



# Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Information Report to Council

**SUBJECT:** Niagara-on-the-Green Student Housing

**Date:** February 11, 2010

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**Department:** Planning and Development

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

There have been numerous complaints regarding issues arising from the use of the homes in the Niagara-on-the-Green subdivision for student housing. On street and off street parking, noise, litter, property maintenance, building maintenance and Fire Code violations are some of the concerns.

A recent incident at one such property resulted in the Fire Department attending in response to a concern regarding a smell of gas which resulted in the furnace and water heater being "red tagged". Staff is currently in the process of gathering evidence and laying charges under the Fire Code, the Building Code and the Zoning By-law against this property.

Most of the concerns and subsequent complaints are occurring due to the concentration of students in these single attached and detached homes. The homes are being renovated to accommodate more bedrooms than were in their original design so that they may be rented to students. This results in basement bedrooms that do not meet Building Code, Fire Code and Property Standards requirements.

The Zoning for Niagara-on-the-Green limits roomers and boarders to 2 per dwelling unit. The difficulty is in defining and proving that a particular person is a roomer or boarder.

## **NEXT STEP/CONCLUSION**

Staff is currently researching the possibility of licensing rental accommodations in the Niagara-on-the-Green area. The Municipal Act permits such a by-law to regulate this activity and to restrict the requirements to a specific area. A few municipalities have already tried this approach with varying degrees of success. Staff expects to tailor the by-law to Niagara-on-the-Lake needs and learn from the experience of those municipalities that have passed such by-laws.

Staff expects to have a draft By-law ready for distribution and comments by the end of April.