



POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT CHARGES
FOR ROGER WHITE ACADEMY, 415 QUEEN STREET

- Roger White Academy is a private school offering kindergarten through grade eight and was founded to empower children to develop a love for learning and to enable them to develop their full potential as noble human beings. The program offers a comprehensive individualized curriculum following the Ontario curriculum. Service is an integral part of the curriculum and provides children and their families the opportunity to reach out and act on the qualities they are learning, conscious of their roles as world citizens and servants of humanity. Roger White Academy's individualized program is based on the rate of progress of each child and their personal abilities and demonstrated aptitudes, building on the child's strengths and promoting sustainable work in areas of additional need. The arts are used as a medium for learning and are integrated in the academic aspects of the curriculum. The Ontario Institute of Studies in Education has followed the progress of the school for fourteen years and through them, the director, Farzaneh Peterson, was appointed to the advisory board for a pilot holistic school under the jurisdiction of the Toronto School Board. Over fifty letters of recommendation are available should they be of assistance.
- Nearly six years ago, before finalizing the purchase agreement for the property, we asked the Town what costs were involved and they told us only about the zoning fees and then at a later date about the site plan fee which together amounted to approximately \$30,000.00. However, they failed to mention the Town's development charges and the approximately \$64,000.00 development charge which was then payable to the Region. We bought the property on the basis of the costs that we had been told. Had we known about the development charges, we would not have proceeded.
- After the shock of being told about the development charges which were only brought to our notice at the time that the original site plan approval documents were finalized and presented for signature, we delayed the project and later, in order to make it more affordable, made a substantial reduction of the scope of work, eliminating the addition to the main building. At present, there is no additional space being added. The renovation is strictly interior.



- The development charges, as they stand today, are based on using part of the main building and all of the accessory building for the school. As yet unconsidered is the fact that both spaces are shared with the residence. When school is not in session, the entire house is devoted to residential use as well as the accessory building on evenings, weekends, Christmas, Spring Break and all summer for the owner's personal interest activities.
- After consideration of public and school holidays and activities that take place away from the school, the school operates only about 160 days or 44% of the year even before consideration of the fact that all spaces are used for residential purposes when the school is not in session.
- The shared use is unusual and, as we understand it, there is currently no provision in the development charges by-law for mixed residential and business use of this kind but oddly, there is for multi-residential development.
- Unlike most businesses, education is not a profitable venture. The service to the community that it provides is largely unrecognized and is certainly not rewarded by any material standards. Farzaneh works grueling hours and spends a significant part of her out of school hours, including the summer and other holidays, in work related to the school. After fourteen years of operation, she is still taking home only about \$25,000 per year before taxes. Farzaneh has never refused a child because of inability to pay the fees. Consequently there are a number of students paying only partial fees or none at all.
- Given these considerations, it seems reasonable to request that the development charges be waived or substantially reduced and that provision is made to pay any charges over time.
- Further, we would suggest that the Town and Region review their fees and taxes generally to provide incentive for those who are engaged in meaningful community service and/or are small businesses, particularly those that are home based.