



Happy Lunar New Year! Around the world, people are celebrating the Lunar New Year. If you were born in 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, you're an OX. Oxen are honest, earnest, kind, logical thinkers and great leaders.

Talpines Property Owners' Association LUNAR NEW YEAR EDITION

Hello from snowy, and cold Waubaushene. The bad news is we're still in lockdown, with the variant spreading in Simcoe Muskoka. The good news: our health care workers and residents in long term care and seniors' homes are being vaccinated, with many receiving their second doses this weekend. We sure are hoping for more vaccine doses for the general public so that we can all resume our normal lives this summer and/or fall!

RECENT EVENTS:

WAG DELEGATION TO COUNCIL

Tay Council heard the delegation from the Waubaushene Action Group in January, and some Council members were openly hostile to the suggestion that they should move forward to either acquire the Pine Street School, or build a multi-use community centre in Waubaushene. The ad hoc committee of Council charged with examining the Pine Street School submitted a report stating that renovating it would cost anywhere from 1.2 to 1.6 million dollars. Council decided that it would NOT approach the school board to indicate

interest in acquiring the school. So, that building will go on sale to the general public soon. Sigh. The AdHoc Committee, headed by Waubaushene Councillor Barry Norris bnorris@tay.ca. is now trying to determine what the “needs” of Waubaushene actually are, and a survey of residents will soon be conducted. Our fearless WAG co-chairs Joanna Jorgensen and Barry Dougherty did a fantastic job on the presentation. (even though they were reluctant to recognize Barry Dougherty and allow him to speak) and they will be consulted by the AdHoc Committee on next steps. **THANK YOU TO WAG!**

REDUCTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS AND VOTING AT LARGE

Tay Council recently floated the idea of reducing the size of Council, and introducing “voting at large” which means that the Wards no longer count, and there is no guaranteed representation for Waubaushene. Many residents already feel that the Township is heavily “Victoria Harbour” centred. Councillors dispute this and feel they represent “the whole Township”. **Actions speak louder than words folks!**



Council ignored the results of the survey of residents that they conducted in which residents clearly expressed their desire to maintain the “status quo” with 7 councillors and dedicated Wards. Hmmmmmm. Seems like surveys are only good if they give you the results you already wanted?

THERE WILL BE A PUBLIC MEETING ON MARCH 17 AT WHICH TIME THE PUBLIC CAN EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS. PLEASE ATTEND. This is important. We need a dedicated

Councillor from Waubaushene who will actually represent us on a Council already heavily dominated by Victoria Harbour residents. We’ll send out a reminder message prior to the meeting with the ZOOM link and number.

SHORT TERM RENTALS (STRs)

Tay Council has struggled with the issue of AirBnbs, and the ever increasing complaints about “party houses”, noise, trespassing, unattended fires, and the disruption to peaceful neighbourhoods. Not to mention irresponsible owners who continue to rent their AirBnBs illegally during the lockdown. Many localities are grappling with the same issues. In a comprehensive report filed by the By-Law department at the Protective Services Committee meeting on February 10, 2021, a “licensing framework” was proposed whereby

owners would be required to pay for a business license; be subject to a demerit system for complaints; and eventually could lose their licence to operate if they did not comply. The By law officers also noted that they are aware of **NINETYTWO** AirBnbs operating in the Township, with the majority in Waubaushene, and Victoria Harbour. Councillors expressed incredulity at the number and actually disputed it; and rejected the proposed licensing scheme as too expensive to implement. In a verbal report, the By Law officer warned that he was getting numerous inquiries from purchasers who wanted confirmation that Tay was “REGULATION FREE’ so they could move in and operate these businesses here. Imagine if the house next to you was a “party” AirBNB!

This is a huge concern to those of us who live here year round or seasonally, and cherish its peaceful nature. Properties are being snapped up by commercial owners who are turning them into “ghost hotels”, with out of town owners who are not contributing in a positive way to our community. We have a terrible shortage of affordable housing in Tay. **LOBBY FOR CHANGE!** Our residential neighbourhoods exclude commercial businesses for a reason. Please make your views known before the situation in Tay worsens. Running a “ghost hotel” or AirBnb in a residentially zoned district is not legal under our by-laws. Email ByLaw Officer R. Kennedy at rkennedy@tay.ca. A survey was conducted by Council on the issue, and the vast majority of respondents asked for regulation of these businesses. The issue will be revisited by Council at a special meeting on Wednesday February 24th, 2021 at 6:30. **ZOOM NUMBER 83382328273. And you can actually ask questions and make comments** 🙄

OUR LIBRARY BRANCH: SHOW YOU CARE

A Tay Library Master Plan was conducted by independent consultants in 2016. Among many other recommendations, the Plan recommended upgrading the premises for all three branches. Port McNicoll branch has been updated, but not Waubaushene or Victoria Harbour. Waubaushene’s building was recognized as too small, and needing extensive repairs including accessibility upgrades. Please show you care by renewing your library card, or registering for one. It’s easy and quick: just call 705-538-1122 or email: library@tay.ca.

STAY SAFE FOLKS! All the best from the directors of Talpines.

Victoria Reaume, President