



W5 Update Contest !

Breakfast with your Councillor

I am sure once you read that the grand prize for this contest is breakfast with your Ward 5 Councillor you will immediately call up everyone you know in the ward to get their email address.

As one of the people who responded to the "Cool Hand Luke: article in the last W5 Update said: *"Cool Hand Luke is a great movie. Point taken. And so is this newsletter in terms of communication. It's clear, readable, and literate."*

This newsletter is only as good as its content and its widespread distribution. Our contest is about increasing our readership from its current 600 to at least 1000 names in the next six months.. We can't accomplish that without you ! If you can provide us with the most email addresses for our list you will have the opportunity to qualify for "Breakfast with your Councillor" and receive a personal "state of the City briefing". Email us your list soon !

Missed an edition of W5Update? View current and past editions and sign up for W5Update on the [Vaughan website](#)

City Budget Approved

At a special meeting of Council held on Tuesday, March 4, Vaughan City Council approved its 2008 budget. The budget calls for a 3.98% tax increase, resulting in a \$42 tax increase for a house assessed at \$412,000. Approximately 25% of your taxes go to the City. The rest are directed to York Region and to education.

Web Links

[City of Vaughan](#)

[RoadWatch](#)

[York Region Police](#)

[YRT](#)

[Greening Vaughan](#)

[Gallanough Resource Centre](#)

CONTACT MY OFFICE

905-832-8585 ext 8349
alan.shefman@vaughan.ca
www.vaughan.ca

Executive Assistant:
Debi Traub
905-832-8585 ext 8685
debi.traub@vaughan.ca

2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, Ontario
L6A 1T1

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Council- March 17, 1:00 p.m.

**Committee of the Whole-
March 25, 1:00 p.m.**

Council- March 31, 1:00 p.m.

All meetings are at City Hall unless indicated



**Alan at the First Chinese Seniors Association of Vaughan Chinese
New Year Celebration at Dufferin Clark Community Centre on
March 2, 2008**

"What we've got here is a failure to communicate."

In the last W5 Newsletter, under the heading of one of the great lines from the movie Cool Hand Luke, I suggested that we need to find new and innovative ways to establish a dialogue between the City and its residents. I received a wonderful variety of feedback and suggestions, including one that I should print comments from residents who respond, so here goes. Below are excerpts from the responses.

"Personally, I thought the communication about garbage was crystal clear and well-publicized! Perhaps people just don't take the time to write things on their calendar.

One possible explanation for your observed lack of awareness [of double-up days] is that the billboards announcing 'The Week of Jan 7 or Jan 14' was not targeted enough - people still had to look up which week they were on. When it takes any effort (like checking a web site) many people don't do it" **Esther**

"It might be useful to give us advance notice in your newsletters. I leave for work when it is dark and come home when it is dark. I passed no signs on the garbage collection or I didn't see them. However I do read this newsletter!" **Bernie**

"Cool Hand Luke is a great movie. Point taken. And so is this newsletter in terms of communication. It's clear, readable, and literate." **Pat**

"Speaking of greening and garbage pick up, why is it so difficult for the sanitation workers to put the green bins, blue bins and garbage bins back on the boulevard where they pick them up? Also, perhaps you could also re-educate residents in your next newsletter about putting out garbage and large items such as sofas and furniture the day after garbage pick up and leaving it out there for 2 weeks. I thought there

were by-laws in place about not putting garbage out before a certain time. Sometimes this area looks like a slum." **Judi**

"As a rule I do not read the Liberal but I always look through the glossy booklets that come in the mail regarding recycling. I think the City has communicated very well. Residents have to be more interested in reading the flyers then they would not waste their garbage tags. These are likely the same people who put garbage out on the wrong days and allow for their garbage to be strewn all over the streets. Keep up the great work with recycling initiatives." **Anne**

"I read your article about communication with great interest. I read & listen to almost everything- I want & need to be informed! When it comes to Vaughan- I got Blank. I did not hear or see anything on the garbage issue!!! Nothing. Likewise on any meetings that would take place." **Tony**

"Just to let you know that I saw many ads re extra garbage pickup in the Liberal and other notices. The same people that don't know re different pick-up days etc will be the same people that will still not see these news items." **R.M.**

"I am a fan of the talking to your constituents as opposed to the dry manner everyone expects." **Eric**

SNOW, SNOW AND MORE SNOW !

Hmmmm. It's been quite a year for snow. Even as I write this it is snowing, no, it is blizzarding out!!! As hard as I try I just can't picture my garden in full bloom at the moment.



But then we also need to keep our snow in perspective. If you take a look at the picture to the left, you can see people trying to dig out their buried cars!

Regrettably, if you are a City Councillor, you can't just complain about snow; you need to do something about it. A couple of weeks ago, as a result of the extraordinary amount of snow that the City has had to deal with this year, Council called in our staff and contractors to have a talk about what we are doing and how we are doing. It was a six hour discussion!

While there have been many individual complaints ranging from windrows not being cleared, to streets not being ploughed (or at least not being ploughed quickly enough), to icy sidewalks to walkways accessing streets being blocked by piles of snow, I don't think we have done too badly. I am also hopefully that after our very thorough

discussion at Council, that some of the problems that we are facing will be cleared up.

There are a number of suggestions that will make snow clearing more effective across the city.

1. DO NOT park your car on the street during a snow storm. This is one of our biggest problems. We do not want to tow cars, but may be forced to in the future if your car is impeding our clearing operations. Remember that your car will impact at least two or three houses.
2. Remember that our first task is to clear our major streets, even before we will go into secondary residential areas. That means that we will be on streets such as Clark, Centre, and Mullen before we can move to interior streets.
3. Cul-de-sacs are difficult to plough with the large trucks that we use to clear our streets. Cul-de-sacs will be done after other streets that can be done much faster are completed. The snow piled up in cul-de-sacs will be removed as soon as possible after the storm has ended
4. Our windrow clearing service doesn't start until about two hours after the street clearing (although we are now adjusting that to follow much closer behind). The windrow clearing (we are virtually the only municipality in the GTA still doing this - think \$1.2 million!!) is a very difficult slow job especially in neighbourhoods where driveways are just a couple of feet apart
5. Do not throw your snow on the street. It is a traffic act violation with substantial fines. It is not a bylaw issue, but one for the police to deal with
6. Clean up the sidewalk in front of your own home. Even though the City does clear sidewalks, it often takes some time to get around. Help out your neighbours by doing what you can.
7. If it is snowing on either garbage or recycling day, be careful where you place your containers to prevent them getting covered up by either the ploughs or the windrow cleaners.

Thornhill Village Plaza Development

OMB Pre-Hearing March 25 2008

On March 25 the Ontario Municipal Board will hold a pre-hearing on one of the most controversial development proposals made in the last few years in this Ward. The proposal from Thornhill Village Plaza, is to build a 15-story, 309 unit residential apartment on Yonge Street (on the current site of the Thornhill Village Plaza) and nine townhouses on the adjacent 14 Arnold Avenue property.

An OMB pre-hearing is used to determine who the parties will be, what

the issues are, how many witnesses may be needed and how long a hearing may take. **People who do not attend the pre-hearing will not be permitted to participate in the hearing.** Any person interested in the hearing and possibly making a participant statement or advising the Board of his/her opposition or support should definitely attend the pre-hearing. If the matter involves significant community interest, it is important to demonstrate this to the Board member at the pre-hearing. The OMB hearing will take place at the Vaughan Civic Centre starting at 10:30 a.m. in the Public Hearing Room.

The developer is appealing four different decisions:

1. The Region of York decision to include the property in the City of Vaughan OPA 669, therefore limiting the building heights to a maximum of 3 to 5 stories;
2. The City of Vaughan's decision to not exclude the properties in question from the designations of "Low Density Residential" on Arnold and "General Commercial" on Yonge;
3. The City of Vaughan's decision to not re-zone the properties to allow the development of the 15-story building or the nine townhouses;
4. the City of Vaughan's decision to adopt the revised Heritage Conservation District Plan

In essence, the appeal is about removing what the developer believes are the barriers to him proceeding with his proposal.

If you have concerns about this development it is very important for you or your representative to appear at the Civic Centre on March 25. Please either call or email me for further information. For anyone who has appeared at any of the meetings that have been held over the last couple of years about this proposal. I will be contacting you shortly with more details.

CIVIC SUGGESTION BOX

Good Ideas Welcome!

A reader of W5 Update has suggested that the City needs to take better advantage of all the "brainpower" that exists in our neighbourhoods. The suggestion is that we solicit ideas from our citizens that would do such things as:

1. Save money - everybody likes to do that, especially Councillors who have to decide on the City budget each year
2. provide better service - again an issue dear to the hearts of everyone working at the City
3. provide new services - caution here because every new service

comes with a price-tag (see #1)

The W5 email IDEA box is now officially open. We would enjoy hearing from you about your ideas that would help us do a better job running the city. Don't forget though that even great ideas must be reviewed from an practicality and economic viability perspective.

SMALL HANDS - BIG HELPERS !

I think that one of the great ways to teach kids is to do things that are important with them. One Ward 5 resident, rather than complain about litter in his neighbourhood, organized his kids to pick up litter on the street that their house is located on. Here is their bounty. My guess is that these kids will grow with a really important lesson - to make a difference you need to take action yourself.



And, although it still looks pretty intimidating out there we are only weeks away from the 20 minute cleanup when people across the City get together to help clean up the litter that accumulated over the winter. I will be writing about this even further in future editions of the W5 Update.

Do You Know a Civic Hero?

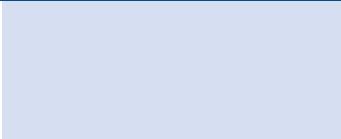
The idea of establishing a Civic Hero Award came about in the City of Vaughan in late 2004 when Councillor Tony Carella and I were considering how we could recognize those residents who contribute to our civic life but aren't necessarily involved formally with the institutions of the City. We wanted to promote civic engagement and to say thank you for doing some of the things that make our lives better.

In the last three years, Rob Brown, Terry Goodwin and Robb Stitt have been awarded the Ward 5 Civic Hero Award.

The City presents awards from one resident of each award annually. The Ward Councillor is required to nominate an individual for consideration of Council. The Award is presented at a Council Meeting during the year. While I am always on the lookout for a potential Civic Hero, there are always others out there who somehow stay well under the radar.

So, do you know of a Ward 5 Civic Hero? I would love to hear from

you about someone in your neighbourhood who goes about his or her own way making our communities better.



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