

# ONTARIO PLANNING JOURNAL

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ONTARIO PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS INSTITUTE

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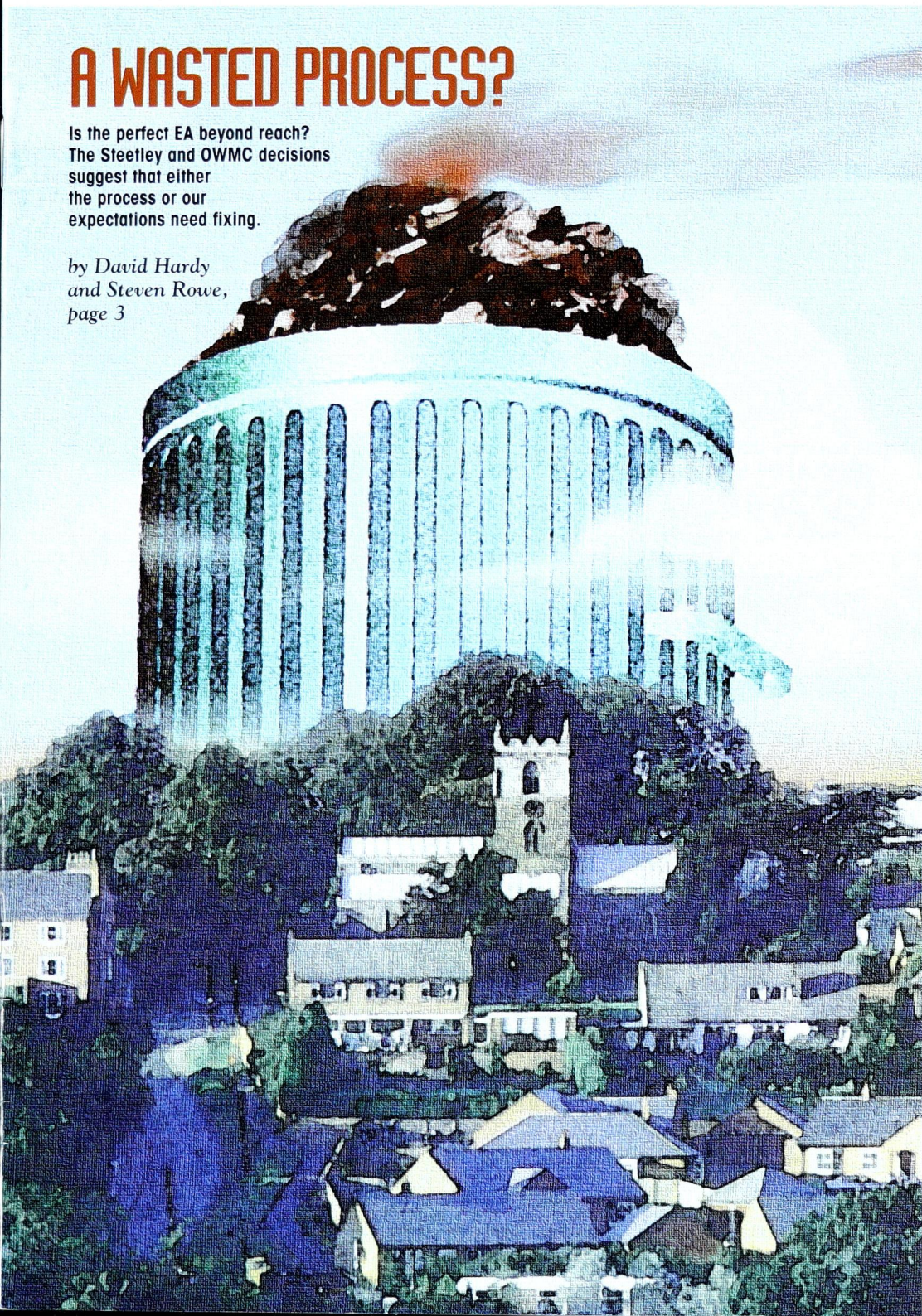
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# JOINT BOARD DECISIONS GIVE THE INDUSTRY PAUSE

By David Hardy and Steven Rowe



Two panels of the Joint Board have given very clear indications of expectations for environmental assessment planning in recent months. In November 1994, a proposal by the Ontario Waste Management Corporation (OWMC) to establish facilities for the treatment and disposal of hazardous wastes was denied approval, and this decision was upheld on appeal. In March 1995, a proposal by Steetley Quarry Products Inc. to establish a landfill in a limestone quarry in Flamborough Township, Region of Hamilton-Wentworth, was also denied approval. This decision was still subject to appeal at the time of writing.

## THE OWMC DECISION: NEW MEANINGS FOR OLD CONCEPTS

The OWMC was created in 1981 to develop facilities for the treatment and disposal of hazardous waste. In July 1985, only weeks before OWMC announced its preferred site near Smithville, on the Niagara Peninsula (known as LF9C), the project was designated under the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act. In 1988, a final Environmental Assessment (EA) document was submitted in support of a proposed waste incinerator, a physical/chemical treatment facility and landfill which would accept hazardous wastes from Ontario, and, potentially, sources outside the province. The proposal was vigorously opposed by local residents, environmentalists and local and regional municipalities. The hearing spanned 270 days and concluded in September 1993. It was estimated that the cost of the process to OWMC was around \$80 million.

The Board denied approval to the OWMC proposal

because OWMC had not fully examined alternative ways of dealing with chlorides (salts) that remain in the residue after hazardous wastes have been treated and incinerated as required by the Environmental Assessment Act. Even in the deep clay soils of West Lincoln, burying the residue would contaminate groundwater over a large area. The solution eventually proposed by OWMC to extract the salts from the residue prior to landfilling would have been very expensive, costing "tens or hundreds of millions of dollars over the life of the facility," in addition to the cost of the OWMC's original proposal.

The Tri-Parties (Region of Niagara, Township of West Lincoln, and the Ontario Toxic Waste Research Coalition) demonstrated that OWMC had

not adequately considered a further alternative, disposal of the waste in mined-out caverns in a salt mine. Provided that the dry environment of a salt mine can be maintained, there is no possibility of contaminants being transmitted away from the disposal area by groundwater, and there would be no need to extract chlorides from the waste residues.

In support of their case, the Tri-Parties commissioned a team of consultants to develop an alternative proposal to solidify waste treatment residues at the OWMC site and transport them by rail for disposal at one of two salt mines in Windsor or Goderich. The alternative was then compared with the OWMC proposal, using OWMC's own evaluation criteria. The rail haul/salt mine

option was preferred, based primarily on costs.

## ITERATION IN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT: ONCE MORE WITH MEANING

Although the Tri-Parties had challenged many aspects of the OWMC undertaking, the Board indicated that the need for and scale of the proposed facility had been adequately demonstrated, and that the supporting technical investigations would have been sufficient to enable approval of the proposal on its own merits. The decision turned on the need to "iterate" Environmental Assessment planning decisions:

"...if in the course of the site assessment studies, environmental effects come to light, and those effects might affect the preference for the selected alternative, a proponent should go back and look at alternatives previously rejected. . . . The iteration would allow the determination of whether the undertaking has greater advantages relative to disadvantages than the alternative(s). At the end of the day, we have to be satisfied that the undertaking that the proponent is putting forward for approval offers the greatest ratio of advantages to disadvantages of the alternatives."

## THE STEETLEY DECISION: READ MY LIPS

The scope of the Board's criticisms in the Steetley decision is much broader than in the OWMC decision, encompassing EA planning requirements for private-sector proponents, engineered versus natural protection for the environment, expectations for public consultation, social impact assessment, a wide range of technical evaluations, and the role of the provincial government in reviewing and



commenting on environmental assessments. In that sense, the implications of Steetley may be greater even than those of the OWMC decision.

The undertaking for which Steetley sought approval was landfilling two million tonnes per year of non-hazardous, solid industrial, commercial, and municipal waste on a 78 hectare section of the progressively worked-out South Quarry. Waste would be accepted from any source in Ontario.

The private-sector costs related to the EA studies and 140 day hearing were considerable. Community opposition was intense, led by a local citizen's group called GASP (Greenville Against Serious Pollution). And the Joint Board did not mince words in drawing conclusions about the adequacy of the site and the EA process. To make sure all parties got the point, the Board took the unusual step of attaching a Board Observations section to their report.

## ROLE OF HYDROGEOLOGY AND TECHNICAL STUDIES

Steetley Quarries proposed a landfill design that would have placed a low permeability double composite liner beneath the waste; two separate collection systems; a leachate pre-treatment plant; a stress relief groundwater management system; systems for surface water management and gas collection and combustion; and noise, dust, and traffic control systems.

The Board heard evidence regarding the presence of 90 homes, three schools, and a number of farms and businesses within several hundred metres of the South Quarry. Local residents rely on groundwater aquifers for their drinking water and other domestic uses. The Board noted that groundwater also discharges to local streams and springs along the nearby Niagara Escarpment.

Looking closely at the proposed landfill, the Board concluded that the location of a

landfill within the fractured bedrock of the South Quarry:

"...would pose an unacceptable risk to local groundwater and surface water resources. The proponent did not reliably demonstrate that hydraulic containment could be maintained in the landfill site throughout the century-long contaminating lifespan of the site . . ."

The Board criticized the failure to impose a minimum hydrogeological standard that would have to be met by the landfilling alternatives, and declared that, because of dust generated by the landfill, the proximity of so many houses made the site unsuitable.

Further, from a dust perspective:

The Board also accepted evidence that traffic impacts had been underestimated, as well as evidence regarding noise and significant visual impacts. A distinction was also made between the impacts of landfill and the impacts of quarrying on surrounding residential land uses. The former were seen as new and different from the latter. It also confirmed the need to examine the "dynamic relationship" between component elements of the environment in conducting EA studies.

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## SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDIES WITHIN THE EA PROCESS

Environmental assessment studies in Ontario have included social impact assessment since the late 1970s. The Environmental Assessment Act, Section 1 (c) (iii) clearly considers "social" as fundamental to the definition of environment. And, in the Steetley decision, the Board underlined the need for each component of the definition of "environment" to be given equal weight.

In the Steetley decision, the Board left few uncertainties as to the need to consider "social criteria" in all stages of the environmental assessment process, including the consideration of alternative sites. In the absence of the analysis in the Steetley EA, the Board was left with: "... a perception that natural resource, technical/engineering and financial concerns were emphasized to the detriment of social accounting and human value concerns."

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION WITHIN THE EA PROCESS: THE PUBLIC'S RIGHTS DEFINED

The core criticism of Steetley's public consultation involved two fundamental

questions related to Ontario's environmental assessment process. Were major decisions about the preferred alternative made by the proponent before the public could have input? And did the public have an opportunity to influence the proponent's decision-making process?

The Board accepted evidence provided on behalf of "Greenville Against Serious Pollution" (GASP) that the process could be characterized as "decide, announce, defend." Referring to the 1987 MOEE "Guidelines and Policy on Pre-Submission Consultation in the EA Process," they stated that:

*"The Guidelines clearly contemplate meaningful public consultation in a cooperative atmosphere, commencing in the earliest stages of planning, before any final or irreversible decisions are made."*

The Board clearly reinforced the EA principle that the public involved in an EA process in Ontario can reasonably expect to take part in a planning process and expect to be able to influence decisions.

### EA PROCESS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Overall, the EA process was seen by the Board as:

"... not adequately established, the assumed need was unrealistic, alternatives to the undertaking and alternative methods of carrying out the undertaking were inadequately addressed, and the environmental assessment process was not rational, traceable and consistent."

Further, being a private proponent does not eliminate the need to consider wider site searches for potential sites on land not owned by the proponent. The Board did not accept lack of ability to expropriate land as a justification for considering only a narrow range of sites. As the Board noted:

*"Section 6 of the EA Act allows proponents to conclude agreements for access onto lands not owned by the proponent to conduct preliminary site investigations."*

### BOARD OBSERVATIONS

The Board acknowledged observations made by participants that the EA process was lengthy, costly and difficult. They noted the 21-month time period for the Blue Book Review. But perhaps more importantly, the Board contrasted the inconsistency of the MOEE's favourable Blue Book Review before the Hearing with the positions taken by MOEE staff and other review agencies at the Hearing itself.

The Board was critical that important issues, including contaminating lifespan and liner performance, had not been resolved to their satisfaction. The Board referred to a number of MOEE policies that it felt had not been adequately applied in this instance.

### CONCLUSION: IS THE EA PROCESS TOO DEMANDING?

The Steetley and OWMC Decisions clarify the Board's expectations in a number of areas of Environmental Assessment:

- Iteration is a fundamental aspect of Environmental Assessment. When conditions or technical findings change, the planning process should be reviewed to assess whether the selected or preferred option(s) are affected.
- MOEE advice is important. MOEE is taking great strides to clarify requirements and advice for facility proponents and reviewers. However, proponents should weigh this advice equally with advice received from independent consultants.
- The integrity of an environmental assessment process is essential and must be "rational, traceable and consistent." This holds, without compromise, for both private and public proponents.
- Public consultation processes must be treated with much respect and discipline as technical evaluations. A meaningful process is paramount for both private and public sector EAs. MOEE Policy Guidelines are essential in drafting a public consultation plan.
- Social impact assessment studies are essential to the EA process.
- Finally, private-sector proponents within the EA process should operate as if they have the resources and responsibilities of a public sector proponent. This includes having regard for scientific and engineering analysis, considering broad site searches, including on lands not owned by the proponent, making the decision to proceed to a Hearing on the basis of the widest possible range of information and advice.
- Previous EA decisions (the first North Simcoe decision, Storrington, Meaford, St. Vincent and others) have reinforced the need for these considerations, but none so clearly as the OWMC and Steetley decisions.

There is concern among EA proponents

that the process itself is flawed, and that the expectations set out in board decisions are unattainable. This is leading to further pressure to streamline the environmental assessment planning process. If environmental assessment planning principles are compromised to a significant degree, however, other considerations such as political expediency, will surely play a greater role in decisions to locate major facilities. We do not believe this situation would be acceptable to a public that has come to expect consultation, involvement, and accountability in decisions that affect their well-being.

*Dave Hardy, MCIP, RPP, is a Principal of the land-use and environmental planning, social science and public consultation practice of Hardy Stevenson and Associates Limited. Mr. Hardy testified on behalf of GASP at the Steetley Hearing. He is the Journal's contributing editor on environmental issues, and a member of the Publications Committee.*

*Steven Rowe, MCIP, RPP, is a Senior Associate with the planning, urban design, and environmental assessment firm of Walker, Nott, Dragicevic Associates Limited. Mr. Rowe testified on behalf of the Tri-Parties at the OWMC Hearing. He is a frequent contributor to the Journal.*

*The views expressed here are those of Hardy, Stevenson Associates Limited and Walker, Nott, Dragicevic, Associates Limited, and do not necessarily reflect those of their clients.*

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# Listowel Plans for Commercial Growth

COMMERCIAL NEEDS PLANNING IN SMALL URBAN CENTRES CAN PAY DIVIDENDS

By Brenton G. Toderian and W. Brent Clarkson

Listowel is an excellent example of what many Ontario towns are striving to become: a community with a thriving commercial sector, a healthy downtown core, and moderate but sustainable population growth. Like many other small communities, however, Listowel is experiencing commercial development pressures both inside and outside the town boundaries.

In late 1993, when the adjacent township of Wallace received an application to develop a 52-acre property as a 150,000 square-foot shopping centre in the urban-rural fringe about one kilometre north of the Listowel border, Listowel Council decided to review its official plan, paying special attention to the plan's commercial policies. Faced with the need to assess commercial pressures but recognizing that the official plan policies dated back to 1986, Council asked the question, "What is best for the Town of Listowel?"

More detailed information and investigation was clearly required. Listowel Council retained MacNaughton Hermsen Britton Clarkson Planning Ltd. to manage the project, prepare background data and undertake the planning analysis; W. Scott Morgan was retained to complete the market analysis. Throughout the study, the planning and market analysis were carefully integrated to ensure that the results were comprehensive and reliable.

Listowel has a population of about 5,000. It serves a large rural community, as well as neighbouring Wingham, Palmerston and Drayton. The downtown has a very low vacancy rate, a good diversity of commercial uses, and an abundance of professional,

financial and medical offices. As with most Ontario towns this size, Listowel wanted to keep the commercial structure competitive, and minimize spending outflow to larger municipalities. Although the Council was receptive to the idea of commercial growth, it was considered imperative that such growth be accommodated in ways that would maintain, and possibly enhance, the health and planned function of the downtown core.

The study objectives were to determine the present and future needs for commercial space, and to identify the best locations for future commercial growth if the need was demonstrated.

The project team undertook the analysis on a macro level without specific emphasis on the competing proposals. To determine the level of commercial growth that could be supported by existing and future trade areas, the team carried out a detailed market analysis. Unlike most market studies submitted in support of, or in response to particular applications, this process was completed in an open and participatory manner, by a neutral party focusing on the best interests of the Town. To accomplish this, the study team worked closely with Listowel Town Council and Planning Advisory Committee, the Perth County Planning Department, the Listowel business community, the residents of Listowel and the surrounding townships.

The study included a detailed analysis of floor space, parking and other physical factors affecting market potential. Primary and secondary trade areas were identified with the help of a comprehensive telephone survey, and estimates of future retail potential were calculated. Finally, the team recommended preferred locations within Listowel for new or expanded retail facilities, based on an exhaustive set of criteria.

Although the team made every effort to find suitable locations in the core for additional commercial development, the recom-

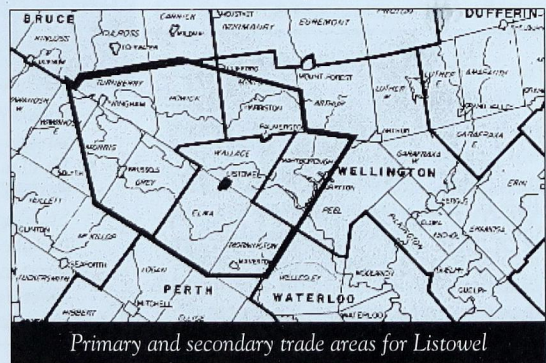
mended site proved to be a location at the edge of the built-up area, but still within Listowel's borders.

As part of the communication process, the head of the project team made presentations to service clubs and other community groups. At the conclusion of the project, an open house was held that attracted a large and very supportive turnout. Many residents commended the Town for taking the initiative to complete such a study.

This type of commercial needs study is by no means unique in Ontario. Municipalities such as Peterborough, Gravenhurst, Huntsville and Simcoe have undertaken similar reviews, in the hope of maintaining the health of their downtown cores.

W. Brent Clarkson and Brenton Toderian are with the planning firm of MacNaughton Hermsen Britton Clarkson Planning Limited. Mr. Clarkson acted as the Project Manager for the Listowel Retail Market Analysis and Commercial Needs Study.

*Editor's note: After the Commercial Needs Study was completed, Listowel Council approved an amendment to the official plan and zoning by-law to permit commercial development recommended in the study. These approvals were not referred to the OMB by the original applicant for the site north of Listowel but the issuance of a building permit has been challenged in the courts. Look for an update in a future issue of the Journal.*



Primary and secondary trade areas for Listowel

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# No big boxes please. We're British.

By Glenn Miller

In jurisdictions as different as Ontario, Britain and the U.S., authorities are concerned about the impact of new retail formats on the viability of existing facilities, although approaches to dealing with these concerns differ widely. This article looks at the situation in Britain.

The focus of planning has traditionally been on striking a balance between protecting the economic health of Main Street shopping precincts and the desire to stimulate new investment by granting planning per-

mission to retail parks in out-of-town locations. Government policy is set out in "advisories," which are roughly equivalent to Ontario's provincial policy statements. Retail disputes are argued at public hearings, but settled in private by the Minister of Environment. In recent times, out-of-town investments have been favoured.

With the government's tacit blessing, out-of-town shopping centres mushroomed across the landscape during the 1980s, often against the wishes of local authorities. Retail parks can now be found at major interchanges throughout Britain, and there has been a minor revolution in retail patterns, led by an increasingly mobile, affluent shopping public.

Recent revisions to two government advisories on the subject of large retail projects and traffic issues seem to signal that the pendulum has begun to swing in favour of providing additional protection for downtown retailing at the expense of approvals for car-oriented big box retail projects.

When advisories are re-issued, the reverberations are widely felt, as public-sector planners and private consultants scurry to establish the high ground in public opinion. To add to the confusion, there is a considerable time lag between the policy's release and the first disputes evaluated by the Minister on the basis of the new policies. In the intervening period, those with real estate investments at risk are placed in a difficult position.

The first hint that the government was considering a change of direction was the

release of a 1994 background report, "Shopping Centres and their Future." The tone of the report caused some real estate companies to immediately scale back investment plans, while others revamped their strategies for a better fit with the government's presumed intentions. Emerging government policies also appear to be shifting the burden of proof concerning impact on existing facilities from the local authority to the developer.

**"I shall not allow the countryside to be despoiled by ill-sited and ill-designed retail parks," said one minister of the Crown.**

While the private sector worries about increased costs to perfect an application, local municipalities are concerned that large-stake investors may prefer to take their chances with the Minister of Environment rather than take the time to negotiate with local authorities. Here in Ontario, critics of OMB practice complain that the opposite is happening, with the burden of proof regarding impact shifting from developers to those opposed to a project.

The latest advisories have also broadened the scope of the debate in Britain to take into account the impact of big box warehouse stores and other out of town retailing on the competitiveness of schemes to stimulate city centre regeneration. Authorities are also presented with an environmental dilemma because of increased reliance on cars for all types of shopping trips. Proponents argue that city centre retail projects need to provide massive amounts of parking to compete effectively with big box highway locations, while others are concerned that too much parking downtown will create levels of pollution that will ultimately frustrate regeneration objectives.

One positive outcome of the retail debate in Britain is that all parties agree there is a need for the departments of Environment and Transport to work closely with the retail industry to develop a new format for collecting retail information. (See the next Journal regarding a proposal to improve the quality of data collection in Ontario.)

Another key difference in Britain is that "good planning" is broadly defined to include opinion on aesthetic issues, which

means that large retail projects in green-field locations can be rejected on the basis of visual impact on the countryside. Nevertheless, despite criticism of big boxes ("I shall not allow the countryside to be despoiled by ill-sited and ill-designed retail parks," said one minister of the Crown), the big box is now firmly established. In 1993, the Minister of the Environment ruled that Britain's first big box membership warehouse store could proceed on the grounds that it was not a retail establishment.

Yet, within six months of the store's opening, the government issued a correction, directing municipal planners in future to evaluate warehouse clubs as retail projects.

*Glenn Miller is Editor of the Journal. This is the second in a continuing series on big box retailing.*



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# The Lowville Project: A Healthy Community for Aging in Place

By Russell Mawby



he Lowville Project began three years ago when a group of residents of this rural village realized that they would have to leave the area as they got older. Many of them had lived there all of their lives, some

in houses that had been in the family for generations. They were not happy about the prospect of moving to one of the many seniors villages in urban Burlington, a city of 100,000 on Lake Ontario to the south.

Lowville is in the Regional Municipality of Halton, about 60 km west of Toronto, in the middle of the Niagara Escarpment. The area suffers from an abundance of beautiful countryside, resulting in a dignified but relentless sprawl of large-lot estate homes. It was this low-density upscale conversion of farmland that scattered Lowville's population in the 1970s, leaving behind a lonely general store to mark the site of a quiet rural village. The problem for the Lowville group was that the population density was now too low to justify the support services they increasingly desired as they grew older.

A few years ago, this group tried to find someone to develop a housing project that would also provide a focus around which some community services could be established, such as a weekly health clinic or a community kitchen for "meals on wheels." They had no success, partly because of the worsening economic climate, but also because it was perceived there was no market for independent seniors housing.

The group had all but given up when they heard about the concept of cohousing, which promotes the idea of groups working together to build their own vision of

good housing. With help and encouragement from the Collaborative Housing Society and many others, they pulled together a vision of the community they wanted to live in, and recently began working with Scott

Sutherland and Son, a local developer and Karp Namisniak Yamamoto Architects to make this vision a reality. The project is currently in the approvals process. The projected move-in date is the summer of 1996.

Ellis Katsof of Halton Region Community Services was an early supporter of the project, and offered invaluable encouragement and advice. After some initial reluctance, the group formally contacted the Halton Region Planning Department, and were pleasantly surprised by the helpfulness and support offered by Patrick Murphy, director of development review, as well as Gary Goodman, former director of the City of Burlington Planning and Development Group. The planning staff helped the group analyse where they could build, and to understand the processes required to secure approval. In return, the Lowville group helped the planners re-examine practices that might have impeded the development of a healthy community.

For example, Halton is facing problems with water supply and treatment in all areas outside Burlington. As a result, the region limits housing density in rural settlement areas to one house per four acres. This had always been interpreted as a single-family, detached dwelling surrounded by four acres of land, to allow separate septic systems, and in most cases, separate wells. The Lowville group encouraged the region to accept that on a parcel of 100 acres, for example, 25 homes could be clustered onto 4 acres, leaving the remainder as open space, with shared septic systems and wells – a concept that is not always well received.

*cont'd. page 24*



Planning a future healthy community

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**F**rom the first supercharged moments before the plenary session when several thousand delegates filled the Grand Ballroom of the Sheraton to overflowing, to the last session on the last day, when delegates were still pushing impatiently to get seats, this conference was an extraordinary experience. Definitely not for people who dislike crowds! A near-record attendance, boosted by more than 500 Canadian registrants, ensured that this conference was also a financial success, a matter of some importance to the three sponsoring organizations. And for those interested



David Crombie

in content, there was a rich - some would say, overwhelming - choice of speakers and tours.

Throughout the five days, conference chair Rick Tomaszewicz and other organizers could be seen

answering questions, directing traffic and generally beaming in delight at the sheer energy of the event. This was also a remarkable exercise in how far volunteer support can be stretched. OPPI's band of helpers, who bore the brunt of the work, deserve special recognition, as does the OPPI office staff, who worked tirelessly with APA's professional conference team.

Like all such events, the experience is now just a kaleidoscope of selective memories. Here are some of mine.

**Number one:** Honourary chair David

## Joint APA/CIP/OPPI conference not for the faint-hearted

Crombie did us proud on many occasions, going beyond the perfunctory to add his own brand of humour and insight to several speeches, and, during the APA awards ceremony, ad libbed continuity. He was the unyielding human factor throughout the very slick a/v presentation, who granted winners unscripted time at the microphone, much to the delight of the audience and the agony of the ceremony's organizers.

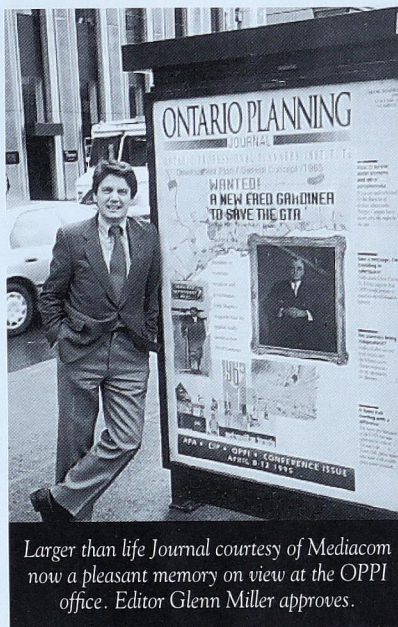
**Number two:** The elegance of two levels of the Eaton Centre dressed up as the world's largest drawing room for a unique cocktail party for the opening reception. Choosing this venue was a stroke of genius!

**Number three:** The transit shelter space generously donated by Mediacom that put an enlarged cover of the Journal in full view of conference goers and the public. Visitors were also treated to large welcoming billboards located in strategic spots.

**Number four:** The best value among many excellent performances was (for my money) provided by David Foot, an expatriot Australian who specializes in economic demography (or was it demographic economics?) at the U. of Toronto. He held several hundred delegates spellbound for more than two hours with a larger than life presentation that was better entertainment than Letterman (and more memorable too!).

**Number five:** The indelible impression of professionalism stamped on the conference program by our Ontario consultants, through their sponsorship, speeches and omnipresence during the five days.

Glenn Miller,  
Editor



Larger than life Journal courtesy of Mediacom now a pleasant memory on view at the OPPI office. Editor Glenn Miller approves.

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**BIG BOX A GOOD READ**

I enjoyed very much reading the informative articles on the planning considerations and the economic factors allowing for the establishment of Big Box Retailers.

Having recently visited Home Depot on several occasions to complete a small household project, I encountered another reason for the growth of Big Box stores; the reason, simply, is attention to service. I have to contrast this experience with dog

day afternoons spend in local stores trying to find a service person who could answer a product-related question instead of just referring me to the pertinent instructions on the back of a blister package.

Canadian retailers are going to have to work harder to supply "just in time" service to maintain their market share.

Gary A. McKay

(Mr McKay is a solicitor with the City of Vaughan. He is an occasional contributor to the Journal and has been a subscriber for many years.)

**URBAN PARK ARTICLE ON THE MARK**

Dictionary of design excess: money, materials, maintenance and message.

May the perpetrators spend an eternity of shadeless, searing summer lunch hours ingesting hot-dogs while the concrete seating 'doughnuts' assail their buns.

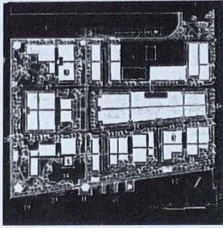
Philip Weinstein

**B.C. REFORM OFFERS INDISPENSABLE FRAMEWORK FOR ECOSYSTEM-BASED PLANNING**

The past couple of years have seen two sets of proposals for the comprehensive reform of provincial planning systems, one in Ontario and one in British Columbia. The contrast between them is striking.

There is no doubt that the Sewell recommendations and the legislation that followed mark an important step forward, particularly with regard to environmental planning. But they adhere firmly to Ontario's traditional presumption that in the municipally-organized parts of the province, however circumscribed it may be by provincial policy statements and other constraints, land use planning means municipal planning.

Given the complete lack of congruence between municipal boundaries and natural units or systems of any kind, and given also the enormous variation in resources, capability and commitment among Ontario's municipalities, this seems an extraordinarily inefficient way of producing the needed information and using professional expertise. More important, it is hard to see how the new regime can be expected to produce a reasonably uniform level of effective, ecologically-based land use planning throughout Ontario. A coherent, province-

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wide system of planning for sustainable development and land use is not even a possibility. In fact, I don't recall seeing the S-word anywhere in the Sewell Report; it certainly doesn't occur either in the "Purposes of Planning" defined by the Commission, or in the "Goals" of the new Policy Statements.

In short, the latest round of reforms has brought planning in Ontario to where the previous round might reasonably have been expected to take it (but didn't) a dozen years ago. It certainly hasn't brought it into the post-World Conservation Strategy, post-Brundtland era. What was that about

generals preparing to fight the last war?

Compare the approach taken by British Columbia's Commission on Resources and Environment (CORE). In a recent report significantly entitled Planning for Sustainability, CORE recommends a comprehensive planning system for B.C., from the provincial to the local level, with sustainable development as its explicit goal. CORE's proposed system includes, as a key element, the regional and sub-regional level of planning the Sewell Commission steadfastly refused to consider, though it is the logical and indeed indispensable framework for ecosystem-based planning. (Note

that CORE is referring to true geographical regions and sub-regions, not to be confused with Ontario's misnamed "regional" municipalities.) B.C.'s municipalities would continue to have an important role, but CORE was not blinkered by obsolete assumptions about municipal primacy in planning.

Ironically, just two years before the Sewell Commission reported, another Royal Commission clearly indicated the right direction for planning in Ontario. Unfortunately, we chose John Sewell's path instead of David Crombie's.

*Nigel H. Richardson, M.C.I.P.*

## PROVINCIAL NEWS

# Niagara Tender Fruitlands Program Aims at Protecting Sector



The Provincial Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs has recently launched a \$20 million "Niagara Tender Fruit Lands Program". Tender fruit growers in the Niagara Region may now apply to a program designed to protect their agricultural lands.

The program is intended to help sustain the long-term viability of Niagara's tender fruit industry and reinforce the actions of local, regional and provincial governments.

Under the program, an eligible tender fruit land owner may volunteer to sign a restrictive covenant, which is then registered on title. It requires that current and future owners not do anything that would make the land unusable for tender fruit production.

In exchange for signing the agreement, the landowner receives a payment from the program. The amount is determined by a complex formula which takes into account the threat of conversion of the land to non-agricultural uses as well as agricultural considerations.

The Niagara Tender Fruit Lands Program is restricted to the tender fruit lands of Grimsby, Lincoln, Pelham, St. Catharines and Niagara-on-the-Lake in the Regional Municipality of Niagara. Detailed maps showing the exact locations of eligible areas and more information about the program is available from the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario, the Planning and Development Department of the Region of Niagara, and the Land Use Planning Branch of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

*Editor's note: An article by Corwin Cambray about how this program was*

*conceived and implemented will appear in an upcoming issue of the Journal.*

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# Robert D. Putnam. Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy

Princeton U Press, Princeton, NJ, 1993, 258 pages (with Robert Leonardi and Raffaella Y. Nanetti)  
 Review by Michael Johnson



concise and highly readable result of a 25-year examination of the performance of newly-established regional governments in Italy, this work deserves to become one of THE basic books in the field of governance. One of the co-authors is an academic in the planning field, and, although the book mentions planning only in passing, it deals with concepts and evaluative measures of interest to any planner

working for, with or against government.

The central observation of *Making Democracy Work* is that great differences in institutional performance have developed among the new regional governments, in spite of their common legislative origins and fiscal resources. The crucial element governing their ultimate effectiveness was found to be the health of the civic community. Successful regions have active, public-spirited citizens with egalitarian political relations, resulting in a social fabric of trust and cooperation. Dysfunctional regions are characterized by vertically-structured patron-client politics, a social life of fragmentation and isolation, and a culture of distrust.

The differences between northern and southern Italy reflect the past. The vibrant new social order of the northern city-states helped make them an economic powerhouse, "inventing" both capitalism and the Renaissance. In subsequent periods, their economies faltered and at times fell behind that of the south, but a greater degree of civic-mindedness persisted. The authors demonstrate that even if this did not always lead to maximum material success, it allowed regions with "norms of reciprocity and net-

works of civic engagement" to take advantage of opportunities more than their "uncivic" counterparts.

The solidarity and trust engendered in a highly civic milieu neither depends upon nor guarantees a general political consensus. However, political conflict can occur without damaging the overall system if there is a basis of mutual trust. By contrast, in areas governed by "amoral familism" there is greater reliance on strong leaders and coercive measures, because the social fabric is too weak to cope with political differences. At the same time, a lower level of civic life makes policing that much harder, as ongoing problems with various mafias demonstrate. (Significant southern proverb: "Damned is he who trusts another.")


The authors conclude that there are two social equilibria: the virtuous, characterized by cooperation, trust (not gullibility), reciprocity, civic engagement and collective well-being, all mutually reinforcing; and the uncivic, typified by defection, distrust, shirking, exploitation, isolation, disorder and stagnation. The social pathology engendered by the latter conditions (also mutually reinforcing) is rational under this set of "rules," making the transition from one set of conditions to the other a difficult process.

*Michael Johnson regularly reviews books for the Journal. Thanks to David Crombie for the suggestion to review this book.*

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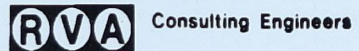
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# OPPI Notebook

A BI-MONTHLY ROUNDUP OF OPPI COUNCIL NEWS AND ACTION

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

About 60% of OPPI members are employed in the public sector. Many of you work for municipal corporations. As a result of our open democratic planning process, the relationship of municipal planners to their employers (elected officials) comes under intense public scrutiny at times. Staff recommendations on specific development proposals are not always accepted by the council, and the planner is called upon to express his or her professional opinion on the matter before a judicial tribunal such as the Ontario Municipal Board.

I have come across several municipal planners recently who are concerned about their professional relationship with their councils. An OMB hearing that took place in southern Ontario in 1990 serves to illustrate the dilemma faced by municipal planners. A planner supported a development application denied by council. The applicant appealed the council's decision to the OMB and subpoenaed the planner as a witness. But the city instructed the planner to limit his evidence to his report and not to review the reports of the consulting planner hired by the city. The role of the planner as a witness became an issue. The following excerpt from the Board's decision provides some guidance:

"When a summons to witness has been properly served, the witness has an obligation to appear before the Board and to give his or her evidence in an honest, unfettered manner. A professional person such as a planner is

required to give as evidence his honest opinion on the matters on which he has expertise. His evidence is not to be fettered or limited by himself, fear of his employer or contrary instructions received from any person or organization.

"In our democratic system of municipal government, councils have the right and discretion to accept or reject the advice of staff and to vote accordingly. A council does not, however, have the right to order an employee to tailor his evidence before any tribunal, whether the Board or a court."

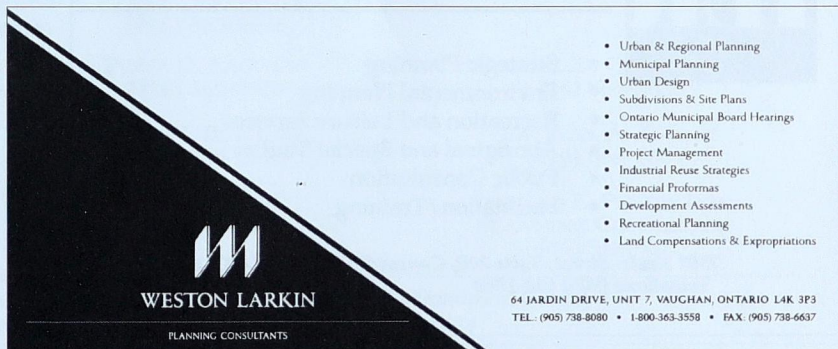
The Board further ruled that the city, "in attempting to curtail the planner's evidence before the Board was improper and that this was an attempt to impair the Board's ability to carry out its function mandated by the Legislature in the Planning Act in that the Board must rely on good, sound and frank evidence, from all witnesses, including and perhaps especially that of the municipal planner, to make decisions in the public interest."

As we have attained registration under the OPPI Act, the professionalism of our members comes under great public scrutiny. The ability of planners, particularly those who work for municipal governments, to speak and act independently is essential to maintaining our profession's credibility.

...

On behalf of OPPI Council, I would like to thank the Toronto Conference Committee and many volunteers who collectively contributed to the success of the joint APA/CIP/OPPI Conference. This was a job well done!

Philip Wong



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# OPPI ACT - PLANNERS COME OF AGE

By Tony Usher

November 24, 1989. The OPPI AGM in Toronto. Moved by George Rich, seconded by Mark Dorfman, carried with one against: "That Council establish a working group to bring forward an application to the Ontario Legislature for a private bill recognizing OPPI and professional planners."

I believe it was John Diefenbaker who said, "It's a long road that has no ashcans." Well, we've had a few on this particular road, which has wound its way through two governments, three ministers and three deputy ministers of Municipal Affairs, and four presidents and three executive directors of OPPI.

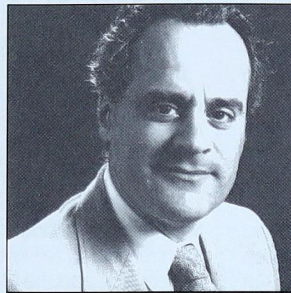
Recognition and registration of the profession was a decades-old

dream for visionaries like George and Mark. But the time wasn't ripe until 1989, when our new province-wide Institute had had a couple of years to get established. The working group was set up and the initial drafting and reviewing of the Bill proceeded quietly. For most OPPI members, the Bill was desirable but still no big deal.

Fast forward to December 10, 1991. I had just become President-Elect and a member of the working group. We went to a meeting with MMA representatives that we thought would resolve a few remaining concerns with the draft Bill. Instead, it quickly became clear that something was going wrong. This culminated in a thumbs down letter from the then minister, Dave Cooke, four months

later. For the next year, we tried all the polite backroom approaches we could, and got nowhere.

These frustrations strengthened



Tony Usher

our commitment and stiffened our resolve. Also, 1993 brought with it a new minister, Ed Philip, a new deputy, Stien Lal, and therefore new opportunities. Council wrote to the members in February 1993 and asked them to get political. You wrote a big pile of letters to MPPs. Some of you made phone calls that we know about, and I'm sure some of you made calls we don't know about.

On May 18, 1993, I met with Stien Lal. It didn't start well. The deputy had in his hand a draft of a letter from Ed Philip reiterating

Dave Cooke's position. By the end of the meeting, that letter was history and we had agreed on a process to negotiate a mutually acceptable

draft Bill.

I'm not going to tell you that my persuasive powers, such as they are, saved the day. I don't know and I don't expect ever to know just what did. But I'm convinced that your lobbying in the months leading up to that meeting made the difference. In adversity, we planners did something we have all too seldom done. We stood up for ourselves.

From then on, things moved ahead smartly and smoothly. Mr. Lal appointed Meredith Beresford as his negotiator. Meredith epitomized professionalism in all her dealings with us. Within six months, we had agreed on a draft Bill ready to submit to legislative counsel. A year later, with the help and support of our sponsoring MPP, Tony Martin, we had an Act.

November 23, 1994. Five years less a day from when we started, the Private Bills Committee reported our Bill to the House, and for all intents and purposes, we were through. Mark Dorfman said it best: "Today the planning profession came of age."

The OPPI Act was everyone's accomplishment. Even if all you did was to practice planning with integrity and in accordance with our common values, you were making a statement about our profession and its merits. It was time for the Act. We gained it together. It belongs to us all.

*This piece is adapted from remarks made by past-president Tony Usher at the RPP Celebration in February.*

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## GETTING ON WITH OUR ACT!

By Mark Dorfman

When the Lieutenant Governor gave his assent, he signalled public confirmation of the Registered Professional Planner. Now, the onus is upon us to use our position in society in the public interest rather than our own. This is the time to pause and reflect upon the commitments that we have made to the public.

Take Section 3 of the OPPI Act: it is a constant reminder of how we are expected to behave as professionals.

The four outward looking objectives are:

- to promote the value, use and methods of planning;
- to improve the quality of Ontario environments and communities by the application of planning principles;
- to encourage participation and cooperation among those persons, associations and groups concerned with improving the quality of Ontario environments and communities;
- to stimulate the generation, development, dissemination and discussion of ideas on planning.

There is something liberating about these value statements. In my view, I believe we have moved as a group from adolescence to adulthood. This is rather refreshing in these turbulent times. We obviously risk public exposure and criticism when we influence public policy and freely speak

out on public issues.

These values are not necessarily different from those of the public in general. Our mission has always been reform and our direction is always the future. As a professional community, we can contribute without being assimilated or losing our public identity, yet still stand apart.

If we continue to balance public interest and private rights, our challenge is to regard government intervention from a strong base of fundamental precepts and values. We need thinkers who can assemble information and experience in a cohesive manner and communicate these ideas to the profession and to the community.

The words to remember are "value," "quality," "participation," "cooperation," "ideas," "environments" and "communities."

Let us be secure with our stated values and move on.

*Mark Dorfman was a member of the Private Bill Working Group.*

## ELECTIONS 1995

The Nominations Committee is preparing a full slate of nominations for President-Elect (1995-96) and District Representatives (1995-1997) on the OPPI Council. Full members interested in contributing to OPPI by standing for election should contact Jeff Celentano, Chair, Nominations Committee, at (705) 474-0400.

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## COUNCIL REPORT: OPPI TO PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR RECENT GRADUATES, EXPAND DELIVERY OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

Susan Smith, Executive Director

OPPI Council met in Kingston on February 17, 1995, and in Toronto on April 7. The following are highlights of the decisions and actions of Council.

### OPPI PRESENCE AT EASTERN ONTARIO PLANNING CONFERENCE

Robert Maddocks, Chair of the Professional

Development Committee reported on successful negotiations with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs' Kingston Regional Office and the Ontario East Economic Development Commission to sponsor a professional development session in conjunction with MMA's Eastern Ontario Planning Conference in September 1995.

### RECENT GRADUATES WORKING GROUP

Council reviewed a report submitted by an OPPI discussion group. Six provisional members met to discuss the current employment realities facing new and recent graduates, and what role OPPI might play in assisting these members. Funding and administrative support were approved to help the group:

- serving as a forum for discussion on career-related issues affecting recent graduates;
- supporting and advising on activities undertaken by OPPI and its committees at the provincial and district levels;
- helping to stimulate the development of strategies on career-related issues affecting recent graduates;
- informing OPPI members through the Journal.

### CITIZENS PLANNING INSTITUTE

David Hardy (Hardy Stevenson Associates) and Russell Mawby of the Citizens Planning Institute (CPI) gave Council an overview of the CPI. Their objectives include referring citizens' groups to sources of advice; educating the general public; and advocating good planning. OPPI and CPI may work together on some initiatives once the institute is formed.

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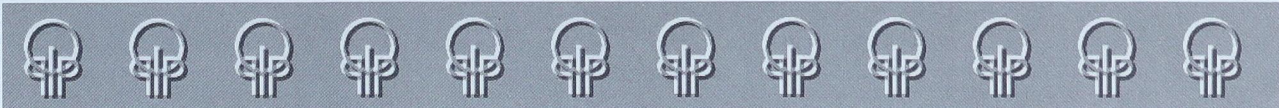
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## PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

by Ron Shishido

The Planning Reform Program of the Province of Ontario came into effect on March 28, 1995. The time for skepticism and complaints has passed and the planning community is getting on with the job of understanding and working with the reform package. Because there is a lot to digest in this comprehensive package of legislation, regulations, policy statements, implementation guidelines and administrative processes and procedures, there is a great demand for information from the planning community. Responding to requests for information from

our private-sector members, we solicited the participation of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs in a planning reform session organized by OPPI and OSEM. This session complemented the education and training sessions offered by the government to the public sector across the province. Two sessions were delivered to 140 participants in February and March, and a third session is planned for April.

In conjunction with the "second wave" of education and training being planned by the province, OPPI is working with Municipal Affairs and other line ministries to deliver information programs on specific aspects of Planning Reform such as natural heritage and environmental protection policies and implementation guidelines over the coming months.

Clearly, OPPI has a role to play in delivering education and training programs on Planning Reform to the planning community. While initially neither contemplating nor being geared up for that role, our volunteer members have stepped forward to meet that challenge. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the efforts of Ann Joyner, Pat Murphy, Tony Usher, Wendy Nott, Tom Lemon and Cynthia Rattle, ably supported by Susan Smith. OPPI members interested in getting involved in future Public Policy Committee initiatives should fax me at (416) 229-4692.

*Ron Shishido is the Chair of the Public Policy Committee. He wouldn't say it, but Ron worked harder than anyone.*

### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING, WHO WERE RECENTLY ELECTED TO FULL MEMBERSHIP

Glen W. Broll	CD	City of Mississauga
Christopher Darling	CD	Regional Municipality of Durham
Stephen D. Fahner	CD	Township of Muskoka Lakes
Albert E. Flooman	SD	City of Sarnia
Stephen W. Hankinson	SD	City of Sarnia
Gary L. Heine	CD	Johnson Sustronk Weinstein & Associates Ltd.
Lars A. Hurlen	CD	Hurlen Environmental
Craig R. Metzger	SD	County of Huron
Yurij M. Pelech	CD	Lush Properties Inc.
Joe Perrotta	CD	Ministry of Municipal Affairs
Stephen J. Plance	CD	Proctor & Redfern Limited
Loretta Ryan	CD	Ministry of Municipal Affairs
Betty E.M. Summerhayes	SD	Ministry of Agriculture & Food
Robert A. Trotter	SD	Corp. of the City of Cambridge
Colleen T. Veitch	CD	Town of Huntsville

### ELECTED TO PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP:

Duraisamy Balam	CD	NorthSouth Consulting and Policy Services
Gholam Iran-Manesh	CD	
Nina-Marie E. Lister	CD	
Alain Miguélez	ED	National Capital Commission
B. Stephen Onyskay	CD	Ryerson Polytechnic University
Anthony H. Parker	CD	
Paula M. Pescador	CD	
Thomas J.G. Plamondon	CD	Weston Larkin
Matthew Powers	CD	Town of Whitby
Manon Robert	ED	Town of Hawkesbury
Susan A. Smallwood	CD	City of York
Steven L. Ward	ED	Lombard North Group (1980) Ltd.

## MANY THANKS TO THE 1995 APA/CIP/OPPI CONFERENCE GOLD AND SILVER SPONSORS

### GOLD

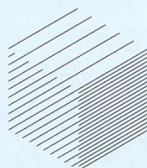


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**Barry Peyton, Holly Spacek, Bohdan Wynnycky, Ron Shishido, David Parks, Andrew Fyfe, Paul Moore and Gary Bell gathered in Orillia**

what does this mean in practice?

*Question: How many planners does it take to implement Bill 163? Answer: Three. One to explain the guidelines, and at least two to carry them.*

This is the first contribution by Todd Stocks in his capacity as editorial coordinator for Simcoe-Muskoka sub-district.

*Todd is a planner with the Township of Tiny.*



## MARCH 28TH MADNESS IN SIMCOE-MUSKOKA

Simcoe-Muskoka Planners held an organizational meeting in early March at the Sundial Inn in Orillia. Rich Vandezande of Ainley and Associates Ltd. in Barrie was elected as our Board of Management representative; and Angela Rudy, also of Barrie, was elected Secretary.

On March 28, 10 area planners and lawyers convened for a workshop in Barrie entitled "After The Act," to discuss the implications of Bill 163. An issue raised at the meeting concerned the potential liability of a planner providing a sworn statement in an OPA submission to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs that all information contained in the application form and accompanying documents is "true." For example, under most circumstances, the contamination of a site by former uses or adjacent sites is impossible to affirm with absolute certainty. The group is working towards developing a draft Official Plan Amendment Application Form which can be used by the area planners. For further information on this issue please contact Andrew Fyfe at (705) 325-1311.

Also in the works is an evening seminar on professional ethics/code of conduct, which has been tentatively scheduled for mid-June. Now that we have legislation which recognizes OPPI members as "Registered Professional Planners,"

*with the Township of Tiny.*

## PETERBOROUGH AND AREA PLANNERS WORK WITH OTHER PROFESSIONS

The Peterborough and Area Planners Steering Committee organized a series of events of interest to planning professionals as well as others associated with the planning and development community.

The first was a Planners Town Hall Meeting, held in May. During an entertaining and provocative two hours, planners heard first hand the views of the three provincial political parties. A moderator ensured that all parties received their fair share of air time! Extending the invitation to professionals in related fields as well as interested planners proved a popular move.

The second series of events, modelled in part after the program sponsored by the GTA sub-district, began in late April with media-tion awareness. A three-part evening session program is planned. Future events, the details of which are being finalized, include:

- Bill 163 "hands-on" workshops
- summer social event
- Facilitating Skills Workshop (three-part program)
- annual Christmas party

To learn more, please contact Kevin M. Duguay, at the City of Peterborough Planning Department. Telephone (705) 748-8880 or fax (705) 742-5218.

*Kevin Duguay is the editorial coordinator for Peterborough Sub-district.*



## WINTER CITIES 1995

In 1991, the Soviet Union had sent a large delegation to the Winter Cities Forum '91 hosted by the City of Sault Ste. Marie. As a gesture of support and appreciation, the Sault Ste. Marie Winter Cities Association sent a three member delegation to the 1995 Winter Cities conference, hosted by the Russian Commonwealth of Independent States in Bratsk this February. The conference attracted approximately 500 delegates. Representation was mostly local, although two future Winter City conferences (Marquette, Michigan, and Winnipeg, Manitoba) were also represented.

The city of Bratsk is 600 kilometres north of Lake Baikal in central Siberia. It is a Winter City in the truest sense of the word! Although Bratsk did not exist before 1954, it is now a busy industrial city of 265,000 people. Bratsk's main claim to fame is that it is the site of the second largest hydro electric dam in the world.

Bratsk is a city undergoing massive change and its hope is to gain international assistance in adjusting to the realities of a new economy and a new form of government.

These are exciting times in the old USSR and it was educational and enlightening to see the changes that are taking place first hand.

All three members of the Sault's delegation are committed to speak and make whatever representations are required to inform the public about their trip to Siberia.

If you would like more information, call Joe Sniezek at (705) 759-5373.

## SUDBURY'S DOWNTOWN ACTION AGENDA

Over the summer of 1994, "Citizens for a Better Sudbury," a citizen's action group, expressed the need to promote the role of downtown Sudbury in northeastern Ontario. Downtown Sudbury is northeastern Ontario's largest concentration of government offices, financial, banking, medical, social and legal services and retail stores. Over 700 offices and businesses employ over 9,000 people.

Whether downtown Sudbury is revitalized or declines therefore has major repercussions on the economic and social fabric not only of

## OPPI SUDBURY '96

(AUGUST 11 - 14, 1996)

### PLANNING ON THE ROCKS: CRISIS OR OPPORTUNITY

#### CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

CONSIDER MAKING A PRESENTATION AT  
THE 1996 OPPI CONFERENCE!!

#### CRITERIA:

Have you been working on something lately that exemplifies planning on the rocks? Have you been involved with a group that has turned a planning crisis into a new opportunity? Are you working on a special project that addresses any of the following themes or subthemes for the Sudbury '96 conference?

#### THE ROLE OF PLANNERS:

- The Profession in Crisis
- Planners - All Things to All People?
- New Non-Traditional Planners
- The New Role of the Planner

#### PLAYERS IN THE SYSTEM:

- Our Cumbersome Planning Process
- Innovative Partnerships with First Nations
- The Increasing Role of Grassroots Groups
- New Approaches to Economic Development
- Well Being of Communities:
- No-Growth Communities
- Planning in the New Economy - Doing More with Less

#### THE ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS

- Social Planning - Housing and Homelessness
- Sustainable Ecosystem Management and Planning
- Streamlined Environmental Assessment for Landfills
- Alternative Design for Sustainable Development

#### ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES:

- The Political Process - Who's in Charge?
- New Aboriginal Planning
- Environmental Bill of Rights

#### TECHNOLOGIES:

- Will New Technology Lead to Job Loss
- The New Use of Technologies

Even if your work does not fit directly into any of the above themes, we still want to hear from you. Contact Heather Robertson at (705) 670-5942 or fax (705) 670-5881 for details of how to make a submission. Or, alternately, contact Carolyn Hart, Programs Committee Chair at (705) 670-5979 or fax (705) 670-5881. Send your proposal as soon as possible, preferably before September 30, 1995. Please provide a title, overview and clippings or name of other potential presenters.

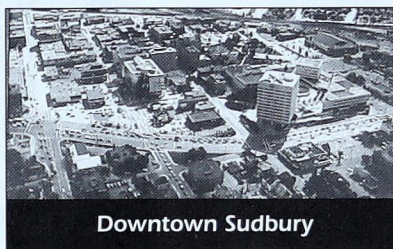
Conference Chair, Sue Heffernan, (705) 560-0120 or fax (705) 688-3109.

Sudbury, but on this important part of the province.

For the first time, a diverse group of interests (Sudbury Metro Centre, in partnership with the community, the City of Sudbury, the Regional Municipality of Sudbury's Planning and Development department, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, and Citizens for a Better Sudbury), will take a fresh look at our downtown in order to develop a strategy. The intent is not only to support the largest concentration of government offices, small businesses and financial institutions in northeastern Ontario, but also to maintain and improve the quality of life in the city and region. The strategy will deal with physical infrastructure, housing, marketing, economic development, social services, service delivery, partnerships, public participation, and organization.

The Downtown Action Agenda will touch all of the different elements of downtown revitalization in an effort to bring the community together to develop a shared vision. A communication program will help determine what the community really wants to accomplish, based on the community's capacity to implement specific goals and objectives through active participation and partnerships.

The firm of Lehman and Associates has been chosen to lead the Downtown Action Agenda. A strategic plan for downtown Sudbury is expected in September 1995.



Downtown Sudbury

## EXPLORING OUR CITY WITH GIS

The task of developing an official plan is always a challenge, but with budget restraints and organizational downsizing, it can be even more difficult. Hiring additional staff or consultants to help out with mapping or analysis can be next to impossible. In the midst of budgetary woes, Sault Ste. Marie's planning division is turning to GIS.

A geographic information system is an essential tool for collecting, analysing and displaying the enormous amount of information involved in preparing an official plan. The benefits are speed, accuracy and cost savings.

Spatial analysis and mapping can be carried out much more quickly with a GIS than with traditional methods. Digitizing natural and physical features as layers of information within one universal drawing scale (1=1) improves flexibility and reduces the potential

for error in the transfer of information between maps created at different scales. Start-up costs of GIS can be expensive, depending on the level of base mapping needed or desired. It is also important to set out all relevant costs, including components such as the cost of hardware/software and training/support.

The introduction of GIS has allowed staff to devote more time to higher priority projects, while reducing the amount of time spent on repetitive, complex tasks. Nearly all 30,000 land parcels have been entered into the database, which will eventually be merged with the Ministry of Revenue's assessment data. Additional data such as flood and fill lines, aquifer and recharge areas, aggregates and soils will be introduced on an as-needed basis. There are also plans to make the system available to the private sector.

Communication and education in GIS is the responsibility of a steering committee charged with ensuring that the system's potential is understood. A key feature of this process in terms of using GIS throughout the organization is to encourage objective feedback and critical review.

*Gerry Taylor is the senior planning technician for GIS development in the City of Sault Ste. Marie's planning division. Laurie Moulton is editorial coordinator for Northern district.*

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## RPP CERTIFICATES PRESENTED AT SOUTHWESTERN DINNER MEETING

OPPI President Philip Wong and Susan Smith, Executive Director attended the March 2, 1995 Southwest District Meeting to present Registered Professional Planner Certificates. Philip noted that Ontario is the fifth Province in Canada to get such legislation. In his remarks, Philip thanked a number of people for their untiring efforts in this cause including, from the Southwestern District, Mark Dorfman, Barb Dembek, and George Rich. In his reply, Mark noted that, with the December 9, 1994 Royal Assent to the Private Members Bill, the planning profession moved from adolescence to adulthood. Mark himself has been involved with the efforts to gain professional registration since the move began in 1970.

Following these presentations, Doug Robertson of Conestogo Rovers & Associates spoke to the 60 plus OPPI members and non-members about the joys of environmental assessment. Public consultation has become the single most important part of the process to ensure that people have a meaningful voice in the process and that there is true participation versus consultation. He noted that there is nothing magical about the environmental assessment process and that it is only a tool as good as the practitioner makes it. In closing, he also indicated that the environmental assessment process has been integrated with other planning and regulatory processes through such avenues as the Planning Reform/Bill 163 legislation currently being introduced to the Province of Ontario.

*Don Stewart is editorial coordinator for the Southwest District.*

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# Keir Consultants: offering technical and geographic diversity

by Jim Helik



Keir Consultants Inc. is a Toronto-based consulting firm with 14 professional staff. Since 1987, the firm has steadily diversified and expanded to meet new challenges and changing markets. Services in social and economic impact assessment, economic development and feasibility analysis were broadened to include land-use planning and policy formulation when Susan Keir joined Andy Keir from the City of Etobicoke in 1990. The following year, the company made a serious commitment to geographic information system (GIS) technology.

Two senior planners support the firm's principals: Paul Lowes specializes in social impact assessment, demographic analysis and policy planning, and Michael Telawski in economic analysis, land-use planning and development. All four are full members of the Institute.

In 1994, Keir Consultants initiated a drive to diversify its markets, first throughout the rest of Canada, then in the U.S. and South America, and finally in south-east Asia. By the end of the year, Keir was a

and an affiliated Indonesian office in Jakarta through membership in CANORA (a Canadian consortium of consulting firms). In association with Gartner Lee International Inc., a joint venture company was formed in Kuala Lumpur with HICOM Berhad, one of Malaysia's largest industrial conglomerates. The new company, known as HICOM Environmental, serves the environmental and GIS needs of the HICOM group of companies and other public and private organizations in the ASEAN Region.

Closer to home, Keir Consultants is involved with the Peel and Wellington landfill site searches; conducts retail market analysis for IKEA; and provides GIS and information management services to the Ministry of Health, several First Nations and Transport Canada. The firm is also becoming recognized for its work in incorporating environmental issues and policies into municipal planning. Current projects in this area include an environmental and open space OPA for Oakville, a natural features study for Mississauga and an environmental management framework for Richmond Hill.

In the United States, the firm is developing an advanced GIS application for property and facility management for Norfolk Southern Railroad. Keir is also planning to launch an affiliated project office in Washington to deal with the World Bank to help in business planning and GIS implementation on the extensive Path to Property project in Peru.

Keir's approach to staying competitive has been to ensure a strong commitment to quality and service; develop strengths in related disciplines; increase the firm's technological capabilities; and expand market horizons.

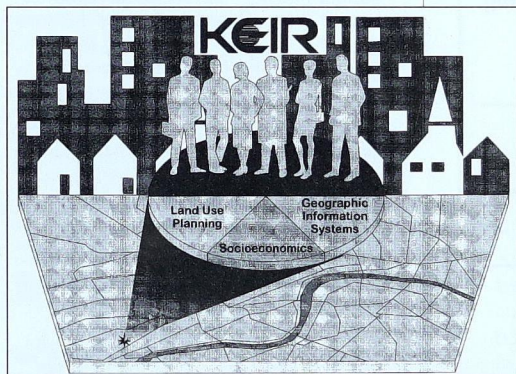
## Planning with People for People

The guiding philosophy at Verrière & Parham Associates in Ottawa is that plan-

ners have an obligation to meet the needs of the community, both tangible and intangible. In order to meet both kinds of needs, the firm advocates a sociocultural approach to planning.

As Ron Parham explains: "The sociocultural approach defines the interrelationships among the social and physical elements in communities. It incorporates criteria for the creation of sense of community and place, the preservation of community identity, and the enhancement of a sense of belonging. It helps planners focus on the community by creating streets instead of highways, downtown areas instead of shopping malls, and neighbourhoods instead of subdivisions.

Kristal Verrière and Ron Parham, who have worked together since 1992, believe that the key to this approach is compre-



**Keir Consultants: offering technical and geographic diversity**

dramatically different company. Two new professional staff included partner Jim Cranston, with an information technology background, and Kathy Tang, the firm's new senior systems consultant in GIS, computer applications development and client support.

Keir has opened an office in Vancouver,



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hensive public participation in planning, hence their motto: "Planning with people for people." To overcome the problem of meetings dominated by the agendas of special interest groups, Verrière & Parham have developed a tool called cognitive or perceptual mapping, which allows them to analyse how the physical environment is perceived by users at the ground level. Cognitive mapping reveals people's values and shows how these values affect their perception of the environment.

The firm uses this tool in all their land use projects and policy development studies to assess the significance of various sites, buildings or landmarks, and to predict the public's reaction to changes. Through this process, consensus can be achieved among community members, the developer and government officials.

Verrière & Parham have recently carried out a cognitive mapping survey of the inhabitants of the National Capital Region

for the National Capital Commission and a sociocultural review of the region's official plan for the Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton.

Kristal Verrière is an architectural technologist and planning graduate of Ryerson. Ron Parham has a master's degree in planning and market analysis and a bachelor's degree in architecture.

## M.M. Dillon: celebrating almost 50 years

With a history stretching back to 1945, and with 500 people employed in 11 offices across Canada, M.M. Dillon is one of the largest consulting firms offering services in planning, infrastructure development, engineering and environmental management. Yet size and history alone are no guarantees of success and have, in fact, seemed to be an albatross around the neck of many other large companies. What has Dillon been

doing right?

A recent conversation with Jim Balfour, newly elected president and chairman (and former director of the planning and environmental science division), sheds some light on the matter.

Balfour points out that the firm's services are all-inclusive, from planning and the environment, to infrastructure and building design and architectural services. Dillon also has long-standing experience in the Middle East, South East Asia, the Pacific Rim, India, Africa, China, the United States, the Caribbean, and Mexico.

The firm has successfully applied such concepts as "building partnerships," "being adaptable," and "skill set management," valid notions that have often been trivialized and applied as buzzwords. Dillon is a member of the Toronto International Partnership (TIP), a partnership between Metro Toronto and certain Metro businesses which provides resources from staffing to operating experience to help companies seek out international business opportunities.

The challenge in this and other partnerships, including Dillon's participation in the Canadian Highways Design Corporation, is to work effectively and efficiently with firms that might otherwise be competitors, and that bring different ideas and skills to the table. As Jim Balfour puts it, "Can we come together, work together, stay together for the duration of the project, and yet remain independent?"

The question of how to manage the appropriate delivery mechanism on a project-by-project basis (which may include partnerships with others) has led to the successful use of project teams. At any one time there will be hundreds of project teams at Dillon, bringing together planners, engineers, environmental scientists and other specialists.

Jim Balfour sees a growing market for planners' skills and a growing need to broaden those skills. The problems of the coming decade will be complex, ill-defined, and multidisciplinary; planners are potentially well positioned to handle the challenge of learning to work with differing roles of all levels of government, and changing delivery mechanisms and methods of operation. M.M. Dillon will continue to explore such situations.

*Jim Helik is a Toronto-based consultant. He can be reached at (416) 923-6027.*



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## ROSS RAYMOND JOINS OMB AS MEDIATOR

**J. Ross Raymond**, Partner with Raymond Walton Hunter Professional Planning Consultants, has accepted an appointment to the Ontario Municipal Board as its third Mediator, effective immediately. Ross will continue in private practice when not meeting the challenges of his new role.

**Mitchell Kosny**, Director of the Ryerson School of Urban and Regional Planning, recently accepted an appointment to the City of Toronto Committee of Adjustment.

As a result of the recent restructuring at the Borough of East York, the Planning Department is now called the "Planning Division", and is part of the new "Department of Community Services."

**Richard Tomaszewicz**, who, for over five years, was Commissioner of Planning Department, will continue to oversee the Planning Division but in his new role as Commissioner of Development Services, which also includes the Engineering, Transportation, By-law Enforcement and Building Divisions. The newly created position of Manager of the Planning Division has been filled through the promotion of David Oikawa, who has been a Senior Planner at East York for four years.

Three newly established consultancies also deserve recognition. **N. Edward Davidson** has formed Ted Davidson Development and Planning Services, based in Mississauga. Ted was formerly with Camrost Development Corporation, Marathon Realty and the City of Toronto Planning and Development Department. Further north, in Richmond Hill, **Sue Cummings** has established Cummings & Co., to serve clients in a variety of specialized areas. Sue will also continue to work with Cole Sherman Ltd. from time to time. Look for more extensive coverage in an upcoming Consulting Practice column.

After nine years with North York's planning department, **Peter Cheatley** has struck out on his own. Peter's experience spans more than 20 years, and he feels that his contacts and knowledge of how things are done around the GTA will stand him in good stead in private practice. In addition to specific experience as an expert witness at the OMB, Peter was most recently director of policy at North York, and before that, director of development planning. Throughout his career with North York,

Peter was active in site planning and urban design issues. He can be reached at (416) 698-7310.

**Correction:** Mark Stagg has replaced **Kris Menzies** at Oro-Medonte. Incorrect information appeared in the previous issue.

*Susan Rosales is the Journal's contributing editor for People. She can be contacted through the OPPI office.*



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*Housing...  
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The result of the past three years of work is a concept that meets and exceeds not only the principles of Halton's existing Official Regional Plan but also the ideals represented by the Healthy Communities plan, developed for Halton Region in 1993. It is only because these residents have taken an active part in the development process (and have to live with the results) that this project can meet these goals. They chose to concentrate development rather than continuing the scattered and isolated sprawl that has been partly responsible for the difficulties the community now faces. They are taking great pains to preserve natural features, including existing trees – after all, this is the main attraction of the area and the proposed site.

The Lowville Project will be a fully accessible community because there is a vested interest in ensuring that neighbours will always be able to visit neighbours. In building a common house – the "Meeting Place" – they are providing community-based facilities that will be the focus for the lives of the residents and be the place from which formal and informal support services will be provided.

This is the essence of the Healthy Communities planning, and increasingly the ideal of all planning. The Region has been very helpful and supportive, but perhaps the most important lesson in all this is that it took a group of stubborn 60 to 90 year olds to insist that healthy community planning should, could and must be followed.

*Russell Mauby is a graduate architect and the Director of the Collaborative Housing Society. For more information about the Lowville project or any other aspect of cohousing, call the Society at (416) 255-7446.*

**TWO NEW PUBLICATIONS TO REVIEW**

The Conservation Council of Ontario has published "Saving the Countryside of Southern Ontario" by Brian Byrnes. The paper addresses challenges faced by rural communities, offering practical suggestions for dealing with change. Phone (416) 969-9637 for more information.

Another publication dealing with conservation and restoration ecology is "The Natural Heritage of Southern Ontario's Settled

Landscapes," by John Riley and Pat Mohr. Distributed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the report is available MNR Natural Resources Library, 5th floor, 90 Sheppard Avenue E, NY, Ontario, M2N 3A1.

The Journal will be reviewing both publications in the near future.

The Provincial Facilitator is looking for examples of successful planning practice. Contact Mary Neumann at (416) 585-6732.



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