



WEST CARLING ASSOCIATION

9 Christie Street,
R.R. #1 Nobel, Ontario, P0G 1G0
Since 1921
Incorporated 1992
Georgian Bay Shoreline Concerns

WINTER 2014 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

by Jeremy Gawen

I suspect that many of you are somewhat puzzled by the planning process in Ontario as it applies to both our cottages and our principal residences. I have been involved in the process for quite a few years both in Carling and in Toronto. In Carling, I, along with other WCA Board members and representatives from the other Associations were heavily involved with the review of both Carling's Official Plan (OP) and its Zoning Bylaw (ZB); I review all plans which require Planning Committee approval. In Toronto, I am a Board member of Moore Park Residents' Association and lead the Planning Committee which reviews all applications to the Committee of Adjustment.

In Ontario, the key document is the Planning Act which sets out the framework for planning and development. Within the Act, the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) lays out the details of how planning should take place in the Province. Each municipality is required to have an Official Plan (OP) which must follow the policies of the PPS and which is largely a descriptive document of how the municipality will grow and develop; the OP should be updated every 5 years and must be approved by the Provincial Government.

In addition, each municipality must have an up-to-date Zoning Bylaw (ZB) which describes in great detail what lands may be used for (e.g. agriculture, commercial, residential, waterfront residential, etc.), the size, dimensions and types of buildings which are permitted (e.g. lot size, living space, height, setbacks from roads, water, etc.).

If you want to make an addition to your cottage or build a new one, you must get a building permit; as long as your construction conforms to the ZB, you will be able to get your permit "as of right". However, it is always worth discussing your project with the Building Inspector (in Carling's case, Doug Vock). If your proposal does not fit within the ZB, you will need to make an application for a "Minor Variance" which, in Carling, may be approved by Council's Planning Committee (made up of the Township Councilors). Again, you are strongly advised to consult with Doug Vock and Maryann Weaver (Deputy Clerk/Planning Assistant) who are extremely helpful. [In the larger jurisdictions such as Toronto, applications for Minor Variances are reviewed by Committees of Adjustment (COA) which are independent, quasi-judicial bodies with appointed, paid members].



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I wish to thank David Hume for his years of service on the WCA Board. Having just sold his Island, David has stepped down from the board. We wish him every success in Thornbury on the other side of Georgian Bay. I would also like to welcome Carolann Moisse to the board and look forward to working with her.

This is the point at which you find yourself faced with the vagaries of Ontario's Planning Act; the Act does not define "minor" as in "Minor Variance". The courts have attempted to do so but have singularly failed. With no definition, jurisdictions have frequently allowed a house to be built that is 50% larger than the ZB allows and called this "minor" which is ludicrous. Many of us have pressed the Province for years to provide a clear definition or at least clear guidelines but they have so far refused. However, in Carling, you can get excellent advice from Doug and Maryann about what may be considered acceptable and they are very reasonable. Your request for Minor Variances then goes to the Planning Committee and, with its approval; you get your Building Permit.

You may wonder what happens if you are refused by the Planning Committee; do you have any right of appeal? Or if you are the next door neighbour and you really don't like the approved plans; can you appeal? Ontario is unique in Canada in having the Province-wide, Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), to which anyone may appeal the decisions of the Planning Committee or the COA within 30 days of the original decision and on payment of a \$125 fee. The OMB is a quasi-judicial organization whose members are appointed by the Province and who generally have experience in land use planning and law. The proceeding is quite formal, similar to a court of law with lawyers and planners pleading their case before a single member of the OMB who generally renders a written decision within 6 weeks. Well over 50% of OMB hearings involve "Minor Variances". These hearings are not for the faint of heart; they are expensive and frequently, as an individual or an Association, you feel very much outgunned because you are nearly always faced with extremely experienced and high-priced lawyers and planners which you cannot afford and, unfortunately, under certain circumstances, if you lose, some developers have applied for costs.

In many respects, Ontario has one of the least successful municipal planning processes in Canada, with far too many decisions taken away from elected bodies and given to unelected officials and far too weak Official Plans which Councils, such as Toronto's, ignore with regularity. Look to Vancouver for an excellent process which really works well for the city, or to a Province like Manitoba.

I should add that the Province is currently reviewing the Planning Act and is currently consulting with community groups. If you have an interest in municipal planning, now is the time to make your voice heard through the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.



*Preserving unique properties along the eastern shore
and North Channel. Join with us in protecting
the natural beauty and character of
Georgian Bay.*

For more information visit,
www.gbtl.org or call, 416-440-1519

A View From Carling Council - Winter 2014

by Michael Gordon

Since my last report in mid-2013, the major issues that Council has focused on have been:

- **Finalizing the update of our Municipal Buildings.** The new public works building is complete and the space to safely store and maintain our public works vehicles has been beneficial with all the snow we received in December. We have discussed the future of our fire station but at this point it appears that maintaining the current firehall along with some extra space by using some of the bays in the old Public works/admin building is adequate for now.
- **Upgrading our road infrastructure** – As part of our effort to hard-surface all of our township roads, we applied to the provincial Municipal Infrastructure Investment Initiative Capital Program in 2013 for funding to support the surface treatment of Blind Bay Rd and Pengally Bay/Linda Ave but were unsuccessful. As a result, we did not do any new major road resurfacing in 2013. As part of our new 10 year Capital Asset Management Plan we have a schedule for the remaining road surfacing work and are in the process of finalizing the budget decisions for 2014.
- **Dealing with congestion at our Municipal water access points** – in October, Council held a public meeting to obtain input on the challenges at our Municipal water access sites. Particular concerns were expressed around the congestion caused by kayakers at Dillon Cove and Snug Harbour. A committee was struck to explore the issues in more detail and bring recommendations back to Council in the spring.
- **Exploring the potential to blast the Deep Bay channel** – Council has spoken with members of the Deep Bay Association about the potential to deepen (and widen) the channel into Deep Bay and has applied for provincial funding for a study to examine the impacts of such an effort.
- **Expanding our service-sharing agreement with the Archipelago** – in October, Council agreed to expand our service sharing with the Archipelago by having Carling hire a new Public Works Manager to serve both Townships. Having this senior position employed by Carling will help to balance the relationship (as the shared CAO and Treasurer are currently Archipelago employees). To implement this expansion and manage our existing shared-services agreement, Council struck a joint committee with the Archipelago. The joint committee met once in November and will meet again in January.
- **Determining the future of our Lighthouses** – Council has submitted a business plan for the Snug Harbour Lighthouse to the Federal government and has had discussions with the West Carling Association about partnering to have the Association act as a “manager” for the site. We still have many questions concerning the process, costs, and obligations but we will continue to engage on this issue.

I am always happy to speak with anyone who has questions or concerns about anything relating to Carling Council. You can reach me at mgordon003@sympatico.ca

The Beaver

by Jeremy Gawen, Snug Harbour

When we first bought the cottage in the mid-eighties, we lived in a small cabin right on the water on our point at the north end of Snug Harbour. I would regularly be out there swimming off the point at 7 o'clock on a Saturday morning and, just as regularly, around the point would come the beaver. At first, as soon as he saw me, there would be a great splash from the tail and he would be gone. Later, after some cautious exploration, he would be quite happy to swim quite close and even around me. This went on for several seasons and I grew to really love this beaver. One spring he failed to appear, never to be seen again.

I'm not sure whether it was one of his offspring but, about 5 years ago, we started to notice a certain amount of young saplings being stored under our dock. At first, we didn't take too much notice but then we started to notice chunks of dock floatation distributed around our little bay. An old beaver had decided that our dock would be a great place to make himself a really comfortable lodge. I tried pulling the branches out from under the dock – the first time we got 2 huge cart loads which we stupidly piled on the shore, only to find that he took the whole lot – and then some – and put it right back the next night. Next time, we moved it a long way inland but, again, to no avail; he just kept on building overnight plus there was lots more Styrofoam on the shore. Somebody told me that beavers don't like mothballs, so I pried up some of the decking of the dock and put plates of mothballs down. Another old wives tale; he obviously had no sense of smell! Next, the great Brian Perks always used to say that beavers don't like the smell of diesel so I tried bowls of diesel sitting on the floatation – didn't bother him one bit!

Clearly, I had to try something more drastic; my mounds of twigs and branches were getting higher and higher and my floatation was getting smaller and smaller. So, off to the hardware store to buy chicken wire which, with some difficulty, I was able to completely cover the underside of the dock. That survived about 2 nights and was then immediately ripped to shreds and back came all the usual branches and twigs, in spades. By this time, the beaver was quite content with all my machinations and had lost all its fear and certainly did not feel the need to vacate his comfortable home lying on (and scrabbling into) our dock floatation. We might not be able to see him but, did we know that he was there! If you've ever smelled a pig farm, just think of that – and then some! Eau de Beaver will certainly not win any perfume awards.

Finally, I did what I should have done to start with; I talked to the famous engineer Bialkowski who had had exactly the same problem a couple of years previously. Bill had designed wooden frames covered with heavy-duty wire mesh screening which fitted neatly in between the main support beams of the dock. Success! Mr. Beaver has not been seen or smelled since!

Unfortunately, this is not quite the end of the story. This last year, I decided to rebuild the docks, mainly by replacing the old decking with new pressure-treated lumber. Having removed the old decking, what do I find underneath but a very large pile of otter poop. I had left one small gap between the two sections of the beaver screen, just big enough for the otters to climb through and use the dock as a convenient toilet! Having filled that gap, I am wondering what creature will be continuing the love affair with our dock this coming year. It will have to be mighty small!

Woodchip Madness

by John Rohr, Richards Bay

Retiring on the shores of Georgian Bay after 30 years of living and working in the core of “the big city” has on the whole given my wife and I what we expected. This provided a chance to refocus our lives around the natural world with its inherent slow pace and a quieter more peaceful daily existence. Still cottage life, we’ve discovered, doesn’t totally reform the individual, but rather bends itself to accommodate each of our characters.

My story is more of a “type A” individual that needs to get out and do things, and the 3 acre blank slate that we bought 15 years ago, anticipating early retirement, has served us (especially me) well.

I seem to function best when I can wake up in the morning knowing I have at least one project to work on. After years of building our new retirement home, most of those projects have been driven by what I could broadly call landscaping; a small flower garden; a larger flower garden; a rock crevice filled in; a foot path here and there; clearing of dead brush and fallen branches; turning a path into a driveway; leveling a sitting area in a natural landscape that does not know the meaning of the word “flat”.

Every year is different; each project is new and challenging; providing me with daily exercise and purpose. I intentionally try not to do too much finger pointing, meaning if I can complete a job with a rake, shovel and wheelbarrow, I will happily choose that option over importing “paid friends”.

I may well have lost some of you by now, especially those who see the cottage as a weekend refuge. But this is a personal tale and retirement is a discovery at its best, and I have rejoiced at the challenges and the diversity that moving to Georgian Bay has brought us, and yes, this includes other aspects more familiar perhaps among them: golf, tennis, boats and a good book and so on.

Still working on our property has served to fill an important creative void that can occur after retiring. Its course has been, while uncharted, largely under my control and direction. Each summer seems to come with a new vision or chapter. This is what brings me finally to talk about wood chips. Something I have had no previous experience with except when we rented a wood-chipper to get rid of all that cut brush after our original building phase (a rather nasty piece of equipment many may remember from the movie “Fargo”).

As some of you may know, Killbear Provincial Park had suffered a tragic loss of hundreds of beautiful tall beech trees caused by disease and invasive insect problems. This has resulted in the necessary culling of many of these giants for safety reasons, adjacent to many of the Park’s camp sites. Creating huge piles of surplus wood chips. Last summer, the Park kindly offered enormous piles of these woodchips just outside its boundaries to any and all takers with the irresistible word “FREE”.

Now my property (and my neighbours') is neatly disguised bedrock with very little soil covering and a veneer of moss, blueberries and mostly pine forest; no beech trees! I was intrigued; all this organic material and FREE!it had landed almost on my doorstep as if the sky had opened up. I drove by it almost daily for a few weeks, asked neighbours about it; many hadn't noticed, and few seemed interested; some thought "diseased trees, bad idea". One old timer was sure the whole pile was going to combust into a huge bonfire one day. The pile did generate a lot of heat; but oddly we found no living things in this material except for dozens of white pigeon-sized eggs with hard boiled yellow centres; clearly poorly placed by some unsuspecting parent, species unknown.

It took the presentation at our WCA Annual Meeting by a Killbear Park representative in early July to get me re-engaged with the massive pile of "FREE" organic matter, with a public assurance that this material was not a hazard to our beloved trees.

I started small. A few plastic barrels and blue box bins hijacked from a previous urban existence and we were off reorganizing our flower-beds; controlling weeds the easy way. Next, I cast my eye towards the 100 feet above my shoreline that consists largely of almost unwalkable glacial rubble. This required rebuilding the box for my small flatbed trailer; one sheet of plywood and several leftover 2x12"s.

Woodchips are tricky and frustrating to work with at first; almost impossible to shovel from a pile. Eventually, I settled on a rake and pick to pull the material onto the trailer and used a snow shovel which I could slide underneath on the plywood trailer to unload.

The more I used it, the more I liked it. It carried no weeds. It was much lighter to wheelbarrow around than soil and it leveled easily. Great for filling the many holes all over our property and my experience told me woodchips would eventually decompose into good much needed nutrients for my struggling trees, as well as providing root protection. Also, they didn't wash away when it rained like soil can.

I put in about an hour and half each day for about a month; picking up a trailer load every one or two days. I was usually there by myself but occasionally running into others: a couple filling their pickup truck with bags and then transporting by boat from Dillon to their soil-starved island. Others were mostly gardeners, or those filling in around the base of their trees. One local contractor showed up with a backhoe; I was sure the chips would all be gone in a week. But he only took a few truck loads and disappeared. By late September, I was getting tired. I had probably distributed 20 plus trailer loads and dropped 5 pounds which I couldn't afford to lose. Not only that, but Peggy my wife and chief caregiver was off to see her ill father for a few weeks.

By the end of September, I had a new vision and things had gotten a lot quieter in Carling as they often do after Labour Day. There was still a huge pile of woodchips and I began wondering what would happen if it remained at year-end. Would the Park or the Township remove it?

I now had my eye on the large depression on my property which flooded every time we had heavy rain. But my forearms were both chronically sprained. I called my favourite local contractor and nine truck loads later.....

I can rest well these days in the knowledge that I have a good size project to work on when the snow melts this spring, after which I may seek help for this “woodchip addiction”.

Ode to Carling Market

By Jane Whitwell

*The Carling Market came to be June 1979 thereabout
Under a canopy of trees at the Recreation Hall parking lot.
A local market is a wonderful mix
Bakers, artists, producers all told
With wares sure to please young & old.
Still a place to find fresh baked bread, tarts & cookies
And with a cup of steaming coffee
Sheer bliss for you & me.
Stroll to visit each vendor
There's Dick, Janet, Dave, Diane, Wanda, Tony, Renata, Marc too
Many more you'll see
From each a weekly friendly hello there'll be.
Other activities you ask
Read the Market's calendar of events
No chance of boring, plenty to do.
West Carling Pancake Breakfast on Canada Day
The Market was there with story books, crayons & colouring pages.
The Dogfest was howling good fun.
From Friends of Killbear a free draw was had.
Specifically for children Parry Sound Library brought many a book
And TD gave lots of toys to play in the sand.
Safety is a concern to all
So Carling Fire & Rescue came with their trucks
Instruction was clear
Work safe, play safe*

*Think twice, always be aware.
Carling Hall has photos of yesteryear
Photo contest was held, submissions from far & near.
Carling Township merchandise for sale
Look cool in apparel or enjoy their history books.
A table to share magazines, well worth a read.
Two hundred pounds of food donated to Harvest Share
Now meals are made for many more to feed.
Georgian Bay water levels a hot topic for sure
Tony Clement, please make the drop stop.
The Market's annual Thanksgiving charity event
A highlight for the community of Carling & beyond
Sunny & warm, a wonderful fall morn
Over 20 vendors setup and hundreds came
For a buffet breakfast, silent auction & Market.
Volunteers cooked a great breakfast
Kids Korner created crafts for every child
Much to bid on in the silent auction
Even a huge basket of goodies fit for a draw.
The support was spectacular, awesome in fact
\$5,000. donated to Carling Township's ``Raise the Roof``
To all of you sincere thanks.*

Come to the Carling Market this year, beginning Saturday May 17th, during the summer from June 21st through August 30th and the Thanksgiving Annual Charity Event on Saturday October 11th. Market hours 9am to noon.

For more information contact Jane Whitwell, jane.lee.whitwell@sympatico.ca or visit www.carlingtownship.ca

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David Hume's Moving Day on Walton Islands with Craig Groves in assistance West Carling Memories to last a Lifetime

By David Hume, Walton Islands

Our journey started when our Windsor neighbours Lib and Don Davidson invited us to join them at their Snug Island cottage for a few days back in 1960. I can remember as if it were yesterday the smooth warm rock, the vastness of the clear blue water with all those tiny islands so far off in the distance. It was a remarkable place, so much so, that we ended up purchasing our humble little cottage on the Walton Islands by 1963. A cottage it was - no running water, no hydro, an outhouse, two tiny bedrooms and a roof and windows that leaked. But for us it was heaven on earth.

Life was different then. The Snug light and Red Rock were both manned and every month the pair from Red Rock would come into Snug in the "Seagull" and the pair at Snug would take the "Seagull" back out to The Rock. The fog-horn still operated. I remember convoys of families venturing out "all the way" to Red Rock to visit the lighthouse keepers, and picnicking on the Minks to explore the ruins of the old abandoned fishing camp. The main house and mess-hall were still intact with lanterns, furniture, utensils and newspapers stuck to the walls to help keep the wind out. The little sleeping cabins were standing, as was the ice house. Mother Nature has since had her way with them all. The old net house is now a beautiful cottage owned by the Stewarts. There were no cottages out there back then. It was magical.

And then there were the many boats. Who could forget the "Andarlin", the "Lady Carling", "The Albert M"? Don and Eleanor Christy owned the marina in those days and it was coupled with a construction business that helped build the many cottages as families grew.

Times have certainly changed. The lighthouses are for sale, Hwy. 69 has become 400, water levels have dropped and become a political issue, zebra mussels have taken over, cell towers have arrived, 4 strokes have replaced inboards, and kayakers crowd the government dock.





It was cold, wet and windy on David Hume's moving day. Groves Marine Work Boat #10, barge and U-Haul truck do the honours at Hume's cottage on Walton Island

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Kevin & Anne Buck
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Fortunately the depth of character of the folks who live in and around our little harbour has not changed. It's the Craig's, the two Brains, the Glens, the Don and Eleanor and Johns, the Marks, the Doug's, the Sarah and Terry's, and the Brent's of the world, and so many others who made our lives so much easier every season at Snug.

We have had a great ride on the island with four generations absolutely loving the time we had. But now it's time to change things a bit. We now live in Thornbury, still looking out on The Bay and have passed the torch to a wonderful family from Toronto with two young children and a Goldie. Our very best to them -- they will love the island.

The moving day picture proves that Mother Nature decided long ago that she would not allow us to wallow in our sorrows and served up wind, cold and lots of rain -- no time to hang around and get nostalgic which was the best for all of us. We said our good-byes and Craig pulled away for the last time.

We will always have incredible memories of Snug Harbour and all the wonderful people we got to know over the years - Thanks for the memories....

David Hume, Paula and the Hume family



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