



# September 2015 Newsletter

## Welcome Back !!

After a pleasant summer enjoying the numerous great activities in our local community, URA is back at work. We look forward to communicating with you using emails, newsletters and meetings, and advocating on your behalf during the upcoming year.

There were relatively few issues that arose during the summer. Therefore, we will not be holding a September members meeting. Our next meeting will be Monday October 5



## Federal All Candidate Meeting October 5, 2015 (Monday)

URA will be holding a Federal All Candidate Meeting on Monday, October 5, 2015 at 7:00pm at the Markham Pan Am Centre.

We will be inviting all registered candidates for Markham-Unionville. As of early August, the Markham Economist and Sun has listed three candidates:

- Elvin Kao, Green Party
- Bang-Gu Jiang, Liberal Party
- Bob Saroya, Conservative Party

## GO train anti-horn program continues to be active

Community activism has continued to keep the GO Horn issue front and centre with our residents and councillors. During the summer, a dynamic group of residents, with URA support, has been canvassing neighbourhoods all along the GO Corridor in Markham to educate citizens that something can be done. Well over 1000 citizens have signed a petition to "stop the horns". More details can be found at <http://nohorn.ca>.

In addition, an article and half-page advertisement covering this topic appeared in August issue of Markham Review.

Progress has been slower than expected in the engineering area. The final consultant report is not yet with City staff, so our objective of having a Working Group meeting in August, prior to a staff report to Council, has not yet occurred. Without this report, we have no concrete facts on the extent and costs of physical work needed to make Markham's road-rail crossings compliant with Transport Canada guidelines in a no-horn environment.



## Unionville Home Society Redevelopment Plan



Local residents were shocked on June 29 to hear about major redevelopment plans at the Unionville Home Society (UHS). In summary, due to cash needs to pay off debts and develop a capital reserve fund, and to increase the supply of affordable and long term care housing in the area, UHS will demolish the 92 unit Heritage Village (“cottages”) component of the campus. A portion of the land will be sold to developer Minto for market-priced housing. The rest would be sold to York Region to develop 200 units of affordable rental housing for seniors. Some expansion of the long term care facility may also occur.

The major concern with the proposal was that construction would not be phased. Cottage residents would have to vacate by December, 2016 and would not be able to move back until about 2020. However, following a public outcry and lots of behind-the-scenes work by Markham Council, on July 29 the Region announced that “all parties have agreed to pursue a revised plan that would see the regional building constructed first so that the residents might be offered the first opportunity for relocation within the community. This should ease the initial concerns stemming from this project”.

There are still unanswered questions about the proposal, including whether the revised construction plan can be achieved, what Minto’s plans are for their development, and what the impacts will be on the larger neighbourhood. As the proposal requires Zoning Bylaw Amendments, there will be a public process to flesh out these details. URA will continue to monitor developments and participate as needed.

### Varley Plaza – Residents to move out

Readers will recall that a 113 residential unit, 4 story mixed-use condo building is slated to be constructed on this property, on Fred Varley Drive near Main Street. URA has had a long history with this project, including loosing at the Ontario Municipal Board in 2013. Council endorsed the Site Plan in June, 2015. We are advised that Tribute, the developer, has given notice for all residents to vacate the building by November, presumably to allow demolition and construction to start soon after.

## What is the URA ?

A non-partisan association of the residents of Unionville

- ✓ Boundaries: Warden Ave. to McCowan Rd. and Sixteenth Ave. to Hwy 407
- ✓ Founded in 1974 to protect the interests of the community
- ✓ Registered with the Province of Ontario and the City of Markham

## What does URA do ?

- ✓ Stays current on events, activities and issues in Unionville
- ✓ Keeps our members informed through regular email broadcasts and monthly meetings (with guest speakers on hot topics)
- ✓ Ensures our residents’ views are known and communicated to local, regional and provincial government officials and representatives
- ✓ Provides information on our website on active issues
- ✓ Organizes special events (e.g. All-Candidates meetings during elections, issue based meetings)

## Special Membership Offer

We are pleased to announce a new fall membership special offer

**Renew Now to the end of 2016 for just \$20 or**

**to the end of 2017 for \$35**

