

Olde Berlin Town Neighbourhood Association

In the Civic Centre ~ A Heritage Conservation District

www.oldeberlintown.ca

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

**Spring
2023**

Hi Neighbour

Spring is in the air notwithstanding Old-Man-Winter who's trying to hang on with periodic blasts of ice and snow. Shovelling snow will soon be in the past and daylight hours will get longer. We can look forward to gardens rejuvenating with spring flowers, walks, hikes, & enjoying the outdoors; going to local festivals, perhaps taking the train ([2023 Elmira Maple Syrup Festival | Waterloo Central Railway](#)) to Elmira's Maple Syrup Festival on Saturday, April 1st with lots of family-fun activities; or participating in Earth Day clean-ups on April 22nd; or revelling in Kitchener Neighbours Day circuit of porch party events on June 17th.

Olde Berlin Town neighbourhood association's annual Meet and Greet is Saturday, March 25th at the K-W Art Gallery in the same building as the Centre-In-The Square. It's central, just a short walk to meet in-person. Hope to see you there, to re-connect and discover new neighbours.

Volunteers for Olde Berlin Town (OBT) keep things going. Volunteers make things happen, such as:

- ❖ Monthly E-Newsletters with timely ideas and suggestions for participating in local activities
- ❖ Identifying safety concerns, development issues, opportunities for local activities
- ❖ Liaising: with the City of Kitchener to benefit residents in Olde Berlin Town for programs at the Downtown Community Centre,

Being involved can build lasting relationships with neighbours and provide a sense of belonging. The best neighbourhoods are made by the people who live there.

More volunteers are needed. A minimum of 3 Board members is required to maintain affiliation with the City of Kitchener. Help plan fun events, assist with social media or be a member on a Safety, Activity or Development committees. To join send an email note to writeus@oldeberlintown.ca.



NEWS:

SECONDARY PLAN

Growing Together Workshop:

March 23, 2023

6:00 pm at Kitchener

Public Library 85 Queen St N (Room D)

The Olde Berlin Town (Civic Centre) Secondary Plan review, which began at the municipal level, with the Planning Around Rapid Transit Stations (PARTS) plans and was advanced through the Neighbourhood Planning Review, is now being re-initiated through the 'Growing Together' project.

The Planning Department is inviting interested neighbours to attend a workshop at 6:00 pm, Thursday, March 23, 2023 at the Kitchener Public Library.

Much of Olde Berlin Town neighbourhood is within the boundary (500m to 800m) of a Major Transit Station Area (MTSA), so you may have received a postcard inviting you to attend this workshop.

At the workshop, the Planning Department will share information about the amount of growth the Province has directed Kitchener to accommodate within the next 10 years and the factors and policies that influence growth and development.

There is also a drop-in at the Farmer's Market on March 25th.

More information at: <https://www.engagewr.ca/growingtogether>

Margaret Avenue and Otto Street: Bike Trail Construction Project starts - April 2023

The City of Kitchener has advised that Steed and Evans Limited received the contract for surface reconstruction of these two streets. The project starts in April with 3 stages proposed. The 1st stage is Margaret Ave (from Victoria St N to Queen St N); it includes underground utility relocations, new curb and gutter, new roadway paving, new driveway ramps, and elimination of a left turn from Margaret onto Victoria. On the southwest side of Margaret Ave only, a 9.75 feet-wide, two-way boulevard multi-use trail will be paved (softer material, not asphalt) for use by both pedestrians and cyclists – and many dog-walkers in OBT. Pre-Condition surveys of nearby home are being offered. Some concerns may be vibration during construction periods, damage/loss to trees and landscaping, parking issues, and detours due to full closure of Maynard Ave during construction periods.

DTK Vision - conversations about the future of downtown Kitchener

The [Downtown Community Working Group](#) formed in 2022, has worked with City staff to form a comprehensive community engagement process and identify key themes and issues in the downtown. The Working Group will review community feedback and create a draft vision and principles based on your ideas. There are three ways to get engaged: share your comments on [engagewr.ca/dtkvision](https://www.engagewr.ca/dtkvision) website, host a workshop with a Do-It-Yourself Kit, or attend a Downtown Kitchener Vision Conversation Pop-Up event on Saturday, March 18 at Kitchener Market (indoors) 9:00 am to 2:00 pm; or at Carl Zehr Square from 4 to 6 p.m.

Olde Berlin Town Neighbourhood

Spring 2023

30-40 Margaret Avenue

The proposal for development of the empty lots on this site is changing - again. On February 7, 2023, the consulting planning firm for the developer, Activa, presented a draft plan of the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) to Heritage Kitchener. A six-storey condo building is off the table and the latest proposal is for eight blocks of 3-storey townhomes with garages (i.e., 6 units per block for a total of 48 units). The units back onto each other with an interior laneway providing access to the garages. There is one central exit onto Margaret Avenue. The unapproved design was more futuristic, featuring flat roofs. A parkette is planned for the east side.

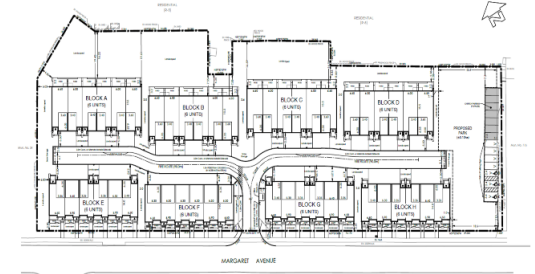


Figure 1: Proposed Site Plan

Feedback on the draft HIA by Heritage Kitchener member, while positive for the lower height, was centred on the building fitting into the “character of the neighbourhood”, roof design, cladding exterior and preservation of the few remaining trees. Nearby homes are primarily detached single family houses. The flat-roof design raised concern as heritage homes in the Civic Centre Heritage Conservation District (CCHCD) tend to have peaked roofs.

These lots had no buildings for many years. Most trees were removed prior to the cancelation of previously approved condo development.



Photo from CCHCD Plan: circa 2007



Photo from draft HIA: circa 2022

A new building must meet specific design guidelines to ensure compatibility with adjacent properties in the neighbourhood. The CCHCD plan has specific requirements in certain sections of the CCHCD. For example:

- 3.0 H.D. HERITAGE DISTRICT OBJECTIVES, PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES
 - o 3.3.5.3 Margaret Avenue (description and policies)
- 4.0 PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION
 - o 4.2.1 Land Use Designations and Zoning → see - Medium Density Multiple Residential Designation – **Margaret Avenue**
- 6.0 ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES
 - o 6.6 NEW BUILDINGS - RESIDENTIAL
 - 6.9 SITE / AREA SPECIFIC DESIGN GUIDELINES → see - 6.91 Margaret Avenue

To evaluate, compare the CCHCD policies with the draft HIA plan. Is the draft HIA in line with CCHCD policies/requirements?

You can access the CCHCD here: https://www.kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_PLAN_Heritage_Plan_Civic_Centre.pdf

You can access the draft HIA here: <https://pub-kitchener.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=8359>

The community has an opportunity to provide feedback. E-mail Heritage planning department. Jessica.Vieira@kitchener.ca

OBTNA's - Neighbourhood Groups & Committees

There are many ways to connect with neighbours. Joining a group or helping at a special event opens doors to new opportunities and making new friends. Participation in a neighbourhood group is a way to learn more about your immediate community and amenities such as the local Community Centre. Communication is the key. In this digital age, most neighbourhoods have some level of communicating on social media or at least by email. If you're a newcomer to the city, the websites for the Region of Waterloo (<https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca>) and the City of Kitchener (www.kitchener.ca) are great resources. A one-stop site for online engagement opportunities across Waterloo Region is www.engagewr.ca; just choose a municipality to view engagement topics currently open for your input/participation.

Olde Berlin Town Neighbourhood Association has four groups that meet – some every month and some periodically. More information on each is below. If you are interested in volunteering for a group please email: writeus@oldeberlintown.ca

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

This group is vital in keeping residents informed with timely information in a non-partisan manner. The Neighbourhood social media keeps people informed through the website, E-News, Facebook, twitter and Instagram. Occasional printed newsletters are hand-delivered, as well as flyers about special events/projects, new developments that could concern residents and notices about public meetings to discuss things. The team shares details about activities and events within the OBT neighbourhood and sometimes with the greater K-W community, particularly if there may be an impact on the people living in OBT. Publications promote the aims of the Association – to have a safe neighbourhood, community awareness and pride in our community. **The website has lots of information for residents, including back issues of newsletters and E-News. You can find information at www.oldeberlintown.ca. Facebook is another resource at <https://www.facebook.com/OldeBerlinTown>. To contact the Olde Berlin Town board, email writeus@oldeberlintown.ca. Stay in touch with the most up-to-date neighbourhood activities and issues, by signing up for the monthly e-Newsletter at www.oldeberlintown.ca.**

ACTIVITY & SPECIAL EVENTS GROUP

This neighbourhood committee looks for ways to bring neighbours together for fun, fitness, education, garden tours, social gatherings and so on. Activities are open to all residents, accessible, promote community involvement, and connect neighbours to one another. Events have mostly happened in early summer and September. In June 2022, the OBT neighbourhood had four different Neighbours Day Porch Parties as well as a musical event in Hibner Park. And last September a short series of Music and Tea Afternoons was held. A recent suggestion was the need for a 'Welcome Kit' for new people moving into the neighbourhood. More help is needed to get this project started.



Matching Grant

This grant supports new resident-led projects and initiatives across the city. Applications reviewed each season. Upcoming submission dates:

- **Spring Review Period** - Thursday, May 18, 2023
- **Summer Review Period** - Thursday, August 17, 2023
- **Fall Review Period** - Thursday, November 16, 2023

Learn more at [Love My Hood Matching Grant - Kitchener Love My Hood](#).

SAFETY COMMITTEE

This Committee promotes a safe and welcoming neighbourhood. A Safety Audit of neighbourhood streets is presently underway. March is ***Fraud Prevention Month***. Awareness and education is crucial. Criminals and scammers extort money with numerous schemes by phone, mail and cybercrime from trusting victims, often targeting the vulnerable population. Most incidents are not reported to police. BE SMART – DON'T be TRICKED into responding. BE VIGILANT against identity thieves. Protect your personal information. If you have been a victim, report the incident at www.wrps.on.ca/onlinereporting or call the police non-emergency number 519-570-9777. You can also email the *Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre* www.antifraudcentre.ca or call 1-888-495-8501. The OBT neighbourhood pamphlet, with safety tips and who-to-call for help sources for keeping you and your property safe, is available at <https://oldeberlintown.ca/welcome-to-olde-berlin-town/>.

Other kinds of safety issues may arise due non-compliance with **Property Standards** and city By-Laws. The **Neighbourhood By-Law Guide** at: https://www.kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/CSD_BYLAW_Community_Guide.pdf, a quick and easy tool, or call 519-741-2345; check regulations before starting a project; see www.kitchener.ca/en/bylaws-and-enforcement/bylaw-guide.aspx. Stealing high-end vehicles and identify theft is increasingly profiled in the local news with tips on how to protect your assets. This concern may be something the Safety Committee could explore with residents and share results.

DEVELOPMENT GROUP

This group meets regularly to consider land use issues, including Official Plans, Zoning By-Law, Minor Variances and Heritage Permit applications, government policies and legislation that could impact the neighbourhood. The City's land use planning rules for Civic Centre neighbourhood are at: www.kitchener.ca/en/strategic-plans-and-projects/civic-centre.aspx. The committee endeavours to share important information with residents in the Olde Berlin Town community via their E-Newsletters or hand-delivered flyers and to support residents' navigation of and participation in the planning process.

In 2022 topics addressed included:

- 19 storey development at 22 Weber St W. Unresolved, currently at provincial Ontario Land Tribunal
- Region of Waterloo's Official Plan (ROP) guiding long-term growth, adopted by Regional Council August 18, 2022; now awaiting Provincial approval
- Kitchener Parks - Green Spaces and Places Strategy passed on August 22, 2022
- Provincial Bill 23 - More Homes Built Faster Act,

Kitchener's website has a comprehensive overview of their planning process for development applications and how to find out information about a specific property. Find it at: [Neighbourhood development guide - City of Kitchener](#)

HERITAGE: OBT neighbourhood has a representative for the Civic Centre Heritage Conservation District (HCD) on the City's **Heritage Kitchener** committee. Heritage Kitchener meets on the first Tuesday of each month and advises planning staff and Council on conservation of publicly- and privately-owned cultural heritage resources. Heritage Kitchener reviews Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) and Heritage Permit Applications against the requirements of the Ontario Heritage Act, Kitchener Official Plan and HCD plans.



City of Kitchener Heritage Grant Program: Most properties in Olde Berlin Town neighbourhood are within the Civic Centre heritage conservation district. If you are looking to restore or conserve a heritage property, grants are available for eligible projects. Applications are due by May 31, 2022. Go to www.kitchener.ca/heritagefunding for information.

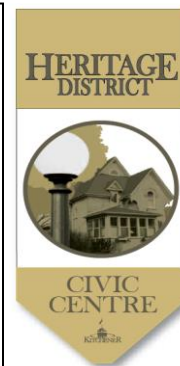
Sources re: **Civic Centre Heritage Conservation District (CCHCD)** in Olde Berlin Town Neighbourhood

The Plan contains guidelines and policies to protect and conserve the Civic Centre neighbourhood. This unique neighbourhood is linked to several key periods in our city's development, and contains many buildings associated with community leaders: Find at:

https://www.kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_PLAN_Heritage_Plan_Civic_Centre.pdf

Property changes may require a heritage permit. Other resources:

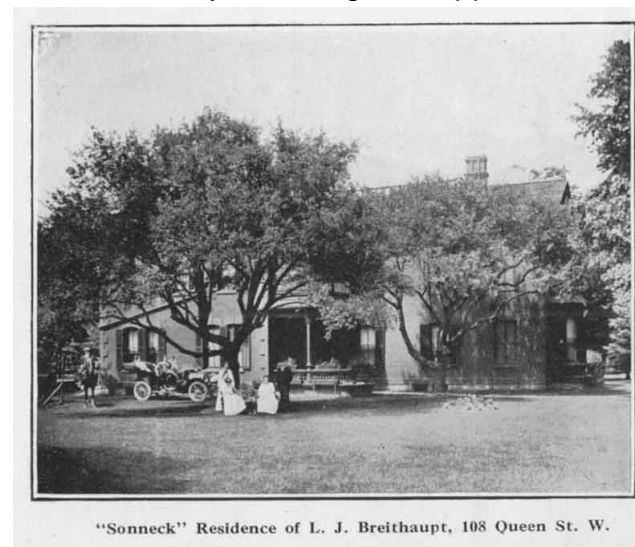
- City of Kitchener: Heritage & Policy Planner; call: 519-741-2200
- Municipal Heritage Committee: <https://www.kitchener.ca/en/building-and-development/heritage.aspx>
- Region of Waterloo: <https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/exploring-the-region/heritage-conservation-toolbox.aspx>
- Ontario Heritage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



HERITAGE FEATURE: The Sonneck House

written and researched by Roseangela Cappellano

The Olde Berlin Town Neighbourhood is home to one of Kitchener's most valuable historic landmarks. 108 Queen Street North, which currently operates as The Sonneck House salon and spa, was constructed in 1874 by Louis Breithaupt, who served as Berlin's mayor, for Judge Anthony LaCourse. The house was one of Breithaupt's many investment properties in Old Berlin and was leased to tenants until it was purchased by Breithaupt's eldest son, Louis Jacob, following his marriage to Emma Devitt in 1881. Louis Jacob Breithaupt is the owner who gave the house its name, "Sonneck House," meaning "Sunny Corner" in German. The mansion certainly takes a place of prominence on the corner of Margaret and Queen Street, but that's not the only reason it received its moniker. When L.J. Breithaupt and his wife first took on the mansion, it was in dire need of repair. Louis Jacob kept diaries during his time living at the house, with entries written in both English and German, and he frequently detailed the family's work on the estate. In 1883 he described the house as having been left in "the most pitiable state," and by 1891 the children had fallen ill from the cold. In that entry, he wrote:



"Sonneck" Residence of L. J. Breithaupt, 108 Queen St. W.

"Little Louis Orville has a terrible cold, and the little girls have it as well. The dampness of the house is to blame for this situation, a draft comes through the one ceiling we had been neglecting to replace."

By 1896, Louis and Emma had completed an extension to the home to accommodate the family's growing needs. After a long summer holiday in England, Scotland, and Europe, the family returned to their new and improved home with sunny dispositions. It was at this time that Louis wrote in his diary:

"We have decided to name our improved home Sonneck in honour of 'Burg Sonneck' on the Rhine, partly because it seems to fit with the name of the old homestead Waldeck (his father's Berlin home) & further because it really is a bright 'sunny-corner.'"

Louis Jacob Breithaupt was mayor of Kitchener and president of the Breithaupt Leather Co., and held a position of political and social importance in the community. His son, little Louis Orville, would eventually follow in his father's footsteps and serve a term as mayor of Kitchener, becoming the third generation of Breithaupt to hold the title. He would also become the lieutenant-governor of Ontario. One of Louis and Emma's daughters, Martha Edna Breithaupt, was an important figure in the promotion of art in Kitchener and the community. She was known to be a friend of Group of Seven painter A.Y. Jackson, who periodically visited Kitchener in the early 1900s. The Breithaupt family name has been associated to mayoralship but also to community leadership in Kitchener's history. Louis Jacob Breithaupt continued to live at the Sonneck house until his death in 1939. In the 1960's and 1970's, Helen Smith ran a small art gallery in the home, and resided there with her husband and children. The mansion was later purchased and divided into apartments, and at one point was intended to be demolished and developed into a senior's residence. The City of Kitchener opposed the development and designated the property as a landmark under the Ontario Heritage Act, recognizing its historical and architectural value. In 2015 the house was purchased by Randy and Ashlee Harms and in December 2018, The Sonneck House Salon & Spa opened its doors and welcomed guests for the first time. They write:

"It has been a labor of love for all who have taken the time to restore the house to what it once was... The community and patrons have made this place what it is today and we couldn't be more grateful!"

If you happen to walk by the Sonneck House, you might want to stop and admire the Italianate style architecture, the detailed woodwork on the projecting bay windows, and the original back and side porches on one of the very few remaining mansions of the leaders of nineteenth century Berlin

References and Credits

Fear, Jon. "Sonneck House." Waterloo Historical Society 2019 Newsletter, 2019, 4–6.
<https://www.whs.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2019-Newsletters.pdf>.
"History: The Sonneck House Salon & Spa." The Sonneck House. Accessed September 5, 2022.
<https://www.thesonneckhouse.com/history>.
"Photos: 108 Queen St. N, Kitchener, Ontario." Photos: 108 Queen St. North, Kitchener, Ontario: Waterloo Region Generations. Accessed September 5, 2022.
<https://generations.regionofwaterloo.ca/showmedia.php?mediaID=3977&sitever=standard>.

***May your troubles be less,
may your blessings be more,
and may nothing but happiness
come through your door.***





Hello Olde Berliners!

I'm thrilled to be serving you and looking forward to being good partners over the next 4 years. As a social worker and now City Councillor, I aim to ensure that all those I serve feel heard, respected, and supported. If you'd like to reach out with a joy or challenge, I'm always open to meet people to discuss your experience living in Kitchener. Also, I love to learn about how I can contribute to the OBT community. So much good activity is happening all around us!

With March Break just around the corner, you will find many free activities for your kids in downtown Kitchener, including daily programming at the Kitchener Public Library. Also check out programming offered at the Downtown Community Centre – They have lots of variety, gentle yoga, Ki Aikido, line dancing, Pilates, art and level-up! If I can maintain some physical activity over the winter months, my mind and body thank me. For a full list of programming, visit <https://www.kitchener.ca/en/recreation-and-sports/downtown-community-centre.aspx>. Register online through ActiveNET, or by calling the registration line at 519-741-2382. Spring program registration opens on March 7th. In addition to this newsletter, check out the city's monthly e-newsletter and website at downtownkitchener.ca to stay in touch with the various events, and activities offered in the DTK.

Let's keep the conversation going because your voice matters! I look forward to hearing from you with any city-related questions or ideas you may have. As always, you can reach me at aislinn.clancy@kitchener.ca, my office 519-741-2786, or cell 226-505-6571.

Sincerely,

Aislinn Clancy – Ward 10

DNA sponsors affordable, Ongoing DROP-IN sports programs at the Downtown Community Centre, 35B Weber Street West
PH: 519-741-2501

DOWNTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION PROGRAMS



Ongoing Drop-in Programs delivered by The Downtown Neighbourhood Association.
No registration or commitment required.

Women's Volleyball

Saturdays 11am-12:30pm

If you are familiar with the rules of volleyball and are seeking a fun, energizing game, come join this drop-in!

Ages 16+

\$3 per drop-in session



Volleyball at Noon

Tuesdays 12pm-1pm

Re-energize with an invigorating and fun co-ed activity in the middle of the workday.

Ages 18+

\$3 per drop-in session

Adult Ball Hockey

Saturdays 1pm-3pm

Keep fit and have fun playing a game of pick-up ball hockey!

Ages 18+

\$4 per drop-in session



Badminton

Wednesdays 6pm-9:30pm

Beginners can learn skills. More experienced players will play against each other, either doubles or singles. Some racquet's available but recommended to bring your own.

Ages 16+ | \$4 per drop-in session



Basketball at Noon (Advanced)

Fridays 12pm-1pm

A high intensity noon drop in for players of intermediate-advanced skills seeking a fun, fast-paced game!

Ages 18+

\$3 per drop-in session

