

## Friends of the Spit

P.O. Box 51518  
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Toronto, Ontario M4E 3V7

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**SPECIAL INSERT**



## Thursday, November 21 Your presence is needed at Land Use Committee

on the matter of  
Planning report for the Spit baselands  
**11:00 a.m.**, Toronto City Hall,  
Committee Room 4

- Phone 392-7033 to be put on the speakers list
- Write to your City Councillor and to the Mayor

## NEWSLETTER

November 1996

On May 21, when City Council voted unanimously to reject plans for a Golf driving range on the Spit baseland and to rezone the area Gr (conservation lands), it was hailed as a great victory for citizens. Unfortunately, that victory may be only of short duration. The City Planning staff recommends maintaining industrial zoning on that part of the baselands.

The article reproduced below appeared in *Eye Magazine* of June 6, 1996. We feel it makes a very eloquent case for the area being indeed part of the Spit, therefore that it should be rezoned Gr.

### ENVIRO

BOB HUNTER

You win some. You lose some.

Here's the win: the nutty idea of a driving range on the Leslie Spit has been shut upon

mightily from alight at Toronto City Hall.

A driving range is an ecological dead zone whipped by a hailstorm of golf balls, the ground soaked with poisons and shaved relentlessly to keep it "trim."

The argument used by The Proponents, as the hustlers are always called, was that the area where they wanted to hack out a driving range "wasn't part of the spit." It was to be located between the First Gate, at Unwin Ave., and the Second Gate, just beyond the meadow and before the embankment begins.

Technically, the spit doesn't begin until the Second Gate, you see. It had been zoned differently — as if ecosystems, even interesting, evolving new ones like the spit's, had precise borders, like municipalities.

#### e-mail your City councillor

##### Mayor Barbara Hall:

mayor@city.toronto.on.ca

##### Council Members:

ward\_xx@city.toronto.on.ca

(where "xx" is the number of

their ward). For instance,

ward\_10@city.toronto.on.ca

will reach Ward 10 Councillor

Tom Jakobek.

# No home for the range

In reality, the meadow and young forests that have grown up in the space between Unwin and the Toronto Harbour Commission marina are every bit as much a part of the spit bioregion as the ponds and the cottonwoods out by the lighthouse where the redwing blackbirds are nesting in the tall grass.

The spit has a special place in the hearts of Toronto-area birders, hikers, joggers, inline skaters, bicyclists and wildlife lovers. Planned in the '50s as a breakwater for a superport for increased Great Lakes shipping that never materialized, the barren pile of rubble from office tower excavations, demolition and street repairs has become our Paradise Regained.

Its spine is a layer of concrete, brick and other construction material with silt and sand dredged from the bottom of

Lake Ontario piled on top, forming beaches and wet meadows, with mixed scrub and immature woodlands taking root.

The five-kilometre peninsula serves as a showcase for spontaneous ecological regeneration. Seeds blew or washed over from the Toronto Islands, or else were carried by birds and animals. The landfill being dumped there contained enough life itself, no doubt, to trigger its own eventual restoration, but the combination of nature and industry fashioned something astonishingly rich.

Displaced from other natural wetlands, marshes, swamps and meadows (sometimes, indeed, by driving ranges) the migratory birds that still pass through

the Toronto area took to the new resting grounds with an eagerness born of desperation. And it looks like they'll be able to carry on. Hurray!

**Read the article  
in the Newsletter!**

#### How to reach your City Councillor

Most effective lobbying is by residents of the ward (some councillors won't take calls from people who live outside their ward). It is best to write a letter to your Councillor **and** to the Mayor. Mailing address is City Hall, Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

Ward #	Phone	Fax	Ward #	Phone	Fax
Mayor Barbara Hall	392-7001	392-0026	9 Steve Ellis†*	392-7904	392-1050
1 David Hutcheon	392-7909	392-1867	10 Tom Jakobek†	392-7915	392-0390
2 Chris K.-Kuczynski	392-0202	392-0398	11 Rob Maxwell	392-7908	392-1050
3 Mario Silva	392-7012	392-7957	12 Betty Disero	392-7011	392-0212
4 Martin Silva	392-7910	392-0095	13 John Adams†	392-0013	392-1461
5 Dan Leckie†	392-7911	392-1870	14 Howard Joy	392-7912	392-1865
6 Kyle Rae†	392-7093	392-0206	15 Kay Gardner†	392-7017	392-1873
7 Pam McConnell†	392-7916	392-7296	16 Michael Walkert†	392-7906	392-1050
8 Peter Tabuns	392-7914	392-1744			

† Member of Land Use Committee — \*Chair