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ONTARIO PLANNERS · VISION · LEADERSHIP · GREAT COMMUNITIES

Provincial Policy Shifts in Favour of Protecting Downtowns

Features p.5
OPPI Notebook ... p.11
Districts & People ... p.13
Commentary p.14
Departments p.17
In Print p.31



Making Planning Real:
Students engage in World Town Planning Day
Page 11





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New Provincial Government Loses No Time in Making Its Mark

OPPI preparing response to proposed legislation

Shortly before Christmas, barely a month after taking power, the provincial Liberals laid down two powerful markers intended to establish the new government's credentials as crusaders against sprawl. In a one/two punch delivered in the legislature on successive days in mid-December, Minister of Municipal Affairs John Gerretsen introduced Bills 26 and 27—the *Strong Communities Act* and the *Greenbelt Protection Act*. With proposed decisive changes to the Planning Act on the one hand, and a geographically focused initiative to establish a massive greenbelt on the other, the government sent a clear message to supporters and foes alike that it is not going to be business as usual at 777 Bay Street.

Building on momentum gained during the election campaign, the Minister left little doubt that although the stated intent of Bill 26 is to “give communities the much-needed tools to control their own planning” by putting “the ability to guide urban development back into the hands of locally elected decision makers,” his real target was the OMB. Claiming that too much power in the hands of developers and the OMB was “not in the public interest,” the Minister outlined a series of strategic changes to the *Planning Act*, which, if adopted, will dramatically shift how development is dealt with at the Board.

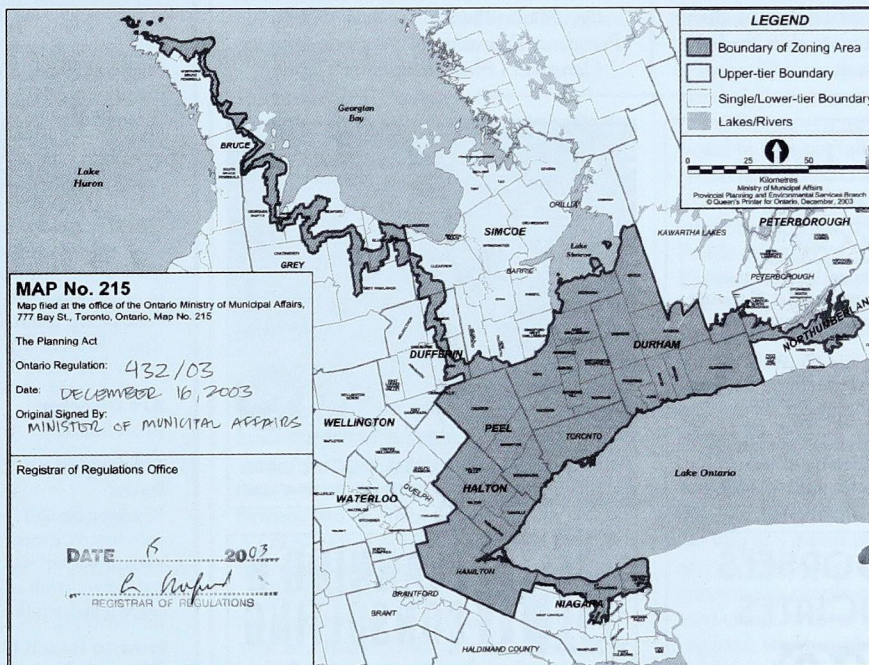
If the prospect of needing to be “consistent with” provincial policy instead of merely having “regard to” the PPS, and restoring the Minister's right to advise the Board when proposed amendments to plans and zoning by-laws “are matters of provincial interest” wasn't enough to ruin a few Christmas holidays, then the imposition of a Minister's zoning order to give effect to the intent of the *Greenbelt Protection Act* (introduced jointly on behalf of the Minister of Environment) over a massive swath of the Golden Horseshoe must have had others reaching for the nitroglycerin.

The Bill seeks a legislated one-year moratorium on a “no-development zone” stretching from the GTA west to encompass the soft-fruit lands of Niagara and north to incorporate the Oak Ridges Moraine as far as Tobermory along the Niagara Escarpment.

Reliable estimates for the time it will take to get bills through the legislature are always difficult to predict, but observers and insiders alike agree that Bill 26 is likely to have a smoother passage than its cousin, Bill 27. As the precursor to a permanent greenbelt in the Golden Horseshoe, Bill 27 guarantees that ministry staff will be hearing from virtually every lobby active in the southern half of the province. At issue are rural properties, agricultural lands, wine production, aggregates, recreation plans, housing, industrial development . . . the list is endless.

Although critics have focused on the speed with which the new legislation has been created and put into play, it is interesting to note that in subsequent speeches, the Minister and other spokespeople for the government have stressed linkages with the energy file, transportation and air quality. Could it be that Ontario means to build a

By Glenn Miller



The “greenbelt” initiative supported by Ministry's zoning order

stronger case for dealing with the Kyoto Accord just as signals from the federal government weaken?

The long-awaited revised Provincial Policy Statement could also finally see the light of day, now that Bill 26 has opened the door to resolving an issue that has been a political football since the Rae government.

Another regular complaint from fast-growing municipalities is that of being forced to extend the boundaries of their urban envelopes against their will as the result of developers appealing council decisions on boundary issues to the OMB. Bill 26 pro-

poses that municipal council decisions concerning changes "to the boundary of settlement areas" can no longer be appealed to the OMB. The bill also alters the criteria that must be met by public bodies with respect to provincial policy statements, promising—if passed—to give a new generation of lawyers the opportunity to put the words "consistent with" under a microscope. As well, this may trigger a swing of the pendulum back towards more direct Municipal Affairs involvement in planning issues. Now that there is a real prospect that the revised Provincial Policy Statement will actually mean something, MAH may well become more pro-active and interventionist when reviewing municipal plans.

Another set of significant changes affecting the way municipalities and the public interact with the OMB is a loosening of the deadlines of appeals under Section 17 (40). Even more controversial is the elimination of the 65-day rule for municipal action on a planning application. Critics will argue that although too many municipalities were willing to allow the clock to run down so as to trigger automatic appeals to the Board in order to avoid controversial decisions, this proposed change threatens to shift the balance too far the other way.

OPPI volunteers from the Policy Development Committee preparing a brief for use in discussions with the Ministry conclude that although the proposed legislation is a positive first step, there are "apparent gaps and areas that warrant further investigation." The brief, due to be ready in February, will contain suggestions "for consideration." The response will be posted on the OPPI website.

Reaction to the proposed legislation has predictably been mixed. Some environmentalists are supportive, while others argue the government is not going far enough. The voice of the development industry, the UDI, has so far been muted publicly. The GTHBA, on the other hand, has already begun to play the "residential development supports the economy" card, suggesting the government exercise "caution" in moving forward with legislation that potentially undermines this aspect of Ontario's economic engine.

This could well be a year to remember. Hold on to your hats.

Glenn R. Miller, MCIP, RPP, is editor of the Ontario Planning Journal and Vice President, Education & Research, with the Canadian Urban Institute in Toronto.

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Bottom Up Support for Agriculture?

The Creation of a GTA Agricultural Action Plan

By John Michailidis

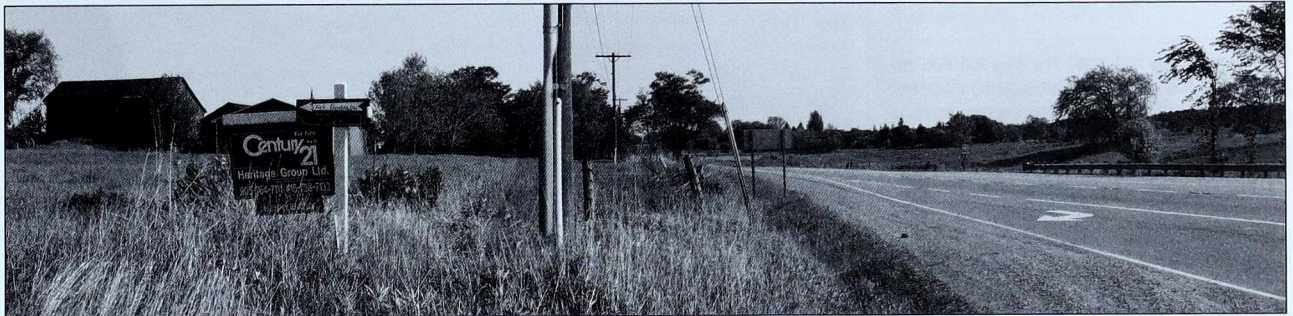


Photo: Steve Rowe

A familiar scene in the urban fringe

A challenge facing the fast-growing GTA is how to strengthen its agricultural industry while accommodating urban growth. In June 2001, the GTA (Toronto, Durham, Halton, Peel, and York) Federations of Agriculture presented the GTA Regional Chairs a list of 10 longstanding issues requiring attention in order for the agricultural industry in the GTA to survive. The list served its purpose well, leading to the preparation of a GTA Agricultural Action Plan.

The GTA Agricultural Working Group, consisting of planning staff from the GTA Regions and the City of Toronto, was formed to tackle the preparation of the Action Plan. As a first step, in March 2003 the Working Group organized a workshop with planners, agricultural experts, farmers and representatives from the GTA Federations of Agriculture.

Participants reached three key conclusions:

- 1) a GTA Agricultural Action Plan was needed;
- 2) the Plan must be action-oriented and must address agriculture from the perspectives of marketing, economic development and land use policy; and
- 3) to be successful, the Plan must identify the organizations responsible for implementation.

The Proposed GTA Agricultural Action Plan

In consultation with focus groups, consisting of representatives of the agricultural industry, the province, and farmers, the Working Group completed a Proposed Agricultural

Action Plan, which was presented at a symposium in Milton in November.

The plan is organized under four themes, and contains 34 specific action items to maintain and support a healthy GTA agricultural industry.

1. Economic Development

Agricultural activities contribute significantly to the GTA economy. In 2001, GTA gross farm receipts equalled \$1.3 billion and the agricultural industry employed 35,000 people. Yet the amount of farmland in the GTA continues to decline. If agriculture is to survive and thrive in the GTA, economic strategies that capitalize on the GTA's competitive advantage and opportunities are needed. These include proximity to a diverse urban population and ideal soil and climate conditions for agriculture. The GTA has all the fundamentals to sustain a prosperous agricultural industry; over five million mouths to feed, a rich land base, talented and dedicated farmers, and an efficient distribution system. A GTA-wide economic strategy for agriculture would make the most of these assets.

The Proposed Action Plan suggests that the opportunities for agriculture in the GTA must be defined. Once defined, a GTA-wide agricultural economic strategy should be developed to promote the opportunities. A first step toward developing a strategy would be to ensure that the existing economic campaigns geared to support agriculture in the GTA are coordinated.

2. Education and Marketing

The actions under the Education and Marketing theme focus on raising awareness

of the contribution of agriculture to the GTA economy, environment and character of life. As well, marketing campaigns would be developed to promote not only local farm products, but also the recreation, entertainment and education opportunities available at farms. This can be achieved by building on existing marketing and education programs. A key feature of a new marketing campaign would be to more fully understand the food preferences of the GTA's diverse population so that the agricultural industry can better satisfy those needs. The GTA Agricultural Profile prepared by Walton & Hunter Planning Associates (now Planscape) in November 1999 (Ontario Planning Journal, vol., 15 no. 2) and updated in October 2003, is a vital tool and information source to communicate to decision makers, the agricultural industry and the broader public the value of agriculture in the GTA.

The Action Plan calls on municipalities to support the creation of urban gardens, not only for their practical use as a source of food, but also as a means of engaging people in the activity of growing food. The idea is that encouraging people in urban areas to grow food connects them with the process of growing food, which might result in more support for the agricultural industry in the GTA.

3. Land Use Policy

The Land Use actions focus on protecting the agricultural land base and initiatives to keep GTA farmers on the farm. The actions stress the importance of having a continuum of land use policies and regulations that support agriculture, from the Provincial Policy Statement to municipal official plans

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and finally to the zoning by-laws.

One of the most effective ways of protecting the agricultural land base, identified in the Proposed Action Plan, is to advance an urban structure that creates a series of centres connected by regional corridors served by higher order transit. The thinking is that better urban growth policies means less agricultural land lost to urbanization. Applying this type of framework as the foundation of effective growth management changes the pattern of urban growth from a greenfield-based view to a city-building philosophy that promotes the efficient use of existing urban land and infrastructure to accommodate a greater amount of population growth.

For instance, York Region has begun this process with its "Making it Happen" Centres and Corridors strategy and Regional Council's commitment to seeing rapid transit in the Regional Corridors.

4. Accountability and Responsibility

Currently there are many government and non-government agencies advocating for GTA agricultural interests. The challenge is to coordinate their work. The Proposed Action Plan provides a framework that will lead to success by creating a sense of co-ownership among the many stakeholders involved in protection of the agricultural economy. Stakeholders in the industry will share the responsibility, decision-making and accountability for implementing the Agricultural Action Plan.

The Proposed Action Plan addresses accountability and responsibility by identifying a lead agency and participants for each of the 34 action items. Attaching time-frames for delivery would strengthen accountability.

Perhaps the most noteworthy and bold action put forward by the Proposed Action Plan is the establishment of a GTA Agricultural Action Committee to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan. As well, the committee would be responsible for raising awareness of agricultural issues, acting as liaison with the three levels of government and encouraging innovation and diversification within the industry. Representation on the committee would be from a wide range of interest groups, including the farming community, government agencies and the private sector. Establishment of the committee is key to the effective implementation of the Plan.

The GTA Agricultural Symposium

Over 120 people representing farmers, financial and educational institutions, community groups, food processors, distributors

and all levels of government engaged in dialogue about the proposed plan at the November symposium. Dr. Deb Stark, Assistant Deputy Minister, Agricultural and Rural Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, gave the keynote address. The participants agreed with the proposed plan and suggested the following refinements:

- A business plan should be completed that defines potential costs and identifies alternate sources of funding.
- Action Items should be prioritized, identifying those actions that can be easily completed at little or no cost.
- Clear timetables for implementation need to be assigned to the Action Items
- Measures of success should be defined for each item.
- Commitment from the senior levels of government is required for the success of the plan.
- The agricultural community must reach out to new immigrants to obtain their support for protecting agriculture in the GTA.

The Next Steps

The Proposed GTA Agricultural Action Plan represents a road map to maintaining a healthy agricultural industry. It represents the first step to finalizing the Plan. Until February 2004, the GTA Agricultural Working Committee will be accepting comments to the Proposed Action Plan. The Plan will be updated based on the feedback, and a recommended Plan will be introduced in March 2004, with the view of the Plan being endorsed by all three levels of government soon after.

Additional information and copies of the Proposed Action Plan are available on the Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario website: www.rpco.on.ca, or by contacting the members of the GTA Agricultural Working Group:

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neil.garbe@region.york.on.ca, or

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Hamilton's Progress towards "Building a Strong Foundation"

By Joanne Hickey-Evans, Linda Harvey and Laurie Payne



Learning from feedback key to meaningful consultation

This is the second article detailing the lessons learned from Hamilton's successful consultation process to update its long-range planning vision.

We knew that the first Stakeholder Symposium was one of the most important, because it would set the pattern for future events. Mayor Robert Wade, Jack Diamond of Diamond Schmidt Architects and a representative from the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives each gave presentations that helped build interest and excitement for the event.

Challenges: The participants represented many sectors. For the most part, they already knew about VISION 2020. They had also been involved in Vision 2020, adopted in 1992 (reported in the Ontario Planning Journal vol. 8, no. 3). Because many participants in the symposium had been involved in similar processes, we also needed to challenge the perception that the consultation process would not influence the decision-making process.

Techniques: To use the participants' time wisely and capitalize on their collective knowledge, we organized working groups that represented various sectors and perspectives. The session began with a brief refresher on VISION 2020 and an overview on how the City hoped to integrate sustainability principles into the Growth Management

Strategy. The participants were put to work for the bulk of the day debating, identifying and developing key directions for the City's future. During the working session, participants worked together in self-facilitated groups, which allowed new relationships to develop and made good use of scarce staff resources. Each group was given a "recorder workbook."

Successes: The recorder workbooks generated more feedback than could normally be obtained through large group discussions and presentations. The comments from the workbooks and other symposium discussions were quickly incorporated into a symposium record, which was circulated to participants for review before being finalized. This set the tone for a responsive process. Finally, because the participants understood the process, they encouraged their colleagues and neighbours to attend the broader community workshops.

Lessons Learned: Even though participants were encouraged to comment on two or three of eight theme areas, many felt the urge to comment on all of the themes. This resulted in less depth than we would have liked. In the second symposium, each group was assigned two topic areas plus an additional topic of their choice to ensure that the feedback met the needs of the project. A second improvement was the recording of key discussion points on an LCD project. This was easier to see than flip charts and conveyed a sense that responses were "live."

The Community Workshops: Engaging the Grassroots

We used the results from the first Symposium to develop the structure and content of the community workshops. Given our tight timelines, we couldn't afford repetition, we had to build on what we had learned to date and continue the momentum toward the desired outcomes.

Challenges: We had several challenges. Few participants were familiar with the details of the vision we wished them to help update and they had little experience with public participation. There were also budget constraints that precluded professional facilitation at each of the nine meetings.

Techniques: Lura Consulting held a training session for the community facilitators, which will serve the community, not only in this process, but also build community capacity for future projects. The material was adapted to meet the needs of a more

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diverse audience and a shorter time-frame.

Success: The workshops were held all over the City at varying times, which attracted many first-time participants. Training community facilitators proved to be a great success, particularly since participants appeared to be more trusting and candid with the community facilitators than might have been the case with paid facilitators. Creating capacity within the community also made sense, given the topic.

Lesson Learned: Staff and consultants were on hand to provide help when, as expected, the meetings started to get off track. As a result, the meetings remained productive and comfortable for all who participated.

Stakeholder Symposium #2: Moving Forward

Stakeholder Symposium #2 was the last pub-

lic event in the phase 1 process. We designed it to confirm and refine the work that was completed over the last few months and to begin to think about how the results might be interpreted on the ground.

Challenge: By now, time was running out, so the strategic directions had to be developed within two weeks.

Techniques: The public's comments on growth management were refined into a set of nine directions. Joe Bogdan, of Joseph Bogdan and Associates, described projects that encompass sustainability principles, organized around the nine themes. Using pictures and illustrations, he demonstrated how these "directions" could be implemented in the real world.

Success: Stakeholder Symposium #2 had even greater participation than the first event. Everyone agreed that they were com-

fortable moving forward and satisfied with the results.

Lessons Learned: Even though much was accomplished in less than three months, we felt the need to hold a number of smaller sessions with groups who weren't at ease working through the larger process. We nevertheless felt that we had not been completely successful in engaging ethno-cultural interests. In future, we will need to new strategies to encourage more diverse representation.

Joanne Hickey-Evans, MCIP, RPP, Linda Harvey and Laurie Payne of Lura Consulting have been involved with the "Building a Strong Foundation" process. A final short segment in this series will detail the range of media used to communicate with the public and summarize the BASF team's assessment of their progress.

New Trust Could Make a Difference

Farmland Preservation and Land Trusts: New Options for Ontario

By Wayne Caldwell, Stewart Hilts and Sarah Thomson

Note: This is the third article in a series looking at issues related to farmland preservation. The first two articles were based on the report "Ontario's Countryside: A Resource to Preserve or an Urban Area in Waiting?" co-authored by Dr. Wayne Caldwell and Claire Weir, School of Environmental Design and Rural Development, University of Guelph. This article examines the establishment of the Ontario Farmland Trust as one response to the continued loss of farmland. The final article will draw upon American experience to identify additional tools to be considered.

Across North America, urban expansion and low-density rural non-farm development are consuming significant acreages of valuable farmland. In Ontario, for example, approximately 160,000 acres of farmland were lost to production in the Greater Toronto Area between 1976 and 2001.

Given the on-going conversion of some of Ontario's best farmland to urban uses, the planning system is challenged to provide new tools to preserve farmland in Ontario both to slow down rural non-farm development and to curb urban sprawl.

One of the options being pursued is the development of the Ontario Farmland Trust. Trusts have been used for many years as a

means of protecting private land for public benefit—often through the acquisition and long-term management of the land, or by holding easements that restrict the use of the property. Trusts have been used primarily as a means to protect natural and ecologically significant areas. While the use of trusts to protect farmland in the American context is commonplace, they have not been used for this purpose in Ontario. The potential use of a Farmland Trust was acknowledged by the farm community in 2002 in the "Odyssey Report," which looked at the evolving future of Ontario's agricultural industry.

However, this will be a "trust with a difference." Rather than focusing primarily on direct protection of individual farms through acquisition or easements, as is typical of American farmland trusts, this trust proposes to focus on research and education to improve farmland protection policies. It will do this through collaboration with the Farmland Preservation Research Project at the University of Guelph. In addition it will use direct farmland protection projects to demonstrate publicly the importance of farmland protection in a very practical way.

A brainstorming conference held by the Centre for Land and Water Stewardship at the University of Guelph in April 2002 brought together farmers and conservationists to consider the idea and throughout 2003 significant progress was made towards the

establishment of the Ontario Farmland Trust. Funding for the Ontario Farmland Trust to date has come from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Metcalf Foundation. The development of the Trust is part of the Farmland Preservation Research Project headed jointly by senior authors at the University of Guelph.

The Farmland Trust has a steering committee that will evolve into the board of directors upon incorporation. The steering committee currently includes three farmers, several other representatives of the agricultural community, four supporters from the University of Guelph, four representatives from conservation organizations, and a lawyer. The Board of Directors will have a minimum of five representatives elected by farm organizations, among a total of 15 members. The active participation of farmers is seen as critical to the success and credibility of the Trust.

The Ontario Farmland Trust is currently being incorporated as a charitable non-profit organization. The trust is expecting incorporation will be finalized in this spring and the Ontario Farmland Trust will make its official launch June 28-29th as it hosts a conference with speakers from across North America in Guelph1. There are currently many land trusts established throughout Ontario for conservation purposes but none are devoted specifically to protecting farmland. The Ontario Farmland Trust will be the first

province-wide agricultural land trust in Canada. There are two similar but smaller regional farmland trusts in Canada already: the Southern Alberta Land Trust Society and the Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust in British Columbia.

Currently, there is very limited legislation in Ontario allowing for conservation easements that are designed specifically to protect productive farmland, though there are many easements already in place to protect natural or ecologically sensitive lands. There are only a couple of instances across the province where agricultural easements have been invoked in the past including some on the former Pickering airport lands and (approved but never used) for the Niagara Fruitbelt. An immediate goal of the Farmland Trust will be to address this issue.

The Ontario Farmland Trust will work to protect agricultural land through:

- public education on the importance of farming;
- evaluating and advocating improved farmland protection policies;
- recognizing the importance of protecting farmers as well as farmland;
- encouraging urban support for protection of farmland in rural areas;
- demonstration projects to protect specific farms.

The Ontario Farmland Trust views with

equal importance the value of protecting agricultural land around cities and the importance of protecting farmland in rural Ontario

stronger than in the United States and the same emphasis on acquiring land would be unrealistic and unnecessary here. While the Ontario Farmland Trust can make an important contribution and act as an advocate for farmland preservation, it is acknowledged that it is not a substitute for strong provincial and local policy. Rather, it will be a public vehicle for encouraging improved consideration of farming in the land use planning process.

The concluding article in this series will reflect on approaches being used in several American states in the context of evolving approaches being pursued by the Ontario Government. For further information on the June 28-29 conference, please visit the following website:

www.uoguelph.ca/~farmland.

Wayne Caldwell, MCIP, RPP, holds a joint appointment between the University of Guelph and the County of Huron. Stew Hiltz is the Chair of the Department of Land Resource Science and Director of the Centre for Land and Water Stewardship at the University of Guelph and is also the Chair of the Board for the Ontario Farmland Trust. Dr. Caldwell and Dr. Hiltz are co-directing the Farmland Preservation Research Project. This project is funded by the George Cedric Metcalf Charitable Foundation and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Sarah Thomson is a journalist who specializes in issues that affect rural Ontario.

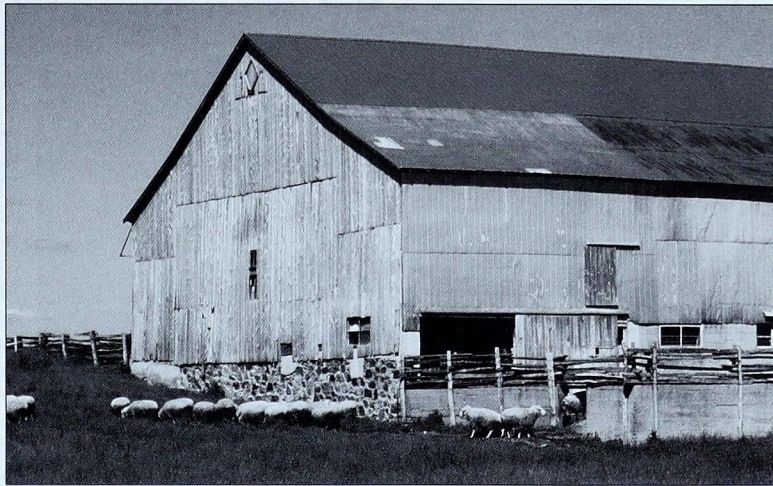


Photo: Gilliam Auld

The new trust could help farming stay viable

from non-farm development. While, the actions of the provincial government in December 2003 (first reading of the *Greenbelt Protection Act*) demonstrate a renewed commitment to the protection of farmland (more on this in the next issue of the *Ontario Planning Journal*) the Trust has the potential to focus attention on the loss of farmland—both due to urban sprawl and rural non-farm development.

Unlike the American model of the farmland trust, where the focus is largely on acquiring easements or development rights over large acreages of agricultural land, the Ontario model will aim to balance the traditional role of land trusts with education, research, monitoring and policy development. Land use planning in Ontario is much



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Responding to Change, Vancouver Style

By Danielle Wiley

According to Smart Growth BC (and confirmed by the region's own statistics), over the past 15 years Greater Vancouver has gained an estimated five residents per hour. This growth rate, faster than that of Cairo, Jakarta or Rio de Janeiro, underlines the need for strategies to control urban growth. As Vancouver's population climbs, new models of compact communities are emerging.

The Electric Avenue Condominium, now under construction in the centre of downtown, is using a car sharing program as a selling pitch. The developer, Wall Financial Corporation, is "gifting" at least seven cars to the Vancouver-based Co-operative Auto Network, which already has 1,105 members



Photo: Hotson Bakker Architects

West 4th Avenue project in Vancouver is "green"

and a fleet of 57 vehicles. Some of the vehicles will be hybrid electric vehicles, for the common use of those residents (and presumably other members of the co-op). In

exchange, the City reduced the number of required parking spaces. Seven cars may be a modest provision for 456 suites, but the program will likely be copied and hopefully expanded. Hotson Bakker's 2211 West 4th Building, which houses an organic grocery store at street level and 78 units above, uses geothermal energy for heating, cooling and hot water. Interestingly, the idea for both the innovative passive energy system and the car share program came from the developer.

Developers are using these

"green" amenities as selling hooks to differentiate their product, much as swimming pools and games rooms did in the recent past.

But while downtown Vancouver neighbourhoods have become more dense, the outlying suburban cities of West Vancouver, Delta and New Westminster have sprawled. To make matters worse, the current Liberal provincial government recently loosened the 1970s Agricultural Land Reserve protection policies. This has allowed "monster homes" to sprout in areas previously devoted exclusively to farming. According to the mayor of Delta, located southwest of Vancouver, the community now has about 20 "country estate homes" on farmland lots ranging from 10 to 100 acres, with houses as large as 900 square metres (10,000 square feet). The owners are not farming! A proposed new by-law seeks to limit the size and placement of future homes on agricultural land to protect the land for future generations of farming. Houses would be restricted to 558 square meters (6,015 square feet) and must be built near the edge of the property. Ironically, the zoning by-law, campaigned for by Delta council for over four years, requires provincial approval, since the agricultural lands fall under the jurisdiction of the province.

Danielle Wiley is a Vancouver-based architect who has taught and consulted in places as diverse as Ontario, the Northwest Territories and Italy.



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Making Planning Real

By Christina Heydom and Martin Rendl

Planners in Central District celebrated World Town Planning Day 2003 by making community planning real for 500 high school students in York Region. The GTA Chapter hosted a planning symposium entitled "The Urban Challenge: Making Sustainable Communities a Reality."

The day-long event was a resounding success. It brought together Grade 9 geography students from four schools of the York Region District School Board with 35 planning professionals from across the GTA. The planners and allied professionals were drawn from all the major disciplines necessary for good community planning. We believe the number of participants alone made The Urban Challenge the largest World Town Planning Day 2003 celebration in Canada.

Students worked in teams to meet their challenge of creating three-dimensional models of sustainable communities. Planners shared with students the important principles of sustainable community planning through a mix of sessions and field trips to different areas of York Region. Drawing on five themes in community planning—infrastructure, transportation, urban design, land use, environment—planners brought home to students the core principles of sustainability and the inter-relationships inherent in planning.

The field trips allowed students to experience first-hand key planning concepts in the communities where they live. The field trip venues demonstrated the presence or absence of sustainable development

using real-life examples. Students discovered new insights into their communities through the commentary of their planning mentors.

No exposure to the current world of planning would be complete without learning about technology in planning. Geomatics staff from the Region of York Planning Department provided students with an interactive demonstration of GIS and other technologies used in today's planning offices.

To complete the day, students explored career opportunities in planning. OPPI members served as a resource on a range of career options including consulting, government and academia. The participation of members from the Canadian Association of Certified Planning Technicians ensured students learned about the complete range of careers in planning.

Students spent the balance of the semester after the November symposium applying their new planning knowledge in developing their model communities. The climax of the Urban Challenge was the regional competition in January 2004 at Markham's Markville Mall where the top models from each school were on public display. Planners returned to judge the models and select the regional winners.

All participants who took the Urban Challenge are enthusiastic about their experiences. Students welcomed the opportunity to interact with planners and apply this new knowledge to their course work. Teachers were impressed with how well the plan-



Unionville students chosen as winners

ners bolstered curriculum objectives and reinforced their classroom teaching. The format gave planners a new audience in a variety of settings to showcase the role of good planning in shaping today's communities.

The Urban Challenge was designed to implement OPPI's Strategic Plan objective of raising recognition of planning among the general public. It emphasized the importance of planning as an activity and highlighted the contributions planners make daily to life in our communities.

Credit for the tremendous success of this event goes to the Program Committee of Central District's GTA Chapter, the dozens of OPPI members who enthusiastically volunteered their time and endured at times challenging weather, and the teachers who embraced the opportunity to involve planners with their students. A complete list of Urban Challenge volunteers along with pictures from the event is found on the OPPI web site in the Central District section.

Christina Heydorn was the coordinator for the Urban Challenge and is a member of the GTA Chapter's Program Committee. She is a planner with Malone Given Parsons Ltd.

Martin Rendl, MCIP, RPP, is the Central District Representative on OPPI Council. He is also the principal of Martin Rendl Associates.


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Central

2003 Lakeland Festivus Maximus

Over 120 planners, engineers and landscape architects gathered at Georgian Downs in late November for the 2nd Annual 2003 Lakeland Festivus (year-end party). Through ticket sales, sponsorships, corporate tables and raffling Maple Leaf hockey tickets, this single event raised \$2,500 towards the Central District Scholarship Fund. We wish to thank our Platinum sponsors (Geranium Corporation, Hardy Stevenson Associates, and Amick Archaeological Consultants) and Gold sponsors (Triton Engineering, RJ Burnside, Long Environmental Consultants and Graham, Wilson and Green—Barristers and Solicitors) for their wonderful support. In addition, we had 12 corporate table sponsorships, four more than last year.

After opening remarks from Michael Sullivan, Chair of the Lakeland sub-district and an update on OPPI activities from Don May, OPPI President, we all enjoyed a great night of good food, good friends and fun harness racing. Thanks to Georgian Downs and all who contributed to this wonderful event.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

On the afternoon of Thursday, March 25, OPPI and the Peel Regional Police will be presenting a workshop at the York Region Administration Building in Newmarket on how to apply the principles of CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design). This training exercise will provide valuable skills to planners who review or prepare policy and regulatory documents, plans of subdivision and site plans. The basic premise of CPTED is that the proper design and effective use of the built environment can lead to a reduction in the incidence and the fear of crime and improve the quality of life of our communities. Emphasis is placed on the physical environment, productive use of space, and behaviour of people to create environments that do not present the environmental cues that encourage

crime. See the Billboard for details.

Following the CPTED seminar in March, look for:

- May/June Golf Course Planning/Design (seminar/social) in Muskoka.
- September "Planner at the OMB"—OPPI Course in Barrie
- November 3rd Annual Lakeland "Festivus" at Georgian Downs (Innisfil)

Brandi Clement, AICP, MCIP, RPP (bclement@jonesconsulting.com) is Senior Planner with Jones Consulting in Barrie. James Stiver, MCIP, RPP (james.stiver@region.york.on.ca) is a Senior Planner with the Region of York Planning Department. For more information on Lakelands, please contact Mike Sullivan at 906-833-1244 (msullivan@lgl.com). Mike is a Senior Environmental Planner with LGL Limited and Chair of the Central District Program Committee.

People

Joe Berridge Builds on Creative Spaces on New York's Governor's Island

A consultant team composed of Robert Charles Lesser & Co, EE&K Architects and Toronto-based Urban Strategies Inc. has been chosen by the Governors Island Preservation & Education Corporation (GIPEC) to develop the conceptual land use plan and program of future uses for Governors Island. **Joe Berridge** is the partner heading his firm's involvement.

A 150-acre portion of the former military base was transferred from the U.S. Government to the City and State of New York last year. An additional 22 acres of the Island has been designated as the Governors Island National Monument and is

owned and operated by the National Park Service. According to GIPEC, New Yorkers are "rediscovering their waterfront and will soon discover Governors Island as a hub of open space, cultural, educational and entertainment activity in New York Harbor."

Also part of the team is a non-profit corporation created some years ago by the City of Toronto. Artspace, headed up by **Tim Jones**, is on board to provide advice on programming. Tim was the driving force behind the recent successful conference held at the Distillery District in Toronto titled, "Creative Spaces," held in conjunction with the Canadian Urban Institute.

After a successful seven years as a partner in Engel Consulting Group, **Phil Shantz** has joined SENES Consultants Limited of Richmond Hill as Senior Environmental and Resource Management Planner. He can be reached at pshantz@senes.ca.

Rowan Faludi, Lauren Millier, Peter Thoma, and Jason Mercer, together with other staff from the PricewaterhouseCoopers Real Estate Practice are forming an independent consulting firm—urbanMetrics inc. effective February 1, 2004. The firm, which will be led by Rowan, Lauren and Doug Annand, will specialize in market, economic and strategic advisory services for the development industry and government sector. (See Professional Practice in this issue.)

Lorelei Jones, MCIP, RPP, and Thomas Hardacre, MCIP, RPP are the Ontario Planning Journal's contributing editors for People. They can be reached at ljones@rogers.com and thardacre@peil.net respectively.



(L-R) Richard Florida, Jane Jacobs and Winnipeg Mayor Glen Murray at Tim Jones' Creative Places and Spaces Conference

Editorial

OPPI Members Have Much to Contribute to Fledgling Network

By Glenn R. Miller

The term "brownfields" is one that can cause a furrowed brow among the general public. Journalists typically start an interview with, "And what exactly is a brownfield?" Of deeper concern is that too many local officials—staff and elected—still look at brownfields as just another special interest issue. This is the sentiment that was expressed in last year's landmark report from the National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy (Ontario Planning Journal, vol. 18, no. 2). That report called for the creation of a nationally focused entity to accelerate the rate at which knowledge about brownfields is absorbed and promoted.

Building on this idea, the people behind the soon-to-be-established Canadian Brownfields Network (CBN) are hoping to help reposition brownfields redevelopment over time as an essential, constructive approach to the challenges of community building—a topic of obvious importance for everyone.

The broad coalition of public- and private-sector organizations that operates under the banner of aboutRemediation.com, and the non-profit Canadian Urban Institute plan to launch CBN within the next month as the first step towards building a network to link professionals, elected officials and investors (to name just a few potential

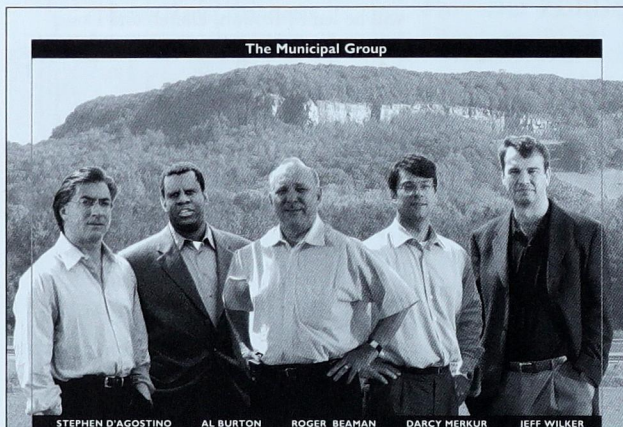
groups) who have an interest in brownfield best practices, professional development opportunities, and in exchanging views and advice with fellow practitioners across the country.

At the outset, CBN proposes to invite professional, municipal and industry associations to endorse membership in CBN, which will be available to individuals for a modest fee. As CBN gains momentum, the network can potentially provide a vehicle for public education and the dissemination of information to the professions whose members are intimately involved with brownfields redevelopment. The Ontario Professional Planners Institute is one such organization.

A quick look at the credentials of those who write articles on the subject for the Ontario Planning Journal, present at brownfield conferences, or who enter the CUI's annual Brownie Awards process shows that planners contribute significantly and consistently to brownfields redevelopment. Beginning with policy making, extending to its implementation and embracing a diverse group of consultants, investors and owners, our members show themselves to be involved in brownfields redevelopment from beginning to end (and everywhere in between). Our members not only have a lot to share with colleagues across the country, but many have endorsed the benefits of learning from other jurisdictions. OPPI is already engaged in brownfields as a member of the Canadian Urban Institute's Brownie Awards Committee. The CBN is an opportunity to move the thinking even further forward.

For more information, click on canadianbrownfieldsnetwork.ca. This will bring you directly to a special page on the aboutRemediation.com website describing in detail the objectives of CBN.

Glenn R. Miller, MCIP, RPP, is editor of the Ontario Planning Journal. He can be reached at editor@ontarioplanning.com. Glenn is also Vice President, Education and Research, with the Canadian Urban Institute in Toronto.



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 **Better Land Use Solutions**

“Re-inventing the City for People—A City by Design”

By Larry Beasley

The following is based on a speech to the University of Waterloo Planning Alumni Annual Dinner last November.

The Vancouver Sun recently ran the headline: “We’re Number One (Again)!” What strikes me as odd is that a city’s status as “just a good place to live” would merit front-page news. We’re accustomed to stories about economic development as a question of jobs and business; but it’s a relatively new phenomenon to see economic development talked about as quality of life.

This is a very big shift and it’s because the dynamics of urban growth and competition have fundamentally changed.

In a footloose world, where people with wealth and talent and energy can move around at will—successful cities are becoming those who can draw these “creatives”—

the focus is on lifestyle; the focus is on compatibility with environment; the focus is on people, people, people—and this translates into a new and fascinating urban formula: economic development = urban design.

Smart cities are re-inventing themselves for people—and where, and how, people live. Smart cities are becoming “cities by design.”

Canadian cities are in a pretty good position to pick up on this trend. We’ve been good at evolving our cities; we never let them go downhill; frankly our contradictions have generally not been as profound as those of our neighbours to the south.

But we can’t be complacent. Municipalities have to keep up with their growth; senior governments have to help. Cities in the U.S., like San Diego and Portland, are pulling themselves up by their bootstraps; they’re experimenting; they’re

taking bold moves; and all their governments are diving into urban issues. I fear we may be sliding the opposite way.

So, how is Vancouver coping with this new agenda? I want to highlight some of the vulnerabilities I think many Canadian cities share. I want to call on senior governments for some help. All of this, I hope, will suggest several themes that might be useful in our common struggle to make our cities great.

Of course, what works in one place may not work in another. Every city deserves a tailored response to its unique problems and opportunities.

For example, Vancouver is blessed with a benign climate, and an unusually wonderful setting of mountains and water; but it is constrained by this same geography—along with an absolutely essential Agricultural Land Reserve. It’s been buoyed up by mas-

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sive immigration of people and capital. It's been lucky in its municipal leadership and disciplined by a legal requirement to balance its budget. In Vancouver, a lot of things are happening quickly and very close together but in a rather organized, logical fashion.

But it's also very isolated from the mainstream of Canadian culture. It's a long way from the centres of power of the country. It has very few head offices or industry and no big government in its midst. And it's been subjected to some pretty wacky provincial governments.

So Vancouver is quite different from Toronto or Montreal or Halifax.

Nonetheless, Vancouver has done some interesting things in terms of city-building over the years. It has taken a counter-intuitive path to the common wisdom. It doesn't have freeways; it hasn't been interested in amalgamation; it heavily regulates development; and it leverages public goods from development—based on the simple fact that public benefits add private value and private value can help pay for public goods. And in recent years it has taken very much to heart that formula that I just mentioned: economic development = urban design. It has re-shaped its laws and regulatory processes and the skills of its officials and the focus of its citizens and politicians around that equation.

The results have been something of a miracle. The re-invention of the city for people has been manifest in what is now called a "living first" strategy for the inner-

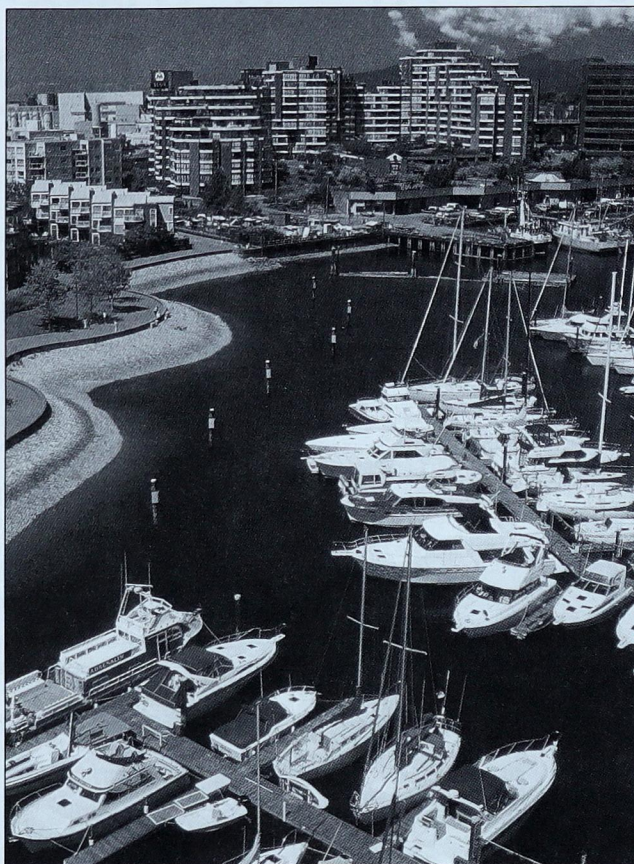
city which has spawned a deluge of development; and a "neighbourhood centres" strategy for the inner suburbs within our municipi-

means housing with intensity—very high densities. It also means housing diversity—all kinds of housing close together. This

helps create housing choice—including special arrangements for low-income households and trying to make the market and non-market indiscernible. It also includes special arrangements for families with children.

We also promote complete neighbourhoods with a commercial high street and social amenities and a full complement of parks and recreation facilities. We promote transportation accessibility and movement choices other than the private car: transit and bikes but especially enticements for pedestrians.

The result of this is that we are always worrying about design for everything that's built: insisting on quality streetscapes with softening of the public realm through lush landscaping, and excellence of architecture—not just for the towers (the picture postcard view) but putting a strong emphasis on the lower floors where people really experience their city up close—and pushing for great materials and weather protection and protecting public views and public art—parallel with a rich program of arts and culture in the city.



Vancouver benefits from commitment to urban design

pal boundaries that's just starting to take off. "Living First Downtown" is a smart growth approach: it's about creating an environment at the core that first and foremost is conceived as a place of residence. This

Larry Beasley, MCIP, is Director of Urban Design with the City of Vancouver. The second installment of his talk will appear in the Urban Design section of the Ontario Planning Journal in the next issue.

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Natural Heritage Planning: The Butcher (Engineer), the Baker (Planner) and the Candlestick Maker (Biologist)

By Michael Sullivan

In reading the past few issues of the Ontario Planning Journal, I have noted that natural heritage planning has received a great deal of attention. This has included informative articles on the Oak Ridges Moraine Plan (J. Dougan; S. Patano and L. A. Sandberg) as well as the "The OMB's Record on Natural Heritage" (C. Wilkinson and P.

Eagles). These articles confirm that natural heritage planning is gaining acceptance at both the practitioner and judicial levels. What this means and what is to happen next, are the two questions that keep nagging me. The answer to each question will help to define the next phase in the evolution of natural heritage planning. The result will be based on the position taken by two professions that generally see development from opposing sides: engineers and biologists. Both professions have differing, but valid positions on this topic.

Having worked in the development industry as a planner in a number of capacities, I have had the opportunity to work with both engineering and environmental consultants, and a conservation authority. This has afforded me the rare opportunity to compare these very different professions and gain a more balanced perspective to address these questions. Please allow me to introduce the three professions: butchers (engineers), bakers (planners) and candlestick makers (biologists).

Engineers are often of the opinion that anything can be engineered, given enough time and money. Engineers tend to look at "how" can it be done, rather than "should" it be done, or whether the resulting impacts be mitigated. Within the profession, however,

there are environment-friendly engineers. Biologists, on the other hand, look at "what" must be preserved, and "how much" will be lost if the development is approved. Again, there are biologists of varying opinions, some whom may be more development-friendly. Routinely, we hear of the biologist leading the environmental charge on various issues

development-friendly engineer is in charge of the project, it is possible that these features will be ignored, or brushed aside. On the other hand, if a project involves significant environmental features, it is quite likely that the engineer will seek input from the biologist to determine how the features can be preserved, while allowing the development

to proceed. If the *Planning Act* is triggered by this development, then the preservation of environmental features may become more significant. Planners will then assist the developer and public in determining a more acceptable and appropriate solution.

Where engineers and biologists both fail is that they generally do not have a legislative or professional requirement to evaluate options based on the public interest, or to examine the options in a public forum before

making a final recommendation. Acting for the public interest is key to concluding the process in an acceptable way. Biologists tend to define their version of the public interest through special interest groups (STORM, CONE, etc.), while engineers satisfy their needs through achieving the standards of design.

As a planner working for an environmental consulting firm, I have participated in several environmental assessments, under the *Environmental Assessment Act*, and other projects, where we are responsible for ensuring that the public input component is satisfied. Fortunately, the engineering firms we deal with are environmentally conscious and supportive of our dealings. The *Environmental Assessment Act* has a more onerous public process than the *Planning Act*, but it does not provide a real means of appeal should a



Balancing ecology and urban growth is a challenge

(Oak Ridges Moraine, Niagara Escarpment) that make headlines only when natural habitat is being threatened. On the other hand, engineers typically tend to be better known for building or creating something (roads, sewers, storm water management systems), with little concern for their impacts on an area's natural habitat. Which is the correct position? Is either correct?

The answer exists within the project itself. It is based on the local/provincial political context, the conditions existing within the defined geographical area, the willingness of the owners' consulting team to consider and evaluate all available options, and finally the desire of all stakeholders, including the professionals, to accept the most appropriate option. Does this sound like the planning process? If the environmental features of a project are considered insignificant, or if a

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stakeholder not agree with the conclusions.

In basing their positions upon accepted planning principles and involving stakeholders through a public process, planners tend to end up in a more moderate position that may involve the loss of some habitat, or result in a project which is redesigned or reduced in scale. These changes have a greater chance of creating a more acceptable project that respects both economic and natural science agendas, while also serving public interest.

In the end: the butcher needs the tools to create it; the baker has taken the time to consider all options and alternatives before coming to a conclusion; and the candlestick maker seeks to remake it to help preserve it for the long term.

What is the next stage for natural heritage planning? This field has been gaining more public awareness and more visibility at the municipal and provincial levels. As long as the public awareness continues, local and regional official plans and other policy documents will create environmentally-related policy with more power. This will enable planners and other professionals reviewing development applications to be more aware of the environmental effects caused by sprawl and deal more effectively with natural heritage issues. As with most larger, regional trends, natural heritage planning must have long-term staying power to obtain the necessary foundation in planning policy and acceptance at the local political level. Three elements need to occur to make natural heritage planning a routine focus of planning policy and practice: 1) political will; 2) professional recognition (planners, engineers, and others), and 3) acceptance of the importance of these issues by developers. The long-term survival of the natural heritage concept is more likely once these parties arrive at the same viewpoint.

Michael Sullivan, MCIP, RPP, is a Senior Environmental Planner with LGL Limited, environmental research associates, located in King City. At LGL, he works on environmental assessments, environmental impact statements and natural heritage planning projects. Mike is also active with OPPI as Chair of the Lakeland Planners and as a member of the Central District Membership Sub-Committee. He is also OPPI's representative on the Canadian Urban Institute's Brownie Awards Committee. Mike can be contacted at msullivan@lgl.com or at 905-833-1244.

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After the Double Cohort: Student-Community Relations

By Kathy Mortimer

Municipalities that are home to colleges and universities have a special set of planning concerns and challenges. A typical response is to establish "Town and Gown" committees, made up of members from the university, the municipality, and student and community leaders, to address these challenges and work towards local solutions. Each town has a unique approach to its particular situation, and much can be learned from sharing "best practices" in by-law enforcement, zoning, community development, sustainable transportation initiatives, and ensuring the safety of off-campus lodging.

The City of Waterloo, where approximately 25 percent of residents are students, is particularly interested in learning from the experience of other communities. To this end, the City is hosting a Town & Gown Symposium, entitled "After the

tion in Waterloo and work with city staff and the committee to devise options for future growth of student accommodation. The trend, even after the double cohort, seems to be increased enrolment for the foreseeable future. The Symposium is an important component of this study, as it will provide a forum to exchange best practices, and identify larger barriers that municipalities face—such as conflicting definitions in the provincial Building and

Fire codes, and lack of provision of affordable housing by the province.

The keynote address at the Symposium will be given by the Honorable Mary Anne Chambers, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, who will address the future of postsecondary education in Ontario communities. Municipal staff, councillors, university administrators and housing and transportation staff, student and community leaders, landlords and housing developers will all find topics of interest.

For further information on the Symposium, please contact Kathy Mortimer at 519-747-8522 or email kmortimer@city.waterloo.on.ca.

The symposium is to exchange best practices for issues relevant to communities hosting postsecondary students

Double Cohort: Student-Community Relations" March 4-5, 2004. The purpose of the symposium is to exchange best practices for issues relevant to communities hosting postsecondary students, identify common barriers to improved relations, and consider possible avenues for future action.

Waterloo is currently in the middle of a one-year Student Accommodation Study, which is looking at ways to increase the supply of suitable student accommodation while minimizing negative impacts on neighbourhoods. An advisory committee consisting of landlords, developers, the university housing administration, university students, as well as residents and councillors representing each city ward, meet monthly to review research.

A consultant has been hired for one year to research the current housing situa-

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The New Economy Requires New Approaches to Consulting

By Rowan Faludi

On February 1, 2004, most of the former staff of the PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP Real Estate Advisory Services practice will separate from their parent firm to rebrand themselves as urbanMetrics inc., an urban advisory services firm specializing in market, economic and strategic consulting for the development industry and government sector. This move will also signal an end of an era for the planning profession, in that PricewaterhouseCoopers was the last of the multi-national professional service and accounting houses to offer a full-service urban development and real estate consulting practice.

Led by Doug Annand, Rowan Faludi and Lauren Millier, the majority of urbanMetrics staff have planning and/or business economics backgrounds. "Unlike traditional planners, however, our experience with PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, enables us to look at planning issues from a different perspective," says Doug Annand.

"Our roots in the planning profession will allow urbanMetrics to be sensitive to the policy environment in which we work, while our business background gives us the economic credibility private-sector clients are seeking."

Some past projects that illustrate this unique combination of planning and business outlook include:

- the formulation of development scenarios for Toronto's railway lands to facilitate their sale;
- the creation of a development strategy for the lands surrounding Hamilton International Airport;
- the preparation of a business case for the expansion of the Spadina subway into York Region and for a new QEW interchange in Burlington;
- the formulation of a market-based vision for Sparks Street in Ottawa;
- the development of strategies for private investment in mass transit;
- economic development strategies for communities across Canada;

- the measurement of the economic value of Canadian universities to their communities;
- the assessment of the fiscal and development impacts of a major water pipeline.

Back in the late 1980s, most of the "Big 8" accounting firms offered a variety of specialized practices to assist both private developers and governments to make decisions about future development projects and urban growth. At Coopers & Lybrand, one of the legacy firms of PricewaterhouseCoopers, the Canadian consulting practice was actually led



The urbanMetrics team

by an urban planner—John Farrow. In the 1990s, however, when technology consulting became highly lucrative, resources were being channelled away from traditional "strategic consulting" and into products such as software development and systems installation. The new consulting practice leaders were information technology specialists. Many urban development specialists, including John Farrow, left the multinational partnerships, to join organizations whose core competencies were more in line with their planning skills.

In addition to focusing on technology, the large accounting firms looked to mergers to

give them the critical mass necessary to compete in the rapidly globalizing economy of the 1990s. In the last of the great accounting marriages, Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand joined forces in 1997 with ambitious expansion plans.

As firms became larger, however, issues began to arise with regards to the independence between the consulting and accounting arms of these organizations. New rules governing auditor independence forced most of these organizations to divorce themselves from the vast majority of their former consulting functions. In the case of PricewaterhouseCoopers, the consulting practice was sold to IBM. The PricewaterhouseCoopers Real Estate practice, however, was not included in the sale because of an organizational quirk, whereby Real Estate Advisory Services on a global basis were classified as "financial advisory services" and not part of the consulting group.

Following these mergers and consulting downsizing, the Big 8 has been reduced to the "Lean 4." Speaking on the future of advisory services within the major accounting firms, Doug Annand noted: "With the growing complexity of regulatory issues surrounding the accounting profession, it will be essential for the large players to forge relationships with independent consulting firms if they want to continue to offer the full range of services their clients require. This is the type of relationship that urbanMetrics will have with PricewaterhouseCoopers."

The history of the group of professionals who make up urbanMetrics is well grounded and is one of the reasons why it lasted as long as it has within a large corporate environment. The roots of the "new" firm trace back to 1947, when it was founded as Larry Smith & Company, a premier shopping centre and real estate consulting

firm. Larry Smith developed many of the techniques now used in market analysis and he is reported to have developed the concept for the first food court in North America which opened in Toronto's Sherway Gardens. The firm was acquired by Coopers & Lybrand in 1975. Although it retained the Larry Smith moniker until the late 1980s, it functioned as the Coopers & Lybrand Real Estate practice and subsequently the PricewaterhouseCoopers Real Estate Advisory Services practice following the merger. After February 1, 2004, urbanMetrics inc. will continue to offer most of the services it did while under the PricewaterhouseCoopers banner.

Arriving at the name of the firm was one of the most difficult steps in getting the new firm out of the starting gate. "It was like a high stakes word game," says Lynne Davidson, a Director of urbanMetrics. "We were looking for a name that described what we did, but had the 'hip' factor." The name "Red Brick Consulting" was rejected as being a little *too* hip for the firm's more traditional clients. Other rejects included: "Legacy Consultants" (too traditional), "Urbanomics" (taken), and "Terra Consulting" (not urban enough).

"The separation from PricewaterhouseCoopers also gives us the opportunity to express the unique culture of our group," noted Lauren Millier. "As planners, most of us have creative sides that tend to get suppressed in a large corporate environment. Physical space is an important part of who we are and also important to the creative process. We didn't want just another office, but specifically sought out something with character." The result was "brick and beam" space in a historic building on Front Street, close to the financial core and Union Station.

Under the ambitious early days of the merger, the former PricewaterhouseCoopers

Real Estate practice was encouraged to expand its range of services and geographical coverage—with mixed results. At its pinnacle, the practice boasted offices in four Canadian cities and affiliations in several Caribbean countries. In today's consulting world, focus is important and easy to lose sight of in a large corporate environment. "Over the past few years, we worked at getting back to what we do best: market research, financial feasibility analysis, and economic development," noted Doug Annand.

While being part of a large firm provided some advantages, such as instant brand recognition, credibility with suppliers, and access to a large pool of expertise and resources, the association led to some confusion on the part of potential clients who viewed PricewaterhouseCoopers as purely an accounting firm. Furthermore, with the loss of the consulting practice, the pool of professional resources from which to draw had been greatly diminished and with today's communications technologies, a small consulting firm with a good contact base can be every bit as effective in pulling together a multi-disciplinary team on short notice.

While the odd client may prefer to receive

their reports with a PricewaterhouseCoopers cover, the vast majority of clients have been hugely supportive of the new firm and indicated that their relationship is with the people and not the company.

"These days clients expect a close working relationship with senior consulting staff, which was not always possible given the cost structure of a large firm. Now I can dig in and get my hands dirty again instead of spending too much time administering a national practice," noted Doug Annand.

In the wake of government cutbacks and the proliferation of boutique consulting firms, planning and urban development services have become more price-sensitive than in the past. Consulting firms must be leaner and pay more attention to the needs of their existing clients.

In summary, in today's corporate and government environments, size no longer matters when it comes to consulting. Small-scale specialty firms are often better able to respond to clients needs and budgets than the large professional service firms, a situation which urbanMetrics hopes to exploit.

Rowan Faludi, MCIP, RPP, is a principal with the newly formed urbanMetrics inc.

Vision, "big picture" thinking and flexibility

The following article is a reflection on the challenges in establishing and growing a flourishing consulting practice over a period of 25 years.

In 2003, Planning & Engineering Initiatives Ltd. (PEIL) celebrated its 25th anniversary in the planning, engineering, and landscape architectural business in Ontario. The firm evolved from my desire to own and operate an independent business and to be proud of each of its achievements. Therefore, after many sleepless nights of contemplation, in 1978, the firm McMurray, Puopolo & Associates was founded as a small planning firm in Kitchener to carry out housing studies for municipalities, and provide local developers with design and approval services.

Our firm has changed and grown beyond recognition over the past quarter century. We transformed from McMurray, Puopolo and Associates, to Planning Initiatives in 1979. In 1988, we opened a Hamilton office. As with the Kitchener office, the Hamilton office has grown progressively. After a number of moves, in 2000 we settled 360 James

Street North (refurbished Hamilton CN Rail Station and federally designated heritage building known as Liuna Station). In 1989, we amalgamated with our associate engineering firm, Frances-Nicholas Ltd. In the spring of 1997, we renamed the firm Planning & Engineering Initiatives Ltd. to better reflect the engineering component and to reflect the changing needs of a growing number of clients.

In 1997, PEIL went from a sole proprietorship to a partnership, consisting of me as President, John Ariens as Vice-President, David Sisco as Secretary-Treasurer, and John Perks, Sergio Manchia and Ed Gazendam (2001) as directors. Two years later, I directed the opening of an office in Mississauga, which is 52 Village Centre Place.

Looking back, I have to say that I am pleased with the direction our management team has taken, and I am confident that our collective knowledge and expertise will

allow us to continue to move forward. I think it is the strong working relationships forged with our clients, and the dedication of our staff that have made the difference. Some clients have been with us since 1978. Many of these business relationships have evolved into friendships. Having started out

with a staff of three in 1978, we have now grown to about 60. Their skills, talent and expertise have propelled this company forward. We have been fortunate that some staff have been with us for 15 and 20 years. These loyal, hard-working individuals have provided this company with stability. Their dedication is an integral part of our growing success.

Today, PEIL provides a full range of services to public- and private-sector clients in Southwestern Ontario. Our consulting services range from environmental assessment, preliminary feasibility studies to policy formulation and master planning to project supervision and construction management.

Here are my top ten principles for running a successful business:



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- 1) Be clear, honest and outline the entire process with your client, complete with budgets, timing and realistic expectations. Communicate with clarity and honesty the client's expectations to the various levels of government and approval agencies.
- 2) Move quickly in response to changing economic conditions, by reducing or increasing staff and services as needed.
- 3) Reflect the changes and growth within the firm to the community through corporate branding, signage, and letterhead. As an example, our logo has evolved to reflect the changes in our firm.
- 4) Offer new disciplines to assist your clients' project. PEIL saw the need to add the engineering field to our firm to satisfy the project needs of clients and to establish a "one-stop shopping" versus retaining two separate firms, thus making projects cost effective for the client.
- 5) Provide "added value" services to your clients, such as the services offered by our Landscape Architecture Department.
- 6) Serve clients from a variety of office locations.
- 7) For complex projects, offer a multi-disciplinary approach to provide successful project management.
- 8) Carry out succession planning to ensure the continued success of the firm.
- 9) Be involved in the greater community through community work, sponsorship of a cross-section of community and political activities. Our industry traditionally is understated in its political views on both the local and provincial levels.
- 10) Finally, create a corporate culture whereby strong work ethics and social values are reflected in the end product. Retain staff who foster and support such values while striving to encourage and motivate them to reach their greatest potential.

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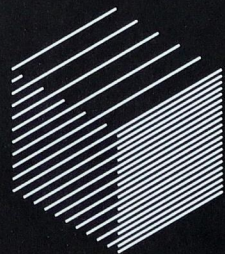
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Running a successful business in these changing economic, political and sociological times requires dedication, stamina and commitment in order to achieve and sustain one's goals. This requires vision and "big picturing" thinking, combined with the flexibility to respond to change. This philosophy should serve us well over the next 25 years.

*Paul F. Puopolo, MA, MCIP, RPP,
OALA, is President of PEIL and served on
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Joining the Dots

By Philippa Campsie

In fall 2003, an unexpected bestseller in the U.K. was a small volume called *Eats, Shoots and Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation* by Lynne Truss. Apparently, more than half a million Britons snapped up copies to find out the correct use of quotation marks and how to handle semi-colons. My sister, who lives in England, sent me a copy for Christmas.

The book, which will soon be available in North America in a modified edition (American punctuation conventions differ from British ones), promises to awaken the Inner Stickler in its readers. Do you automatically wince when a sign announces that a restaurant is Always's Open? Do you grind your teeth when you see a list introduced by a semi-colon instead of a colon? Do you raise an eyebrow at the super-market sign promising "Fresh" (in quotation marks) Tomatoes? If so, Truss's book will make you realize that you are not alone. If not, you will learn the secrets of the initiated and learn to avoid embarrassing punctuation errors.

Truss's biggest bugbear, and the subject of her most impassioned chapter, is the apostrophe. She encourages a vigilante approach—armed with large indelible markers and buckets of liquid paper, guerrilla punctuators could add missing apostrophes where needed (Truss was photographed adding one to the movie poster for *Two Weeks Notice*), paint over uncalled-for apostrophes on signs such as Antique's For Sale, or move them to their rightful places in advertisements for Freds' Diner.

She takes a more casual attitude towards the misuse of a punctuation mark that I find irritating. Back at the end of the book, in a chapter called "A Little Used Punctuation Mark," she offhandedly suggests that hyphens may be destined for oblivion, despite pointing out the enormous difference between, for example, extra-marital sex and extra marital sex. I wouldn't be so quick to dismiss the hyphen. Take the expression "a large scale model." Is it the model or the scale that is large? Or "a light coloured

material"? Is the material lightweight or pale? Or "a frozen food sales rep." Doesn't the rep know enough to come in out of the cold?

But the punctuation mark that probably creates the most havoc is the comma. The title itself alludes to a misplaced comma. Here's the joke: A panda walks into a café, orders a sandwich, eats it, draws a gun, fires two shots into the air and then heads for the door. When the waiter demands an explanation, the panda hands him a badly punctuated wildlife guide that reads: "Panda: large black-and-white mammal, native to China. Eats, shoots and leaves."

Commas can radically alter the sense of a sentence. Consider the following: "The planner said the mayor was mistaken." Add two commas and you have "The planner, said the mayor, was mistaken." Truss describes legal battles over comma use, and I

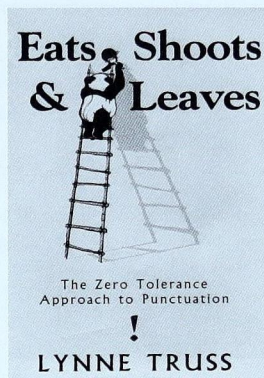
have heard that OMB members once spent half an hour at a hearing debating the placement of a comma. Although I don't know what the exact sentence was, the member who mentioned it to me thought it might have been the controversial "serial comma." Despite its criminal-sounding name, this is simply the comma following the second-last item in a list: "The development will include townhouses, commercial space, a school, and a park."

In the Canadian publishing industry, serial commas are usually mandatory in adult non-fiction, because they prevent misunderstandings. For example, according to legend, an author once dedicated a book, "To my parents, Ayn Rand and God." You can imagine similar sentences in planning documents: "The site currently has three buildings, two sheds and a gazebo." Are the sheds and the gazebo considered "buildings" or not? The serial comma might sort things out a bit. It's also handy when the elements of the list already contain the word "and": "The shops in the mall include Grand and Toy, Abercrombie and Fitch, and Crabtree and Evelyn."

(While I'm on the subject of lists, I should mention another source of ambiguity, unrelated to punctuation. Consider a sentence such as "The planning department is focusing on harmonizing services following amalgamation, restructuring, and the retraining of staff." How many tasks does the planning department have? Have the restructuring and retraining already taken place? A copyediting rule comes to the rescue: place listed items in order of length, starting with one-word items, then two-word ones, and so on. "The planning department is focusing on restructuring, retraining staff, and harmonizing services following amalgamation." No questions there.)

The point of all this, and of Truss's book, is that it helps to have some clear rules to follow. Rules save time and anxiety. When you have established once and for all exactly what a semi-colon does and why, you don't have to waste five minutes putting one in, looking at it worriedly, taking it out again, trying a colon, then a comma, then a dash, and ending up rewriting the sentence because you cannot for the life of you decide which mark is the right one for the effect you are trying to achieve. These days, when one must make hundreds of minor decisions each day (double decaf espresso or soy vanilla latte? Beethoven's Fifth or the theme from Star Wars for the cellphone ringer?), it's positively relaxing to be told exactly which punctuation mark goes where.

Philippa Campsie has started a newsletter for municipal employees with hints about grammar, usage, and plain language. To order a copy, send your mailing address to pcampsie@istar.ca. Philippa is the deputy editor of the Ontario Planning Journal.



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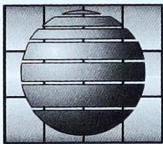
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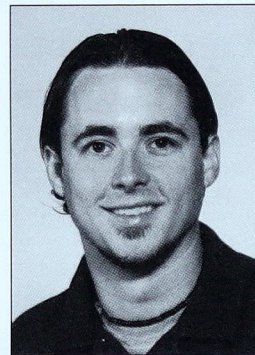
Student Affairs

No Co-op? No Problem

By Greg Atkinson

The best way for a planning student to get a taste of what goes on in the professional world is to get a summer job. Co-operative programs are quite effective at integrating academic and practical work experience, while allowing students to establish valuable links with employers. But what if your planning school doesn't have a co-op program? How do you obtain planning experience as a student?

The topic of summer employment is the most discussed issue among planning students every year and, for many, it causes undue stress and worry. Because student jobs depend on administrative circumstances such as budget allocations, council approval, or HRDC (Human Resources Development Canada) grants, decisions concerning the hiring of students can be made as late as May and are not always advertised. Having worked as a summer student for the past 4 years while in a non co-op program, I have put together a list of the top five things students can do to obtain summer employment.



Greg Atkinson

1. Create a portfolio of your best work. This can be a valuable way to present a snapshot of your skill set during an interview. The portfolio should fit into a standardized binder or folder and it should be a summary of your planning work—not a comprehensive collection. Include abstracts or summaries of your best papers, and if you have drawings, have them reduced at a copy centre to fit into your binder.
2. Be sure to include at least one professor as reference on your resume. You should also make sure your planning program director knows who you are, as directors are often contacted by employers to recommend students for summer positions.
3. Volunteering is a great way to gain experience and display your planning skills. Many organizations greatly appreciate volunteer efforts. If they have the funds to hire a summer student, you will likely be considered before others who apply, given that they already know your skill

level and willingness to work.

Volunteering for non-profit organizations is also a great way to build contacts, and it looks great on a resume.

4. E-mail someone within a government planning department or at a consulting firm to inquire about obtaining a summer position. It can never hurt to e-mail anyone within an organization (even the director); if they cannot help you they will likely direct you to someone who can. Be sure to e-mail early in the winter semester to inquire about summer employment. This is a non-threatening method of finding out if and when departments are hiring students and it requires very little effort (contact information is usually available on a web site).
5. Go to OPPI social events and conferences. Students receive a big discount on registration fees, and professionals at these events are more than happy to discuss school, summer

employment, or provide helpful advice. If possible, show up alone, because this will force you to network with professionals if you don't have a fellow student to talk to all night.

The joint 2004 OPPI/CIP Conference will be in Toronto from July 17 to 22 and there will be hundreds of planners attending from all across the country. Affordable accommodations will be arranged for students, and remember you can receive a 50% discount on registration if you would like to volunteer. Hope to see you there.

Although it will not directly result in a summer job, I would also like to encourage students to apply for OPPI scholarships and consider writing an article for the Ontario Planning Journal.

*Greg Atkinson is the Student Delegate on OPPI Council. Please e-mail him if you have any questions or comments regarding student matters
atkinson@yorku.ca.*

Ontario's GeoSmart— Why this Program Needs to Continue

By George Lysenko

I had planned to write this issue's article concerning distinctions and similarities between Planning and GIS Professionals. However, the potential termination of a very constructive and successful provincial funding assistance program, GeoSmart, has changed the itinerary.

Originally, the GeoSmart program was part of the Province's ConnectOntario funding initiative out of SuperBuild. Under ConnectOntario/GeoSmart, the following municipalities received funding approval for GIS initiatives in June of 2001:

- County of Oxford (up to \$500,000);
- Municipality of Chatham-Kent (up to \$500,000);
- County of Essex (up to \$500,000).

In February 2003, a number of changes were made to the GeoSmart program to

facilitate the implementation of GIS in Ontario communities and to streamline the overall administration of the program. Part of the streamlining was to separate ConnectOntario and GeoSmart. GeoSmart received a \$32 million funding allocation and is now administered through the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR).

Eligible applicants include municipalities, First Nations, Conservation Authorities, and not-for-profit organizations. Eligible project expenses include commercial software (including application services), hardware, spatial data collection and conversion (including metadata development), software customization, database enhancement, systems integration, training, marketing, and the like.


GIS has become a fundamental tool for doing municipal business, as well as enhancing the operation of other public-sector

organizations. To this end, GeoSmart will invest in projects that will use GIS to:

- support local economic development;
- improve local government efficiency;
- increase public access to land information over the Internet.

Since February 2003, MNR has received and responded to more than 100 Letters of Intent from municipalities and public-sector organizations in Ontario expressing an interest in applying for program funding. In August 2003, funding was publicly committed to 32 projects. GeoSmart contributions towards the projects are expected to be in excess of \$6.2 million. The total value of the combined projects is expected to exceed \$13 million. Furthermore, private-sector contributions towards the projects are expected to exceed \$3 million.

In comparison to the programs and accomplishments of other provinces, Ontario's initiatives to facilitate the use of GIS in both the public and private sectors increasingly are lagging behind. Once on the forefront with initiatives such as the Ontario Basic Mapping Program, the successful tran-



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sition from digital cartography to GIS was never made.

Provincial legislation concerning "mapping" responsibilities sorely needs to be revisited. First of all, the term "mapping" is archaic and needs to be replaced with "geographic database" from which many forms of mapping may be derived. Secondly, most references addressing the need and responsibility for accurate mapping in municipal and planning-related provincial legislation are implicit rather than explicit; and therefore, leave room for discretionary action. When the province engaged in its downloading of responsibilities to municipalities, the responsibility for creating and maintaining a province-wide geographic database, which was in essence downloaded to municipalities, fell through the cracks.

At the same time, millions of dollars have been invested by the province in building technology infrastructure for "Smart Communities," "Community Portals" and the like. However, the existence of the infrastructure does nothing to ensure that relevant and reliable information exists for communication and decision-making purposes. Information, not technology, is the cornerstone of a "Knowledge-Based Society." Technology is the delivery mechanism.

In this regard, the existence of technology has little impact if there is no content.

Following the program reductions of the late 1980s that continued throughout the 1990s, MNR has been pursuing GIS-related initiatives that firstly support its programs, secondly support the programs of the "Land Cluster Ministries" (Ministries requiring land related information to support their programs), and lastly support the creation and maintenance of a province-wide geodatabase that provides the foundation for all public- and private-sector GIS initiatives. With its limited mandate and resources, MNR has made considerable strides with its Land Information Ontario (LIO) initiative. However, LIO is strictly a framework for building a province-wide geodatabase from disparate sources. These sources include:

- the federal government;
- federal/provincial collaborations such as the Ontario Roads Network (ORN);

- provincial program supported initiatives such as the Natural Resource and Environment Data Project (NR/E);
- tax-supported public and private sector initiatives such as those out of Teranet Enterprises Inc., the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC), and the provincial alliance with these two organizations known as the Ontario Parcel Alliance (OPA);
- grassroots initiatives on the part of municipalities, conservation authorities, First Nations and other local public organizations.

The notion is that the geographic data created, and hopefully maintained, through these initiatives will find their way into the Ontario Geospatial Data Exchange (OGDE). The OGDE provides the technology infrastructure for the centralized sharing of geographic data. At the same time, it becomes the closest thing in Ontario to a province-wide geodatabase, albeit in a virtually, inconsistent, and patchwork fashion.

The province needs the cooperation and participation of its municipalities to ensure the success of OGDE. Large-scale projects such as the ORN and OPA tend to get lost in database creation and

miss the most important component, which is ongoing database maintenance. There is no point in constructing a database if you are not prepared to invest in upkeep. The only thing worse than a lack of information, is misinformation. In this regard, municipalities play a crucial role in geographic database maintenance, as well as in its initial creation. For the most part, the geographic landscape changes as a result of growth. Growth results from planning approvals. Planning approvals are largely initiated and/or given at the municipal level of government. As such, following the premise that "data should be captured and maintained at its source," municipalities should play a key role in province-wide geographic database initiatives.

From the municipal perspective, the weakness of the approach taken by the OPA is that the partnership is built around the business needs of land registry and assessment. Because municipalities are

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focused on the development process, which typically occurs years before development is ready to be registered and valued, municipalities need a product that is more conceptual than that provided through the OPA. As a result, databases produced through the OPA process are considerably less useful to municipalities than they might be.

Given this background, GeoSmart is having a very positive impact on what would otherwise be a very bleak picture. From a planning perspective, GeoSmart funding facilitates the acquisition of business applications, as well as supporting geographic and business data, to facilitate growth management initiatives and streamline the processing of development applications. As such, its benefits are felt by the planning profession as a whole, whether practising in the public or private sector. GeoSmart is also achieving its goal of supporting the province's geomatics industry and assisting the industry to effectively compete internationally. Increasingly, consulting firms focused on planning, engineering, surveying, and economic development

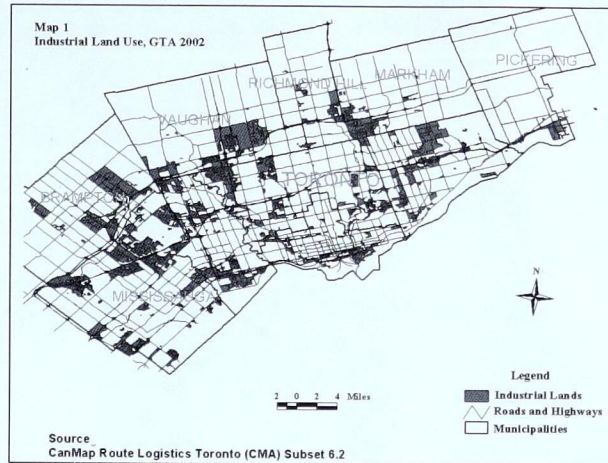
services are collaborating with Geomatics firms to address their clients' needs with the assistance of GeoSmart funding.

GeoSmart currently has 19 outstanding

2004. In the interim, the Province will be undertaking the largest pre-budget consultation in its history. According to the Government of Ontario, it will be soliciting input that will lead to decisions which ensure the protection of our natural resources, the growth of our economy, and the provision of quality services to our citizens. As part of this input, I encourage you to indicate your support for continuing the GeoSmart Program to:

The Hon. David Ramsay
Ontario Minister of Natural Resources
6th Floor, Room 6630
Whitney Block
99 Wellesley St. West
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1W3

George Lysenko, MCIP, RPP, is the Ontario Planning Journal's contributing editor for Technology. He is also Managing Director, Business Solutions, with iPlancorp in Newmarket. He can be reached at George.Lysenko@iplancorp.com. (Editor's note: George's name was spelled incorrectly in the previous issue)



Upkeep key to making GIS relevant

applications for funding, as well as dozens of completed applications awaiting submission. The review and approval of these applications and proposed projects is on hold for the balance of the fiscal year ending March 31,

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A More Sustainable Urban Environment: Beyond Idealism and Cynicism

By Stephen D. Murphy



Green roofs can store storm waters

I am repelled by phrases geared to the epoch of the sound bite, yet cannot turn away. Terms like “smart growth” and “green cities” are pithy and avoid the deadlier sins of endless exposition or jargon. However, they also swiftly attain the nuisance whine of mosquitoes or stale catch phrases (“whazzup..?” “smarrt groowth . . . !”). People may begin to wonder if they mask impracticalities and become cynical about whether anything besides semantics will ever change.

So it is with creating more environmentally friendly urban areas, especially in the cores. As readers well know, urban areas can be complex and beset with so many challenges that paralysis does not creep so much as it throttles. Nonetheless, examining initiatives in urban areas across the world, one sees that there seems to be a renewed vigour to tackle the challenges that prevent more livable, sustainable urban areas. Ontario’s mayors, regional chairs, and the staff in planning, development, and environmental departments of municipalities have been vocal in their public lobbying, strategic in professional visions, and serendipitous in experimenting and implementing ideas that will help achieve more sustainable urban environments.

As an ecologist who works in urban areas and enjoys the dialogue with planning professionals, I see much that is hopeful. Probably the best example is about how to concentrate growth and reclaim underutilized areas like “brownfields” (contaminated and underused/ abandoned industrial sites) and “greyfields” (underused commercial sites). In some cases, I might prefer to see these sites restored to become ecological nodes in urban areas but, more often, it makes more economic, social, and ecological sense to use such sites for residential or more sophisticat-

ed retail/light industry uses. In ecological terms, reusing brown and greyfields often means that sprawl is less likely to claim ecologically sensitive or otherwise functional areas in the suburbs. This can result in fewer people commuting long distances and contributing to automobile pollution. Since this pollution is a contributor to low-level ozone production (smog) and urban heat islands (increasing electricity consumption, particularly in summer), reducing it at source and having more greenfields preserved to help mitigate the effects can be important in creating a better urban area.

Similar to brown and greyfields, a lot of the other pragmatic approaches start at a small scale, such as a test building. Supported by agencies such as Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, there is renewed interest in environmentally friendly buildings, which can mean something as established as R-2000 standards but also alternative approaches like better solar panels, geothermal power, breathing walls for air circulation, or living machines to treat waste. Not all of these will be appropriate for every building, block, or municipality, but they may transform existing building stock into more resource-efficient units or create ideas as new stock is built. One approach I help work on is testing whether green roofs (rooftop plants anchored in shallow growth media and waterproof substrates) can be designed and function to serve diverse purposes like intercepting and cleansing water before it reaches storm sewers, cleansing air, or improving energy efficiency. There is much enthusiasm about new approaches and technologies like green roofs, but little long-term and comparative data. The time is now to do the studies to see if efforts will achieve environmental goals, be cost-effective, and respond to citizens’ agendas about what makes their municipalities livable.

I promote the concept of ecological reconciliation in urban areas. By this I mean restoring as much of the historical ecosystem as is feasible, while being prepared to implement ecological changes that reflect the urban physiognomy, climate and human colonization. This might mean I can get support for de-channelizing a creek in a core area, but I might need to construct simple wetlands for flood control, and plant low-height vegetation more appropriate for a dryland savanna due to safety concerns or because the plants are more tolerant of the local weather urban areas create. The vegetation and habitat might be native to the region or province but it is “reconciliation” because the historical riparian habitat cannot be supported by the altered climate or the ongoing social issues.

An idealist might be tempted to dismiss the

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desires and fears of residents or workers but this usually irritates and sours people from ever trying similar ideas. Ultimately, these ideas, once successful, will need to be adapted and repeated within and across urban areas to create an effective "landscape" transformation of urbanizing Ontario. As provincial policies and initiatives finally seem to be helping municipalities address their local needs (for example, Bill 56 on brownfields, the Smart Growth panel) and provide direction for integrating planning across municipal boundaries (examining the mandate of the Ontario Municipal Board, the creation of a "Green Envelope"), the ideals can become reality—assuming the revenue opportunities are delivered as promised. Of course, not everyone will agree that urban areas should be greened as attested by the decision to proceed with the Hamilton Red Hill Valley Expressway. Nonetheless, most urban areas have wisely planned "big" in vision and started "small" in testing ideas and consulting citizens. Pushing cynicism aside, there is ample opportunity to put Ontario on a path to more sustainable urban environments.

For further information:

Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

<http://www.amo.on.ca/>.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

www.cmhc.ca

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Federation of Canadian Municipalities. <http://www.fcm.ca>.

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<http://www.greenroofs.ca/grhcc/index.html>.

International Healthy Cities Foundation.

<http://www.healthycities.org/>.

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Stephen D. Murphy, B.Sc. (Hons.), Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in Environment and Resource Studies at the University of Waterloo. He can be reached at: sd2murph@uwaterloo.ca.

Karen Gregory, MCIP, RPP, is a senior research consultant with CMHC in Toronto. She is the Ontario Planning Journal's contributing editor for Sustainability and can be contacted at kagregor@cmhc.ca.

Heritage

Divisional Court finds municipality at fault in failing to designate Lakeshore Churches heritage

Catherine Nasmith

The Ontario Heritage Act gives municipalities responsibility for protecting the province's built heritage by designating properties or districts—but not the power to stop demolition. Municipalities can delay demolition of designated properties for 180 days, and may withhold a demolition permit until a building permit for a replacement building has been issued. They can also impose fines if the replacement building is not constructed within two years.

In the community of Lakeshore, near Windsor, the Roman Catholic Church wanted to consolidate three congregations into one and to demolish three existing church buildings. Local citizens, with support from the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, were able to get an injunction against the demolition permit. The Divisional Court recently threw out a resolution passed by the Town that had refused to consider designating St. Joachim Church because the Church had not asked for the designation.

This decision makes it clear that municipalities must act on their responsibilities to protect heritage buildings and that failing to designate has serious consequences. Even in cases where the prognosis for saving the building is poor, municipal action such as identifying the building as having heritage significance can be powerful in encouraging preservation. The Lakeshore matter has been sent back to the municipality for reconsideration.

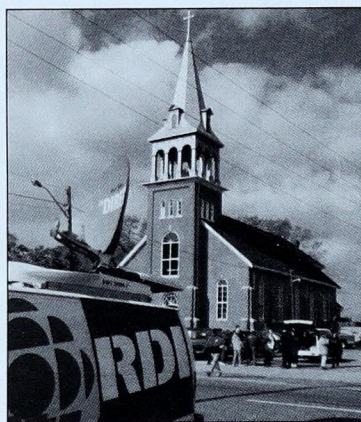
The situation has an additional twist to most preservation battles in Ontario in that the churches were built by the 300-year old Franco-Ontarian community and were very important as symbols of their deep roots in the area. The lawyer hired by the group formed to defend the churches, S.O.S. (Save

our Sanctuaries) was Ron Caza, who had challenged the closing of the de Montfort hospital in Ottawa on a constitutional rights argument. It was hoped that the constitutional rights would also win the day in this case.

S.O.S. succeeded in getting the municipality's refusal to designate overturned, not on constitutional grounds, but because of flawed process. The judges, RSJ Blair, SJ Benotto, and J Beaulieu, ruled that the town had a responsibility to do what it could to protect the heritage buildings; that the Heritage Act is established to provide for the "conservation, protection and preservation of the heritage of Ontario" and gives municipalities powers to "suspend certain private property rights." In imposing a condition to make designation conditional on the property owner's consent the town had "aborted the decision making process." The judges added, "The very purpose of the Act must be to balance the interests of the public, community and the owner. This balancing would not be necessary if the owner's consent were a precondition."

Catherine Nasmith is an architect and heritage conservation specialist based in Toronto. She was the first chair of the Toronto Preservation Board and currently serves on the Board of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario. She has been a provisional member of the Institute and currently publishes an electronic newsletter, "Built Heritage News." She can be reached at cnasmith@sympatico.ca.

For the full text of the Divisional Court decision go to: <http://www.canlii.org/on/cas/onscdc/2003/2003onscdc10862.html>.



St. Joachim Church

Building a case begins with kids

A Cautionary Tale for Kids

The Little Driver

Author: Martin Wagner
Publisher: Pinter and Martin, London, UK
Date: 2003
ISBN: 0-9530964-5-9
Pages: 55

Reviewed by: Michael Sullivan

The back cover of this "little" book sets the stage for the reader: "Joe always dreamt of driving his own car. When his wish comes true and he takes his brand-new sports car for a spin through town and country, his adventures soon take a turn for the unexpected." This turned out to be a very appropriate take on the book's theme. The story is based on British society, but the points raised are relevant to the

Canadian stage as well.

Originally I thought my 10 year-old daughter and I could do a joint review, to give readers a different perspective of the book. However, being that young girls (at least mine) do not list cars as their top priority, I was left on my own to do the review. What a treat! The author was able to describe, in simple and entertaining language, how our love affair with the car has affected our lives in so many ways.

The story begins with Joe, an eight-year-old boy, whose father runs a car manufacturing plant. Cars are all that Joe thinks about, at school, at home, while playing with friends. The story begins when Joe begins to "live" his fantasy, via a vivid dream, which goes like this. His father gives him a bright red sportscar for his 16th birthday. Joe learns how to drive the car on his own, and does

quite a good job even avoiding accidents and speeding tickets. Joe slowly drives around his home town, until the desire to explore overcomes him. He proceeds through the country to the next town, when the story really begins.

Joe doesn't realize how his car works, until it runs out of gas on a busy road. After finding a gas station/convenience store, he encounters a man carrying a bottle of milk. But Joe notices that the man has no car and thus questions him as to where he came from. He discovers that the man lives across the intersection from this, and two other gas stations. Joe thinks this sounds convenient, until the man describes how the roads/intersections were not built for pedestrians, so to cross the road safely, he must walk 10 minutes down the road to a cross walk, then 10 minutes back. While he lives only a few feet from the gas station, he must walk upwards of 20 minutes to get there. He also notes that the nearest supermarket is 20 minutes away, but that he must walk over a large parking lot, which is a hazard in itself. Joe

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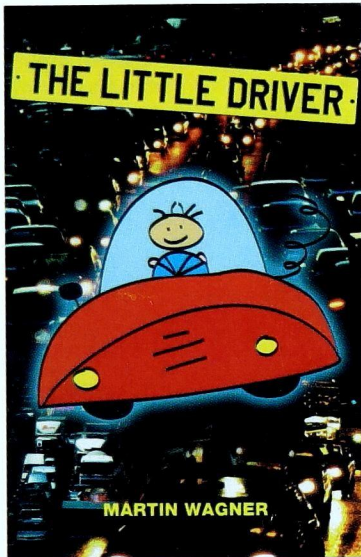
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wished, for the old man's sake, that everyone could have their own car, so they could get to the supermarket easily. It is interesting how, through the innocence of a young boy, we begin to grasp the side effects and repercussions of our current suburban state of mind.

Continuing on his journey, Joe encounters other situations where the car dominates urban design, and pedestrians are an afterthought, at best. For example, there is the street that goes nowhere, but offers a great experience for those just "wanting a drive." Then Joe is looking for something to eat at a shopping mall, where the expansive parking lot requires Joe to walk too far. While in the shopping centre, he encounters a little girl, left alone by her mother, who is protesting the opening of

a new road. The girl's mother hates cars and the roads they require, so she takes whatever actions she feels necessary to delay or stop a road from being constructed. The girl notes, ironically, that "Cars should come second. Humans were here on earth first." The love affair that we Canadians have with the automobile is exemplified when Joe experiences a traffic jam. He observes many of the drivers getting angry, honking horns and that most of the cars have only one occupant. He questions why cars are made so big, if they only carry one person. Then a car salesman opens the passenger door and proceeds to try to sell Joe a new car. He shows Joe the latest sports car, introduced only 20 minutes earlier, and tries to entice him



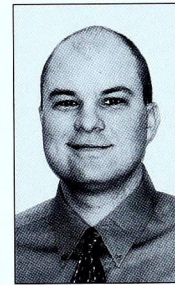
with the car's speed and good looks. He sidesteps Joe's concern about traffic jams by noting that new roads are being built all the time. This portrait drives (no pun intended) home the depth of our love affair with the automobile.

In the end, after all of these events, Joe vows to give the car back to his Dad, or better yet, lock the car away forever. Then, he wakes up from his dream, to find himself sitting in class. It had all been a terrible nightmare. On returning home, Joe had several questions for his parents.

The *Little Driver* puts Canadian's love affair with the automobile into an extreme perspective. With the recent provincial and municipal election results, it seems that Ontarians, at least, are becoming less satisfied with a society designed for the automobile and more interested in regaining a sense of community.

Neo-traditionalists and smart growth advocates would benefit from referencing this book as it offers a simplified perspective in support of their causes. This book was a refreshingly different source of inspiration for achieving what is becoming a more widespread goal: living and working within walking distance.

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