

Friends of the Spit

P.O. Box 467, Station J
Toronto, Ontario M4J 4Z2



NEWSLETTER
March 1989

CROMBIE COMMISSION HEARINGS

The Royal Commission on the Future of the Waterfront, headed by former Toronto Mayor David Crombie, will hold a series of hearings on issues affecting the Toronto waterfront. Friends of the Spit will participate.

The Commission was appointed by the Federal Government "to inquire into and make recommendations regarding the future of the Toronto Waterfront and to seek the concurrence of affected authorities in such recommendations, in order to ensure that, in the public interest, Federal lands and jurisdiction serve to enhance the physical, environmental, legislative and administrative context governing the use, enjoyment and development of the Toronto Waterfront and related lands."

The upcoming hearings of the Commission will examine Harbourfront, the Toronto Island Airport, the Port of Toronto/the Toronto Harbour Commissioners and the Environment. Friends of the Spit will speak on the latter two issues.

The Toronto Harbour Commissioners

Established at the turn of the century to develop the Port of Toronto, the Toronto Harbour Commission (THC) owns virtually all the land on the eastern waterfront. These lands were donated by the city of

Toronto, for the purpose of commercial shipping operations. With a shrinking empire, due to the decline of commercial shipping, the THC has branched into land development, an example of which is the huge 1,200-slip marina it intends to open near the Spit.

Friends of the Spit's position regarding the THC is that it should become a port authority, restricted to managing the commercial shipping facilities, and that the lands not needed for this purpose — from Cherry Beach to the Spit — should revert to the city, with the major part maintained as public parkland.

A document called *The Toronto Harbour Commission: a Discussion Paper* will be available by the end of March. It will include the THC's proposed plan for the Port Industrial Area (which is adjacent to the Spit). To obtain a copy of this report, write to the Crombie Commission at the address overleaf.

The Crombie Commission will hold hearings on this report on Wednesday, May 10, starting at 10:00 a.m. Friends of the Spit will be making a submission. We hope many of you will do so as well, since any THC plan is going to have a serious impact on the Spit.

To present a submission on this plan at the hearings, you must advise the Commission in writing by Thursday, April 27, 1989 at the address overleaf.

Environment and Health

The Environment and Health Work Group, which deals with water quality, lakefilling, heritage preservation, natural areas and wildlife, will issue its report very shortly. To obtain a copy, write to the Commission at the address at the end of this article. There will be a presentation on this report on Tuesday, April 4, at 10:00 a.m., at the offices of the Commission (see address over). The public is invited to attend.

Friends of the Spit has already submitted a brief on these subjects to the Commission, and we will appear at the hearings, which are scheduled for Tuesday, April 25, 1989, at 10:00 a.m. We urge you to attend and to voice your views as well. To speak at the hearings,

MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT RENEWAL

Memberships for 1989 are now due. We hope you will renew your support as we continue to face new challenges to protect the Spit from development.

Dues for 1989: Individual — \$5.00 Family — \$8.00 (Additional donations are very welcome)

Please tear off and mail with your cheque to:

Friends of the Spit, P.O. Box 467, Station J, Toronto, Ontario M4J 4Z2

I want to renew my membership support for 1989.

Name..... Phone number.....(H)(B)

Are your name and address on the mailing label correct? If not, please make the necessary changes on the label.

Note: If you already have renewed for 1989, you will find a red check mark on your mailing label. Please accept our thanks for renewing so promptly.

you must advise the Commission in writing by Tuesday, April 10.

The "D" Word

In an article published in the March issue of the *Globe and Mail Toronto Magazine*, Colin Vaughan writes:

"... Crombie would do well to eliminate the word 'development' from any further discussion about the waterfront. 'Development' is a word better suited to the fringes of Metro, not the lakeshore. Already Harbourfront and the central waterfront are overdeveloped, but even now, when the question of the THC-owned lands to the east of Toronto Harbour comes up, all involved immediately begin to think of ways those sites can be 'developed' for housing or industry or whatever.

"Rather than the 'D' word, 'R' words should prevail on the waterfront. 'Recovery', 'Restoration', 'Rehabilitation' and 'Renovation' of the natural and pedestrian and park environments from the Humber to the eastern limits of the Beaches should now be the top priority. As the natural lakefront is restored, all efforts must be turned to the long-term elimination of such intrusive uses as the Hearn generating plant and the Island airport. And only when the first bulrush appears in the clean waters of the bay at the foot of Yonge Street and when folks can stroll unimpeded along the water's edge through parkland stretching from the Eastern Gap to the Ex will David Crombie have fulfilled his mandate, not to the federal government, but to the people of the city that he once ruled."

We feel the same, Mr. Vaughan.

To requests the reports and to be put on the speakers list for the hearings, write to the Commission at the following address:

Ronald L. Doering, Commission Counsel
P.O. Box 4111, Station A
Toronto, Ontario M5W 2V4

Telephone: 973-7185 Fax: 973-7103

All the hearings and presentations will take place at the Commission's office, which is located at 207 Queens Quay West (at the foot of York St.), 5th floor. We hope to see many of you there.

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ATTENTION BIRDERS

A Call for Contributions to Field Checklist

Friends of the Spit, with the Toronto Ornithological Club's input, is putting together a Field Checklist for birds observed on the Spit. If you have sightings, or nesting information in particular, which you wish to contribute, please contact Herb Elliott at 654-8220 and send your data to him at 211 Ellsworth, Toronto M6G 2K7

BOTANY FIELD CHECKLIST

Plant Species on the Spit to Be Inventoried

The University of Toronto Botany Conservation Group, with Friends of the Spit's support, is assembling data for a field checklist of plant species at the Spit. Please forward any data you have to our contact, Dr. V. Higgins, Department of Botany, University of Toronto, Toronto M5S 1A1.

FRIENDS OF THE SPIT T-SHIRTS

We still have a small supply of Friends of the Spit T-shirts, in sizes Medium and Small only. The T-shirts bear the outline of the Spit in dark green on light blue 50% cotton/polyester knit.

The cost is \$10.00 per shirt, or 2 for \$18.00, postage and handling included. Please make your cheque payable to Friends of the Spit and send your order to our P.O. Box address.