

# Women's Community Co-operative 'LADY BITS'

August 2025

## SISTERWOOD

The group of women who pledged their allegiance to the outside beauty of Women's and stepped up this year to join the Garden Committee (now called 'Sisterwood'), deserve a huge THANK YOU for your vast amount of patience during this upside down 2025 Summer season.

Due to the ongoing repairs to the south end retaining wall and forthcoming parking lot re-do, so many of the perennial flowers and bushes needed to be dug up, moved and then replanted, or risk losing them. If you haven't had the opportunity to go out and enjoy the beautification that happened right under our noses, please take the time to do so. Prior to everything being pulled out and destroyed, the committee came together with a plan (and shovels), and transplanted our beautiful gardens, saving all that they were able to, so that members could continue to enjoy them.

One member that deserves a major shoutout of gratitude and thanks, is Melissa Douglas from Unit 201. Melissa has a keen eye and the greenest of thumbs! She has regularly continued to water and give love to all of our new gardens. You will find Melissa outside almost every single evening faithfully caring for the flowers and bushes, little trees and shrubs. We are very fortunate to have a member like Melissa who truly understands 'community' and when she signed up for it, she meant it and fully intended to follow it through. THANKS Melissa! Kudos to you! Thank you Sisterwood!!

## NEIGHBOUR TO NEIGHBOUR

The new hallway carpet install is now complete and it looks fabulous! If you drop or spill something, it is your responsibility to clean it up. Please remember that if you're carrying a cup of tea or coffee or a drink, make sure that it is covered!! Let's keep it looking new for a very long time. Next up, the front lobby! Kate will let us know when the lobby floors will be professionally cleaned. We are all so very fortunate!

**Important note for those with portable 'self evaporating' A/C Units** - These still require occasional draining or emptying, especially during extreme periods of hot humid weather! You'll find a drain plug on the back.

Check your manuals on how to ensure that this is done properly to prevent leaks!

## Construction Update!

Phase 1 of the construction should be completed by August 15, 2025 - weather permitting. There will always be one door accessible to enter or leave the building during all 3 phases. The south end door will have a permanent ramp entry identical to the main entrance making it accessible for people in a wheelchair or using a walker. Phases 2 & 3 to follow!

## Important Reminders

- Keep to assigned parking spots
- Remind visitors/PSWs to park on the street
- Advise PSWs to put garbage DOWN the chute
- SORT your recyclables accordingly. Garbage does NOT go in the blue bins
- You must request a bulk item pickup date through Mike
- Please share your feedback in regard to the monthly newsletter



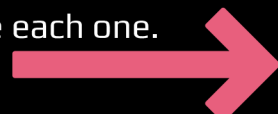
Did you  
notice????

## Policies & By-Laws

Do you know the difference between a By-Law, a Policy and a Procedure?

There are substantial differences, with how they are created, voted on, passed and followed.

Let's help define each one.



# Bylaws, Policies and Procedures: What's the Difference?

## Bylaws are...

To write bylaws for an organization, you need to outline the organization's structure, operations, and decision-making processes defining key terms, addressing topics like membership, meetings, board structure, and amendments. Bylaws should be clear, concise, and comply with relevant laws and regulations. They are a written rule or set of rules that governs the internal operations and conduct of a co-op organization. Bylaws define the structure, membership, decision making processes, and other essential aspects of how the cooperative functions. They are crucial for ensuring transparency, accountability, and member participation within the co-op and provide a framework for how a co-op operates, outlining the rules and procedures for various aspects of its business.

Bylaws can cover a wide range of topics, including membership requirements, voting procedures, board responsibilities, financial management, and dispute resolution. Bylaws are essential for establishing the legal framework of the co-op and ensuring that it operates in accordance with its stated purpose and values.

Common elements found in cooperative bylaws include:

- Membership rules (eligibility, application, termination)
- Governance structure (board of directors, officers, committees)
- Meeting procedures (notice, quorum, voting)
- Financial management and budgeting
- Member rights and responsibilities

Cooperatives are legally required to have Bylaws. These can be customized to reflect the specific needs and values of the co-op and its members.

Bylaws of the co-op must be voted on and approved at a General meeting of the Membership.

## Policies are...

In a cooperative, bylaws are legally binding rules governing the organization's structure and operations, while policies are more flexible guidelines that can be changed more easily by the board of directors. Bylaws are typically more difficult to amend, requiring a higher threshold of member approval (e.g., a two-thirds majority). Policies, on the other hand, can often be modified by a simple majority vote of the board.

In essence, a housing co-op policy is a comprehensive framework that ensures the co-op operates effectively, fairly, and democratically.

## Procedures are...

A policy and an operative procedure are distinct elements within an organization, though both are crucial for consistent operations. A policy sets the overall rules and principles, defining what should be done and why, while an operative procedure outlines the specific steps and methods on how to implement those rules. Think of a policy as the "what" and the procedure as the "how".

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**We hope this helps to clarify the 'what's what' of the inner works of our home here at Women's.**

**There are copies of the Women's Community Cooperative By-Laws, Policies and Procedures in every single unit, for every member. As they are changed, repealed or updated, new copies are given to each member to be replaced in these books.**

**It is the member's responsibility to ensure these very important books are kept up to date and in order!**

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## August Highlight: Niagara Peninsula Homes



For the past several years, Niagara Peninsula Homes has been contracted by Women's as our Property Management Company. NPH is a non-profit organization that has specialized in Property Management for both Cooperative and Non-Profit Housing since 1979 - longer than Women's Cooperative has been in existence. In fact, Betty Ann Baker was part of 'our' beginning. NPH is a member of The Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada, The Golden Horseshoe Co-operative Housing Federation and Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association. To say the staff of NPH (Kate and Mike just to name a few), are knowledgeable about all aspects of Cooperative housing would be an understatement.

Although we have chosen to highlight Niagara Peninsula Homes on the whole, we would like to specifically spotlight their leader and founder, Betty Ann Baker. NPH is led by Executive Director, Betty Ann Baker. Betty Ann leads a team of well trained staff all specializing in different aspects of both Cooperative and non-profit housing. She has a list of accreditations your arm long. She is a Certified Instructor for the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada specializing in the Board of Director workshop and Financial Management; CMHC award winner for Outstanding Contribution to the Co-op Housing Sector; Co-operative Association of Ontario award winner in Innovation in CED; YWCA Woman of Distinction in Business in 2000; One of three women named woman of the year in Chatelaine in 2000; Nominated twice for the Premier's Award by Niagara College and is a recipient of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal. Betty Ann is a brilliant font of knowledge and source of information to the Board of Directors attending all of our meetings. She continuously shares her wisdom, awareness and intelligence with us.

Betty Ann is a previous Governor of the Niagara College Board of Directors. She has served as Chair of the Central Housing Authority, Chair of the amalgamated Housing Authority Board in Niagara as well as on the Board of Directors of Niagara Regional Housing, of which she was one of the founding board members.

We are absolutely blessed by her leadership and all that she brings to the table at Women's. We believe she sincerely deserves to be celebrated and shown our gratitude over and over. Thank you for all you do for us here at Women's and so far beyond, Betty Ann! You truly are a powerhouse, the face of leadership and an amazingly recognizable representative of/and for all women! If you have ever had the pleasure of sitting at the table with her and her head full of co-op knowledge, there is no doubt of it being a rewarding experience.

Thank you for always having our best interest at heart & for always ensuring we are where we need to be!



Would you like a digital copy emailed to you? Contact one of us or send us an email with your request to Diane and Emily at [dianedowney8082@gmail.com](mailto:dianedowney8082@gmail.com), and we'll happily send you a colour copy each month via email!

## Happy long August Civic Holiday, everyone!