

BOTTOM LINE

The President Reports:

WILD ON WATERDOWN II

I was extremely proud of Flamborough a couple of weekends ago. Wild on Waterdown happened on June 8. It was great to see what can be accomplished when many people come together. We had around 700 people volunteer on 30 different community-minded projects for the afternoon. Projects included all kinds of initiatives as simple as cleaning up a park, to painting hopscotch lines at a school to serving tea to local seniors. Agencies such as Drummond House, CHOICES, Flamborough Food Bank and The Flamborough Women's Resource Centre were just some of the recipients of the volunteer force. When it was all over, much good was done.

One thing I loved seeing throughout the day was the number of businesses who came with a team of their staff and worked and volunteered together. I can't think of a better way to build a sense of unity within staff then to give back to the community by volunteering as a group. I believe that businesses with a local social conscience are more successful. Flamborough has a community mindset and when businesses invest into the community they receive dividends in return.



JASON SMALL
President, FCC

One of the many businesses who sponsored Wild on Waterdown was Boston Pizza. In talking with its leadership they said they like to use a large portion of their advertising dollars to make a difference in the community. Their efforts do not go unnoticed, as this past year they were recipients of the *Community Service by a Business Award* at our Flamborough Chamber of Commerce *Outstanding Business Achievement Awards*. Boston Pizza is a leader in making Flamborough a great community while at the same time increasing their bottom line. Talk about a win/win approach!

Having this community-minded approach is a win for your business as well as a win for Flamborough. Thanks again to all the businesses that served and sponsored Wild On Waterdown.



AND THE FLAMBOROUGH OPEN WINNERS ARE ...

ABOVE: The winning team at the 2013 Flamborough Open – co-hosted by the Flamborough Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club of Waterdown and held at the Carlisle Golf & Country Club – represented M&L Testing and consisted of (from left) Rob Roche, Steve Parsons, Moe Conway and Rick Mizener. Elizabeth Ferraiuolo of Sherwood Engraving presented a trophy to each member. RIGHT: Sponsor Mike Martin (left) of Skyway Life Insurance (the administrator of the Chamber Group Benefits Plan) with Blake Anthony, the winner of the Putting Contest. BELOW: Elizabeth Ferraiuolo with the winners of the individual contests. They are (from left) Jamie Kleven of Lafarge Canada (Closest to the Pin - Mens), Rod Anthony (Longest Drive - Mens), Angela Parker (Longest Drive - Ladies) and Angela Donato of Apex Results Realty Inc. (Closest to the Pin - Ladies).



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THE BOTTOM LINE - JUNE, 2013 - 2

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Auto-Tires	

B

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C

Cable/Internet/Telephone	Cogeco Cable, 950 Syscon Rd., Burlington905-333-5522
Casinos	OLG Slots at Flamboro Downs, 967 Hwy. #5 W.....905-628-4275
Caulking	Beverly Caulking, 971 Conc. 5 W.905-659-3367
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Arend Kersten

Executive Director, Flamborough Chamber of Commerce

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ROUTINE REZONING FEES JUMP BY 70% IN HAMILTON

BY CASSANDRA CHIN
www.yourhamiltonbiz.com

The Flamborough Chamber of Commerce will meet soon to discuss the City's 70 per cent hike in zoning application fees. The fees have jumped from \$5,930 to \$10,275.

"Our concern, at the simplest level, is how will this negatively impact commercial and industrial investment in Hamilton," said FCC's Executive Director Arend Kersten. "We're not talking about a complex zoning application with adjoining buildings or anything like that; a 70 per cent increase concerns us all."

The fees are problematic when looking at how the current global economy affects the decisions business investors make, noted Kersten.

"(Investors) will look at the building permits, and places like Burlington and Brantford, and they'll look at the prices of the land, what the application fees are, what the labour costs are, and they'll just as soon as spend their money elsewhere if there are too many impediments," he explained.

The City's Planning Division manager Steve Robichaud noted the rate changes were effective in January.

"The 2013 fees were established based on a detailed activity based

review of the actual costs (staff time, public notices, etc.) involved in the processing of development applications," said Robichaud. "The fee schedule differentiates between the size and scale of the project in that there are two classes of rezoning applications: routine and complex. Alternatively, where the proposal does not comply with zoning, such as parking, a minor variance application is an option to the rezoning process."

A routine rezoning application, as defined by the city, may add one specific use that does not change the zoning district, may reduce yard requirements or modify other district or zone requirements, may rezone three single detach dwelling lots or less, or extend a "temporary use."

On the other hand, a complex rezoning application would be considered all other applications. For phase one, services up to the city council report, cost \$13,850. An additional \$6,700 will be added for phase two, subsequent to the council resolution approval. If a business owner is considering submitting multiple or joint applications, total fees are reduced by 25 per cent.

"(Rezoning) is required if you have a piece of property and you need a rezoning to accommodate a new use;

typically that's residential switching to commercial or to agricultural," said Kersten. "A lot of zoning requests have to do with commercial and industrial development."

Kersten was informed by a city official that council instructed staff to adjust costs of an application so it is covered entirely by the applicant.

"In other words, it becomes revenue neutral to the taxpayers," he explained. "If it costs \$10,000, then the applicants will pay the \$10,000, instead of the \$5,000 and the rest carried by the other taxpayers."

The aim of the increase is to make applications "revenue neutral," which means all costs, including staff time, be the responsibility of the applicant with no support by the taxpayers.

The adjustments in fees, suggested in a report made by BMA Management Consulting Inc., also put Hamilton in line with neighbouring municipalities. The change in rates is based on a comparison with adjacent and/or similar sized municipalities.

The current fee structure reflects approximately 75 per cent of the costs to process an application, said Robichaud. The City's current fee structure is considered "middle of the pack."

The Flamborough Chamber of Commerce will be meeting on Tuesday, June 4 to discuss its next steps and whether or not they will challenge the fees or take it to council.

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For more, please Page 8.



Photos courtesy of Wilf Arndt

FUN AT THE FLAMBOROUGH OPEN

Flamborough Chamber of Commerce (FCC) Executive Director Arend Kersten (left) joins Ward 15 (East Flamborough) Councillor Judi Partridge and Ward 14 (West Flamborough) Councillor Robert Pasuta before the start of the 2013 Flamborough Open held on May 29 at the Carlisle Golf & Country Club. The annual tournament is co-hosted by the Rotary Club of Waterdown and the FCC.

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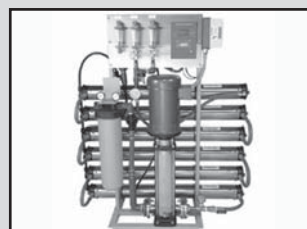
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IT'S TIME FOR A FAMILY PICTURE

After being presented with the *Lifetime Achievement Award* by the Flamborough Chamber of Commerce at February's *Outstanding Business Achievement* (OBA) awards gala at the Flamborough Hills Golf & Country Club, it was time for Tim Langford to be joined by his immediate family for a group photo. Pictured with Tim and his wife Suzanne are (from left) Riley, Jack, Kalyn and Tyler. Tim accepted the *Lifetime Achievement Award* personally as well as on behalf of his late grandfather Wilf and late father Tom. For over 90 years Langford Pharmacy was a fixture in Waterdown before closing last year. Tim remains the owner/operator of the renowned Brant Arts Pharmacy located on Brant Street in Burlington.



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Hank Gelderman
Jan Gelderman Landscaping
Sandy Gray
Weeks Home Hardware
Bill Grisdale
Grisdale Enterprises
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Jay's Auto Service
Karen Hunt
Rockton Dinner Theatre
Charles & Margaret Juravinski
flamboro downs
Wilf, Tom & Tim Langford
Langford Pharmacy
Archie McCoy
McCoy Foundry
Jim and Margaret Robertson
Pause Awhile Tea Room
Ron Steepe
Kitching Steepe & Ludwig
Funeral Home
Ernie Weeks
Weeks Home Hardware

BUSINESS GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

2006 - *Hickory Dickory Decks*
2006 - *DanceMakerz*
2007 - *CHOICES*
2007 - *Magnolia House Spa*
2008 - *Dufferin Aggregates*
2008 - *Aventix*
2009 - *Langford Pharmacy*
2009 - *Waterdown Optometric Clinic*
2010 - *The Lock Hut*
2010 - *Millgrove Gardens*
2011 - *Greensville Gourmet*
2011 - *McCann Professional Dog Trainers*
2012 - *Opta Minerals*

TOWN OF FLAMBOROUGH AWARD

2006 - *Sylvia Wray*
Flamborough Archives
2007 - *flamboro downs*
2008 - *Cpl. Chris Klodt*
2009 - *Gail Bosma*
Flamborough Food Bank
2010 - *Ryan Ellis*
Mark Visentin
Canadian Junior Hockey Team
2011 - *OH Canada Ribfest*
Rotary Club of Flamborough AM
Rotary Club of Waterdown
2012 - *Wilf Arndt*
Waterdown BIA

SANDRA GRAY/ WEEKS HOME HARDWARE AWARD

Community Service by an Individual Award
2006 - *Deb Tigchelaar*
Drummond House
2007 - *Tom Jacques*
Hickory Dickory Decks
2008 - *Heather Johnston and Ted Lindsay*
Flamborough Review
2009 - *Peter Barnes*
Waterdown Youth Centre
2010 - *Marti Van Hoeve*
Van Hoeve Homes
2011 - *Dante DiFelice*
Waterdown Collision
2011 - *Norm Read*
Beckett Lowden Read
2012 - *Roger Wilson*

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AWARD

2009 - *Haley Luckanuck*
Spoiled Rotten Pet Services
2011 - *Nicole Martin*
Talent Search Summer Camp
2012 - *Sarah Powell*
Sarah Grace Photography

COMMUNITY SERVICE BY A COMPANY AWARD

2006 - *Flamboro Speedway*
2007 - *Jay's Auto*

2008 - *Terra Greenhouses*
2010 - *Waterdown Dairy Queen*
2011 - *Lafarge Canada*
2012 - *Boston Pizza*

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE GREEN AWARD

2008 - *Waterdown Collision*
2009 - *Nathan Helder*
Gelderman Landscaping
2010 - *Sensible Life Products*
2012 - *Rothsay*

FCC SERVICE AWARD

2006 - *Arend Kersten*
Flamborough
Chamber of Commerce
2007 - *Lafarge (Dundas)*
2008 - *COGECO*
2009 - *Robert Pasuta*
Councillor - Ward 14
2010 - *Fred Eisenberger*
Mayor - City of Hamilton
2011 - *Dutch Mill Country Market*
2012 - *Janet Barnard*
J. Barnard Bookkeeping

CIVIC RECOGNITION AWARD

2011 - *Flamborough Women's Resource Centre*
2011 - *Soroptimists International*
Dundas-Ancaster-Flamborough

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'THE BEST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED TO THE FCC'

Each year, the Flamborough Chamber of Commerce (FCC) recognizes extraordinary individuals who have made a unique contribution to the 'Voice of Business in Flamborough.' At this year's Outstanding Business Achievement (OBA) awards gala at the Flamborough Hills Golf & Country Club, the recipient of the Flamborough Chamber of Commerce Service Award was Janet Barnard. Ron Graham of Lafarge Canada - the Secretary of the FCC Board of Directors - shared the following with the audience in introducing Janet.

It is my pleasure to introduce Janet Barnard as the recipient of this year's *Flamborough Chamber of Commerce Service Award*.

According to Flamborough Chamber of Commerce (FCC) Executive Director Arend Kersten - Janet Barnard is the 'best thing that ever happened to the FCC.' But before I call her up. I have a story to tell.

Once upon a time ...

Once upon a time the FCC was looking for new members for its Board of Directors. So it went public - asking for expressions of interest from its members. One such expression came from Hal Bushey, who was then the Executive Director of CHOICES.

Arend met with Hal who concluded - after a lengthy conversation - that what the FCC Board needed was 'more women ... and financial expertise.' So Hal turned to Janet - who was then an employee of CHOICES - a local organization committed to supporting people



Janet Barnard (second from left) was presented with the *Flamborough Chamber of Commerce Service Award* at the *Outstanding Business Achievement (OBA)* awards gala held earlier this year at the Flamborough Hills Golf & Country Club. The presentation was made by Mark Cripps (left - YourHamiltonBiz.com) and Ron Graham (right - Lafarge Canada). They were joined by Janet and Tony Simeone of the Dutch Mill Country Market - the recipient of the award the year before.

with developmental disabilities.'

Any successful enterprise requires that you have different people with different skills that compliment each other. Or - as Arend likes to say - 'particular people at a particular time in a particular place are called to a particular task.'

I'm not sure how much arm-twisting it took on Hal's part to get Janet to accept the appointment to the FCC Board. What I am sure about is that Janet's appointment to the FCC Board - including her subsequent election as the FCC treasurer - was indeed 'the appointment of a particular person in a particular time at a particular place to a particular task.'

And that - ladies and gentleman - resulted in 'the best thing that ever happened to the FCC.'

Janet's gifts when it comes to

accounting - and all it entails - are extraordinary. Every month, she provided detailed reports outlining the very latest in financial realities.

And although she can be 'tough as nails' when it comes to accounting practices and policies, she was always professional - and does it with a 'smile on her face.'

Janet's tenure on the FCC Board came to an end last September. But we are delighted she has agreed to stay on board as our bookkeeper.

In her 'other life' Janet has her own business providing accounting services to a number of clients. But she's not all business.

She - and the love of her life Bar-

ney - love to travel in their fifth wheel. They especially appreciate trips to warmer climates when there is snow on the ground here.

Janet has also become a very active - and passionate - member of the Dundas-Ancaster-Flamborough chapter of Soroptimists International - a world-wide organization committed to 'making a difference for women since 1921' (see below).

Below her signature on her email, Janet has included this quote: 'I've learned that people will forget what you said; people will forget what you did; but people will never forget how you made them feel.'

That's our Janet.



ABOVE: Janet Barnard (right) - the recipient of this year's Flamborough Chamber of Commerce (FCC) *Service Award* at the *Outstanding Business Achievement (OBA)* awards gala - is congratulated by Premier Kathleen Wynne (beside Janet) and local MPP Ted McMeekin. They were joined by fellow members of the the Dundas-Ancaster-Flamborough chapter of Soroptimists International (SI-DAF) including (from left) Christine Aarlaht, Pauline Hardcastle and Shirley Eden. BELOW: Councillors Judi Partridge and Robert Pasuta with Janet Barnard and other members of SI-DAF (including Maria Demkowich - second from left) at the OBA gala.



SI-DAF PREZ AT THE UNITED NATIONS

It is with deep regret that I cannot attend this year's *Outstanding Business Achievement* awards gala. As President this year of Soroptimist International of Dundas, Ancaster, Flamborough (SI-DAF), it has been my pleasure to become more involved with the FCC and to watch the business growth of some of our joint members: Christine Aarlaht of CG&T Automotive, Janet Barnard, Maria Demkowich, formerly with JDJ Trailer Manufacturing, and of course, Sandy Gray.

This coming week marks the *57th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW57)*, to be held at the United Nations in New York City. I will be joining the Soroptimist International (SI) delegation along with 39 women from all over the world representing the four Federations that make up our organization: Americas, South West Pacific, Europe and Great Britain & Ireland.

The priority theme at CSW57 is "the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls." It is an issue that exists here in Hamilton in the forms of domestic violence and human slavery (forced marriage, sex trade and forced labour).

There will also be a review at CSW57 of the theme from the 53rd session regarding the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men - including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS.

I have been passionate about the mission of Soroptimist International and its role as a non-government organization (NGO) at the United Nations. This year, I put my name forward for consideration and was informed that there is a lottery process. By pure chance (or fate), there were three vacancies and my name came up!

I am very excited to be attending and I will be blogging about my experience on the SI-DAF website (www.soroptimistdaf.ca). I will be happy to provide a report to the FCC upon my return.

Brooke Gordon, President
Soroptimists International - Dundas Ancaster Flamborough

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Photos courtesy of Wilf Arndt

2013 FLAMBOROUGH OPEN - WEDNESDAY, MAY 29

ABOVE: Flamborough Chamber of Commerce (FCC) Past President Penny Gardiner (Economic Developers Association of Canada) and current President Jason Small (Community Church) join FCC Executive Director Arend Kersten (centre) at this year's *Flamborough Open* – co-sponsored by the FCC and the Rotary Club of Waterdown at the Carlisle Golf & Country Club. BELOW: Enjoying a beverage in the clubhouse after the tournament are (from left) Norm Read (Beckett Lowden Read), Tony Marchese, Tim Miron and Frank Spiridoulias (Lord Byron).



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I

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Investment Brokers	Edward Jones, 1470 Centre Rd., Carlisle905-690-3103 Edward Jones, Todd Hayman, 4-331 Dundas St. E.905-690-0564

J

Jewellery	Vicky Harrison Designs, 10 Culotta289-431-6026 Waterdown Goldsmith, 9 Mill St. S905-689-5222
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L

Landscaping	Beaudry Group, 4031 Fairview St., Burlington905-639-6502 FloraTech Landscaping & Main., 1425 Alderson Rd905-689-5466 Gelderman Landscaping, 831 Centre Rd.905-689-5433 Shademaister Landscaping, 764 Robson Rd.905-689-4297
Lawn & Garden Equipment	Briggs & Stratton Yard Tools, 1 Trillium Way, Brantford 519-751-1685
Lawyers	Agro Zaffiro LLP, 4-1 James St. N., Hamilton905-527-6877 Christopher C. Breen, 3400 Fairview St., Burlington905-689-5559 Jansen Personal Injury Law, 3-20 Main St. N.905-690-2929 K. Cowan Law, 34-35 Main St. N.289-895-7777 Lazier Hickey LLP, 25 Main St. W., Hamilton905-525-3652 Miller Thomson LLP, 301-100 Stone Rd. W., Guelph.....519-780-4635
Legal Services	Dundas Lock & Key, 178 King St. W., Dundas905-627-7985
Locksmiths	The Lock Hut, 12 Glaceport Dr.905-689-0514

M

Manufacturing	Flamboro Machine Shop, 952 Brock Rd.905-659-0404 Heron Instruments, 447 Moxley Rd.905-628-4999 R&R Manufacturing, Millgrove905-689-9911
Marketing	Serve Media, 998 Courtland Dr., Ancaster905-304-3451
Marketing/Web Design	Market Mechanics, 50 Karsh Cres.289-635-1507
Meat	Millgrove Packers, 549 Conc. 5 W.905-689-6184
Metal Fabricators	Flamboro Technical Services, 383 Conc. 6 E.905-689-8815
Mill Equipment	Bev Brown Enterprises, 30 Maple Ave.905-628-9929
Millwrights	Industrious Solutions, 540 Hwy. #8905-627-3600
Mobile Home Parks	John Bayus Park, 6501 S.S #1, Cambridge519-623-2845 Beverly Hills Estates, Box 52146 Oakville
Mortgage Financing	Dominion Lending Centres, 9 Franklin St.,905-690-6834
Movers	TWO MEN AND A TRUCK, 50 Dundas St. E.....905-981-5000

N

Newspapers	Flamborough Review, 30 Main St. N905-689-2003
Nursing Home	Alexander Place, 329 Parkside Dr.905-689-2662
Nuts-Edible	Picard Food Partnership, 447 Dundas St. E.905-690-1000

O

Optometrists	Dr. Janice Van Wyngaarden, 835 Hwy #97, Freelon905-659-3937 Family Eye Care, 66 Mall Rd., Hamilton905-385-3661 Waterdown Optometric Clinic, 301 Dundas St. E905-689-7234
Office Supplies	Staples, 88 Dundas St. E.905-689-0271

P

Pet Care	Spoiled Rotten Pet Services, 796 Millgrove Side Road....905-541-6450
Pest Control	OHN Pest Management, Con. 12 E., Freelon289-237-1062
Pipewelders	Industrious Solutions, 540 Hwy. #8905-627-3600
Photography	Sarah Grace Photography, www.sarahgrace.ca905-659-4927
Plumbing Contractors	Taylor's Plumbing, 300 Dundas St. E905-689-4777
Printer	Staples, 88 Dundas St. E.905-689-0271
Produce-Fresh	Brenn-B Farms Ltd., 1252 Conc. 5 W905-659-7419 Earth Fresh, 131 Browns Line, Toronto416-201-4391 Ubbelea Mushroom Farm, 1160 Edgewood Rd.905-689-8610
Property Management	The Enfield Group, 1 Hamilton St. S905-689-7341
Pumps	Flamborough Pumps, 793 8th Conc. W., Puslinch905-659-3337

Q

Quarries	Dufferin Aggregates, 685 Brock Rd.905-627-7711 Lafarge Canada, 628 Hwy. #5905-527-2744
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R

Race Track	Flamboro Downs, 967 Hwy. #5 W.905-627-3561
Real Estate	Dean Martin, Re/Max Garden City, 720 Guelph Line905-633-4614

R

Real Estate	R. Denninger, Re/Max Garden City, 427 Dundas St. E. ..905-689-1717 Angela Donato, Apex Results Realty, 5 Riley St.905-630-1659 Re/Max Condos Plus, 45 Harbour Sq., Toronto416-203-6636 Wendy Martin, Sutton Group About Town905-681-7900 Michael Domenichetti, Sutton Group About Town905-681-7900
Rendering	Rothsay, P.O. Box 8270, Dundas905-628-9303
Restaurants	Boston Pizza, Flamborough Power Centre905-690-1500 Dairy Queen, 233 Dundas St. E.905,689-8514 Harvey's Serving Swiss Chalet, 255 Dundas St. E.905-689-3140 Lord Byron Restaurant, 10 Main St. S.905-689-6648 Tim Hortons Donuts, 255 Dundas St. E.905-689-3131 The Royal Coachman, 1 Main St. N.905-689-5952 Turtle Jack's Muskoka Bar & Grill, 255 Dundas St. E.905-690-1787 Walmart Canada, 90 Dundas St. E., R.R.#2905-689-9273 Village Manor Retirement Home, 57 John St. W.905-689-5440 Pacific Cedar Shake & Shingle, 2099 Hwy #6 N.905-659-1655
Retail	
Retirement Homes	
Roofing	

S

Security Systems	A.B. Wass Security, Box 390, Waterdown905-689-7931 Connectall Communications, 7 Commerce Ct., SC905-383-2282 Rankin's Septic Tank Pumping, Box 12, Waterdown905-689-5585
Septic Tank Services	DAF Sorooptimistssorooptimistdaf@gmail.com
Service Clubs	CHOICES, 59 Kirby Ave., Greensville905-628-6147
Social Services	Medtel Software, 7 Innovation Dr.905-389-2996
Software Development	Magnolia House Spa Boutique Salon, 20 main St. N.905-690-9759
Spa	A.T. McLaren Ltd., 69 John St. S., S. Hamilton905-527-8559
Surveyors	

T

Taxation	Beckett Lowden Read, C.A. 20 Main St. N905-689-2052
Testing Equipment	M & L Testing Equipment, 31 Dundas St. E.905-689-7327
Toilets-Portable	Room To Go Inc., Box 76, Millgrove905-689-6389
Tools	Flamborough Technical Mgmt., Box 1282, Waterdown 905-690-6094
Topsoil	Millgrove Garden Supplies, 682 Concession 5 W.905-689-5527
Tourism	City of Hamilton Tourism, 34 James St. S., Hamilton905-546-2424
Traffic Tickets	Geoff Ellis, The Ticket D.O.C.T.O.R., 1294 Hwy. #6905-659-1844
Trailer Sales/Manufacturing	J.D.J. Trailer Mfg. & Miska Trailers, 1056 Hwy. #6905-689-7100
Trailers	Wheeling World, 140 King St. E., Hamilton905-522-1368
Trans/Freight Forwarding	(ABH) Oversize Direct, 1 Waterwheel Cr.905-690-3193 L.P. Services, 100 Mead Ave., Hamilton905-312-9073
Trucking	Jimmy D Coverdale, 955 Highway #97, Freelon905-659-2253

V

Veterinary	Clappison Animal Hospital, 780 Highway # 6 N.905-689-8005
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W

Weighing Systems	Trouble-Shooting Services, Box 185, Carlisle905-659-1323
Welding	Parsons Welding Service, 25 Dundas St. E.905-689-5144
Wine & Beer	Polar Bay Wines, 254 Dundas St. E905-690-1868
Women's Services	Drummond House, 67 Conc. 5 E905-689-1484 Interval House, 630 Sanatorium Rd., Hamilton905-387-9959
Woodworking	Marinete Construction Group, 447 Moxley Rd. S.905-627-6850

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The Flamborough Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to leadership in recognizing and encouraging good corporate citizenship, defending and promoting private enterprise, contributing toward the growth of a healthy local economy and continual improvement to the quality of life in Flamborough.

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THE HAMILTON 'OPEN FOR BUSINESS' REPORT CARD

The *Open For Business* subcommittee was created by Council to examine all aspects of Hamilton's services when it comes to supporting new and existing businesses. In addition to making a formal presentation to the subcommittee, representatives from the Flamborough Chamber of Commerce (FCC) met with committee members and senior staff to support the initiative. What follows is a 'report card' prepared by *YourHamiltonBiz.com*.

By SAIRA PEESKER

www.yourhamiltonbiz.com

Despite what it may seem to some frustrated entrepreneurs, staff and councillors at City Hall are working to make it easier to do business in Hamilton. Council's *Open for Business* subcommittee first approved its Action Plan in late 2012, a working document that tracks the group's wants and needs on its path to improved customer service.

Last month, staffers from the City's Planning and Economic Development Department presented the committee with an update. It lists tasks that have yet to be done – such as establishing a maximum turnover time to process a business license – but also several items that have been checked off the department's to-do list.

YourHamiltonBiz took a few of the finished items and consulted a dozen pending or recently-launched businesses and property developers. They include 28 Lister, B Love Conscious Eatery, Blair Elements, The George Hamilton, Hifyre, Mezza Cafe, Midevco, School House Studios, The Stowaway, Sweet Marie's, The Express and the yet-to-be-named cafe in the Locke Street Bakery's former home.

Each was asked to provide a letter grade and comments for each section, which have been averaged to get the final grade. Businesses were asked to recuse themselves from categories that did not apply.

Officially instated a 48 hour call/email return policy
Completed May 28, 2012

Grade: A-

Almost everyone surveyed said City staffers were quick to respond to emails

and calls. "I have had excellent communication with the City via telephone and email," said one respondent, while another said emails seemed to be returned faster than phone calls.

Increase awareness of the role of the planner and business facilitator within the One-Stop for Business.

Started in early 2013, ongoing

Grade: D+

Half of the respondents had never heard of the City's business facilitators, and several others say they only found out well into the process. "No one suggested the Business One-Stop until I popped by their office to use a computer. Once there, (a facilitator) introduced herself and was very helpful," said one. "I had no idea that the City has a Facilitator of any kind," said another.

Improve online BizPal tool

Grade: C

BizPal is an online tool that helps business owners find out what permits and licenses they need, and the cost. Staff were hoping to add more City of Hamilton information to make it more effective and less overwhelming for Hamilton's business owners. Ongoing project

Many respondents hadn't heard of BizPal or didn't bother to use it. Those who did said it was somewhat helpful but also confusing, saying it seemed more straightforward to just ask get the information from a person at City Hall. "The biz tool is good once you figure it out," said one. "It was easy to use, but my business type was not there," said another.

Initiate a strict timeline of four weeks to review detailed plans (grading, landscaping, lighting, urban design, tree saving, etc.) that are conditions of the site plan.

Completed in 2012

Grade: C

Many businesses said this didn't apply to them, but the highest grade from those who did was a B. Many said they felt it was left to the last possible day, while others were frustrated that holidays didn't count in the four-week timeline. At least one, however, was understanding about the delays. "They

are very much overworked," he said. "So much growth in development in downtown Hamilton in such a short span. I don't blame them."

Create one application for all signs

Completed in 2012

Grade: C+

Only one respondent said they completed one form for multiple signs. Another said he began the process believing he'd only need one form, but in the end, was required to do more. "When I started that process I was told that it was greater than I was previously told," he said.

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