



The Orangeville **Banner**

Melinda Cheevers
Managing Editor

THURSDAY
DECEMBER 15, 2022

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SHOULD MONO PAVE THE WAY FOR SMOOTHER TRAVELLING?

GAIL POWELL
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Mono resident Anthony Hoeslin believes the time has come to start paving over Mono's gravel roads.

The country property owner, who has lived in Mono for the last eight years, wants the Town of Mono to seriously consider the wear and tear that gravel roads and endless potholes pose to residents' vehicles, and the safety factors that come with loose-rocked, slippery, muddy country roads. As well, he wonders if the maintenance of asphalt-covered roads might cost taxpayers a bit less — in the long run.

See BE CAREFUL, page 9

Doug Thomson, Town of Mono resident, doesn't want the gravel roads paved in his community.

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BARRIERS TO ACCESS

JOSHUA SANTOS
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Michelle Caesar would like to attend popular events at the Hillsburgh Community Centre but finds it difficult to secure safe and accessible parking at the venue.

"Sometimes, when my son has had to park way down the street," said Caesar. "It's snow and ice, that's when it gets tricky."

Caesar has Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease. It is a group of inherited disorders that cause nerve damage mostly in her arms and legs. The disease progresses slowly.

"The nerves don't stimulate the muscles," said Caesar. "My hands were deformed. My feet and your knees and elbows down over your extremities, but it can also affect your breathing, diaphragm and hearing."

The United Nations prompted the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on Dec. 3. It encourages the rights and well-being of persons living with disabilities by raising awareness of their situation in all aspects of politi-



Michelle Caesar uses braces for her legs so she can walk.

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See WINTER, page 9

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Total coverage: 21,959 homes

Orangeville Banner distributed to Orangeville, Grand Valley, Shelburne, Mono, Dundalk, Alton

Erin Advocate distributed to Erin and Hillsburgh community

Content Strategy

- Our goal is to produce quality journalism that resonates with our readers
- We strive to create journalism that reflects our diverse communities, that increases our readers' understanding of their communities and how decisions made by institutions like municipal government impacts them
- Also work to provide helpful information that makes their lives easier

Advisory Council

- Recently, Metroland launched 16 community advisory councils across its footprint. In Orangeville, our council was launched in 2021 and includes a number of leaders from across the community.
- Feedback from advisory council members has helped to guide editorial decisions and our content. Members have also been afforded the opportunity to write columns that appear in our papers
- Metroland launched Torstar Gives Back

Special Edition: Housing

The Orangeville Banner

THURSDAY
SEPTEMBER 2, 2021



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SOLUTIONS NEEDED FOR SENIOR LIVING

HYBRID MODELS FOCUSING ON CREATING AN INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY ARE ONE POSSIBLE PATH

TABITHA WELLS
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Amidst the chaos of the current housing climate, the senior housing crisis is one that's at a critical point, particularly within Dufferin County.

"There is a shortage of long-term care beds in the region and in our community specifically," said Joe Andrews, an Orangeville councillor. "We're seeing

See 'INVEST', page 7



Coun. Joe Andrews stands in front of the Montgomery Village Retirement Residence, which has spent much of the past year building an addition onto their building in an effort to provide more seniors housing.

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NEWS

TOWN OF SHELBURNE ADDRESSES AFFORDABLE HOUSING

JOSHUA SANTOS
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2020, 50,375 people left Toronto, and 24,800 residents left Montreal.

This in part was made possible by the rapid rise of remote work. At the beginning of 2021, 32 per cent of Canadian employees aged 15 to 69 worked most of their hours from home, compared with only four per cent in 2016.

Throughout the development of the official plan, council and residents have indicated the desire to maintain the small-town character, protect natural features, and provide orderly and well-defined development. It guides future land use, transportation, cultural and heritage and development policies to manage the growth and development of the municipality.

The town permits the construction of various housing types such as single-detached, multiple residential apartments, townhouses, triplex, and semi-detached duplex dwellings.

Planner Steve Wever said the town is taking an active role in addressing affordable housing. "Town council serves as the board of directors for the Fiddleville Non-Profit Housing Corporation, which includes 45 housing units, including rent geared to income units and market units," he said. "The Fiddleville housing is owned by the County of Dufferin."

Data from Statistics Canada shows more people are opting to live outside of Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, contributing to ongoing urban sprawl. Between the beginning of July 2019 and the start of July

2020, 50,375 people left Toronto, and 24,800 residents left Montreal.

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"A mix of housing types is important to accommo-



Brad Pritchard/Metroland

The town of Shelburne permits the construction of a variety of housing types such as single-detached, multiple residential apartments, townhouses, triplex, and semi-detached duplex dwellings.

date the spectrum of housing needs related to demographics, from first-time homebuyers to seniors, a range household sizes, rental and home ownership opportunities, income levels and accessibility needs," said Wever.

Given the high costs associated with housing, the official plan states council should be constantly aware of the costs of town standards when considering development applications. Agencies should be made

aware of the town's desire to provide affordable housing. Council should assist and encourage, whenever possible, developments and programs designed to meet the average household's needs or special groups such as seniors.

"The town would address any planning application submissions from long-term care providers," said Denyse Morrissey, chief administrative officer. "The town does not provide long-term care as

that is the responsibility of the County of Dufferin."

The town says it's a desirable place to live as it has a small-town character, and offers safety, comfort and opportunities in the community.

"The town is not a housing provider and therefore does not directly develop housing projects to deliver affordable housing," said Wever. "But rather works to incentivize and support opportunities for the provision of affordable housing by housing providers such as the private sector, other levels of government, non-profit organizations or others."

"The town incentives rental housing through reduced parking standards and payment-in-lieu options, as well as development charge credits for the conversion and renovation of upper-story floor space to resident units within downtown buildings."

The pandemic, ensuing lockdowns and work-from-home options continue to contribute to residents ditching the city life.

OPINION

SAFE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEEDED IN ORANGEVILLE AND BEYOND

HOUSING SHOULD BE A RIGHT, NOT A PRIVILEGE, SAYS HEATHER HAYES

We've reached out to members of our Community Advisory Council, asking them to write about issues of importance during this federal election. This is one of those columns.

Home is that safe place to land; it is a refuge after a long day, a retreat from the world, a place of protection. It is the first pillar in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. It was recognized as a human right by the United Nations as early as 1948. And yet, almost one third of Canadian



HEATHER HAYES
Column

households live in an inadequate, unaffordable or unsuitable dwelling according to Statistics Canada.

In my work life, I run a food bank and work with individuals who have no home, people who live in apartments in conditions that you expect to see in a news report about "other" countries and families who have to make a choice between medication or rent, food or rent. I heard it explained well when someone related their work efforts to "putting a Band-Aid on an arterial bleed."

I can feed people, but it is a drop in the bucket when someone doesn't have safe, affordable housing. There are wait-lists years long for housing because the housing stock doesn't exist.

Rooming houses are being sold because it's a "hot" housing market; a one-bedroom apartment is 60 per cent of a person's pay at a minimum wage job, and that doesn't even begin to address young people who can't afford to get into a starter home with a decent income.

We need to increase affordable safe housing stock across our community, our province and our country.

The good news is many communities have pulled together and are piecing together solutions for affordable housing: converting motels into apartments (Barrie), changing zoning requirements to allow tiny homes (Woodstock), building laneway housing (Toronto) and rent assistance programs, to name a few.

It will take all levels of government — whether it's in their mandate or not — working with service clubs, neighbourhood groups (TIMBY — Yes In My Back Yard), not-for-profits, building associa-

tions, businesses big and small. Most importantly, it will take us, the people, to tackle the housing crisis.

One of my favourite quotes is by Barbara Coloso: "There's no problem so great it can't be solved."

Talking about affordable housing has been going on for years; now is the time for building, funding, changing zoning and bylaws and creatively using the spaces that already exist. This is possible if we all lift together.

Housing, like food, should be a right, not a privilege.

Heather Hayes is executive director at the Orangeville Food Bank. She can be reached at heather@orangevillefoodbank.org.

ABOUT US

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Special Edition: Housing

12 ■ BACK TO SCHOOL

COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE STRUGGLING FINDING HOUSING DUE TO THE PANDEMIC

ANGELICA BABIERA
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After almost a year and a half of online learning, post-secondary students are ready to go back for in-person classes.

However, for some students, this also means moving out of their parents' homes and living closer to their campus. According to Mark Taylor, Places4Students director of accounts, many students

company specializing in providing colleges and universities throughout North America with off-campus housing solutions for students. They partner with universities, colleges and student unions to provide rental property listing service on their website for students, landlords and affiliates of the schools.

Taylor notes that this upcoming season



Tabitha Wells/Metroland

have a limited number of students on those who need to be on campus, they for housing as there are very few listings he market.

ferred remotely," said Muscat. "We have a limited number of students on many of the campuses that need to find housing because of that. However, for those looking, they are still struggling, because there are few rental listings on the market right now."

On Places4Students' April 2021 quarterly report on property student rental listings at Georgian College Orangeville campus,

there was only one listing from this year's April quarterly report, and in 2019, a two-bedroom apartment or condo had six listings.

"We're encouraging people who live near colleges and universities that if they have extra room in their homes to really look to rent it out to students this year. It's not only good source of extra income, but it's also a great experience," said Taylor.

■ OPINION

HOUSING CONVERSATION WON'T END HERE



MELINDA CHEEVERS
Column

It's about trust. Our relationship with our readers is built on transparency, honesty and integrity. As such, we have launched a trust initiative to tell you who we are and how and why we do what we do. This column is part of that project.

Reading through the paper this week, you might notice something a little different compared to our usual editions. Each of these articles found within these pages are all related to one topic: housing.

As I mentioned in this column space last week, our newsroom opted to dedicate this entire issue

into a deep dive of the housing situation in our communities. Like other newsrooms across the Metro-land footprint, we recently embarked on launching community advisory committees, and housing was one of the top concerns on everyone's mind at our inaugural meeting.

And it's no wonder. There's a housing crisis in this country, and it's impacting every community across Canada, including ours.

Sometimes that impact is very noticeable: houses selling for hundreds of thousands of dollars over their asking price, renters desperately posting in community groups looking for available units, and first-time homebuyers being shut out of the market.

Sometimes it's more insidious: businesses having to reduce or alter their hours because staff can't find housing, or renovations

are occurring where tenants are evicted and the units are renovated then relisted at a higher price. This is a complex issue and there aren't going to be any easy fixes. Through the stories we're sharing in print and online this week, we're hoping to start a conversation in the community. We've asked federal candidates to weigh in on what they'd do, if elected and we've compared the national party platforms to help keep this issue top of mind for readers as they head to the polls.

The conversation doesn't end here though. We pledge to continue writing about the housing situation and sharing your housing stories.

Melinda Cheevers is managing editor of The Orangeville Banner and Erin Advocate. Email our trust committee at trust@metroland.com.

their property price," said Taylor. According to Muscat, Georgian College has fewer students looking for homes before because it is really focusing on learning due date. "So, again, it's approximately 70 per cent of our programs a

■ NEWS

30% RULE NOT FEASIBLE IN CURRENT HOUSING CLIMATE

WITHOUT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, MOST FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYERS ARE DRIVEN OUT OF THE CURRENT MARKET

TABITHA WELLS
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Housing and rental affordability is a nationwide problem right now. It's not only from financial losses during COVID; the price of rentals and homes continues to skyrocket.

From January to July 2021, the average home sale price in Orangeville was \$784,084 as reported by the Toronto Regional Real Estate Board.

As of Aug. 25, the lowest home listed on Realtor.com was \$499,900 for a two-bedroom townhouse. The second lowest was \$649,900 for a semi-detached home.

Someone making \$100,000 a year could be approved for a \$600,000 mortgage with a five per cent down payment, explained Geoff Del Grande, a broker with The Mortgage Centre in Orangeville.

"But, if you're making \$50,000 a year, you're not going to qualify for much at all."

Rentals are not faring much better, a growing trend since before COVID.



Tabitha Wells/Metroland

From January to July 2021, the Toronto Regional Real Estate Board says the average house in Orangeville sold for \$784,084.

One-bedroom apartments, including upper levels, basements, and apartment buildings averaged \$1,400 to \$1,700 a month. Two-bedrooms averaged between \$1,800 to \$2,375 a month.

WHERE HAS THIS LEFT RENTERS AND BUYERS?

"It's definitely getting harder for first-time homebuyers," said Del Grande.

He added the market is mainly driven by people who already own a home, thanks to having access to equity.

Sandra Pratt, a local realtor, runs Orangeville and Area Rental Listings on Facebook, where landlords and renters can post listings.

"I have spoken with many people who are left feeling desperate with the limited housing options that we have because it's so competitive," she said.

CAN THE 30 PER CENT HOUSING COSTS RULE APPLY IN THIS CURRENT CLIMATE?

It's long been said housing should equal no more than 30 per cent of your income. But many people are

facing the reality that housing is going to take up the majority — in some cases nearly all — of their income.

In a report released on Aug. 20 by the County of Dufferin, if the county were a village of 100, 45 of those people would spend above 30 per cent on shelter costs.

To follow that "rule," average rental rates would require a minimum of nearly \$5,000 monthly income to afford the average one-bedroom apartment, and a household annual income of approximately \$70,000 to

afford the lower end of houses available for sale. That's without anything beyond mortgage and rent within those costs.

ARE OTHER FACTORS CREATING AN IMPACT?

In the Toronto real estate report, homes in Orangeville sold within 11 days. With few houses for sale, only 0.6 months worth inventory is available. In a buyers' market, the length of inventory is usually about six months.

"I think that people are wise to the fact that everyone was bidding with high

FEDERAL ELECTION HOW DUFFERIN-CALEDON CANDIDATES PLAN TO ADDRESS HOUSING

TABITHA WELLS
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Housing is one of the major issues voters are asking about as they prepare to head to the polls for the federal election on Monday, Sept. 20. The Orangeville Banner reached out to each of the candidates in Dufferin-Caledon to address how they intend to

grow that protects and preserves prime farmland and rural livelihoods while also reducing flooding and climate impacts. We need an affordable housing supply. The

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is always more that can be done. In addition to the measures announced on Aug. 24, I will also fight for more options for housing for seniors including more opportunities to age in place.

KYLE SEEBACK — CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

Affordability. We have a detailed plan, including building a million homes over the next three years. The plan will encourage Canadians to invest in rental homes by allowing the deferral of capital gains tax when selling a rental property. It also allocates 15 per cent of the federal government's real estate portfolio to housing and encourages investment in affordable purpose-built rental housing for Canadians, while banning foreign ownership for those not planning to live in Canada. As of the time of publication, Anthony Zambito (People's Party of Canada) had not responded to the question.

competition to get into the housing market, whether you're renting or buying," said Pratt. "They are coming to rent more qualified, they're bringing their paperwork, their credit scores, everything the landlord wants to see when they go see them."

THOUGH IT IS DIFFICULT, THE SITUATION ISN'T HOPELESS

Pratt notes most renters eventually find a place. In cases with low credit scores or income, it could mean seeking out assistance from town and county services.

"It's a lot of work, definitely, but just keep checking everywhere," Pratt said. "Dufferin County's housing department can also help out with people who are in those situations."

For those unable to purchase a house right now, Del Grande notes connecting with a mortgage agent is one of the best ways to work toward that goal.

"We'll work with first-time homebuyers until they finally get to a point where they can qualify for a purchase," he said. "Sometimes that's years."

He notes there is no cost to utilize a mortgage agent. "If you think you might want a house someday, start now," said Del Grande. "Just start the ball rolling. Eventually it will come together for you."

Looking Forward

We want to continue to tell the stories of our community and are looking to make more connections

Would love to find ways to work together

Let us know about what's happening with your organization

Our Question to You



What do you think will be the biggest challenge facing our community (or your organization) in 2023?

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