

# Summary of BCA Meetings - Mar. 17, 20, Apr. 17, 1997

## MARCH 17 - BCA GENERAL MEETING

A general meeting was held for the purpose of approving expenditure of BCA funds toward the erection of community signs and a community hall.

Community Hall: A preliminary design for the community hall was presented. The Blackburn Community Association would be contributing \$30,000, the Recreation and Parks Board would contribute \$65,000 and the City of Gloucester would contribute the remaining \$205,000. In order for the project to proceed for city approval it was necessary for the BCA to approve the expenditure at this general meeting. The following motion was voted on by the membership:

*Are you in favour of the Blackburn Community Association spending up to \$30,000 towards the construction of a Community Centre?* The motion passed unanimously.

Signs: An overview of the reasons for proposing the erection of signs for the community was given. The objective of the BCA was to have signage which would 1) identify the community, 2) advertise community announcements/events, and, 3) advertise the businesses of Blackburn Hamlet. To this end two types of signs were proposed: business signs and community identification signs. Several different drawings of signs were presented. It was pointed out that at this point in time, no locations for any signs are available and that the BCA would have to negotiate with the NCC and the Region in order to obtain their consent as they presently control all of the lands where signs could possibly be put. Thus, the expenditure vote by BCA members was to obtain the mandate from residents to proceed in the first place. If and when possible locations become available, the community will be consulted one more time to obtain their approval for specific signs and specific locations. Optimally, it was felt that a business sign could best be erected in the vicinity of the west entrance to Blackburn Hamlet on Innes Road near the detention centre. Community identification signs would ideally be situated at each of the entrances to Blackburn Hamlet. The following motions were voted on by the membership:

*Are you in favour of the Blackburn Community Association spending up to \$5,000 towards a business sign?* The motion carried by majority.

*Are you in favour of the Blackburn Community Association spending up to \$24,000 for community signs?* The motion carried by majority.

## MARCH 20

New Directors - Two new directors were appointed to the Board of Directors: Dianne Woollard as membership director and Marion Jones as secretary.

Community Hall - Initial estimate by the architectural firm for construction was \$340,000, \$40,000 more than the budget limit. The City is searching for assurances from the BCA to cover this overage in case the bids come in that high. Agreement that it would not be prudent to provide such assurances without any actual bids. We will wait to see what the bids come in at. If the original figure of \$300,000 is exceeded, then we will decide what to do.

Business Partnership Proposal - The possibility of joining into a joint marketing program with local businesses was discussed. With the changing community - aging residents and smaller families, the need to broaden the appeal of a BCA membership is becoming evident. At the same time, it is recognized that local businesses are having an increasingly difficult time surviving in the community and that there is a need to better focus on local residents in providing goods and services. To this end it was proposed that the BCA enter into a partnership program with local businesses through the Blackburn Business Association. The idea is that BCA cardholders could be entitled to some sort of discount or other benefit at the discretion of the business. Additionally, interested businesses could sell BCA memberships. Initial discussions with the business community have been positive. It was agreed that this could be a very positive program for both businesses and the BCA. Motion passed to pursue the program on a pilot basis until December, 1997 and evaluate it at that time. Dianne Woollard will meet with businesses in order to design and implement the program as soon as possible.

BANAR - John Stevens notified the board that he is resigning after the May issue of the BANAR.

Membership Canvassing - Discussion about ways of recognizing BCA membership canvassers and encouraging canvassers to complete their canvassing sooner. Iris Phillips suggested that other organizations offer prize incentives to encourage people to finish. Agreed that it was too late this year, but that it might be a good idea for next year. Michael suggested that all canvassers receive a formal "thank you" for their help. This will be done.

Amalgamation - Everyone reminded of the April 2 consultation meeting being put on

by the City of Gloucester in Blackburn Hamlet regarding the "Greater Ottawa" model and the Ottawa-Cumberland amalgamation. Some discussion over the role of the BCA in this process. Should BCA be taking a "position" or is it better to simply provide information in order to permit residents to decide for themselves. It was suggested that the role of information provider would be better. Iris Phillips suggested that maybe now is the time to have Gardner Church present to the community. She will look into it.

BCA Reserve Funds - \$65,000 in deposits are maturing March 21. Neil Morris sought direction on reinvestment given the impending financial commitments for the community hall. Given current low interest rates, it doesn't matter much. Decision made to rollover for shortest time possible right now - 30 days; to be re-discussed when we have more information about when we will need money for the community hall.

BCA Accounts - BCA still using manual ledgers. Neil Morris suggested that his job would be much easier if he could use a computerized accounting system - i.e. Quicken. Agreed on the purchase of the software for the BCA.

## APRIL 17

New Director - Gertha Decoste appointed to the board as Education Director.

Bavarian Fest - Sue Sheridan presented a proposed budget on behalf of the Bavarian Fest committee to evaluate the feasibility of holding the Bavarian Fest again this fall. Costs from last year's event were cut considerably, and it is believed that the event could be held again at break-even or with a small profit. Motion passed to hold the Bavarian Fest again, on the weekend of October 4 & 5, 1997.

Earth Day - Sue Sheridan proposed that an "Earth-day" walk be held in the Hamlet the Sunday of Fun Fair. All in agreement.

Re-zoning of NCC lands on Innes and Blair - "The Woodburn Farm" - Michael briefed everyone on the status of the zoning application by the NCC to the City of Gloucester for these lands. NCC applied to zone the property as commercial, with the view that it would become a large retail centre. A public hearing was held at city hall on April 16 by the city planning commission. Considerable opposition was voiced by Pineview residents. On behalf of the BCA Michael expressed opposition to the rezoning on account of the overall principle of rezoning such lands by the NCC, the fact that Gloucester needs to use up its abundance of existing commercial space before placing a property this size on

the market, and because of the downstream impact on businesses in Blackburn Hamlet. The planning commission denied the rezoning application; however, it must still go to city council for a final decision.

**Volunteer Awards** - Michael recognized Lois Kemp for her ACT Volunteer of the Year Award and Iris Phillips for her Gloucester Volunteer Award. Five other Blackburn residents received Gloucester Volunteer Awards.

**Amalgamation** - Michael reported a poor turn-out at the public forum on April 2. It was suggested that the BCA actively promote the issue of municipal government reform in the region and the proposed amalgamation of Gloucester and Cumberland through the BANAR in order to inform residents.

**NCC Greenhouses** - Rainer Bloess reported that NCC has found a tenant for the vacant greenhouse property at the West end of the Hamlet. It will be utilized by a market garden operation.

**Other** - Status reports given on the community hall and fun fair. Both activities progressing well. BCA board volunteered to serve drinks at the beer tent and for the supper dance. BCA will also participate in the parade.

The above is a summary of the highlights of the BCA meetings. If you would like a copy of the actual minutes, please leave a message on the BCA Info-line at 786-1405.

## NCC UPDATE

NCC lands at the intersection of Blair and Innes are being considered for development. An application for highway commercial development has been launched and appeared on the City of Gloucester Planning Advisory Committee Meeting in late April. The Planning Advisory Committee voted by a majority to disallow application approval at this time. This item will be on the Agenda at the May 13 Gloucester Council Meeting.

Points of contention:

- Right of first refusal should be given to the expropriated owners;
- Local concerns for increased traffic in an already congested corridor;
- Economic overload on local "small business" in nearby communities.

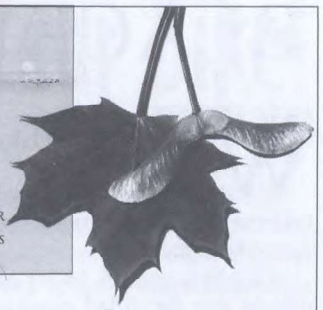
Watch for council decisions in your local newspapers.

*Editor's note: Gloucester City Council approved the rezoning of the NCC land at Blair and Innes. Having attended the meeting mentioned in this article, I would like to know why councillors would change their minds like this. Perhaps we will receive an explanation in a future BANAR.*

## QUOTABLE ADVICE

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