

# Olde Berlin Town Neighbourhood Association

*In the Civic Centre ~ A Heritage Conservation District*

[www.oldeberlintown.ca](http://www.oldeberlintown.ca)

<https://www.facebook.com/OldeBerlinTown>



## Hi Neighbour

Fall is becoming a distant memory, and winter snow is in the forecast. Season's Greetings to all and wishing everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year.

This is the first printed newsletter since the Covid pandemic began; so, there is a lot of catch-up in this newsletter; please forgive the length of this issue.

The volunteer board members for Olde Berlin Town (OBT) neighbourhood continued to meet this past year, albeit on ZOOM during this coronavirus pandemic. While remote meetings are not as fruitful as in-person ones, they do keep us connected. Isolation has touched all of us in different ways. There have been many changes since restrictions and lockdowns began on Mar 17, 2020. People moving, new neighbours arriving, development concerns, bike trail proposals and so much more.

If you are new to the neighbourhood . . . Welcome. You can subscribe to our mailing list at <https://oldeberlintown.ca/signup/> for E-News sent bi-monthly and as needed. Printed newsletters are normally delivered 3 or 4 times a year with news about the neighbourhood, events and activities, municipal information, heritage and items of interests. We also share neighbourhood news via our Facebook page.

If you haven't already, check out the lovely lights on trees along Ahrens St. West put up by the residents.



**ANNUAL MEETING**  
**Advance Notice**  
**Olde Berlin Town Neighbourhood**  
**March 26, 2022 at 1:00 pm**  
We are hoping for an in-person meeting.  
Location and other details will be shared through our next newsletter, via E-News and on Facebook.

Neighbourhood  
**VOLUNTEERS**  
Needed

social media help  
deliver newsletters

## THANKS to VOLUNTEERS

Thanks to all the volunteers who keep our Neighbourhood Association going. It's nearly two years since we've been able to deliver printed newsletters. The volunteers who hand-deliver these newsletters in Olde Berlin Town Neighbourhood play an integral part in keeping all neighbours connected. While internet and Zooming have become a common way to communicate, our Olde Berlin Town (OBT) printed newsletters are an important part of reaching out to all neighbours about concerns and happenings. Your volunteer participation is important and very much appreciated.

Some volunteers have moved, so we are looking for people to hand-deliver the printed newsletters on their home street. Neighbourhood volunteers are also urgently needed to help with our website and E-News. We are also looking for volunteers to join our Development or Safety Committees. If you can help with any of these needs, send an email note to [writeus@oldeberlintown.ca](mailto:writeus@oldeberlintown.ca).

## Why is there an Orange Shirt in the Window?

The reason is a lot deeper than you think.

I am white, and I am male. I come from an upper middle class Canadian family. I grew up right here in Kitchener, Ontario, which (in the 70's and 80's) was a lovely little Southwestern Ontario town. We hung out in forts in the forest behind our house, and played tag and cops and robbers between our neighbours' houses. School was the place where we learned all kinds of things, and that learning helped shape our understanding of Canada and the world. Back then, in our minds, Canada was the most beautiful, fair and just country. This reality was never questioned, and neither was our understanding of what being "Canadian" really meant. Everything was "normal." No war. No hard living, just a boat-load of privilege.

Now, as a local high school teacher, I have come to understand more about privilege, invisible barriers, systemic racism and the truth about what was really happening to Indigenous people in Canada. It is truly disappointing as an adult to discover that what you were taught as a child is just simply not true. At 49 years of age, I'm left asking the question: What does being Canadian really mean?

It is very difficult for a person to thrive in a place where they are afraid, oppressed, discriminated against, or are not allowed to enjoy equal opportunity. Systemic and overt racism, discrimination, micro-aggressions, and stigma, are real in Canada, and they create powerful barriers in people's lives.

The 175 year old legacy of the Residential School System is one of the worst examples of systemic racism in history. John A. MacDonald and his Conservative government designed and implemented this school system to convert all Canadian Indigenous children to English-speaking Christians. The expressed goal of the government of the day was to "kill the savage in the child."

By 1850, Indigenous children were forcibly taken from their homes, and parents who fought back were beaten and incarcerated. Upon arrival at the schools, boys and girls had their long traditional hair cut off, and school staff attempted to vigorously clean the brown from their skin. Children as young as 4 or 5 were educated in English until the ages of 12-13, and were forced to pray and observe the traditions of Christianity. If children spoke their native tongue at school, misbehaved, or resisted, the punishments ranged from being beaten, to needles in the tongue. At one horrific location in Manitoba, a non-lethal electrocution chair was used to torture children. Students were physically and sexually abused at the hands of staff or other students.

These conditions were commonplace across the system, and can be heard through the testimony of the many Residential School survivors, whose stories are a part of the TRC's (Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Committee) documentation process. They are easily found on the TRC website.

The schools were wooden tinderboxes, and many burned in horrific fires. Preventable diseases and malnutrition were rampant throughout the system, medical care was non-existent and, in many cases, the children who died on site were buried in unmarked graves. Only recently are modern technologies revealing the evidence and scope of the ugly truth. Students attempted to flee terrible conditions, but died from exposure to the harsh Canadian cold.

Photo: Kevin Tupman Photography



One such story tells of Chanie “Charlie” Wenjack’s struggle. Learn more about Charlie through the book “Wenjack,” by Joseph Boyden, or through Gord Downie’s “Secret Path” project as a part of the Downie-Wenjack Foundation. These explorations are well worth your time.

The trauma left behind from all of this is real. It has had an inter-generational impact on many Indigenous people and communities. Generations of Indigenous people are affected by these experiences, instead of the memories of a childhood! Murray Sinclair (the former chair of Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Committee) said that the seven generations of trauma from the Residential School System has done incalculable damage, and will take seven generations to heal.

This national miscarriage of justice must be acknowledged.

The good news is that the process has begun. The orange shirt in our window represents my family’s willingness to listen. As privileged, educated, white Canadians, we want to learn how to be better Canadians. We are heartbroken by the atrocities of our hidden history, and we want to openly show our support and willingness to understand. As I drive around our community, I hope to see many orange shirts in many windows, because the symbol will represent our collective commitment to understanding, and will help communicate the deep regret we feel as a nation.

Orange Shirt Day (now National Truth and Reconciliation Day) is held on September 30 each year as an opportunity for Canadians to acknowledge the truth, and in a small way begin the journey to help reconcile with our Indigenous brothers and sisters.

Submitted by C. Mulligan  
A resident of Olde Berlin Town neighbourhood

~

Want to learn more? From the Kitchener Public Library Chapter One Podcast: “Rights of Passage: A Reconciliation Podcast is a three-part podcast that engages with wampum and contemporary treaties, territorial and land acknowledgments and most importantly, the actions that Canadians can take as we work together with First Peoples towards reconciliation. Haudenosaunee knowledge holder Kelly ‘Frantastic’ Davis and Dr. Stephen Svenson of Wilfrid Laurier University are your hosts.” Available at <https://kitchenerlibrary.podbean.com/e/episode-4-rights-of-passage-part-1/>

~

Visit the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation at [www.nctr.ca](http://www.nctr.ca).

~

---

### **Bike Trails - Downtown Cycling Grid and Margaret Avenue Multi-Use Trail**

A neighbour recently asked about the left-hand turn off of Margaret Avenue onto Victoria Street - when travelling west towards Waterloo. Darren Kropf, Active Transportation Planning Project Manager, confirmed that the left-hand turn lane at Victoria is being removed to make space for the trail. He also notes the new multi-use trail on Margaret Avenue and Otto Street is scheduled for construction in spring of 2022. A tender is being prepared by the city for release later this year. In addition, city staff are studying their recommendation to reverse the stop signs at the Ahrens and Young intersection in response to citizen's appeal to City Council for a 4-way stop instead.

The City has been working on a master cycling plan for a few years. In 2019, Olde Berlin Town neighbourhood had a contra-flow bike lane added on Young Street and some parking spaces were removed. On December 14, 2020, City Council approved a continuous downtown cycling grid, connecting the downtown core to adjacent neighbourhoods and regional cycling arteries. It includes a multi-use trail on Margaret Avenue. The street reconstruction plan will "remove parking on Margaret Avenue between Queen Street and Maynard Avenue," and "build a 3.0 metre wide trail in a way that eliminates front yard impacts and reduces tree loss to one." This trail will be constructed of asphalt and not concrete which would be more characteristic of our Heritage District. For the latest news on cycling, trails and other Kitchener connections from Bike Kitchener; go to: <https://subscribe.kitchener.ca/Subscribe> and select Bike Kitchener under Newsletters.

### **Downtown Community Centre**

Our Neighbourhood Association is affiliated with the City of Kitchener and the Downtown Community Centre at 35B Weber Street West. This pandemic has had a major impact on some City programs and facilities, including our arenas, pools and Community Centres. Implementing provincial requirements has impeded certain recreational programs. You will need proof of two vaccinations to access certain indoor public settings and facilities like the Community Centre. You can check requirements in advance at 519-741-2501 or [www.kitchener.ca/downtowncc](http://www.kitchener.ca/downtowncc).

### **Neighbourhood Happenings**

The City of Kitchener's Neighbours Day event last September saw local musicians lending their unique talents by staging small, intimate pop-up concerts in neighbourhoods all over Kitchener from porches to driveways, front lawns to boulevards. This happened on Ahrens Street with residents joining spontaneously in the fun.

Enterprising neighbours at the corner of Lancaster and Mansion transformed their boulevard into a beautiful garden. We hope it can be featured in our Spring newsletter.

**Sidewalk shoveling** . . . the City of Kitchener's website states:

<https://www.kitchener.ca/en/living-in-kitchener/snow-removal.aspx>

"Property owners must clear the sidewalks around their property of both snow and ice within 24 hours of a snowfall. These sidewalks must be maintained to bare pavement on an ongoing basis. This includes clearing snow and ice on the sidewalk that prevents safe pedestrian access to the road, often found at corner lots (called a [windrow](#)). If a complaint is received and a bylaw officer determines your sidewalk is not clear, you will have another 24 hours to clear it to our bare pavement standard. After this point, we may hire a contractor to clear your sidewalk and add the cost of the clearing to your property tax bill." Additional information is in the city's Neighbourhood By-Law Guide.



The following article is from Friends of Olde Berlin Town, a neighbourhood group pursuing a compatible, inclusive development of 22 Weber Street West that permits existing neighbours to thrive and the heritage district to endure. The Neighbourhood Association distributed notices to residents about the September 8, 2021 Neighbourhood Information Meeting referenced below.

## **ABOUT the Friends of Olde Berlin Town and 22 Weber Street West**

In January 2021, a corporation named “30 Duke Street Limited”, appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT), formerly Local Planning Appeal Tribunal and Ontario Municipal Board) to re-zone 22 Weber Street West to permit unlimited height, a reduced front yard setback and a 79% reduction in required parking. All while proposing pricing at 22 Weber Street West that is out of reach for 60% of Kitchener’s population.

This application has not been open to any municipal statutory consultation or heritage review, both of which are required by law.

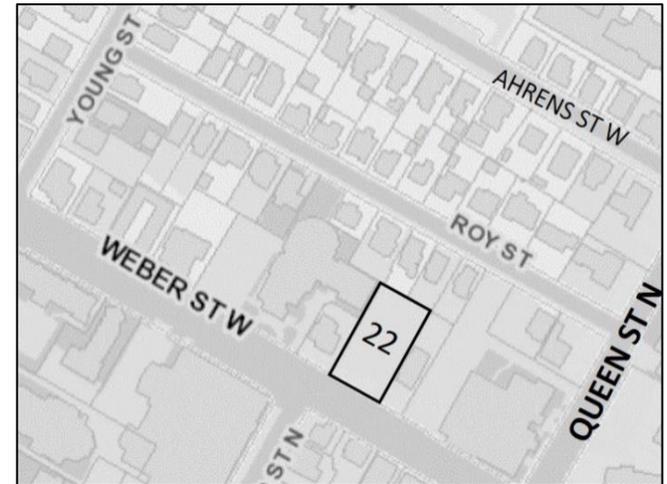
A group of neighbours, Friends of Olde Berlin Town (Friends), emerged in response and secured party status (full participation) at the OLT. The plan for the hearing is underway but still incomplete. Thus far, Friends helped 22 neighbours and community members, including the Social Development Centre and the Architectural Conservancy Ontario North Waterloo Region Branch achieve participant status at the OLT. Friends also secured the September 8, 2021 Neighbourhood Information Meeting to allow the community to hear basic details on the proposal and share comments with Planning Staff.

Following the Neighbourhood Information Meeting, the City raised 31 issues with the Applicant’s proposal, many of which cite the same legislation that Friends would like the OLT to recognize and uphold. The City also announced that it continues to contemplate a motion to dismiss the hearing on jurisdictional grounds.

On December 3, 2021, the OLT denied the Applicant’s “highly unusual” request for additional storeys at the OLT as opposed to proceeding through the City of Kitchener’s Planning Department. The Tribunal asserted that to bypass municipal review and public input “would be extremely prejudicial to the City and other opposing parties.” The Adjudicator ordered the Applicant to re-submit their application and all supporting documents to the City of Kitchener by December 31, 2021. The City can then review the application and convene a new Neighbourhood Information Meeting. Opportunity to comment on the heritage aspects may be available during a review of the Heritage Impact Assessment at Heritage Kitchener.

A fourth Case Management Conference is now scheduled for 10:00 a.m. April 4, 2022 to consider acceptance of additional participant and party status requests and revisions to the Draft Procedural Order (a plan for the hearing jointly created by the parties, presently including the Applicant, City, Region and Friends). The OLT will also consider potential motions to dismiss the application on jurisdictional grounds.

Friends of Olde Berlin Town needs your support to pay legal fees and expert witness costs. Please visit the website at [www.obtfriends.ca](http://www.obtfriends.ca) for more information, to sign a petition, request a lawn sign or make a contribution.



## Highlights from the E-News for Olde Berlin Town

**CITY BY-LAWS** are featured regularly. It is best to know the by-laws before you get a warning or a fine. Topics over the past year included: **Parking** regulations; **Hedges & Trees** referenced the requirement to maintain clear sightlines for walkers or vehicles; **Sheds/accessory buildings** included a reminder to check building requirements before putting a shed on your property; **Driveway extensions and water drainage** included reminders . . . don't allow water to be "directed at a neighbouring property" or "cause a nuisance" leading to erosion. Contact the city at 519-741-2317 for driveways and at 519-741-2435 for water drainage.

**SAFETY tips** like pedestrian safety and keeping kids safe on their route to school with reminders about observing school zone speeds, obeying the crossing guard and watching for darting children between parked cars. Another safety article was about Scam Warnings. **Waterloo Regional Police** remind the public to #StopPauseThink and be vigilant when responding to requests to make purchases. If you have been a victim of a scam and suffered a financial loss, please report the incident online at [www.wrps.on.ca/onlinereporting](http://www.wrps.on.ca/onlinereporting) or call the non-emergency number at 519-570-9777. You can also file a report with the *Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre* by calling 1-888-495-8501 or [www.antifraudcentre.ca](http://www.antifraudcentre.ca).

**HERITAGE:** Thank you, Ilona Bodendorfer for taking on the role of OBT Civic Centre Heritage District representative to the Heritage Kitchener committee. Many thanks to outgoing representative Becky Mueller for her service in 2019-20.

**DEVELOPMENT** matters are another regular section. Opportunities for civic participation are available with OBT's Development Committee.

### Quick Reference for Civic Engagement

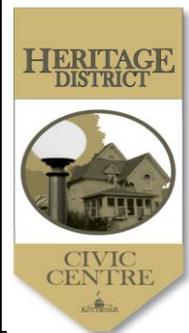
1. Offer feedback on current issues and projects impacting citizens
  - a. Engage Kitchener: <https://www.engagewr.ca/kitchener>
  - b. Engage Region of Waterloo <https://www.engagewr.ca/regionofwaterloo>
2. Community By-laws – quick reference guide  
[https://www.kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/CSD\\_BYLAW\\_CommunityGuide.pdf](https://www.kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/CSD_BYLAW_CommunityGuide.pdf)
3. Property Standards <https://www.kitchener.ca/en/in-your-neighbourhood/property-standards.aspx>



### Sources re: **Civic Centre Heritage Conservation District (CCHCD)** in Olde Berlin Town neighbourhood

CCHCD Plan: [www.kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD\\_PLAN\\_HeritagePlanCivicCentre.Pdf](http://www.kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_PLAN_HeritagePlanCivicCentre.Pdf). Building(s) or property changes may require a [heritage permit](#). Vacant buildings within an HCD subject to heritage provisions of the [property standards bylaw](#).

- City of Kitchener: Heritage & Policy Planner 519-741-2200 ext. 7839;
- Municipal Heritage Committee: <https://www.kitchener.ca/en/building-and-development/heritage.aspx>
- Region of Waterloo: <https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/exploring-the-region/heritage-conservation-toolbox.aspx>
- Ontario Heritage Act: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o18>



---

**From the OBTNA Development Committee. . .** Some key changes in land-use since March 2020.

## **Haldimand Tract**

In April 2021, The Haudenosaunee Confederacy Chiefs Council called for a moratorium on development of the Haldimand Tract, lands along the Grand River that include Kitchener.

## **Ministerial Zoning Orders (MZOs)**

Historically used in areas without an official plan or at the request of municipalities in emergency situations, MZOs bypass all requirements for consultation and cannot be appealed. The current Provincial government has issued 57 MZOs between their election in June 2018 and November 2021. By comparison, previous governments issued 16 MZOs in 15 years. The Conservatives permitted MZOs to override Conservation Authorities with Bill 229. Later, with Bill 257, the Conservatives legislated that MZOs are not required to conform to the Provincial Policy Statement.

## **Affordable Housing Crisis**

Despite the affordable housing crisis, the province continues to deny City Council the option to institute Inclusionary Zoning – a requirement to include a percentage of affordable housing in a new development – throughout the City. The Social Development Centre (SDC) documented that lower-income people are being displaced in the face of new development, particularly along the ION route. To alleviate the ongoing displacement, the SDC calls for upholding of property standards bylaws, prevention of ‘renovictions’ and the construction of affordable and non-market housing on publicly-owned land. Many continue to advocate for housing, as opposed to yielding to further commodification of the real estate market.

## **Regional Official Plan Review**

The Province requires the Region complete a Land Needs Assessment to accommodate population growth anticipated until 2051. The most ambitious option Planning Staff proposed to Regional Council sets a density target of 70 people and jobs per hectare on Designated

Greenfield Areas (lands to be converted from countryside to developable portions of the Region). Some ask why our region is contemplating building new communities at low densities that a) miss an easy opportunity to build sustainable, complete communities that can include affordable housing without displacing existing residents; b) render frequent, meaningful public transit unfeasible; c) exert more pressure to expand beyond the countryside line and further encroach on natural and built heritage and established neighbourhoods; and d) perpetuate a suburban model of growth.

## **Places & Spaces (aka Parks and Recreation)**

A decade ago, in order to support development in the downtown, Kitchener City Council endorsed a parkland dedication exemption. City staff now report that more than a quarter of the residential neighbourhoods, including Olde Berlin Town, are “well below” or “critically below” the average provision of park space per person. A survey accessible via [www.engagewr.ca](http://www.engagewr.ca) is open until January 7, 2022. Further public consultation is expected in early 2022.

## **Committee of Adjustment**

Kitchener’s Committee of Adjustment, which grants relief from zoning regulations on ‘minor’ applications, reached new levels of notoriety with its decision on the 926-936 King St E variance application. Even city planning staff opposed the application going to the Committee, arguing it was too substantial and should be considered by Council as a Zone Change Application. Despite staff’s and neighbours’ protestations, the Committee accepted the application. Council is thought to now be re-considering term limits, eligibility requirements and other rules to govern the Committee.

## **Kitchener Growth Management 2021 Annual Report**

The Region of Waterloo estimated that the Major Transit Station Area encompassing Olde Berlin Town surpassed the minimum provincially-required density by 11% in 2019.

## Councillor Sarah Marsh Ward 10, Kitchener



Dear neighbours,

In mid-December, Council passed a budget that stayed well below the rate of inflation at 1.9%. I'm also pleased to share that we were able to introduce a new Affordable Housing Reserve Fund that will allow us to provide much-needed incentives for building more truly affordable housing units.

I want to give a quick shout-out to Olde Berlin Town resident Judith Stephens-Wells who leads a citizen advisory committee called Compass Kitchener. Her presentation to Council this month provided extremely valuable feedback to help keep us on track for addressing the community's priorities. Way to go, Judith!

City Hall's Carl Zehr Square remains under construction this winter, but the good news is for those looking for a place to skate this winter . . . come down to 44 Gaukel Street to skate on our new synthetic ice rink. Let us know what you think!

I wish you all the best as we enter the holiday season.

Peace, Love, and Joy to you and yours.

[sarah.marsh@kitchener.ca](mailto:sarah.marsh@kitchener.ca) 519-741-2786 or 519-807-8006

## Heritage Homes of Kitchener Calendar (circa 1982)

In 1981, the *Kitchener Waterloo Record* published a series of water colour images of regional heritage homes painted by Bert Williams. In



1982 these paintings were made into a calendar. The North Waterloo Architectural Conservancy Ontario branch has reproduced a virtual copy of the Heritage Kitchener Calendar [here](https://www.aconwr.ca/blog/heritage-kitchener-calendar-1982/).

<https://www.aconwr.ca/blog/heritage-kitchener-calendar-1982/>

The **December** page depicts **51 Ahrens Street West**, 1867, built for The Rev. Franz Herlan, an itinerant minister who spent some time preaching in New Hamburg before he made his home on Ahrens Street; in Berlin, he ministered the congregation at Zion Evangelical Church; this tiny clapboard cottage reflects gothic features with added features such as a porch and side and rear additions; it is said to be one of the only surviving wooden structures from the great Berlin fire; and a souvenir of our Confederation year 1867.

### Important Numbers To Know

- ◆ Ward Councillor, Sarah Marsh (519) 741-2786 [sarah.marsh@kitchener.ca](mailto:sarah.marsh@kitchener.ca)
- ◆ Police (519) 653-7700 or 519-570-9777
- ◆ Gas Leaks (519) 741-2529
- ◆ Property Standards (519)741-2345 [www.kitchener.ca/bylawguide](http://www.kitchener.ca/bylawguide)
- ◆ Crime Stoppers 1-800-222-TIPS (8477)
- ◆ City of Kitchener's Contact Centre (519) 741-2345
- ◆ Garbage (519) 575-4400 [www.regionofwaterloo.ca/waste](http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/waste)  
Download My Waste app recycling schedules & reminders

### OBTNA Volunteer Board ~ 2021

Noam Miller, Jane Parmley, Donna Kuehl,  
Rosemary Coleman, Stephen Pedersen, Leslie Stallard

E-Mail: [writeus@oldeberlintown.ca](mailto:writeus@oldeberlintown.ca)

For updates/e-news: <http://oldeberlintown.ca/signup>

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/oldeberlintown/>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/OldeBerlinTown>

We want to hear from you! [writeus@oldeberlintown.ca](mailto:writeus@oldeberlintown.ca).