

Surely we are entitled to find this out now, on a matter of such community importance.

If there was enough demonstrated community support, the DSBN & the City may reconsider the acquisition. That is, if it's done now, before the site turns forever into 7 acres of infilling...or a strip mall...or some other development. This is where you come in...act now or lose it forever.

There's one other thing that the consultant recommended for the recreationally-starved north and east parts of the city...a skateboard park. Is that the better choice for our area?

Comprehensive Development Strategy (CDS).

This is a City Hall strategy for creating a resident-driven (not staff-driven) vision for each area of the city, through input at public "town hall" meetings. The community participates directly in creating a vision for this area. The CDS program then develops a "wish list" of area recommendations. We like this because it involves "quality of life" issues & that's exactly what the WCNA is all about.

CDS reports have been completed for four other areas of the City (Merritton, Downtown, West St. Catharines and Port Dalhousie....hmm, which area is missing?) The City's Economic Development & Tourism department loves this strategy because it helps them understand what's missing here, solving how to attract new residents & businesses here. Then they can apply for grants when suitable opportunities become available. Merritton's CDS is directly successful for their \$4.7 million federal & provincial grants which funded the realignment of Glendale, the Merritton "Skyway" improvements, sidewalks etc. One obstacle we face in Grantham Ward is funding. And we need City Council to request & approve the creation of this strategy for Grantham.

Our Mission Statement

"To promote safety and enjoyment, and to enhance and maintain the quality of life in and around our parks and neighbourhood."

Grantham Ward Candidates Night

Meet, Hear & Compare our 7 City Councillor Candidates

Join us on

- Friday October 27, 2006 @ 7:30 p.m. Grantham Lions Club, 732 Niagara St. (at Parnell)
- All welcome
- A free public event jointly hosted by the Walker's Creek Neighbourhood Association & the St. Catharines Professional Firefighters' Association

Your Candidates:

- Dawn Dodge
- Brian Dorsey
- Laura Ip
- Bill Philips
- Salvatore Sorrento
- Mike Sullivan
- Tony Tullo

The WCNA's 3rd Annual Yard Tour



The WCNA's 3rd Annual Yard Tour on Saturday June 17, 2006 was a tremendous success. More than 110 people bought tickets and enjoyed 10 lovely and unique yards plus a stop at one of our

riparian buffers in Walker's Creek Park. Attendees came not just from St. Catharines but from Thorold, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara Falls, Fort Erie, Beamsville, Markham, Hamilton, Vineland & Mississauga.

Our Yard Tour Hosts deserve a round of applause for their contribution to this success.

A big thank you to our wonderful supportive Event Sponsors:

Sally Dollar at Royal LePage, Philip Jones at Edward Jones Investments & The City of St. Catharines.

Congratulations to the winners of our raffles:

Jan Sward & Debbie Good, for the door prizes generously donated by J Monks Fish & Stuff & Dreams of Chocolate.

Thank you to everyone who helped or supported us with this event which is our only annual fundraiser.

Idyllic Living

Long-time local resident Pat Jones shares a look back at life in the Walker's Creek area...from growing up here in the 1950s, choosing to raise a family here in the 1970s & seeing life as it is here today.

You cross that invisible barrier at Carlton Street. The air smells cleaner, the temperature is 5 degrees cooler ... you are back in north-end St. Catharines.

I grew up in north-end St. Catharines. When we moved down here in the 50's, it seemed so far away. As children, we were never bored. There were countless things to discover, limited only by our imaginations. Our mothers would pack us a lunch and we would be off for the day to discover in "Sherwood Forest." We now refer to this as Walker's Creek. It consisted of orchards, trees and a wide creek. We would let our imaginations roam, build wooden rafts and paddle down the creek, lie in the shade of the trees and conquer the world.

This was an area totally safe for children to play in, no cars, and no streets to cross. We knew it was time to come home when we got hungry or if the neighbouring streetlights came on which ever came first. It we wanted to venture further to the north, we would swim at the end of Vine St. in clean water. In the winter, we would toboggan down the "big" hills.

As we got older, we all got jobs picking fruit for the local farmers over in the area where our houses now are. Cherries, pears, peaches and grapes - all grew in abundance. It was not a favorite job and the pay was terrible, but everyone did it.

When my husband and I married, he being a downtown guy, wanted to live in the heart of town. There you could walk to work, walk to the mall, walk around town, but it wasn't the same. When our family started and we were looking for a home to raise our children in, it was to the north-end that we turned.

By that time, they were starting to develop the area we now live in. For a tidy sum of \$700, we could even back on to the Walker's Creek, with the closest neighbour 300 or more feet away. I was sold. That was the best decision we ever made. We were fortunate enough to be in on the ground floor of our subdivision, so we watched in amazement as many changes took place.

The mud field that used to be an adjacent orchard slowly became grass and turned into Walker's Creek Park. The Grantham YMCA was built and became part of the community, near our backyard and homes, complete with an outdoor track. A path was put in the parks from Linwell Road north to Lakeshore Road, with exercise stations along the way. These stations have since been taken out, but the path is still used by many, many people every day. Walkers, joggers, bicyclists, parents with young children and the elderly, they all enjoy the

park in all kinds of weather.

Long before the spraying of the grass along the path, the creek was filled with pollywogs, crayfish and other small animals. Our sons, along with all the other neighbourhood children, spent countless hours in rubber boots in the creek studying nature. It was amazing to see the different stages of the pollywog, a natural science lesson. You couldn't walk across your lawn in the summer without little frogs jumping ahead of you.



After one particular rainstorm, we looked out our back window and there was the largest snapping turtle on our lawn, having crawled up from the creek. The creek would often overflow after heavy rains and salmon were not an uncommon sight, having come in from the lake. We have seen countless animals; deer, rabbits, raccoons, and even horseback riders enjoy the park.

The children of the neighbourhood hardly ever played on the street. Kite flying, baseball games, football games, organized firework displays, hockey rinks and just running and playing in the safety of the park, they have all been enjoyed by neighbors and friends alike.

As our children grew up and left home (they still live in the area), we started to look at new homes in other areas of the city and beyond. There were many beautiful homes with all the newest features, but as anyone will tell you, it is location, location, location. We just couldn't find what we had here. I am sure we all have special moments walking along the path on a clear summer morning.

Where else can you walk to the lake, crossing only one major street and watch the world wake up, watch a sunset at the end of a long day, or watch visitors from around the world marvel at the canal? Walker's Creek is a special place. We are all so fortunate to live in and enjoy the prettiest spot in St. Catharines.

Thank you to Pat Jones for sharing her story with us. Other submissions from residents and members are welcome.



Have you visited our website yet? It's www.walkerscreek.ca There's historic area photos, a discussion board & monthly poll on Lakebreeze School & even a place to post for lost pets ... & more.

Not a WCNA member?

Here's what you missed at our September 2006 meeting:

Guest Speaker Brian Narhi; Topic: Burial Plots in our Walker's Creek Area

Brian Nahri is a local author & historian, a graduate of Brock University (Honours BA in Classics & Archaeology) & University of Toronto (MA, PhD program in Comparative Literature, ancient Egyptian & Classics). He has studied & written about local history for over 30 years & has written several books on the subject.

- Hostetter-Cooke Plot, located on a hill above Beamer Creek, near Walker's Creek & Club LaSalle, 10 or 12 burials, including a veteran of the Battle of Waterloo, 1 tombstone left in a shattered state

- Servos Burial Plot, located near Happy Rolph's, dates from 1862
- Hodgkinson Family Plot, located at Parnell & Bunting, a boulder currently marks the spot, many graves were relocated to Victoria Lawn Cemetery during the construction of the Welland Canal
- Darby Family Plot, located along Walker's Creek, on the north side of Lakeshore Road, to the rear of the newly renovated farmhouse at 255 Lakeshore (which is now for sale). Local word states that remains were seen to be disturbed there in the 1970's when work was done in the park area

Brian shared a variety of photographs, stories & interesting items relating to these plots & the families. Other submissions from residents and members are welcome.

DO YOU ENJOY THE "WALKER'S CREEK NEWS"?

Stay in the loop... It's easy, worthwhile and inexpensive to join the WCNA! Annual Membership is just \$10 per household ! Just send a \$10 cheque payable to "WCNA" to us at P.O. Box 20234, St. Catharines, ON L2M 7W7 Please ensure you include your full name, home address & email address (if any). Charitable tax receipts are now available for any membership fee or donation received.

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Walker's Creek

NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWS

Welcome to Our Special Pre-Election Grantham Ward Primer...

THIS IS NOT THE USUAL "WALKER'S CREEK NEWS"!

Voting on Monday November 13? We hope so, because our sleepy little bedroom community of Grantham Ward has a lot of voting power.

Did you know that:

- ▶ our Grantham Ward has lead the City in voter turnout for at least the last 2 municipal elections
- ▶ in 2000 & 2003, Dawn Dodge lead all City Councillors with the highest number of votes in the city (both times 2nd place belonged to long-time Councillor Joe Kushner)
- ▶ this year there are 7 candidates running for the 2 spots representing us on City Council
- ▶ now our Councillors will have 4 year terms instead of 3 years, so that makes our choices even more important now, for all elected positions.

Yes, it's going to be one interesting election.

We want every resident to make their best educated choices possible, which is why the WCNA is joining up with the St. Catharines Professional Firefighters' Association to host a Grantham Ward City Councillors Candidates Night on Friday October 27 at 7:30 p.m. at the Grantham Lions Club. This is a free public event that will give you the best opportunity to hear and compare the various candidates.

In the meantime, we have a few questions. Why are so many people running here...when Ward 3 has only three candidates vying for two positions? What are the local issues for this ward? Let's take a peek at what's happening here...

Infilling:

A hot topic & a sore point for a number of people. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. We're short of land in this city & this is supposedly the answer to spiraling tax rates. But is it always the right thing to do? We're aware of one local high profile subdivided lot that was divided in 3 pieces almost 3

years ago & not 1 piece has sold yet. City Council approved the split despite all the reports being against it, except for the subdivider's own report. Maybe Council should think twice before carte blanche carving up existing parcels.

Lakebreeze School:

This is a beloved Grantham institution that many people were counting on being converted to a Community Recreation Centre. It's relatively young & is extremely well-located... plus we keep losing recreation in our area (witness the loss of the Grantham Y, ball hockey at Municipal Beach, the basketball courts at Maplewood, Lakebreeze & even at Prince Philip in the summer). In September 2006, City Council voted "in camera" (i.e. in secret) not to buy Lakebreeze from the school board. That was just 1 week after the City's own Recreation Consultant (in charge of creating our new Recreation Master Plan) advised City Council that our city needs to build another Rec Centre, a splash pad & more soccer fields.

We keep hearing politicians lament "how do we attract families & keep our youth here"...isn't a good quality of life for residents part of that plan? We've got abundant greenspace but not much recreation here. We've got a wading pool on Arthur Street, but not an arena in the ward...the four pad is way across the City.

Councillor Dawn Dodge tells us that she was very much in favour of the acquisition, a stand she's willing to share as she feels does not compromise the integrity of the closed door session. Councillor Brian Dorsey was asked by us to share his vote on Lakebreeze (not any further details) but he refused.

The WCNA is concerned. This is a matter greatly affecting the community but it's discussed 100% in secrecy with no opportunity for public input. It seems to us that the acquisition is completely within existing & future Parks Policy. That's why our WCNA Interim Chair (& Grantham Ward Candidate) Mike Sullivan has requested to address City Council this month, asking to have the staff report released on whether to buy the lands or not.

Continued on page 2...

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RE-ELECT...

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Lora Campbell Campaign contributions gratefully accepted.
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Vote: **Salvatore Sorrento**

Platform:

- control property taxes.
- support existing business, industry and development projects i.e. revitalize downtown, new hospital, infrastructure, address homelessness.
- support physician recruitment
- open communication with our fire fighters
- attract new economic investment

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- Board of Directors - Folk Arts Council
- St. Catharines Community Policing Advisory Committee

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I would love to hear about your issues and your ideas to move this city forward. I can be reached at **905-688-CITY (2489)** or by email at **marilyn@marilynbodogh.com**

A VOICE FOR YOU AT CITY COUNCIL

Mike Sullivan

18 Sharon Street
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Candidate for Councillor - Grantham Ward (Ward #5)
Please Remember To Vote Monday, November 13, 2006
Authorized By The Mike Sullivan Campaign for City Council

Vote

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