

THE LOOK OUT

A Newsletter Created by the Mono Mulmur Citizens' Coalition



WINTER 2020

PRESIDENT'S
MESSAGE

DON'S DESK
HOW ARE OUR
COUNCILS DOING?

WHAT'S BEEN
GOING ON
LATELY?

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Members!

MC² continues to be front and centre in our communities. We constantly work to influence our municipalities, to increase the level of engagement with citizens and to develop relationships with other like-minded citizens' coalitions. In addition to acting locally, we are also involved provincially, federally and globally.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of the team who makes

it happen and the members – YOU! – who support MC² by renewing and encouraging others to join the organization. Thank you for your continued support and for answering the e-blast calls to action!

As our first newsletter of 2020 goes out to all of you, we have included our annual membership renewal package for your consideration. You will also see an important letter from our new

treasurer, Bob Mitchell. Please give Bob's message your careful attention.

Welcome back to MC² for another busy year!

"We can change the world and make it a better place. It is in your hands to make a difference."

Nelson Mandela

Warm Regards,

Elaine



DON'S DESK HELPERS WRITE...

MONO AND MULMUR COUNCIL UPDATES

The arrival of winter has provided the usual challenges and issues for our Councils. One critical problem has emerged in Mono. A citizens' group is working with Council to address the development of what many see as a commercial operation in contravention to both the zoning by-laws and the strongly residential nature of the surrounding community. This issue, which is addressed below, has tended to overshadow the more normal work of the Mono Council, work which is also reflected in the Mulmur agenda, and features the finalization of budgets for the upcoming year, attention to road safety and others. The following update will ensure members are in tune with the work of Councils and the issues that they are facing.

MONO UPDATES

BUDGET: The budget for the year of 2020 was finalized and approved after the usual debates, discussions and public input. It was decided that the rate of tax in Mono shall remain approximately the same as last year adjusted for the inflation rate. The major cost centers in the budget are Roads 50% and Police and Fire 16%. Council manages the budgeting process effectively, with very little public involvement or interest.

RACETRACK: On the development side of things there is a proposal to import 1,835 tandem truck loads of soil to build up a horse racetrack "for personal use" on a property on the Fourth Line. Again, we see the need for tight control on fill dumping, which would have been in place if the Council had already approved the revised by-law. (See back page on Gooseville

Tavern for more info on the current fill by-law.)

PLASTIC BAGS: A by-law restricting the distribution of single-use plastic bags in Mono is awaiting its third reading at Mono Council. It may be passed by the time this newsletter reaches you. The Mono by-law, if approved, is slated for implementation by January 2021. There is a substantial amount of pressure and lobbying going on to persuade the Ontario government to follow suit and enact a law banning the bags province wide as well. This would give municipalities much more power of enforcement.

SAFETY TASK FORCE: The report of the Community Safety Task Force was presented to council and the public. Essentially the task force recommended 16 items requiring

DON'S DESK CONTINUES...

MULMUR UPDATES

attention. This also formed the base for the need for more policing to concentrate on speed issues on both Airport Rd and Highway 10, in addition to the need for better police presence in neighbourhoods to the south end of Mono. Contact the Mono Town Office for any updates to these recommendations.

BUDGET: The Mulmur Council has completed the budget for 2020. There will be a 2.99% increase over 2019, mostly driven by inflation issues. As usual two elements of the Budget drive most of the Township's costs, with Transportation Services at 44% of the total and Protective Services (Police and Fire) at 28%. Our view of the Township's budget management remains the same as in past years: our Council is effective in managing costs. In the past several years the Council has built its reserve funds, which are now being used to fund capital projects and purchases.

RECREATION SURVEY: For many years the community has struggled with the costs related to the Recreation Centre (Arena) in Honeywood, a facility which is shared with neighbouring Melancthon. The issues surrounding this facility focus on its cost, how expenses

should be shared with Melancthon, who uses the rink and other facilities in the building, what other recreational facilities do we have in Mulmur and what should we be most focused on. The Township is investing in a survey which allows citizens to give input and opinion on the Arena and other recreation opportunities, both currently available as well as needed, in Mulmur. The survey will be closed on February 21 and is available on the Township website. Citizen input is important as decisions will be made based on response to the survey.

CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: For many years MC² has advocated for both Mulmur and Mono to increase the focus on transparency, providing citizens with full disclosure on what Councils are doing; while at the same time opening up as much as possible to citizen comments, inputs and reactions. Both Councils have made significant progress on transparency, holding regular town hall meetings, encouraging question periods at Council meetings, ensuring opportunities for citizen input at Council meetings, and providing detailed information about meetings and activities on their websites. Mulmur has been working hard to get

wider use of, and attention to, its email list, which now provides access to about half of Mulmur's residences. Regular notices about important situations and events are sent out. Mulmur is now initiating a monthly E-Newsletter. We urge citizens to sign up for the email list. Mono provides a summary of the main discussions and decisions from its Council meetings. The end result of all of this communication has been a major increase in transparency. There is still plenty of room for improvement, and one of the most significant opportunities for improvement is for more citizens to take advantage of, and to react to the information being provided.

Much of what our Councils do is related to the ongoing management and administration of our communities. While we often focus on the "major" issues like the Gooseville Tavern and Council Transparency, it is important to realize that much of the responsibility in the jobs of Council and Staff is centered on the day-to-day work of keeping communities functioning well. Our view is that for the most part, this routine work is well done and we appreciate their efforts.

Notes from the Environment Committee

We were immensely pleased with the outcome of the Presentation on Plastics last fall. One of our committee members, Joanne Rovet, was a key speaker. As result, there have been several requests for more presentations including to a high school class, to a group in Georgetown and to a newly emerging environment group in Alliston. We sent a petition to the federal government which has been

formally received and will in time be responded to by the relevant ministries. The key focus of our petition is eliminating single use plastics and stopping subsidies to fossil fuel industries. Watch the website for updates on this issue.

Though Arnold DeGraaff has stepped away from being the chair, he is still on our committee. We are thankful for the years of service

he has given to our community through his careful research of topics and creative ways of sharing many important issues with all of us.

The Environment Committee welcomes suggestions for new members. For more information please contact Rita at 519-942-3283 or at degraaff-reitsma@sympatico.ca.



WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON LATELY?

● The Gooseville Tavern property was once again in the news. Apparently, the property owner decided to uplift several truck loads of fill to build up the driveway/road on his property. Council convened a public meeting prior to their regular meeting to hear the neighbours' issues. The fact that soil was moved one particular weekend recently without any advice or permit is notable and unusual. The Town appears to have excused that fact as permissible. The neighbours suggested approximately 200 truck loads were moved. The town accepted the property owner's version that approximately 70 truck loads of soil were moved and

that the move could only be done on that weekend. The citizens' group opposing this project has been awaiting a serious reaction from Council to their concerns, and an end to what they see as significant acquiescence to the Tavern's proponent.

● Related to the fill dumping issues, Council has a new fill by-law which has been waiting to be passed for two years. What is holding up the process? This new by-law is more detailed than previously and would be a more effective tool for controlling the type of fill dumping witnessed on the Tavern property, and elsewhere in Mono.

● **ATV USE IN MULMUR** - A couple of years ago Mulmur Council took very strong action to prevent allowing All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)

access to the county forests located in our township. The Provincial law on ATVs allows their use on public roads by local farmers, and allows recreational use only if the Towns/Townships specifically permit such use. Mono and Mulmur have not permitted recreational use on their roads. The Province is now changing the focus on ATVs in a law that has been passed but not yet enacted. Now Towns/Townships must pass by-laws specifically prohibiting ATVs. Mono did not wait for final enactment of this new law, and passed a by-law prohibiting ATV recreational use. Mulmur, has not yet passed such a by-law. We encourage members to contact Councillors to make clear that they do not want to see non-farm related ATV use on Mulmur roads.

THE 2019 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Last year's AGM took place on November 3 at the Mansfield Ski Club facilities with a great turnout of the membership. Along with detailed reports from outgoing Treasurer Don MacFarlane and outgoing Environment Committee Chair Arnold DeGraaff, the 2020 Board of Directors was unanimously approved – Del Bernardi, Susan Brown, Elaine Capes (President), Arnold DeGraaff, Knut Holmsen, Bob Mitchell (Treasurer), Rita Reitsma (Secretary) and Cheryl Russel.

Elaine took the opportunity to express her heartfelt thanks to the past and current Boards and the other members of "The Team". Don has also stepped down from his position as long-time Board member and Past President but will

continue his communications role. Arnold will stay on the Board and the Environment Committee. Secretary Rita Reitsma, outgoing keeper of the books Frances MacFarlane, Felicite Morgan and Cathy Noonan of Communications all received lovely flower bouquets.

Those in attendance had an opportunity to pose questions to the Board. Our members were treated to great refreshments and an enjoyable talk by Dorothy Mazeau of Golden Girls (and guys) Canada, an organization which promotes and assists with the matching of single adults for shared housing. For more information check out www.goldenhomessharingconnections.ca

THE LOOK OUT

Your comments on this issue are welcomed at info@monomulmur.com.
The Executive of MC² : Elaine Capes, President - Rita Reitsma, Secretary - Bob Mitchell, Treasurer.
Members-At-Large: Del Bernardi, Susan Brown, Arnold DeGraaff, Knut Holmsen, Cheryl Russel.
Newsletter Editor Cathy Noonan / Newsletter Design Felicite Morgan Cover Image: Schoolbus AM / Credit Felicite Morgan.