

# Echoes of the Oxtongue

Newsletter of the Oxtongue Lake Ratepayers Association

Spring 2008

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## Editorial Note

With winter finally giving way to spring, we can start to think about those enjoyable summer activities in our Community and on the Lake. In most peoples minds, planning to get the boat in the water or to open up the cottage beats shovelling snow! The purpose of this early Newsletter is two fold, a) to get you thinking about those pleasant summer activities and, b) to provide information on Highway 60 bridge replacement plans for our community. For the latter, we are extremely grateful to Chris Woodfield who has done a stellar job in working with the MTO project manager and preparing the informative report included as part of the Newsletter. Thank you, Chris. Also included are two waste management notices from the Township on mandatory recycling and 2008 household hazardous waste days.

*John & Margaret Lawrence*

## OLRA Website

Following a successful application by Jim Elliott and Jim Grant, the OLRA was awarded \$500 by the Haliburton Development Corporation to develop an OLRA website. Jim Grant will be meeting with the web designers later this spring to initiate design and content for our new website. We hope to include a bulletin board, live weather updates, articles of interest and education, classified advertisements, links of interest, useful guides and pamphlets, zoning maps, etc. Anyone with suggestions for content should contact Jim directly at [Jim@jamesgrantmusic.com](mailto:Jim@jamesgrantmusic.com).

## Job Opportunity

Are you a student looking for a job in the area? The Algonquin Highlands Recreation Department is looking for a university student to develop and deliver summer programmes throughout the municipality (with the bulk of the programmes being in the Stanhope area). The position is part-time from mid-April to the end of May and full-time for July and August. Duties include organizing and promoting a community garage sale, BBQ, and two family campfire nights, assisting with the Stanhope Soccer League, the Dorset Kids Fish Derby, and the Stanhope Heritage Day, as well as helping with other recreational activities such as beach crafts, tennis games, board games, etc. The rate of pay is \$11.64 per hour. Anyone interested should contact Melissa Alfano, Recreation Coordinator, Township of Algonquin Highlands, by telephone (705) 766-9968, or e-mail, [drc@algonquinhighlands.ca](mailto:drc@algonquinhighlands.ca).

## Membership

Our membership currently stands at 65 – down considerably from 2006/07 when we climbed to over 100. If you have not already done so please complete the Membership Form and send it along with a cheque for \$30 to the OLRA Treasurer, Jim Elliott, 8 Island View Blvd., Toronto, Ontario M8V 2P4 or drop it off at Helsel's General Store. E-mail addresses are appreciated where possible as they facilitate rapid communication with our members and reduce mailing costs for the newsletters.

*Editors: John & Margaret Lawrence,*  
[lawrencemj@sympatico.ca](mailto:lawrencemj@sympatico.ca).

**Membership Form**  
**Oxtongue Lake Ratepayers Association**  
**2007/08**

**First Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Last Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cottage Address\*:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Province:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Postal Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address\* (if different from above)** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Province:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Postal Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Please indicate which address you would prefer we use for correspondence and newsletter:**

**Cottage** \_\_\_\_\_ **Home** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone**

**Cottage** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail address:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Road Work in the Oxtongue Lake Area**

Improvements along the whole length of Hwy 60 have been ongoing for several years. As part of this project, the Preliminary Analysis (comprising identification and analysis of requirements) and Detailed Design of upgrades and improvements to the sections of Hwy 60 passing through the Oxtongue Lake area are now underway. When the Preliminary Analysis and Detailed Design phases are complete the actual work on these projects will be prioritized. This involves a review of all road improvement projects in Ontario to produce a list of projects to be carried out during the next five years. Selected projects are included in the Southern Highways Program, which is updated annually. Although future construction timing is not yet known, now is the best time to become involved in the process by drawing attention to concerns and problems that need to be addressed and improvements that should be considered.

At the moment there are two projects in the Oxtongue Lake area that are in the Preliminary Analysis and Detailed Design phases: They are:

- The Section of Hwy 60 from the West Gate of Algonquin Park to 500 meters east of the Oxtongue River Bridge, just east of the Timber Trail Resort. The Consultant Project Manager for this project is Al Rose of Earth Tech Canada and the Ministry of Transportation Project Manager is Judith Baldasaro.
- The Section of Hwy 60 from 500 meters east of the Oxtongue River Bridge to the north end of Blue Spruce Road. The Consultant Project Manager is Tyler Drygas of URS and the Ministry of Transportation Project Manager is Sergiy Morozevych.

The information contained in the following sections of this report is based on input from the Ministry of Transportation and from a number of residents living in the Oxtongue Lake community.

### **Hwy 60, from the West Gate of Algonquin Park to 500 meters east of the Oxtongue River Bridge (G.W.P. 5552-04-00)**

The detailed design for this section along Hwy 60 is currently ongoing. While in detailed design, the need to rehabilitate the existing highway is being evaluated. This may include repairs and upgrades to the pavement, rehabilitation of the drainage systems and other safety and operational requirements such as: replacement and/or adjustment of guard rails, clearing vegetation to improve visibility and updating highway signage.

The bridge that carries Hwy 60 over the small river connecting the outflow from Long Lake to the Oxtongue River was completed during the summer of 2007.

Some of the specific recommendations that are being considered for this section of the highway include:

- Improvements to the highway drainage system where required,
- Safety and operational improvements where required,
- Maintaining the existing highway alignment, road width and passing lanes,
- Maintaining existing commercial and residential entrances at all times during and after construction,
- Resurfacing the existing pavement.

The construction year of this assignment is not yet known. It will depend on funding availability.

It is expected that, when activated, the required construction will be completed during a single or perhaps two summer season(s), - this will be determined closer to the construction date.

### **Hwy 60, from 500 meters east of the Oxtongue River Bridge to Blue Spruce Road (G.W.P. 93-89-00 & G.W.P. 5550-04-00)**

At present work on this project is in its early stages. At this point the main concerns are to:

- Examine the current situation and become familiar with the problems that presently exist,
- Identify needs of the various stakeholders who range from people who live and/or work in the Oxtongue Lake area to people who are simply road users interested in getting to their destination quickly and safely,
- Consider costs and possible impact on the natural environment,
- Examine and evaluate possible approaches and select the solution that best fits the identified needs.

**At the end of this phase it is planned to present the findings and recommendations to all interested parties. For Oxtongue Lake residents, this presentation is expected to be during May or June 2008. The OLRA Executive will ensure that everyone is notified about the date and time of this meeting.**

Looking ahead, a range of design alternatives are being examined for the two bridges, the Oxtongue Lake Narrows Bridge and the Oxtongue River Bridge. Each bridge alternative is being designed to meet current standards and requirements for navigable clearance. To allow continued traffic flow along Highway 60 during the construction of each bridge two arrangements are being considered:

- Retain the existing bridge and construct a new bridge immediately north or south of the existing bridge,
- Install a Bailey type bridge, possibly including a temporary detour, to provide single lane traffic, controlled by traffic lights while the existing bridge is demolished and a new bridge constructed in roughly the same place as the existing bridge.

Minor road modification / realignment of Hwy 60 may be required in the vicinity of the two bridges. This will depend on which replacement alternative is selected.

Road improvements will be examined to address existing safety concerns. Most of these modifications are expected to be accomplished within the existing road allowances although it may be necessary to obtain a small amount of land adjacent to the existing road allowance in some places and trim back parts of the rock cuts.

The actual construction of the two bridges and improvements to Hwy 60 is still a long way off but could be brought forward depending on a number of factors. When the Detailed Design of the new bridges has been completed (currently targeted for spring 2009) construction of each of the bridges and Hwy 60 road improvements will be prioritized. Construction of the new bridges may be carried out as two separate sub projects. A conservative estimate is that each bridge will be constructed during a single construction season.

In the last few years several changes that affect our community have been developed almost to the point of implementation before we have been notified or invited to participate. This project is different. We have been advised by the MTO Project Managers that all suggestions from stakeholders aimed at improving traffic flow and safety will be seriously considered by both project teams during the full life cycle of their project but will be easiest to include if submitted before the completion of the Preliminary Analysis and Design Phases This gives us the opportunity to provide input right from the very beginning and we all should take this opportunity to show that we are interested in participating in projects that affect us and that we are able to provide constructive input.

Although the winter months are not the best time to gather stakeholder input the following are some comments, suggestions and concerns collected so far:

People who have experienced previous road work point out that it can be quite disruptive, noisy, dirty and take much longer to complete than expected. While construction is taking place people need easy access to Algonquin Park if they reside to the west of the bridges and to Huntsville and Hwy 35 and 11 if they reside to the east of bridges. They don't want prolonged delays and rough and potholed temporary diversions.

The present bridges are primarily designed for cars and trucks but there is also a need to provide for off road traffic (ATVs & Snowmobiles) and safe pedestrian walkways that do not compete for limited road space or are just separated by road markings.

In addition to considering the needs of road traffic during the construction of both bridges, attention should also be given to the need to keep the waterways open between the main body of Oxtongue Lake, the north section of

the lake and ragged falls; particularly during the summer season when there is considerable boat traffic passing under both bridges

The new bridges may be realigned differently from the existing bridges and because of their new design will require fewer supporting piers. The piers no longer needed should be removed either completely or sufficiently to not present a hazard to boats or a danger to swimmers.

If water levels of the lake need to be lowered during construction of the Oxtongue Lake Narrows Bridge there are concerns that lower water levels will affect the: cottage water supplies, boating safety, fish habitats, general ambiance of the area and tourism. Any adjustment made to the dam to lower the lake water level should be repaired as quickly as possible.

Businesses, particularly those relying on passing traffic, are concerned that construction and the resulting realignment of the road may adversely affect their parking facilities, their visibility and ultimately their viability. Local businesses make a major contribution to the community by providing: shopping, gas and other auto supplies, outfitting supplies, jobs, work for local contractors, accommodation, restaurants, promoting community activities (e.g. the annual regatta and fishing derbies) and also make a significant contribution to municipal taxes - if they lose their viability residential taxes are likely to increase.

Most traffic accidents and near misses occurring in the area are primarily caused by poor sight lines (due to bends in the road) and the speed of traffic. If the proposed road work simply straightens out the curves in the road it will lead to increased traffic speeds and greater danger to traffic entering or leaving Hwy 60. There is a need to provide better run on and off lanes on Hwy 60 at Junctions, have reduced speed limits on the section of Hwy 60 that passes through the community and traffic lights at the more hazardous road junctions. Greater attention should also be paid to the needs of school buses.

The executives of the Oxtongue Lake Ratepayers Association and the Businesses Association have already made submissions to the MTO based on the above input but you are encouraged to provide input to the MTO either supporting or opposing the views expressed above and/or providing your own suggestions or concerns. Your input (preferably by mail or email) should be sent directly to the MTO and a copy sent to the Oxtongue Lake Ratepayers Association Secretary to allow the association to develop a collective viewpoint. The relevant addresses are as follows:

**For the West Gate of Algonquin Park to about 500 meters east of the Oxtongue River Bridge**

Quote Project G.W.P. 5552-04-00

**Judith Baldasaro - MTO Project Manager**, Ministry of Transportation, North-eastern Region, 301-447 McKeown Avenue, North Bay Ontario, P1B 9S9. e-mail, [Judith.baldasaro@ontario.ca](mailto:Judith.baldasaro@ontario.ca).

Please also copy **Kasim, Manal**, e-mail, [Manal.Kasim@ontario.ca](mailto:Manal.Kasim@ontario.ca).

**For Blue Spruce Road to about 500 meters east of the Oxtongue River Bridge**

Quote Project G.W.P. 93-89-00 & G.W.P. 5550-04-00

**Tyler Drygas - Consultant Project Manager**, URS Canada Inc., 75 Commerce Valley Drive East, Markham, Ontario, L3T 7N9, e-mail, [tyler\\_drygas@urscorp.com](mailto:tyler_drygas@urscorp.com).

**Please also send a copy of your suggestions, concerns or comments to the Secretary of the Oxtongue Lake Ratepayers Association, Betsy Siegfried - OLRA secretary**, 198 Howland Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5R 3B6, [elizsieg@ca.inter.net](mailto:elizsieg@ca.inter.net).



**NOTICE TO ALL RATEPAYERS**  
of the Township of Algonquin Highlands

**2008 HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE DAYS**

will be held on the following dates and at  
the following respective locations:



<b>May 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Maple Lake Landfill</b>	<b>1-5 pm</b>
<b>June 28<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Dorset Landfill</b>	<b>1-5 pm</b>
<b>August 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Oxtongue Landfill</b>	<b>1-5 pm</b>
<b>August 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Dorset Landfill</b>	<b>1-5 pm</b>
<b>Oct. 11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Maple Lake Landfill</b>	<b>1-5 pm</b>

**ACCEPTABLE HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE**  
**CLASSES**

Latex and Oil Paints, Finishing Products e.g. varnish,  
glues, etc.; Used Motor Oil; Auto and Household Batteries;  
Propane Tanks and Cylinders; Cleaners e.g. bleach, oven cleaner, etc.; Aerosol Cans;  
Solvents e.g. varsol, paint thinners, etc.; Pesticides and Herbicides; Pool and  
Photographic  
Chemicals; Fluorescent Light Tubes

**UNACCEPTABLE WASTE CLASSES**

Industrial Waste; Needles/Sharps; PCB's; Radioactives; Pathological

**LANDFILL USER IDENTIFICATION CARDS**  
**MUST BE SHOWN**

For further information, please call:  
(705) 489-2379

