

Glen Williams
Community Association
Our Village, Our Voice.

Annual Report - 2017

Preamble

Over 50 Glen residents attended the November 23, 2016 founding meeting of our new not-for-profit corporation Ontario 001959883 – Hamlet of Glen Williams Residents Association Inc. – The GWCA. They reaffirmed the community's desire for a strong and active Glen Williams Community Association. We are pleased to report that good progress has been made over the past year to renew and strengthen the association. The activities of the Board and its membership in 2017 have been multifaceted.

Board of Directors and Government Relations

At the 2016 Annual General Meeting, 14 individuals were elected to the GWCA Board of Directors: Janet Bailey, Dale Cox, Dave Cox, Joan Griffin, Matt Kindbom, Drew Leverette, Kate Murray, Ken Paige, Derek Remes, Don Robinson, Claudia Russell, Claudia Stanic, Wayne Van Hinte, and Tom Wharton. At our first organizational meeting, the new 2017 Board appointed: Drew Leverette - President, Kate Murray - Secretary, Claudia Stanic - Treasurer, Janet Bailey - Communications & Membership Lead.

The Board of Directors has met every month since. During the year, the composition of the Board changed through resignations and the subsequent appointment of Alex Leger. In addition to active Board members, the association organized other residents into a network of Neighbourhood Reps to strengthen connections in every corner of the hamlet. The association's organizational requirements for drafting a Bylaw and establishing a bank account have been dealt with. See separate Bylaw and Financial Statement 2017 documents. The work of the Board continues on the refinement of a GWCA Purpose Statement.

The Board re-established ongoing liaison with the Town with a January meeting involving the Directors and the Mayor and our three Ward 2 Councillors. Mutual dialogue and "heads-up" email exchanges have continued over the year. The President has met informally a number of times with the Town's CAO to discuss issues and exchange perspectives. Board members have met with Town Staff, observed and presented at multiple Town Council Meetings and have attended selected Committee of Adjustment and Rural Policing Meetings.

Communications & Membership; Activities, Events & Community Groups; Business & Arts Community

A major achievement for the association has been the successful launch of the hamlet portal www.glenwilliams.org. The Board wishes to acknowledge and thank volunteers Sandy Gillians, Steve Beattie and Janet Bailey for the hours and personal resources they continue to contribute to the informational and technical requirements of this website. Many Glen community groups and

entrepreneurs have asked to be included in the online Directory. The GWCA continues to solicit and accept information that will connect activities, events and groups. There have been over 5000 visitors to the site since it was launched with an all time traffic high in July for Canada Day. As with all social media, our website remains a work in progress.

The GWCA is committed to looking for every opportunity to build community. Our purpose is to facilitate connections between different community groups and neighbourhoods and advocate for joint objectives or projects, wherever possible. Our Board made connections with the Credit Valley Heritage Society concerning their Credit Valley Trail Strategy. We promoted the Town's initiative to fly the most flags and become Canada's Most Patriotic Town. The GWCA participated in the Glen's Canada Day celebrations with an information table and display in the ballpark. Ongoing liaison has been established with the Glen Williams Town Hall Board. Beginning steps have been taken to connect with the Ontario Greenbelt Alliance and its 120 community groups and environmental organizations. Informal liaison was established with many of the local businesses and with the new Board of the Williams Mill. The GWCA continues to look for ways to best support our business and arts community and their contribution to cultural vibrancy and quality of life in our village.

To comply with government email correspondence laws, our Neighbourhood Reps distributed *glenwillams.org* bookmarks to encourage residents to visit the website, renew their GWCA membership online and confirm ongoing receipt of both Janet Bailey's Glen eNewsletter and the GWCA eNewsletter. Membership is strong with over 700 registered members, with additional persons receiving eNewsletters. The response to both newsletters has been extremely positive. Residents say that they appreciate being kept informed about specific issues facing the hamlet and the many opportunities to enjoy our life in the Glen. Our GWCA column in the Neighbours in the Glen magazine is widely read and commented upon. We are fortunate to have this small print publication that focuses on Glen Williams and informs us about interesting people, stories and issues in our hamlet.

Development & Infrastructure

Many hours were spent by the new Board in its very early days dealing with the Eden Oak Creditview Heights development application proposed for the vacant land between the end of Credit St. and the Wildwood Rail Trail. This involved the reading of many reports and creation of multiple written and oral submissions. We believe that the final design of this development does not adequately meet the intent of the Glen Williams Secondary Plan, but are somewhat heartened that our resident advocacy proved helpful to Town staff in securing some concessions from the developer. Board members spoke at both the January Town Council Public Meeting concerning the Town-Developer agreement and the February OMB Hearing structured to confirm the deal. We experienced first hand the power of both developers and the OMB. Current OMB tribunal processes do not allow the public to engage on an equal footing, unless those residents are prepared to finance their own lawyers and consultants. Following this unsatisfactory experience, the GWCA offered residents the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding. A "Lessons Learned" open session was held in the GW

Town Hall in April where participants learned about the current development application process and the future developments planned for Glen Williams. In July, Eden Oak advised the Town that it is again applying to the OMB, this time it is to appeal the Town's handling of their Devins development application. This involves a proposed development for the vacant land between Oak Ridge Dr. and 8th Line, behind the Wildwood Road properties. An OMB Pre-Hearing has been set for the Town's Council Chambers on November 17, 2017. In August, the GWCA provided background support information to interested neighbours surrounding "The Field". This vacant land, again owned by Eden Oak, is bordered by Tweedle St., Bennett Place, Glen Crescent Dr., Confederation St. and Bishop Court. Area residents affected plan to express their views early on to the Town, before a formal application is filed by the developer.

In our GWCA presentation to Council in January, Board members spoke about the limitations imposed on residents by the current public engagement process offered by the Town. We also voiced residents' concern that if the Eden Oak Creditview Heights style of development was possible under the Glen Williams Secondary Plan, it was time to review this 2005 policy framework. These issues along with the residents' concern about the protection of the character of the Glen's mature neighbourhoods, had Town officials respond with two reports at the June Council meeting. The Town's Public Engagement Report presented a number of recommendations including a Mayor's Task Force on Public Engagement. The GWCA President is serving on this task force. The Glen Williams Workplan Report proposed a hamlet Secondary Plan review for 2019, and a Glen Williams Mature Neighbourhood Character Study. GWCA Board members and area residents met in September with Planning Staff to discuss the scope of the proposed character study. A staff report about the study will be coming forward to Town Council in November 2017. In 2018, The Town Transportation and Public Works Dept. is scheduled to begin the Environmental Impact Review (EIR) for their planned Prince St. Reconstruction Project.

Traffic & Safe Active Transportation

A comprehensive public trail system supporting safe active transportation (cycling, walking) is important to many residents in Glen Williams. The GWCA advocated to the Town and the developer for the protection and enhancement of the landscaping along the Wildwood Rail Trail and for a multiple trail connections with a destination parkette in the proposed new Eden Oak Creditview Heights – "The Chase" development. We were successful with the former, but not the latter this time around.

The speed and volume of traffic through the hamlet remains an ongoing issue for Glen residents. The GWCA Board assisted a number of neighbourhood street groups who made inquiries about traffic speed concerns. We heard from residents on the 8th Line, Wildwood Road, Confederation St. and Prince St. We supplied contact information and suggested strategies for engaging Town staff to find solutions. Our combined efforts resulted in the installation of traffic calming measures on two roads - Prince Street and Wildwood Road. Information collected from traffic spot speed radar studies of those roads generated calming measures that included enlarged speed signs, painted SLOW signs, and optical bars on the asphalt.

Natural & Built Heritage

Protecting and enhancing the beautiful natural heritage of our hamlet is important to us all. The GWCA supports projects that will achieve this objective. Our Board invited the Executive Director of the Credit Valley Heritage Society (CVHS) to our June meeting. The CVHS is looking to gather partners to support the vision for a 100 km pedestrian corridor from port to headwaters that will touch 20 identified destinations including Glen Williams. Board members attended a similar presentation at Town Council in late August to show our interest and support. Protecting and enhancing the built heritage of the Glen has yet to be explored by Board. Many regulatory issues have changed since the topic of heritage designation was discussed by residents in the early 2000's. We have been asked by some residents to investigate the topic again, especially in the context of the upcoming Glen Williams Mature Neighbourhood Character Study.

Conclusion

It has been a productive year for the new Glen Williams Community Association. Keeping our home as a hamlet in both form and function requires ongoing commitment, vigilance and advocacy from residents. In the face of today's quest for uniformity, passionate people with a wide range of interests working together are needed if we are to maintain our special sense of place known as "The Glen".

The GWCA invites new voices to join the voices of others currently volunteering to help form our Board of Directors for 2018.

Respectfully submitted by:

2017 GWCA Board of Directors

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*presented at the
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