



RICK JOHNSON



REGIONAL COUNCILLOR
CHAIR: DURHAM REGION PUBLIC WORKS
CHAIR: ONTARIO TRAFFIC CONFERENCE
CHAIR: CENTRAL LAKE ONTARIO CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
PICKERING HYDRO COMMISSIONER

1998 NEWSLETTER

Ward 3 - Pickering, Region of Durham
One The Esplanade, Pickering, Ontario L1V 6K7

Home: (905)649-2295 Fax: (905)649-1119 Office: (905)420-4605 or (905)683-2760

REVIEW OF 1998

I would like to thank all of the constituents of Ward 3 for allowing me the opportunity to serve in a leadership role for my 10th consecutive year. It has definitely been a time for change, not only municipally, regionally and provincially but also for myself personally. I have adapted well to these changes. I want to thank you for the continuing support I received in the last municipal election and I will continue to represent you, the property taxpayer, to the best of my ability over the next two years.

1998 was a very busy and interesting year to say the least. It was a year of many dramatic changes; from the provincial downloading and changes in provincial legislation to the end of nearly all provincial grants. As a concerned community leader, I could see change was inevitable. I was not aware that the degree of adjustments municipal governments had to make was going to be so drastic. "There is only one taxpayer" and we the local government, as a creation of the province, must adhere to their direction.

Taxes

The new assessment has left some hefty tax hikes for about 10% of the public. It also meant a decrease for approximately 17,000 households in Pickering. However, the small business operators were hit the hardest and to me this is not right.

Downsizing

Trying to adjust our system of delivering cost effective service to the home owner across Durham Region is one of my goals; not an easy task unless we look at changes in how we deliver that service. Whether it is amalgamation of transit, restructuring of our Regional Works Department, or a complete overhaul of our Conservation Authority, we must look at all options as we have done in these areas in the past.

Brock East Community Association

For some of our communities, 1998 has been a challenge. I congratulate **Terry White** and the formation of the **Brock East Community Association** on their aggressive achievement and victory over a Waste Transfer Station in their community. The withdrawal from the OMB of J & F Waste Systems was a team effort with all levels of government applying pressure and proving that by working together we can achieve more.

North Pickering/Brock Road/North Hwy. #7

While I still farm close to 200 acres, one half of this property is part of a long term lease I have from the Federal Government on the once expropriated airport lands. Because of this situation, I have always removed myself from any airport discussions. To avoid any conflict that could be perceived by any member of the public, I feel protecting the integrity of the office which I hold is more important than my input on this topic. I feel this issue will someday come to a resolution and I applaud all those involved on their vision of North Pickering's future.

Marianna Gardens

I also congratulate **Ray King**, **Lee Strongman** and others from the **Buckingham Gate Community** for their united effort at the OMB hearing of Marianna Gardens. It sometimes is unfortunate

that a Developer can refer a Council decision to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) for appeal. I commend our community associations for their integrity throughout the process.

Durham Region Public Works

After six years on the Region's Public Works Committee serving as Vice Chair and Committee Member, this term I was selected as the Chair of this very busy committee. Water, sewers, roads, leases, tenders, land accumulation, and waste management are just part of the duties we are responsible for. Additional highlights include stoplights at Dellbrook and new signalization at Highway #2 at Rosebank. As well internal water and sewer will improve this corridor.

Waste Management

Brock West Landfill was closed two years ago and our waste goes to Keele Valley which is scheduled for closure in the year 2001 or 2002. This means alternatives for landfilling must be sought. This year I was selected by my colleagues at the Region of Durham Council to serve as Chairman of the Waste Management Steering Committee to find the 20 year solution for all of Durham Region municipal waste. Of the eight municipalities, Brock Township has a small landfill, Scugog has two transfer stations, Oshawa has one transfer station and Pickering has a private sector transfer station. Clarington, Pickering, Ajax and Whitby have town-wide curbside collection along with Uxbridge. We must look at all options and alternatives and we have selected a Public Advisory Committee who meet regularly and are to bring solutions back to our Steering Committee.

Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority

This is also my first term as Chairperson of the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority. CLOCA participated on the North Taunton Environmental Study Steering Committee with the Town of Whitby. This study will define both the Natural Heritage System and future development limits within the Iroquois Beach area of the Town of Whitby with regard to natural connections into the Town of Pickering and City of Oshawa. Some activities involving the public and school children included the following: 24th Annual Maple Syrup Festival at Purple Woods Conservation area with an attendance of 9,000, education and interpretive programs for over 12,000 students in Durham Region, environmental summer day camp program for over 400 children and the first Durham Region Groundwater Festival with 750 participants from local school boards.

Ontario Traffic Conference

For the last six years I have enjoyed being Chairman of the Ontario Traffic Conference but because of my busy schedule, I may be stepping aside from this position. However, the information I have brought back to Pickering and Durham Region is not only about Traffic Calming but Intersection Pedestrian Signals which, I believe, improved traffic safety in many of our communities

Pickering Public Works

The Traffic Calming projects installed in the Ward 3 rural area hamlets of Cherrywood, Greenwood and Whitevale continue to prove very effective in reducing vehicle speeds and overall volumes of commuter traffic. Follow-up studies indicate an average reduction in the 85th percentile travel speed of up to 12 km/hr in each hamlet. These projects have received significant

attention from interested persons, municipalities and consultants from across Ontario and should be considered a benchmark for success.

Pickering Museum Village Foundation

As a member of the Pickering Museum, I participated in the schoolhouse project fund raising in the horseshoe tournament and as auctioneer. Over \$11,000 was raised during the festival which will allow the Pickering Museum Village Foundation to take the next step in converting a turn-of-the-century, square-cut log house into a one-room schoolhouse which will serve as the orientation centre for our education program. Approximately 15,000 students are active participants in the school programs and pioneer hands-on activities.

Pickering Hydro Update

In the year 2000 the production and supply of electricity will no longer be the exclusive domain of Ontario Hydro. The Electricity Competition Act gives Retailers (like Pickering Hydro) the freedom to purchase electricity in an open marketplace. Larger customers will also be able to buy directly from suppliers. This customer choice at the wholesale and retail level will lead to a greater variety of pricing options and a more competitive environment. In the last 3 years, Pickering Hydro has implemented 4 rate reductions and the electricity rates are now among the lowest in Durham Region.

Planning Department Highlights

- Agricultural Lands - in 1997, the Province announced that it was selling back, to private ownership, lands in the Agricultural Preserve. These lands are located in a triangular area, west of the West Duffins Creek to the Toronto border and north of the CPR Line to Green River. In response, the Town confirmed through its Rural Study that these lands should remain as part of the Rural Area. Subsequently, Town Council also supported the imposition of agricultural easements on the lands. Discussions are on-going among the Town, Ontario Realty Corporation and the Region of Durham respecting the easements.

- Highway 407 - MTO approved an environmental assessment for Highway 407 incorporating two of the Town of Pickering's concerns as follows:

- within the Town of Pickering, Highway 407 is not opened until access is completed to Highway 7, east of Brock Road
- no at-grade intersections are provided in Pickering other than at Brock Road as an interim measure until Brock Road is realigned easterly, and a full interchange can be constructed.

- Construction was completed on the expansion of the Pickering Town Centre to accommodate five new theatres and new parking lot.

- East Duffins Area Study - the Town's local and regional plan amendments to establish detailed land use designations for the East Duffins Area are scheduled to be dealt with by the Region of Durham in early 1999.

- The Durham District School Board was granted approval for, and are currently constructing a 3,830 square-metre elementary school on the south side of Westcreek Drive

- Tridel (Discovery Place Limited) were granted approval for, and are currently constructing a 16-storey, 253-unit apartment building and recreation complex on the south side of Kingston Road west of the existing Tridel Apartments. Construction is anticipated to be completed in the summer of 1999.

- A rezoning application was approved to construct a 200-unit expansion to the existing Valley Farm Retirement Centre. Construction is anticipated to commence in 1999.

- Liverpool Road and Finch Avenue (N.E. corner) - construction has been completed on the Jehovah's Witness Church building.

Part-Time Firefighter Recruitment

A "recruitment blitz" was undertaken in the interest of attracting qualified applicants from the North. 18 applicants wrote the aptitude test and 9 candidates successfully completed the medical/fitness assessment at York University. It has been determined that additional part-time firefighters to service the northern area is crucial and it has been recommended that, in order to increase our complement in the area, a similar recruitment exercise be undertaken in the Spring of 1999.

Diana, Princess of Wales Park

The dedication by Her Honour, Hilary M. Weston, the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, of the **Diana, Princess of Wales Park** took place on September 12, 1998 with the Mayor, Members of Council, Town Staff and many residents of the town in attendance. As the emcee it was satisfying to see another park we completed from start to finish.

Parks and Facilities

We will be starting construction in the spring on a new park at the top of Pinegrove and working on the design of the new Woodsmere Park west of Rosebank and north of Stroud's Lane.

Committee of Adjustment

The Committee of Adjustment has been very busy this year with a wide range of diverse applications. I really enjoy this challenge and, although the time commitment is great, the reward has been satisfying.

Durham Non-Profit Housing

I have found it very interesting completing my first year as a Director of Durham Region Non-Profit Housing. Providing a mix of market value units as well as more affordable housing has to be done in a more business-like fashion.

Sports Hall of Fame

The year ended on a sad note with the passing of Syl Apps on December 24, 1998 in Kingston, Ontario. The Ontario Athlete of the Year Trophy was named after Syl Apps for his commitment to Ontario Sports throughout his entire life. He served as a Commissioner of Sport for the Province of Ontario, as a member of The Toronto Maple Leafs Captain, was elected to the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1961 and placed sixth in pole vaulting in the Berlin Olympics in 1936. The words **excellence** and **dedication** are only a few of the many words that describe this individual. It has been a great honour to serve as the Chairman of the Athlete of the Year program 1998 and presenting the winner, Roger Clemens, at the Blue Jay luncheon last April was the highlight of 1998 for me.

1998 Business of the Year

The good corporate sponsors of so many events in Pickering need to be recognized and my "hats off" to many of these companies, especially the **Metro East Trade Centre**.

The Curtain Finally Falls. The completion of the new multi-purpose Claremont Community Centre had the stage curtain installed and used at this year's 37th Annual Christmas Concert.

In closing, I would like to congratulate **Heather Guscott and all the Altona West** participants in their annual Fall Festival at Westcreek Park. I would also like to congratulate **Rob Thierien and the Crystal Forest Community Association** for their good work with the **Starlight Foundation**; one of the days I look back on at the end of this year in a very warm and positive way.

Rick Johnson

Regional Councillor

Ward 3 Pickering, Region of Durham

Home: 649-2295, Fax: 649-1119,

Office: 420-4606 or 683-2760

email: rjohnson@town.pickering.on.ca