

EDITORIAL

with Dawn Brown

Make an educated decision

With signs dotting boulevards throughout the town—and everywhere else, for that matter—there is no ignoring the fact that the first round of this year's elections is just around the corner. The provincial election is only weeks away, on June 7, and with the municipal election in October, more and more municipal politicians are filing. For the bulk of the summer it would seem politics and elections will be front and centre—we should probably all get used to those lawn signs.

While there are times that our choices in political leaders may seem disappointing, or our votes fruitless, it's important to remember how fortunate we are to live in a country that affords us the freedom to vote and have an impact on our country's, or province's, or town's government. Not all countries, not all people enjoy these rights that we sometimes take for granted.

And, though, not taking our right to vote and having some input into our government for granted is important, perhaps equally important is making an educated decision when casting our vote. In this day and age of instant information at our fingertips, there really is no excuse for not having a general understanding of the platform for the party you support as well as those that you don't.

It's important to take the time to do a little research into the candidates running in your area; who they are, what they've done, as well as the party they represent. Have a solid handle on the party's platform. When making your decision, it is important to take the time to look into the issues that matter to you and review where each party and local representative stand. Don't just vote for a party or individual because you always have. Make your decision informed and based on what matters to you.

While we consider what issues matter most to us, we should also keep in mind that not everyone will share our opinion. Not everyone shares our views. Not everyone shares the same opinion on the same issues. What's important to one person, isn't necessarily important to everyone else and vice versa, which is why it is important to remain respectful.

The world is filled with different ideas and different thoughts—and wouldn't it be a boring place if it wasn't—which is why when discussions roll around to politics we should remain respectful when someone disagrees with our political views. Debate and discussion, being open to new ideas and opinions are vital, but there is no need to resort to name calling or furious tirades on Twitter or Facebook when someone's view differs from your own. We should remember to behave like grown ups.

Sometimes the party we support wins, and sometimes it doesn't. That's part of living in a free and democratic society—which is much better than the alternative.



START OF THE SEASON: The Acton Horticultural Society's Annual Plant Sale was once again a resounding success despite poor weather on Saturday morning. Jennifer Somerville, a long-time member of the club, is one of the volunteers who helps to make this event happen every year. - Alex Hilson photo

Townhouses, condominiums and bungalofs—oh, my!

Recently there's been some discussion in town about two proposed housing developments. Housing developments is an interesting term. To me it implies "single detached houses", however, what has been proposed on one of the sites are bungalofs. The other proposal is for townhouse condominiums.

There's a lot of confusing stuff with these proposals. First, as I was recently reminded, if you have lived in Acton long enough there has been an endless reminder from the "powers that be" that there is a water restriction on future developments in town—with the exception of those not reliant on "Town Water". So, how can we have at least 16 more dwellings plus the ones that have already been started to be built at the end of McDonald Blvd. on the old Heller's property? Water has always been a big issue for Acton. I realize that if the proposals receive approval then the water thing will have to be addressed. However, more housing proposals amidst water restrictions is a conundrum that boggles the mind.

The other thing is why do we have to have so many different names for buildings that have already been in existence? The one potential development proclaims they will be townhouse



By
Angela Tyler

condominiums. Aren't townhouse condominiums really just townhouses? Does anybody remember when they built the townhouses on Danville about 30 years ago? Back then, they were referred to as link homes. I realize some townhouse complexes have associations, but really aren't we just renaming the same things? There seems to be a fair amount of grumbling about the townhouse condos by the GO station however, I think they fit in fairly well. Yes, they are more modern than some of the traditional houses in the area, but I think they work. For a young commuting couple with the GO Train right there, it's a great opportunity.

Recently, a large piece of land on the east side of town has been brought forward for approval for 16 bungalow townhouse units. Bungalow is just an awkward word. It's hard to say. It sounds harsh, and it's just a silly word in my opinion. So, now we have a bungalow townhouse. Back to the same question...isn't it just a townhouse, but a different

shape? This one is a bit different—the townhouse looks like a house and may have a garage. So then are we not back to the link homes on Danville Avenue concept, or the houses on Doctor Moore Crescent, or John Goy Drive? I can't even remember what they were advertised as when they were proposed, but now aren't they just an attached house?

While we debate what all these names mean, or if they are even needed, we get back to another age-old problem for Acton that always comes up, especially during an election year. Every election the topic of affordable housing in Acton comes to the forefront. This election will surely be no different. What begs to be answered in this discussion is what is affordable? The townhouse condos by the GO station are affordable for those young commuting couples who may have chosen Acton over a tiny apartment in downtown Toronto. The proposed bungalow may be quite affordable for a family moving up from Milton into Acton. Maybe those who demand affordable housing in Acton this election need to define what affordable is in order for our candidates to address the issue properly



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