



**Waterloo Region Home  
Builders' Association**  
**Advocacy in Action**  
**October 2009**



*Your Voice on National, Provincial and Regional Issues*

Waterloo Region Home Builders' Association (WRHBA) actively participates through a number of committee's organized to represent the interests of the Association related to building and development issues within our region. In addition to these committee's our Association coordinates our advocacy efforts with Canadian Home Builders' Association, Ontario Home Builders' Association and other Home Builders' Associations. Visit WRHBA's website at [www.wrhba.com](http://www.wrhba.com) for back issues.

**NATIONAL - CANADIAN HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION - [WWW.CHBA.CA](http://WWW.CHBA.CA)**

*Prepared by Brian Blackmere, Stantec Consulting Ltd.; WRHBA President*

Brian Campbell, our current Treasurer and CHBA Urban Council representative will be flying to Ottawa this coming Friday to attend the CHBA business meetings. The agenda will include a round table review of regional and local issues looking for commonality in possible solutions as well as presentations by Wendell Cox on impacts of planning regulations and government imposed costs. Pierre Filion of the University of Waterloo will be speaking about the "Not in My Back Yard" syndrome and how best to cope with it as we move to greater infill development and as usual there will be a plethora of economic data presented. We look forward to hearing from Brian directly on the outcomes at our November dinner meeting.

**PROVINCIAL - ONTARIO HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION - [WWW.OHBA.CA](http://WWW.OHBA.CA)**

*Prepared by Brian Blackmere, Stantec Consulting Ltd.; WRHBA President*

Topics related to OHBA will be covered by OHBA President James Bazely this month in his keynote address to the membership.

**LOCAL - WATERLOO REGION HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION - [WWW.WRHBA.COM](http://WWW.WRHBA.COM)**

*Prepared by Brian Blackmere, Stantec Consulting Ltd.; WRHBA President*

I have been invited by MP Stephen Woodworth to attend a gala this coming Saturday at Bingemans where he along with Gary Goodyear, Harold Albrecht and Peter Braid will be hosting numerous Conservative MPs including Hon. Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development. Our outreach to local MPs is obviously being rewarded by these kinds of invitations and including the invite to sit at the Industry Roundtable hosted by these 4 local MPs.

**REURBANIZATION WORKING GROUP**

*Prepared by Committee Chair, Douglas Stewart, IBI Group, WRHBA Past President, 2006-2007*

The primary focus of the discussion related to identifying the next major Project to be undertaken by this committee. The two top discussion points related to how best to address matters related to challenges

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for reurbanization projects from either the community (public and NIMBISM) and the political will to approve projects where there is strong community opposition. While the two matters are integrated they require separate approaches. The goal is to ensure that Council has the tools and resources above the applicant consultants and their staff to appropriately consider new reurbanization projects. While in the discussion stage, we are looking to make this an event for the current Councils and for future Councils given the importance. All opportunities are being evaluated including coordinating with other Groups such as the Prosperity Council and hosting a seminar with key speakers. More details to follow in the coming months.

The Committee is always evaluating the mandate and making sure we are keeping our focus well aligned.

The presentation relating to the proposed Regional Corridor Design Guidelines was deferred to the next meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 4th

## **REGION OF WATERLOO LIAISON COMMITTEE**

*Prepared by Committee Chair, Ian Rawlings, IBI Group, WRHBA Past President, 2001-2002*

The Regional Liaison Committee met Thursday October 15<sup>th</sup> and discussed a package of data prepared by the Region looking at the issue of Demographics and Housing Choice. The data, which has been culled from the latest Census is complex but essentially provides insight into a number of issues associated with the theory and reality of "aging in place". It would appear from the data that it is possible to track the housing decisions of our local population in terms of existing housing type, by age of construction with the age of the household and potential better understand whether our aging population is indeed remaining in their existing housing choice or moving into different product, and if so, what type of product. Due to the complexity of the issue, the Regional Liaison Committee has arranged to meet jointly with the Regions Rapid Transit Public Advisory Committee and potentially the Re-Urbanization Working Group to broaden the discussion through the different perspectives offered by those other committees. Further research into this matter may be warranted and the Region has offered the prospect of funding this further research with the participation of WRHBA.

## **CITY OF CAMBRIDGE LIAISON COMMITTEE**

*Prepared by Committee Chair, David Aston, MHBC Planning; WRHBA Director*

No report at this time.

## **CITY OF KITCHENER LIAISON COMMITTEE**

*Prepared by Committee Chair, Peter Armbruster, Activa Group, WRHBA Past President, 2007-2008*

### **Development Charge Credit/Refund Agreement Policy**

At Council's direction, City staff, along with their Consultant Hemson, have developed a draft policy with respect to DC credit/refund agreements. WRHBA volunteers have had several meetings with staff and Hemson to review the proposed policy and have provided input.

The policy is intended to guide the City when making decisions about whether to enter into a DC credit/refund agreement. The proposal is more restrictive than the current policy and agreements will generally only be considered for projects that are designated as higher priority developments as outlined in their Growth Management Plan.

This proposed policy will be going to the Finance Committee on October 26<sup>th</sup> and members who may be affected by this policy are strongly encouraged to obtain and review the proposed policy.

### **New Condo Addressing**

Tom Ruggle from the Fire Department attended the meeting to discuss issues surrounding condo addressing. Builders are experiencing difficulties with their proposed numbering schemes, claiming that Fire is changing their proposed addressing (MUI's) too late in the process of development. This topic was up for discussion at a prior meeting and the Emergency Service Policy is currently under review to address these issues. Tom will attend the next meeting to discuss the revised draft policy on addressing to obtain feedback before seeking Council approval.

### **Site Plan Approval Letters**

Clarification was sought on the wording required by the City on site plan approval letters. The City will ensure that a sample letter will be included in the application package going forward.

### **Subdivision Design Manual**

Since April 2009 staff have been working on updating the subdivision manual along with the industry and stakeholders. To date, there have been 11 meetings.

Phillips Engineering has been drafting the manual and making changes based on comments received to date. Together with staff, these changes will be reviewed with CEO, WRHBA and other stakeholders on September 18<sup>th</sup> in preparation for Council on November 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **2010 Building Permit Fee Update**

As part of 2010 budget preparations, Building Enterprise sent a package to the builder representatives of this committee to review and comment dealing with a proposed permit fee increase of either 3% or 5.2%.

Building staff are mindful of discretionary spending and reported a savings of \$40,000 to date and \$60-\$70K is expected by end of the year.

Based on the discussion including feedback Building Enterprise will recommend a 5.2% permit fee increase for 2010.

## **CITY OF WATERLOO LIAISON**

*Prepared by Committee Chair, Jennifer Passy, Cook Homes Limited*

### **Planting Vouchers**

Barb Magee-Turner attended the September 24<sup>th</sup> meeting to discuss staff's review of the Planting Voucher program in light of a request of the Liaison Committee to review the possibilities for streamlining the administration of the program. All in attendance agreed that there is continued value in the program, however, WRHBA members expressed some concern regarding the administrative commitment involved between builders and developers as well as the City and requested that the City look into further opportunities to incorporate the voucher process into the permit tracking system and City distribution of the vouchers. A report from Ms. Magee-Turner is expected back at a future meeting.

### **Urban Design Manual**

On September 28, 2009 Council of the City of Waterloo approved the new Urban Design Manual. The Manual is intended to be a living document which will be updated on a regular basis. The General City Design Guidelines and the Supplemental Design Guidelines which form part of the Manual are intended to be Council-approved guidelines and will require Council approval for future updates. The technical guidelines and reference material provided in Parts 4 and 5 are Staff approved and can be updated on a

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more frequent basis. An electronic copy of the Manual is available on the City's website, or a copy can be obtained by contacting Ryan Mounsey, Development Planner/ Urban Designer at 519-747-8589 or via email: [Ryan.Mounsey@waterloo.ca](mailto:Ryan.Mounsey@waterloo.ca).

### **Rental Housing Licensing Review**

Staff advised of the ongoing review of rental housing in the City and that more information would be forthcoming on the scale of buildings and potential staging of a by-law, in the new year.

### **Official Plan Review**

The City has now released its Economy Discussion Paper. The Discussion Paper is the fourth in a series of reports dealing with proposed draft Official Plan policies, and was received by City of Waterloo Council on Monday, September 28, 2009. Upcoming papers include the following:

- Environment and Energy;
- Knowledge and Technology;
- Land Use Designations; and
- Implementation of the Plan.

### **GRCA LIAISON COMMITTEE**

*Prepared by Committee Chair, Brian Blackmere, Stantec Constulng Ltd.*

The GRCA liaison committee has been repopulated with representatives and we anticipate the first meeting to take place on November 4<sup>th</sup> at the GRCA offices.

For further information, please contact Marie Schroeder, Executive Officer at 519-884-7590. Consult [www.wrhba.com](http://www.wrhba.com) for liaison committee listings, meeting dates and past issues of WRHBA's Advocacy in Action.

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