City of Ottawa overall. Adding in the Greystone Village development, she explained that there are more than 4,500 household units in OOE, and that core housing needs in the community are significantly different than elsewhere in Ottawa.

"When considering all households, we have a higher level of unaffordable housing in Old Ottawa East, and there is also a higher level of unaffordable housing for tenant households. There is a very low level of subsidized housing in our community, a higher level of housing mobility, and finally, a much higher level of renter households than owner households in Old Ottawa East than the City overall," said Odenbach Sutton, who is the series coordinator for *The Mainstreeter*.

Housing affordability metrics were also affected by population data which showed that Old Ottawa East had almost double the percentage of youth residents

Community webinar panelists Anthony Leaning, Maria Rigby, Chris Osler and Megan Sicard offered a range of perspectives and opinions on issues of housing affordability, suitability and choice, as well as social isolation, inclusiveness and diversity in Old Ottawa East. The next webinar in the series is entitled *Community Advocacy in Old Ottawa East* and will feature Capital Ward City Councillor Shawn Menard as one of the panelists.

(aged 15 to 24) compared to Ottawa's overall community average, and almost triple the low income prevalence among youth in the community in comparison to the City average.

These statistics caught the attention of panelist Maria Rigby, President and co-founder of OMRA, a not-for-profit that combats family homelessness by providing portable rent subsidies to newcomer families yearly on a time-limited basis. "The average house cost in Old Ottawa East is more than three quarters of a million dollars now, and that's up from about \$500,000 just eight years ago," said Rigby, whose organization helps to sponsor and provide settlement support for refugee families in Ottawa.

"Even the Lees Avenue apartments which offered the most diversity in our neighborhood, in terms of culture, ethnicity, spiritual beliefs, and language, is also now priced out of reach for OMRA's needs - units that were affordable five to 10 years ago are now too expensive."

Panelist Chris Osler, while working with the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre, spent several decades working on neighbourhood development and engagement in OOE, with a principal emphasis on community health. He explained that his focus was centred on questions such as who lives in Old Ottawa East, how diverse are we, and whether the community has attributes that make us welcoming and inclusive.

Osler felt that key to OOE becoming a more welcoming and inclusive community was to better understand and improve health equity within the community. "How I think of building

healthy and diverse communities is to think about the range of equitable public spaces accessible to all in Old Ottawa East, and you have fantastic public resources in this community: the community gardens, the complete Main Street, the Deschâtelets hub, the Flora Footbridge, the Rideau River Nature Trail, and Springhurst and Brantwood Parks." Osler also cited the current advocacy campaign in Old Ottawa East around removing the Alta Vista Transportation Corridor from Ottawa's draft Official Plan as "super important to the health, recreation and well being of many, many Old Ottawa East community residents."

Anthony Leaning, an award-winning architect and urban designer with experience in affordable and alternative housing, expressed concern that the rising cost of housing threatened the demographic diversity of the community that he and his family have really appreciated during their more than 20 years residing in Old Ottawa East.

"These pressures on housing costs have exposed the weakness here in our own community, in that we don't have a broad spectrum of housing choice. Most of the area is single family homes with a smattering of duplexes and doubles, and a handful of small, low-rise apartment buildings. Lees Avenue, on the other hand, is almost entirely high rise apartments, mainly rental and presumably somewhat affordable," Leaning observed.

"There are very few options in between these two extremes. Although the new development at Greystone has somewhat filled in the middle part of the spectrum, the housing types offered there are fairly expensive, and mostly privately owned." He concluded that the

diversity that has been OOE's strength for so long is at risk, "not just by market pressures but also by the inadequacy of housing choice in the type, the cost and the tenure, whether it's rented or owned."

The final panelist was Megan Sicard, an undergraduate student in Social Innovation at Saint Paul University and the co-founder of a project called "Habitations Partagées Mirela", a non-profit organization that matches two people to prevent social isolation and promote affordable housing.

In her remarks, Sicard addressed the eight attributes of an age-friendly community, including indicators such as walkability, accessibility of outdoor spaces, transportation, housing, social participation and health services. She noted that "the future of communities around the world will largely be determined by measures taken to improve the quality of life of older citizens."

The next free community webcast in *The Mainstreeter's* Social Issues Discussion Series will provide OOE residents with a rare glimpse into the nuts and bolts of *Community Advocacy in Old Ottawa East* from the vantage point of those pleading their cases to government decision-makers as well as those on the receiving end of the advocacy. The webinar, which will feature both Capital Ward City Councillor Shawn Menard and *The Mainstreeter's* John Dance, is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, May 19 at 7:30 pm. Registration is now open at https://bit.ly/communityadvocacy_ooe.

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We are looking for new Board members!

We invite people who are clients of our services to become involved as volunteers on our Board of Directors. If you:

- are a client of the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre,
- are aware of SHCHC's role in the community and support our mission,
- are 18 years of age or older,
- have awareness of current health and social issues,
- are a resident of the city of Ottawa,
- can commit to monthly meetings, advocacy and networking activities for a two-year term,

email Cristina Coiciu at ccoiciu@sandyhillchc.on.ca and indicate that you are a client. At the moment, we have Board openings for individuals who are clients of our Centre.

For more information about who we are and what we do, please visit our website at www.shchc.ca.

Nous sommes à la recherche de nouveaux membres pour notre Conseil d'administration !

Nous invitons les gens qui sont des clients de nos services à s'investir comme bénévoles en devenant membres du Conseil d'administration. Si vous :

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- pouvez-vous engager à participer à des réunions mensuelles, à défendre les intérêts des résidents et à avoir des activités de réseautage pour un mandat de deux ans,

envoyez un courriel à Cristina à ccoiciu@sandyhillchc.on.ca et indiquez que vous êtes client(e) de nos services. En ce moment, nous avons des postes vacants au Conseil d'administration ouverts à des personnes qui sont des client(e)s de notre centre.

Pour plus de renseignements sur notre organisme et nos services, veuillez consulter notre site web à www.shchc.ca.



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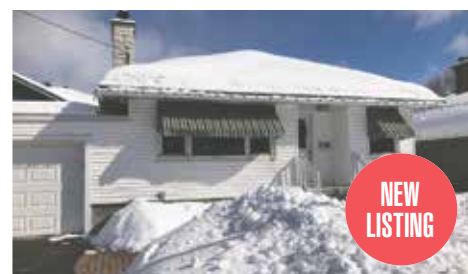
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ECLECTIC EVENTS...

On May 2nd

Hike for Hospice Care Ottawa takes real and virtual strides to support end-of-life care

KRISTINA VOTH-CHILDS

Hospice Care Ottawa is hosting its annual fundraiser, the Hike for Hospice Care Ottawa. To ensure the safety of clients, volunteers, staff and supporters, the hike will take place virtually again this year. Participants register online and are encouraged to share their personalized fundraising page with family and friends to collect donations. Their 5 kilometre hike can be completed on or before Sunday, May 2 any way they choose: in their neighbourhood with family,

on a local trail with their four-legged friend or inside on a treadmill.

Hike for Hospice, presented by Tracy Arnett Realty Ltd., Brokerage, is a marquis event for Hospice Care Ottawa, a community-based charitable, non-profit organization which offers palliative and end-of-life care, at no charge, to individuals and their loved ones. Delivery of services is possible through the support of a small, dedicated staff, many volunteers, generous donors and fundraising events like the Hike.

“With our aging population, demand for our services continues to increase,” says Lisa Sullivan, Executive Director of Hospice Care Ottawa. “We must raise over \$2-million annually to support the palliative and end-of-life clients at Hospice. We recognize the pandemic has been a challenge financially for many. If you are able to, please consider supporting the Virtual Hike. Together we can ensure compassionate palliative and end-of-life care is available to those when comfort matters most.”

While COVID-19 drastically changed the world, what didn't change was the compassionate care that Hospice Care Ottawa provides to the community. Staff, volunteers and physicians swiftly adapted to the challenges brought on by the pandemic to continue to provide key hospice services. The residences have remained open to provide



Hospice Care Ottawa staff and volunteers have continued to provide quality, compassionate care throughout the pandemic.

end-of-life care, and clients receive regular phone calls and invitations to virtual events while in-person community programs are paused.

The Hospice Care Ottawa atmosphere feels different with COVID-19 screening and modified visitor processes but, importantly, the care continues to be compassionate and appreciated. “Our thanks for running such an amazing and comforting place,” said one family member, whose loved one received care in hospice residence during the pandemic. “The gentleness of the care provided will always be remembered.”

Hike for Hospice organizers are hoping to achieve the goal of

\$135,000. All of the funds will stay within the Ottawa community to provide compassionate and supportive care to individuals with a life-limiting illness and their families.



For more information or to make a donation, visit www.hospicecareottawa.ca or call 613-260-2906 ext. 222.

For more information or to make a donation, visit www.hospicecareottawa.ca or call 613-260-2906 ext. 222.



SUPPLIED PHOTOS

Participants are encouraged to make a sign and snap a picture while completing their Virtual Hike to share on social media with the hashtag #Hike4HospiceOttawa.



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At the University of Ottawa Heart Institute

Volunteers needed to spin their wheels for heart research

RON ROSE

I've been participating in a research project at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute for the past two months. The objective of the research trial is to determine the impact of different types of exercise on quality of life, fitness level and severity of Atrial Fibrillation (AFib) incidents.

AFib is a heart condition that causes an irregular heart beat, and sometimes, these irregular heart rhythms can be quite painful. While there is a lot of research supporting the health benefits of exercise for common types of heart conditions (e.g. heart attack), the effects of exercise on AFib remain understudied; this research trial is designed to examine that relationship.

My experience started with a series of tests and a blood sample to determine a baseline state of fitness, and my physical and mental health. I was then randomly allocated to one of three separate groups: a group which follows a high-intensity interval exercise regime, a group which follows a moderate continuous exercise regime, and a control group, which does not involve any additional exercise. In all cases, trial participants are expected to maintain their regular exercise regime.

Following the tests to determine my baseline level, I was randomly assigned into the moderate continuous exercise group. That involves going to a gym at the Heart Institute at the Civic Hospital campus twice a week and riding a stationary bicycle for an hour. The hour is broken down into a 10-minute warm-up at low intensity, a 40-minute ride at a challenging level of resistance, followed by a 10-minute cool down.

All of my exercise sessions are one-on-one, supervised by an exercise physiologist. Their safe environment creates a great opportunity to get started with exercise. My blood pressure readings are taken before, during and after the exercise, with multiple readings during the ride itself. Taking a blood pressure reading on a bike rider is no mean feat, but Sol Vidal, the exercise physiologist (and

Ph.D. candidate) assigned to my trial, does a superb job, not only of taking the measurements, but keeping me motivated during the ride.

In addition to the blood pressure readings, occasional heart rate readings are taken, and I am expected to describe, on a sliding scale, my level of exertion and my difficulty in breathing.

The trial is divided into two parts. After six weeks, I underwent another baseline series of tests and then started the second six-week trial.

I look forward to the twice weekly exercise; it provides some variety to my regular exercises, and the level of difficulty is not difficult. Plus, in the COVID months of February and March, where else could I find a gym to ride a stationary bike twice a week?

The trial organizers are looking for volunteers, especially women as they are underrepresented. I would certainly urge any Old Ottawa residents who have AFib to apply (see the Ottawa Heart Institute's ad on this page of *The Mainstreeter*).

Participating in the trial is painless, provides an excuse to get started with exercise or exercise more, and gives you a sense of contributing to the advancement of science, and helping to improve the life of people living with a heart condition. They have also started a virtual exercise study specifically for women with any heart disease.



For more information on the AFib research project or the virtual exercise study for women with any heart disease, email Matheus at MMistura@ottawaheart.ca



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To learn more, please contact the Research Coordinator:

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Note: This research study has been approved by the Ottawa Health Sciences Network Research Ethics Board



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