



Hummel to **restore** historic home in St. Davids

Dan Smeenk
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The derelict David Secord House in St. Davids may be getting a second chance at life, courtesy of a plan put forth by developer Rainer Hummel that would cost more than \$1 million.

However, to make it happen, he's asking Niagara-on-the-Lake's council to back the project so the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority will grant him an exception to one of its rules.

The developer behind Hummel Properties Inc. is looking to restore and make modifications to the 226-year-old home, also known as the Paxton House, which is in serious disrepair, inside and out.

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Celebrating Indigenous heritage

11th annual powwow returns to NOTL Native Centre after five-year absence



The Niagara Regional Native Centre's annual powwow was back at its grounds on Airport Road this past Saturday, Sept. 27, for a day of dance, arts, good spirits and togetherness, shared by thousands. For event organizer Sabrina Shawana, who stepped in at the last minute to make sure this year's powwow came to fruition, it felt like "a revival for this community." DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Andrew Hawlitzky | The Lake Report

It was a close call for this year's Niagara Regional Native Centre powwow — the yearly gathering, which saw some organizing troubles, was rescued at the 11th hour by community members who stepped in to save the treasured event.

The 11th annual Nurturing Our Roots Traditional Powwow, held Saturday, Sept. 27, drew thousands to the Native Centre's grounds on Airport Road for a day of dance, arts, good spirits and togetherness.

The powwow was originally

meant to be held at Butler's Barracks, but was temporarily cancelled when not enough teams signed up for a lacrosse tournament meant to anchor the weekend.

On Sept. 22, five days before the powwow, the Native Centre

board asked community member Sabrina Shawana to take over planning.

With Butler's Barracks no longer an option, the powwow was moved to the Native Centre's

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Ford's speed camera cut could cost taxpayers **up to \$140K yearly**

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

With Premier Doug Ford moving to ban speed camera programs across the province next month,

the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is set to lose more than \$100,000 in revenue for traffic upgrades — and it says taxpayers may have to make up the difference.

The town made \$134,484 from automated speed cam-

eras in 2024 and expected to earn a similar amount this year. That money was spent on upgrades, says Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa, including \$33,000 for new speed limit signs after rural road limits went down to 70

km/h last month, "not used to pad anybody's budget."

"Property taxes will continue to pay for all future traffic calming and safety measures," said town communications co-ordinator Marah Minor, which means

"there are no delayed or cancelled projects."

Replacing the lost revenue would add about \$140,000 to the tax levy for 2026, equal to a 0.8 per cent increase, she said.

"Depends on the full

budget review, but if all else remains the same, this item has the impact of raising the levy by that amount," Zalepa said.

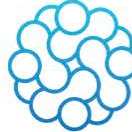
Unless, Zalepa said, "the

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Developer **given permit** after beginning work illegally

Zahraa Hmood
The Lake Report

After ignoring a stop-work order from the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake on Tuesday, developer Benny Marotta's company has received a permit to continue its excavation work at the future Parliament Oak hotel site.

The town issued a site alteration permit to Two Sisters Resorts on Friday, three days after it hit the developer with a stop-work order to cease the construction and soil removal work taking place at 325 King St. without a permit.

This new permit, accompanied by a site alteration agreement, allows the developer to excavate a specific part of the site to work on what will be the hotel's underground parking area, according to the town's requirements.

The town did not provide copies of the site alteration permit and site alteration agreement, which would show what requirements the developer has to follow with this new permit.

The town says a permit application was submitted



The developer behind the future Parliament Oak hotel began excavation and soil removal work last week and continued the rest of the week, after the town hit it with a stop-work order on Tuesday. Now, the developer has permission to continue excavating as crews work on the hotel's underground parking lot. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

on Sept. 12, which town staff reviewed.

For the past couple of weeks, however, there were concerns about activity starting at the site, but staff found no violations, chief administrator Nick Ruller told The Lake Report last week.

It wasn't until the town saw construction work happening at the site early last week that it came in with a stop-work order and

a \$500-a-day fine for the developer.

Alongside a review of the permit application, the town's peer reviewer Terra-Dynamics Ltd. took a look at the hydro-geological study for the site, an assessment of the area's subsurface geology and groundwater conditions.

The town says the peer reviewer examined this study and confirmed the excavation area the developer pro-

posed is “acceptable,” said Lauren Kruitbosch, associate director for the office of the CAO, in an email.

Kruitbosch said staff will be monitoring the site and will make sure development activities “proceed in a manner that respects the town’s regulations and the community’s concerns.”

Marah Minor, the town's communications co-ordinator, said if further violations take place, the town can issue another stop-work order and more fines.

Lyle Hall, who lives one block away from the King Street project, has some doubts about this.

He says he's not sure why the town would want to make an agreement with someone who's not following the municipality's rules.

“How do you ‘work closely’ with a developer thumbing his nose at your bylaws?” he said in an email.

As to how the town handled this situation, Hall said that it appears the town is approving the developer's actions after they have been taken.

“I can’t think of another project, of this magnitude

and with this level of public scrutiny, where the developer has simply shown the middle finger to the town, without consequence.”

This stop-work order is the latest chapter in a saga of controversy surrounding the Parliament Oak hotel project.

Alongside anxieties about the influx of tourists and that the new hotel will drive down surrounding property values, individual NOTLers and resident groups are concerned about the impact on the town's infrastructure.

Some say the project, which includes plans for a two-floor underground parking lot, could cause flooding of the nearby One Mile Creek.

They've criticized the reports prepared by the engineering firm R.V. Anderson, stating they contain errors and omissions as to the current state of local stormwater infrastructure and the demand the hotel will create on this system.

Richard Connelly, a retired civil engineer, is one of those vocal critics — he said he was “absolutely horrified” to hear that the town granted the developer a site alteration permit.

"If it was me, I wouldn't have ever let them do anything at the site until the reports were satisfactorily completed," he said.

A Sept. 22 letter sent to the town from attorney Bryce W. B. Murray, representing the Friends of One Mile Creek, the Niagara Foundation and the NOTL Residents Association, warns that the situation at the Parliament Oak site could be a liability for the town.

"The prospect of flooding on both a regular and catastrophic level is real," the letter says.

"The costs involved to clean up and remediate such occurrences, should they occur, will be significant."

At this juncture, Hall says the focus needs to be on making sure this project doesn't put a heavy burden on the town's utilities, One Mile Creek and neighbouring homes.

"We've already lost the argument on parking, traffic, scale, visual and noise impacts," he said.

"Let's be open and honest about what's happening at Parliament Oak."

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Tree planted for Joanne Young



Friends of Joanne Young gathered Wednesday at Sykes Landscaping for a tree-planting ceremony in her memory. Members of the NOTL Horticultural Society and loved ones shared stories, wrote messages to attach to the tree and helped plant a honey locust, chosen for its resilience. Young's mother and sister attended, with her mother watering the tree to close the tribute. Young's mother, Berna Young, and her sister Yvonne Yarker attended, with her mother watering the tree to close the tribute and Jeff Sykes tamping down the earth. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Taxpayers will **cover loss** of speed cam revenue unless province steps in to help, says mayor

Continued from Front Page

province steps up and provides something.”

Council plans on deciding how to handle the gap during 2026 budget talks — “a council decision and (a) community decision as to what the priorities are,” Zalepa said.

Ford announced the ban at a press conference on Thursday, Sept. 25, calling the devices “nothing more than a cash grab” and saying he’ll provide municipalities with funding for speed bumps, flashing signs and other road-safety measures he says are more effective.

Niagara Region says it acknowledges Ford’s announcement, but its cameras will keep running until the law takes effect and regional council decides what to do next.

This year, the camera on Niagara Stone Road in front of Crossroads Public School was the target of multiple acts of vandalism, with unknown individuals chopping down the camera six separate times this summer during its tenure.

When drivers are caught speeding by a photo radar camera, they’re ordered to pay their ticket through the provincial courts.

That money first covers the cost of running the automated speed enforcement



In a press conference on Thursday announcing the ban, Ford said cities and towns in Ontario should use speed bumps, flashing signs and other tools to slow down drivers. FILE

program. Whatever is left is split between Niagara Region and local municipalities in Niagara, with NOTL getting a share.

The funds flow through Niagara’s Vision Zero program and can only be used for safety projects such as lowering speed limits, adding signage and other traffic-calming measures.

Ford’s ban ends that funding, meaning property taxes will now cover costs “to maintain what Vision Zero could have afforded,” Minor said.

Zalepa said municipalities have a couple options: “You stop doing something else, or you have to raise a levy.”

“That’s the impact that comes out of this kind of decision,” he said.

The region, he said, wouldn’t be much help in

offsetting the financial gap: “The province is dictating what’s going to happen.”

The region said having speed cameras on-site “has shown positive results,” slowing down drivers and improving their behaviour.

When a speed camera was installed at Niagara Stone Road in early 2024, the region reported average speeds dropped to 46 km/h after the camera was active, down from 57 km/h before automated enforcement. It rose again to 53 km/h after enforcement ended.

The region’s sentiment is echoed by the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, which released a statement on Sept. 18, stating that automated speed enforcement tools have been proven to “reduce speeding, change driver behaviour and make our roads safer for everyone.”

“Ontario’s police leaders view (automated speed enforcement) not as a revenue tool, but as a traffic safety tool,” its statement read.

Scott Fraser, Niagara’s associate director of transportation planning, said speed cameras remain part of the Vision Zero initiative, which aims to reduce and eventually eliminate traffic deaths and injuries on regional roads.

Arguing “don’t speed and you don’t pay for it” and noting speeds have dropped significantly in areas with cameras, Zalepa rejected the premier’s claim they are a “cash grab.”

“It’s too bad that I think there’s a little bit of rhetoric in this one,” he said.

“Proof is in the reports. Proof is in the funding. Proof is in the audit financial statements.”

While Ford said the province will distribute funds for municipalities to install other road-safety measures, Minor and Zalepa confirmed no details have been shared with NOTL.

“It’s encouraging to see, I guess, the premier admit, or acknowledge, that there would be some impacts, which there are,” Zalepa said.

The Lake Report is still awaiting answers on the status of the NOTL enforcement site — including the new CCTV camera and repairing the damaged pole — as well as program costs to date and any unrecoverable expenses.

Also unknown is what this means for the region’s contract with the vendor, including any penalties or termination terms, and whether Niagara will pursue the province’s proposed traffic-calming fund — details also not provided by deadline.

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Flag raised for Truth and Reconciliation



Cara-anne Farrow-lawrence, centre, and fellow Strong Water Singer Sandi Mansfield stand with MP Tony Baldinelli at Niagara-on-the-Lake's Truth and Reconciliation ceremony. PAIGE SEBURN

Powwow returns to NOTL after five years

Continued from Front Page

grounds, the first time the event was held there since before the pandemic. The powwow had previously been hosted at the Meridian Centre in St. Catharines.

For Shawana, it ended up feeling like a rebirth for the annual event.

"Taking it back to the grounds of the Niagara Native Centre, feels like a revival for this community," said Shawana.

"I was really hoping to give the community this opportunity to just be human again and have an experience ... almost like a hard factory reset."

Vendors lined the grounds selling jewelry, carvings, art and food, while Meridian Credit Union provided free ice cream until supplies ran out.

Ray Thunderchild emceed the event, guided and the dance circle where people of all ages were invited and compete for prizes, including gift cards to local restaurants.

Shawana's motivation to keep the powwow alive goes back to personal experience.

"I restarted this powwow for the community back in 2014 because in 1999, when my grandfather passed, this community really rallied behind my family to support us in our deepest time of grief," she said.

"That moment showed me so much love that I've been doing these radical acts of reciprocity ever since, trying to give that kind of love back to others."

An elder from the Strong



Top: Colourful regalia fills the dance circle at the Niagara Regional Native Centre. Bottom: Drumming and chanting circle perform during the Nurturing Our Roots Traditional Powwow. ANDREW HAWLITZKY

ship before colonization and that queer spaces in Canada should recognize them as forebears.

"I hope to see our two-spirit people at the round tables with the board members, where the decisions are being made, for the good of all and for the generations to come."

For vendors, the event was not only about sales but about being in a space where culture and community are respected.

Teyo Hill, a soapstone carver from Six Nations, said taking part in the powwow was a very positive experience.

She described the gathering as welcoming and well organized, with a strong sense of community, and said what she hoped people would take away from the day was simple.

"Peace is the answer," said Hill.

Held the weekend before the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Shawana said reconciliation is not a simple or easy process, but gatherings like this move people forward together.

"Events like this let us walk in unity together in a way that's real, not just words. Reconciliation isn't just a casual stroll," said Shawana.

The Native Centre has not announced when the next large-scale gathering will take place, but Shawana said she hopes this year's powwow showed the community's readiness to keep building spaces of healing and cultural pride.

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“Events like this let us walk in unity together in a way that’s real, not just words.”

SABRINA SHAWANA
POWWOW PLANNER

Water Singers, identifying herself as Okie the Two-Spirit Elder, described the powwow as both a celebration and a form of medicine. She said gatherings like this help people, including herself, heal from trauma while reminding them of their responsibilities to one

another. "I almost want to cry because I'm so happy to see this. This is what we're supposed to be doing," said Okie. She also spoke about inclusion, noting that two-spirit people held important roles in traditional leader-



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NOTL votes to keep its pedal pubs **dry**

Dan Smeenk
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Pedal Pub patrons in Niagara-on-the-Lake won't be sipping drinks while pedalling anytime soon, after town council voted to maintain its current alcohol-free rules.

The decision was made during its last general committee of the whole meeting, following the introduction of a provincial law on July 1 that allows pedal pub cyclists to consume alcohol on board — provided the operator applies for and receives a liquor licence.

Niagara Region, which issues liquor licences, approached the town to ask whether it would permit alcohol consumption on pedal pubs.



NOTL's pedal pub won't be serving booze. FILE

Niagara-on-the-Lake is the only town in the region with an operating pedal pub: Pedal Pub NOTL on Mary Street.

This branch of the Pedal Pub company opened in 2019 and has been rolling ever since, taking groups of up to 15 people to bars and breweries in town, on a pedal-powered quadricycle.

Granting a licence would have required an amendment to the town's licensing

bylaw. Town staff presented two options: keep the bylaw as-is — which is what it recommended — or change it to allow licensed pedal pubs.

Council voted in favour of the staff recommendation, a decision it confirmed during its regular meeting last Tuesday.

Pedal Pub NOTL's general manager, Marlo Saganski, said the company has "no comment" on the town's current stance.

"We believe it is important to take the time to fully understand the matter and to consult directly with the town council," she said via email.

"We welcome the opportunity for further discussion and look forward to working together to ensure that all perspectives are carefully considered before moving forward."

A pedal pub is an open-air, bar-style vehicle with four wheels and barstool seating. Patrons power it using bicycle pedals at their feet.

Before July 1 this year, provincial laws around alcohol in vehicles prohibited pedallists from being able to drink while on board the Pedal Pub, as well as operators from selling and serving alcohol on board.

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Hummel seeks town's help in **\$1.4M** restoration

Continued from Front Page

Hummel presented to council during its last committee of the whole meeting, joined by heritage consultant and structural engineer Mark Schultz. They explained the scope of his plan and asked the town to advocate for the project to the conservation authority.

The house, located at 46 Paxton St. in St. Davids, sits on top of a slope next to a nearby ravine. The conservation authority has policies to prevent buildings from sliding into nearby ravines — in this case, it means the house can't have a setback within 7.5 metres to the top of the slope.

However, Hummel says to rebuild the David Secord House according to his plans, the setback would need to be within that limit.

He argued the home's heritage value outweighs the risk and said support from the town would strengthen the company's case with the authority.

"If we, as the bad, bad, greedy development company go to the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority and say, 'We need relief from the top of bank,' that's going to be a lot more complicated than if the Town of NOTL does it," he said.

"We can make sure that it doesn't fall."

The project would cost \$1.2 million to \$1.4 million to complete, Hummel told The Lake Report.

The rebuilt house would stay in the same footprint it has now, as the building



The 266-year-old David Secord House is in a state of disrepair. But developer Rainer Hummel hopes to save it.

would crumble if moved, he said.

He is, however, proposing some changes: adding three bedrooms and a garage.

These new additions, Hummel says, are so the heritage property can serve a "proper adaptive reuse" — in this case, as a house. He told The Lake Report the house will not be sold.

He also plans to rebuild the structure without its second floor to restore its original one-storey design, lower the roofline and reinstate the original chimneys.

He said the 7.5-metre setback line cuts through the existing house and would run through the additions to the property.

Jennifer McQuillan, marketing and communications specialist for the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, said this 7.5-metre setback rule does exist. However, it is negotiable

depending on the circumstances.

"Specifically, our policies allow for the possibility of reducing this 7.5-metre setback within settlement areas, provided that a favourable geotechnical report supports the reduction," she said.

For the David Secord House, she said, because it's located within a settlement area, the village of St. Davids, "the setback can be reduced if the necessary geotechnical studies indicate that it is safe to do so." She added that for properties outside of a settlement area, the 7.5-metre setback is mandatory, with no reductions allowed.

The project needs to move "very, very quickly" to prevent irreparable damage to the house, Hummel told council on Sept. 16.

"We have made an arrangement with the owners of the property to purchase

the Secord house on its own lot and with that restore the house," he said.

The rebuild team has started cleanup on the site so it can plan its work. They plan to renovate the house in phases.

"Critically, the thing right now is to get a roof on it," Hummel said, telling council they hope to have the new roof installed by Christmas.

The proposal received broad support from councillors, who focused their questions on the process and logistics.

Coun. Gary Burroughs thanked Hummel and Schultz, saying he was "thrilled that you're taking it on."

Coun. Erwin Wiens asked how construction vehicles would access the site via Paxton Lane. Hummel said they hadn't finalized that plan but suggested a temporary driveway might be an option.

Coun. Sandra O'Connor was the only one to oppose the request to go to the conservation authority. She told The Lake Report she didn't want council to tell the authority to "bend their rules."

Hummel emphasized the long-term vision for the project.

"This is a project to restore the house for 200 years, not 20," Hummel said.

The NOTL Museum says the house was built in 1799. David Secord was a military officer, merchant and politician in Upper Canada who died in 1844.

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Left: More than 150 people gathered on the first tee Friday afternoon to raise a glass to the oldest golf course in North America, as the NOTL Golf Club celebrated its 150th anniversary. Right: Piper Kelly Buckley was on hand as players prepared to begin their round. DAVE VAN DE LAAR

NOTL Golf Club celebrates 150 years

Members mark historic birthday for North America’s oldest course

Staff
The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club turned back the clock more than a century on Friday as North America’s oldest golf course celebrated its 150th year.

The sun shone brightly as golfers dressed in period attire, breaking out long skirts, fashionable headgear, tartan regalia and other historic themes to help turn the day into a memorable and remarkable anniversary.

The club, founded in 1875 on the same spot as it currently exists, has been marking its 150th birthday all season.

But as numerous members remarked, Friday’s celebration was “the best event they’ve ever done. It was so much fun and so well done.”

In all, 180 golfers signed up for two separate nine-hole outings, split between a morning and an afternoon session. Each round was kicked off with the skirl of the bagpipes courtesy of Kelly Buckley of St. Catharines.

The golfers played mainly in groups of four or five in a scramble format, but the committee that organized the day added a few twists.

Ambassadors from the Golf Historical Society of Canada were on hand with prized selections of “hickory sticks” and replicas of “gutty” golf balls, the type of rudimentary equipment used in the late 1800s.

Few of the golfers had ever swung such museum

pieces but on this day they had to use them on several holes.

Gutty balls were made from the dried sap of the saponilla tree and formed into ball shapes when they were heated up.

They didn’t fly very far and, as players learned in using the wooden-shafted hickory clubs, the game of golf has come a long way in the past century.

In another nod to history, NOTL Museum representative David Servos, a descendant of Niagara’s Launcelot Cressy Servos, a golf pro, instructor, course designer, author and playwright, mingled with the crowd and talked up the town’s and the club’s past.

It was all in fun and was seen by participants as a perfect way to recognize the club’s 150th.

But the golf competition was secondary to the effort to embrace the past, as members went the extra distance and dug into their closets to find items that celebrated the game’s bygone era. Long skirts, plus-fours and oversized headgear were de rigueur.

At an outdoor reception afterward, the historic club, the players and those dressed to the nines also were celebrated.

Clad in his family’s bold red tartan, The Lake Report’s Kevin MacLean and his wife May Chang were singled out with prizes — along with kilt-clad Linda Anderson-Kozik — for their throwback attire.

But dozens of others, including Gail and Norm Kerr, whose 1870s-era golf ensembles were the perfect fit for the occasion, embraced the historic theme and were decked out for the day.

On the course, there were some winners, too.

In the morning session, the foursome of Jim and Janice McMacken, Peter Chilibeck and Dave Anthony carded a 1-over 37.

In the afternoon, in warmer temperatures, Patrick Craig, Charles Goddard, and Brian and Marion MacIntyre teamed up to shoot a stellar 1-under 35.

There were some sharpshooters on the day as well. On the third hole with special flags at 150-yard intervals, Stephen Warboys and Todd Watson were closest to the pin in the morning, while Steve Millward nailed the prize for both pins in the afternoon.

And on the second hole, where groups had to putt from 150 inches away no matter where they landed on the green, Bruce Cochrane was the morning prize winner and Marion MacIntyre won the afternoon session.

As the day wrapped up with a mass photo on the first tee with, appropriately, more than 150 people raising a toast, several conversations focused on the idea of the club making the throwback celebration an annual event.

No promises but club co-owner Eva Kessel said it is under consideration.



Clockwise from top left: The Lake Report’s duo of May Chang and Kevin MacLean, wore his family tartan for the NOTL Golf Club’s 150th anniversary celebration, Norm and Gail Kerr were picture-perfect in their 1800s-era golf attire, The NOTL Museum’s David Servos was on hand to talk about the history of the town and the club. He’s shown with Gail Kerr’s award-winning painting commemorating the 150th. Prints of the work are available for purchase, Dressed head-to-toe in gear reminiscent of the 1800s, NOTL’s Barb Hastings prepares to tee off on the first hole Friday morning, Pictured with her husband John, Linda Anderson-Kozik wore the Anderson tartan and her ensemble won a best costume prize. DAVE VAN DE LAAR/SUPPLIED PHOTOS



NOTICE OF APPLICATION AND ELECTRONIC PUBLIC HEARING

What: Notice of **Application and Hybrid Public Hearing for the Committee of Adjustment** (under Section 45 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, as amended).

When: **Thursday, October 16, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.**

Where: Hybrid meeting in-person at Town Hall, Council Chambers, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil **or** electronically via the directions below (Microsoft Teams).

Regarding: **Minor Variance Application A-22/25 – 130 Front Street**

What is the proposal?

The subject lands are known municipally as 130 Front Street, located on the south side of Front Street, east of Gate Street in Old Town, Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Minor Variance Application A-22/25 is made to facilitate the construction of a detached accessory structure to accommodate a garage and a second storey Additional Dwelling Unit and requests relief as follows:

1. Maximum height of an accessory structure from 6.0 meters, as required in the Zoning By-law, to 6.4 meters.

Dialogue is encouraged:

Written or video comments on the application may be forwarded to Natalie Thomson, Secretary-Treasurer Committee of Adjustment **prior to Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 12:00 p.m.** at 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON, L0S 1T0, or via email at natalie.thomson@notl.com.

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For more information:

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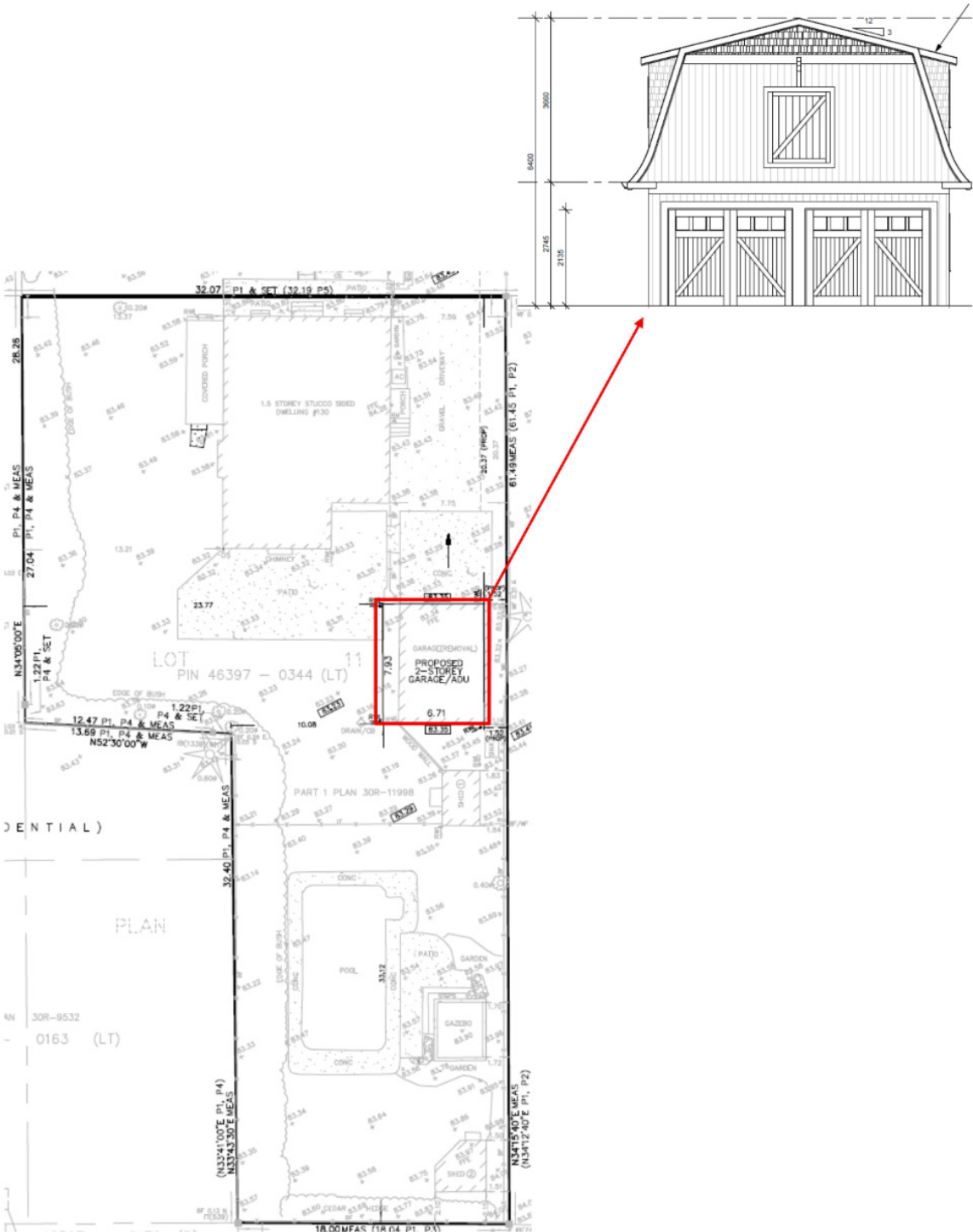
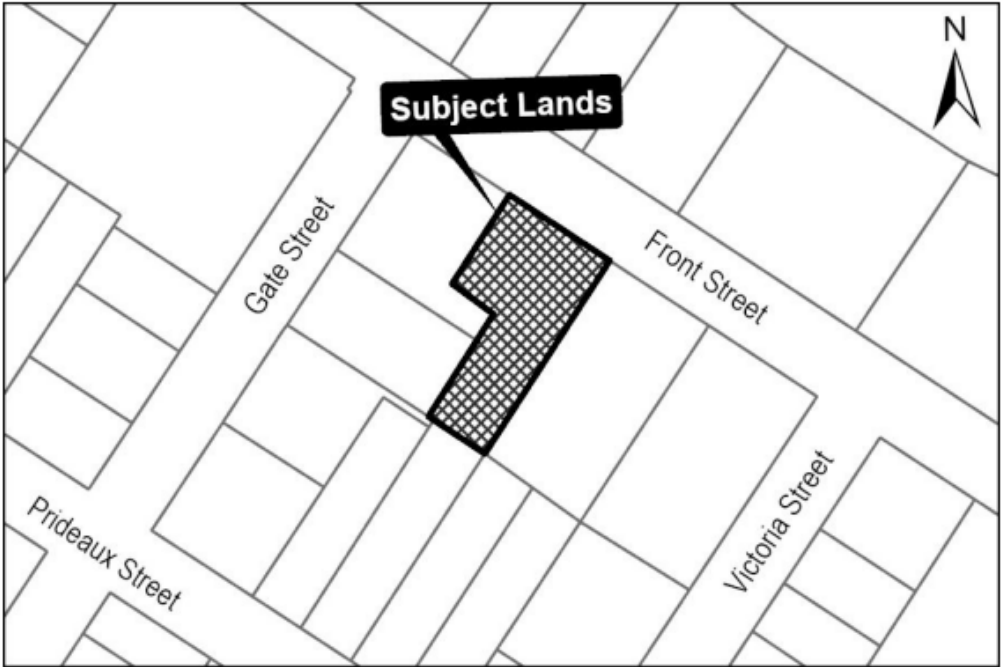
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October 2, 2025



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Wineries in NOTL are among several commercial operators that host special events in town under the town’s special events policy, which a new report says is “overly broad,” leaving staff, organizers and the public “confused and frustrated.” **PAIGE SEBURN**

Consultant’s report calls for new special events bylaw in NOTL

Paige Seburn
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

Inconsistent, confusing and without enforcement: those are the findings of a new report prepared on behalf of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, which takes a close look at the municipality’s rules for special events, such as those held by businesses across town.

This report is the first step in a process to create a dedicated bylaw to govern special events.

Prepared by consulting firm StrategyCorp, the “current state report” recommends the town create a dedicated bylaw, set clearer event categories and introduce a licensing system for frequent commercial operators — which, in NOTL, includes several wineries.

“The town’s special events policy is overly broad and invites significant ambiguity, leaving staff, organizers and the public confused and frustrated with perceived inconsistency of how events are managed,” the report states.

Only in parks are special events enforceable, through the town’s parks bylaw. “The lack of a special events bylaw is a gap,” it adds.

That’s what this review will lead to, said Lucie Palka, the town’s project manager of strategy and digital services: “a dedicated special events bylaw.”

“At present, the town does not have a specific bylaw to enforce special events,” she said.

The firm presented its findings at a council Sept. 23 workshop. The results were also posted on the

town’s website Sept. 18.

Ed Werner owns Brox Company Limited., a grape-growing company that has taken legal action against Konzelmann Estate Winery and the town over events and enforcement.

In an email, he said the report “confirms what I have been stressing to the town for years,” and “what has resulted in my company suing the town.”

The six-month-long review is still underway, examining how the town manages special events and what changes may be needed.

Council has not directed staff to pause approving special events, so applications are continuing under the current process, said Palka.

In July and August, consultations took place through surveys, focus groups and interviews with residents, organizers, community groups, tourism partners, staff and council. The resident survey ran for three weeks, with the third week added after the fact to gather more feedback.

To prepare its analysis, StrategyCorp stacked results alongside town records, staff input and comparisons with other municipalities. It “goes beyond validating existing practices,” Palka said.

It was designed to balance tourism and economic benefits with farmland preservation, public safety and residents’ quality of life, while identifying common concerns — “ensuring that recommendations are grounded in the experiences of the whole community,” she added.

Werner said the review recognizes residents’ con-

cerns, including those with safety, noise, parking and enforcement.

About eight in 10 survey respondents said the town’s role should include upholding the rules to ensure organizers comply with permits, bylaws and zoning.

“This is what I have asked of the town and have not received,” said Werner.

The report challenges the town to regulate impacts on health, safety and agricultural land — issues Werner said leave residents in rural and agricultural areas “facing commercial creep.”

It found 28 per cent of respondents agreed more events should be allowed in town, which Werner said shows most residents either want fewer events or no increase and argued support for more likely came from commercial operators and their staff.

From now until December, the town will develop a special events principles document, review fee structures and event processes, draft recommendations, and host workshops with stakeholders for feedback, before finalizing an implementation roadmap.

Palka said residents can also comment on results at council meetings, including as a delegate.

Werner welcomed the town’s decision to review its policies but urged residents and the agricultural community to stay engaged because, unlike commercial operators, he said, residents “do not have paid staff to present our arguments.”

“We must be diligent if we wish to have our voices and concerns heard.”

paigeseburn@niagaranow.com



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1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil **or** electronically via the directions below (Microsoft Teams).

Regarding: **Minor Variance Application A-19/25**
– 638 Queenston Road

What is the proposal?

The subject lands are known municipally as 638 Queenston Road, lying on the north side of Queenston Road, west of Concession 7 Road Niagara-on-the-Lake. Minor Variance Application A-19/25 is made to facilitate the construction of a car portico onto the existing single-family dwelling and requests relief as follows:

1. Maximum lot coverage from 15%, as required in the Zoning By-law, to 16% to accommodate the car portico.

Dialogue is encouraged:

Written or video comments on the application may be forwarded to Natalie Thomson, Secretary-Treasurer Committee of Adjustment **prior to Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 12:00 p.m.** at 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON, L0S 1T0, or via email at natalie.thomson@notl.com.

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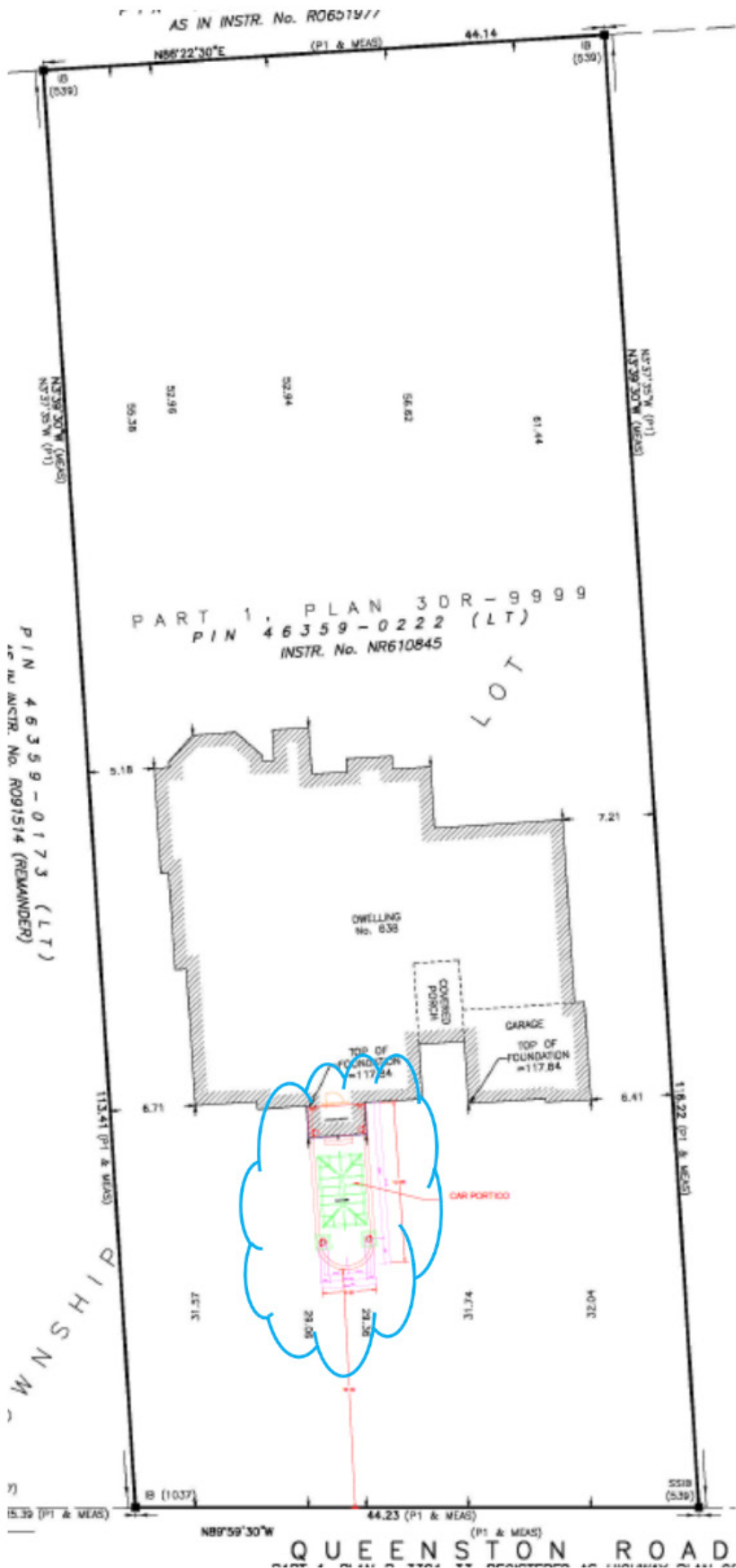
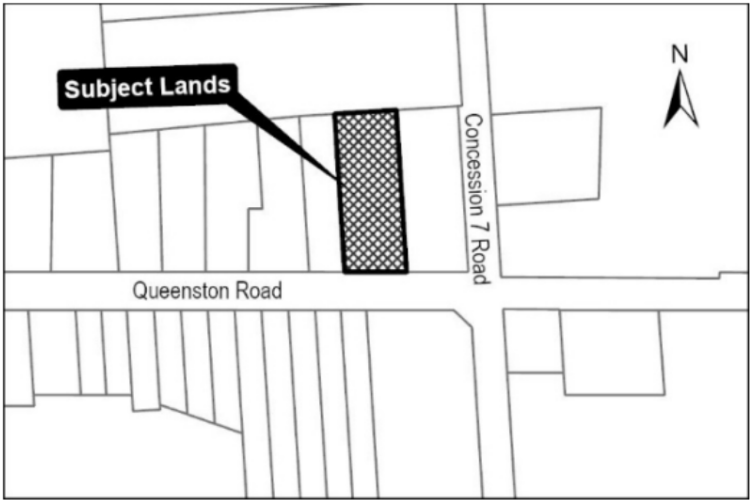
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October 2, 2025



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Lions Club donates 20K pairs of shoes

Andrew Hawlitzky
The Lake Report

More than 20,000 pairs of donated shoes were hauled out of a shipping container in St. Davids last Saturday, marking the end of a months-long community effort that will help families overseas build new lives.

Soles4Souls Canada and the St. Davids Lions Club collected the shoes from across Niagara, filling a 40-foot container that was emptied and reloaded into a trailer bound for Toronto.

The shoes will be distributed to countries in the Caribbean, Central America and South America, keeping them out of landfills while providing women with inventory for small businesses that sustain families.

The collection effort began in February, with Lions Clubs across District A2 pitching in. The Grimsby Lions gathered about 8,500 pairs on their own, while the Long Point Lions contributed more than 2,500.



Lions Club volunteers load up the shipping container with shoes bound for families in need. SUSAN SNIDER

Smaller clubs across the district added thousands more, eventually filling the container with 20,000 pairs of gently used shoes.

“For me, it’s important because this isn’t just about shoes. It’s about dignity, and about giving families a way to create stability in their lives,” said Louise Agnew,

District Governor for Lions Clubs District A2 and partner with Soles4Souls Canada.

After being loaded by 15 Lions Club volunteers, the trailer headed to Toronto to be weighed before Soles4Souls Canada oversees distribution abroad. The donations will reach families

through micro-enterprise programs in countries including Haiti, Uruguay and Guatemala.

Susan Snider, president of the St. Davids Lions Club, said hosting the container showed the strength of local service. She described how her club’s Quonset hut overflowed with donations before the 40-foot container was provided as storage.

“At first it was overwhelming, but the support from our Lions in this district is phenomenal,” said Snider. “To see 20,000 pairs of shoes come through here, you realize how much people care.”

Snider added that the Lions need more members to keep efforts like this going, particularly younger people who can help sustain the service work into the future.

Community members can still drop off shoes at 23 barrel locations across Niagara. A full list of sites is available through the Soles4Souls Canada website.

andrew@niagaranow.com

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Murray slams it home for rare eagle 2

Kevin MacLean
The Lake Report

Smooth-swinging lefty Glen Murray managed a rare feat on the first hole during men's league action at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Golf Club last Thursday.

Playing on the par-4 first hole, framed on the right by Lake Ontario and book-ended by Fort Mississauga behind the green, Murray lofted his second shot from the fairway toward the pin — and into the hole.

The rare eagle 2 hit the pin and dropped directly into the hole. But no one knew it for sure.

Standing 123 yards away with playing partners Brodie Townley and Robert Yamamoto, it was unclear what happened to the ball.

They hoped it went in the hole (happens all the time when pros hit the pin), but from that distance, clanging off the metal pin, it easily could have ricocheted over the green or into the lake or nearby trees.



Glen Murray notched a rare eagle 2 on the par-4 first hole at NOTL Golf Club last week. FILE PHOTO

After a solid drive, Murray said he hit a wedge and “thought I heard a click at the flag.” And there was no ball on the green.

“I told Robert and Brodie

it must have gone in,” he said, but neither believed it until Townley walked up and found the ball in the cup.

“Better than a hole in one,” quipped Murray, who has had an ace before at another course.

Thursday's swing paid off handsomely, as well. Not only did the eagle help him shoot a 1-over 37, good for second low gross behind Ricky Watson (35), it earned Murray a \$70 gross skin.

Other winners: Don Stewart (30) and Martin Vagners (31) were low net, Jeff Jacques sank the longest putt on #2, Stewart had the longest drive on #3, Paul Loucks was closest to the pin on #4 and Yamamoto was closest on #9.

Jacques putt on #2 also earned a gross skin (\$70) and a net skin (\$95). Ted Carmichael birdied #6 for a gross skin and John Liotta scored a net skin on #7.

The men's league wraps up its season Oct. 16 but other leagues are already

finishing.

The Monday business women held their final outing this week and Tracey Peters was top shooter with 42.

Other winners: Barb Hastings (longest drive on #1), Nancy Nichols (closest to the 150 on #2), Cheryl Yamamoto (closest to the pin on #4), Frankie Rothschild (sank the longest putt on #7 and Bridgette Bassie (closest to the pin in two on #9).

And on Tuesday, the women's nine and 18-hole leagues also held their joint finale scramble and dinner.

Tee notes: As reported last week, young NOTL golfers finished well at the annual Champion of Champions tournament at Cardinal Lakes in Welland.

Among them was 14-year-old Natalie Simpson, who also plays out of the Cherry Hill Club. She was runner-up in the junior girls division, carding a score of 102.

Simpson has been junior girls champ at Cherry Hill for the past two seasons.



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Regarding: **Minor Variance Application A-20/25 – 52 Homestead Drive**

What is the proposal?

The subject lands are known municipally as 52 Homestead Drive, lying on the north side of Homestead Drive, west of Frontier Drive, Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Minor Variance Application A-20/25 is made to recognize the location of the outdoor in-ground swimming pool structures and equipment (pool heater and shed), and requests relief as follows:

- 1. Minimum side yard setback from 1.5 metres, as required in the Zoning By-law, to 1.32 metres for the existing outdoor in-ground swimming pool equipment (pool heater);
- 2. Minimum rear yard setback from 1.5 metres, as required in the Zoning By-law, to 1.09 metres for the existing outdoor in-ground swimming pool equipment (pool heater);
- and 3. Minimum side yard setback from 1.5 metres, as required in the Zoning By-law, to 0.48 metres for the existing outdoor in-ground swimming pool structure (pool shed).

Dialogue is encouraged:

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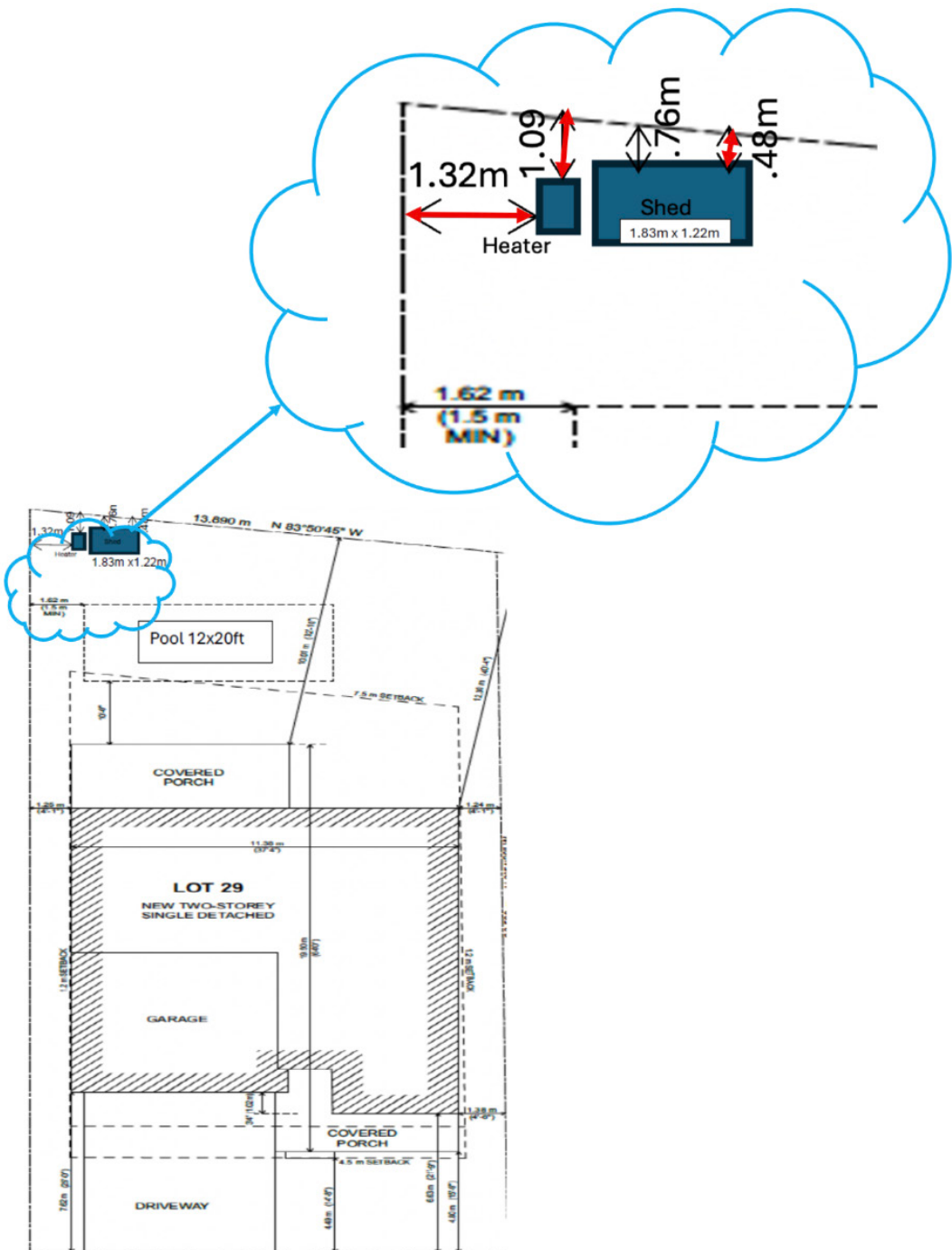
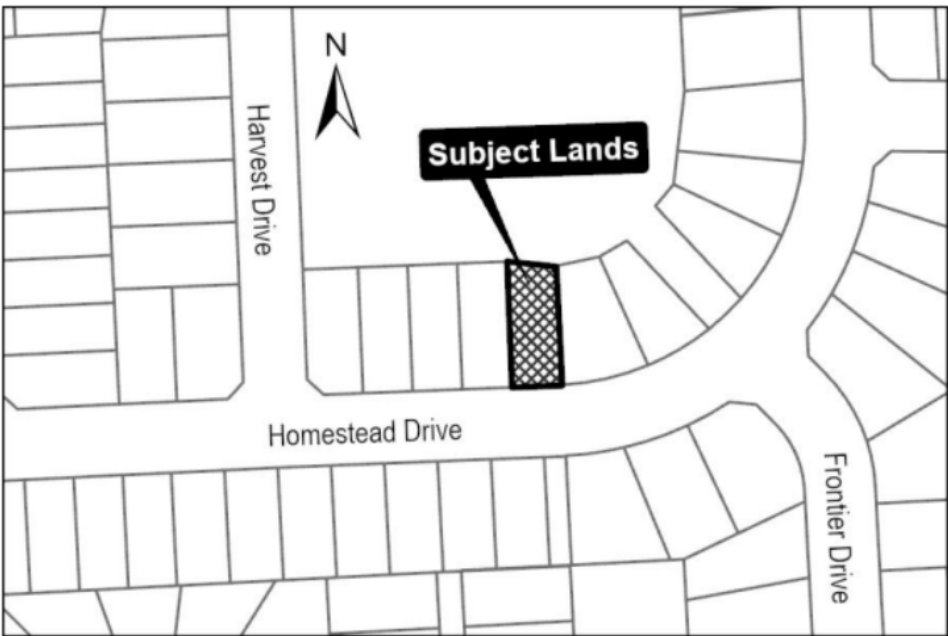
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October 2, 2025





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With Bradley Hamilton

#47: When you encounter a tourist, give them a pin or something from your community. It will be highlight of their trip. When travelling, take a pin to give to those special people that make your trip meaningful.

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Contributed by Patty Garriock
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- Tom Peters

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Eagle comes for lunch

Over at Niagara Shores Park on Tuesday morning, Sept. 30, a bald eagle feasts on carp.
DAVE VAN DE LAAR

Opinion

The battles we’re losing



THE TURNER REPORT

Garth Turner
Columnist

It’s a swell town. We live on the right side of the river. Every chat I have with an American tourist reinforces that.

We elected a central banker. They elected a reality TV guy. What could possibly go wrong?

Alas, it ain’t perfect in NOTL. Let me count the ways. Six of them, anyway.

Perhaps you’ve noticed the rape of Roslyn. This past week workers finished pushing through a driveway onto Queen Street brushing the front steps of the 1822 iconic, landmark Roslyn Cottage.

Gone is the distinctive gate and fence, the trees, bushes, shrubs and bricks. Soon a two-storey garage will squeeze onto the scant land left after the historic property was ripped in half.

Behind the house, where a vineyard, pond, mature shade trees and stone walkways graced and framed Roslyn’s grandeur, there’s now dirt. Flat, denuded, ready-to-build-on dirt. The severed home recently sold for well over \$2 million. The dirt is listed for \$1.7 million.

How did this happen to



The historic Roslyn cottage lost its greenery and property, replaced by gravel and, soon, a garage. GARTH TURNER

an historic property? On heritage grounds the town denied the brutal severance and garage/driveway plan.

The owner/developer (Rainer Hummel) took it to the Ontario Land Tribunal. Council chose surrender over spending money to defend history. Roslyn was ravished.

Then there’s Garrison Village’s Terminal 4 and The Wall. Regular addicts will recall this was the stuff of last week’s rant.

The new, hulking, arched Clayfield Hotel with its sunglassy windows, airport vibe and 42 attached, three-storey vacation rentals is a far cry from what was approved for the gateway site into Old Town.

But council was busy doing other stuff. Staff approved five rounds of changes. Now people who flock to see old, quaint, authentic and irreplaceable architecture are greeted by a fine example of the Mississauga Industrial school of design. Residents of Perez Road, behind, live in the shadow of a wall of hotel rentals.

And who can forget Parliament Oak? Putting a major hotel in the middle of a residential ‘hood was bad enough, but the developer (Benny Marotta) didn’t even secure permission to start digging. This steamy little paper gave you all the dirt on that last week (the town tried and failed to stop the work).

Speaking of dirt, is anyone worried about those 19th-century, brick-lined arched tunnels snaking beneath the former school site, soon to be a parkade? Apparently not. If there was an arrow-head down there, work on the place would freeze.

Of course, let’s add Fat George to the list. In a few weeks two heritage homes on Victoria Street will be razed, followed by tearing down the century-old Royal George Theatre and the ancient building beside it.

In the battle between money and legacy, it’s the same old winner.

Over the next three years the new \$80-million theatrical complex — all 50,000 square feet of it, soaring 60-feet high, will be built. There’s no published construction plan. None has been asked for. Some nearby retailers and cafes will not survive. You have no idea what we are in for.

Not far away is 27 Prideaux. Taxpayers just gave a quarter million dollars to a former owner of this modest cottage in an admission that members of our clowncil screwed up. They designated the property as protected, preventing replacement of a garage, but the owner wasn’t told. He sued for damages. He won. We lost.

And, finally, we also rained cash on Rainer’s company. A million bucks in public funds went to Mr. Hummel (remember him?), the multi-millionaire developer who lives with his antique car collection in a palace on acres of land on the main street.

Why? Because he deserved it. The politicians screwed up again. An illegal bylaw was proclaimed to curb one proposed project and whacked him by mistake. He sued for \$3.6 million in damages and just settled for a million.

What do these things have in common? And how long until the next vote?

Garth Turner is a NOTL resident, journalist, author, wealth manager and former federal MP and minister.

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The NOTL election knives are out early

Dear editor:

It feels like the election-eering has already started for next fall's municipal election in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

A few weeks ago, Al Bisback wrote a letter rightly observing that most, if not all, planning application decisions seem to be favouring the developers these days ("Letter: Lack of scrutiny in planning department approvals," Sept. 4)

the following week, Al was attacked by deputy lord mayor Erwin Wiens as having been incompetent in the previous council ("Letter: Setting the record straight on planning in Niagara-on-the-Lake," Sept. 11)

Then, in quick succession, council approves two large settlements which seem to call into question the actions of the previous council members, intimating

incompetence, if not outright malfeasance, neither of which were proven in court since the settlements end the litigation ("Town pays \$225K settlement to former property owner over 'misuse of power,'" Sept. 18, "Town settles another lawsuit, pays \$1M to builder over development freeze," Sept. 25)

Of course, the presumed overspending on legal fees caused by the actions of previous council is blamed for the infrastructure deficit, which has nothing to do with the need for ever-increasing infrastructure spending to accommodate the new development in town.

Witnessing the never-ending line of trucks exiting the Parliament Oak site, I wonder what road repairs will be necessary in the next year?

It seems to me in the last election cycle, the knives didn't come out until later in the year or early 2022 when the rumours started circulating about the mayor's husband and the mayor unethically circumventing the rights of their neighbour who was going to sue the town and them ("Secret recording claims Disero knew about husband's complaint," Oct. 20, 2022).

Funny how that seemed to disappear from the news after she lost the election.

We also learn today that the town had received an application for a permit to truck soil away from the Parliament Oak site early in September, which was still in process when the developer began excavating and trucking soil away at the beginning of last week, with no permit and

continued in defiance of a stop-work order ("Developer ignores stop-work order," Sept. 25).

Interestingly, I know of several enquiries made last week that weren't even informed of the existence of the application until after it was posthumously issued on Friday afternoon.

One would have thought the town would have simply stopped processing the permit application and demanded the illegal activity stop before resuming consideration of a permit, instead of issuing it four days after the infraction began.

I hope at least the \$2,000 was collected in fines for the four days of illegal trucking.

It will be an interesting year!

Bob Bader
NOTL

Conflicts grow like weeds between the vines



BOTTOM LINE

Steve McGuinness
Columnist

Grapes are big business in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Many farmers and wineries grow them. Many town residents and temporary foreign workers hold jobs in agricultural and agritourism.

Our vineyards are considered tranquil oases. But the relationship between winery owners and farmers is not always symbiotic and cordial.

Outdoor event hosting is the flashpoint in an ongoing dispute between a local winery and its farm neighbour. The hostilities broke out into the open at a Sept. 9 planning meeting in the town's council chambers.

The meeting heard an application by Konzelmann Estate Winery to amend a zoning bylaw, seeking to

host up to 30 special events annually at the north end of its property, near a gazebo on Lake Ontario. Brox Company, or Brox Farms, a neighbouring grape grower, opposed the application.

Some elected councillors have ties to the farming and winery industries. Coun. Andrew Niven, employed in a senior role at Konzelmann, declared an occupational conflict. Coun. Erwin Wiens, a former wine king, owns a family vineyard and Coun. Maria Mavridis's family operate a wine bar on Queen Street.

The subject lands are identified as a "specialty crop area" (Niagara Peninsula tender fruit and grape area) within the "protected countryside" under the Greenbelt plan. Under NOTL's official plan, the area is designated "conservation / agricultural-specialty crop area." Rules permit wineries to conduct limited commercial activity as a secondary use within self-contained areas, isolated from existing farms.

Although winery co-owner Jim Reschke suggested upcoming events would be small-scale, quiet and held in daylight, the Brox presenters, led by owner

Edward Werner, brought photographs and videos depicting prior disruptive events.

They showed pictures and footage of night lighting, amplified sound, food trucks and club cars shuttling guests, plus farm market tents and picnic tables set up in the parking lot. Brox's lawyer, Tom Richardson, amplified these concerns, citing many unauthorized events, breaching site-specific plan obligations and liquor license conditions.

Other area wineries operate outdoor event spaces which are included in the on-farm diversified use calculation designed to limit the percentage of farmland dedicated to non-farm uses.

At the council meeting, Quartek, the applicant's planners, argued that Konzelmann's on-farm diversified use ratio would be acceptable at 4.3 per cent, but a peer review by Brox's planning consultant, MHBC, suggested a 2 per cent guideline be more firmly applied.

Dr. Donald Cole, of the University of Toronto, spoke about pesticide spray dangers to vineyard guests. Another neighbouring

grape farmer, Emanuele Giunta, complained about Konzelmann events causing safety, noise and traffic congestion concerns on Lakeshore Road.

Giunta and Cole were both aggressively interrogated by a hostile Coun. Wiens. He claimed the professor's pesticide spray studies were irrelevant, provided the two vineyards complied with Pest Management Regulatory Agency rules. Wiens also suggested that Giunta should be consistently supportive of wineries, recognizing his business's dependence on selling them grapes.

Hopefully, calmer and more open minds prevail in settling this dispute, recognizing its precedent value. Allowing every one of the 50 wineries in town to host 50 guests at 30 new events would attract another 75,000 guests annually, on top of the estimated three million already visiting our town of 20,000.

In his Bay Street career, Steve McGuinness was a senior advisor to large financial institutions and is now retired in NOTL. Send your personal financial planning questions to him at smcgfinplan@gmail.com.



This week's riddle is "Jeopardy!" style.
Category: "HAVING FUN"

A startup may turn to this, a general term for financing by smaller dollar amounts from many people.

Last issue category: IN THE MEDICINE CABINET

Clue: Semaglutide, a drug for type 2 diabetes that's used for weight loss, is sold under the brand names Rybelsus, Wegovy and this.

Answer: What is Ozempic?

Answered first by: Margie Enns

Also answered correctly (in order) by: Lynda Collet, Kimberly Amaral, Sue Rautenberg, Jane Morris, Bob Wheatley, Tuija Johansson, Alison Parsons, Howard Jones, Jeff Lake, Jim Dandy, Wade Durling, Esther VanGorder, Claudia Grimwood, Wesley Mann, Katie Reimer, Edna Groff, Sylvia Wiens, David Spencer, Marla Percy

Email answers to editor@niagaranow.com, with your name, for a chance to win a \$25 Irish Harp Pub gift card every week. (Subject line: Riddle me this)

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Delegations, the David Secord House and **Parliament Oak**



ARCHITEXT

Brian Marshall
Columnist

To begin, I must declare a mea culpa for suggesting that you, a citizen of Niagara-on-the-Lake, “have the right to delegate (speak to) any item included on the open agendas of town council and all of its committees” in last week’s column. Apparently there is a formal process on the town’s website to file a request for a delegation to be presented in council and committee of the whole meetings which, provided you meet their long list of criteria, may be granted. So, it is not a “right” in the truest sense of the word, but rather a qualified opportunity that may be granted at the discretion of town staff in accordance with that criteria. And sadly, unlike many towns and cities across this province, there is no simple process on the town’s

website to request a delegation before the municipal heritage committee. This week, I attempted to request a delegation on an agenda item in the Oct. 1 meeting of the municipal heritage committee and was informed, according to the terms of reference for this committee, that “delegations will be generally limited to” applicants for heritage permits or seeking comments on a future heritage permit application and those seeking to designate their property. Now, it’s not impossible to delegate in a meeting of the municipal heritage committee, but bizarrely, it is more challenging than being granted the opportunity to address our elected officials in official sessions. If you wish to delegate to the heritage committee, first contact the “staff liaison” — Sumra Zia, the town’s heritage planner — with your request. The staff liaison will inform the committee of your request and the members can move a motion to add you as a delegate. Your request will require the endorsement of two committee members to move and second the motion and a two-thirds majority vote of the committee to add your delegation to the agenda.



The revitalization of the historic David Secord House is a topic near and dear to Brian Marshall’s heart — it was the subject of his column from Feb. 6 this year. FILE

While there is some chance that your delegation may fail to be added, I believe that for rational, educated and well considered submissions, that risk is small. Based on my experience serving with this committee, I’d suggest they would be open to and actually welcome the input of town residents as a part of their deliberations. That said, I find it absolutely inexplicable why a town that’s built heritage component is widely celebrated by both visitors and residents alike would seek to limit the information provided to its advisory committee as part of their deliberations. But, such is the case. Interestingly, making delegation to the town’s quasi-judicial committee of adjustment — whose decisions are fundamentally important in preserving the character and shaping the development of our streetscapes — is the simplest and most straightforward process while simultaneously being one of the most under accessed opportunities to express the resident voice. But, let’s move on to a topic which, as long-term readers of this column will know, is near and dear to my heart — saving and restoring the incredibly important historic c. 1799 David Secord House on Paxton Lane in St. Davids. Since 2018, I have consistently appealed for this building — as an irreplaceable historical statement attesting to the settlement, founding and growth of

Niagara and Upper Canada which, in turn, led to the formation of our country — to be preserved for posterity. And recently, Hummel Properties has committed to doing so. Notwithstanding a few past differences, I wish to congratulate the principal of this company for undertaking this project. Properly executed, the restoration of this vital and unique piece of heritage will stand as a lasting legacy bequeathed to all Canadians. Thank you, on behalf of our children and our children’s children. And, while I wish we could finish this week on such a high note, the press of events denies us that opportunity. After approximately 48 hours under a stop-work order (ignored by the developer for much of this time), work on the Two Sisters Resorts’ Parliament Oak site continues under a last minute issuance a “site preparation plan permit” by town staff — this despite no site plan approval or issuance of a building permit. I opine that town staff is skating on very thin ice in issuing this permit. Typically, according to normal and accepted practice in this province, site plan approval is required prior to any such permit being issued. Moreover, why has Two Sisters Resorts not been charged the full \$500,000 fine for proceeding work without permits as specified under Section 36 of the Ontario Building Act? It would go a long way to offsetting taxpayers out-of-pocket expense for the recent legal settlements of \$1 million and \$225,000 respectively. Finally, down at 187 Queen St. it appears, based on site work and recent paint marks on the curb, that the town may be proceeding with a curb-cut to allow a driveway off Queen Street. Not only is this action something that the municipal heritage committee historically indicated that they were not in favour of, but also such an alteration in the heritage characteristics of a Part IV designated property should require a heritage permit and no such application has come before the municipal heritage committee to date. Rolling over to avoid issues seems to be the flavour of the day ... *Brian Marshall is a NOTL realtor, author and expert consultant on architectural design, restoration and heritage.*



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Notwithstanding clause manages to flummox Canadians



ROSS'S RAMBLINGS
Ross Robinson
Columnist

Before I commence this week's Ramblings, I will formally send condolences to the many friends and colleagues of former tireless Niagara Region politician Jim Bradley.

He passed away last Friday, and it would be trite to say, "after a life of public service." He set many records for political longevity.

He recently said, "Our system of democracy is a true treasure, and I have always considered it as a great honour to be able to advocate for the needs

and desires of our city, our region, and our province."

Yes, our Canadian democracy is precious, but what the heck is the notwithstanding clause?

During my high school days in the 1960s, my political career peaked as prime minister of the student parliament at Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School in St. Catharines.

I learned a fair bit about the workings of our parliamentary democracy in Canada and have always tried to keep somewhat current as our wonderful nation progressed or digressed.

Our Canadian federalism has never been truly stable, but by many measures, we have done rather well when compared to the rest of the world.

Under the leadership of former prime minister Brian Mulroney way back in the 1980s, our politicians somehow developed the Meech Lake Accord.



Parliament Hill.

Translated into our other official language, L'Accord du Lac Meech.

It was central to the effort to recognize Quebec as a distinct society.

Debate raged, and I thought very wise Canadian Joseph Philippe Pierre Yves Elliott Trudeau stuck a pin in the arguments by saying, "What's the big deal? If one side is unique and distinct, it follows academically that the other side is also unique and distinct."

Not only was former prime minister Trudeau brave and handsome, but he also often seemed to be slightly intellectually ahead of the pack. In both official languages. And that is amazing!

Returning now to my question, let's try to understand the notwithstanding clause, section 33 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. I admit ignorance, as philosophical political discussions have never really rattled my chain.

Earlier this week, I asked several NOTLers what they thought about this piece of Canadiana, which has recently been part of political discussions.

No one claimed to have a real understanding of the notwithstanding clause. Some folks claimed to "sort of" know what part it played in our parliamentary system of government, but it became clear there was no real knowledge. Or desire for knowledge.

Perhaps we tend to confuse political matters by also using words like heretofore, inasmuch and herewith and the long French gem, neanmoins — in English, nevertheless. After considerable

research, I deduced the notwithstanding clause gives our federal parliament and our provincial and territorial legislatures the power to override certain terms of our Charter of Rights and Freedoms for up to five years.

Earlier in this Ramblings, I admitted that understanding the recently regularly mentioned notwithstanding clause had never been a priority in my life.

As I am now writing this weekly column, the reasons become clearer and clearer. It's pretty dry stuff. And not one person I tried to engage showed even the slightest spark of enthusiasm.

Perhaps some things are best left to our professional politicians, bureaucrats and academics.

I think any word containing over nine letters qualifies as a long word. There are 15 letters in the word notwithstanding. Enough said.

Notwithstanding this

weak thought, can we agree that last weekend was an exhausting time to be a sports fan? Late September really had a lot of action, so I will just mention a few highlights.

Perhaps inspired by the recent successes of Vicky Mboko and Summer McIntosh, our world-class Canadian Women's Rugby Team got to the finals of their recent World Championship tournament played in England. My goodness, over 80,000 tickets were sold for the final game at Twickenham. Who woulda thunk?

Then on Sunday, many Canadians were glued to television screens as the Blue Jays clinched. Add to this the Ryder Cup shenanigans and our neighbours, the Buffalo Bills doing so well ...

Notwithstanding the normal NOTL focus of my weekly Ramblings, perhaps Canada's parliamentary notwithstanding clause will generate a bit more interest.



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Residents will have opportunities to learn more and share feedback on both the Official Plan and the Former Hospital Site (176 Wellington Street) project. Sessions are drop-in style, and no registration is required:

Official Plan Engagement Sessions

October 15 – NOTL Community Centre (14 Anderson Lane, NOTL)

- 4:00 – 5:30 p.m. & 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
- Presentation at 7:00 p.m.

October 16 – Mary Snider Room, Centennial Arena (1567 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil)

- 4:00 – 5:30 p.m. & 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.
- Presentation at 7:00 p.m.

Former Hospital Site Engagement Sessions

October 15 – NOTL Community Centre (14 Anderson Lane, NOTL)

- 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (Simpson Room)
- 4:00 – 5:30 p.m. (Auditorium)

October 16 – Mary Snider Room, Centennial Arena (1567 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil)

- 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

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SPONSORED/OPINION

Decision to deny owner-occupied short-term rentals was short-sighted and threatens heritage

SPONSORED
Opinion

The following is an open letter to the village of St. Davids.

In 2018 we bought the First Presbyterian Church of St. Davids to preserve it for future generations. We want to explain why we failed.

Our family has lived in St. Davids for 10 generations. We are the first private owners since 1888 and feel the weight of good stewardship.

The permitted uses range from institutional, commercial, single-family residential to very profitable high-density multi-residential units. We did not want a condo development on the lands. Only certain adaptive reuses support the church's preservation. Commercial uses tie a building's fate to the vagaries of the business cycles.

The best adaptive reuse for the church was to renovate the church as our principal residence. We spent the last six years and significant costs toward that end.

We stayed, short-term, at many repurposed heritage buildings throughout North America and Europe. Every owner was adamant that the ability to earn income, when needed from short-term lets, was crucial to the preservation of their historic building.

We concluded that if our principal residence was licensed as a short-term rental (STR) the income generated would help support the high costs associated with preservation of the church for the benefit of future generations and the village. If not for COVID and a slow planning process, our principal residence would have been built in 2022.

Without meaningful consultation, council passed a new STR bylaw in May 2025 that placed a moratorium on future cottage rentals or villas and an eight-year occupancy rule for new licences. Adaptive reuse as an STR would have fallen under the prior bylaw, with no need to appear before council on July 22, 2025.

We proposed a zoning amendment to exempt the church from the moratorium on new licences for villas and the eight-year occupancy rule. To support the preservation and maintenance of heritage buildings that fall under the Ontario



St. Davids residents Mark and Brenda Stewart say council ignored the good will behind their plans to preserve a historic church in St. Davids, which involved turning it into an owner-occupied short-term rental. They say council's decision not to allow new short-term rental licences has forced them to consider other options for the property, which could mean the development of high-density, multi-residential units. They argue there should be exemptions for owner-occupied short-term rentals, especially for heritage homes.

Heritage Act there must be exemptions to the bylaw for owner-occupied STRs.

We do not support licensing of STRs that are not owner-occupied, which in all cases must be properly regulated. The church will not set any precedent unless another heritage building in an urban boundary falls within very strict conditions for an adaptive reuse as a principal residence.

Only councillors Weins and Cheropita had the foresight to see the heart of the proposal was the preservation of heritage and not an absentee owner profiteer reducing housing stock. All other council members were unable to see the forest (heritage preservation) through the trees (anti-STR sentiment). Surprisingly, councillors Vizzari and Niven, residents of St. Davids, voted against preservation of the church, thereby encouraging more high-density development. The majority decision, bereft of common sense, was troubling.

Aside from the lack of foresight, there are a few main reasons that council failed to support heritage preservation and what that means to our village.

Firstly, there is a crisis in communication in the public forum. The "them vs. us" culture has pervaded our town. False and misleading narratives are woven into opinions that are presented as fact. "Knowledge" is being mined from social media and online news platforms. "Clickbait" and software algorithms funnel "news" that confirms the reader's bias. While the

loudest voices are heard, the danger is believing they are always correct. Statements claiming that all countries are banning STRs or there are 1,000 STRs in NOTL are factually incorrect.

However, these "facts" are published in our local media. Richard Harley's editorial of July 21, 2025, was a clarion call to residents opposed to STRs to attend the July 22, 2025, council meeting and stand up to the "privileged group of property owners who profit by turning homes into unstaffed, unregulated and unfairly taxed accommodation businesses."

His broad brush unfairly painted the many responsible owner-occupied STRs that generate needed income while providing crucial alternative and affordable accommodation for tourists. Tourism is vital to our village. Not all STRs are bad. A farmer does not cut the whole cornfield down to root out a few bad stalks. She manages the field. Bad STRs mean that council is not doing its job. Had Mr. Harley heard our proposal, he might have concluded, along with council, had it not been covered by the loudest voices, that our proposal preserved heritage and did not offend the crux of anti-STR concerns. To suggest that the shortage of affordable housing stock in our communities is in any meaningful way caused by owner-occupied STRs is an oversimplification of, and failure to understand, the underlying economic, political and societal factors (to name a few) that are affecting many communities

throughout the world facing housing shortages.

Secondly, our village suffers from Old Town centrism, where most of the focus and public funds are centred on the Old Town.

The majority of STRs, heritage buildings and development are in the Old Town along with the problems. Our village pays and suffers. Council spent \$3 million of our tax dollars in legal fees to protect heritage in the Old Town but are not prepared to support heritage in our village.

At the July meeting, council approved, to date, \$1 million to support the NOTL Museum's plans to expand its footprint, which includes a community hub.

No councillors said that before we allocate more funds in the Old Town, St. Davids needs a community hub. The council drives the bus, and St. Davids, the poor cousin in her worn dress, sits at the back, while the Old Town sits in the front seat in her Sunday best, enjoying all the sights and amenities at the preferred stops, barely looking back to acknowledge that outlying communities deserve to move forward as well.

This isn't the Old Town's fault; it is the fault of council to fairly change the seating when warranted. All council members need to remember that the Old Town only represents about 37 per cent of eligible electors in the five polls in NOTL, while the outlying poorer cousins in the other polls represent 73 per cent, with a good percentage held by St. Davids.

St. Davids needs champions on the council who ef-

fectively and aggressively, if need be, address the obvious imbalances. A roundabout was forced through our village centre because, apparently, council cannot get involved in regional affairs, but it does.

Council voted to support the developer of the Parliament Oak hotel in its request to the region not to be charged \$800,000 in fees. St. Davids has an old pool with rundown changerooms, no community centre, no public washrooms, no proper sports park. Our commercial centre has no support. Millions of dollars have been spent to fight development in the Old Town, when it was often permitted under the Planning Act.

Enough has been spent to pay for a lot of amenities in our village. Pick battles we can win and work with developers.

Development can be suspended if the infrastructure to accommodate it does not exist. As an example, development in St. Davids should be suspended until DSBN proves there is sufficient educational infrastructure.

It is reported that DSBN, despite requests for comments on development, does not reply. All authorities know that our public school is far over capacity by hundreds of students. We have five portables, no parking, no safe dropoff and pickup area.

The solution is obvious: DSBN must adjust the school boundaries and bus Glendale students to Crossroads that is under capacity. Do not allow children of out-of-town parents, that do not pay taxes in NOTL, to attend our school. Cement blocks and ticketing are Band-Aid solutions. The real danger is not on the roadside, but in the small parking lot. Buses line up three feet away from children with no guardrails.

A tragedy is waiting to happen while DSBN waits for more reports. Adequate educational infrastructure is surely just as important as waste management. How can council approve any additional housing stock in our village without knowing the educational infrastructure exists to accommodate it? Push DSBN hard for solutions. This would never be allowed to happen in the Old Town.

St. Davids is a vibrant, expanding community, with a population that can deter-

mine who is going to be on council and lord mayor in the next election. Whether you have been a member of the village for 10 months or 10 generations, we need to take ownership of our village's future and hold council to account. Development is inevitable under the Planning Act, but bad development is not. Good development, like heritage preservation, requires foresight and action. Council has offered our village neither. We cannot be an afterthought on the agenda.

For the preservation of the church, important to the cultural fabric of our village, it is too late. However, for the benefit of all communities and future stewards of heritage buildings, council must have the courage this October, when the STR bylaw is under final consideration, to make the appropriate amendments to protect heritage buildings, as we proposed. Council must see the forest and not just the trees. We believe our proposal was "good" development. In the face of council's bad decision, we see no option but to sell the church property and relinquish our stewardship. A majority of interested buyers see the church lands as a great location for condominiums. We agree if we were developers, but we are not.

Sadly, over the past six years we have realized that every level of government wants to see the church lands used for high-density residential development. Most of council failed to learn from past mistakes. Plans for less development, more suitable for a neighbourhood, have been rejected only to find, on appeal, higher-density development is allowed.

Councillor O'Connor spoke of more housing stock and voted against our proposal, seeing nothing special about us, and the majority agreed.

Of course, we are not special, but the church and our village are special. Yet we remain in the back seat.

St. Davids has been overlooked for decades and that must stop. Our proposal and plans submitted at the council meeting on July 22, 2025, can be viewed online at www.notl.com/council-government/meetings-agendas-minutes

Respectfully,
Mark and Brenda Stewart
St. Davids



Jim Bradley's legacy is **everywhere you look** in Ontario

David Israelson
Special to The Lake Report

If you have lived or grown up in Niagara, or Ontario for that matter, during the last six decades, it will be hard to get your head around the idea that Jim Bradley is no longer with us.

Bradley, who passed away Sept. 26 at age 80, was chair of Niagara Region. But that's like saying John Lennon was a songwriter. Jim Bradley's work, his accomplishments and his legacy, mean a lot more to Niagara, to Ontario, to Canada, to those who knew him and to everyone who is better off because of his accomplishments.

Bradley served in the Ontario Legislature for three days short of 41 years, from 1977 to 2018. A few months after he was defeated in the 2018 election — after having won 11 previous times — he became regional chair. But it's not how long he was in office that really matters, it's what he man-



Jim Bradley's time as Ontario's environment minister laid the groundwork for many things seen as ubiquitous today — "If you can toss a can into a blue box, it's because Jim Bradley brought in the world's first blue box recycling program," writes David Israelson. ALEX HEIDBUECHEL

aged to accomplish.

His most significant achievements came in his first stint in the Ontario cabinet, as environment minister from 1985 to 1990. He was not exactly a dashing figure — he more or less looked and dressed in

the same rumpled suits back then as he did just before he fell earlier this year.

But his work was dashing. I covered him as an environment reporter for the Toronto Star. He made a huge difference, overhauling and modernizing

environmental protection in Ontario in ways that have been emulated around the world. "I didn't realize until I started working for him, he's an environmental freak!" one long-time staffer told me.

If you toss a can into a blue box, it's because Jim Bradley brought in the world's first blue box recycling program. If you go camping in Algonquin Park, you are enjoying lakes and trees that are not choking to death on acid rain, because his Countdown Acid Rain program set the standard for curbing air emissions. Bradley also brought in tough municipal and industrial wastewater rules, making it harder for cities and companies to pollute the Great Lakes.

In opposition at Queen's Park, he served for a short time as interim opposition leader and for a long time as a thorn in the side of successive New Democrat and Progressive Conservative

governments. He returned to cabinet when Dalton McGuinty's Liberals came to power in 2003 and served in several ministries, including environment, again. Mostly, though, he was there to offer wisdom and insight into how to get things done.

He told me he agreed only at the last minute to run for Niagara Region when he was asked by citizens concerned about the quality of the region's council at the time. He didn't want the job but he wanted to get the job done.

Bradley's political style was as effective as his personal style was, well, dull. He was modest, polite, thoughtful and hardly ever used the teacher voice he had at his disposal. He didn't need to.

He made friends with politicians of all parties and views and worked patiently with bureaucrats. But the slowness of government bugged him. "I can bang the desk and say to the

bureaucrats: Do this now! If I'm lucky, the fastest I see results will be two months," he said.

That was too slow for the environmental freak.

To move things faster, he deployed a small army of young, energetic, highly motivated staffers. To this day, there are all kinds of important people in high places across Canada and internationally, whose eyes light up when they speak about Bradley and the opportunities he gave them.

Many would return every year for the annual "Bradley Dinner" in St. Catharines. Many more people would relish receiving his annual Christmas card, cheap-looking of course, but with a personal message on the inside. I don't know all these people, but I know they'll all miss him. And so will I.

David Israelson is a writer and non-practising lawyer who lives in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

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THANK YOU

On behalf of Father Peter Rowe and The St. Vincent de Paul Peach Festival Committee, we would like to thank all of our dedicated volunteers for the countless hours dedicated to setting up, organizing, dismantling and working on a hot summer day to celebrate this year's Peach Festival. Your hard work, generosity and spirit of service were essential in making the event another resounding success.

A special note of appreciation goes out to the following for their contributions:

Peach Festival Steering Committee
"The Vineyard" (diocesan newsfeed)
Niagara Warehouse of Hope
Mike Colaneri, Cotton Construction
Vintage Inns
Simpson's Pharmasave
Hendriks Your Independent Grocer
NOTL Fire & Emergency Services

Colonial Florists
Newark Neighbours
The Lake Report
Paul Tarsitano
Niagara Helicopters
Sandtrap Pub & Grill
124Q Hotel & Spa
Cupcakes by Laura

We would like to especially thank Mario Puma and the following businesses that have supported our Peach Festival over the past 25 years:

Seaway Farms
Quiet Acres
Palatine Fruit and Roses
Van de Laar Orchards
Walker's Country Market
Folino Family Farm
Tregunno Fruit Farms

Meyers Family Farms
P.G. Enns Farm
Gaio Family Farms
LaValle Family Farms
Lepp Family Farms
Ricciardelli Orchards
Pillitteri Estates Winery

We truly couldn't do it without you.
With heartfelt gratitude,
Fr. Peter Rowe and The St. Vincent de Paul Peach Festival Committee



NOTICE OF APPLICATION AND ELECTRONIC PUBLIC HEARING

What: Notice of **Application and Hybrid Public Hearing for the Committee of Adjustment** (under Section 45 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, as amended).

When: **Thursday, October 16, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.**

Where: Hybrid meeting in-person at Town Hall, Council Chambers, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil **or** electronically via the directions below (Microsoft Teams).

Regarding: **Consent Application B-12/25 – 380 Nassau Street**

What is the proposal?

The subject lands are known municipally as 380 Nassau Street, lying on the east side of Nassau Street, north of William Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The application proposes the creation of one new lot (3,833.8 square meters in area) with frontage on Nassau Street to accommodate a single-detached dwelling. The existing single-detached dwelling, pool house/shed and pool would be maintained on the retained lot.

A previous Consent Application was approved (B-05/23), which has lapsed due to conditions not being cleared within the required two-year period.

Dialogue is encouraged:

Written or video comments on the application may be forwarded to Natalie Thomson, Secretary-Treasurer Committee of Adjustment **prior to Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 12:00 p.m.** at 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON, L0S 1T0, or via email at natalie.thomson@notl.com.

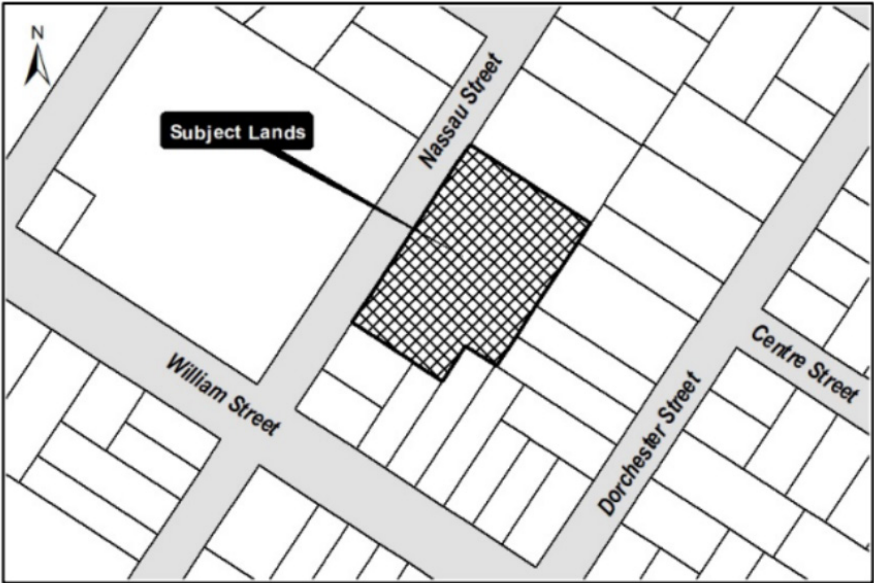
If you wish to participate and make an oral presentation at the Hybrid Public Hearing of the Committee, you must register with the Secretary-Treasurer Committee of Adjustment at the contact information provided. Following registration, you will be provided with the option to attend in-person or instructions to connect to the Electronic Public Hearing.

At this time, written comments are encouraged. All submitted comments become part of a public record and will be circulated to the Committee of Adjustment, Town staff, the owner/agent for the application and the Ontario Land Tribunal if the application decision is appealed.

For more information:

For more information regarding this matter, please contact Natalie Thomson, Secretary Treasurer Committee of Adjustment, at 905-468-3266 ext. 312 or via email at natalie.thomson@notl.com.

Additional information and material regarding the application(s) may be obtained via the Town’s web-site at <https://www.notl.com/business-development/planning-services/committee-adjustment>.

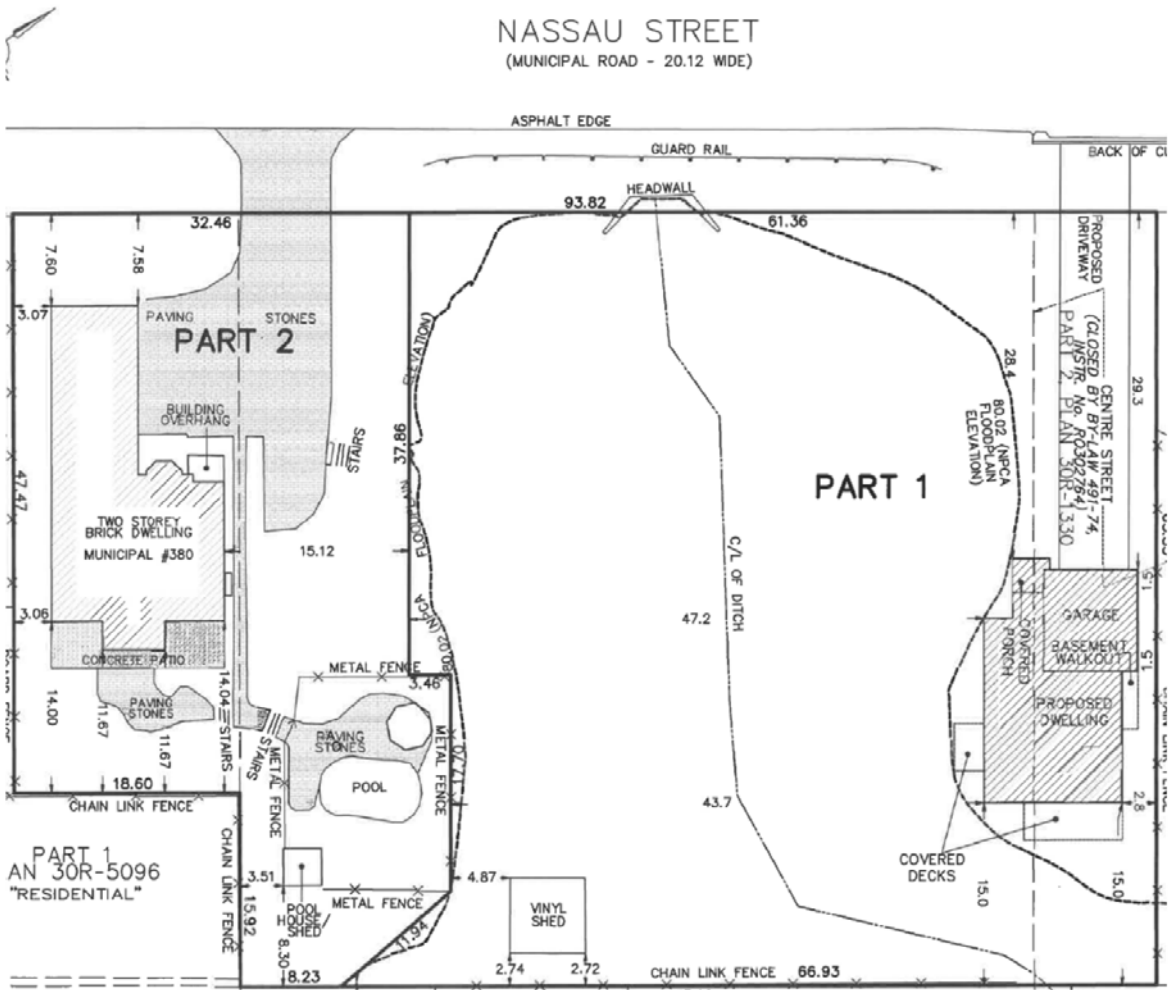


If you wish to be notified of the decision of the Committee of Adjustment in respect of the proposed application, you must make a written request to the Secretary-Treasurer Committee of Adjustment, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake, P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON, L0S 1T0, or email at natalie.thomson@notl.com.

Please note neighbours and other interested parties not defined by the Planning Act are no longer eligible to file appeals for this application as per Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022.

Planning Act appeals may be filed by the applicant, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, a “specified person” (as defined by *Planning Act 1(1)*), and any “public body” (as defined by *Planning Act 1(1)*).

October 2, 2025





NOTICE OF APPLICATION AND ELECTRONIC PUBLIC HEARING

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When: **Thursday, October 16, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.**

Where: Hybrid meeting in-person at Town Hall, Council Chambers, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil **or** electronically via the directions below (Microsoft Teams).

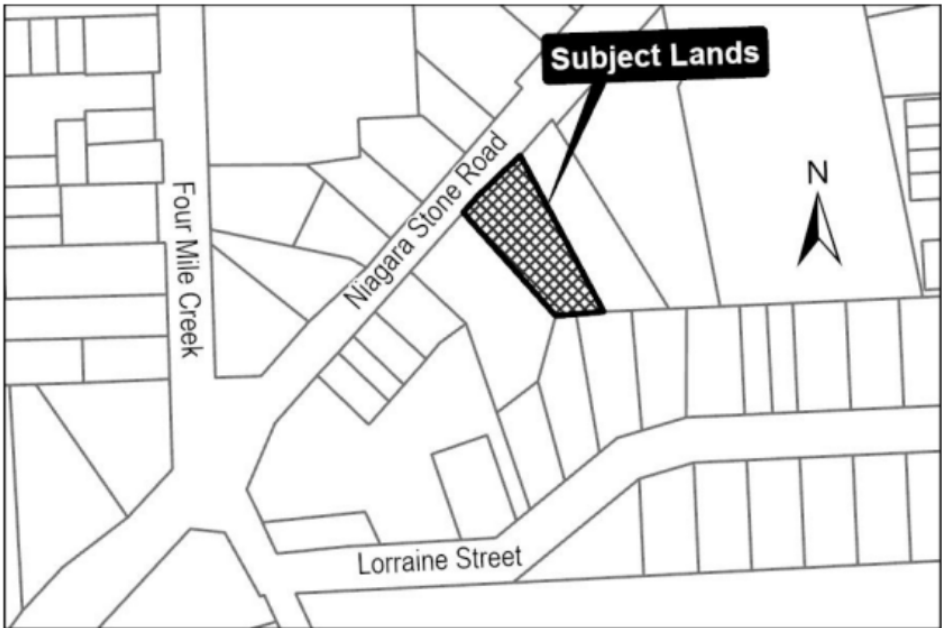
Regarding: **Minor Variance Application A-18/25 – 1523 Niagara Stone Road**

What is the proposal?

The subject lands are known municipally as 1523 Niagara Stone Road (Silversmith Brewing Co.), located on the south side of Niagara Stone Road, east of Four Mile Creek Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Minor Variance Application A-18/25 is made to recognize existing conditions on the outdoor amenity area and requests relief as follows:

1. Maximum outdoor patio area of 110% of the licensed capacity (66 seats) of the restaurant to a maximum of 107 square metres, whereas the By-law permits a maximum outdoor patio area of no more than 50 % of the licensed capacity of the restaurant with which the patio is associated to a maximum size of 90 square metres;
2. To permit an outdoor patio in a yard which abuts a residential zone, whereas the Zoning By-law does not permit outdoor patios in yards that abut a residential zone; and
3. To permit an outdoor patio restaurant to be located a minimum of 0 metres from an internal road or driveway located on the lot, whereas the By-law requires a minimum 3.0 metre setback.



Dialogue is encouraged:

Written or video comments on the application may be forwarded to Natalie Thomson, Secretary-Treasurer Committee of Adjustment **prior to Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 12:00 p.m.** at 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON, L0S 1T0, or via email at natalie.thomson@notl.com.

If you wish to participate and make an oral presentation at the Hybrid Public Hearing of the Committee, you must register with the Secretary-Treasurer Committee of Adjustment at the contact information provided. Following registration, you will be provided with the option to attend in-person or instructions to connect to the Electronic Public Hearing.

At this time, written comments are encouraged. All submitted comments become part of a public record and will be circulated to the Committee of Adjustment, Town staff, the owner/agent for the application and the Ontario Land Tribunal if the application decision is appealed.

For more information:

For more information regarding this matter, please contact Natalie Thomson, Secretary Treasurer Committee of Adjustment, at 905-468-3266 ext. 312 or via email at natalie.thomson@notl.com.

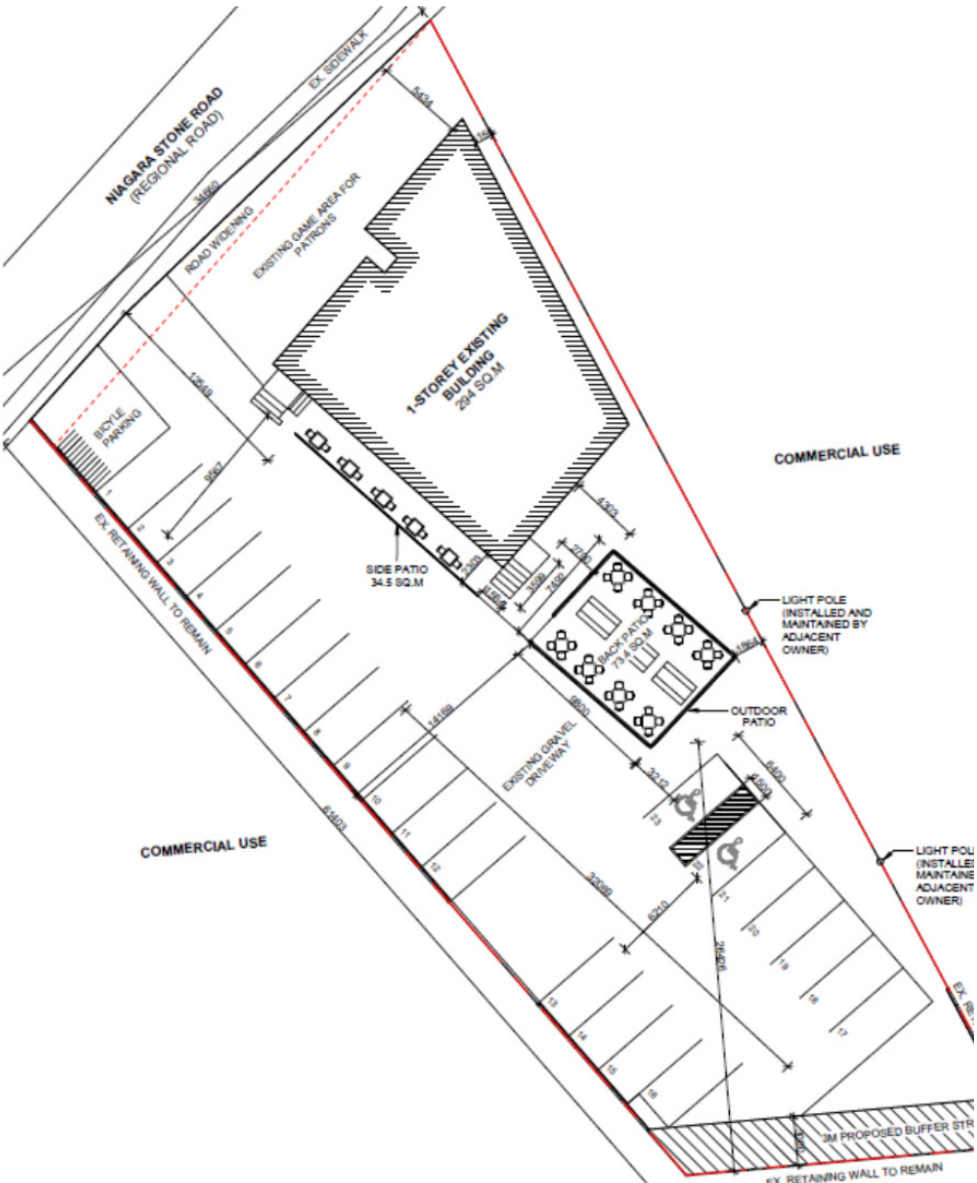
Additional information and material regarding the application(s) may be obtained via the Town’s web-site at <https://www.notl.com/business-development/planning-services/committee-adjustment>.

If you wish to be notified of the decision of the Committee of Adjustment in respect of the proposed application, you must make a written request to the Secretary-Treasurer Committee of Adjustment, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake, P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON, L0S 1T0, or email at natalie.thomson@notl.com.

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Planning Act appeals may be filed by the applicant, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, a “specified person” (as defined by *Planning Act 1(1)*), and any “public body” (as defined by *Planning Act 1(1)*).

October 2, 2025





NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

IN THE MATTER OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER 0.18 AND IN THE MATTER OF THE LANDS AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATION IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake intends to designate the property at **263 REGENT STREET, GOSTLING-TAYLOR HOUSE (PLAN 86 PT LOT 107)** as a property of cultural heritage value or interest under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter 0.18.

Description of Property

The subject property located on 263 Regent Street, is known as the Gostling-Taylor House. The subject land is located north of Regent Street near the intersection of Regent Street and Johnson Street. The property has a moderate setback from Regent Street. The residence is set on a landscaped property, with a couple of mature trees. The access to the property is through a wide gravel driveway from Regent Street. Access to the main entrance is off of the public sidewalk through a concrete paver pathway.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

The property known as the Gostling-Taylor House has cultural heritage value or interest for its design and physical values, its historical and associative values and its contextual values.

263 Regent Street is a rare example of an asymmetrical Georgian style residence. The unique two-storey, three bay Gostling-Taylor House breaks away from tradition as it does not adhere to a rigid symmetry on the front façade. The exterior walls of the residence are clad wood clapboard siding, including beaded vertical corner boards. The roof of the subject property consists of two intersecting gable roofs with overhanging eaves at all three gable ends. The gable ends contain projecting verges. The roof features moulded wood fascia at the verges, plain fascia at the eaves, and plain soffit and frieze throughout. The window openings on the façade are vertical rectangular openings, containing double hung six-over-six windows. The windows are framed with moulded wood trim and a horned plain wood sill. Throughout the other elevations, the window openings feature plain wood trim surrounds with a horned plain wood sill. The main entryway is located off-centred on the façade, to the west. The doorway features a flat arched opening with moulded trim surrounds, a flat, two-light transom window, and a panelled door. The residence sits on a low foundation.

The Gostling-Taylor House has historical association with early settlers in the Niagara Region. The land, on which the subject property stands today, was granted by the Crown to Young in 1794. He was a carpenter who was involved in the construction of Fort George and maintenance of Fort Erie and Fort York. The house is also historically associated with Edward McMullen. Edward, appears to have constructed the current house on the subject lands in 1842 and is also associated with the construction of the adjacent property at 58 Johnson Street. He appears to have been involved in the local construction industry.

The Gostling-Taylor House has contextual value because it is important in defining the historic character of the area. 263 Regent Street is part of the historic fabric within Old Town, specifically the Downtown Character Area. It is also within the boundaries of the National Historic District. It lies in close proximity to various other historic buildings, including designated properties and properties listed on the Municipal Heritage Register. It acts as a character supporting resource for the Old Town. In addition to this, 263 Regent Street is also visually and historically linked to its surroundings. The house design and layout of the subject property, in terms of the setback and materials, is in keeping with the surrounding properties, especially the Part IV designated property at 46 Johnson Street. The asymmetric Georgian style of both the properties is also very similar.

Description of Key Heritage Attributes

Key exterior attributes that embody the heritage value of the dwelling at 263 Regent Street in Niagara-on-the-Lake include its:

- Two-storey Georgian residence
- Box-like structure
- Asymmetric three bay façade, with off-centred entrance
- Wood clapboard siding, including beaded vertical corner boards
- Two intersecting gable roofs with overhanging eaves and projecting verges
- Moulded wood fascia at the verges, plain fascia at the eaves, plain soffit and frieze
- Vertical rectangular window openings at the façade
- Double hung six-over-six windows at the façade
- Window openings at façade with moulded wood trim and horned plain wood sill
- Window openings elsewhere with plain wood trim surrounds with a horned plain wood sill
- Doorway flat arched opening with moulded trim surrounds
- Doorway with a single leaf panelled door, capped by a flat, two-light transom
- Low foundation
- Location along Regent Street
- Existing setback from the road
- Location within the National Historic District
- Historic connection to 58 Johnson Street

Objections

Any objection to this designation must be filled no later than 30 days after the date of publication of the Notice of Intent to Designate. Objections should be directed to Grant Bivol, Town Clerk, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake, L0S 1T0. The last date to file a notice of objection is **October 31st 2025**.

Queries

Any further queries should be directed to Sumra Zia, Heritage Planner at (905) 468-3266 ext. 327 or through email at sumra.zia@notl.com.

Dated at the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake this 2nd day of October 2025.

GRANT BIVOL, CLERK

The natural beauty of Niagara in autumn

The following column was written by the late Joanne Young, garden expert and coach, and was originally published in the November 7, 2024 edition of The Lake Report. The paper will be publishing some of the highlights of her column over the next few weeks to celebrate her and her love of gardening, which she shared with the whole community.



GROWING TOGETHER 

Joanne Young
Columnist

In a bit of a departure from the regular gardening article, this week I would just like to take some time to reflect on how lucky we are to live where we do, in the Niagara region.

Over these past few weeks, we have been engulfed by the beauty of nature. Everywhere you turn, the array of colours has been amazing this year and seems to have lasted maybe

a bit longer than usual.

I love going for drives when I get the chance and never miss an opportunity to capture it on my camera.

It doesn't need to be anywhere in particular. It might be a conservation area, down a country road, or just going for a stroll through town — there is always something magical to see around each corner.

One of my favourite places to spend time in Niagara, especially in the fall, is along the escarpment, hiking.

There is something about wandering through the tall, towering trees that have faced many adversities and the massive moss-covered rocks that have sat there for millions of years.

The different textures and shades of bark, highlighted by the large, leathery, maroon-red oak leaves, the golden-yellow beech leaves, the amber-orange autumn colour of the sugar maples



The Niagara Escarpment is renowned for its vibrant fall colours during the month of October. Go take a look. FILE

and the crimson red of the red maples.

The vineyards are also captivating in the fall with the abundant clusters of ripening fruit waiting patiently to be harvested. The fall colour on the grape leaves can vary from bright yellow to oranges to wine-red, making the fields come alive.

It always amazes me how something like the vineyards and orchards

can change so drastically from season to season, each season just as beautiful as the next.

It reminds me that we all go through different seasons in life. Sometimes a certain season can have a negative connotation, but we need to remember all seasons can be beautiful in their own way.

You just need to look for the beauty around you.

Gardens (or nature in general) are something that appeals to people's five senses — sight, sound, touch, taste and smell. This is why being out in nature has such a positive effect on many.

Spending time outdoors can lower blood pressure, reduce stress levels and bring about a sense of peace and belonging to a bigger picture.

Make sure that you take some time outside this week and soak in everything that nature has to give you.

On those sunny, warm days that we just experienced last week, who couldn't help but go for a long walk or bicycle ride down the Niagara Parkway?

The majestic old oak trees that are dotted along the path give you a sense of time gone by.

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Have some fun

- Across
- 1. Goblet (7)
 - 5. Devour (7)
 - 9. Biased (6)
 - 10. Typo (8)
 - 11. Main roads (8)
 - 13. Likenesses (6)
 - 14. Respect (6)
 - 18. Roomy (8)
 - 19. Belongings (8)
 - 21. Locomotive (6)
 - 23. Sucking fish (6)
 - 24. Noblewoman (8)
 - 28. Unfortunate happening (8)
 - 29. Fictional ape-man (6)
 - 30. Crisp (7)
 - 31. Outlaws (7)
- Down
- 2. Capital of Vietnam (5)
 - 3. Strap (5)
 - 4. About (5)
 - 6. Firmly adhering to a purpose (9)
 - 7. Hollering (9)
 - 8. Dummy (9)
 - 10. Spars (5)
 - 12. Obtained (3)
 - 15. "A --- Named Desire" (Tennessee Williams) (9)
 - 16. Detonation (9)
 - 17. W Moroccan city (9)
 - 20. Vessel used for private cruising (5)
 - 22. Fury (3)
 - 25. Extremely (5)
 - 26. Exhausted (5)
 - 27. Point of view (5)

Crossword Puzzle

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Last issue's answers

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EXPLORING HISTORY
WITH NOTL MUSEUM



Stepping stone or oldest artifact on the street?

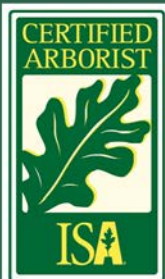
Here we have the spritely two-year-old Jane Walsh standing on top of a Board of Ordnance stone in 1937 near Queen and Nassau streets. At its very founding, Niagara-on-the-Lake was a British military town. The Board of Ordnance (BO as shown on the left side of the stone in the image) was responsible for the supply of weapons and ammunition of all kinds. They were also in charge of the maintenance and construction of fortifications and barracks. This marker, with the additional broad arrow, notes that the stones are boundary markers for military properties. Each has a number that corresponds to various maps — this one is likely #36. These stones were erected around the perimeter of four properties in Niagara-on-the-Lake owned by the British military starting in 1823. Niagara-on-the-Lake, in fact, has the most intact ordnance boundary stones in a community than any other Town that originally had them. A recent project, led by museum board member Ted Rumble and his crew of volunteers and town staff, helped to shine a light on these artifacts throughout the community by resurfacing of the stones and providing protective fencing. There is a plaque about the stones located at King and Byron streets. Thank you to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and these volunteers for all their hard work. More information on these stones can be found at notlmuseum.ca/research/ordnance-boundary-stones.



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Exceptional, yet dangerous: The human story so far



DR. BROWN

Dr. William Brown
Columnist

Several million years ago, there wasn't much to differentiate apes ancestral to humans from other mammals whose attention rarely, if ever, strayed beyond their immediate environment and needs, and behavior hardly justified the word "exceptional."

That was until several hundred thousand years ago when chance and natural selection led to the gradual emergence of a species with big brains capable of increasingly complex symbolic thought and language and creating grand narratives for the origins of the heavens, earth, forces of nature and themselves — a species like no other before them — now solidly set apart by their language and imagination, and surely the beginnings of exceptionalism.

From evolutionary and developmental perspectives, it wasn't that long before our species became the first to land on the moon and

send satellites to the edge of the solar system from which pictures were taken of a tiny planet almost lost in a sea of billions of stars — our island home blue dot as Carl Sagan, so famously expressed it.

In the last 10,000 years, our species domesticated plants and animals and flourished in number to the millions and more recently, eight billion and counting.

With the advent of science our creation stories began to change to reflect our growing understanding of the universe on the largest and tiniest scales, the evolution of life and our own species, and most recently how we might change the genetic destiny of any creature, including ourselves.

Exceptional, now fully justified? Perhaps.

But marvellous as we are, there are caveats. For at the most elemental level, all life discovered so far shares the same core elements and molecules of life from simple cells to us.

For sure, there are differences but there are far more similarities than differences between simple cells and complex single cells and between the latter and multicellular organisms of increasing complexity.

When it comes to mammals, the body systems and organs of all are nearly identical, whether they be



While all mammals share the same kinds of body systems and organs, what sets humans apart from other species is our brain, says columnist Dr. William Brown.

the circulatory, respiratory, gastrointestinal, skeletal, immune, endocrine or genito-urinary systems.

What most sets us apart from other species is our brain. Bird, mouse, whale, chimp and human brains are similar in their basic architecture and cell types.

Partly, it's a numbers game: humans have more nerve cells and many more complex inter-neuronal connections.

But that isn't the whole story — whales and elephants possess twice the number of nerve cells in their brains, compared to humans, yet show no signs of competing with human intelligence.

What's sets the human brain apart from those of other highly intelligent species is the extent to which our brain is lateralized and specialized compared to other species.

In humans, the two cerebral hemispheres play very different but complementary roles for cognitive powers, language, emotion and processing sensory information.

Dominance of one hemisphere for control of the speech, forearm and hand and eye are well known features of this specialization and lateralization. Those lateralized differences between the cerebral hemispheres, which are so

much a feature of human brains are either absent or minor features in our living primate relatives.

So, yet another indication of exceptionalism for humans.

But what really sets humans apart on the exceptional scale is our collective intelligence and ability to pass on our knowledge from generation to generation, initially by language, later by illustrations and texts and these days electronically though the web and social media have turned out to be mixed blessings.

Unfortunately, for all our cleverness, and growing control over nature, humans have failed to develop equivalent wisdom.

Our history suggests that too often we resort to solving disputes between differing cultures, beliefs and nations by force and these days, given the power of modern weapon systems, that's a very dangerous path to take.

In short, exceptional as we are in technical matters, we have yet to develop the collective wisdom and will needed to share the resources of the planet for the welfare of others and the planet: witness the inaction on climate change despite alarming changes in just the last 10 years.

To return to the question — are we exceptional?

Yes, but we have become far more dangerous than at any time in the past — armed to the teeth and often resorting to violence by preference.

Does anyone think the turmoil in the Middle East will ever end? Any pauses seem to last long enough for warring parties to catch their breath long enough to rearm for the next outbreak.

Ditto for Ukraine and bordering countries in Eastern Europe and looming threats in the Far East or even threats between ordinarily friendly neighbors. It's never a safe time with bullies in charge and globally, there are a lot of grievance driven bullies looking for fights.

It isn't just political bullies: other issues loom. What about gene editing without considering the consequences for other species and the ease with which novel viruses and other pathogens can be created on low budgets almost anywhere? Or what about the looming threat that artificial intelligence poses to a growing number of jobs in the future?

Lots to be concerned about and so far, no solutions.

Dr. William Brown is a professor of neurology at McMaster University and co-founder of the InfoHealth series at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library.

Obituaries & In Memoriam

A tribute to Ilze Andzans from the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library board



We, her friends and colleagues on the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library Board, are deeply saddened by Ilze’s recent passing. During our time together, we came to know her not only as a thoughtful and dedicated board member but as a passionate advocate for the library and its place in the heart of our community.

Ilze believed deeply in the power of libraries to connect people, spark curiosity, and foster lifelong learning. She brought warmth, insight, and determination to every conversation. As an avid reader, she always had a book to recommend. She was also a regular participant in library activities, especially our fundraising events, often with her daughter, Olivia. Her contributions helped shape the direction of our work, always with an eye toward inclusion, accessibility, and community impact.

She also had a wonderful way of combining her love of photography and road travel with her appreciation for libraries, visiting branches across eastern Canada and the northeastern United States, always in search of new ideas and possibilities. That spirit of exploration and optimism was inspiring.

More than anything, Ilze was a friend. Thoughtful, curious, and full of quiet strength, she made our time on the board richer and more meaningful. Her legacy lives on in the work she helped shape and in the hearts of those who had the privilege to serve alongside her.

In honour of Ilze, the Board has launched a Read it Forward initiative to celebrate her passion for learning and discovery. Donations made in her memory are helping to grow the Library’s photography section – one of her favourite areas – so that future readers can find inspiration just as she did. We hope her story encourages others to share the joy of reading with the community, whether by contributing to Read it Forward or simply passing along a great book.

Ilze will be missed, but never forgotten. Her spirit lives on in every book shared and every reader inspired.



Else Suba



SUBA, Else —
Passed away peacefully in her sleep surrounded by love at Heatherwood Retirement Home on Thursday September 25, 2025, at the age of 93. Beloved wife of the late George Suba (2018). Loving mother of Sandor (Clara) and Susan. Caring Grandma, Oma and Nagymama of Angela, Daniel (Amber), Kristina and Madelen. Adored Great Oma of Victor and Ellena. Dear sister of Henry. She will be fondly remembered by her nieces, nephews and friends.

Else spent much of her adult life in the service of her family, her community and of course her gardens. She always looked for ways to help others and lend a hand at home or afar. She contributed her time and skills for many years to the Folks Arts Society. She volunteered and was a proud member of the Christ Church McNab community. In her last years she was honoured to knit and crochet close to 100 baby blankets for the Medical Humanitarian Aid of Hope. She cherished her lifetime friends, church friendships, and wonderful friends she met at the Heatherwood Retirement home. Thank you to the ever caring and wonderful Dr. J and Staff

Cremation has taken place. A celebration of life will be held at a later date. Those who wish may make a memorial donation to Medical Humanitarian Aid of Hope, the Alzheimer’s society and any other charity that is close to your heart would be appreciated in her memory. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com.



Irene Ford



FORD, Irene —
It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Irene at St Catharines General Hospital at 2 p.m. on Sept. 29. Irene passed peacefully with her husband Gordon and daughter Carol by her side.

Treasured wife of Gordon Ford and loving Mother to Wendy (Patriquin) and Carol (MacNeil), Grandmother to Zach, Lane and Luke. Irene was born in Urmston, England in 1946 and is survived by her 5 siblings Steve, Ian, June, David and Andrew. Predeceased by her mother Edith Curr and father Harold Taylor.

Irene met her husband Gordon in Manchester, England at the age of 18, they were married over a year later on Christmas Eve 1966. Irene came to Canada in 1974 with her husband and two daughters where they settled in the GTA and then later in Niagara-on-the-Lake where she lived for the past 37 years.

Irene worked at Brock University for over 20 years in the Bursary department before retiring, she was an active member of St Andrews Presbyterian Church in NOTL for many years where she greatly enjoyed being a member of the choir and a church Elder. Irene was a kind and generous soul and will be greatly missed by her family, friends and community.

In keeping with Irene’s wishes, cremation has taken place. A celebration of life will be held at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 323 Simcoe St., Niagara-on-the-Lake on Thursday, Oct. 2, 2025, at 2 p.m. Interment to follow in church cemetery. All invited to a time of fellowship following the celebration at the Kirk Hall next door to the church. In lieu of flowers those who wish may make a memorial donation to the Canadian Cancer Society. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.morganfuneral.com.



Judith ‘Judy’ Van Lammers



Van LAMMERS, Judith “Judy” —
Judy lived life with warmth, laughter and a spark that lit up every room she entered. Predeceased by her husband Robert “Bob” Harold Van Lammers, she leaves behind cherished memories as mother of Lisa (Martin) and Susan (Marc), and as “Gannie” to her beloved grandchildren: Kellan, Matthew, Paul and Emma.

She was predeceased by her sister, Carole Anne Kavanagh (John), and is survived by her brothers: Terry (Debbie) and Tommy (Lydia) Clancy. Her late-in-life partner, Philip Nicholas, mourns her deeply.

Born in Toronto and raised in Ottawa, Judy moved back to Toronto as a teenager where she attended Loretto Abbey High School and began nursing studies at Saint Michael’s Hospital. True to her adventurous spirit, she ultimately pursued a career in Secretarial Administration, excelling as Executive Assistant to the Director of the Toronto Metropolitan Separate School Board for many years.

Judy’s sociable nature meant she was never short of friends; from childhood friends in Ottawa, high school classmates, young families in the Henry Farm community, to the many teammates and wives she met through Bob’s sporting life, her connections endured across decades.

The sudden loss of Bob at only 60 was a heartbreaking shock that altered the course of the family. Judy’s strength and resilience shone through, guiding her forward with courage as she created a new life near her daughters in Niagara-on-the-Lake. There she embraced her new community with her signature energy and spirit-engaging with her condo board, playing bridge several times a week and serving as the driving force behind countless outings and gatherings. In doing so, she wove a rich tapestry of friendships in her new home.

Judy’s story came full circle when she reconnected with Phil, an old friend from Bob’s hockey community. Their companionship blossomed into a loving partnership that allowed them to share their golden years together. Judy’s spontaneity, resilience and enthusiasm for life will be remembered and cherished by all who knew her.

In honouring Judy’s wishes cremation has taken place. A Celebration of Life will take place a later date.

Arrangements entrusted to Considerate Cremation & Burial Services, 26 Nihan Drive, St. Catharines (between Lake Street & Scott Street), 289-362-1144. Online condolences may be made at CCBSCares.ca



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