

Diverse Ward 3 Exemplifies City Growth

THE CONSTITUENTS of Ward 3, primarily a blue-collar ward in northeast London, are community activists. Perhaps the stigma sometimes attached to this diverse ward of industry and affordable housing has forced the residents to stand up for their rights.

More than 40,000 residents occupy the area containing such landmarks as 3M Canada Inc., Fanshawe College, and through recent annexation, London Airport and Fanshawe Lake. New homes have sprouted like mushrooms all along the north side of Huron St., from Clarke Rd. to Adelaide St.

Recent issues of note: the development of homes along the Thames River, in River Valley North and Killarney Grove; strip mall and rezoning plans for 22 homes near the former CFB London; and the improvement of two former Cheyenne Ave. (now Oakville Ave.) apartments.

Plenty of ammunition exists for six candidates (at press time) for two Ward 3 councillor positions. Since 1940, there

have been two representatives per ward. October 14 is the last day to register for the November 14 municipal election.

BERNIE MACDONALD

Incumbent Bernie MacDonald has represented Ward 3 since 1980. The industrial safety training co-ordinator, known as "Silent Bernie" in his early days as councillor, speaks passionately on his ward's issues. His style complemented the leadership of Pat O'Brien when the London-Middlesex Liberal MP was a Ward 3 councillor.

MacDonald came into his own before O'Brien's departure. He grabbed more than 4,000 votes in the 1991 election, and has remained at the grassroots level. MacDonald says a close monitoring of his section of town, for example, keeping a "continuous vigil" on improvements to the Oakville Ave. buildings, is demanded by his constituents.

"One thing about Ward 3: the com-

munity does get involved. Look at the street lighting in Huron Heights. Look what's going on (on Oakville Ave.) after some people put their heads together and put a little work into it. All of this takes neighbourhood involvement."

MacDonald says the "design of Ward 3 has completely changed," citing infrastructure improvements (Cheapside St. extension, Gloucestershire Hall acquisition). Regarding plans for a strip mall on former CFB married quarters land, MacDonald says he'll fight an uphill battle to eliminate those plans.

BETTY HOWARD

Full-time councillor Betty Howard, wife of former PUC chairperson Bob Howard, was appointed to fill O'Brien's vacant seat in mid-October of 1993. Twenty candidates appeared before council, seeking the spot; Howard was chosen on a fourth ballot.

Even though she earned 2,151 votes in the 1991 election, Howard pulled less than 50 per cent (only 46 per cent) of MacDonald's votes, therefore entering the drawn-out selection process.

Howard, who has said she and MacDonald have been "very close for a long time," apparently doesn't let friendship stand in the way of a good political fight. During her '91 campaign, she said, "People feel Pat and Bernie are just not strong enough. We need stronger fighters for the ward and the issues that are going on."

Ward issues must come before city-wide concerns, Howard says. "We're getting into a lot of neighbourhood building. Taking care of your parks, for example; fund raising: I'm all for this. If you want certain things... is the taxpayer prepared to chip in with a little help?"

LINDA TAIT

As chairperson of a Ward 3 citizens' committee against a proposed federal correctional facility, Tait says she tasted politics, and now hungers for more. The London nurse says if elected, her first concern - "my family" - will include "constituents - they will be my big family."

Tait was not one of five finalists for O'Brien's spot on council. (Of the 22 original applicants for the empty Ward 3 spot, only she, Howard and Todd Graham have registered to run in this election).

"A lot of people asked me if I was going to run in this election," says Tait. "I put a lot of hard work into (fighting the correctional facility)." She says she'll also fight the Oxford St.-Highbury Ave. strip mall venture.

out of 22 who have thrown our names out for (the election) when it comes to having to spend some money and some time."

Graham, who was vice-chair of the committee opposing the halfway house, stresses the importance of proper development. He's watching development along the Thames with interest - "It's changing the makeup of the ward" - and hopes for wise decisions involving growth of land surrounding and including the airport.

"There are a lot of young families moving into the ward. It's going to give Ward 3 a little more voice. I think it's important that we make sure (airport development) is good, not just development for development's sake."

CHARLES PAYNE

If Reverend Charles Payne, of Faith Temple Church of God in Christ, wins a Ward 3 seat, he'll have further opportunity to fight illegal drugs and related crime, on a scale larger than the Dundas and Glebe streets area. Payne's political ambitions are largely supported by his sons, Charles Jr., Fanshawe College Student Union President, and Doug, former FSU V.P. Athletics. "They told me to run," laughs Payne.

No one can accuse the amiable Payne of not being in touch with the people. He's in contact with drug addicts and prostitutes, and offers positive alternatives. Policing, welfare and affordable housing issues are important, Payne says.

"I hope to be able to cut through all that red tape at city hall. People didn't really want to get involved (with Dundas and Glebe) crime until they were forced to."

Payne says Londoners must also realize "not everyone is rich here. There are still people who need to be taken care of. People with low-paying jobs: if they're making \$7 or \$8 an hour, if they go off welfare, let them maintain their benefits."

STAN WYATT

A long-time London real estate salesperson, Wyatt was an 18-year president of the London-Middlesex Progressive Conservatives. He says he's finally running for councillor because, "Truthfully, I think I can do better."

Wyatt says he'll be a full-time councillor. "We need better government spending. There's too much waste. I'm not for these fringe things." Wyatt targets Centennial Hall and the London Convention Centre - "that monster downtown" - as examples of why we need to "tighten our belts."

"City-wide issues, not just ward is-

