

Background

Currently, there is a covenant attached to every property deed in the Beechwood South Homes Association (BSHA) boundary that requires a yearly fee to be paid to support and maintain the swimming pool and tennis courts operated by the BSHA. The fee also support events offered by the association, including barbecues, yard sale advertising, and other special events. These covenants expire on December 31, 2013.

The BSHA board has been working to ensure the best interests of the entire BSHA community. Various options were presented at our Annual General Meetings in 2008 and 2009. We concluded that a Special Services Levy (SSL) was the most viable way to ensure the continuation and financial stability of the BSHA in the future.

Early in 2010, volunteers visited every home in the association to explain the SSL and to survey residents' opinions. The survey found the vast majority of residents in favour of the SSL.



Contact Information

If you have questions, any board member will be happy to answer them.

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Important Information about the Future of your Neighbourhood Association

The covenants on the homes in Beechwood South expire at the end of 2013. This brochure explains how a partnership with the City of Waterloo will allow for the continued vitality of the Beechwood South Homes Association, assuring the sustainability of our shared facilities and safeguarding our property values.

Q&A

Q: What is a Special Services Levy (SSL)?

A: A Special Services Levy will allow the City of Waterloo to collect your annual BSHA membership fee as a special item on your property taxes. The amount of the fee will still be set by the association, but you will pay it as part of your property taxes instead of writing a separate cheque to the BSHA.

Q: What is a Special Area Levy (SAL)?

A: It's just another name for a Special Services Levy.

Q: Is this a done deal?

A: No. A mail-in vote will be held early in 2013. The city wants to see strong support for SSL before they agree to it. **It is very important that you submit your vote.**

Q: Does it need to be unanimous?

A: No. The city just wants to see substantial support.

Belonging to Beechwood South Homes Association, with all the facilities and family activities, adds noticeable value to any house in this community.

*-- Annette Blake,
ReMax Real Estate Agent*

Q: What other options were considered?

A: We could have moved to voluntary membership, as some of the other Beechwoods have done. Drawbacks to this approach included:

- Unstable funding, especially if more and more associations are competing for the same potential members
- Traffic and parking issues in the neighbourhood
- Higher and less certain fees, as costs would be shared among fewer homes

Another option would have been to dissolve the association which would leave the future of the facilities in limbo. We may not have a say in how they were used.

Q: I don't use the pool and tennis courts (any more). Why should I remain a member?

Even if you no longer use the pool and tennis courts, having them here helps maintain your property's resale value. Most new families moving into the neighbourhood tell us that they were specifically looking for these types of facilities. Your board works very hard to maximize the services offered for the fee charged. We have the lowest fee of all the Beechwoods, while still having among the highest levels of service.

Q: How long would the SSL be in force?

The City of Waterloo does not want to renegotiate the agreement every year. (Nor do we!) The proposal is for three 5-year auto-renewing terms, for a total of 15 years.

Q: What if the SSL doesn't work out the way we expect?

A: Since nobody can predict the future with certainty, the terms of the agreement between BSHA and the City of Waterloo state that either party may terminate the agreement, without cause, on one year's notice. We're optimistic that things *will* work out, though: Beechwood II has had an SSL in place successfully since 2008.

Q: What if not enough people vote in favour of the SSL?

A: We will have to scramble to come up with another plan. Given that it has taken us six years to get this far with the SSL plan, we're not sure how we could put another plan in place by the end of 2013 that meets the expectations of the community.

