

ONTARIO PLANNING JOURNAL

JANUARY/FEBRUARY

1998

VOLUME 13

NUMBER 1

ONTARIO PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS INSTITUTE



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**Port McNicoll's
appetite for
self-determination**

A Plan to REBUILD A Village

Your Guide to the New Tax System

Lawyers Stanley Stein and Michael Bowman explain the intricacies of tax assessment in plain language.p.7

Novae Res Urbis Profitas Est?

How an innovative consultancy is feeding the appetite for information in the new City of Toronto.p.18

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ONTARIO PLANNING JOURNAL

Volume 13, Number 1, 1998

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Canadian Institute of Planners

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NOTICE FOR HOUSING SPECIALISTS

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The City of Toronto Urban Development Services Department, with assistance from Tim Welch, has recently conducted a survey of municipal by-laws concerning condominium conversions and demolition policies.

For further information contact
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PORT DREAMS— A PLAN TO REBUILD A VILLAGE

By Glenn Miller

The ability to see past obstacles and define new opportunities is a rare talent but one that can make a singular difference in how a community develops. When it comes to implementing a vision, however, without a receptive local public, and without leadership ready to accept the political risk of committing to change, not even the clearest vision can succeed. This is a story about how a small village on the shores of Georgian Bay is looking to the future.

Port McNicoll is economically depressed. It has one of the highest unemployment rates in Simcoe County. Late last summer, in a decisive show of support for harbour redevelopment plans that have been in the making for almost five years, the people of Port McNicoll chose to link their future to an ambitious public-private partnership for the regeneration of five miles of shoreline and the creation of a multi-phase, four season residential/recreational development. The documentation shipped to the ministries of Municipal Affairs & Housing and Natural Resources is reportedly the largest application of its kind to emanate from Simcoe County. Remarkably, no objections have been received. Provided that provincial authorities give their approval this spring, redevelopment can begin as early as this fall.

The events of the next decade will decide if the deserted industrial harbour complex that now dominates Port McNicoll is an underutilized asset or a massive concrete millstone.

MAKING THE MOST OF NATURAL FEATURES

Port McNicoll's appetite for self-determination is nothing new. Its strategic location as the natural terminus of a direct overland route from Lake Ontario to Georgian Bay was first rec-

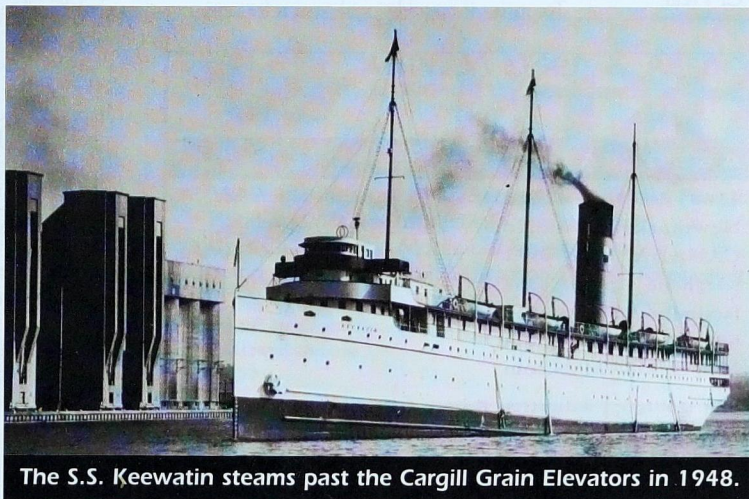
ognized by fur-trading native peoples. Jesuit priests, also canny traders, established a thriving settlement here nearly 200 years before John Graves Simcoe thought of using the area's natural advantages for military purposes. It was not until the beginning of this century, however, that the demands of an expanding east-west Canadian economy prompted the CPR to invest heavily in what local residents still refer to as 'the Port'.

The railway spent freely to build state-of-the-art infrastructure in Port McNicoll, creating one of Canada's premier rail-ship transfer points for grain shipments and other cargo from the west. For a brief time, Port McNicoll was viewed by the railway as "the Chicago of the North," a claim that may seem fantastic today but a perspective that made economic sense at the turn of the century when the prize for winning the battle for control of transporting grain was access to vast European markets. The Port also became a transfer hub for first-class passenger travel, served by a fleet of luxury vessels that carried Canadian and American passengers to and from the lakehead. The CPR's ambitious master plan for the Port led to the construction of more than 6,000 feet of concrete seawall and 150 acres of railyards between 1908 and 1912, alongside a village devoted to the

demands of its principal employer. The vestiges of subdivisions to house the expected massive population growth that were laid out but never built are still being discovered by local farmers.

All went well until the 1950s, when grain traffic began its long decline as a result of fundamental changes to the geography and economics of marine transportation on the Great Lakes. The completion of the rail network coast to coast, and the introduction of faster, more reliable diesel trains which no longer needed intermediate fueling stops, short-circuited the Port's economic rationale by making the transfer to ships redundant. As well, the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway allowed cargo ships to reach the Atlantic directly, while the growing popularity of air travel also stole away first-class marine passengers. Cargo and passenger traffic halted altogether in the mid-1960s. From then on, the Port was solely dependent on declining grain transfers. For the next 20 years, the fortunes of Port McNicoll continued to deteriorate. In 1988, with the cancellation of federal grain subsidies, the six million bushel Cargill Grain Elevator closed for good, confirming what most people in the Port already knew - a new livelihood needed to be found.

Labelled as a blue-collar railway community, the Port had been largely ignored when other Georgian Bay communities prospered during the post-war recreational development boom. In the early 1990s, when developer Don Mitchell first picked his way through the deserted slips and rusting railyards, Port McNicoll was suffering. Not only was unemployment high, but young people were leaving in droves. In fact, business was so poor that many stores closed and even the banks pulled out. In 1992, the only point of agree-



The S.S. Keewatin steams past the Cargill Grain Elevators in 1948.

(CP Archive)

ment among frustrated community leaders was that, for better or worse, the future of the town was irrevocably linked to the harbour complex.

SEEDS FOR A WORKABLE PARTNERSHIP

In development, timing - and the right attitude - is everything. Discussions between local, provincial and federal politicians and senior CP representatives about the severe challenges facing the village helped to lay the ground work for the village's regeneration. Later, thanks to the commitment of local officials, the village was able to weather the uncertainties of municipal restructuring in Simcoe County. In anticipation that the villages of Port McNicoll and Victoria Harbour were to amalgamate with Tay Township, the village authorized Tay's energetic new planning director, Wes Crown, to seek advice from senior officials at the Province. Recognizing the depth of the problems facing the Port, Municipal Affairs deputy minister Dan Burns immediately recommended that a strategic plan be prepared. He also introduced Crown to the Provincial Facilitator, who helped arrange JobsOntario funding for the strategic plan. This subsequently ensured that the village was able to take advantage of joint infrastructure funding to pay for the upgrading of key local services.

Another timely event was the arrival of Don Mitchell. The president of Development Concepts was looking for development opportunities. As a 10 year veteran of Marathon Realty - CP's real

estate development arm - Mitchell was ideally qualified to assist CP realize the potential of its rail and harbour assets.

Mitchell cites good synergy with municipal officials - including the Township's planning consultant, Ron Watkin - and a willingness by municipal officials to work cooperatively with the development interests, as reasons why he was willing to consider taking on such a difficult long-term project. After all, more than half of the 825 acre CP site includes provincially significant wetlands, and the shores of the Severn Sound were constrained by strict guidelines set out

mism. Mitchell emphasizes that the wetlands - more than half of the site - will remain untouched, and that only 150 acres of the remainder is to be developed.

"The community could easily have dismissed our development plans out of hand but they refused to be cynical about it. Ours was not the first development scheme to come along with promises of a rosy future, by any means," he comments. "I think it also helped that we - and by "we" I mean both the municipal officials and the private developers - quickly began to see the project the same way, and tell the same story to the public. I can't say enough about the professionalism of the Tay staff and their consultants," enthuses Mitchell.

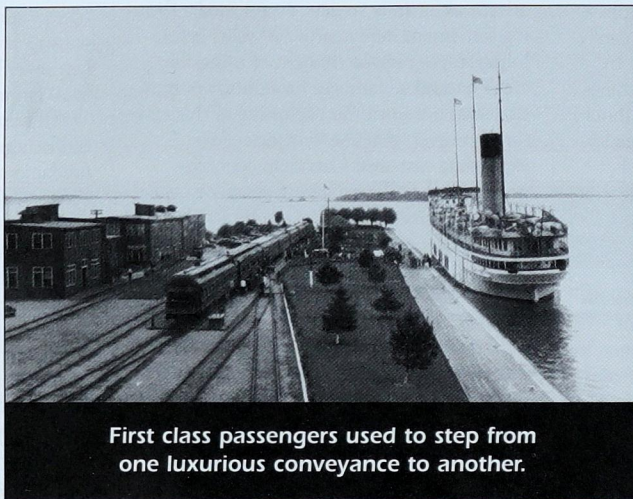
The benefits of collaboration are substantiated by Wes Crown, Tay's director of planning. "From the outset, a key objective was to integrate future development with the village. Preserving that sense of community identity proved to be a cornerstone of the project," relates Crown. And from the developer's perspective, the community appreciated CP's commitment and patience. "Everyone understood that our plans had to be able to deal pragmatically with the physical, marketing and financial realities. But we had to strike a fine balance between wise use of our resources and demonstrating

that there was momentum," Mitchell adds.

CP agreed to join forces with Development Concepts in 1993, and an agreement was struck with Port McNicoll to work cooperatively on a strategic plan. The next two years of concentrated effort were to re-energize and completely redefine how the community saw its future.

"The public participation program was very open," recalls Ron Watkin of Ainley and Associates, Tay's planning consultant. "Because it was clear to people that the developer was not afraid to go to the public, the project won over many potential skeptics. There is literally something to interest everyone - brownfield redevelopment; heritage preservation; community economic development; urban design issues; environmental regeneration, you name it." Watkin also acknowledges that visitors to open houses and public meetings often left as advocates for the project as a result of finding something to peek their interest.

Mitchell chose to use the centrally located "bunkhouse", a relic of the railway era, as



First class passengers used to step from one luxurious conveyance to another.

(CP Archive)

by an IJC remedial action plan to regenerate the area's fragile ecosystem punished by nearly a century of urbanization and intense agricultural activity. Balanced against this, Mitchell feels that long term trends support a demand for high quality residential, resort and recreational developments that respect the local environment. The Port's proximity to Highway 400 - less than two hours from Toronto - is an additional reason for opti-

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a focal point for public meetings. With the help of PRIDE funding, he also arranged with members of the Be-Wab-Bon Metis and Non-Status Indian Association to undertake modest improvements on site and to provide informal security, effectively discouraging vandalism and underlining the intention to integrate development with the rest of the community. This is the heart of the public-private partnership. Leasing the harbour to the association for \$1 emphasizes that the community plays decidedly more than a

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spectator role in the future of the project. Significantly, the lease also provides the citizens of Port McNicoll with public access to their own waterfront. As development proceeds, a municipal steering committee will identify other community initiatives to be carried out to improve the site.

JOINT PLANNING YIELDS BENEFITS

Early on the team decided to jointly prepare a "Regeneration Plan" that focused the interests of public and private stakeholders on the essential planning and investment decisions for the harbour and adjacent lands. Another objective was to develop an action plan for protecting and regenerating the sensitive shoreline and harbour complex. Once these studies were complete, the workplan moved on to address official plan amendments.

In what proved to be a turning point in the process, the team also decided to undertake critical environmental impact, site clean up and site development studies simultaneously. The studies were carried out by

consultants hired by Development Concepts and CP, and coordinated by the Township planning staff and their consultant, Ron Watkin.

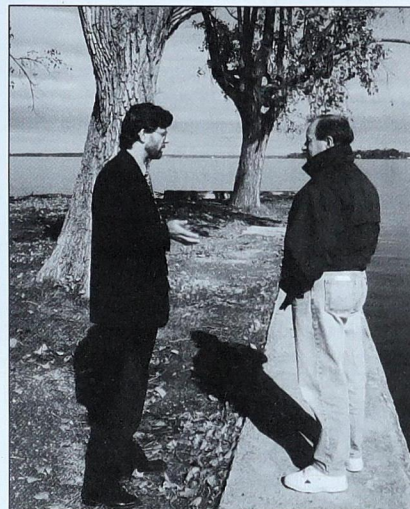
"If we had done these studies separately or at different times, we would probably have missed many opportunities," says Crown. "It's the difference between going by the book and striving to look at the objectives behind various policies," he suggests. "When specialist consultants are challenged to stay focused on the big picture, I think everyone wins. An example is how we addressed objectives for preserving public access to the water's edge. This led to a creative system of walking trails that wind back into the existing village," Crown explains.

The project has also benefitted from the diverse experience of several environmental specialists. On the advice of one consultant employed to conduct a peer review of an earlier report on environmental constraints, Crown and Watkin decided to redesignate a large development site as a natural area. The developers agreed, acknowledging that preserving a significant bird habitat makes the project as a whole more valuable.

The development concept that has emerged from this cooperative process is a deceptively simple blend of commonsense, pragmatism and adherence to principles of good planning. The natural features such as the wetlands and natural shoreline are protected. The historic harbour becomes the focal point of commercial activity, centred around marinas, public docks and moorings for larger ships. Public access to the waterfront is ensured by the placement of public uses and the trail system. A maximum of 600 residential lots will be developed in a variety of settings, which is consistent with long-term plans for the village's overall growth. In the geographic centre of the project, half a dozen streets are to be extended

from the village to the east-west shoreline access road, developed in scale to the existing community. At either end of the development, lots will be carefully eased into the natural setting, keeping mature trees and using old rail spurs and other historic reminders of the area's railway past as access routes.

Soil studies have revealed that there are no hazardous wastes and that where soils exceed MoE guidelines, they can be capped



Wes Crown and Don Mitchell in "the Gardens"

or used as berming materials. "The key issue is one of perception," Mitchell suggests. "CP takes its environmental responsibilities very seriously, and so we are not only doing the right thing, we bend over backwards to make sure we are seen to be doing the right thing." During the investigative work, members of the community, many of whom spent



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their working lives on the site, were able to provide advice on what to look for and where to find it, Mitchell says.

The unusual juxtaposition of industrial bric-a-brac and lush plantings is part of the air of mystery surrounding Port McNicoll. Accordingly, regeneration of "the Walks and Gardens" will also feature prominently in the development plan. "When first class passengers disembarked from the trains, they would stroll in the Gardens until it was time to board the ship," Mitchell relates. "It was a magnificent piece of landscaping, and we plan to recreate it as a public park."

Conveying the impression that development is taking place in a public park is a key part of the marketing philosophy behind the project. The hands-off approach to the environment is partly based on financial pragmatism. "Working with what's here is a financial necessity," Mitchell admits. "Many resort/lifestyle developments fail because they attempt to replace the natural environment with manicured lawns. The cornerstone of our strategy is the opposite. Instead

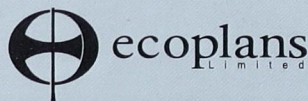


Public trails integrate the project with the community

of paying a fortune to create a new landscape, we will work with what nature has already created. This community will start off with mature treelots and hedgerows. We think that's a real plus."

As Mitchell conducts a site tour, accompanied by Wes Crown, his words are drowned out by the loud honking of Trumpeter Swans flying low over our heads. These birds, possibly the first to breed in the wild in many years, have found a safe haven on the shoreline of Port McNicoll. Under the watchful eye of their "keeper" - the owner of the area's surviving boat yard - the swans have already decided that the Port can sustain their needs.

Glenn Miller, MCIP, RPP is editor of the Ontario Planning Journal and director of applied research with the Canadian Urban Institute. He worked with Don Mitchell at Marathon Realty in the mid-1980s. Ron Watkin, MCIP, RPP is a consultant with Ainley & Associates and a member of the Central District Board of Management.



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New Municipal Assessment Starts in 1998

By Stanley B. Stein and Michael Bowman



The new Fair Municipal Finance Act (Bill 106) restructures Ontario's

assessment and property tax system. These changes will affect the value and planning of land.

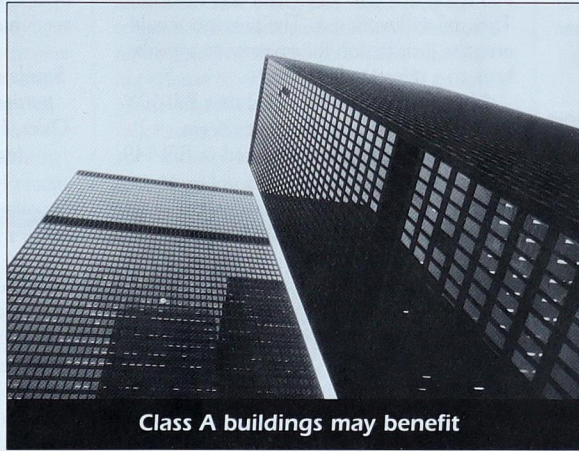
Currently, property taxes are the product of provincially determined assessments and municipally determined mill rates.

Provincial assessors employed by the Ontario Ministry of Finance assess the value of real property. Depending on the type of property, the assessment may be based on cost, income or sales. The assessment roll listing all of the assessments is sent to each municipality in Ontario. The municipality, after considering its financial requirements for the year and the overall taxes to be levied, determines a mill rate (one thousandth of \$1.00) to be applied to the assessed value of each property.

Under Bill 106, the criteria used by the provincial assessors and the role of municipalities will change. The mandate of provincial assessors under the Assessment Act has been to assess real property at "market value." This did not necessarily mean current value. Before 1970, assessment was a municipal responsibility, and many municipalities maintained assessments based on historic values. In 1970, the Ontario government took over assessment in order to rationalize the system and introduce current market value throughout the province.

However, until the passage of Bill 106, there has never been a full province-wide reassessment, although a number of municipalities in Ontario have undergone "class" reassessments under section 58 of the Assessment Act, in which properties within a property class (such as commercial, residential, or industrial) have been reassessed in order to remove inequities within that class.

Bill 106 introduces a province-wide reassessment based on "current value," defined in the legislation as "the amount of money the fee simple, if unencumbered, would realize if sold at arm's length by a willing seller to a willing buyer." This new



Class A buildings may benefit

definition replaces the current standard of "market value" which has subtle differences: "the amount that the land might be expected to realize if sold in the open market by a willing seller to a willing buyer".

Under Bill 106, the Minister of Finance may make regulations providing that the "current value" of eligible land is based on "current" use, and not, presumably, on alternative uses that could affect its value. Municipalities will, however, have the option of "opting-in" to these regulations. This has important implications for land that has a potential use other than its current use.

Reassessment will be phased in. When fully implemented after 2005, the new procedure will require annual reassessments based on the average of the land's "current value" for the taxation year and its "current value" for each of the previous two years. For 1998, 1999 and 2000, however, the relevant valuation date is June 30, 1996. As a result, the most immediate effect of Bill 106 will be a province-wide reassessment based on June 30, 1996 values. This will affect every property in Ontario.

The role of municipalities has also changed. Currently, it is limited to determining financial needs and setting mill rates. There are only two basic mill rates (residential or commercial, subject to school board support). Bill 106 allows municipalities to establish mill rates for a new and larger group of property classes (although the

provincial government will retain some control by setting an allowable range for each property class). The Minister may prescribe classes of real property that include residential/farm, multi-residential, commercial, industrial, pipe-line, farmlands, and managed forests. This will undoubtedly result in conflicts among competing interests seeking "equity" in the tax burden, particularly between residential and non-residential classes.

The province-wide reassessment and the introduction of new property classifications and tax rates will change property taxes throughout Ontario. Hardest hit will be those municipalities such as Toronto that have not undergone a recent reassessment.

Other important changes for municipalities include:

- municipalities can phase in mill rate increases or decreases over eight years to cushion the change;
- upper-tier municipalities can defer or cancel taxes for low-income seniors and low-income disabled persons;
- upper- and single-tier municipalities can set lower tax rates for lower-valued commercial properties by creating up to three bands of assessment and taxing a portion of the property below a threshold at a lower rate;
- municipalities may tax vacant commercial property at 70 percent of the commercial mill rate and vacant industrial property at 65 percent of the indicated rate.

These municipal powers would be exercised through by-laws. There will be no opportunity to appeal council decisions on these matters.

Bill 106 also eliminates business assessment. There have been long-standing criticisms of the archaic legislation that assigned varying rates to different types of businesses. However, the loss in tax revenue will have to be recouped by municipalities through realty assessments. This concerns landlords and tenants because it implicitly means a readjustment of their tax obligations that was not foreseen when they signed the lease.

The Ontario Municipal Board will have no

further role in the appeals process. Under the current provisions of the Assessment Act, any person could complain that an assessment was too high. A decision of the Assessment Review Board could be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board within 21 days, and the Board would then hold a hearing on the complaint. These provisions resulted in a large number of appeals that occupied a substantial amount of the Board's time.

Under Bill 106, the Assessment Review Board is the only administrative tribunal able to hear complaints about current value. The current provision that stated cases or

appeals on questions of law from OMB decisions may be heard by the Divisional Court, will be preserved for the Assessment Review Board. It remains to be seen how the recommendations of the Government Task Force on Agencies, Boards and Commissions (the Wood Committee) to consolidate the ARB and the OMB into a Property and Planning Tribunal will work out. The province could give the jurisdiction for assessment appeals back to a reinstated OMB.

The province has indicated that Bill 106 is the first phase of assessment reform. Additional changes are proposed in Bill 149,

currently pending third reading. Responsibility for assessments may be downloaded to municipalities.

Together with the anticipated changes in the overall tax burden, Bill 106 will likely cause painful readjustments for many property owners. Whether this will be outweighed by the promise of a fairer, clearer and more accountable tax system remains to be seen.

Stanley B. Stein and Michael Bowman are partners in the Municipal Law Group of Osler, Hoskin and Harcourt. Mr. Stein is a regular contributor to the Journal.

EDITORIAL



The recent ice storm in Quebec and Eastern Ontario had a devastating effect on many thousands of people. The full economic impact on storekeepers, farmers and businesses will likely still be only a guestimate this spring when the leaves appear on what is left of the urban forest. In the next issue of the Journal we hope to provide some photographic coverage of that aspect of the devastation.

The urge to help out in some way also brought out the best in many communities. School children in cities all over Ontario spontaneously volunteered their pocket money to contribute to a relief fund. The invaluable help provided by hydro crews from out west and south of the border demonstrated that a sense of community can be a broad concept indeed. Somehow that willingness to pitch in provided a warm glow even to those not touched directly by the ice storm.

But tough questions are already being asked about our state of preparedness on many fronts. Disaster planning will undoubtedly be a priority, for a few months at least. For all their comprehensiveness, though, few municipal plans address the issue of risk. Planning visions contemplate the ideal – not the unimaginable. Beyond a few symbols on land use schedules, how many plans deal with guaranteed access to the electrical grid or telephone communications, for exam-

Ice Storm Shows We Ignore Risk

Leaves unanswered questions

made bandwidth a municipal priority?

We take our food supplies for granted as well. How many regional plans count provision of food terminals as an essential land use? In London some years ago, plans to create a mixed use entertainment/retail complex in the former home of Covent Garden – London's market hub for natural produce – grew out of concerns that the site was too congested and vulnerable to interruption in transportation access to allow it to continue to function. The new project could not proceed until an alternative site had been found. In Ontario today we assume that the supermarket giants will take care of things for us.

The icestorm was a shock to our systems. Perhaps we should think more carefully about a less than ideal world.

Glenn Miller is editor of the Ontario Planning Journal and director of applied research with the Canadian Urban Institute based in Toronto. He can be reached at <ontplan@inforamp.net>

LETTERS

WELL VERSED IN PLANNING

As part of the rite of initiation into the Institute, I was required to answer the age-old question "What is Planning?" (Exam 'B', Question 1). As I always do when the going gets tough, I resorted to verse. If you would like to know how I pulled this off, contact me at the former City of Scarborough.

Ed Watkins, MCIP, RPP is a principal planner with the former City of Scarborough

MORE DIALOGUE WANTED

I feel that the Institute should be a forum where dialogue and the exchange of ideas are promoted. The OPJ could provide a col-

umn that allows members to submit questions or concerns about various planning issues. Other planners could provide answers through the same medium.

As well some of the broader questions could be set up as projects for our fellow student members. The benefits would be mutual, providing experience to students and other planners with access to a large and underutilized resource.

Peter K. Chee, Student member, Toronto

Editor's Note: This idea could work well if there are planners out there willing to help out. What are your views?

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HOW EFFECTIVE WILL MUNICIPAL ROLE IN HOUSING BE?

It is difficult to judge a process and outcome on the basis of the Journal's necessarily short summary of the Metro Housing Stakeholder Group report (Nov/Dec, 1997). But I see no evidence that the stakeholders perceive just how vastly different the new policy era is from the pre-Chretien, pre-Harris era with its funding for mixed-income co-ops and non-profits. Those days are not coming back. Social housing is not perceived as a vote-getter, and priorities for increased social spending (now on the horizon thanks to the perceived success of recent budget-cutting) are in the fields of medicare (some housing support programs might be included here) and education.

Perhaps having too many stakeholders in the (receding) status quo rendered the group unwilling to examine other scenarios - such as a focus on providing housing for the neediest instead of building mixed-income projects which have resulted in subsidies for middle and higher-income residents. A CMHC program evaluation published back in 1983 pointed out that the co-op and non-profit programs had to build so many more units than were actually required to house neediest that it was obvious that goals could

never be achieved. Such policies made the cardinal error of letting the ideal become the enemy of the good (or at least the OK). The panel ought to have presented the municipal government with a set of alternative scenarios, setting out the benefits and drawbacks of each one. Instead they seem to have been able to see the future only in terms of the recent past and have devised a report that has the modest virtue of avoiding offense to other stakeholders. It tries to please everybody (it advocates the new city "allocate sufficient resources for housing" but "no large-scale financial commitments") and, as we know, such play-it-safe statements end up satisfying no-one.

I am a member of the Toronto Children's Aid Society Housing Working Group. We review and support the work of the CSA's housing advocate. One of her activities has been to try to persuade self-governing co-ops and non-profits to allocate units to CAS clients (either youth leaving care or families whose inadequate housing is considered to be a factor requiring CAS intervention). Due to the club-like nature of such projects she has managed to obtain a grand total of three units! I am also on the board of a privately-financed non-profit aimed at housing a target group we have

found to be in desperate need of specially-designed housing. The government is obliging us to spend half our money to house people who are not in great need in order to fulfil the requirement of mixed tenancy; thus we can only build to suit half the potential number of our core-neediest. This waste of philanthropic money will certainly send a message to anyone else contemplating housing for the neediest.

Michael Johnson MCIP, RPP

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Question the articles, the assumptions, the conclusions. The articles are short and important ideas may get left on the cutting room floor. Fire off an e-mail when you read something that bothers you or puzzles you. Send your letters to the editor to:

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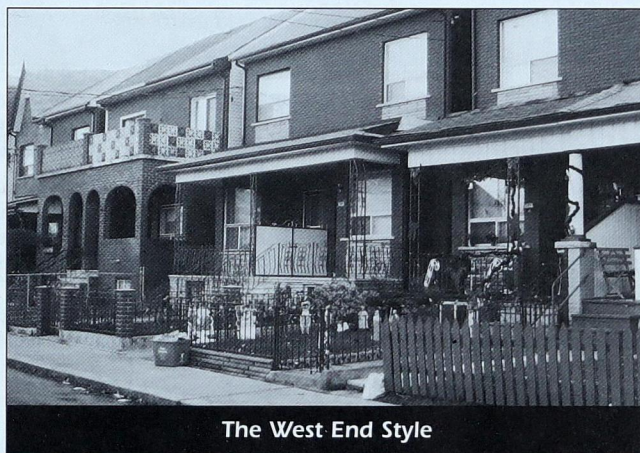
OPINION

Rehabilitation of Housing by Ethnic Groups in Toronto's West End Unappreciated Asset to the City

By Julius Gorys

Housing rehabilitation is a neglected area of research, with the exception of the renovation by middle class "whitepainters" - who displaced lower income residents. In Toronto, most whitepainting was carried out in the east end, an area once dominated by lower-income Anglo-Saxon residents, largely devoid of practical skills or ambition, who remained in their largely rented housing for a long time. To make ends meet, they grew vegetables in their yards, hence the term "Cabbagetown".

By contrast, the west end was largely occupied by working-class communities from other areas of Europe. The purchase of prop-



The West End Style

erty was a principal objective of most of these immigrant groups. Each wave of immigrants reversed the trend of deterioration by

applying high personal housing standards and considerable investment. They bypassed traditional institutions and occupations, and took advantage of their manual skills, honed in the construction industry, to improve their properties. Much of their work was undertaken via an underground economy through undocumented cash transactions and barter.

A visual scan of Toronto's west end reveals brightly painted facades, wrought iron or mediterranean arched porches. Behind the facades, however, we find code compliance, modernization and remodelling comparable to that done in sandblasted neighbourhoods. The difference is that the process was evolutionary rather

than revolutionary, with no displacement of households from a different class.

Basements, roofs, plumbing, wiring and windows were updated. Much was done without a building permit, or the value of the work on the permit was understated to avoid being penalized for upgrading through the application of higher property tax assessment values.

Rehabilitation by ethnic groups has occurred largely without government assistance such as the former Neighbourhood Improvement Program and Residential Rehabilitation Action Program worth \$1

billion in funding. This was because of the conditions associated with obtaining grants or loans, language barriers, general distrust of government, and the traditional ethos of "going it alone."

The work undertaken by such groups has increased the economic life and assessment value of this housing and contributed to the economy of cities by providing employment for contractors, building suppliers and tradesmen, as well as direct (if understated) revenue through building permit fees. Good maintenance has largely negated the need for residential redevelopment in the west end, and has long provided accommodation for low-income tenants.

It is unclear whether this upgrading will continue, given the decline of the construction industry and the virtual halting of

European immigration. Moreover, ethnic groups no longer solely first reside in downtown Toronto; they move into the older established areas of the suburban communities too.

Will this affect the future of Toronto? If Toronto's inner neighbourhoods can maintain their liveability through the control of crime and congestion, then we should be optimistic. If not, then government intervention may be necessary. It makes economic sense for government to preserve that social asset and partially underwrite the work. Fostering and relying on the efforts of private citizens will of course be a cheaper and equally fulfilling alternative.

Julius Gorys, MCIP, RPP is a senior planner with the Ministry of Transportation.

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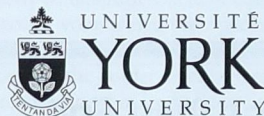
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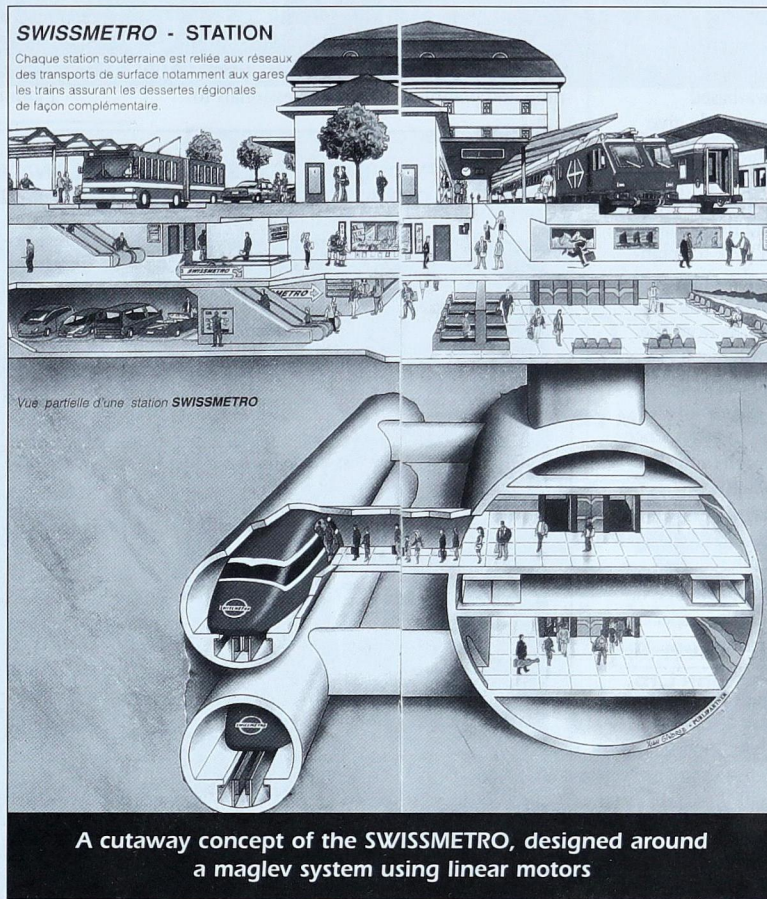
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Rich Potential In Underground Spaces

By Alicia Bulwik

Both Toronto and Montreal have extensive underground networks that link key buildings in their respective cores. Last fall, I attended a conference on Underground Spaces in Montreal that provided designers, engineers and artists with a unique venue to explore new ideas in the field. For me, one of the highlights was a presentation by Enrico Zuffi on the SWISSMETRO project, which proposes to “fly” passengers between Zurich and Geneva in less than hour. The earliest completion date for this ambitious project is 2015.

Douglas Karpiloff from New York presented the strategies used by the World Trade Center to deal with security concerns following the devastating bomb attack that took place a few years ago. The challenge of rebuilding quickly in a high density context provides interesting lessons for dealing with vehicular and pedestrian flow in lower density Ontario.



Other representatives from Toronto included Macklin Hancock (Project Planning), Ken Jones (Centre for the Study of Commercial Activity at Ryerson) and Judy Morgan (City of Toronto). Our own extensive experience has yet to be tried in the suburbs, but conferences like Underground Spaces could well inspire change. As land resources become more scarce, what's underneath acquires a new important dimension.

Alicia I. Bulwik, MRAIC, MCIP, RPP is a Business Development Advisor with the (former) City of Scarborough. She is a member of the organizing committee for the CIP conference to be held in Montreal in 1999. She can be reached above ground at <bulwik@scarborough.on.ca>

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Waterloo's Ottawa-Based Alumni Excel

By Deena Warman



For planning students, exposure to the world of practicing planners is a tremendous benefit. The Ottawa-based

Waterloo planning alumni regularly give fourth year students a unique treat: a two-day conference created exclusively for the benefit of the students, featuring presentations by top practitioners and the occasional media star. An additional perk for planners practicing in Ottawa is the opportunity to mingle with the national media who cover Parliament. Mark Seasons from the NCC, who is about to join the faculty of Waterloo planning, arranged for well-known CBC reporter Jason Moskovitz to speak at lunch one day. Also in attendance at last fall's event were Chris Fleming, Duncan Buray and Roman Winnicki. Deena Warman, student representative, thanked the organizers on behalf of the Waterloo Planning Student Association. "This kind of support is really appreciated," Warman said. "The alumni deserve special

recognition for their commitment."

The November alumni dinner in Toronto also broke records for the number of planning and planning-related professionals to

be crammed into one room. The event also featured presentation of OPPI awards.

Deena Warman represents the Waterloo Planning Student Association

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Provincial Excellence in Planning award winners
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Don't be fooled into believing that the OPPI Symposium's theme "Breaking Out" is meant to invoke images of gangling, wet-behind-the-ears youth battling unsightly skin ailments.

Truth be known, the program planned for August 16 - 19, 1998 in Kingston will stretch the limits of your knowledge base by demonstrating how planners can use their skills in non-traditional ways. A variety of sessions will focus on topics that attendees will find valuable in preparing for tomorrow's reality.

We'll kick off and close our Symposium with Myles Rademan, our main keynote speaker, who will challenge planners to recognize what is going on around them and suggest how best to prepare for the future. We will also hear from Dee Brasseur, one of the world's first female jet fighter pilots, concerning her success in breaking through barriers while breaking down stereotypes.

You'll be able to choose an escape on one of the several mobile sessions; through picturesque Prince Edward County, or along the historic Rideau River through Westport and Perth, or crossing the international border via Wolfe Island to Cape Vincent and Sackets Harbour, or along the mighty St. Lawrence River into


the Thousand Islands through Gananoque and Brockville. We will also offer a tour of Downtown Kingston, including the harbourfront area.

Symposium Headquarters are at the Ambassador Hotel and Convention Centre, which provides an exceptional backdrop for our social events. These will commence with an "Eastern Exposure" Tailgate Party on Sunday Night. The next evening you can either hit the town for an escorted pub tour throughout downtown Kingston or participate in a scenic boat cruise and dinner touring through the Thousand Islands. The final social event will see the Tuesday Evening Gala


Banquet which will consist of a sit-down meal with live music and dancing to follow. Many events will provide fun for all members of the family. A children's program will be offered as well.

Plan on "Breaking Out" in Kingston, August 16-19, 1998.

Maureen Pascoe-Merkley is Brockville's Director of Planning, and is working with the 1998 Symposium Committee.



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LET'S BE CLEAR ABOUT THE NEW AUTOMOBILE RATING SYSTEM

By Fernando Saldanha

If you've noticed a recent change in your automobile insurance premiums, you are not alone. A growing number of automobile insurance companies have adopted the new CLEAR automobile rating system, which has created changes in auto insurance rates. OPPI asked the providers of its Group Home and Automobile Insurance Plan, INS Group Services Inc., to provide some background information about CLEAR.

The Canadian Loss Experience Automobile Rating System (CLEAR) was developed by the Vehicle Information Centre of Canada, a non-profit organization incorporated in 1989. The organization's mandate was to devise a system of automobile rate groups that match premiums to the risk associated with each vehicle's make and model. Using information from various official statistical agencies, the Centre compiled information on the relationship between

insurance claims and vehicle characteristics. Under CLEAR, premiums are determined by the claim history of the make of vehicle, not the purchase price.

HOW WILL THE NEW CLEAR SYSTEM AFFECT OPPI GROUP MEMBERS?

Although CLEAR allows insurance companies to predict future claims more accurately and fairly, it rewards car owners for buying vehicles that experience fewer and smaller losses. Vehicles with safety features such as anti-lock brakes, dual air bags, side-impact door reinforcements, anti-theft devices and premium tires may cost more than cars without these options, but the CLEAR rating system should reduce their owners' insurance costs. Owners of high-risk vehicles could see large increases, while owners of low-risk vehicles could

see their premiums decrease.

Many insurance companies are now changing to the CLEAR system. It is only a matter of time before all insurers accept the CLEAR rating. During the transition period, however, consumers may find large differences in insurance premiums.

While other factors may also influence insurance premium rates, CLEAR will distribute the cost of insurance more fairly among all drivers and will help consumers to become more informed.

Fernando Saldanha is Manager of Business Development with INS Group Services Inc., providers of OPPI's group home and automobile insurance plan. For more information, or for a quote on your home and automobile insurance needs, call INS Group Services Inc. At (905) 459-4002 or 1-800-756-8745.

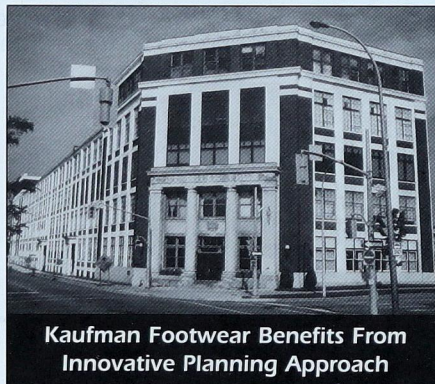
ADVANCES IN ADAPTIVE REUSE AND HERITAGE PRESERVATION

MEET THE WINNERS

During the next few months, the Journal will be presenting the inside story on the people and thinking behind the Outstanding Planning Awards, 1997 and awards for Professional Merit. In this issue, Brenton Toderian introduces you to a case study from Kitchener.

The challenge was to develop a flexible heritage designation to allow for the practical reuse of a very large, former shoe manufacturing plant while preserving architectural and heritage integrity. It was clear to the owners that a range of office and commercial uses must replace the historic manufacturing use, since it was no longer possible to accommodate modern manufacturing processes. Through extensive negotiation, a unique clause in the "reasons for designation" provides for the opportunity for sympathetic alterations to the designated architecture in accordance with approved elevation drawings. Council retains control over final designs submitted at the building permit stage.

The adaptive reuse and heritage designa-



Kaufman Footwear Benefits From Innovative Planning Approach

tion is an excellent example of the private and public sectors working towards common objectives. The result balanced the needs of Kaufman Footwear Ltd. and the City of Kitchener's desire to preserve a key piece of the city's heritage. Paul Britton, MCIP, RPP made the submission to OPPI on behalf of MacNaughton Hermsen Britton Clarkson Planning Ltd., Kaufman Footwear, the Walter Fedy Partnership (architects), and city staff.

OPPI COUNCIL APPROVED THE FOLLOWING FEES, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 1998, AT ITS DECEMBER 5TH MEETING.

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The applicable taxes will be added to all of the above fees.

OPPI AND CIP AWARDED CIDA FUNDING

CIDA recently approved \$225,000 to fund OPPI and CIP's International Internship Program for Young Planners. The money was approved under CIDA's International Youth Internship Program. The program will be a partner-

ship with involvement from OPPI, CIP, CIDA, private and public sector employers, and young planners who are either unemployed or underemployed. The planning profession is leading the way by submitting this proposal - ours was the first

professional association to apply for this funding and CIDA may use our proposal as a model for others. More information will be available soon, or members can contact Steve Dunning at the CIP office 1-800-237-2138.

SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT

GREAT EXPECTATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE

By Brenton Toderian

The new Southwest District Executive is committed to constantly improving its services and representation to the SWOD membership. The Executive is in the process of redefining the roles and responsibilities of each position, and welcomes ideas and comments from the membership. Individuals with suggestions are invited to contact either Mike Barrett, Chair, or Brenton Toderian, Vice-Chair. Questions can be directed at any time to any of the following Executive members.

- Mike Barrett, Chair (County of Oxford Planning Department) (519) 539-1271
- Brenton Toderian, Vice-Chair (MacNaughton Hermsen Britton Clarkson Planning Limited) (519) 576-3650
- Steve Jefferson, Secretary-Treasurer (K. Smart & Associates) (519) 748-1199
- Hugh Handy, District Representative (County of Wellington Planning Department) (519) 837-2600
- Bev Hindle, Program Sub-Committee Chair (Malone Given Parsons) (519) 421-2210
- Wil Pol, Membership Sub-Committee Chair (City of London Planning Department) (519) 661-4653

Brenton Toderian, MCIP, RPP is vice chair of the South West Executive. He is also the Journal's contributing editor on retail issues. He is an associate with MBHC in Kitchener.

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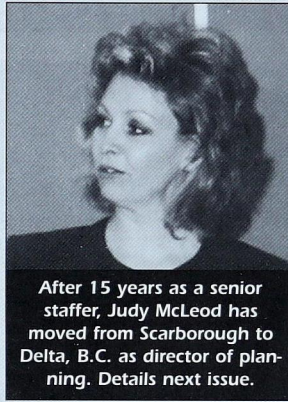
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NORTHERN DISTRICT

Glenn Tunnock is preparing an article for inclusion in the next issue of the Journal.

PEOPLE



After 15 years as a senior staffer, Judy McLeod has moved from Scarborough to Delta, B.C. as director of planning. Details next issue.

The People column returns next issue. Contact Greg Daly at <dalyg@weirfoulds.com>

EASTERN DISTRICT

EASTERN DISTRICT RECENT LECTURES

By Barb McMullen

The continuing series of Eastern District Urban Forum events recently featured an October lecture on "Redeveloping Contaminated Sites." The lectures are sponsored by OPPI and several other professional organizations. October's event was attended by environmental consultants, academics, municipal, provincial and federal staff, and members of special interest groups.

Presenters at the October lecture included Andy Lewis of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Energy, who spoke about MOEE's 1997 Guidelines for Use at Contaminated Sites, Pierre Maheux of Jacques Whitford Environment Ltd., who talked about restoration and re-use technologies and David Cox of McCarthy Tétrault, Barristers & Solicitors, who spoke on legal and liability issues associated with contaminated sites.

The Eastern District also sponsored a special November lecture on "Adaptive Re-use and Planning Loft Developments in

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Ottawa-Carleton." Barry Padolsky, architect, presented an overview on issues on adaptive re-use and the recent Ottawa trend to loft conversions. Sandy Smallwood of Andrex Holdings Ltd. gave a slide presentation on his residential loft conversion of the 1873 Wallis House, and James Colizza, architect, presented a case study of his recent conversion of a 1913 former Ottawa Hydro sub-station.

The roadblocks to re-use projects generated a lively discussion by architects and planners attending the event.

Two additional Urban Forum lectures are already planned for 1998. The first, entitled "On the Fast Track: Sustainable Transportation in Canada," was scheduled for the evening of January 28, 1998 at the RMO. The second, planned for early

March, is entitled "Today's GIS: New Tools, New Users." Contact Sylvie Grenier at (613) 560-6058, ext. 1597.

Barb McMullen, MCIP, RPP, is Publications Representative for Eastern District OPPI and principal of McM Planning.

CENTRAL

GTA

Steve Willis

The GTA Program Committee held its Annual pre-Christmas party on December 4, 1997, at the Wineyard Restaurant in Toronto. It was one of the largest gatherings of Toronto-area OPPI

members in the last few years, and more than 150 planners attended.

Special presentations were made to the OPPI staff for their assistance in organizing GTA events during the year. Several lucky people walked away with door prizes, including a dinner for two at the restaurant, cases of beer, and other OPPI paraphernalia.

The event was organized by Loretta Ryan and the GTA Program Committee. Special thanks go to the firms that sponsored the event: Walker, Nott, Dragicevic Associates Limited; Arthur Andersen; Peter Cheatley & Associates; Jeff Kratky Planning; Macaulay Shiomi Howson Limited; The Butler Group; Opus Management Inc.; and Cumming + Company.

Steve Willis, MCIP, RPP, is a principal planner with TEDCO, and is the editorial coordinator for the GTA.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Census Consultation Process

By Cameron McEwen



The distribution of the Census Consultation Guide by Statistics Canada earlier this year marked the beginning of the content consultation and testing process for the 2001 Census. A broad range of data users, including planners in every level of government, national associations, non-government organizations, community groups, businesses and the private sector, universities and the general public, were asked to provide their comments on the questions

asked, requirements for future census information, and the identification of data gaps.

Once these consultations have been completed, Statistics Canada will evaluate the data needs in light of statutory requirements, availability of other sources to meet the data need, the response burden on the providers of the information, as well as Statscan's collection and processing costs. Statscan must always bear in mind the need to respect the respondent's right to privacy. Proposed census content is rigorously tested using a vari-

ety of methods including qualitative testing such as focus groups and in-depth discussions with respondents, small-scale surveys and a large quantitative National Census Test.

As planners are well aware, access to information from the census depends largely on the geographic units used to disseminate the data. Geographic units are designed to cater to a range of user needs, depending on two factors: the level of detail required and the availability of data based on confidentiality constraints. The standard geographic

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units for census dissemination can be described as either administrative or statistical. Administrative areas are generally those defined in provincial or federal statutes.

ADMINISTRATIVE AREAS

- Provinces and territories
- Federal electoral districts
- Census divisions
- Census subdivisions
- Designated places
- Postal Codes - Statistical Areas
- Census metropolitan areas
- Census agglomerations
- Urban and rural areas
- Census tracts
- Economic regions
- Census consolidated subdivisions
- Enumeration areas

Consultation with stakeholders across Canada on the standard geographic areas recommended for the 2001 Census is now complete and analysis of the user responses has now begun. The following themes have emerged with respect to census geography issues:

1. Users want a small, stable geographic area that is not subject to data suppression, and that can be used as a building block for other applications or tools.
2. In areas where municipal amalgamations have occurred, users have requested that the dissolved municipalities are maintained and that profile data be released to support longitudinal analysis.
3. The user community has mixed views concerning Census Tracts. Some users want CT limits to be retained to support historical comparability. Others are requesting that CTs be modified to reflect current neighborhoods.
4. Many users support the release of population and dwelling counts for Unincorporated Places (UP) or an equivalent smaller level of geography for the 2001 Census. (Note: the UP program was not supported for the 1996 Census for financial reasons).
5. Federal users, in particular, are expressing the need for more differentiation of rural (for example, add additional categories such as rural metro adjacent and rural

remote). Many have also stated their hope that this definition would become a STC standard for data dissemination.

Consultation with stakeholders across Canada on non-geographic issues such as questionnaire content and post-censal surveys is now underway. In order to have an impact on content testing, briefs or comments on the proposed changes to the 2001 Census content should be received by March 31 this year. For more information on the 2001 Census consultation process, please contact:

Manager
2001 Census Content Determination Project
Statistics Canada
Jean Talon Building, 3B4
Tunney's Pasture
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0T6
Tel: (613) 951-6994
Fax: (613) 951-9300

Cameron McEwen is with the Geography Division of Statistics Canada in Ottawa.

Related website

[<consultation2001@statcan.ca>](mailto:consultation2001@statcan.ca)

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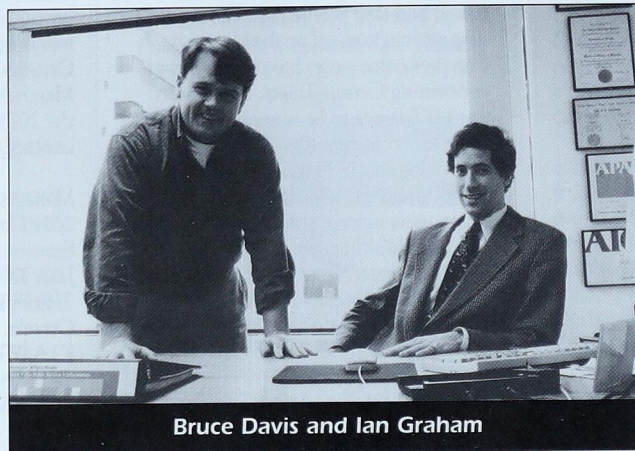
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Novae Res Urbis Ad Torontonium

By Jim Helik



an Graham, MCIP, RPP, AICP and partner Bruce Davis recently formed the consulting firm of URBAN INTELLIGENCE. The firm's mandate is to be fully knowledgeable about the news, people, activities, and services of municipal government in the "new" Toronto, and to provide clients with a one-stop information and consulting source. The firm produces a weekly newsletter called Novae Res Urbis (News of the City) by fax and e-mail to a wide variety of subscribers in development, politics, planning, and business. In a short time, NRU has developed a devoted clientele. "I really like the format," reports one



Bruce Davis and Ian Graham

busy consultant. "It gives me the scoop on a variety of city-related things quickly."

The consulting practice is focused on providing information on development activity in Toronto and the GTA, assisting clients with the approval process along

with other professionals. The firm plans to get into the government relations business in 1998 to help build private sector relationships with political and bureaucratic leaders in the new city and to identify opportunities for public-private initiatives.

Ian Graham was previously an associate with Kentridge Johnston Limited. Bruce Davis has been active in federal, provincial, and municipal politics for over a decade. For more information

about the firm, call (416) 979-3360 or e-mail

<urbanintelligence@compuserve.com>

Jim Helik, MCIP, RPP, is the Journal's contributing editor for consulting practice. He can be reached at 923-6027.

For the remainder of 1998 the column will be focusing its attention on innovation in professional practice and management issues facing consulting firms. We are particularly interested in hearing from firms whose exploits have not yet been publicized in the Journal.—Ed.

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Municipal Engineers Association Class Environmental Assessment Renewal Project

By Dianne Damman



he Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) is revising its Class Environmental Assessment (EA) documents for Municipal Road Projects and Water and Wastewater Projects. The current Class EAs expire in May of this year. The MEA Class EA Renewal Project is scheduled for completion in the summer of 1998, with a submission of the revised Class EA(s) for approval to the Ministry of the Environment.

The Project is being developed in six stages, leading to adoption of the new Class EA.

So far, a questionnaire has been sent to those with an interest in the Class EAs and the results have been compiled. The questionnaire sought input on items such as:

- areas for which change should be considered (eg., the planning and design process, private sector regulation, public involvement requirements), along with a rationale and an indication of the degree of change required;
- whether other projects should be added to the Class EA documents;
- whether the current Road and Water and Wastewater Class EAs should be consolidated into one document;
- experience with "bump-ups" and the "bump-up" process;
- public consultation experience and approach; and
- adequacy of the consultation process in the current Class EAs.

Issues identified as a result of this are the need to:

- improve the planning and design process;
- clarify the project schedules;
- improve the consultation process, including an examination of alternative consultation methods;
- harmonize with the Planning Act and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act;
- the expansion of the application of the Class EA to other municipal projects.

In addition, the first Project Update was published in October 1997. There are plans to publish five more.

A workshop to discuss issues relative to the Class EAs took place at the end of January. OPPI members participated in this workshop.

Comments on the MEA Class EAs can be e-mailed to <meaclass@interlog.com> or faxed to the MEA Class EA Renewal Project at 905-823-8503. For more information on the MEA Class EA Renewal Project, please contact Dianne Damman at 519-745-9227 or <damman@kw.igs.net>

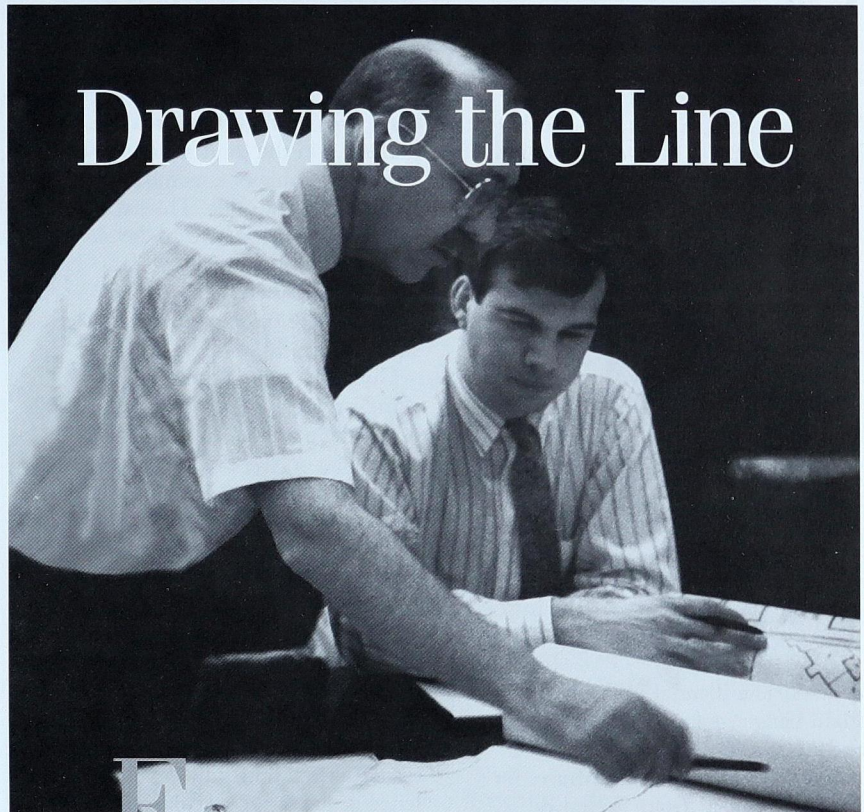
Dianne C. Damman, M.A., MCIP, RPP is acting head of the Public Policy Committee's

Environmental Working Group and a consultant providing services in environmental impact assessment and planning and environmental management systems. She is a member of the

Steering Committee for the Municipal Engineers Association Class EA Renewal Project.

Related website

<http://www.ilap.com/mea/ea/index.html>



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1996-7

President's Annual Report

By Valerie Cranmer

Organizations such as ours are made effective by volunteers. Your willingness to spend time on behalf of OPPI makes a world of difference and my job as your President a pleasure. Because of our volunteers, the amount of work that we are able to do in a year, in addition to all the work done by our staff, is phenomenal.

Professional development continues to be a very successful service for our

members. Over the past year we scheduled more than 20 courses and workshops. These included the introduction of two new

courses, The Planner as Facilitator and Plain Language for Planners, as well as the Alternative Dispute Resolution modules, the membership courses for the ever-popular Exam B, and Bill 20 and the Policy Statement Training Sessions. Our Professional Development Committee is examining how best to implement the results of the needs assessment survey to ensure that



Valerie Cranmer

new courses reflect the needs of the membership.

OPPI is maturing, and I don't mean that we're all just getting older. This is clear in the increasing importance of professionalism and our code of conduct. This year, for the first time, we published in the Journal and annual report the name of a member who was in breach of the code. The experience we gained is being used to develop two practice advisories that will be published in the Journal. The advisories are designed to help members avoid similar situations in the future.

Our 1997 Symposium held in Windsor was a great success. Over 200 practising planners and students descended on the city to participate in discussions and mobile workshops on what's hot in planning. The Symposium Committee did a fantastic job in providing participants with a wide variety of topics to discuss and sites to visit. They deserve a big thank you from all of us. We are left with one question though—who planned the less than warm August weather?

The Journal continues to enjoy high reader satisfaction. This level of excellence is due to the ongoing commitment of the editor, Glenn Miller, and the many volunteers who write articles and put the Journal together.

The Publications Committee is also responsible for OPPI's homepage on the Internet. The page was recently re-constructed to make it more interesting and up-to-date.

Our Public Policy Committee is our largest and busiest group of volunteers. The committee acts as an umbrella for four working groups that represent the environment, resource management, municipal affairs and housing. The group as a whole draws on the expertise of more than fifty members throughout

the province to review policies, proposals and legislation; work on program development, and represent the profession on external committees and task forces.

This Committee is currently undergoing a strategic visioning process which will help it move beyond responding to legislation to becoming a part of the decision-making process before new legislation is introduced.

Our activities with students have greatly improved over the last year, due mostly to the enthusiasm and hard work of the student delegates on Council and the Student Liaison Committee. The Committee introduced SPED—the student planners' e-mail directory. The monthly e-mail newsletter delivers information on OPPI and its activities throughout the school year, and encourages more involvement by students. OPPI also hosted open houses, helped organize career information sessions and sent members and staff to talk to students on various topics. For the first time, an information session was held in the spring with U of T's graduating class to provide them with the how-to's of membership in OPPI.

The Private Sector Advisory Committee has three main initiatives:

- a salary survey of public and private-sector employers. This information will be compiled and published for use by members;
- a survey of Tariff of Fees By-Laws across Ontario; and
- the development of "How to Hire a Consultant" Guidelines.

In addition, the long-awaited consultant directory is complete. The Directory provides a low-cost promotional tool for private sector members and was mailed to all Full and Provisional members, as well as all Ontario municipalities and other potential clients.

As part of OPPI's Strategic Plan,

STATISTICS CONDENSED

The 1996/97 Annual Report is included with this Journal rather than as a stand alone publication as a cost-saving measure. As a result, the membership statistics have been significantly condensed. A copy of the complete set of statistics normally printed in the annual report is available through the OPPI office.

Council undertook the development of a volunteer strategy. This was the result of years of feedback from members who were interested in volunteering for committees and activities, but were not personally invited to participate. The strategy evolved into the development of a committee resource manual which, when completed early in 1998, will encourage more access to volunteer positions by members.

Recently OPPI was involved in a national Associations Membership Study. The project studied member satisfaction, member value perceptions, member loyalty and retention issues for individual associations. Twenty-four associations, including fifteen professional associations, participated in the project. Questions arising from the survey, in the areas of accreditation, membership requirements, communication, professional education and member benefits, will provide food for thought for Council as they review the Strategic Plan in 1998.

OPPI is proud to announce that five of its members were recently named as Fellows by CIP. They are: George Rich, Macklin Hancock, John Bousfield, Gerry Carrothers, and Sally Thorsen, who was awarded this honour posthumously. Both George and John attended the CIP conference in August in St. John's to receive this honour.

The up-coming year will continue to be busy for staff and Members. The Harris government continues to produce legislation, studies, edicts at an unprecedented rate, and we must respond in a professional and timely manner, if we are to maintain and enhance our credibility as a profession with the Province.

The Strategic Plan needs to be revisited to ensure that the focus of Council reflects the aspirations of the membership. We will also examine the possibility of increasing the professional development programs, and address the issues of delivering these programs across the province in a cost-effective manner.

Membership has always been a major concern of mine. Although there have been many improvements in the mem-

bership process in the last few years, there are still some areas to be tackled. A large number of planners who have been in practice for ten or more years are non-members or are maintaining their status as Provisional Members. These people could contribute greatly to the profession and the Institute as Full Members. We

need to find ways to address this issue. Membership Outreach and Council are committed to improvement in these areas and coordination with the District activities and initiatives.

Council will continue to raise the awareness of the profession and the Institute at every opportunity.

Valerie Cranmer, MCIP, RPP

TABLE 1

OPPI MEMBERSHIP BY DISTRICT, DECEMBER 1997

District	Full	Prov.	Retired	Student	Public Associate		TOTAL
					Associate	Associate (Student)	
Northern District	52	27	2	9	-	2	92
Southwest District	226	134	8	102	-	8	478
Central District	928	584	40	258	11	13	1834
Eastern District	162	115	7	37	2	1	324
Out of Province	11	2	1	12	-	-	26
TOTAL	1379	862	58	418	13	24	2754

NOTE: Full Members include 9 Fellows of CIP; Retired Members include 1 Fellow of CIP.

TABLE 2

MEMBERSHIP BY CLASS AND SEX, DECEMBER 1997

	Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%
Full	1043	75.6	336	24.4
Provisional	535	62.1	327	37.9
Retired	50	86.2	8	13.8

TABLE 3

FULL AND PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP BY EMPLOYMENT CATEGORY, DECEMBER 1997

		Northern	Southwest	Central	Eastern	TOTAL	
						No.	%
Ont./Can. Public Service	F	8	5	78	17	148	6.64
	P	2	3	27	8		
Municipality	F	29	137	420	80	989	44.39
	P	11	51	210	51		
Other Public Agency	F	1	2	24	6	83	3.73
	P	1	8	32	9		
Private Sector	F	15	80	434	61	894	40.13
	P	12	50	212	30		
Academia	F	-	11	19	8	48	2.15
	P	-	2	8	-		
Unemployed/Caregiver	F	-	5	17	-	66	2.96
	P	-	6	31	7		
TOTAL		79	360	1512	277	2228	100.00

NOTES: Total excludes 13 out-of-province members. Based on membership census updated to 1997 and extrapolated to entire membership as shown on Table 1.

Guelph's Experience with Charity Casino Gambling

By Chuck Hostovsky
(First of two parts)

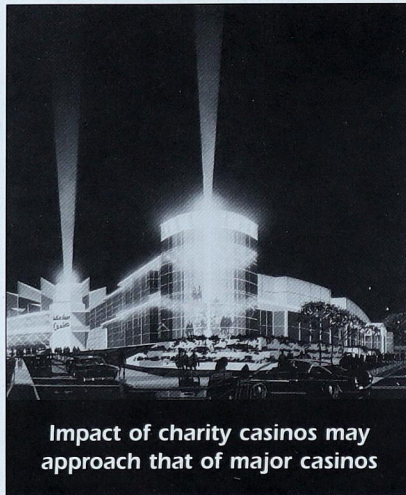


In February 18, 1997, the Ontario Gaming Control Commission caught most land use planners off guard when it issued a Request for Proposals for its Charity Gaming Club (CGC) project. Since 1612, when the first lottery was organized in England to honour "God and Country" and support the colonists in the New World, we should have expected that announcement, despite the 350-year wait for the 1969 amendment to the Canadian Penal Code that permitted government lotteries and charity casino gaming.

By 1995 Ontario was netting almost \$1.5 billion a year in gambling revenues for "God and the Province," almost three percent of the province's total revenues. However, even when the Windsor Casino was announced (which was quickly followed by Casinorama and the Niagara casino), no one suspected the magnitude of the Charity Gaming Club project.

Coopers and Lybrand had conducted its market research well: 44 casinos, strategically located throughout Ontario, open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, would saturate the gaming potential of the populace. The consultants recommended that the average Ontarian should not have to travel further than 40 kilometres to a casino. Although other provinces have already introduced casinos, only Ontario used location theory and market research to propose a province-wide network of casinos to maximize gaming-related revenue.

Winnings may come from up to 40 table games (blackjack, roulette, and so forth) and up to 150 video lottery terminals, but no slot machines will be permitted. Of the winnings, 10 percent goes to the operator; 10 percent to the charity (to maintain the charade of the "charity" casino), and the province takes 80 percent. This is expected to yield almost a billion dollars a year for the Province. These monies make the winnings from the roving Monte Carlo events the casinos are intended to replace look like pocket change. The Province carefully explained that there have been problems with the Monte Carlo events and that the casinos will "provide a safer, more controlled environment for gaming activities."



HOW DO YOU ZONE A CASINO?

Across the province, municipalities reacted to the announcement by reviewing their official plans and zoning by-laws. The question was initially very simple: do the OP and zoning by-laws allow casinos? In Guelph, it was quickly determined that the comprehensive zoning by-law did not define or recognize casino gambling. In the past, occasional casinos had tended to operate out of banquet halls and similar places and had been considered temporary uses. However, the proposed permanent casino would be a specific land use.

A charity gaming club could be defined in many ways, which are permitted in Guelph in a variety of zones throughout the city. In all, 2,200 acres of land in the City are zoned in a way that could allow a casino.

PUBLIC REACTION

The public reacted negatively. People phoned, wrote letters and made presentations to Council opposing the provincial proposal. Council directed staff to look for ways to prohibit casino gambling in the city. A Public Liaison Committee was formed on the advice of the author, who has been doing conflict resolution on other projects for the City. Although most people oppose the casino, a couple are in favour and a few are undecided.

Unfortunately, the Gaming Control Commission's public consultation process has been inadequate. In fact, the Commission's Request for Proposal put a disturbing "gag order" on potential operators: "Proponents must not disclose any details pertaining to their proposal...Proponents shall not issue a news release or other public announcement pertaining to details of their proposal."

Guelph, like many other municipalities, decided to invoke the little-used Section 38(1) of the Planning Act and on April 7, 1997, issued an interim control by-law to "prohibit, for a period of one year, the use of lands, buildings and structures located within the boundaries of the Corporation of the City of Guelph for charity gaming clubs." This bought planning staff some time.

The 44 casinos are not the only threat to Ontario communities. The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation and Public Protection Act, passed November 18, 1996, permits the establishment of video lottery terminals in Ontario communities – the "crack cocaine" of gambling. They are particularly attractive to young people who have grown up with video games. They have already created social problems in Alberta and New Brunswick, where they are now allowed. At the same time, "one-armed bandits," which are very popular with older gamblers, are not part of the CGC proposals. This reinforces the sense that the province's marketing efforts are aimed at youth, which is disturbing in terms of public policy.

THE CHARITIES' DILEMMA

Planning staff in Guelph had to weigh the economic pros and cons of a casino in the absence of an economic impact assessment from the Commission. Coopers and Lybrand has calculated the propensity of Ontarians to gamble as follows: 33 percent of adults from the catchment area will visit the casino; they will make an average of 10 visits a year and spend an average of \$37 each time.

Using these figures, the total amount spent by Guelph residents is expected to be about \$10 million and an extra \$12 million will come from residents of surrounding municipalities. Although the lion's share

will go to the Province, the charities stand to earn more than \$2 million.

The Province has put charities in a difficult situation. At a time when charities are receiving less money in direct contributions from governments and public giving is down, the lure of big dollars from gambling revenues is hard to resist, even if it contrary to the charities' social values and mandates. The United Way of Wellington Guelph conducted a preliminary survey of their membership and found that although 62 percent of the organizations that responded were opposed in principle to charity gaming clubs and VLTs, only 31 percent would not accept revenue from these sources.

THE PROVINCE FIGHTS BACK

The Province clearly did not expect the level of backlash from the public and councils over this issue. Suddenly municipal councils found themselves pitted against charities that supported the Province's proposal. In August 1997, and with much fanfare, the Province released the report (allegedly based on a public consultation process) of their Charitable Gaming Allocation Working Group: "A Compass and a Dream: Strengthening Community Capacity and Sustaining a Civic Society in Ontario." The report took the rhetoric and propaganda of helping charities to new heights. Again, the public and municipal politicians did not buy in.

The Province then offered yearly payments of \$1,500 per VLT (or \$225,000 annually for a full-slate of casino VLTs) to the host municipality to offset administrative costs. Guelph, like many other municipalities, rejected the offer.

GUELPH'S REFERENDUM

Guelph, like many other municipalities, held a plebiscite in conjunction with the November 1997 election of municipal and school board representatives. The question on the ballot read, "Are you in favour of a

charitable gaming club (sometimes known as a charitable casino or gambling casino) in the City of Guelph?" The results were 70 percent against.

It was hoped that the referendum would kill the proposal and allow planning resources to be directed to other priorities. However, the City has been receiving mixed messages from the Province about the referendum results. It is not clear whether the Province will force casinos on municipalities. Minister of Municipal Affairs, Al Leach has been quoted in the media as stating that a referendum would not be binding on the Province and that the referendum is just one of many "consultations" they will take into account. Furthermore, CHC Casinos Inc. of Miami, Florida, the chosen operator of the Guelph casino, has informed City staff that they intend to pursue a casino and will be selling the proposal to local politicians and the public early in 1998.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

If nothing else, Guelph has learned something from this exercise. First, planners must now recognize gambling as a land use. However, we know from our

recent experience with adult entertainment parlours and adult video stores that we cannot use the official plan and zoning by-law to regulate community moral standards. Indeed, it seems that gambling is no longer considered immoral, given public acceptance of activities such as lottery tickets and bingo.

Second, gambling creates severe social impacts and casinos create significant land use compatibility problems. Sound planning rationale is needed to regulate casinos and VLTs in a community. Extensive consultation with the public and interest groups can

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help us define that rationale.

Third, planners must answer to Council. Most Councils involved as potential hosts have rejected the CGC proposal. Some have not.

(This article will conclude next issue with a review of the benefits and costs associated with the pathology of gambling, as well as implications for land use planning.)

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Students Learn New Skills

by Akash Sinha

The first semester of the new school year found second year students at the School of Urban and Regional Planning, Queen's University, scrambling to piece together everything they've learned since starting the program. Second year students at Queen's apply their knowledge in a practical manner with special projects which last the first term.

Six second year students chose to concentrate on the social aspects of planning, and are working with Prof. Sue Hendler on their project. The group is evaluating service delivery of the Kingston Aids Project and its effectiveness in meeting HIV/AIDS related needs within the community. Through a series of surveys and interviews, the evaluation will provide

valuable feedback on how the agency can improve service delivery.

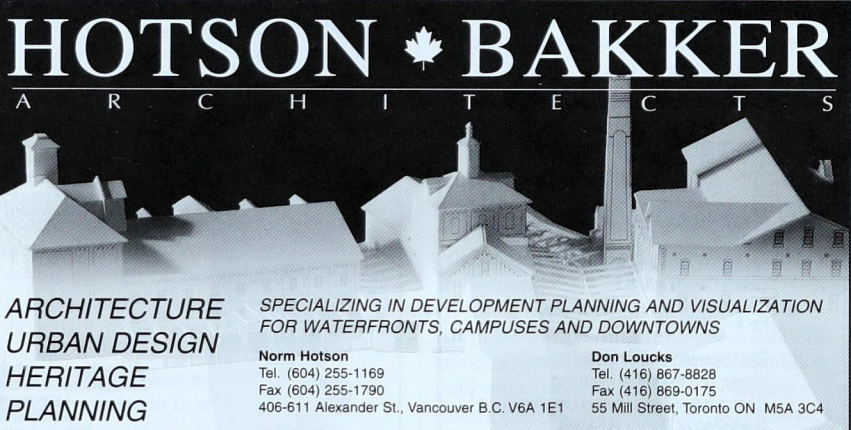
The rest of the class are trying their skills at urban design and development, in a project spearheaded by Mark Seasons from the NCC, and Carl Bray from Commonwealth Historic Resource Management. The purpose of this project is to create policies and guidelines to guide development along the Tay Canal while maintaining the historical aspect of the region. The group is also using new planning tools, such as commemorative integrity statements and assessment of cultural landscapes.

Akash Sinha is a second year student at the School of Urban and Regional Planning, Queen's University, and is a student representative on the Eastern District Executive and Student Liaison Committee.



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Condo Conversions Post-RHPA

By Linda Lapointe

Once the Tenant Protection Act, 1997 comes into effect, anticipated in April, 1998, the Rental Housing Protection Act (RHPA) will be repealed. Under Sections 51 - 55 of the new Act, landlords will have considerably more scope to convert rental buildings to condominiums following notice of 120 days. Once a condominium is registered, existing tenants will have first right of refusal; however, landlords need only provide the tenant with 72 hours notice of the offer to purchase a unit. Tenants who live in buildings of at least five residential units will be entitled to compensation equal to three months rent or to another rental unit acceptable to the tenant, if they choose not to purchase.

By comparison, the soon to be defunct RHPA directed municipalities not to approve a condominium conversion unless the applicant agreed to replace the rental housing with similar units in a similar rental range and/or the proposal did not adversely affect the supply of affordable rental units. The RHPA required the applicant to notify tenants, required the municipality to hold a public meeting and provided for appeal of the municipality's decision to the OMB. The RHPA also gave municipalities the power to approve of demolition, major repairs and conversions to equity co-operatives.

What can municipalities do in the future

to retain rental housing? The major vehicle for protecting rental housing in the future will be through official plan policies regarding condominium conversions. Many municipalities across Ontario have such policies - many of which predate the RHPA. Such policies usually stipulate a benchmark vacancy rate representing a "balanced" or "healthy" rental market below which condominium conversions will not be permitted. Also, given that many municipalities also have the authority to approve condominium applications, this authority gives them additional leverage over condominium conversions. (The condominium approval by-law usually states that the condominium application must not conflict with other policies in the official plan and, thus, an application would not be granted where the official plan policy on condominium conversions was not met.)

Each municipality needs to assess the level of protection that is needed for the private rental stock taking into account local conditions - such as the current and anticipated supply of private rental housing, other opportunities for lower cost condominiums, and the need and demand for affordable rental housing. The municipality should consider establishing a public process for the condominium conversion as well as requirements for a technical assessment of the state of repair of the individual property.

With condominium conversion policies in the official plan, municipal decisions

regarding particular cases can be appealed to the OMB. Such decisions were appealed to the Board prior to the RHPA and there is precedent for the Board upholding municipal decisions to deny conversions under tight rental market conditions (that is, when vacancy rates were too low). Support for controlling condominium conversions can be found in Section 2 of the Planning Act which identifies a provincial interest in "the adequate provision of a full range of housing." Also, the Provincial Policy statement states that "provision will be made in all planning jurisdictions for a full range of housing types and densities to meet projected demographic and market requirements."

The level of protection afforded to tenants subject to condominium conversions will ultimately depend upon the policies and decisions of the local planning authority and, in the case of appeals, the interpretation of the residing Chair of the OMB.

Linda Lapointe, MCIP, RPP, is a private consultant on housing and planning matters. As editor of the Journal's housing column, she welcomes comments and feedback as well as articles on housing and residential planning. Linda can be reached by phone at (416) 323-0807, fax (416) 323-0992, or e-mail: <311markham@sympatico.ca>

Errata: The author of Case Studies of the Municipal Role in Housing in the previous issue should have been identified as Richard Drdla & Associates.



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The Usual Suspects

By Philippa Campsie



A few weeks ago, I attended a panel discussion about the future of cities. Since there was a reception following the event, I went.

It was pleasant enough. I saw a great many familiar faces (perhaps you were there too!) and the faces of those on the platform were equally familiar. The presentations were articulate and full of amusing anecdotes. There were a few not-very-challenging questions afterwards. The food at the reception was excellent. But when I got home I had a lingering feeling of disappointment.

Or perhaps I should call it déjà vu. I had been in that room before, or one much like it, with most of the same people and heard most of the same things coming out of the same mouths. I had the same feeling about the Megacity hearings.

The usual suspects turned up and said predictable things, but the more interesting presentations were made by people I've never heard of. Although many of them were inexperienced in public speaking, they were well informed and they talked passionately and cogently about their city and their opinions on Bill 103. Many of them had fresh, unusual perspectives.

Even then, I was rather dismayed at the preponderance of Anglo-Saxon names in the list of speakers. One black speaker even mentioned the fact that he was facing an almost entirely white, middle-class audience. Toronto is not a predominantly white, middle-class city any more. But who speaks for those other city dwellers?

Ursula Franklin coined the word "planners" to describe the people that planners plan for. They may not have come to the megacity hearings, they may not join

ratepayers' groups, they may not even know that they are allowed to participate in the planning process, but nonetheless it's their city too. Do planners know how they feel about planning issues?

Philippa Campsie is the deputy editor of the Journal. She teaches plain language to planners and other groups and is the principal of Philippa Campsie Editorial Services.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Aids to Competitiveness

By Joe Cimer



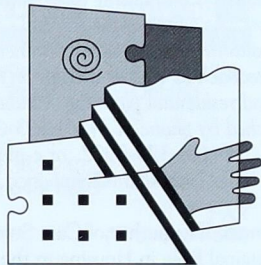
Electronic information systems are rapidly becoming the norm in municipalities that place a priority on good customer service and effective economic development practice.

Although the rationale for investing in new systems often comes from economic development departments, planners cannot afford to be left behind. Here are some examples of jurisdictions where planning and economic development professionals are combining their talents and energy to produce results.

The City of Vaughan, like many other jurisdictions, posts promotional information on its web site, but has taken the extra step of producing an interactive CD that combines demographic, economic, tourism and other information about the municipality. Potential investors can "point and click" with a "business calculator" program that estimates the cost of setting up shop in the municipality. Comparisons can be made with other jurisdictions. The CD taps into a vacant land inventory and assessment data to make this possible. The former City of North York, now part of the new Toronto, has its plans and zoning by-laws on CD.

The City of Thorald has also moved aggressively to use technology to its advantage with the establishment of a community intranet, which may be a first in Canada. Residents can access a full range of municipal information, and can use the system to apply for building permits or even check out books from the library.

American cities have a more aggressive tradition of fierce competition for economic development than here. In Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, for example, provides potential investors with a CD containing everything from municipal zoning codes, mapping and photos of key buildings and individuals in the community to video clips that illustrate quality of life. Numerous juris-



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dictions in the U.S. are also using the power of GIS to provide comparative macro economic data. Here in Ontario, the Ontario Investment Service has one of the most comprehensive web/cd information sets, and is gradually accumulating a full set of municipal links.

Following sweeping organizational changes being experienced in Ontario, with more emphasis on funding services from the property tax base, we can expect more municipalities to combine the benefits of having to do more with less with the power of electronic information handling.

This article is based on information provided by Joe Cimer, a planning and marketing consultant with HLP Systems. He can be reached at (519) 944-8570 or <jcimer@hotmail.com> Related web sites include: Ontario Investment Service

<www.2ontario.com> and Industry Canada <http://strategis.ic.gc.ca> Nicola Mitchinson is the Journal's contributing editor on economic development.

Contact her at Jones Consulting (705) 734-2538.

Private Sector Advisory Committee

by Peter Smith



The Private Sector Advisory Committee (PSAC) held its inaugural meeting of their current term on October 28, 1997. A number of good issues and initiatives were discussed - some building on the activities of the previous committee's work, others are new to the agenda, including our intent to have PSAC as a regular feature in the Journal.

PSAC originally evolved out of a merger agreement between OPPI and the Association of Consulting Planners (ACP) in 1994. Funds held by ACP were mostly transferred to OPPI, and used towards funding the RPP legislation costs being incurred by OPPI. Subject to approval by the ACP Board of Directors, the balance of the funds are now being transferred to OPPI under the agreement.

It is interesting to note that the private

sector now comprises a significant portion of OPPI membership. Our sense is that it is in the range of 40-50% of members working in private planning, economic, computer applications and other consulting areas, in retail and industrial business that acquire or need to dispose of land and building assets at the best value, in financial organizations and development companies. PSAC would like to hear from the membership, particularly those in the private sector concerning current issues, topics of interest and ideas on the future in the planning industry. We are also looking for members interested in being on PSAC, or that would like to take on a particular private sector initiative.

PSAC is chaired by Don May, a member of OPPI Council. Other members include Ross Raymond, Bob Lehman, Scott Burns, Lindsay Dale-Harris, Bill Green, Andrew McNeely, Don Logan, Lauren Millier and yours truly, Peter Smith.

Some immediate activities for PSAC include:

- Assistance with the final review of the "How to Hire a Consultant Guidelines"
- OPPI Salary Survey and Tariff of Fees Bylaw Survey
- Seminars and workshops - Running a Successful Planning Consultant Business; Computers in Planning; Networking
- Recommendations for nomination for CIP Fellows and OPPI Member Service Awards
- Regular column and article contributions to the Journal.

Peter Smith, MCIP, RPP, is a member of the Private Sector Advisory Committee, and is an Associate with Weston Consulting Group Inc.



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LETTERS FROM LONDON

Where to Put 4.4 Million New Homes? —Or— Intensification in the Interface Zone

By Jeff Lehman

The United Kingdom's Department of the Environment recently announced that there was a 'need' for 4.4 million new households to be built in England by the year 2016. No doubt more than one Housing Director dropped his pint of Guinness at the news. The minister later added that 60% of that number were to be accommodated on brownfield sites. This was interpreted as inner city urban redevelopment — a sure cause of heartburn.

This inevitably provoked a variety of furious responses, especially from housing agencies, who pointed to approximately 100,000 vacant houses in Greater London alone as evidence of a massive housing surplus. But many in government took the statement at face value, and searched for solutions to meet the stiff demands.

Necessity being the mother of invention, local councils got together and hired some planners to help locate the 'imminent' hous-

ing boom. In the Northwest Region of Britain, which includes the City of Manchester, the regional authority hired London consulting firm Llewelyn-Davies to develop a manual for housing capacity estimates.

Refreshingly, the process includes on-the-street surveys of potential locations for redevelopment. Staff and Council sit down with a community plan and cross off all areas where redevelopment is not desired or feasible, then conduct site visits and use photography (and/or mapping) to get a feel for the most suitable areas. Each area undergoes cost-benefit analysis for maximum capacity under three scenarios for growth — "status quo", "local change", and "regeneration".

But perhaps more important than the process itself is the underlying thinking. There is a growing recognition that urban redevelopment requires flexibility in planning ideas and implementation. British authorities are also becoming more aware of

a need to narrow the gap between public and private sector for market-successful redevelopment.

Llewelyn-Davies found that the best sites for redevelopment were so-called interface zones, "the awkward, mixed use areas where different uses meet." These areas are uniquely suited for intensification, as the community character is mixed and changes in use and built form are ongoing. Often located at the "edge of town", interface zones have the advantage of strong, pre-existing infrastructure links and the attractiveness of prime location. Their unique suitability for redevelopment bears consideration in Toronto, where, despite attempts to comprehensively plan intensification opportunities, infill-type development often occurs on an ad-hoc basis and frequently involves hard-fought OMB hearings. Interface zones exist in abundance in Toronto, and as Mega-City grinds into motion in the next few years, the redevelopment potential for these areas bears further consideration.

Jeff Lehman is currently studying planning at the London School of Economics. This is the first of an occasional series. Jeff can be reached at <jrlehman@le.ac.uk> More information about the report referred to can be found at <www.rtpi.org.uk/>



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