

Chair's Report – May 2015

(* Indicates agenda item at OOECA Board meeting of May 12, 2015)

***Greystone Village – Proposed Street Names:** See sketch below for proposed naming of Greystone streets. Let me know what you think. As noted below, the Oblates and the city are OK with the names.

To me they sound like good names - clearly with historical significance. And not "generic" as "Greystone" is. I also like that the extension of Hazel will be called Hazel - this is a good symbolic tie-in with the rest of the community.

I wasn't aware of the Kealey and Telmon names but if you check Rick Wallace's OOE history on the OOECA site you'll see that they were significant. And it's good to see French names are very much there.



City Won't Take Ownership of 30m Riverfront Property: It sounds as though the city isn't willing to take possession of the 30m riverfront of the Oblate / Regional property although the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority may be interested.

Erin O'Connell, the city's lead planner on the file, wrote: "After reviewing the reports submitted as part of the zoning amendment and plan of subdivision application, we advised Regional that we would accept the corridor but it would have to be with a Record of Site Condition and Risk Assessment to the MOE. So essentially, we are not comfortable in taking it without further investigation into the contamination. As a result, they have been having discussions with the RVCA to consider the potential for them to acquire the land. These discussions have not concluded as of yet and hence we have been challenged to discuss details of design or concept for those lands without concluding discussions surrounding ownership."

My immediate reaction was disappointment because I think a continuous linear park embracing Brantwood, Greystone, Springhurst and 160 / 166 Lees would be a wonderfully defining feature of Old Ottawa East. Ian McRae, Stephen Pope, Eddie Gillis and others have met Regional to discuss the future the 30m area. I wonder if we should be pushing the city to take possession. Apparently the city doesn't want to have to deal with contamination – and related clean-up costs - of the lands.

Mainstreeter Opinion Column on Greystone: I read with interest Andrew Caddell's piece in the April *Mainstreeter*. I don't agree with him though. Regional Group has worked well with community representatives and what Regional submitted to the city adhered to the much discussed and consulted-upon Old Ottawa East community design plan. Indeed, there are a number aspects of Regional's plan that are superior to what was proposed within the CDP (i.e., the Hazel Street extension as a second major entrance to the development from Main Street; the shifting of the point towers from overlooking Brantwood Park to more in the centre of the site, making the Grande Allée as a park rather than a standard roadway, and having four-storey condos – rather than the originally proposed six - flanking the Deschatelets residence.)

Development Update: Domicile is now planning for "shovels in the ground" this fall – providing the market for the units is demonstrated. Meanwhile, Regional Group has erected its construction fences, cut down trees and is proceeding well with the construction of the sales office (just to the north of the Grande Allée). I've heard nothing new on when work might begin on 129 Main (the Petro-Canada service station site).

Col By – Clegg Safe Crossing: The construction of the crossing is rapidly proceeding. The NCC tells me that the concrete sidewalks are in, the new paving could be done by May 8th, and the cobbles will be installed shortly. The City has mentioned that they are putting up the traffic signal poles after the long weekend but it may be earlier. So the crossing should be substantially complete by the end of May. Seems to me they've done the work expeditiously and finally it will be possible to safely cross Colonel By at any time of the day. I've suggested that there be an official opening and that it would be

good if an OOE child who crosses there or somebody who needs mobility aids should help with the official opening – anybody you can suggest?

Rideau River Flooding – Recognition of Pauline Lynch-Stewart and Peter Croal:

Pauline and Peter were selected for the Partners in Preparedness award by the city's Office of Emergency Preparedness for their great efforts in preparing the plan for Brantwood Park flooding ("610 Action Plan"). It was a fine example of how several people could come forward and do necessary research and consultation to come up with a needed plan. As it happened, the river did not have high water levels this year but, thanks to Pauline and Peter, we will be better prepared should it flood in the future.

Main Street Construction Safety: Safety during construction is very important and as per an example of May 6 it seems that the city is responsive. Lorna Glennie of Bullock Avenue had a close encounter with a dump truck, let the Councillor's office and OOECA know and within two hours Josée Vallée had addressed the problem with the responsible company. When you see a problem please email the councillor's office (david.chernushenko@ottawa.ca), the Main Street communications person (dianna.ashworth@gmail.com), city project manager Josée Vallée (josee.vallee@ottawa.ca), with a copy to OOECA (info@ottawaeast.ca).

Defeated Challenge to Main as a Complete Street: I was delighted to see that the city and Councillor Chernushenko are resolute in their support of Main as a complete street. A community association across the river (Faircrest Heights) had been seeking the cancellation of Main as complete street.

Councillor Chernushenko noted in an email (April 25, 2015): "A small group of Alta Vista residents have been mounting a campaign to stop this design. They have been told in no uncertain terms by the mayor, the president of CHEO, their own councillor Jean Cloutier and me that this is a 'done deal.' Council voted overwhelmingly in favour two years ago, and the shovels go in the ground in May. Some significant preliminary work starts on Monday - the PSA went out yesterday.

"The public meeting in two weeks time [i.e. May 11, 2015], is not a "consultation." We have had dozens of those (including the PAC). It is an 'information' meeting to let people know in as full detail as possible what 'will' happen; with some opportunity for residents to ask specific questions and to raise detailed concerns, such as timing, protection of personal property/plants/foundations, bus detour routes and movement of stops, etc. If there are some specific steps the city and contractor can take to make improvements or reduce construction impacts, those will be considered at this meeting and in the days following. But Main Street WILL be a Complete Street, and it will be a 'game changer' not just for Ottawa but for North America. We are reviving our communities, while continuing to provide an important route for motorized vehicles, but the latter is no longer the top priority.

"You should know that Councillor Cloutier has been exceptionally supportive, even to the point of taking it on the chin from some of his residents."

Elliot-Marlowe-Clegg Detour during Main Street Construction: A number of residents of Marlowe and adjoining streets have gone to considerable effort to ensure the safety of the area's residents is not compromised during Main Street construction. Initially residents asked that Marlowe not be used as the detour for northbound buses for a full construction season. The city was unwilling to change its plans, citing a lack of alternatives. That said, Marlowe residents will be well-prepared for dealing with the additional bus traffic and the city is very aware of their concerns.

Speed Boards During Main Construction: Traffic manager Britney McGrath notes that the Main Street Reconstruction project has "purchased four speed display boards, and this is actually the first project in the City where we have purchased boards to be dedicated to a particular project. We do have issues with vandalism so these signs actually have to be formally mounted on a hydro pole, or a permanent post in the ground. That being said, they are not easily moved and will be placed in strategic locations for each phase of construction.

"During the first phase of construction, where northbound traffic is closed at Clegg, we hope to install the four boards at the following locations:

1. McNaughton (Main to McGillivray facing westbound traffic)
2. Marlowe (Elliot to Clegg)
3. Riverdale (Glenview to Avenue facing westbound traffic)
4. Glenora (Herridge to Hazel)

"These locations may change in the phase of construction where northbound traffic is hard closed at Riverdale."

Chuck and Ilona Bain have kindly agreed to have the McNaughton speed board on their lawn and we are looking for somebody on Marlowe to take one. The Riverdale and Glenora speed boards will be on hydro poles.

Advice to Residents near Construction: Also, in terms of advice for those who live near the construction site, as per the research that Katherine Simonds is doing and the experience of Lees residents last summer, please note (as per Ian and Wendy McRae):

"It is important to take pictures of your front yards, especially if you have a retaining wall which is on your property. Our experience on Lees was that the retaining walls were not replaced as they were, but were built to someone else's idea of what they should be, without consulting the homeowner.

“If you have a tree which is not being cut down, be sure that if they excavate close to the roots, the roots are then covered with burlap. Be sure to keep the burlap damp until earth is put back. On Lees the replacement of soil was sometimes a month later. I also think every homeowner should have their house videoed for shifting which could occur from the vibrations of the construction. I am not aware that anything bad happened on Lees, but it was an offered service, and a good precaution.

“Any roots over 20 mm should be cut only with saws and the cuts should be made under supervision of an arborist or landscape architect or city forest official. The roots should never, ever be bashed off with heavy equipment as happened to the Bruno’s spruces. Exposed roots have to be protected by wet burlap from direct exposure to the sun and wind. This is what the city demands of contractors working near their trees. There is also a city bylaw defining the “critical root zone” within which work is forbidden. Some trees can survive cuts inside one side of the CRZ but not on two sides. This also depends on the age and health of the tree so professional oversight is required.
<http://ottawa.ca/en/residents/water-and-environment/trees-and-community-forests/protecting-trees>

“The grades might change along the street so be sure to note the current height of structures such as retaining walls to be sure they are replaced appropriately and discuss the changes with the supervisors or the city engineer or landscape architect. We have been advised (at least with respect to work on city trees), that if you see some potentially illegal activity you should phone 311 immediately and report it. Getting to know the contractors is the best way to maintain mutual respect. We found the contractors were very considerate and friendly on the Lees Avenue project. If you see something not right ask the crews and supervisors.”

One other comment from an O’Connor Street resident who experienced lots of detoured traffic when was reconstructed: “ ...it was dreadful, but a necessary evil. Our house still has many cracks in the plaster from all the additional buses and trucks that rolled down our street and my attempts to get City compensation for that went nowhere. Apart from adding a temporary stop sign at our intersection and directing all ‘through-trucks’ to use Bronson, there was no other mitigation that I am aware of. But it’s over now.”

Cash-in-Lieu (CIL) of Parkland Funding – Update: As a follow-up to our discussion at last month’s meeting Councillor Chernushenko responded:

“Your concerns are understandable, and I share them. The high costs of park (or any city project) estimates continue to baffle me, but our staff contend that they are indeed based on real market costs, using competitive bidding. I will see how we might involve the OOECA/CAG in this process, so as to understand how the prices/costs come to be what they are, and to potentially offer suggestions on ways to reduce costs and get better value for money. As for the field [at 160 Lees / the AVTV lands], I will now look at some “bare minimum” field repair options.

And Joanna Linsangan-Coke provided additional follow-up:

“We’ve been in touch with staff regarding your questions; their answers are pasted below:

“Certainly, Ward CIL funding can be held in reserve for planning for new community space. CIL funds can be used to produce preliminary plans and cost estimates for such facilities, however a specific site location and project scope must be identified and approved by Parks & Recreation before CIL funding can be used for this purpose.

“The repair of existing recreation facilities is not eligible for CIL funding. We can request PBGS to do some basic repairs to the existing informal field at 161 Lees Ave within their existing maintenance/operating budgets.

“With regard to the Greystone Village parks, please note that the developer will be required under the development agreement to convey the park land to the City, as well as develop these parks through the Development Charges collected for the project. The OOE community can provide input to the park design process to ensure that needed facilities are included in the 3 new parks. We would recommend that Ward CIL be directed to making improvements to existing parks in the community.

“The City’s cost estimates are prepared by Infrastructure Services Department and are based on current market costs for supply and installation. Their accuracy is dependent on the level of design detail and site information available at the time the estimate is prepared. In the case of the proposed soccer field at 161 Lees, the design was at a very preliminary stage, so a significant contingency allowance of 40% is included in the estimate in order to cover any unforeseen issues that may arise through the site analysis and design development stages. As the design progresses, the accuracy of the estimate increases and the final project budget may well decrease as the contingency allowance is reduced.

“Almost all parks and recreation facility projects are publically and competitively tendered and awarded to the lowest bidder meeting specifications. The exceptions are small works, such as the installation of common park elements such as benches, picnic tables, bulletin boards, etc., where we have standing offer prices from suppliers. These standing offer prices have also been competitively bid and are good for a set period of time (i.e. 3 years).

“I’ve already asked to staff to keep me updated with their request for the field repair at 160 Lees.”

And thanks to Jim Strang for raising at FCA our concerns about the CIL program.

Complete Streets Open House: On May 5th I attended the Complete Streets Implementation Framework open house. The essence of the framework is that for future street construction / reconstruction the city will as a matter of course “create complete streets within the scope of the project.” Sounds positive to me.

Ottawa East News References to OOE: The April 30, 2015 issue had a number of OOE stories / references: the 47 Havelock proposal, the challenging season of construction (“the reconstruction of Main Street in Old Ottawa East will likely have the biggest impact on local drivers as it is rebuilt into a ‘complete street’ between now and 2017”), and a story on an Orleans children’s garden “inspired by Main Street garden.” Good to see the hard work of OOE residents “inspiring” others. I was also interested to see the story on community mailboxes. Councillor McKenney says the mailboxes will “destroy Somerset green space.” Despite Ron’s efforts we’ve not heard from Canada Post about the proposed locations of mailboxes in OOE.

Sesquicentennial Projects for OOE: I’d hoped to organize a gathering to talk about possible sesquicentennial projects for OOE but now propose to write a *Mainstreeter* article to solicit suggestions and volunteers.