This Newsletter is produced and distributed by the Bluewater Shoreline Residents’ Association (BSRA), an umbrella group of residents/beach/cottage/subdivision associations, as a service to the shoreline residents in Hay and Stanley Wards. It is funded by the Member Associations and its Associate Members. For information on membership, please contact the Membership Secretary, Jim Chapman, at (519) 235-1644 or (519) 565-5303. BSRA’s Postal address is BSRA, GMB 411, RR 2, Zurich ON.

This issue of the Newsletter is being distributed now to provide information about some Association activities, and to provide some information of interest. As you will see below, the equity issue, as focussed on the assumption of roads by the municipality, has taken considerable time and effort on your behalf. It must be remembered that the issue is not roads themselves, but equitable use of tax dollars, with the care of the roads being the most noticeable issue.

NOM 270.

A Few Items of Interest

◆ This is the 25th edition of the Newsletter, and the Association is in its 10th year of Newsletter publication, during which time there have been 2077 articles prepared and published, including these. BSRA continues to receive positive comments about the Newsletter, all of which are appreciated, and encourage the continued research and efforts that go into publication. Nonetheless, all of these efforts would be ineffective without the efforts of those in our distribution system who distribute the Newsletter to almost all of the households in the Bluewater Shoreline Community. To each of these dedicated volunteers, we all give our hearty thanks!

◆ It was with regret that the Executive Committee accepted the resignation of Chuck Box as a Vice President of BSRA. Chuck was diligent in his efforts on behalf of the Shoreline Community, and attended Bluewater Council meetings as well as BSRA meetings. Unfortunately, his other responsibilities and circumstances led him to relinquish his duties with BSRA. The Executive Committee will miss his counsel, but looks forward to his future participation.

◆ For Stanley Ward residents who have in the past used Stanley Township road services on a fee-for-service basis, you should be aware that the Stanley Ward grader was out of service for significant repairs for a period of time in the Spring, but has been back in operation for some time. Bluewater Council has affirmed that the same fee-for-service is to be provided in Stanley as heretofore. Thus, if your subdivision requires grading, gravel, calcium, snow-plowing, etc., contact Dean Armstrong at 565-5245.

◆ Recently, there seemed to be some confusion expressed about the nature of BSRA’s membership. To clarify the situation, it should be noted again that BSRA has only Member Associations, (subdivision Associations as recognized as such by the BSRA Executive Committee, and who pay a Membership fee), and non-voting Associate Members, (individuals who each pay an Associate Member fee), and there is no such thing as a subscription fee under BSRA’s constitution, (a copy of which should be in the possession of each Association President and/or Secretary and/or Representative; if your Association has misplaced its copy, please contact BSRA’s Secretary at the address above.) Nonetheless, copies of the Newsletter are provided to Bluewater Councillors and Managers, and to the Press, at the Council Meetings following publication.

◆ Last Winter, the Provincial government introduced a ban on spreading septage (septic tank contents) on land during that part of the year when the land would most likely be frozen. Because there are no heated storage facilities for septage, some areas which have a high concentration of solids, septic tank pumping operations had to stop during the spreading ban. However, some residents got caught with full septic tanks when no one could relieve the problem by pumping out, and a few residents even had to move elsewhere until the ban was lifted. Bluewater Councillor Bill Martin has pointed out that to avoid this problem recurring this coming Winter if the ban is re-imposed as is most likely, septic tanks should be cleaned out during the warmer seasons.

BSRA Residents’ Survey

You will recall that a survey was distributed in June to the representative of each subdivision in the Bluewater Shoreline Community, which was designed to ascertain the extent to which Shoreline Residents’ subdivisions/associations wanted the BSRA Executive Committee to pursue road assumption on their behalf, as directed by the Annual Meeting of 2000. As part of the study, the “primary”/“secondary” use of the residences was also surveyed. Although a few surveys are still trickling in, the responses of the first 40 returned were analyzed by Bob Campbell, our Vice President, and have indicated some interesting results.

It should be remembered, however, that this study was a survey only, and not a census. Thus, a number of individual residences along the shoreline were not surveyed, and perhaps isolated pockets of a few households each were missed for some reason or other, likely because they were isolated pockets. As well, trailer parks and residences abutting the highway were not included. In addition, it must be remembered that this is a report of opinions of knowledgeable persons about the most likely scenarios, as opposed to being a census of all households. Nonetheless, the survey provides significant patterns and trends in the Shoreline Community for our understanding.

Here is a brief glossary of terms for the better understanding of the explanations that follow below:

primary residence: the place a person has established as the permanent address of record.

secondary residence: a residence other than the primary residence of a person.

household: for our purposes, this is the same as a residence, although strictly speaking, a residence is a building, while a household consists of those who occupy the building.

dedicated road: a road which, in a subdivision agreement and/or plan, has been dedicated to the municipality, and is therefore a public road owned by the municipality. There may also be roads on the plan/agreement which are not dedicated, and these generally are private roads, (see below), unless transferred to the municipality.

assumed road: this is a road which has already been dedicated to the municipality and which has been taken over by it.

unassumed road: a dedicated road which has not yet been taken over completely by the municipality.

private road: a road which is owned outright by a person or other legal entity; the ownership is usually verifiable by a deed.

transfer: this involves a legal transfer of title from a private road owned by a person or legal entity to another person or legal entity. In this report, transfer to the municipality is indicated. Transfer may also involve severances of property.

Seasonality/Permanence of Households/Residences

Bob Campbell found that Sole Permanent Residences, (Primary Residences), are found in 95% of the 40 Subdivisions, and these represent 27.5% of the total households. In addition, a further 11.7% desire year-round access to their residences, making a total of 39.2% of households requiring year-round access. Interestingly, only a few more than this, 2.2%, desire only seasonal access, (May to October), with the rest, 18.6%, in between these extremes. Interestingly, in
four subdivisions, “year-round” households account for over half of the residences, (percentages of year-round residences are shown in bold, and percentages of primary residences are shown in italics), 57%, (19%); 62%, (51%); 69%, (69%); and 92%, (86%) respectively, while in a further 9 subdivisions, between 40% and 50% of their households are used year-round. Only 2 of the 40 subdivisions had no “year-round” households. There are 896 households in those 40 subdivisions, and of these there are 246 year-round households, of which 205 are primary residences. Thirty of the households surveyed send children to school, but the total number of children attending school from each subdivision and from the Shoreline Community as a whole were not ascertained.

**Road Assumption Survey**

In answer to the questions re the desire of subdivisions to have the BSRA pursue the possibility of having roads therein and/or accessing the subdivisions assumed by the municipality, the survey was careful to include only those responses which were written on a survey form and signed by a responsible representative from the subdivision being surveyed. Nineteen subdivisions indicated that they wished to have the 18 East-West roads serving their communities assumed, and four did not. By the way, this includes at least one road where the ownership would have to be transferred to the Municipality. A further 11 roads are former “township roads” or have already been assumed by the municipality. As well, 26 subdivisions have indicated that they wish BSRA to pursue the possibility of having 25 “internal” road systems assumed, although 13 subdivisions did not wish to pursue that option.

It should again be pointed out that a response to the survey was in no way a legal commitment to any particular course of action. Rather, the survey was a study seeking direction for the Executive Committee of the Association. The results of the survey clearly indicated that some action is desired, and the Committee is prepared to pursue the directions of the Association Members as expressed at General Meetings. We are all greatly indebted to Bob Campbell for his organization of the survey, his administration of it and his analyses which have been quoted above! Naturally, this report is only a summary, but Bob has also made some other analyses beyond those reported herein.

**Another Decision Dilemma**

It is often difficult for Council Members to satisfy the wants of ratepayers while maintaining a close rein on non-essential expenditures, and especially to avoid hidden costs in connection thereto. A good example of this kind of dilemma for Council was the recent excellent presentation at Council for the construction of a $350,000 to $400,000 over the Bayfield River next to the Highway 21 bridge in Bayfield. The request was that Council should endorse the proposal, which is to be presented to the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO), and that MTO should pay the whole cost, thus “avoiding an expenditure by taxpayers”. (?) Since it appeared at first glance that no municipal expenditures would be required, Council readily endorsed the proposal and agreed to have two representatives assist with the presentation of the proposal to MTO.

Upon later sober reflection of the proposal, several questions were raised by various persons. Here are some of them.

- Would those using the footbridge be required to return to the shoulder of the highway to walk on, or would it be expected that sidewalks North and South of the bridge be constructed, maintained, and plowed in Winter? At whose expense?
- One of the reasons for requesting a footbridge is that MTO will not put a barrier between the present bridge’s road and its sidewalk because of the narrowness of the roadway, and the plowed snow from the road ends up on the sidewalk. Would MTO be expected to keep the footbridge clear of snow, and if so, how? Would it be expected that a small wheeled plow or other vehicle be specially brought in, or would the bridge be shovelled by hand? By whom, and at whose expense?
- How many persons are expected to use the footbridge in each season, especially the number expected to use the footbridge in Winter, justifying the expense? What would be the regulations re fishing from the bridge, and who polices them?
- For whom is the footbridge designed? It is perceived that since there are very few year-round residents North of the bridge, and that the vast majority of services are on the South side, it could be perceived that the footbridge is primarily a convenience for those on the North side without cars, etc., perhaps touring boaters who might wish to use downtown restaurants and shops? If this is the case, then is the footbridge mainly for the use of those not taxpayers in Bluewater?
- Having endorsed the proposal, to what extent is the municipality committed to top up underfunding and/or operating costs?
- An argument made in favour of a footbridge was that the old bridge had a pedestrian walkway away from the travelled portion until it was replaced 45 years ago. Someone wondered why then it took 45 years to recognize the desirability of a footbridge if it was so important?

In any case, such are the kinds of aspects that must be considered for every proposal before Council, before valuable and scarce tax dollars should be expended, and such decisions are among the dilemmas facing Council.