



December 2015 Newsletter

URA New Board of Directors And Officers



At our Annual General Meeting on November 2, 2015, the following Directors were elected: Tom Davies, Donna Day, Gene Genin, Keing Li, Karen Lui, Reid McAlpine, Peter Miasek, Adam Poon, Kanthini Rajakanthan and Alick Siu.

At a subsequent Directors' meeting, the following Table Officers were elected:

President - Alick Siu
Vice President – Reid McAlpine
Treasurer – Donna Day
Secretary – Gene Genin.

With the election of a new President, Peter Miasek continues on the board as Past President.

As Past President, I would personally like to thank the returning members of the board and extend a special welcome to Tom, Karen and Kanthini. I also wish to congratulate Alick on his new role and welcome Donna to the Officers team. Under the capable leadership of Alick and the Officers, we have a very strong board that will lead our Association forward.

Peter Miasek

Christmas Party (December 7th) Stiver Mill 7:00 - 10:00 PM

You will soon receive your invitation to our 3rd Annual Unionville Community Christmas Party, hosted by Unionville Ratepayers Association, Unionville Villagers Association and South Unionville Residents Forum. It will be at the Stiver Mill with drop in between 7:00pm and 10:00pm. We have also invited elected officials, key municipal staff and presidents of other Markham ratepayer associations. We remind you that we are accepting donations – non-perishable food for the Markham Food Bank or new unwrapped toys for the Markham Fire toy drive.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

URA Fighting to Resume Skating On Toogood Pond



For the past year representatives of the URA and other community groups have been in discussion with City staff to convince them to resume the clearing and flooding of Toogood Pond during the winter for skating. Sadly this fall we arrived at an impasse. Staff has cited safety concerns for ceasing to clear and flood the pond - despite decades of safe skating there. On November 23rd the URA, UVA, UBIA and UHS delivered a plea in favor of resuming winter maintenance to the General Committee of City Council. The matter was then referred to the December 7 meeting of the Committee. At that meeting an internal City report on the topic will be reviewed along with the details of our November 23rd presentation (which will be posted on the URA website.) We encourage anyone who has ever enjoyed skating on Toogood Pond to attend the December 7 General Committee meeting to demonstrate their concern to Council.

Contact
Information

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Scardred 7 – Request for Downzoning At Highway 7/Village Parkway

This company, at 3940 Highway 7 (north side, west of Village Parkway) is applying for amendments to Markham's Official Plan and zoning bylaws to change from their approved 209-unit 8-story condo building fronting on Highway 7 to a 29-unit townhouse development.

As discussed in our October newsletter, URA has concerns with this application. Because Markham is obligated under provincial law to assimilate a large population increase by 2031, this downzoning could shift population from an intense transit corridor to new developments north of our area, contributing to sprawl and traffic through our community. The URA Directors wrote to Development Services Committee (DSC) indicating that "the Directors are opposed to this downzoning unless a means is found to transfer the extra 180 units to another location in Markham on a major transit corridor or in a regional growth centre, while still maintaining the principles of good liveability and good planning in the receiving location".

Council will now await a staff recommendation report before making a final decision early in 2016. York Region also has an interest in this matter, and must approve any Markham decision.

Unionville Home Society Redevelopment Plan

As discussed in our September newsletter, the Unionville Home Society is starting a development project to accommodate the following:

- A minimum of 200 affordable housing rental units for seniors on a 2-3 acre parcel in an apartment building owned and managed by Housing York Inc.
- A 1-2 acre parcel for a future UHS expansion
- The residual lands to be redeveloped for market-oriented residential uses by Minto Communities Inc. , a large developer, to allow the UHS, via this land sale, to provide for its long-term financial and operational sustainability

The three proponents are establishing a Community Liaison Committee. URA has accepted an invitation to sit on this committee. The first meeting is in mid-December. We will keep our members and the community informed as the project proceeds.

Main Street Unionville Vision Moving Slowly – Property Owners Reluctant to Chip In



Perhaps the most important issue affecting our community is the status of the Vision Plan approved by council last winter. In the view of the URA, much depends on the hiring of a development coordinator to lead implementation. However, despite two meetings with local commercial property owners, the Mayor has been unable to convince them to chip in to cover the cost of this position -- despite the enormous gains they stand to make through the revitalization of the village. Nonetheless Council's Development Services Committee has agreed to continue with the development of a new official Secondary Plan, built on the Vision Plan, and to establish a new community advisory committee on the project. The URA will be invited to appoint a member to that committee. On November 23 the new President of the URA wrote a letter to the DSC expressing satisfaction with the establishment of the committee but disappointment at the lack of progress on the development coordinator. The letter (which is now posted on the URA website) encourages the City to fund the position itself for one year, in light of its own financial interests in the redevelopment of Main Street. The URA will continue to promote this position via the new advisory committee.