

## **President Report - February 2018**

I always enjoy the Winter Olympics and admire the skill level of all of the athletes. As I write this, the Olympic Games are just about to begin so I have no idea how the Canadian athletes made out in their individual sport. I am a curler and I still play hockey so I am a big fan of those sports. The mixed doubles in curling is new to the Olympics this year and that can be fun to watch. So many of the sports are timed events meaning teams can lose by literally hundredths of a second and are disappointed with their result. Still, you have to admire the skill and their commitment to their sport to reach that level of competition.

By now you will have noticed that the traffic signals at Ogden Road and 76<sup>th</sup> Avenue are in the process of being installed. They should be operating soon if not already. We are hopeful these traffic signals will improve the management of traffic within the community particularly during the morning and afternoon peak traffic periods, and maybe even pull some of the traffic away from 18<sup>th</sup> Street.

I have nothing new to report on the proposed 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue underpass at this time of writing. We are told that the City is still trying to confirm the road alignment and will then work with the affected property owners and residents with respect to how their property will be impacted. I am sure they will also be holding another information session at some point but we do not have a date yet. It would seem that we will not be able to stop the construction of this underpass as it is intended to replace the 69<sup>th</sup> Avenue railway crossing when it is closed, but we have requested that the City consider restricting the commercial vehicle access to the smaller trucks.

Last month I wrote about the Shepard Landfill Site and that the City was planning to close that landfill to the public and restrict the use to industrial waste and Green Cart material. I now believe that there are other changes now being proposed for the Shepard Landfill and I say that because Councillor Keating chose to withdraw a Notice of Motion that he had filed at City Council which would have delayed the closure pending a further review of alternatives. I believe what I heard was that the City is now proposing an expanded throw-and-go area for the public with a separate access point so as not to interfere with the commercial vehicles. Anyway, I will try to learn more and I will report further in future reports.

You may have heard that the City is proposing further changes to the way they handle the approval of secondary suite applications. Currently, because many of these applications are coming from property owners located in districts designated as R-C1 or single family, a land use re-designation is required to allow for the change in use. As it currently stands, all land use re-designations must go before City Council at a public hearing for approval. In recent months there has been a substantial increase in the number of applications and they have found this to be extremely time consuming to members of Council, the City administration staff, and of course to the applicants. Now my personal position has been that the City created a set of criteria some time ago for the City planners to follow when reviewing secondary suite applications and every application that is forwarded to City Council is coming with a recommendation for approval, which would suggest that the application has met the requirements in the approval criteria. Still, City Council has chosen to reject a few of these applications so from that perspective, if they are

going to overrule the recommendation of the administration on some, in my opinion they must then review them all.

To be clear though, we at MOCA do not have an issue with the principle of secondary suites. A few years ago there was a proposal to do a blanket rezoning of only four Wards within the City to allow secondary suites and Ward 9 was included in that group, which of course included our community. We opposed this at the time because it was not City wide and it was considered as an experiment – we did not want our community residential property owners to be an experiment.

As I understand this most recent proposal, it amounts to a City wide amendment which would allow secondary suites in all communities in the City. A review committee will have the authority to review, approve, or reject individual applications based on their merit. There may still be some that might have to be referred to City Council at a public hearing, but these should be much fewer, making the process much more streamlined for most applicants. I believe this matter will be going before City Council on March 12 and if this proposal is approved, secondary suites would no longer require a rezoning application but would only require a Discretionary Development Permit. There will still be an opportunity for those who oppose an application to appeal the matter to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board but their decision would be final.

I know that I continue to harp on memberships but that is the one key thing that organizations like ours rely on, as it is the members that make the decisions at the end of the day. I can guarantee you that being a member of MOCA is not like being a member of a political party – you will not be getting a request for a financial donation every 3<sup>rd</sup> day. There might even be the odd benefit like a free monthly disposal at Ecco Waste and Recycling which you might appreciate from time to time. And we could use your membership!!

And of course, if you are planning a social event, i.e., for your family, or business, or organization, please give some thought to renting the MOCA Hall, - main hall upper floor, or lower level lounge. We would appreciate your business.

As always, if you have questions or concerns that you would like to direct to me, please either call into the MOCA office, or send me an e-mail at [president@millicanogdencommunity.com](mailto:president@millicanogdencommunity.com). [Note-this is a new e-mail address].

Best wishes

Rick Smith, MOCA President