

## Friends of the Spit

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### *In this newsletter...*

#### THE POLITICAL ISSUE

- The Spit/TTP needs a councillor to represent the 300,000 visitors yearly (who walk, run, or cycle).
- No cars on The Spit.
- Support the TTP Master Plan and EA .

## NEWSLETTER . by email only

## October 2018

### As an Editorial ...

See Page 2, please.....

Been to our website lately?????

[www.friendsofthespit.ca](http://www.friendsofthespit.ca)

See an incredible historical  
“document”...

**The Outer Harbour East Headland**  
video was produced in 1978 by Don  
Adams, for Metro Cable TV. Thanks  
to Don for his sleuthing to uncover a  
copy, and thanks to ROGERStv for  
permission to post it on our website.  
Enjoy... the sentiments ring true 40  
years later!!!!!!

And, try as we might, we could only  
identify one person in the video..Bill  
Martin. If you recognize anyone,  
PLEASE email us. It would be great  
to know their names!!



Car-free, care-free cycling on The Spit

**The Political Issue.....The Spit's ward ...is now Ward 14 – Toronto-Danforth**  
THE QUESTION WE POSED TO THE CANDIDATES:

...we ask that you please confirm:

**That you support the Tommy Thompson Park 1992 Revised Master Plan and Environmental Assessment in its entirety, including Item 5.6 Access/Parking which begins “Private vehicle access, to the Park will be prohibited.”**

This is the question we posed to the two incumbents of the new Ward 14, City of Toronto, and to the other new candidates who had email addresses. We posed the question by email, and because her old Ward 30 encompassed the Spit, we followed by telephone to Paula Fletcher.

Mary Fragedakis, councillor for the former Ward 29, replied by email:

Thanks for reaching out to me about this.

**Yes, I support the support the Tommy Thompson Park 1992 Revised Master Plan and Environmental Assessment in its entirety, including Item 5.6 Access/Parking which begins “Private vehicle access, to the Park will be prohibited.”**

**The Leslie Street Spit is a unique and wonderful gem. I truly appreciate the work so many in the community have done to maintain and nurture this amazing public urban wilderness.**

Sincerely,  
Mary Fragedakis

Paula Fletcher, councillor for former Ward 30, did not respond by email, and when asked specifically to state her support for the Master Plan and EA during our phone call subsequent to the email, did not answer the question.

The other candidates who replied by our press deadline stated:

From Marisol D’Andrea: Thank you for your e-mail. I support the Tommy Thompson Park 1992 Revised Master Plan and Environmental Assessment.

From Chris Budo: I want to protect this beautiful priceless area so the generations after can enjoy it the same way I've been so privileged to.

“I Chris Budo pledge that I will support the Tommy Thompson Park 1992 Revised Master Plan and Environmental Assessment in its entirety, including Item 5.6 Access/Parking which begins “Private vehicle access, to the Park will be prohibited.” “

From Dixon Chan: I would be glad to continue support of the Master Plan if elected.

From Ryan Lindsay: Ryan answered “Yes” to our question of support for the Master Plan ..

**In our view, someone unprepared to support the Master Plan and EA does not deserve a Friend’s vote. When a candidate comes a’knockin’, ask them if they support the Master Plan....**

## As an Editorial ...

For 41 years, Friends of the Spit has been a non-partisan advocacy organization. We have accepted support for our ideal --a car-free public urban wilderness-- from all corners, and we have, in turn, criticized all corners when criticism was fair and warranted. Politics sometimes makes for strange bedfellows, but we have been grateful over the years for the support we have obtained.

We are now in a true quandary. Our local councillor, Paula Fletcher, whose ward includes The Spit/TTP, had not replied to any email or phone message of ours since May 2017 until we initiated a phone call on October 3<sup>rd</sup> this year. Her lack of response was apparent to all of you who wrote or emailed her last year, to protest the possibility of private sailing club (APSC) members' cars being allowed on The Spit when the park is open to the public [park-open hours]. (Although, we do understand that all who emailed were put on the councillor's eblast newsletter!). (And, if any of you did receive a personal reply to your email or letter, *please* do let us know...to date, it's all been silence except for two calls to concerned individuals in late September of this year.)

Private vehicles on The Spit are prohibited by the Master Plan, which was revised and passed, along with the Environmental Assessment, in 1993. At that time, Friends agreed to the inclusion of the sailing club (APSC) on The Spit; at that time, the APSC understood and agreed to the condition of no cars when the park is open to the public.

It has taken 24 years, and the park is almost ready to be open 7 days a week! Once the shoreline stability issues are resolved with Ports Toronto, the remainder of the land will be handed over to the TRCA and the City, and all will be governed by the provisions of the TTP Master Plan and EA.

The APSC members knew this day was coming: now they want to abrogate the Master Plan so that they can drive out during park-open hours. Reopening the Master Plan and EA would require, at a minimum, stakeholder meetings and new professional consultant reviews, which would be lengthy and extraordinarily costly for all taxpayers. Given the environmental success of The Spit/TTP, and that the Spit has become a destination park and a world-famous wildlife refuge, if the Master Plan and EA were to be reopened, many would argue that the yacht club is now an anomaly, and should be deleted (their tenure is based on a year-to-year license agreement).

**APSC is a 100 berth club; there are 300,000 visitors a year to the Spit. Who gets priority? The Master Plan and EA answers that..... 5.6 Private vehicle access, to the Park will be prohibited.**

One of the many great joys of the Spit is that one can walk, cycle, or jog without the worry of automobile traffic: one can even learn to ride a bike safely out there. Besides safety issues, who needs the pollution or the noise? Who needs cars in a Public Urban Wilderness ?? We do not understand Councillor Fletcher's apparent support for driving private cars on The Spit. The Master Plan permits a shuttle: Why doesn't APSC continue with a shuttle for their yachters?

In the absence of Councillor Fletcher's support for the Master Plan and EA, we can only advise that you VOTE FOR A CANDIDATE WHO WILL SUPPORT THE TOMMY THOMPSON PARK MASTER PLAN AND EA, and SAVE THE SPIT FROM PRIVATE CARS.

## A good news story.....

Where other jurisdictions have culled cormorant colonies, the TRCA's progressive policy at The Spit has celebrated the double-crested cormorants! By implementing various discouragement methods to prevent expansion of the physical area occupied, over the last few years, the colony has essentially been contained, and more importantly, now approximately three-quarters of the population are ground-nesting birds !! This year, approximately 14,500 pairs nested, compared to 13,275 in 2016. Last year, only 12,840 pairs nested...the lower 2017 number is attributed to the high water levels inundating some of the ground-nesting areas.



## Coming Soon.....Entry Pavilion:

The elegant small structure, planned for construction this year, has been deferred to May next year (2019). During its construction, the parking lot will be reduced in size. As we note on our website: "This is the fourth and final small structure for The Spit. As well as indicating "you have arrived", this building, together with a revamped parking lot, and new auto entrance off Unwin Avenue, will demarcate the northern limit of The Spit and Baselands. This will close out our thirty year battle to ensure that the Baselands are included in The Spit lands !! [Remember, the Baselands were once zoned I2D2 and slated for an industrial subdivision!]"

*Image courtesy of the TRCA*



**Consistently and Continually, The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority has emphatically stated their support for the TTP Master Plan and EA.**

**PRIVATE VEHICLE ACCESS.... NO !!!**

Last April (2017), when we learned of a concerted effort by the members of the Aquatic Park Sailing Club to circumvent the Tommy Thompson Park Master Plan and EA in order to allow their private vehicles on the Spit during times when the park is open to the public, we were naturally concerned!

We emailed the councillor on April 26, 2017, but received no answer.

We called the councillor's office, and were only able to leave lengthy messages with assistants. We received no call back.

One co-chair even dropped in on the City hall office, with no success.

So then....

*Digression for history: in 1988, the MTRCA promoted a master plan for The Spit which included six sailing clubs, two wind surfing clubs, a 400 car parking lot where cell one now is, a large visitor centre, along with many other accoutrements. That plan was vigorously fought and debated by Friends of the Spit and by many other allies. The Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront waded, and weighed, in and gradually a more natural plan took hold. This resulted in the revised Master Plan and EA we have now, which was accepted by all stakeholders, including Friends and the APSC. It was thanks to the seemingly endless citizen meetings, board meetings, and consultations that the MTRCA was persuaded to eschew development and instead go with the natural option, which they have, to their enormous credit, whole-heartedly embraced. The problem with car access arose when the park was opened in 2017 to the public on weekdays 4pm to 9 pm, and driving was still occurring during these park-open hours.*

So then, in June 2017, we initiated an email request to our members, and allies, to write Councillor Fletcher, to ask why her apparent support was being given to a 100 berth yacht club for their private car access when the park is open. [Thank you to all who wrote and emailed!!] We figure over 100 emails were sent, many very eloquent, but again, to our knowledge, no-one received a response for over 14 months. Councillor Fletcher could disagree with us, but we all deserved a timely response!

Things went quiet, seemingly died down, but we kept hearing of efforts, and our questions regarding auto access to the sailing club reps at the Tommy Thompson Park User Group (TTPUG) meetings went unanswered.

On August 8, 2018, we again emailed the Councillor, asking her questions, and asking her to contact us as soon as possible. Again, no reply. Silence.

Then, a 25 ward election came along! We emailed again, this time requesting Councillor Fletcher to confirm her support for the Master Plan. Again silence. Then, in late September, two of her constituents let us know they did receive return calls, and one led to an FOS-initiated call with Councillor Fletcher.

Alas, the support we had hoped for was not given.

**We need a councillor who will respond in a timely manner...**

**We need a councillor who understands that the Spit has 300,000 "constituents", yearly! These people don't drive....they walk, run, cycle, .....**

**We need a councillor who will whole-heartedly support the Tommy Thompson Park Revised Master Plan and EA !!!!!**

**5.6 Access/Parking**

Private vehicle access, to the Park will be prohibited. Private vehicles will be allowed to drive beyond the Park Entrance to a public parking area at the base of approximately 200 spaces in size. An access road beyond the private vehicle access control point will be maintained for restricted vehicle access for shoreline maintenance, park maintenance and emergency vehicles, school bus access, APSC emergency vehicles and shuttle van and potentially a park transportation service.

**A different type of sailor...**

What the yacht club members have failed to recognize is that "no cars" won't spell the end of their club (as some worry) BUT, rather, a different type of sailor will be attracted ... a sailor who relishes the car-free environment and who is comfortable being out on The Spit without a car!

**Quick Quiz #1:**

Councillor Fletcher was appointed to the Board of the TRCA in January, 2017. (The TRCA jointly manages the Spit with the City).

Since then, how many Board meetings has she attended?

- a) All 20
- b) 12
- c) 7
- d) 3

**Quick Quiz Correct Answer:  
3 meetings !!**

**Say goodbye to a lost opportunity for further greening of Leslie Street.**

What was once visualized as green space at the west side of Leslie, south of Commissioners Street, was rezoned in May to permit a postal sorting station.

Over the years we had supported Councillor Fletcher in a drive to keep this land a "green" park; the City planning studies showed it as green...But along comes Canada Post, and now it's a building with a 25 ft boulevard of < hopefully> green space. Alas..another lost opportunity for an expansive Green Corridor up Leslie Street.

**Speed Limits:**

All vehicles on the Spit during park-open hours are limited to a maximum **18 km/hour speed limit** and must have their hazard lights turned on while moving. If you witness speeding, or dangerous driving, record the license number, time and date and report it to the TRCA (or to us via our website).

[ 18 km/h is *not* a typo! We are unsure how that speed was arrived at, but hey, we aren't complaining! ]

Yes, this speed limit applies to cyclists too.

**More UNDER CONSTRUCTION and “COMING SOON”:**

***Martin Goodman Trail (MGT):***

You will have noticed construction fencing and siltation curtains bordering Unwin Avenue, from the outlet channel all the way east to Leslie Street. After stakeholder consultation, a number of meetings, and input from Friends of the Spit and other groups, the Martin Goodman Trail is being completed in this stretch of land and will form a natural boundary between the Spit Baselands and Unwin Avenue. Keeping the trail to the north and west maximizes the Baselands habitat. This work is scheduled for completion later this year.

***Pedestrian Trail Reconstruction and Realignment:***

The April ice storm caused significant damage to the pedestrian trail south of the Staff Booth/Visitor’s Centre. This damage is scheduled to be repaired this Autumn, and, as part of the restoration, a considerable portion of the trail will be shifted away from the scarp edge, to provide some protection from future storms.

The pedestrian trail north of the Staff booth/visitor’s centre damaged by the 2017 high water levels and storms will be repaired and rebuilt, but that work will occur when the Ashbridges Bay Treatment Plant work and expansion is done, and the Ashbridge’s bay Erosion Control measures are complete.

***Baselands Trails:***

The detailed design process has begun for some Baselands trails. A preliminary map is shown below. Input is being sought from The Tommy Thompson Park User Group, which includes Friends of the Spit. These trails would be pedestrian and accessible. Their construction date is unknown, but design work is proceeding, so please don’t hesitate to email us your thoughts.



<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/construction-new-facilities/baselands-trail-tommy-thompson-park/>

**Our website has been updated and refreshed!** And, as well, the Bird and Butterfly Checklists have been updated: and, as always, if you have any photographs which you would like to add to our site, please send them.

Due to municipal election regulations, this newsletter is sent by email only. No funds were expended in its creation or distribution.

**Park Hours:**

At present, the park is open 7 days a week:  
Monday – Friday: 4 pm to 9 pm  
Weekends and holidays: 5:30 am to 9 pm (with staff on-site from 9 am to 6 pm)

City By-law officers may enforce the park hours, and can issue fines to individuals in the park outside of these hours. [ed.note!!!]

**Quick Quiz #2:**

Get out your compound interest calculators!! Had the APSC levied \$50 per berth (100 berths) per year, and made monthly payments to a savings plan every year since 1994; and assuming only a 5 % annual rate of return, how much money would they now have to purchase and operate a shuttle van ?? (Shuttles are permitted in the Master Plan!):

- a) \$ 100,000
- b) \$ 155,000
- c) \$ 202,000, or
- d) Over \$ 228,000

**Quick Quiz Correct Answer:**

**Over \$228,000. (ed note: sure buys a nice shuttle van !)**

The APSC has had 24 years to plan for the “no car” future...how has their planning gone so far? At the last TTPUG meeting, when asked, the club reps declined to comment.

**Quick Quiz #3:**

Yacht yăt/ noun: **yacht**; plural noun: **yachts**

1. a medium-sized sailboat equipped for cruising or racing.

Are the APSC boats Yachts?

- a) Yes
- b) No

**Quick Quiz Correct Answer, and discussion:**

- a) Yes: We think so: they have washrooms and cooking facilities and beds. Of course, that would also define a cottage .....

Below is a photo of the moorings in Embayment C this summer... you decide.



**In closing:** And a shout-out came from Matt Kellway, our friend through the Portlands Energy Centre saga years ago, who is now a candidate in Ward 19, Beaches-East York:

*Thank you for inviting me to comment on Tommy Thompson Park. While the Park itself is outside of Ward 19, I am a strong believer in maintaining the beauty of our waterfront as a natural space. I support the 1992 Revised Master Plan, especially item 5.6, which restricts private vehicle access to the Park and maintains the area as all-natural public space. I agree with the purpose behind the Master Plan, to restrict private uses of the Spit and maintain it as a public asset for all of Toronto.*

*Regards, Matt.*