



To promote the exchange of information on issues that impact the quality of life in our neighbourhood, broader community and the Town of Oakville, with a particular focus on preserving and protecting our history, streetscapes, natural environment, heritage districts and homes.

OLRA Fall Newsletter

Oakville Lakeside Residents' Association

Fall 2024

Midtown Oakville - Act Now!

by Amanda Holden

If you've been following the local news and speaking to your neighbours we hope you've heard about the plans and concerns regarding Midtown Oakville. It's a complicated but very important issue and a comprehensive story about the situation and possible next steps is included on page 6.

The Oakville Lakeside Residents' Association has joined again with the We Love Oakville Group (remember the success we had with "Stop Amalgamation!"). We've broken down the situation into three important outcomes:

- Stop the province and their plans to control development through the Transit Oriented Community (TOC) program.
- Ensure growth is managed by the Town of Oakville.
- Get the Town of Oakville Plan Amendment (OPA) right, including the new concept of a Community Permit Planning System (CPPS).

Over the last few weeks we've seen some positive progress from the Town and planning staff with the delivery of a new draft OPA. Please read from page 6 on to learn more. We're confident with the right support, community involvement and leadership we can create an approach and guard

rails to ensure Midtown Oakville becomes a thriving liveable place to live and work. To do that we must speak to Provincial power with a loud voice. That means lots and lots of people, across Oakville, speaking out against hyper-density, and speaking out against unrestricted development and the abuse of provincial planning approaches.

Please look at weloveoakville.org and sign up for updates and emails. Click on the easy to use "Letter Writing Campaign" to share your voice with politicians and decision makers.



OLRA Garden Party 2024

by Geoff Godard

A delightful tradition of the OLRA since its inception in 1966 is our annual garden party. Members meet, mingle and catch up on current affairs that affect our small patch of the world, enjoying the late spring warmth in the garden of one of our members. The weather gods always smiled upon us, that is until June 8, 2024, when we were to meet at 41 Navy, the home of Jeremy Schaal and Jennifer Doherty. The forecast for that afternoon was ominous. However, we had in hand a very generous offer from the next-door neighbour, St Jude's Anglican Church, to use Victoria Hall in case of inclement weather. We watched the growing inevitability of heavy rain on our iPhone screens and made the decision early in the afternoon to take up the offer. That turned out to be a wise move. The rain commenced as forecast, just after the scheduled 4:00 PM start, and continued steadily. Almost an inch fell before it subsided that evening.

The event was sold out as always, limited to ninety due to the usual 21st century institutional health and safety regulations. Inside the atmosphere was warm and friendly. Victoria Hall has a wonderful stained-glass window commemorating the Golden Anniversary of the ascension to the throne of the eponymous Queen on June 20, 1837. We used it as a backdrop for some of the pictures in our pictorial essay that follows.

The provenance and history of this very striking window will be expanded upon in our Spring 2025 issue.



Gardens We Love

by Geoff Godard

One of the very nice things about living in our Lakeside area is our downtown. Wide sidewalks, interesting shops, patioed restaurants and a welcoming ambiance for visitors from near and far.

Contributing to the overall effect are the sidewalk planters filled with bursts of colour, extravagant displays that change with the seasons. There are more than 50, and this is their story. They're the product of a private sector collaboration between Bill Podolsky of Lakeshore Securities, lead sponsor, and the rest of the merchants in the Downtown Oakville Business Improvement Area.

Since its formation the BIA has funded planters along the main drag. In 2003 Lakeshore Securities moved to Trafalgar and Lakeshore and joined the BIA. Bill, its founder and CEO and an Oakville native, thought our already attractive downtown would be enhanced if the number of planters were increased and their appearance upgraded.

He enlisted Frank Rae of Forget Me Not Flowers, then downtown, to propose something better, which he did. At first an informal collaboration between the BIA and Lakeshore Securities, its success led to a contractual formalization in 2018, with Lakeshore as lead sponsor and the BIA as principal funder.

Here's how it works. Quarterly the BIA issues an RFP (request for proposal) for the design of the upcoming season's theme about two months in advance. The winning design is picked by the BIA's Beautification Committee, so it's in the hands of people who love our neighbourhood as much as we do.

While capacity and track record of the proposers are key considerations, the design itself is the main criterion. Responders are generally larger floral and/or greenhouse operations such as Forget Me Not Flowers and Sheridan Nurseries due to the logistical challenges of the seasonal changeover. In addition to being able to source a lot of plant material, the installer must be able to complete the changeover virtually overnight, meaning its manpower capacity is crucial.

The result is what we see as we stroll along Lakeshore between Allan and Navy. Next time you stroll through our downtown, consider the care and effort behind the creation of such a beautiful addition to the streetscape. Thank Mr. Podolsky, Mr. Rae and the BIA merchants, instrumental in its creation and realization.



Neighbourhood Dog Series: The Taming of Charlotte

by Hazel Cole

We have now published 3 articles in the Neighbourhood Dog Series, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to come up with a new slant on this subject. Hence, when fellow Board member Geoff Godard told me that he and his partner Kim Kennedy had brought in a dog trainer to work with their new rescue dog, Charlotte, a 5 ½ year-old yellow labrador, I immediately thought that this could be interesting material for an article.

Kim and Geoff are real canine lovers; their first dog was Fanny Brown who lived for 12 years and the second was Zoe, also a rescue dog, who lived for 14. Both were chocolate labs. After Zoe died, the couple tried to resist the temptation to acquire another dog immediately, but realising they really were “dog people”, they succumbed after two months – hence the arrival of Charlotte in their home. While Zoe had been stand-offish and skittish, Charlotte turned out to be really affectionate. But there was a problem, she suffered from separation anxiety, and it was difficult to control her reactions. At a loss to know what to do, they asked advice from their vet who suggested they contact Bark Buster Mississauga/Oakville. And that is how Wil Lawson came to their home.

The visit lasted only two hours, but the results were impressive. Wil started by laying out the basic principles, explaining that when humans wish to train dogs, they should first observe how the mother trains her puppies. He showed the couple a fascinating video of a mother severely – and I mean severely – reprimanding her litter of puppies and imposing order before she would accept to lie down and allow her unruly off-spring to suckle. The video was followed by a practice session. The aim was to prepare the dog to be submissive. Whereas the mother dog growled and snapped at her puppies, in circumstances when Charlotte became out of control, Geoff and Kim were instructed to shout BAH! They were also supplied with charts indicating how to react and the techniques to use, depending on the degree of excitement of their labrador.



Kim told me that the effect was immediate. They were both stunned. They are the ones in control now, not their dog. The service was expensive, but worth every penny. Plus, the company offers a life-time advice service over the phone.

Maybe you have an unruly rescue dog or have just acquired a rumbunctious pup and are at your wit's end as to how to train your canine friend. Why not contact Wil at Bark Buster? Here's the link to the website <https://www.barkbusters.ca/mississauga-burlington-oakville/>

You can also watch a short video on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ValXf-W52mA>

Let's give Kim and Geoff the last word. “Had we known about Wil when we had our first dog, we would have saved ourselves a lot of angst.”

Avalon Fine Jewellery – a Jewellery Store in a Class of its Own

by Hazel Cole

In the last issue, I bemoaned the loss of old-established stores on Lakeshore. There are, however, a few steadfast survivors, among them the jewellery store, Avalon, owned and run by Lucy and Terry Paunkoff since 1988. The couple started out operating a wholesale company but wanted to switch to retail to have a closer relationship with their customers. Lucy subsequently took a course in gemology, while Terry concentrated on design. They originally lived in Etobicoke but fell in love with Oakville while out cycling and decided this was where they wanted to live, work and raise a family. It appears they have been successful on all three counts.

From my first visit, I realised that this was no ordinary jewellery store – definitely not mainstream – and it wasn't just a question of assortment. Of course, the assortment was one of the ingredients of their success, ranging from beautiful estate jewellery, fine and custom jewellery, plus artisan pieces from Italy, Canada and the US. However, there was something more intangible. After talking with Lucy with a view to writing this article, I realised that what I felt was the passion with which the couple approached customer service.



She regaled me with stories of some of her long-standing customers, such as the severely ill man who left hospital to visit the store to buy his beloved wife a present; the mother with a stroller whose baby came back some 25 years with her fiancé to buy her engagement ring; the newly divorced customer who only felt free once she handed over her wedding ring. It turns out that buying and selling jewellery is an immensely personal affair. Lucy's first love is estate jewellery. She derives tremendous pride and satisfaction in finding new homes for much cherished heirloom pieces. She cares for her customers whom she describes as "out of the ordinary" and "eclectic." And, as a customer myself, I can attest that it is a pleasure to visit Avalon even if it is just to browse. You are guaranteed a pleasant welcome.

In fact, the main page of the Avalon website says it all: Proudly serving Oakville and its surrounding area since 1988, Avalon Fine Jewellery provides a unique selection of fine estate jewellery and beautiful artisan designs. Warm, friendly service, certified appraisals, jewellery and watch repairs provided. www.avalonfinejewellery.com

Midtown Oakville – The Full Story

by Duncan Galloway

In our Spring newsletter we provided an overview of the context and status of Midtown planning. Earlier, in January many of you sent emails and letters to the Mayor and Council expressing our concerns at the draft Midtown plan, asking for better explanations of height and density, lower population targets, building heights kept to 20 storeys, integration of mid-rise buildings, better environmental standards and so on.

Across Oakville thousands of emails and letters were sent. This made a huge difference, as we will explain below. Together, we are heard. In this article we will provide the most current update on Midtown, an explanation of the forces at work, and show why your attention and communications are still needed and critically important.

Some Background

While you wait at the traffic lights by the Go station on Trafalgar Road, you can contemplate Oakville Midtown – because you are right in the middle of it. Below is the map of Midtown: 103 hectares, of which only 43 hectares can be built on – the rest is railway, roads, hydro etc. This little 1 square kilometre has been designated the leading strategic growth area for Oakville; it will become Oakville’s urban core centred around transit with the highest density of population in Oakville.

What kind of city centre will this be? Different players are involved, and each have their own

goals and agendas:

- **First and foremost: Future Midtown residents**, who should be able to live in comfort in a beautiful tree lined, friendly, safe neighbourhood, with easy access to shops, green spaces, neighbourhood schools for their children, accessible health care for the whole family, and the ability to walk, cycle and travel easily to work, study and play. OLRA and the [We Love Oakville](#) group of resident associations have been advocating for a liveable Midtown for over a year and continue to do so.
- **Landowners and Developers:** Their primary focus is to build for maximum return on their investment in land and costs of development. Simple maths dictates that the more housing units they can place on a hectare of land the greater their return. If the project is so constrained that it becomes unprofitable or too expensive, they will not build, but rather will sell the land or wait for more profitable conditions to emerge.
- **The Current Provincial Government:** They have declared a “housing crisis”. Ministers announce they will “build, build, build”. Through various laws, policies and agencies they bring great pressure to bear on Midtown planning.
- **Oakville Planning Staff:** They must navigate a path between the demands of the provincial government, developers, and what is liveable for future residents. Their role is to develop a high-level plan (the

Midtown Official Plan Amendment, or OPA) that forms the basis for future development of Midtown through to 2051 and beyond.

- **Oakville Council:** While representing the interests of their respective Wards, they have an overall responsibility to ensure the best possible plan for a liveable Midtown, while addressing multiple issues - traffic, transit, finance and costs, parks,



environment, amenities and services, schools and so on.

- **The Ontario Land Tribunal:** This important player sits behind the scenes but has an outsize influence on all – a provincial government body that adjudicates appeals relating to land use planning. In recent years an iniquitous system has been established in Ontario. It works like this: developers put an initial application for their forest of towers to the Oakville Council who say “No”. Then the developers immediately appeal to the Provincial Government - the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT). The Housing Minister may, at any time, issue an order (an MZO, Ministerial Zoning Order) overruling the Council and allowing the development to proceed, despite opposition from Town planners, council and residents. In recent years the OLT has overwhelmingly decided in favour of the developer - 97% of the time according to an analysis of decisions in 2022. We understand that the performance of the OLT is being investigated by the Province Auditor General.

What does this mix of players, and especially the OLT, mean for our Midtown plan? Basically, it comes down to achieving a liveable high-density Midtown. We need to make sure the neighbourhood of Midtown is high density and liveable, not hyper-density, overcrowded, cramped and unliveable. Authorities world-wide have a wealth of data showing that overcrowding means a diminished quality of life due to cramped living conditions, noise pollution, severe traffic congestion, mental and health issues arising from lack of personal space, and inadequate access to amenities like parks, community centres, healthcare and schools.

Understanding Density

A simple density number to watch out for is number of people per hectare. A hectare is a square of 100 metres by 100 metres (if you watched the Olympics, that is the 100-metre sprint around 4 sides of a square, or the grassy interior of a running oval).

The Provincial Government has mandated that Midtown must have at a minimum, a density of 200 “people & jobs” per hectare, and ideally more. So around 20,000 people and jobs. The standard is to plan for about one third jobs, two thirds’ residents – so the province minimum is about

130 residents per hectare, or just under 14,000 overall.

But, as we write this, developers have applications in front of the Provincial Government that are on track to create a hyper-density neighbourhood. For example, Distrikt Developments have applications for 11 towers in Midtown, which they have already appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal. The density of their 5-hectare development, using their own numbers, is over 2,800 people per hectare! That is hyper-density – eight times Manhattan’s highest density neighbourhoods, and almost eighteen times the Province minimum density requirement. There are 54 landowners and developers in Midtown - currently other developers are sending in their own applications to the OLT with similar unliveable numbers. Total population in Midtown could balloon to over 90,000 people - well over even the highest density in the world (Mong Kok neighbourhood, in Hong Kong).

“ We need to make sure the neighbourhood of Midtown is high density and liveable, not hyper-density, overcrowded, cramped and unliveable ”

Who’s In Charge?

The OLT threat drives all planning decisions. While we would love to have a Midtown plan that is a green village of 5 or six storey mid-rise timber buildings, meeting minimum provincial density requirements but not much more, we know that plan would not be “defensible” at the OLT. In other words, the OLT would regard the Midtown OPA as unrealistic, and the Minister could grant developers their applications for 40, 60, and 80 storey towers. Oakville Council and the planning staff would lose all ability to manage the development of Midtown as a liveable community and would lose the ability to obtain community benefits from developers.

So “defensibility” at the OLT is a key criterion of a good Midtown plan. Oakville planning staff must try to create a plan that has the right balance between liveability and defensibility.

To make matters worse, most recently the Province’s Ministry of Infrastructure announced they would establish a “TOC” – a Transit Oriented Community – in Midtown, and they would do this together with one favoured developer. What would this mean? We don’t

know, because all this is being done in secret with the Provincial Government and their single favoured developer working together, while imposing strict confidentiality and non-disclosure agreements on Oakville staff and Council. Secret financial arrangements between the Provincial government and one favourite developer with unknown impact on our Town? Concerned? So are we – take a look at the We Love Oakville site (weloveoakville.org) to send a letter to the Provincial government to express our concern at this TOC initiative.

What is Oakville Doing?

Against this forbidding background, on October 10, 2024, Oakville planning staff presented a workshop to explain and discuss with Council, the latest draft Midtown OPA. You can see this presentation on You Tube (Committee of the Whole: Midtown Oakville, October 10). The good news is that, for the first time, we were presented with a draft OPA that, in our view, can evolve into a viable plan for a liveable Midtown. We were provided with transparent explanations and reasons for decisions that make sense. And the density numbers, while potentially high, are more reasonable and make sense. Here are some key points:

COMMUNITY PERMIT PLANNING SYSTEM

The OPA must commit to the establishment of a CPPS (Community Permit Planning System) that will provide the detailed bylaw structure governing building permits across Midtown and will enable the Town to establish conditions for development permits. In particular it would allow the Town to give developer a “bonus” of additional floors over a threshold height in exchange for the developer providing community benefits. These “bonusing” conditions could support achievement of:

- public transit infrastructure, facilities, services;
- public parking;
- affordable housing for a wide array of socio-economic groups;
- additional parkland above the provincial parkland dedication bylaw;
- day care centres;
- integration of office uses in mixed use developments;
- green buildings;

- pedestrian and cycling facilities across the QEW, railway tracks or Trafalgar Road;
- community facilities such as a creative centre, including studio, office, exhibition, performance and retail space, and a library; and
- contributions towards a district/renewable heating/cooling/energy system.

Quite a wish list! In other words, the CPPS should add detail to the overall policies of the OPA and should address many of the liveability issues we have been advocating for over the last year. No doubt the development of this CPPS will be closely watched and carefully analyzed and debated in the months to come.

TRAFFIC

Not addressed by the CPPS and one of residents’ key concerns is the impact of Midtown development on traffic and congestion on Trafalgar road and around the Go station. The October 10 presentation shows anticipated bridges, new roads and infrastructure that may help. But this infrastructure is not in the power of Oakville – this major investment in road infrastructure depends on investment by others – Halton region, the Province Ministry of Transport, and MetroLinx (the Provincial Government operator of the Go Transit system). The concern is that not one of these bodies seems to be seriously engaged in providing this infrastructure.

PARKS AND GREENSPACE

One of the issues we face in Midtown is that the Town owns little of the land. Any space for parks, green space and amenities such as libraries, community centres and day care has to be obtained from landowners / developers. That means negotiation - essentially setting density criteria so that if a developer wishes to build more apartments by building higher, they will have to give a community benefit back to the Town - in the form of space for a park, floors for a library or community centre, and so on.

HEIGHT AND DENSITY

The main tool for negotiation available to the Town is to allow a developer to build more density in each area, up to an overall cap. Schedule L3 of the draft OPA shows the overall cap on density, in the form of FSI - floor space index. Basically, with a FSI of 2, a builder can cover the entire plot of land with two floors;

with an FSI of 6, six floors. Things get more complicated when considering roads, greenways, setbacks, wide sidewalks and so on, but that is the basic idea.

Oakville planners' approach is to retain the Town's old OPA policy that maximum heights are capped at 20 storeys. But they would allow a developer to add more storeys in return for providing community benefits to the Town (such as the above list). Developers could add additional storeys until they reach the maximum FSI density cap for that area. In this way as development proceeds, the Town can provide key community benefits and liveability assets.

The October 10 presentation gave some graphics that explained this well. The first figure below, shows full development of up to the threshold of 20 storeys assuming no developer wanted to exceed the "threshold" heights of 20, 12 or 10 storeys (depending on location within Midtown).

This second figure (right) shows the maximum that could be built if all the landowners and developers added on extra floors (shown in brown) up to the maximum density allowed for that location. In this case all developers would have provided space, land and or amenities to the Town in exchange for permission to build higher.

What does this mean in terms of numbers of people and overall density of population? One baseline number to bear in mind is a recent study by Watson & Associates to establish the population likely to be in place by 2051. Their study showed a conservative estimate of 29,900 people and jobs by 2051, with an assumption that growth would continue beyond that date. Remember, the province minimum is round 14,000 residents.

The draft OPA shows the following:

YIELD	~ Residents	~Jobs	~ People & Jobs	~ GFA in sq. m.
ⓐ Minimum FSI	18,125	7,200	25,325	1.3M
ⓑ Threshold Height* (not achieving maximum GFA)	34,230	16,290	50,520	2.6M
ⓒ Maximum FSI*	36,035	16,850	52,885	2.7M

In other words, if no one built higher than the threshold height of 20 storeys, the minimum population would be about 34,000. If all developers built to the maximum density allowed, population would be about 36,000 residents.

What Should We Do??

To put these numbers into perspective, as we said above, unrestricted development based on current developers' appeals to the OLT could give an unliveable hyper-density of 90,000 residents.



High density neighbourhoods in Manhattan of a similar size, such as Upper East Side or Hells Kitchen, have population densities in the range of 30,000 to 40,000. So, this draft OPA plans for a future high density resident population of around 35,000 that is at the top end of high density in North American terms, but liveable and hopefully defensible to the Provincial government at the OLT.

In conclusion, we are cautiously optimistic that this draft OPA can, hopefully, become an OPA that we residents can support. There are lots of details and areas of concern, but overall, this is a refreshing and reassuring draft plan. OLRA and the We Love Oakville team will continue to monitor and advocate for the refinement and development of this OPA.

But – and this is a big but, if developers' applications are approved by the Provincial Government at the OLT, this draft OPA is meaningless, and we are in a free-for-all of unrestricted development, hyper-density and little money for community benefits. If the provincial Minister of Infrastructure proceeds with the TOC initiative that would add to the population planned by the OPA.

Our fight for a liveable Midtown is now to convince the Province that we are all supportive of our Town plan, and that we can achieve more than the density they require for housing without their interference and without their preferential treatment to certain developers.

We must convince the Province that their TOC initiative, with their favoured developer is not welcome, and not needed. We must speak to power with a loud voice.

That means lots and lots of people, across Oakville, speaking out against hyper-density, and speaking out against unrestricted development and the abuse of the OLT system.

OLRA and other Resident Associations are organizing under the We Love Oakville banner and website to make it easy for all people across Oakville to speak out and be heard. Things will move quickly in the next few months – and indeed may have moved on since this was written.

Please look at the website and sign up for updates and emails you can send to politicians and decision makers. Please make your views heard. ***It is critical every resident and their friends send the Premier emails*** or we will end up with hyper density on the Distrikt lands.

The future residents of Oakville need you!



The Story of Stucco Houses in Old Oakville

by Tom Murison, coordinate by Liam Rondeau

On sunny fall weekends, people stroll along Lakeshore Road and its side streets, making their way down to the lake. Couples, families with strollers, friends, and dog walkers admire the well-tended gardens, old trees, and charming homes of Old Oakville. Wooden historical plaques carved by the Oakville Historical Society show dates as early as 1833. These houses have survived and evolved for nearly 200 years. The oldest buildings, mostly pre-Confederation, are located near the Sixteen Mile Creek on Navy, Front, King, and William Streets.

While some brick and stone buildings are interspersed across the neighbourhood, the three-storey **Murray House (built in 1857, 147 Navy Street)** and the **David Patterson House (built in 1835, 19 Navy Street)** bookend three blocks of charming stucco-clad houses on Navy Street. Stucco has been a defining feature of Oakville's historic homes for over a century. Known for its textured finish and versatility, stucco became a popular choice in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Stucco was often applied to homes originally clad in clapboard or shingles, offering a more durable, weather-resistant exterior that could cover imperfections and blend renovations seamlessly. Over time, it became a popular choice not only for its strength but also for modernizing the appearance of aging wooden homes. Its unique charm, seen in many homes throughout Oakville, adds to the aesthetic appeal while reflecting how the Town's early residents adapted their homes to stand the test of time.



The Michael Quinn House (built in 1855, 38 Burnet Street) exemplifies an early clapboard-covered home with two windows, a centre door, a

low-pitched roof, and stone footings. The windows, replaced around 1900, were fitted into the same openings as the original "six over six" single hung sash windows.

Most early houses in the neighbourhood were timber-framed because brick and stone were hard to come by and required much more labour to obtain. The vast pine forests near the lake were cleared for farming, making timber an accessible resource for home and barn construction. Pine logs were hewn into beams and rafters and used to build log cabins, with a skilled axeman able to square a 28-foot long timber in one day. Planks sawn by hand required two men—one above and one below the log—a laborious and unpleasant task. Once sawmills were established, carpenters used large two-handed pit saws, which are still found in nearly-new condition at antique shops today. If timbers were sawn with a circular saw, the tell-tale cut marks are often still visible; coarse, straight cuts suggest the use of a pit saw or a primitive water-powered "gate" saw. By 1827, sawmills were constructed along the creeks in Oakville and Bronte.



Wall of former Methodist Church, circa 1818 in Wellandport. The hand split lath (narrow horizontal wood pieces) holds the remaining plaster on the interior, with clapboard on the exterior walls. Note the hand split lath with remaining plaster inside & clapboard outside (without board sheathing).

Builders in early Oakville found an efficient way to construct houses by assembling the frames on the ground before raising them into place. The wooden beams were secured with oak pegs, and corner braces were added to keep the walls steady during storms. To avoid higher taxes, homes were kept under a certain height, leading to the common 1½-storey design seen in many historical buildings. This method of construction

remained popular until tax laws changed in the mid-1800s.

The Sexton's Lodge at St. Jude's Church (built in 1835, 148 William Street) is a timber-framed structure that reflects multiple stages of alteration over the years. Originally, the front wall was 12 feet high, but an additional four feet and a new center window were added when the roof was raised. The upper stucco was applied to lath on new posts, while below, it was applied directly over the original clapboard siding. The windows were updated in the late Victorian era to the stylish round-topped "two over two" design. The porch roof and "Deacon's" benches were likely added at the same time, providing a sheltered spot to wait for the minister. The coarse stucco texture, made from sand and grit (likely taken from the beach), shows a unique pattern left by the craftsman who applied it. The texture and pattern in the finish coat of the stucco show that the craftsman threw the finish against the first coat of stucco. At the second floor this pattern is clearly visible. An Irish plasterer who recently repaired this wall tried to keep this "trade secret" of "hurling plaster" concealed but was caught out by a passerby.



45 Navy Street, a stuccoed home, stands out for its unusual orientation, with the gable facing the street—something more typical of early businesses, like stores and blacksmith shops. Originally built as a storehouse near the creek, the timber-framed building was moved to its current location on rollers and turned to fit the narrow lot, placing the entry door on the side. Large windows and dormers were later added, cutting through the original walls and timbers to bring in more light. Placing dormers

on the long walls required cutting the heavy timbers that tie the wall together. The building relies on the large tie beams at the level of the floor to keep the posts vertical. The charming entry porch, with its detailed 1890s carpenter fretwork, adds to the historic character of this unique home.

The creeks in Oakville, Bronte, and Clarkson made it possible to harvest the thick pine forests that once blanketed the shoreline. Sawmills in these areas processed and shipped millions of board feet of pine lumber to Toronto and Hamilton, fueling the rapid



growth of these cities. Some of the planks used in local buildings were truly massive—such as the 24-inch-wide boards found in the walls of 45 Navy Street, cut from trees over three feet wide at the base and tapering only slightly 20 feet up. These towering old-growth pines, standing over 150 feet tall, were prized for their heartwood, as millers avoided the less durable sapwood. Logging was often done in the coldest winter months, when the hard work of felling and dressing timber was made easier in the frosty air. As Abraham Lincoln once said, "A log warms you twice—once when you cut it and

once when you burn it." To prevent damage from beetles, saw logs were peeled before springtime, though evidence of missed timing can still be seen in the large elliptical tunnels bored into the wood by insects.

The Peter McQuorquodale House (built in 1833, 143 Front Street) is a classic example of a long, stuccoed, and low timber-framed house with its ridge running parallel to the street. Dormers were added later, replacing the original single-hung windows with smaller casement units. The large heavy wooden posts comprising the frame were spaced about 42 inches apart to accommodate standard doors and windows and made it easy to align the dormers between them. The result is a beautifully symmetrical façade. The dormers now complement the pairs of windows and the central door below, adding balance and charm to this historic home.



The “Worn Doorstep Tea Room” or “Electric Light Cottage” (212 Front Street) is also stucco-covered, but is a masonry building that has been parged with stucco. Traces of the rubble stone or brick walls can be seen through the stucco, particularly on the west end. If we assume that there were very few plasterers in Oakville, or possibly only one at this time, we can see that he was active between 1870 and 1925, or most likely around 1892 when the house was converted to an electric generating plant.

One of the later examples of a stucco-covered house is **the DeC. Fletcher House (built in 1922, 200 William Street)**. This is a full two-storey house with side entry and attic. The characteristic texture seen with other examples is also very apparent at the Fletcher House, especially near the chimney and under the gable roof, where it reminds one of how a child sweeps out a "snow angel" with their arms. The plasterer would stand and apply the stucco as a series of layers one above the next, as far as he could conveniently reach. The pattern remains obvious even after several coats of paint.

The John Moore House (built in 1838 and 1853, 29 Navy Street), is notable for its stucco exterior, which appears to have been applied over the original clapboard siding sometime after 1853. Faint seams in the stucco suggest potential delamination from the underlying structure, hinting at the house's long history of modifications. The proximity of the original windowsills and trim to the surface of the stucco—almost flush with the wall, rather than the typical one-inch recess—supports the idea that the stucco was a later addition. The house, originally built in 1838 and possibly raised in 1853 for a new cellar, also shows evidence of evolving architectural details. For example, the windows of the house have different sized panes across storeys – indicating the possibility



that they were moved or replaced as part of the renovations. The layering of stucco over the clapboard illustrates how building materials and styles evolved in response to the needs of the time, while still preserving the home's historic charm.

For much of the 19th century, Oakville remained a quiet shipbuilding and farming village, which likely helped preserve many of these early structures from demolition or significant alteration. When changes were made, including relocating buildings, the sturdy timber frames made the process easier. Today, the abundance of stucco in this neighbourhood creates a unique charm, providing a timeless backdrop for the shadows of trees, fences, and colourful gardens. Stucco also allows additions like porticos and dormers to blend seamlessly with the original architecture. The rich variety of stucco-clad buildings adds to the special character of this area, making it a treasured part of Oakville's heritage. Even new homes in the neighbourhood pay tribute to the stucco tradition while incorporating modern materials.

Protecting and preserving these historic structures is crucial, as proper restoration requires both expertise and investment. The residents who care for these homes act as stewards of Oakville's legacy, safeguarding its history and character for future generations—a commitment that deserves celebration at every turn.

About the author - Tom is an Alberta boy who grew up in Saskatchewan on the family farm. He studied Geography and History before attending Cambridge University to study Architecture. He has worked on many heritage restoration projects across town and beyond, including numerous 19th century house and church projects across southern Ontario. His interest in heritage grew from a great respect for the people who settled and built our country often in extremely difficult circumstances.

Eye on the Sixteen

By Geoff Godard

The multi-year seawall replacement project in Oakville Harbour is nearing completion. Work on Town properties along the bank of the creek occupied by Oakville Yacht Squadron, Oakville Power Boat Club, Burloak Canoe Club and the Town docks on Oyster Bay that commenced in 2019, was completed this spring with the opening

of the new slips at Shipyard Park

According to Rakesh Misty, Waterfront Development Coordinator for the Town, there will be some minor work carried out next spring on Dock 3 of the Town docks in Oyster Bay near the Oakville Yacht Squadron.

Now the focus is on the only private property on the creek, the waterfront belonging to the Oakville Club. But first a few words on the club itself. Its venerable main building, a granary until it was repurposed in 1907, is likely the 1835 granary built by Oakville's founder, William Chisholm, although records are unclear. However, its massive hand-hewn, white oak timbers date the structure to before the 1840's. Around that time steam powered sawmills reached what had just been renamed Canada West and quickly supplanted the old labour-intensive craft. The badminton/pickleball court, originally an aerodrome in Fingal, Ontario, was acquired by the club in the 1930s and floated down the crick from its most recent home, the site of the Oakville Fall Fair on Rebecca Street where the Oakville Arena now stands.

Back to the Waterfront. Oakville Club's current seawall was installed about 50 years ago. Standards were less robust then, as were materials, and parts of it have become weakened, threatening the integrity of the structure and the adjoining tennis court. The contractor is Shoreplan Engineering, the company which worked on the Town's seawall project. Completion is expected early next spring. The new seawall will be a foot higher than the highest point of the record high-water levels of 2017 and 2019 which inundated the docks and threatened the lower tennis court and the building itself.

Finally, a word on expected lake levels. Lake Ontario is forecast to stay within its long-term average again in 2025.



Oakville Downtown

BIA and Other Updates



Light up the Night

15 November, 5pm –10 pm – at the Towne Square. Let the festive season begin! Live entertainment featuring the CW Carolling Champions The Sugar Plums.

Santa Claus Parade 2024

Saturday, 16 November 9 am (rain or shine).

Rock'n Around - Silent Holiday Disco

23 November, 5pm –10pm at the Towne Square
Back with a beat, this evening is all about grooving and moving under the twinkly festive tree lights.

St Jude's Christmas Bazaar

23 November, 9am – 2pm

A wonderful family tradition to begin the festive season

Free Hot Cocoa and Fire Pit

30 November, 7 and 14 December, 2pm-6pm at the Towne Square

Fire pit will be lit at 2pm and cocoa provided while supplies last.

Live Holiday Music - The Candy Cane Carollers

30 November, 3pm to 5pm, 7 and 14 December, 2pm to 5pm at the Towne Square

Come listen to a cappella holiday music downtown

Visit with Santa

7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22 December 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. at Centennial Square

Santa will roam the streets of Downtown between 2pm and 3pm, followed by booked appointments at his cottage in Centennial Square. All proceeds collected will support the United Way of Halton.

Seventh Annual Christmas Eve "Carols in the Square"

Tuesday, December 24, 2024 - Chartwell Church invites the Oakville community to join them for this year's Christmas Eve "Carols in the Square." Singing will start at 5:00 pm and finish at 6:00 pm. In the spirit of Christmas, there is also an opportunity to bring a non-perishable food item in support of Kerr Street Mission's foodbank.

Please note: if it rains, the event will take place at 228 Chartwell Road, Oakville.



Join the OLRA or Renew

Membership Information

The Oakville Lakeside Residents' Association is a volunteer non-profit organization. Since 1966, we have been a strong voice for our neighbourhood on issues that impact our community. We are committed to keeping our members informed on what is happening in our neighbourhood and our Town.

We engage our members via: oakvilleira.ca, email, Facebook, newsletters, blogs, meetings, and neighbourhood events.

JOIN or RENEW TODAY!

The membership fee is \$25 a year (May 01 - April 30) per household or \$40 for two years.

Check out your current membership status at oakvilleira.ca/members

We offer 2 ways to pay:

- 1 Cheque:** Please mail your name, street address, phone number and email along with a cheque payable to "Oakville Lakeside Residents' Association" to:
338 Lakeshore Rd E
P.O. Box 69585,
Oakville, ON
L6J 1G0
- 2 INTERAC e-Transfer:** Please send an e-Transfer through your online banking to:
olramembership@gmail.com - ALSO email us your name, street address and phone number.

Our success depends on a broad base of support in a well-informed community!

Gratitude and appreciation to the following people who contributed to this edition of the OLRA newsletter:

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