



MMRA *watchdog*

The Watchdog is the newsletter of the Mississippi Mills Residents' Association Vol.1, Iss.3 Summer 2003

Mississippi Mills Town Hall Public Meeting

Location: **Clayton Recreation Hall,**

47 Linn Bower Lane, Clayton
Date: **Thursday, July 10, 2003**
Time: **7 PM–9 PM**

Council of the Town of Mississippi Mills invites you to bring your ideas and concerns to a town hall meeting. Council members and staff representatives will be on hand to address your inquiries in a relaxed atmosphere. Please consider attending.

On-line? Join the MMRA Discussion Group

go to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MissMillsResidents/>
Keep up-to-date on breaking news and issues. Contribute your opinions and suggestions.

MMRA Sponsors Rookie Candidate Workshop

Thinking about running for Mississippi Mills Council in the fall '03 election? Come to a special workshop for rookie candidates on Saturday, July 19, 9 AM at the Union Hall (corner of the Tatlock Road and Wolf Grove Road).

The workshop is open to all residents of voting age who have not held any elected office before. You do not have to be a declared candidate to attend. You may bring up to two members of your campaign team.

Cliff Bennett will discuss how to build a campaign team, and the mechanics and timing of a Class A campaign. Cliff Bennett is a former Mississippi Mills Councillor and Deputy Reeve of Ramsay Township.

Cindy Halcrow, Mississippi Mills Clerk, will give each potential candidate an information kit and explain the financial and legal requirements of running for office. She will answer any questions on how the new write-in vote will work.

There will be additional presentations covering image management, signs, brochures, events, issue research, and meetings.

Prepare yourself for the November municipal election. Pre-registration is mandatory. Call Reiner Hollbach at 256-2490 or e-mail him at reiner@ca.inter.net by noon July 18. A fee of \$5 will be collected at the door to cover refreshments and other expenses.

The workshop starts at 9 sharp and ends at noon. Bring a lunch and stick around to ask extra questions.
—submitted by *Shaun McLaughlin*

Plasma Arc Gasification & Vitrification (Garbage Incinerator)

Activity on this issue peaked in May. The MMRA circulated a position paper to the public and to Council titled *Plasma Arc in Mississippi Mills — an Unnatural Place to Grow*.

At the May 8th Plasma Arc Committee meeting, after discussion, members of the committee were unwilling to give a letter of intent to PyroGenesis to proceed with funding applications. Nor were they comfortable with spending \$150K for a Due Diligence study. **A motion was approved to do neither.**

Pyrogenesis came back at a special Town Council meeting on May 13th with a presentation to change the minds of Council. Council rejected this second attempt at getting the Plasma Arc process rolling. Reasons given for the rejection ranged. Economics, a lack of public input, and being the first to use an untried technology were cited as issues.

Plasma Arc is in the doghouse indefinitely. Needless to say, the MMRA approves of Council's final decision in this matter.

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Town News

Mississippi Mills Smoking Survey

The newly formed Town of MM Smoke Free Committee is seeking your input.

The Committee has published a survey that is available in various locations around MM. Please fill in a survey and let the Committee know your opinions! There is also an online survey form, but it must be submitted by snail mail, or dropped off at the Hub in Almonte, or any of the libraries in Almonte, CP, or Pakenham.

The Environmental Advisory

Committee makes recommendations to Council regarding environmental issues and concerns for the Town of Mississippi Mills. There are openings on this Committee for two volunteers—one adult and one student. For more information, please call Stacey Blair 256-2064.

Mississippi Mills Swim Program

Beginning on July 2, 2003, and running through August 9, 2003, the schedule for supervised swims at the Almonte and Pakenham Beaches will be as follows: 1 PM to 4PM Monday through Friday.

Please note that you swim at your own risk during unsupervised periods. For further information, please contact the Recreation and Culture Department at 256-1077.

A new property standards bylaw for Mississippi Mills is currently in process. The MMRA is reviewing & investigating the bylaw draft and seeking input from interested residents.

The MMRA directors recently requested MMRA representation on the Community Official Plan Steering Committee (COPSC). The MMRA recognizes the COP process is crucial to the Town's future health. Council turned down the request. However, the MMRA will continue to monitor and provide input to the COPSC.

MMRA — summer 2003

The Growth Issue and the Settlement Population Forecast

The Community Official Planning Steering Committee has been discussing the future growth of Mississippi Mills for the past number of months. Recently, the Steering Committee put forth its recommendations — a total population for Mississippi Mills of 18,500 by year 2024 — to the Planning and Economic Development Committee for their review and approval. By doing so, the Steering Committee was requesting a clear sense of direction from Council, who are the members of the Planning Committee.

In the end, the Planning Committee reduced the projected growth population to 17,500 for Mississippi Mills, by the year 2024. In conjunction with this number was a decision that the majority of this growth be directed to the Almonte Ward (60%) followed by the existing rural areas of Pakenham and Ramsay (25%), and future new growth settlements (15%). This division of future growth is in recognition of provincial planning policies, which direct the majority of growth to fully serviced (sewer and water) areas.

The growth debate has not been without controversy. Some suggest that the “small town characteristics” of Mississippi Mills and the Almonte Ward will be lost with too much growth. Also, in recent history, the majority of residential growth has consistently been in Ramsay. This has been countered with projections that the growth pressures on the community from the City of Ottawa and elsewhere will be such that the new Official Plan must accept and plan for this level of growth.

The new Community Official Plan will be the first all-encompassing plan for the Town of Mississippi Mills and will lead the direction of growth and development within this community for the next 20 years.

We encourage all members of the community to attend the Official Plan Steering Committee meetings which are held the second and fourth Monday of every month at 7 PM in the Council Chambers. These meetings are informative, enlightening, and conducted in a very open and public manner under the Chair of John Edwards. At all times, John strives to ensure that all members of the Committee and even the public in the gallery are given the opportunity to express their views, ask questions and debate the issues.

To quote John Edwards, “The Community Official Plan is the vehicle through which you can have a say about what our community should be like in the future.”

Please see the Mississippi Mills website under “Official Plan” and the MMRA website (www.mmra.ca) for more information.

—submitted by David McLaren

And another thought: The concern of some residents that Almonte's small town character is threatened by growth of more than 7200 is somewhat unsubstantiated. Much depends on *how* future growth is handled. Absolute size is less important than *how* you get there.

—MMRA member
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Greystone Estates parkland sale averted, but ...what about the park?

Municipal tax rates for 2003 are set after some debate. Kudos go to Mississippi Mills Council for voting to decrease the mill rate by 3.6% (to offset the increase in market assessment values) and also to the MMRA for broadcasting the issues to the public. The mill rate is less, although municipal taxes have risen over last year's. The Town's total estimated budget expenditures for the 2003 budget have increased by 6.16% over those in 2002.

Earlier this spring, the Parks & Recreation Committee of Council suggested that lands previously set aside for park lands in the Greystone Estates sub-division be sold for residential development. The residents of Greystone Estates rallied. They did not want the land sold. A petition against the sale, signed by active residents, was presented to the Parks & Rec. crew at a public information meeting held at the Almonte Curling Club.

The Parks & Rec. committee decided not to sell the park property, due to the concerns of the residents, but they also indicated there are no current plans to develop the area because of the high price tag associated with creating and maintaining a park. An idea floated out that residents may want to do some minimal upkeep on the land. Perhaps such a question will lead to some renewed interest in parks and recreation at the community and at the Council level in Mississippi Mills.

Although the Budget is tight, there is general concern that the Town continues to acquire park land, but can not afford to develop or maintain it. This is not effective or desirable in the long term.

—submitted by Jill McCubbin, from Greystone residents' and MMRA members' email discussions

White Tail Ridge

In April, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) rejected the first amendment to the Almonte Official Plan (referred to as amendment OPA2) that would have allowed sewer and water to be brought anywhere outside Almonte's borders at the Council's discretion.

Subsequently, a revised OPA2 was submitted by the town and approved by the MMAH, which is site specific to the Ottawa St strip mall only. The word is out that the WTR developer is returning with a response, and will try to get a site specific sewer and water Almonte OP amendment.

Ottawa St. Strip Mall

The MMAH gave draft approval to the site specific OPA2 Almonte Official Plan amendment. A Ramsey OP amendment is still required to allow for the large size of the mall. The developer, John Levi, recently submitted a revised Market Impact Study

(MIS) to the Town, tabled on June 24 at the P&E Committee Meeting.

At the meeting, Councillors pointed out the many inconsistencies and inadequacies of the report. However, with minimal discussion, the committee accepted the report. There is a general concern among residents that the strip mall will have an adverse effect on the downtown core in Almonte. Yet, there was almost no discussion on this subject at Council. Unfortunate, because the main reason for requiring the MIS in the first place was to evaluate the strip mall's effect on the downtown core—and the Almonte OP requires it. Council and staff are reluctant to release this new study until it has been "fixed up" and Council has re-approved it. The MMRA questions this approach. How is the public to have meaningful input, if residents can't comment until after decisions have been approved? A public meeting on these issues is tentatively scheduled for July 29.

—submitted by George Yaremchuk

Membership update! The MMRA membership is currently **156 and still growing**. As a member of the MMRA, please consider joining an MMRA committee (see www.mmra.ca for more information). MMRA **watchdogs** (members) who can attend and update the group on the occasional Council or committee of Council meeting are also in short supply. Please call Julie Yeaman at 256-2361 if you are interested.

Update on Almonte's Sewer and Water

At a special Public Works Committee meeting on Monday, June 23, 2003, presentations from John McKee, from the engineering firm of OMM Trow, and John Kingsbury, from the Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA), provided insights into the current operating capacity of both the Almonte Ward's water and sewage (lagoon) systems. While preliminary in nature, neither presentation painted a rosy picture of the capacity of either system with suggestions that during the summer months the supply of water just meets demand and the sewage lagoon is at or nearing capacity.

More detailed capacity and operating information is expected at the upcoming July 3rd Roads and Public Works Committee Meeting and we hope that these detailed reports will provide a much clearer picture, and that the news will be much better.

We do, however, want to take this opportunity to remind you to please conserve our precious and limited resources.

(For more information on the Trow engineering report, visit www.mmra.ca)

—submitted by David McLaren

— dog tag —

MMRA—The Mississippi Mills Residents' Association
The Watchdog is the newsletter of the MMRA. The Watchdog broadcasts information & decisions from the Board of the MMRA, and keeps members up-to-date on current issues and municipal affairs in Mississippi Mills. (Published as required.)

The MMRA Board and executive positions

President (and webmaster):	George Yaremchuk
Vice-President:	David McLaren
Secretary:	Brenda Boyd
Treasurer:	Dorothy Finner
Director of Membership:	Sietze Praamsma
Communications Committee:	Jill McCubbin newsletter David McLaren Bill Slade web monitor Julie Yeaman watchdog coordinator
Directors at large:	Reiner Hollbach, Doug Fleming, and Steve Handfield-Jones

Taken from the MMRA *ruff ruff* draft constitution...

3. The Objects of the Association are:
- (i) to enhance the life and living conditions of the residents of the Town...
 - (ii) to ensure that each resident is given an enhanced opportunity to participate in the democratic, economic and civic affairs of the Town;
 - (iii) to research and investigate issues of civic concern, and to inform its membership;
 - (iv) to further the education of residents in civic values, including their rights and responsibilities;... (read more at www.mmra.ca)



Our bark is no worse than our bite.

newsletter breeder (editor):
Jill McCubbin
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Mississippi Mills Residents' Association—MMRA

2003—Membership Registration Form—also available on-line at www.mmra.ca

The MMRA is a non-profit residents' association. To join by mail: MMRA 2 Tatra St. Almonte ON K0A 1A0

Your membership donation will help cover the costs of organising meetings, advertising & communications.

Please join the MMRA to help protect & enhance our wonderful community of Mississippi Mills.

last name(s): _____

first name(s): _____

mailing address: _____

home phone number: _____

street address: _____

membership fee

town: _____

individual: \$10

postal code: _____

family (2 members): \$15

email address: _____

donations are appreciateed: \$ _____

residence: _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

Blakeney Almonte Clayton Appleton Ramsay Rural Pakenham Pakenham Rural