

# NEWS FROM THE HOWITT PARK NEIGHBOURS GROUP

## Update on the Lafarge Property

July 8, 2005

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### GREETINGS GOOD NEIGHOURS

We'd like to introduce ourselves; we are a group of neighbours who got together in May when we learned that the Lafarge property was being considered for commercial re-development. We organized a community meeting at the Guelph Bible Chapel that same month and invited City Planning Staff and the Developer, Rosewater Management, to attend. Over 100 people came to this meeting and we learned that Costco was considering moving onto this site. Many expressed concerns not only to the Developer but to Planning Staff that they were worried about the increase in traffic, noise and air pollution and the impact that all of this would have on the surrounding area.

Rosewater Management announced that they would be hosting their own community meeting with the intent of getting feedback from the neighbours. We felt it was important to let everyone know about this meeting so our group circulated a flyer encouraging people to come to the meeting. This resulted in 200 people attending the meeting and again the group told the Developer what their concerns were. Concept drawings were presented at the meeting and included not one but two big-box type stores. Throughout this meeting we were reminded that plans were only at a 'concept' stage and our input was valuable and would be included. The majority of those present told the developer that we were not interested in having big box stores in our neighbourhood.

We learned from both of these meetings that many of us have questions that need to be answered, that we are protective of our community and that communicating with each other helps us to play an active role in our community.

These events led to the formation of the Howitt Park Neighbours Group and the publication of this newsletter. Our vision is very simple – *"The Howitt Park Neighbours Group is dedicated to keeping our neighbours and community friends informed about*

*the potential development of the Lafarge property so that we can participate effectively in the decisions concerning our community."*

It's our intention to use this format and others to communicate regularly with you.

### **THESE ARE OUR THOUGHTS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LAFARGE PROPERTY**

Many in the neighbourhood are not opposed to development of the property but we want a development that is appropriate to our existing community. This could include a mixture of residential, commercial and light industry. But we feel that there are so many issues that have yet to be addressed that it's important for us to be at the table for the discussion, for our voices to be heard.

Over 30 delegates attended the Planning, Environment and Transportation (PET) meeting at City Hall on June 27, 2005. Although City Staff did not recommend that the Lafarge property be included in the Commercial Policy Review (CPR) we felt it was important to voice our concerns. At this meeting we learned that Rosewater Management has hired a local lawyer, Robin Lee Norris, to represent them. Ms. Norris informed the PET committee that "we're ready to go" and that Rosewater could have a plan ready in a few weeks. She requested that the PET amend the CPR to include the Lafarge property. An amendment was in fact put forward by Councillor Billings but was defeated in a 3 to 2 vote. ***We do not feel that this was a victory for our community.***

So what does this all mean to our neighbourhood? The same amendment could and probably will be presented again at City Council on Monday, July 25 and our fear is that we won't be so lucky next time. To the best of our knowledge **Rosewater still intends to build two big box stores on this site despite our concerns about safety, transportation, design and compatibility, servicing the property and environmental issues.**

## SO WHAT'S NEXT?

City Council will be holding a special meeting on **Monday, July 25<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.** to receive the CPR. Council could amend the CPR to include the Lafarge property and this would bring the commercial re-zoning one step closer to reality. We all need to let Council know that Rosewater's current plans **are not appropriate for our neighbourhood.**

## HOW CAN YOU HELP

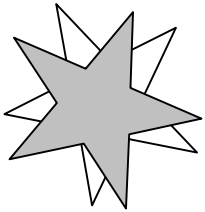
There are many ways in which you can also become involved:

- You can call or write to each City Councillor and the Mayor to express how you feel about your community and how you would like the Lafarge property to be developed.
- You can send letters to the editor of both the Guelph Mercury and the Guelph Tribune.

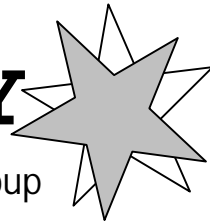
- You can speak to your neighbours to let them know what's happening and what they can do.
- You can volunteer to help distribute flyers or newsletters. This is a large neighbourhood and we've included the areas within the boundaries of Silvercreek, Waterloo, Edinburgh, Paisley and the Hanlon. We could use your help.
- If you would like to donate money to help cover the cost of photo copying flyers, announcements, etc. it would be gladly accepted.

## HOW TO CONTACT US

To find out how you can get involved, to offer support or to ask questions, you can e-mail us at [h\\_p\\_n\\_g@yahoo.ca](mailto:h_p_n_g@yahoo.ca) or you can call 821-8165



# COMMUNITY PARTY



Organized by The Howitt Park Neighbours Group

When: Sunday, July 17<sup>th</sup>

Time: 2:00 - 4:00

Where: Howitt Park  
(beside the Optimists Club)

Children's Activities, Snacks and Beverages

**Community information about the possible  
commercial development of the Lafarge Property**

*Donations Greatly Appreciated*

