

# OLD UNIVERSITY NEIGHBOURHOOD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION



## 2017 SPRING NEWSLETTER

### **OUNRA Annual General Meeting: May 11**

**Guest Speaker:** Geoff Glass, Broker, Royal LePage/ Royal City Realty

*“Emerging Trends in the Guelph Real Estate Market: Implications for House Prices in the Old University Neighbourhood and for Student Income Properties”*

Geoff will draw on his more than forty years of experience in the Guelph realty business to reflect on the current character of the housing market here. He will focus on the Old University Neighbourhood, within the wider Guelph context. He will consider the implications of current price trends for investing in income properties for student housing.

**OUNRA Business Matters:** President’s Report; Treasurer’s Report; Elections for Executive.

**Councillors’ Corner:** Leanne Piper and Cathy Downer will bring us up to date on developments in Guelph and will respond to questions from the floor.

## NOTICE OF OUNRA AGM

7 PM, THURSDAY, MAY 11, 2017

GYMNASIUM, HARCOURT CHURCH, 87 DEAN AVE.

Our web site: <https://ounra.wordpress.com>

## **OUNRA and the Committee of Adjustment**

The OUNRA Executive began intervening at the Committee of Adjustment (C of A) when it discovered that some property owners were making unreasonable requests for exemptions from the zoning bylaws. Often, these applications to the C of A were intended to permit expanded parking spaces or modifications for buildings beyond what is permitted within a R1b residential zone (as is the case for the Old University Neighbourhood). The aim, in each intervention, has been to preserve, as much as possible, the character of the neighbourhood and to protect the quality of life available to the neighbours.

The Executive Committee gradually learned the rules and principles under which the C of A must operate, as dictated by the City's Official Plan and the Province's Planning Act. Our submissions to the C of A have become more sophisticated and more accurately focused on the issues of key concern to the C of A. We realized that we could *support* applications, not just oppose them. As we say in our Mission, Vision, and Values statement, we value, among other things, *efforts by homeowners to develop and enhance their properties within the policies outlined in the City of Guelph Official Plan and By-Laws*.

Whenever an application for a minor adjustment in our neighbourhood goes before the C of A, the City Clerk's Office advises the OUNRA of the application. The Executive Committee reviews the request. Almost always, we talk to the neighbours, to find out how they feel; sometimes, we talk to the applicant, if their request is unclear. Based on our sense of how the near neighbours feel and our understanding of the planning principles that guide the C of A decisions, we write a letter either of support for, or opposition to, the application.

Over the last couple of years, we have intervened in about 20 applications, and we have supported a large majority of them.

You can see a full account of how the OUNRA conducts itself in relation to the C of A on the OUNRA website at: <https://ounra.wordpress.com/2015/03/03/ounra-and-the-committee-of-adjustment-what-we-do-and-why-we-do-it/>.

## **House Parties: Selling Beer to Raise Money is Not Legal!**

One of the events that can be most disruptive for residents in the OUN takes place when our (usually friendly and well-behaved) student neighbours decide to raise funds for a charity or sports team by charging a fee to attend a beer party. Under Ontario's Liquor Control Act, this is not legal, and violators are liable for substantial fines.

Sometimes, the party hosts will claim that the beer is actually free, although entry to the venue costs, say, \$10. This is a ruse. It is still illegal for beer or other alcoholic beverages to be consumed at an unlicensed location where money has been paid.

Many times, these parties become noisy and troublesome. If you know that there is going to be a "beer fundraiser" taking place near you, call the police at (519) 824-1212 well before the party starts. The police usually call in for a talk with the party sponsors. Trouble can be avoided by early intervention!

*Hearty thanks to all of our volunteers who brave the elements to hand-deliver the thousands of copies of the OUNRA Newsletter, so that all our neighbours can be kept informed of local issues and OUNRA's activities to address them. Your efforts are much appreciated! - Teresa*

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *Bruce Ryan*

As of the May 2017 Annual General Meeting I will have come to the end of my second year as President of the OUNRA. It has been a stimulating time and I have learned much about zoning bylaws, the challenges of politics and the frustrations of dealing with the OMB. Still, I am ready to hand the gavel to the next President.

Through my time with the OUNRA I have come to better understand urban planning rules and how development decisions get made. I now appreciate that at the formal decision tables, such as the Committee of Adjustment and the Ontario Municipal Board, how we as residents might *feel* about a development is largely irrelevant. About the only things that count are what the zoning bylaws, the Official Plan, and Ontario's Planning Act say as interpreted by planning experts. Non-expert voices are politely heard but often carry relatively little weight. On the other hand, if we non-experts can speak knowledgably and with good awareness of planning principles, we can make a difference to decisions (and we have).

In the last several years, the Executive Committee has become much more sophisticated in how we approach planning issues and have learned to speak in ways that garner respect. It is our hope that we will be less likely to be seen as nothing but NIMBYists with the result that our views will be treated more seriously when it counts.

At this year's AGM, we are seeing several Executive Committee members step down and some after many years. I wish to thank Daphne Wainman-Wood, who is our past Past-President, for her many years of service. Likewise to Tony and Elizabeth Smith who have been involved with OUNRA for more than 15 years and Tony was Treasurer for many of those. Thanks also go to Donna Haley who, as a landlord, has helped us to understand better the landlord perspective. John Lawson, who has brought much wisdom and maturity to our discussions, says he must leave the Executive this year although suggests he might come back later. We hope so. And our student member, Luke Maloney, has graduated and moved away from Guelph. His voice was most valuable at the table. All of your efforts are much appreciated.

I look forward to working with the returning members of the Executive and with the new people who have volunteered to be elected at the 2017 AGM.

## **OUNRA Executive (as at April 2017)**

**The members listed below intend to continue on the Executive; additional members will be elected at the AGM.**

Bruce Ryan	102 Forest St.	(519) 766-9684	bryan102@gmail.com
John Gruzleski	16 Lynwood Ave.	(519) 829-3225	j.gruzleski@sympatico.ca
Sylvia Watson	69 Talbot St.	(519) 780-5328	sylviarwatson@gmail.com
David Josephy	66 Maple St.	(519) 821-8293	david.josephy@gmail.com
Scott Butler	14 Wolfond Cr.	(519) 780-1157	scott@ogra.org
Lisa Mactaggart	70 Maple St.	(519) 821-7371	lmactaggart@sympatico.ca
Teresa McKeeman	90 James St. W.	(519) 822-1036	teresamck@execulink.com
Scott Poland	17 Lockyer Rd.	(519) 837-5975	spoland79@gmail.com

## **OUNRA Active in the Town and Gown Committee**

The OUNRA is an active participant in the Town and Gown Committee of Guelph. The mandate of the Committee is to provide a forum for stakeholders to address issues of common concern, which may include neighbourhood development, community relations, housing, environment, economic activities, charitable/ volunteer programs, recreational and cultural events, health and safety issues, and academic outreach. This Committee has been established as an informal body to facilitate discussion.

The Committee is jointly sponsored by the University of Guelph and the City of Guelph. It meets every few months to deal with emerging and ongoing issues. The meetings alternate between City Hall and the University.

The Committee is comprised of representatives from several City departments as well as the U of G Student Life Office, graduate and undergraduate student government representatives, Guelph Police, Guelph Fire Service, landlords, and neighbourhood groups, including the OUNRA.

At every meeting, each of the neighbourhood groups is given time to raise issues with City and University officials and to get our concerns on the table for discussion. If any of you have concerns about issues pertinent to the Town and Gown Committee, please get in touch with anyone on the OUNRA Executive and we will take the matter to the Committee for discussion.

## **Noise Control and “Nuisance Party” Bylaws**

The City of Guelph Noise Control Bylaw is in effect 24 hours a day, although there is increased tolerance during the day and early evenings. Residents who are being bothered by a loud party are asked to call the Guelph Police Service on their non-emergency number: (519) 824-1212. If there are no safety concerns, the police dispatcher will likely send out a bylaw officer to deal with the complaint.

The City will also respond to complaints of persistent noise, such as a barking dog, loud music, operation of construction equipment, and faulty equipment, such as air conditioners or pool pumps.

Recently, the City received permission from the Province to more than double its fines. The minimum fine is set at \$300, but it can go much higher, depending on the circumstances (such as repeat violations). Normally, the attending officer will issue a warning only, if the offending persons cooperate and reduce the noise. However, if the person hosting the party is belligerent or uncooperative, the officer can issue a fine immediately. If the property is rented, a letter is sent to the property owner.

## **OUNRA MEMBERSHIP FORM**

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**POSTAL CODE** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-Mail** \_\_\_\_\_

Annual membership fee is \$20 per family. Please make cheques payable to OUNRA. Please bring your form to the AGM or mail to: David Josephy, Treasurer, OUNRA, 66 Maple St., Guelph N1G 2G2.