

Making Welland a safe place to work, live, and play

By **MAGGIE RIOPELLE**
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How do you make Welland a safer community?

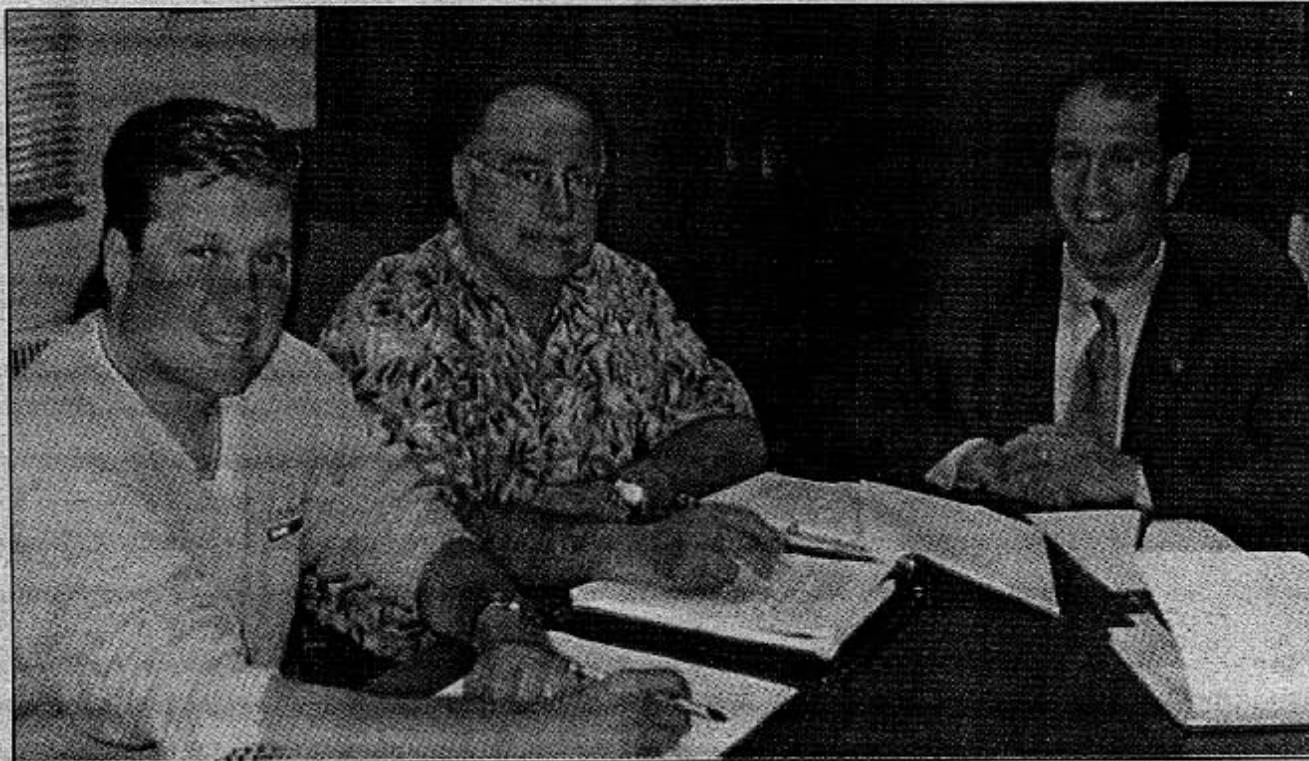
Well that is a question that the Welland Safe Community Partnership steering committee hopes to answer with a new community initiative.

The Safe Community Initiative is a federal program designed to encourage communities to raise awareness and focus on safety concerns.

The goal is to make a designated safe community, a safer place to live, work and play.

To that end, the steering committee has made a decision to develop six sub-committees that will focus on senior safety and awareness, workplace safety, wellness and prevention, safe neighbourhoods, emergency planning, and sponsorship.

"Our next step is to encourage the citizens of Welland to get involved in making our community a safer place by joining one of the sub-committees,"



A steering committee is working to make Welland a safer community. From left, Councillor Pat Chiocchio, chair of the Welland Safe Community Partnership, Rick Demers, vice chair, and Mayor Damian Goulbourne, meet to discuss some safety issues.

said Coun. Pat Chiocchio, chair of the Welland Safe Community Partnership. "Our goal is to ensure that

every citizen in Welland thinks about safety on a daily basis and takes the necessary steps to prevent

injuries and other mishaps."

Mayor Damian Goulbourne, who learnt of safe

communities back when he was the president of the Welland/Pelham Chamber of Commerce, originally championed the initiative.

It was one of the first priorities on his agenda after being elected as mayor.

However, not wanting it to be an initiative of the City of Welland, he has since passed the leadership roll over to Coun. Chiocchio and Rick Demers, vice chair.

The steering committee includes a number of community stakeholders such as the college, school boards, fire department, police, Ontario Hydro, United Way, among others.

It is the plan of the steering committee, which is a dedicated group of volunteers, to extend the life of the initiative well beyond a political three-year term, he added.

"The Safe Community Initiative was originally started by a man whose...

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