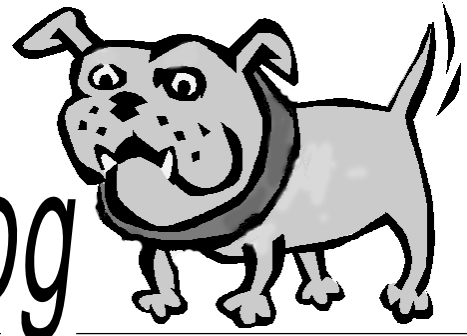


MMRA *watchdog*



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



Did you know the town is paving Mill Street, Almonte?

(back in 1926) —photo courtesy of Michael Dunn (see more at <http://almonte.clal.ca/> and take a virtual historical walking tour of Almonte)

The MMRA is introduced to Council, 10 March 2003

(the 'dog applies for its licence—will council approve the papers?')

Planning and Economic Development Committee Meeting March 25, 2003.

Committee meeting begins at 5PM, public information meeting begins at 7PM, in the council chambers. Concerning an application for amendment to the Ramsay Ward Official Plan and the Miss. Mills zoning by-law (necessary for development plans on the new shopping mall to progress). This is part of the review process only. The applicant will provide market impact and traffic impact reports.

Public meeting to consider a property standards by-law for the entire town. April 3, 2003, at 7 PM, at the Municipal Offices. (for more info: www.town.mississippi-mills.on.ca and click on government notices.)

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Dear Mayor Pettem,

As you will be aware, a group of Mississippi Mills residents recently formed an association dedicated to the betterment of our community. To this end we are interested in developing a positive working relationship with Council and staff. By this means we hope to make your jobs easier and improve communications back to the population. We want to give the residents of Mississippi Mills a better understanding of your concerns and constraints, and give you the opportunity to better know their wishes.

Following are some of the roles and activities that we can envision for our association:

- a programme of regular meetings between us
- provision of appointees to Town committees
- assistance in research and other tasks from those of our members who have special expertise
- organisation of public meetings and 'Town Hall' meetings at and between election times
- assistance in organising public opinion surveys on specific issues.

We would propose an exploratory meeting with you in the near future to examine the possibilities in this regard. We have an interim executive in place who are preparing for a formal founding general meeting in May. If we can discuss possible arrangements with you before that, it will enable us to present a framework of an arrangement to the membership at that time.

We look forward to hearing from you in the near future, and remain ready to meet with you at your convenience. We believe we can work together to enhance the quality of life of the entire population.

Yours very sincerely,
MISSISSIPPI MILLS RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Peter Moller, Liaison (256-1237)

on behalf of MMRA Board: Dorothy Finner, Anne Mason, Shaun McLaughlin, Peter Moller, Al Potvin, George Yaremchuk, and Julie Yeaman.

If you need something from somebody, always give that person a way to hand it to you.

The following article lists most of the development projects proceeding in and around Mississippi Mills.

Just how many were you aware of? How many were publicized by Council or by the Gazette? The MMRA aims for less secrecy and more discussion.

Spring Street Subdivision

This property is located behind the current Gale subdivision, between Patterson St. and the Mississippi River (near the new water tower).

There are approximately 297 residential units, plus plans for Seniors' residence condos, and a commercial section on top of that. The proposed site plan (available at www.mmra.ca) shows a small waterfront park, but no waterfront buffer zone at all.

This site is situated on class 1 and 2 agricultural soil (top quality!) the shoreline is classed as provincially significant wetlands, and is also classed as an Area of natural Significant Interest (ANSI). As well, the town zoning map shows that about 1/4 to 1/3 of this property is zoned a waterfront environmental hazard zone.

The owner is Salim (Mike) Houchami (former owner of *Mama's Place*). He has made a request to the Official Plan Steering Committee that this property be included inside the borders of Almonte Ward. If this bid is successful, he will be able to conveniently side-step the normal developmental approval process. If development property is inside an urban area, then it can't really be agricultural, can it? Officially the MMRA has not heard anything further about this project. So far, test holes have been dug in the field behind Tatra St. (at Patterson) and surveyors have been around.

Ottawa Street Strip Mall

John Levi and Wilson Basille are planning a new strip mall across from the Independent Grocer/Stoneridge Mall. Site plans detail a strip mall with 10-18 individual store spaces, a separate Homes Building center (hardware and lumber combined), and a Tim Horton's.

Currently this development contravenes both the Ramsay and Almonte Official Plans—they must both be amended to allow this development to continue. Council's current position: It is allowing Levi/Basille to do the preliminary work to the sewer/water conduits underneath Ottawa Street to make ready for services to be brought over the ward boundaries. Levi/Basille are working at their own financial risk, but Council is trying to speed through the amendment process, so as not to deter/discourage the mall-builders any more than possible.

The developers asked for the process to be fast-tracked as much as possible. **There is a public information meeting on this issue on March 25th at 7 PM at the council chambers, Town Hall, Old Perth Road.**

The traffic study that was produced for this development indicated that no additional expansion of Ottawa St. is required! Hard to imagine when a left turn will be needed into Tim Horton's in the morning and then another to get back out across traffic and off to Ottawa to work. Slow downs?

Levi/Basille "Mall" #2

This one is kitty-corner across the street from new mall #1, right next to Graphix Express. This development is currently being proposed as seven separate buildings linked with a service road. More development linking up to public water and sewer services.

Sadler's Farm

This property is located behind the proposed strip mall. (Northwest side of Hwy 49 coming into town from Ottawa). Presumably the argument is this: Once services are brought out to the strip mall, then it will be rather easy to service the land in behind it.

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Web Site

The MMRA Web site is located at:

<http://www.mmra.ca/>

Information on rumours, developments, waste & water related issues, press items, contact info., etc. There are still gaps, but the MMRA is evolving. If you have comments, suggestions, would like to contribute content or rumours, email gny@sympatica.ca

MMRA Yahoo Discussion Group

For up-to-the-minute discussion and information, the discussion group is where it's at. An active group that serves as a forum for issues coming down the pipe from town council as well as information from many other sources. In addition, information & documents are posted in the "Files" area.

To access the group, you must be or become a member of Yahoo Groups at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/>. Membership to Yahoo is free, but you'll need to endure adverts while browsing—a reasonable trade-off for our purposes. (Be sure to uncheck the "negative option advertising" buttons where you can.)

It is often difficult to join Yahoo, but with perseverance it can be done. We will "soon" have a step-by-step document available to guide you through the process. Note the only real information you have to give to Yahoo is a valid email address—it's up to you how much other real information you post. However, a unique user name is required. (Unique among millions of Yahoo Groups users.) It is suggested you not use your email address—it will be visible to all.

Fill out a profile once you're a member. This is the information displayed to other group members when you post messages. It is separate from what you gave to Yahoo to become a member (above). As a member of the MMRA, please fill out the profile with at least your first name & last initial. In this way, when you post, you will be easily identified by other members. Anonymous use of the discussion group won't be allowed, but remember nobody outside the MMRA group has access to the group.

After your profile is complete, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MissMillsResidents/> and click "Join this group" link. This will automatically send a request to group moderator (George Y) who will (shortly) approve your membership. If you have problems, please email George at gny@sympatica.ca.

That's all for now, George Y

OFF THE BOARD

The Mississippi Mills Residents' Association (MMRA) got off to a great start with over 100 people attending the evening meeting February 12 at the Almonte high school to talk about community issues and to help select an interim board of directors. Many people signed on to become members, and numbers have been increasing steadily since then.

John Edwards, chair of the Community Official Plan Steering Committee, spoke to the crowd about the importance of public participation. Brian Doucett and Mike Miller, directors of the Carleton Place Ratepayers' Association, gave the new MMRA members tips on how to get started and how the grow.

During the open discussion, and backed by a survey taken at the meeting, it appears that the top-of-mind issue is development. Residential growth planning, new malls, maintaining the viability of the downtown core, preservation of agricultural lands from development, and protection of hamlet character were all of high concern. There was also positive support expressed for a new resident's association that would work with Council to

insure a broadening of the base of people contributing to development decisions in the future.

The attendees chose eight people to act as an interim board of directors until the end of May. Members are: former Almonte mayor Dorothy Finner (Treasurer), Al Potvin (Policy), Julie Yeaman (Membership), Anne Mason (Communications), Peter Moller (Liaison), Mike Doyle (Legal), George Yaremchuk (WebMaster) and Shaun McLaughlin (Secretary). Mike Doyle has since resigned his position, with regrets. Legal matters have been assumed by Al Potvin. Policy development will be handled by all directors and by subcommittee.

The interim Board has met twice since the inaugural meeting and is hard at work establishing the by-laws, committees, finances and mandate in preparation for the Annual General Meeting due to take place in May. If anyone is interested in giving us a hand, you are more than welcome! Please contact a member of the interim Board and let us know. And check out our web site (see article in this newsletter) for more information.

—Anne Mason

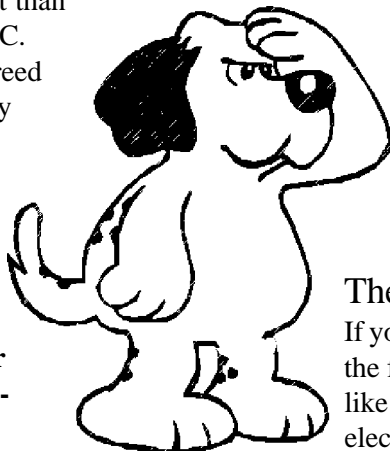
News from the interim board meeting, held March 10, 2003

Policy Issues

The board identified the need to have a committee that could react quickly to development issues. The board must remain focussed on creating the foundation for the MMRA, but some issues demand attention. It was agreed to form the Current Development Action Committee (CDAC). Its mandate will be to respond to issues needing immediate attention. Members are Julie and Stewart Yeaman, Shaun McLaughlin, George Yaremchuk, Al Potvin, Nathan Rudyk and Jill McCubbin.

The board also realized that long term policy issues need development, and the board sees this as very different than the mandate of the CDAC. Therefore, the Board agreed to create a General Policy Advisory Committee to develop this area. Dorothy Finner is the only current member.

Please consider this notice as an appeal to membership asking for volunteers for this sub-committee.



Legal/Structural Issues

The Board determined that this role is large and that it's lead, Al Potvin, should have some help. Therefore, the Legal and Structural Advisory Committee was struck.

Al Potvin is the only current member. **Please consider this notice as an appeal to membership asking for volunteers for this sub-committee.**

Communications

A tentative date was set for the MMRA founding General meeting: May 21, 2003, time & location TBA.

The MMRA needs community participation— please get involved and contact your board. The MMRA would also like *watchdogs* (members) at town council and council committee meetings. We need to keep information circulating. Can you help?

Stand up and be counted!

Sit up and bark! (good dog)

The coming elections — what to do?

If you are considering running in the fall municipal election for the first time, let the MMRA board know. The MMRA would like to offer support to intrepid individuals who want to get elected. This town needs an effective & innovative Council!

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Wilson Basille is reportedly the speculator behind this proposed development. He has already asked the Official Plan Steering Committee to include this property inside the revised boundaries of Almonte Ward. This land is currently in Ramsay Ward, and cannot be serviced until the Almonte Official Plan is changed by Council to allow water and sewer to be brought outside the Almonte ward boundaries.

Logan's Subdivision

Merv Logan is planning a subdivision in behind Martin St. off Adelaide St. It's adjacent to town and municipal services. This proposal seems actually to follow the gist of the Official Plan(s)! Concentric, adjacent growth, inside the urban boundaries! No site plan has been made public as of yet, though surely one exists.

Some information from the town: Logan's subdivision is 2.2 ha of land designated residential in the Almonte OP. Anticipate an application for draft plan approval in the early spring of 2003 for 16 single detached lots, 10 townhouse lots, & an 8 unit condo block—density of 6.3 units/acre.

Residential Development at Mitcheson & Carss

Vision of an investment group led by Stephen Brathwaite.

A plan with 2 phases. Phase 1: five residential lots created in 2003. The first & largest at the corner of Mitcheson and Carss, the other four along Mitcheson. Site plans have not yet been approved. Phase 2 sees development of that large block of land bounded by Mitcheson, Carss, Martin St. North, and a still-closed road allowance, Lansdowne St. This area is adjacent to public services, it's within the Almonte ward, and looks like another example of smart growth.

—George Yaremchuk

Plasma Arc Incineration in Almonte

After the last public meeting (last spring) where the public was highly critical of the proposal, and then the subsequent disappearance from the scene of the financial backer Richard Barth, most of us assumed that Plasma Arc Incineration in Almonte was dead. Such is not the case!

The Plasma Arc Committee has been quietly meeting for the past year. This committee reports to the Roads and Public Works Committee, which then reports to council.

The committee commissioned a report last summer on various waste disposal techniques, which (surprise, surprise) indicates that Plasma Arc is the favoured way to go. We are still trying to obtain that report from the town. In September, council authorised Mayor Pettem to negotiate with Pyrogenesis in regards to the Plasma Arc technology.

Plasma Arc Spending

Council approved **\$1600** to be spent on Plasma Arc (reasons not specified) last spring. In Feb 2003, council approved an investigation to identify all possible sources of funding and the process of provincial environmental approvals for Plasma Arc, and **\$3000** to perform this investigation. In Jan 2003, the Plasma Arc Committee recommended to the Roads & Public Works Committee that **\$50,000** be budgeted for Plasma Arc for required consulting services for preliminary investigations of funding and environmental processes. Sounds like council is getting very serious about this.

— 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.)



Our bark is no worse than our bite.

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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 appreciated: \$

TOTAL: \$

residence:

Blakeney Almonte Clayton Appleton Ramsay Rural Pakenham Pakenham Rural

