

**TENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**AINSLIE WOOD/WESTDALE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF**  
**RESIDENT HOMEOWNERS INC.**

**SEPTEMBER 23, 2008**

**DALEWOOD SCHOOL AUDITORIUM**

President John Wigle called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m., welcomed everyone, and presented his report.

**President's Report (John Wigle)**

John described the association's 10th-anniversary celebrations held June 28, 2008, at Kidsfest in Westdale Village, which included his speech highlighting memorable aspects of the association's history and comments by MPP Ted McMeekin, Ward 1 Councillor Brian McHattie, and past presidents Phyllis Tresidder and Liz Millar. He noted the gracious letters of congratulations from Mayor Fred Eisenberger; Mr. McMeekin; Mr. McHattie; Dr. Peter George, president and vice-chancellor of McMaster university; Roger Trull, vice-president university advancement; and MP David Sweet. He noted that these letters identified some unique features of the AWWCA: the dedication and hard work of our volunteers; our initiatives within the community, notably the creation of the Campus Town Association (a partnership of the AWWCA, McMaster University, and the Westdale BIA); our alliances with McMaster University, the fire department, the Hamilton Police Service, the bylaw department, the Westdale BIA, etc.; our ability to "pursue dialogue and collaboration rather than confrontation with community partners."

John highlighted achievements of the past year. The association brought McMaster University and the city together to resolve traffic issues and develop a fair and workable transportation plan. The dedication shown by Scott Stewart, general manager of public works, and Hart Solomon, manager of traffic engineering & operations, and Terry Sullivan, McMaster's traffic and security director, was thankfully acknowledged. The AWWCA created the Access to the Best Care committee to investigate the proposed changes made by Hamilton Health Sciences to adult services at McMaster University Medical Centre. Under the leadership of Dr. Ken Ockenden and Rob Payne the committee prepared an interim report, which the association sent to HHS, the Local Health Integration Network, and municipal and provincial politicians, among others. The ABC committee continues to work on this issue, making a recent presentation to the Hamilton Board of Public Health. We also have representation on the West Hamilton school planning committee, which is monitoring the public school board's intentions with respect to our elementary and middle schools. Lisa Dodds, our first vice-president, works as police liaison with Crime Manager Sergeant Jo-Ann Savoie, who recently told us that a major perpetrator of graffiti in our neighbourhoods has been arrested and charged. Ira Rosen, our second vice-president, is bylaw liaison for property standards. Ira held meetings throughout the year to which he invited representatives of the HPS, bylaw department, fire department, McMaster Students Union, and others. The association has been instrumental in publicizing the rental housing bylaw passed by the city of Oshawa in 2006; AWWCA member Ken Sherman organized a rally that attracted over 140 people to support such a bylaw in Hamilton.

West Village Suites has opened on the former CNIB site and is in its second year of operation. It appears to be a well-run residence. Ongoing, the board is gathering as much information as possible about future developments that may affect our community: Auburn Developments wants to build a residence that would house 550 students on Ewen Road, Valvasori Properties is interested in building a residence on the former Colin McDonald school site, Trinity Property Developments would like to build a shopping plaza east of McMaster Innovation Park. Vinnie Welsh has taken on the position of liaison for land use and rental housing. The board is aware of the community's dissatisfaction with bylaw enforcement and has made this a priority for the coming year.

John thanked Megan and Brian Coombes, who recently resigned from the board, and welcomed new

board member Shelli Eisenberg in the new position of student liaison. Loreen Jerome is taking on membership duties and Barb Mansfield will assume the role of treasurer. John then introduced the remaining directors of the board and concluded by inviting audience members to become more actively involved in a worthy organization.

#### **Presentation of Last Year's Minutes (Angela Tirone)**

Ken Sherman made the motion to accept the minutes from the 2007 annual general meeting. Arnold Beal seconded the motion. It was carried with none opposed and no abstentions.

#### **Membership Report (Janet Woodward)**

A new record reached on August 31, of 570 paid-up members, including 22 Friends of the AWWCA. At that time, we had the lowest number of overdue memberships ever—just 7.

Over the past 10 years, 940 individuals have joined the AWWCA. Of those, 58 have declined renewal, 40 have been removed due to lack of response to requests for renewal, and over 200 have moved out of the area. Sadly, 34 have died. Of our current members, 112 have been members since 1998.

I am happy that we have not once raised our membership fees in 10 years. We are able to keep our fees modest thanks to our many volunteers. And there's more good news. In the past year, we welcomed 59 new members to our association; your membership helps us to continue as a strong association. Between newsletters, we communicate with 82 per cent of our members by e-mail. This is a huge increase from November 1998, when just 30 per cent of our members had e-mail.

I have enjoyed serving you as membership secretary and communicating with you via e-mail through member notices over the past 10 years. I am very pleased that Loreen Jerome has volunteered to take on these duties.

I am also happy that Vinnie Welsh has volunteered to co-ordinate the Earth Day cleanup, which I took over when Dmitri Malakov left two years ago, and that Shelli Eisenberg is going to replace me on the pajama-parade committee. However, I will keep busy coordinating the AWWCA's newsletter, as I have done for the past eight years.

#### **Treasurer's Report (Loreen Jerome)**

As outgoing treasurer I am happy to report that we have a bank balance of \$3,273.00 as of Aug. 31, 2008. Copies of our Statement of Operations for the year ended Aug. 31, 2008, are available in the front hall.

I would like to thank board member Lavinia Welsh for agreeing to review Committee of Adjustment applications for minor variances—a job I have been doing for the past six years. The association receives copies of all variance applications from the City of Hamilton and must sort through them to find the ones that apply to us.

On behalf of the board of the AWWCA, I would like to introduce Barb Mansfield. Barb was appointed by the board as the new treasurer of the AWWCA. As a certified general accountant, she comes highly qualified for this position.

#### **Barb Mansfield**

I want to thank Loreen and my fellow board members for giving me the opportunity to act as treasurer for the next couple of years. I moved into the neighbourhood nine years ago and have seen a number of positive changes occur. I believe that we live in one of the best areas of the city with our access to the RBG and waterfront trails. I am confident that our community will continue to grow and improve. Last summer I was able to help Loreen out for a short time with the treasury responsibilities, so have had some exposure to the job. Also, I am fortunate that she will still be involved and can provide support as needed—she has left me some big shoes to fill. Loreen has done an outstanding job as treasurer for the past nine years. Thank you and please join me in a round of applause in appreciation for all the hard work that Loreen Jerome has done for our community.

## **Guest Speakers**

John Wigle introduced Jerry Conlin, director, municipal law enforcement and licensing services, Oshawa, and David Potts, city solicitor, Oshawa

Mr. Potts explained that their presentation would endeavor to explain what happened in Oshawa, not to advocate any position. The bylaw came into being as Oshawa's response to land-use conflicts. There was an interim control bylaw 58-2007. Enforcement took place with fire, building, property standards, zoning and parking by permit, lot-maintenance bylaw--an order would be issued, and within days a cost would be applied to taxes, and in some extreme cases charges were laid. In the garbage-collection bylaw the owner was responsible.

With this new licensing system owners do not get a license if they do not comply with the zoning bylaw. The landlord makes an application to the city, which arranges inspections before granting a license. The onus is on the landlord to chase the city; it is no longer the city's responsibility to chase landlords to get things done. The basic determinant for licensing is whether the house is rented.

Bill 130, Municipal Statute Law Amendment Act of 2006, clarified the power to differentiate by area. Scarce resources can be applied to an area of the city where the problem lies; a bylaw does not have to apply to the entire city. There are administrative penalties and a hearings office to hear appeals. The owner of a house that is rented out within a specific geographic location (2.5 km around the university campus) must obtain a license annually. In July 2007 Oshawa's council recommended establishing a bylaw. Public meetings were requested by council in September 2007. There were more than 800 people at the second public meeting, and there were two other meetings held for public debate. In February 2008 council passed the bylaw with amendments. All interested parties were allowed to participate.

The bylaw regulates landlords. It imposes conditions as a requirement of continuing to hold a license. It limits the number of bedrooms to four in most areas; an average home in the area was built with four bedrooms. The number of bedrooms was increased to a maximum of six on some streets; each home must maintain an amenity area – there must be less than 40 per cent of the home's bedrooms on the ground and basement floors.

Landlords have a lot to gain from this process. The application for license includes landlord particulars (name, address, e-mail, single owner or corporately owned) and rental-unit particulars (floor plan, maintenance plan, management plan, parking plan--parking on the road is not permitted. Each rental house that a landlord owns must have a license.

The license includes the license number, a sketch depicting the location of each bedroom, and the landlord contact information. The license conditions include a written tenancy agreement; the landlord cannot interfere with lawful inspections; the license must be visibly posted; the property must be insured for \$2-million, and the landlord is to notify the city if there are any changes made to the information given on the application; the landlord must comply with the applicable laws. There is a licensing administrative penalty of \$250 to encourage compliance and a hearing officer for appeals.

The bylaw has been in place since May 2008. Forty of 500 rental properties voluntarily started the process. A special enforcement team went door to door to inform those not in compliance that they were subject to penalties.

Successes to date include weeding out a number of investing landlords who were not co-operating, enhancing the safety of occupants, and getting councillors, university personnel, and planning staff to work together. The debate does continue, but overall the City of Oshawa thinks it is making progress—there has been a shift of focus away from enforcement, the system is proactive instead of reactive, and it ensures that there will be an adequate supply of appropriate housing.

John thanked our speakers and moderated a question period:

Q. Are two occupants considered boarders?

A. No, not under this bylaw.

Q. Is fire licensing included in the bylaw?

A. Interconnected fire alarms are required under existing fire laws, which are a part of the bylaw.

Q. Is grandfathering in place?

A. No.

Q. Was council agreeable to the bylaw? A. Council struggled with the issues, and public meetings were the largest ever.

Q. How many more staff members were needed?

A. Staff received specialized training. Two people are in administration and five in enforcement.

Q. Parking issues?

A. Parking is prohibited near the university unless by permit for homeowners.

Q. Does the bylaw restrict the number of occupants?

A. The bylaw addresses the number of bedrooms, not people. Proving a lodging house is difficult, proving a rental is easier. Oshawa prefers to count bedrooms, not people.

Q. How much power do you expect the owner to have over the tenants?

A. The landlord has much more control over the use of the house than the city does.

Q. What about the number of occupants--the number of students in each bedroom?

A. No rooms were found to be doubled up upon inspections to date.

#### **Councillor's Report (Brian McHattie)**

A rally will be held on Thursday, Oct. 20, assembling at the Dalewood Recreation Centre and marching to the hospital. More time is needed to investigate the proposed hospital restructuring plan. Community dialogue is needed to find a community solution. Emergency Medical Services has issued a statement that the number of occurrences of code zero (where no ambulances are available) will continue to worsen under the new plan.

There continues to be enforcement of property standards and noise bylaws with administrative penalties for a second offence. The landlord is subject to a \$250 penalty, as well as penalties incurred by the occupants of the house.

Hamilton city staff is investigating the possibility of a bylaw similar to Oshawa's for the areas surrounding McMaster University and Mohawk College. A 24-page report will be presented to the Committee of the Whole on Oct. 14, 2008. It will recommend establishment of a community liaison committee (CLC) comprised of stakeholders (the MSU, the off-campus housing office, the off-campus student association, landlords, the AWWCA, representatives from the Mohawk area, and perhaps others). The city hopes to have a bylaw in place by the second quarter of 2009.

The Hamilton School Board has put Dalewood and Prince Philip Schools on the prohibitive-to-repair list to rationalize the closure of one of the schools and have a K-8 school. Mr. McHattie's position remains that both schools be kept open for the sustainability and walkability of our neighbourhoods. Council has agreed that the Dalewood Recreation Centre will be rebuilt on its current site. Brian has met with Judith Bishop to encourage the school board to reinvest in Dalewood School. Prince Philip now has a Mandarin-as-a-second-language program.

Mr. McHattie congratulated the AWWCA on our 10th anniversary. He asked that people forward the addresses of problem houses to his office.

John thanked all the participants and adjourned the meeting at 9:35 p.m.