

HOW CITY HALL WORKS...

CATCH attends and reports on committee and council meetings at Hamilton City Hall, 71 Main St. W., Hamilton.

Agendas for each standing committee and council meeting are required to be posted on the City's website (www.hamilton.ca) at least three days prior to the meeting. The agendas include links to detailed reports from City staff which are a good source of information about what is taking place in the city.

Standing committees meet twice per month. There are six to nine councillors on each committee. This is where most of the real decision-making and debate on issues takes place.

Citizens may speak at these committee meetings. The standing committees make decisions and send recommendations to Council where there is not usually much additional debate.

City Council is the final decision-making body. Hamilton has 15 City Councillors, plus the Mayor. They meet twice a month on the second and fourth Wednesday at 7 pm.

INVITATION ...

CATCH welcomes citizens interested in working to promote democracy in Hamilton. Our members range from young adults to seniors and come from many diverse backgrounds.

Whether you have much or little time to help, either up front or behind the scenes, there's a place for you in **CATCH**.

CATCH is an independent, non-governmental initiative and receives no funding from any government level.

Check us out or introduce yourself at City Hall. The **CATCH** monitor sits at the media counter, on the east side of Council chamber nearest Main Street.

TO LEARN MORE,
GET INVOLVED OR ALERT
CATCH ON SITUATIONS/ISSUES
etc ...

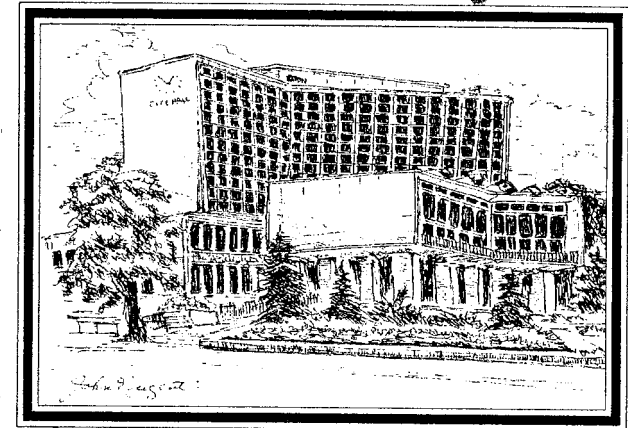
Join our email list to receive free updates. Send an email to:
CATCH@cogeco.ca

Read reports on our website:
www.hamiltoncatch.org

Write us at:
CATCH
c/o Environment Hamilton
1130 Barton St. East, Suite 207
Hamilton ON L8H 7P9

CATCH

www.hamiltoncatch.org



CITIZENS AT CITY HALL

Promoting democracy,

public access

and accountability

at Hamilton City Hall

WHO WE ARE ...

CATCH (Citizens at City Hall) is a volunteer community group of concerned citizens which promotes civic involvement in Hamilton.

Members attend and report city council meetings and carry out associated research and activities on City Hall and local issues.

WHAT CATCH DOES ...

- involvement in and promotes citizen engagement in municipal affairs
- improves democracy at City Hall
- monitors and reports on civic issues, affairs and civic business
- explains City Hall and its functions

"The health of a democratic society may be measured by the quality of functions performed by private citizens."

Alexis de Tocqueville

ACTIVITIES OF CATCH ...

First Priority

- attending, recording, transcribing and reporting city council and committee meetings
- research and activities related to city council and local issues

Resulting Action

- writing news articles about city issues often not reported by other media
- maintaining a website of weekly updates on current issues with links to an archive of past articles and city council/committee meetings
- maintaining email updates for viewers to get free current news on city activities
- producing a weekly news column for VIEW newspaper

Other

- occasional public meetings/workshops
- active email communication between members
- training and mentoring in skills needed, e.g. writing, computers, etc.
- special projects as situations arise

WHAT CATCH CAUGHT...

- City sitting on \$600,000 in unspent poverty relief money
- former city manager's letter warning of possibility of city bankruptcy
- new city manager made campaign donations to mayor
- provincial decision to appeal the city council's aerotropolis urban boundary decision
- recognition of "Little Africa" historical settlement
- secret meetings of GRIDS task force without minutes or agendas
- discounts for development charges on industrial and commercial properties
- payment of over \$50,000 per month to Christine Silverberg
- Mayor's letter to the Escarpment Commission which violated city rules
- Hamilton's media concentration – Spectator control of weekly papers
- Business tax cuts failed to stimulate growth
- Faulty maps in draft Greenbelt plans for Hamilton area

CATCH WEBSITE

www.hamiltoncatch.org

- weekly reports on city council and local issues
- reports and transcripts of City Hall meetings
- reports of citizen presentations
- indexed archive of past articles
- search function