

Friends of the Spit

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NEWSLETTER

October, 1988

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ON NOVEMBER 14 MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT

The environment is the hottest issue of the upcoming municipal election. But don't be fooled by the numerous claims of the legions of pro-development candidates who become born-again environmentalists when an election is called.

Call your candidates. Attend all candidate meetings. Ask questions. What is their position on the Spit? On the Rouge? How will they solve the garbage crisis? What is their position on landfill? On incineration? Did they vote for more buildings and less parkland at Harbourfront?

Make your vote count. Barely one third of registered voters go to the polls on election day. Because of this lack of interest, candidates get elected by a very small group of supporters they cultivate. And this is the reason for the dismal environmental record of the city councils in Toronto and surrounding municipalities.

For your information, here is the voting record on the issue of the Spit at the Metro and Region Conservation Authority of the candidates in Toronto and Metro who are or have been MTRCA Board members.

Voted for development on the Spit

Bill Belfontaine (Scarborough)
Bob Yuill (North York)
Milton Berger (North York - acclaimed)
Jim McGuffin (North York - acclaimed)
Bill Granger (Toronto)
Richard O'Brien (Etobicoke)

Voted against development on the Spit

Joyce Trimmer (Scarborough)
Jack Layton (Toronto)
Lois Griffith (Etobicoke - acclaimed)
Brian Harrison (Scarborough)
Maureen Prinsloo (Scarborough)

WATERFRONT DESIGN CHARETTE

The Ontario Professional Planners Institute, the Ontario Association of Architects, and the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects are planning a week long design charette on the waterfront for early next Spring. At this time the plans are not fully formulated, but the idea is to have a team of 6 to 8 designers each with a specific skill relevant to the design problem take a "fresh, unbiased look" at the Toronto and area waterfront.

The charette has the blessing of the Crombie Commission and will be using the Commission's interim reports, to be published in January, as their major background data. They will also be asking for base data from the city of Toronto, Metro, the MTRCA, SCOW, the Waterfront Remedial Action Committee (WRAP) and ourselves.

The charette teams will also expect public input during the desing week. The exact boundaries for the study are still not determined, but they will be within the limits of Port Credit to Ajax and may be only Metropolitan Toronto.

We intend to be highly involved in this design blitz of the waterfront and will keep you posted.

(As we are going to press, a consultant hired by the Crombie Commission has released 'Bold Concept II', a nightmare plan that would put an airport on the Spit, do extensive lakefilling to build another island off the Toronto Islands, and fill the north shore between Cherry Beach and the Spit with theme parks and boutiques. This "Concept" is 'bold' on only one front: it totally overlooks the natural parkland zoning the city of Toronto has just put on most of this area and the MTRCA planning process for the Spit. We are planning a response to this neerdenthal idea hatched by Jack Jones, formerly of the Toronto Harbour Commission, now turned consultant. We will give you more details in our next newsletter.)

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT STATUS REPORT

You may wonder why you have had no word in the newsletter about the progress of the Environmental Assessment for the Spit. There is a good reason for this. There is no progress. The MTRCA still hasn't filed. But we have been informed by the MTRCA that they are planning to file the EA documents with the Minister of the Environment in mid-November.

INTERIM MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

The 1989 Interim Management Programme for the Spit is virtually the same as for 1988. The park will be open to the public, for no fee, on weekends and public holidays. The bus and van service will operate in the Spring, Summer and Fall. The Aquatic Park Sailing Club will continue to have car access on a few weekends in the Spring and Fall. In general, the status quo is maintained.

A word of caution to avid Spit users. As the winter approaches do remember to dress warmly. Also try to avoid going out alone. There have been no incidents to cause alarm about your safety on the Spit. It's just that should you slip on snow or ice and hurt yourself you might have a long, cold wait before help arrives

TORONTO BY-LAW

The latest interim holding by-law imposed by the city of Toronto on the waterfront includes all Spit lands and waterlots. Lakefilling at the Toronto Harbour Commission marina and any other new area of landfill must cease while these by-laws are in place. Thus both the Environmental Assessment process and the City have caused a slowdown to immediate development at the Spit.