



Ward 1 ~ Chedoke – Cootes

Report to the Community
from
Councillor Brian McHattie
Summer 2006



Dear Resident

Happy summer in Chedoke-Cootes! I would like to take this opportunity to share some of the past year's activities with you as well as let you know about the work that will be taking place in the three Ward 1 neighbourhoods (Ainslie Wood-Westdale, Kirkendall, and Strathcona), and the City-wide activities that I am working on this year.

We haven't produced as many newsletters as I would like, but we work hard at ensuring that my website (www.brianmchattie.ca) is current and chock-full of information – please have a look and let us know what you think. *If you want to know more, but don't have access to a computer, call our office, so we can provide you with further information.*

While this newsletter outlines many of the issues that I am working on, it doesn't describe all of the work done by my staff on your behalf. As some of you know, long-time Ward 1 administrative assistant, Kay Morden has moved on to a new position in the City's Legal department. I want to take this opportunity to thank Kay for many years of dedicated service to Ward 1 constituents; she will be remembered by all, far into the future. At the same time, I have the pleasure of introducing my new assistant, Nikola Patti. Nikola is a Ward 1 resident and was a member of the Environment Sub-Committee of the Kirkendall Neighbourhood Association, when that committee was active. She started at the end of June and has quickly adapted to the pace of our office. Dale Brown, my Community Relations Assistant continues to do a stellar job of responding to your queries and ensuring everyone is well-informed of our activities.

Before outlining activities neighbourhood by neighbourhood, I wanted to highlight two ongoing issues of great interest to Ward 1 residents:

Ward 1 Property Taxes

As you well know, Ward 1 experienced the highest increase in property assessment values this past year. I am continuing to work with MPAC (Municipal Property Assessment Corporation) to find a way to differentiate income houses used for student housing from "owner occupied" houses lived in by permanent residents.

We have asked MPAC to do a study to determine the impact of student housing on property values. We have not received the results of that study yet.

We are also working with other municipalities such as London and Waterloo to find a way to license student housing.

In March 2006, the Ontario Ombudsman issued a report which was critical of the assessment process. MPAC has committed to making changes. In the interim, the Ontario Government has cancelled property tax assessments for the next two years.

Pilot Project: No Pesticides in Ward 1 Parks

In the Fall 2005, I was made aware that the City Parks department was planning on resuming pesticide use in parks for the first time since 2001 as a result of weed thresholds being met. I asked staff to not spray pesticides in Ward 1 parks due to my concerns over children's health.

In this year's budget, City Council allocated \$15,000 for a Ward 1 pilot project targeted at developing a pesticide-free management regime.

For this year, we have set up a project at Churchill Park, using aeration, over-seeding and top-dressing on one of the soccer fields, to better understand what needs to be done on a larger scale.

We are also looking into the mechanical removal of weeds with the possibility of setting up *citizen*

weeding days. Perhaps the residents of your own street could organize a "*weeding day*"! In the meantime, no pesticides will be sprayed.

It is important to remember that we still need to find alternatives to pesticides, in order to maintain the quality of turf, particularly for sports fields. We held a community meeting in May and heard presentations from staff about the City's pesticide policy. We also heard from Harry Jongerden, Garden Designer and Horticulturist at the Royal Botanical Gardens who previously looked after the gardens at the Stratford Festival without using pesticides.

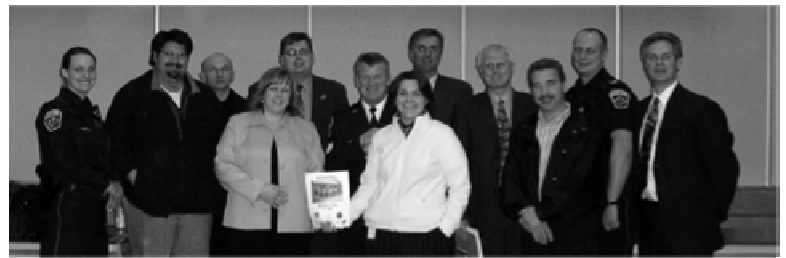
To develop a pesticide-free strategy in your neighbourhood park, please get in touch with my office so we can work together to keep our children healthy and safe.

Ainslie Wood & Westdale Neighbourhoods

The Ainslie Wood Westdale community stretches from the Dundas and Ancaster borders in the west to Highway 403 in the east.

Community Business Plan

As we have done for the past three years, we continue to work with the many active stakeholders in this area. In March, at McMaster University's President's Advisory Committee on Community Relations (PACCR) annual forum, we joined with others in signing this year's Business Plan, designed by Hamilton Police Services. The mission statement is: *The West Hamilton Beat stakeholders are committed to working together to solve recurring quality of life issues.*



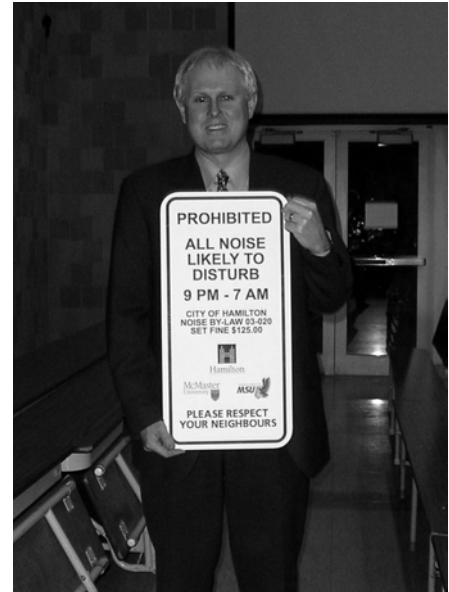
Signing the 2006 community business plan Photo: Loreen Jerome

There are 5 directions this year: *Property Issues, Crime Reduction, Transportation and Traffic, Disorderly Conduct, and Communications*. Each stakeholder has taken responsibility for working on strategies for each direction. A full copy of the plan is posted on my website at www.brianmchattie.ca/activities/activities_safety.htm.

Some of the responsibilities of our office are:

- Set up a proactive property standards inspection project with McMaster and the MSU to have a city by-law officer and student inspectors monitor properties in the area around McMaster. We will be testing this approach during a 2 month pilot project which will run in August and September, 2006;
- Continue to work closely with Sergeant Jeff Copp, the Hamilton Police Services Crime Manager for Ward 1;
- Set up a Pedestrian Traffic Safety Committee to propose long term traffic solutions for the McMaster area. This committee has met 4 times to date. We are also working with McMaster, Hamilton Health Sciences and residents on solving traffic problems in the Forsyth-Mayfair-Sterling area;
- Process *Community Enhancement Forms* which identify addresses to be recognized for their positive contribution to the community or because there is a problem such as long grass. These forms are available on the website, or call our office if you need copies;
- Implement *Operation Hush*, a program designed to address noise emanating from groups of people moving through neighbourhoods late at night by enabling police to permit by-law personnel and Hamilton Police Service to issue tickets.

Unveiling of Operation Hush sign
Photo: Loreen Jerome



Main Street West Charette

In June 2005, the OPPI (Ontario Provincial Planners Institute) held their conference in Hamilton. They held a “charette” (a design guidelines workshop) on Main Street West to brainstorm how the street might look with purpose-built student housing. We hope to hold a meeting in the fall to show you those designs.

Ainslie Wood Westdale Secondary Plan

In an effort to draw students out of the neighbourhoods, the Ainslie Wood Westdale Secondary Plan encourages the development of purpose-built student housing along Main Street. Over the next two years, approximately 800 new student housing units will be built and there are others in the planning stages.

In September 2006, McMaster University will open Les Prince Hall, their latest residence, housing 390 students. In September 2007, the West Village Student Residence will open on the

former CNIB property on Main Street West, housing 450 students. This building will be designed using the federal government’s LEED environmental design program, encompassing energy and water conservation features.

With McMaster committing to not increasing undergraduate enrollment until at least 2010, we are hopeful that these new student living spaces will free up single family houses in the neighbourhoods that can be reclaimed by families.

Projects scheduled for Ainslie Wood Westdale in 2006 include:

- Completion of repairs to the former West Hamilton landfill site and reconstruction of Kay Drage Park to include two new baseball diamonds and three new soccer fields (officially opened on July 28, 2006);
- Installation of a new splash pad and trees in Churchill Park;
- Construction of a traffic island in the middle of King Street in front of G.R. Allan school, providing a safer crossing for children and adults alike.

Kirkendall Neighbourhood

The Kirkendall neighbourhood stretches from Highway 403 east to Queen St and is bordered on the south by the Escarpment and on the north by Main Street.

Locke Street Happenings

This continues to generate lots of discussion! I worked with the Kirkendall Neighbourhood Association and Melrose United Church to sponsor a film night and visioning session for Locke Street. The results are available on my website. This effort has led to the revitalization of the Kirkendall Neighbourhood Association and discussions on creating a new Business Improvement Area (BIA) for the southerly part of Locke Street (Homewood to Chatham).

There has also been an ongoing discussion of a vision for the future of Locke Street South. You can read the discussions by going to [//lockestreet.com/pipermail/vision](http://lockestreet.com/pipermail/vision) and you can join the discussion by subscribing at [//lockestreet.com/mailman/listinfo/vision](http://lockestreet.com/mailman/listinfo/vision).

Shortly after the March meeting, the West Town Bar & Grill announced that it would be expanding. This has generated a lot of discussion due to concerns such as noise, vandalism and litter. Before the project can proceed, the AGCO (Alcohol & Gaming Commission of Ontario) needs to grant a liquor license, a building permit needs to be issued and an encroachment agreement for a patio needs to be considered by the City.

The AGCO will be holding a hearing in the fall due to the number of concerns that it has received.

At the time of writing, the City has not received the plans from the West Town, so the building permit process has not begun.

Kirkendall Traffic Study/West Hamilton Bicycle Study

The Kirkendall Traffic Study is addressing transportation issues in the Kirkendall neighbourhood and around the West Hamilton Innovation District. Two public meetings have been held to date. A number of suggested

improvements were presented at the second public meeting, including a proposed link from Chatham Street to Longwood Road, and ways to manage traffic issues around Earl Kitchener School.

The project website can be accessed at: www.brianmchattie.ca/issues/issues_kirkendall.htm

281 Herkimer (former CIBC building)

We worked hard to see whether there was a way to convert this building to a library facility, but unfortunately, the cost of conversion was prohibitive. We held 3 public meetings to discuss our options and on July 12, Council approved the rezoning of this building to permit either one residential unit, or a commercial use within the existing building including a business or professional offices, retail stores, daycare, art gallery or personal service establishments.

The City will now determine a fair market value for the building and will be accepting bids, probably starting in the fall. I will be seeking

community input to help determine which bid should be accepted.

It is important to note as well that this building has been designated as a heritage building which means that the exterior cannot be altered including the windows and no additions can be considered. There are also a number of items in the interior that need to be preserved. Some examples include the wood and glass vestibule, the vault with decorative wood trim, the clock, wood and marble dado, plaster ceiling and the wood, glass and brass check desks.

Chedoke Golf Course/Winter Sports Park Update

The City prepared a Request For Proposal designed to investigate possible new ways of running the City's golf courses and winter sports park. I am a member of the Steering Committee. The process has now run its course and the City's Internal Bid, compiled by City staff have won the right to continue to operate the facilities. Staff are now working on the details of the final proposal to bring before Council for approval.

McMaster Innovation Park – West Hamilton Innovation District

Plans for the McMaster Innovation Park have now been finalized and can be viewed at www.mcmaster.ca/research/mip.htm. I had the good fortune of representing the City of Hamilton on the project steering committee.

Still to come is the finalization of the West Hamilton Industrial Area study that is considering land use scenarios around the McMaster Innovation Park. Two public meetings have been held to date. Staff are now working on refining the range of permitted uses and development vision based on input from the last public meeting. The plan is tentatively scheduled to come before the Planning and Economic Development Committee for approval in the Fall. See www.hamilton.ca/whia for more details.

Proposed cycling trail through the Chedoke Golf Course

I recently looked at closing the entrance from Glenside Ave. into the Chedoke Golf Course in order to try to reduce the amount of vandalism that takes place both on the golf course and in the neighbourhood. At the same time, a new proposal was brought forward to create a cycling path between Glenside Ave. and Studholme Road. This proposal would result in some changes to the layout of the golf course which would reduce the existing conflicts and may also help to reduce vandalism. Detailed planning for the trail is now underway.

H3 Water Pressure District Environmental Assessment

The Ministry of Environment received a "bump-up" request of the Environmental Assessment which recommended building a pumping station at the far east end of Highland Gardens/The Rez park. At this time, the Ministry has not yet made a decision on whether to require a bump-up.

Projects scheduled for Kirkendall in 2006 include:

- Completion of Traffic and Bicycle Studies (Fall 2006);
- Installation of a new stoplight at Dundurn and Herkimer (December 2006);
- Reconstruction of the CPR bridge on Dundurn Street South over the railway tracks – **note that this has been delayed again and is now scheduled for early in 2007;**
- Resurfacing of Studholme Road, including a new sidewalk;
- Feasibility study for the West Hamilton Rail Trail (from the CPR Aberdeen rail yard to the existing rail trail by Rifle Range Road which leads into the Dundas Valley and beyond).

Strathcona Neighbourhood

The Strathcona neighbourhood stretches from Highway 403 east to Queen Street and is bordered on the south by Main Street and on the north by the Bayfront.

Update: Good Shepherd Project on Former Loretto Academy Site

As you know there are several large piles of dirt on the property and the project has been inactive for some time. In response, I instructed our by-law enforcement staff to have the Good Shepherd remove the dirt piles. The organization has appealed the order to comply to a Property Standards Appeals Committee meeting, scheduled for September 18, 2006. Apparently, the basis for the appeal is that the material is contaminated by lead tiles and other

contaminants and the Ministry of the Environment must approve the removal of the material.

I have been meeting with Good Shepherd and City staff to encourage progress and it now appears that there may be financial and legal problems with the project. I am planning on holding a full public meeting to further update the community this fall.

Update: Victoria Park

The Victoria Park Master Plan is in its final stages. Components of the Plan include new landscaped park entrances at King and Locke and at King and Strathcona; redesign of the parking; re-creation of the historical perimeter

track, complete with interpretive signage describing the history of the area; establishment of a butterfly garden and community gardens; and tree planting.

More information is available at:

www.myhamilton.ca/myhamilton/CityandGovernment/CityDepartments/PublicWorks/CapitalPlanning/OpenSpace/VictoriaParkConcepts.htm

Strathcona Secondary Plan

This project began early in 2006. It is a land use plan intended to update the previous plan which dates from the 1970s. A number of public meetings have been held on a variety of topics including visioning for York Boulevard; community services in Strathcona and visioning

for the neighbourhood as a whole. The background report has been completed, and staff are now working on the draft plan which will be presented to the public in the fall. Note that the accompanying Strathcona Traffic Study will begin in the fall.

More information on the Secondary Plan can be found at:
www.myhamilton.ca/myhamilton/CityandGovernment/CityDepartments/PlanningEcDev/Development/CommunityPlanning/SecondaryPlans/strat_home.htm.

Projects scheduled for Strathcona in 2006 include:

- Resurfacing of Victoria Park tennis courts and re-painting of the fence;
- Resurfacing of Victoria Park pathways, and re-establishment of a picnic area on the site of the former bocce court;
- Upgrades to Tom Street Park;
- Road improvements on Crooks and Magill streets, and creation of a “Window on the Bay” feature at the end of Crooks Street;
- Installation of bike lanes on York Boulevard west of Dundurn Street;
- Study on the Strathcona Pedestrian Bridge from Dundurn Park to the Bayfront;
- Finalization of plans for the West Harbour Trail along York Boulevard and down Valley Inn Road to Hendrie Valley.

City-Wide Activities

In addition to working on your behalf on Ward issues, I continue to take leadership roles in issues that affect the future of our city.

During my time as President of **CityHousing Hamilton**, we have added 94 new affordable housing units and are working on new affordable home ownership programs.



Councillor McHattie, Vicki Woodcox, Director, Employment, Housing & Long Term Care, City of Hamilton and two Directors of the CityHousing Hamilton Board at demolition of property to be redeveloped for housing

Photo: City of Hamilton

The **Transit Steering Committee**, which I chair has just completed a Ridership Growth Strategy that will lead us to our goal of 100 rides/capita by 2020.

As Chair of the **City of Hamilton/CPR Liaison Committee**, I am working on a better communications system that would assist residents in reaching CPR on weekends when many of the idling engine problems occur. If you have a problem with CPR, I encourage you to call the **Community Connect Line** at **1-800- 766-7912** in order to help CPR track the problems.

Pedestrian Committee

I passed a Council motion to establish a committee focused on raising the profile on pedestrian issues. The interest is in encouraging more walking and creating a level playing field with the vehicular mode of transportation by cataloging pedestrian problem spots across Hamilton, creating safer crossings, implementing more traffic calming, and other actions. This work will likely begin through a Pedestrian Forum, this fall.



Trees Across Hamilton Update

Trees Across Hamilton, which I started in 2005 with the planting of 4,000 trees is continuing across the City in 2006. We are also completing a feasibility study into establishment of a Hamilton Trees and Parks Foundation which will focus on the long-term sustainability of tree and park efforts.

2006 Earth Day Tree Planting, Princess Point
Photo: BARC

Anti-Idling Initiatives

In the 2006 budget process, City Council supported an education and awareness program to encourage motorists to turn off their engines when idling for longer than 10 seconds. *Green Venture* is leading this program for the City and wishes to speak to neighbourhood groups and others on the issue. I encourage you to contact their project coordinator, Thom Oommen at toommen@greenventure.ca for details.

During the budget deliberations, Council had considered and rejected a by-law to regulate anti-idling. I will be reintroducing the by-law concept in the coming weeks. Also of note on this issue, is a Clean Air Hamilton air pollution study that clearly identifies vehicle idling as amongst the top environmental problems in Hamilton. This study was presented to City Council on August 2, and can be viewed at the link at www.brianmchattie.ca/issues/issues.htm.

Economic Development Initiatives

I am working on the establishment of a new Energy Cluster strategy as part of the City Economic Development Plan. This work has begun by assisting a new company, Cleanfield Energy to establish their wind turbine company in Hamilton. Part of this work will be to look at the feasibility of establishing a district energy system at the Glanbrook Business Park.

Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction

Hamilton has one of the highest rates of poverty in Ontario, with 1 in 5 residents living at or below the poverty line. This is unacceptable. I am the Council representative on the Roundtable, who have committed to making Hamilton “*the best place to raise a child*”. To learn more about how you can assist, contact me or visit the project website at hamiltonpoverty.ca.

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Please contact me with your ideas for Ward 1!

Not a Ward 1 Resident? Some Canada Post delivery areas in L8P and L8R Postal Codes include areas of Ward 2.