

Councillor invites Ward 1 residents to join committee to help steer community

As Aurora residents get used to the new Ward system of one Councillor representing a specific segment of the Town, residents of Ward 1 are invited to become more involved in the process.

On January 25 at Town Hall, Ward 1 Councillor Ron Weese will host the first meeting of a new Resident Committee for interested neighbours.

Set to begin at 7 p.m. this meeting will lay the groundwork for the Committee's future work on many issues facing the ward, which Councillor Weese describes as the most diverse in terms of geography and housing stock.

"I have always felt that wards present an opportunity for better representation by Council people to their residents and I think it's a primary function of Councillors to be connected and represent the residents," says Councillor Weese. "I have had, from discussions elsewhere, how local Councillors in other communities manage wards and be that representation and I believe that one of our best opportunities is to get people together, get them organized and do the communication plan so that information can come out readily and accurately from Town Council and, by the same token, bring the needs and interests of the residents in the ward to Council. It is a way for me to get connected and create representation."

Among the issues Councillor Weese says he expects to be uppermost in people's minds are the Province's plans to increase GO Service, including structural works, such as the upcoming traffic underpass beneath the train tracks, and how that might impact the neighbourhoods; train horns; the impact of Bill 23 on the Aurora community; and sustainable housing.

"I am very interested in finding out what the residents feel about that as a group and what priority it takes in terms of Council's time to deal with it. That's important," says Councillor Weese of the train issue.

"Town Square remains top of mind for people. Very interested to hear how it is going to be added and community access is going to occur. I have been in meetings regarding that and to hear what the residents feel about it and that includes volunteer groups and groups that have cultural and historical interests, as well as business interests. The thing that is unique to this Ward is from stem to stern it is a business corridor and it's the Yonge Street corridor. There are issues around that and developing Town Square as a destination and the value around that as a business community.

"The purpose is not to bring individual complaints or question service levels at this point. I'm really hoping the residents come together with a 30,000-foot view of the ward and the Town that are interested in becoming organized in a fashion that we can communicate in a more timely manner and more accurately so that people remain informed and they have an opportunity to bring issues that have higher priority for both the ward and the Town so that I can represent them in Council so this first meeting is how do we get started? There is no playbook for this, so we're really building it and I think if it is built with the right foundation that it will sustain itself and be something that's valuable in this ward and maybe other wards, too."

For more information on how to become involved, visit: ron@ronweese.ca.

By Brock Weir
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