

## STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE/ LANDOWNER AND USER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### COMBINED MEETING 4

6-8pm, Wednesday May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012  
EMS Training Centre (Toronto Fire Academy)  
895 Eastern Avenue

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*The combined fourth meeting of the Port Lands Acceleration Initiative Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) and Land Owner and User Advisory Committee (LUAC) was attended by over 60 representatives from the member organizations (see participant list attached). The purpose of the meeting was to brief SAC and LUAC representatives on the current findings and recommendations from the Port Lands Acceleration Initiative and seek their feedback and advice (see meeting agenda attached). A facilitated discussion followed the presentations. The summary below organizes feedback from the facilitated discussion into key advice from the SAC and LUAC for the Port Lands Acceleration Initiative Project Team to consider. This summary was available for participant review prior to being finalized.*

*The mandate of both the SAC and LUAC is to provide a forum for feedback, guidance and advice to the Project Team at key points during the public consultation process. Please visit the project website ([portlandsconsultation.ca](http://portlandsconsultation.ca)) for more information on the Port Lands Acceleration Initiative's public consultation process.*

## FEEDBACK SUMMARY

Feedback from SAC/LUAC representatives is organized here into six areas, including: More Information on 4WS Comparison; Timing and Order of Phasing; More Information on Costs (and Opportunities to Review Numbers); More Information on Peer-Review; More Information on Detailed Design; and Greater Certainty for South of Ship Channel.

### MORE INFORMATION ON 4WS COMPARISON

- Comparison of original and realigned 4WS could benefit from additional information, including: hydrological modeling; provision of wetland; impacts on health, environment, quality of life, and land value ; more detailed breakdown of cost, including phase by phase cost for original 4WS.

### TIMING AND ORDER OF PHASING

- Support for idea of phasing with suggestion to consider implementing parks and public realm as early as possible to ensure implementation and increase land value.
- More information on the projected timeline for completing phases 1 through 5 would be helpful.
- Some concern that the land released for development as a result of phase 1 flood protection might not be the best place to start development. Consider performing phase 1 and 2 of flood protection together so that film district lands (where there is already activity) can be released earlier.

**MORE  
INFORMATION  
ON COSTS AND  
OPPORTUNITIES  
TO REVIEW  
NUMBERS**

- It would be useful to have more detail on the costs of the different phases, particularly the cost of flood protection in phase 1 and 2.
- Consider presenting costs on a year-by-year basis in addition to the phase-by-phase basis presented.
- Consider including the net benefit of additional development land in the business and implementation plan – it currently isn't clear how much more funding this additional land will contribute to paying for the cost of flood protection and other development-enabling infrastructure.
- Consider the full cost of transit (capital and operating).
- Would be useful to have greater opportunity to dive into numbers in more detail (e.g. having copy of presentation before meeting, having physical copy of presentation at meeting, additional Advisory Committee meetings). Would like to fully understand the costs, benefits, gains and losses so that SAC/LUAC representatives can communicate an accurate picture to the communities that they represent.

**MORE  
INFORMATION  
ON PEER-  
REVIEW**

- Would be helpful to have more information on the scope (e.g. specific elements of PLAI to be reviewed) and procurement process for the peer-review.
- Consider conducting a peer-review of the realigned 4WS, including costs and value of additional development land.

**MORE  
INFORMATION  
ON DETAILED  
DESIGN**

- It would be useful to have more information on detailed design, including process (e.g. what agency will lead and who will undertake design work) and timing (e.g. detailed design of naturalized space before or after finalization of EA).
- Consider continuing to seek the Waterfront Design Review Panel's comments on realigned 4WS as it undergoes detailed design.

**GREATER  
CERTAINTY FOR  
SOUTH OF SHIP  
CHANNEL**

- Even though the lands south of the ship channel are not the focus of this discussion it would be useful to have greater certainty on what will happen there, particularly with respect to the green link to Lake Ontario Park from the ship channel.

### **Next Steps**

The meeting wrapped up with representatives of Waterfront Toronto and the City of Toronto confirming that the timeline for completing the Port Lands Acceleration Initiative has been extended, with a report going to Executive Committee in September, and Council in October 2012. This extension will provide an opportunity for a peer-review of the business plan, the continued development of the business and implementation plan, and an additional round of public consultation. These activities will ensure that the emerging framework is based on sound financial modeling, fits within a broader city-building context, and allows for incremental implementation.

### **SAC/LUAC Meeting 4 Attendance**

309 Cherry Street  
3C Lakeshore  
475 Commissioner Street/75 Basin Street  
Arhon Investments  
Beach Waterfront Community Association  
Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD)  
Canada Green Building Council  
Canadian Salt  
Canadian Urban Institute  
Castlepoint  
Chai Poultry  
Cherry Beach Sound  
CIMCO Refrigeration  
City of Toronto - Real Estate Services  
Citizen Development  
CodeBlueTO  
Colliers  
Corktown Residents and Business Association  
Councillor Fletcher's Office  
CycleToronto  
Don Watershed Council  
East Toronto Community Coalition  
Eastern Marine  
EN Consulting (on behalf of Castlepoint)  
Essroc  
Fasken Martineau (on behalf of Sifto)  
Federation of North Toronto Resident Associations  
First Gulf Don Valley  
Friends of the Spit  
Goderham Worts Neighbourhood Association  
Infrastructure Ontario  
Johnston Litavski Ltd.  
LaFarge  
National Rubber Technologies  
Ontario Power Generation  
Outer Harbour Sailing Federation  
planningAlliance  
Port Land Owners Group  
Redpath Sugar  
Rideau Bulk Terminal  
Rose Corp  
Sherwood Park Resident Association  
South Riverdale Community Health Centre  
Toronto Board of Trade  
Toronto Field Naturalists  
Toronto Green Community  
Toronto Industry Network  
Toronto Park People  
Toronto Port Authority  
Toronto Port Lands Company  
Toronto Waterfront Studios Development Inc  
United Rentals of Canada  
Urban Strategies Inc.  
Waterfront Action  
West Don Lands Committee  
Weston Village Residents' Association

### **SAC/LUAC Meeting 4 Agenda**

Port Lands Acceleration Initiative  
**STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE/  
LAND OWNER AND USER ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING #4**

Wednesday, May 23, 2012  
EMS Training Centre (Toronto Fire Academy)  
895 Eastern Avenue  
6:00 – 8:00 pm

#### **PROPOSED AGENDA**

#### **6:00 pm Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review**

Nicole Swerhun, LURA/SWERHUN Facilitation Team

#### **6:10 Executive Update**

John Campbell, Waterfront Toronto  
John Livey, City of Toronto

#### **6:15 Briefing on Current Findings and Conclusions**

David Kusturin, Waterfront Toronto

*Questions of Clarification*

#### **7:00 Facilitated Discussion**

1. What do you think about the current findings and recommendations?
2. Do you have any suggested refinements to the current findings and recommendations?

#### **7:55 Next Steps**

#### **8:00 Adjourn**

Port Lands Acceleration Initiative

**STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE/  
LANDOWNER AND USER ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**COMBINED MEETING 4**

6-8pm, Wednesday May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012

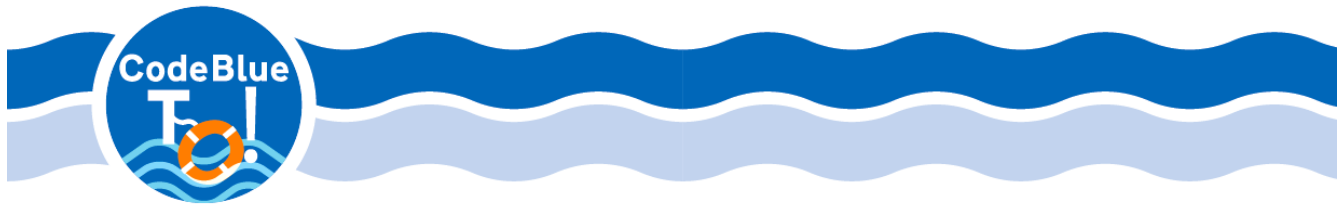
EMS Training Centre (Toronto Fire Academy)

895 Eastern Avenue

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**ATTACHMENT A.**

**Additional Feedback**



## CodeBlueTO: response to Round 3 of consultations on the Port Lands Acceleration Initiative

CodeBlueTO has a number of concerns, questions and comments about progress on the Port Lands Acceleration Initiative (PLAI) that we wish to express at this stage.

However, we first want to indicate our gratification that the PLAI review of the Environmental Assessment's flood protection options has confirmed that the preferred alternative (4WS) continues to be the optimal approach to flood protection of the Port Lands – albeit with suggested realignments. We also recognize the value of the additional phasing and costing analysis, which has identified a potential strategy for staged implementation for flood protection and development. Although few details have been made available, it also appears that there is some optimism that the process will lead to concrete funding or financing strategies that can start to make the first steps of Port Lands revitalization feasible, even in these challenging economic times.

While important progress has been made on the business planning side of the initiative, we are concerned that the analysis is seriously underdeveloped in areas that are critical to the success of the PLAI – both for building broad support for the work in the short run, and for achieving the important city-building goals of the Central Waterfront Plan over the longer term. As a result, we have a number of questions, concerns and comments about the work that has been shared to date, as well as some specific suggestions as to what steps might be taken over the next phase.

### 1. Naturalization and River Design

... to establish and sustain the form, features, and functions of a natural river mouth within the context of a revitalized City environment while providing flood protection up to the Regulatory Flood.

– *Terms of Reference: Goal of the Don Mouth Naturalization Project Environmental Assessment*

**NATURALIZATION:** First, CodeBlueTO wants to stress that naturalizing the Don River in the Lower Don Lands is a separate and distinct issue from resolving the issue of flood protection for surrounding areas. Indeed, we know from the work on the West Don Lands Flood Protection Landform that the engineering requirements for flood protection can, in fact, stand in the way of habitat restoration.

No evaluation of naturalization potential for the realigned 4WS (4WSR) proposed by the PLAI has been provided. However, we feel that the proposal's reduction of the size of the flood plain, combined with a reduction in the overall green space, will limit aquatic habitat value while also drastically reducing the

potential terrestrial habitat value – unless the open space devoted to active recreation is severely curtailed, which no one would wish to see. Simply put, a naturalized Don River mouth with virtually no tree canopy would be a serious choke point for migration of neotropical passerine (perching) birds, the very birds that currently pass through. Even as compared to existing conditions in the Port Lands, such a revision could pose a negative effect on bird migration.

Members of **CodeBlueTO** are also very concerned that construction of a naturalized river mouth will have to wait until phases 4 and 5 of redevelopment, which requires waiting until the agreement with the adjacent landowner over use of the dock wall expires – i.e., until the adjacent landowner moves from its present location. This leaves us wondering whether a naturalized river mouth will be achieved in our lifetimes. Indeed, we wonder what the impact of dock wall uses will be on adjacent aquatic and terrestrial habitat in the interim.

Although an extended and detailed discussion of naturalization choices and strategies for the river mouth was an important part of the public consultation and technical work under the existing Environmental Assessment, there has been no similar discussion as part of the PLAI. It is essential that the specifics of naturalization be addressed as part of the current initiative. Each phase of development of the river and its related ecosystems – whether in three phases or in five – must include a specific commitment to naturalization. In other words, completing part of the overall naturalization plan should be a commitment in each phase of the development, with associated costs identified in the plan.

The recommendations that go forward must address how a naturalized river will be achieved – including technical details as to how a realigned 4WS will be designed and implemented in order to:

- Optimize aquatic and terrestrial habitat;
- Improve linkages between habitats;
- Enhance biodiversity of aquatic and terrestrial species;
- Accommodate future changes in the environment.

– *Terms of Reference: Don Mouth Naturalization Project Environmental Assessment*

This would require articulating a comprehensive definition of “naturalization” to determine whether or not modifications of existing plans for the Lower Don Lands conform to the EA’s requirements.

We recommend that a series of stakeholder workshops be convened over the next two months to evaluate the capability of a realigned 4WS to meet the naturalization goals set out in the EA Terms of Reference. These workshops should consider:

- The options for terrestrial and aquatic habitat creation along the course of the realigned river mouth, The Don Greenway, and in upland areas;
- The implications of proposed dock wall retention where the river meets the Lake; and,
- Options for implementing naturalization components at each phase of development.

**RIVER DESIGN:** As was noted repeatedly in the stakeholder and public meetings, there is significant concern that, in optimizing for cost and development potential, the current river design has lost the “magic” and transformative power of the existing design by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA). There has been repeated criticism of the decision to reduce green space along the river course – moving it instead

to mid-development blocks. There has been criticism of the river path itself, which appears to reproduce the same unnatural 90° turn as the Keating Channel. There are concerns that bringing the river out in its final stretch saves a few acres of development land at too great an expense to naturalization and place-making.

We believe a better result can and must be achieved from an urban design perspective. We are recommending that a design process be initiated immediately with stakeholder involvement from the outset to enhance the river design and integrate work from the naturalization workshops. We further recommend that the MVVA team be invited back to lead this design process, as they have already worked extensively with all of the parties, including community stakeholders, and have advanced knowledge of aspects of the relevant technical requirements. This process could start with an interactive planning event resembling the Don Greenway charrette, which provided a productive and creative opportunity for education, visioning and consensus building.

## 2. Transit

We share the concerns of many at the SAC/LUAC and public consultation meetings that planning for transit has not been adequately undertaken.

As the PLAI research has indicated, high quality rapid transit in the Lower Don Lands and Port Lands is essential to attract the kind of private sector investment that is necessary to achieve the City's aspirations for economic revitalization. Creating quality of place through the provision of viable, rapid, high quality transportation is a critical necessity for creating livable new mixed-use neighbourhoods. In our view, a bus right-of-way – even as a stop-gap measure – does not constitute adequate planning for the area. The negative reaction of investors in East Bayfront to the failed delivery of the promised Queen's Quay LRT should confirm this point.

As with plans for other infrastructure for the area, we expect that a detailed plan for funding and implementation of high-quality rapid transit – transit that can support the concentration of workers and residents projected for the area – will be included in the next round of public and stakeholder consultations.

## 3. Business Plan

A great deal of work has been accomplished on the business plan side of the PLAI. Many consultants have been retained to analyze infrastructure implementation and phasing costs, potential development pace, potential revenues, potential financing and funding mechanisms. The SAC/LUAC and public have been given a very high-level report on the results of this work, but the information received to date has tended to raise more questions than it has answered.

For example:

- When comparing the PLAI realigned 4WS with the EA's preferred course for the river, has there been an evaluation of whether the revised version improves or diminishes potential land value? Is there a loss of economic value to having development on only one side of Don Roadway and Commissioners Street?

- Is a “main” street with retail at grade best served from an urban planning viewpoint by single loading it? Commissioners and the Don Roadway may not be envisioned as this kind of street but, if this is the case, what are the “main” streets?
- Is there any reason why the EA preferred course could not have been phased in a way that is similar to the phasing being proposed for the realigned version?
- Has naturalization along the river course and within the Don Greenway been included in the infrastructure costing? If so, what has that costing been based on?
- How would the costs and phasing strategy change if some part of river naturalization were included in each development phase?
- What and where is the land that is being reserved for a future “transformational” use?
- Will it be recommended unequivocally that any revenues or development charges from the Port Lands will be reinvested in Port Lands infrastructure costs? How will those arrangements be secured? Will the arrangements include any kind of contribution towards the “River Precincts” and “River Mouth” phases of the flood protection?
- Given fiscal constraints, does it make sense to rule out Tax Increment Financing and other value capture tools completely, when jurisdictions around the world have found ways to use such tools for *sine qua non* projects like transit-building?
- And, of course, the big unanswered question: Where does the first instalment of funding come from?

Again, we are requesting that one or more technical briefings be conducted on the business plan issues to allow stakeholders to review the analysis in more detail and to explore questions about the analysis. We recommend that one briefing be held relatively soon to deal with questions coming out of the SAC/LUAC and public meeting, and that a second briefing be held toward the end of the summer to allow a more in depth discussion of the specific funding or financing recommendations.

#### 4. Comprehensive Planning for the Port Lands

At the beginning of this process, it was understood that the PLAI was intended to look at the Port Lands as a whole – a goal that has had broad support from a public that did not want to see one-off developments approved without an overall road map in place.

To date, some very preliminary steps have been taken in the form of identifying possible planning precincts and articulating certain values – such as the Central Waterfront Plan “core principles” – that are intended to guide planning. But it seems fair to say that, so far, what has been shared with the public has been very rudimentary.

We are aware that implementing comprehensive planning for the whole Port Lands is a daunting task – particularly given that for much of the Port Lands, the development horizon is a long way off. At the same time, there is a need to move quickly to a greater level of specificity in areas that might be ripe for development. An example can be found in the film precinct, where private land owners / leasees have begun to put together precinct planning proposals on their own. There is a need to integrate that process with initiatives in other areas, such as South Riverdale, in order to seize every opportunity to create better connections between the Port Lands and the rest of Toronto.



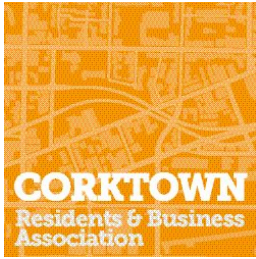
We note that developments in the concrete campus area are in varying stages of approval. Vacancies on the Hearn site, the Lever site and Cascades site present large-scale immediate opportunities for public open space and transportation infrastructure. These projects need to have a bigger planning framework to establish promontories, pedestrian and cycling networks, and view corridors and to connect in with the longer-term plans for development and open space centred on Cherry Street. As well, a framework is required to formalize needed connection improvements at Cherry Street, Carlaw and Leslie. Such a framework will provide some certainty for employment uses that will continue to exist in order to secure well paying jobs in the Port Lands. They need buffers and safe passageways through to ensure compatibility with existing and future uses.

By the end of the PLAI, we expect to see a program for advancing high-level framework planning for the full Port Lands, with a specific time table for initiating precinct planning in key precincts. And, as with all waterfront planning and development processes, we expect confirmation that Waterfront Toronto will continue to be the planning, development, and implementation lead for the Port Lands.

*CodeBlueTO would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on this phase of the PLAI initiative.*



*CodeBlueTO is a coalition of individuals, organizations, and groups that support the people's plan for Toronto's Port Lands, as developed by Waterfront Toronto. We defend the vision of a beautiful, revitalized urban community developed in a financially astute manner for this ecologically sensitive area. We believe in maintaining a transparent process that continues to involve the broader community. Our city. Our waterfront.*



**Response to the combined SAC/LUAC Meeting #4 - May 23, 2012 and to the Public Consultation #3 – May 24, 2012**

June 8, 2012

First, let me say that on behalf of the Corktown Residents & Business Association, we wholeheartedly endorse the positions expressed so thoroughly by both CodeBlueTO and by the West Don Lands Committee. We are closely allied with both organisations.

We also have the following specific points to add or perhaps the same expressed from a slightly different angle. Perhaps several angles since there is some repetition but that might be necessary to get the points across.

**Funding**

While no concrete plan has been put forward for funding of the flood protection and Don realignment and naturalisation, it is pretty clear that it will have to come from multiple sources and methods. And so at every turn, the planning must maximise every opportunity for the lands. So every aspect must have big ideas – transit, Master Plan, Don realignment and naturalization. Until the business plan and proposed composite funding is in place, or even proposed, there can be no compromising on the “grand plan”.

Great effort needs to be expended on exploring the possibilities for Waterfront Toronto to be able to create or take on debt, in some form, in order to add to the list of possible funding tools. Since no one funding vehicle will be able to carry all this weight, there must be multiple possible vehicles the sum-total of which stands a chance of making this all a reality.

**This dictates two key comments:**

1. Aim high – if we start compromising already at the planning stage, we know the process will be one of compromise and whatever plan is put in place will be watered down. So don't start by cheapening the plan to save dollars – go with the grandest vision that can be created.
2. The more catalysts that can be created and realised, the greater the possibility is to generate income from which at least a portion of the infrastructure costs and funding plan will be drawn. There are already catalysts ready and waiting to go – in the Film Precinct for a start. Provide them with the planning tools to proceed and create their plans.

**Transit**

Every planner, developer, architect, and knowledgeable citizen knows that good transit is the key to workable and sustainable development on a large scale. There is no comprehensive transit plan leading the process here – it's all band aid ideas with the hope that in the future, it will be brought up to the standard needed. As someone said to me recently: “Hope is not a business strategy”. Without a comprehensive transit plan which must have LRT as its backbone, development of the kind possible in the Port Lands simply won't happen, and talk of acceleration and land values is pointless. Even if it isn't yet known how to fund such transit, it must be made the key element of the planning – then there is a chance that it will be funded. Without such a plan, the money will never materialise, and neither will the grand possibilities for the land.

**Don Mouth Realignment and Naturalization**

The award-winning plans drawn up by MVVA and originally approved by Council in 2010 as scheme 4WS has been dramatically downgraded in 4WS Realigned. It has been cast cleverly as a slight change to 4WS but it is by no means slight. The river in 4WS has become a channel in 4WS realigned and the splendid naturalization at the mouth has become an outlet with almost nothing natural to be seen. Basically it is Keating Channel South. This is compromise at the start of the process. Since every development process inevitably sees compromise as it proceeds through design and refinement and approvals and finally implementation, where will this modified plan actually end up. Something resembling a ditch which will do nothing to enhance the value of the development lands being created. The calculations presented at both the SAC/LUAC meeting and the following Public Consultation simply ignored the issue of value creation and instead focused on reducing cost. It is short-sighted and will simply lead to a second-rate outcome which future generations will look upon and say about the folks who let this happen – us – “what were they thinking!?”

As stated earlier – we must aim high – this is not the point in the process to be making compromises. We haven’t see a coherent business plan yet and we are making compromises already?

**Catalyst for Port Lands development**

We all know that the entire Port Lands area needs a catalyst and there is a catalyst ready to go with two major developers already involved in what is now thankfully designated as precinct – the Film Precinct. But they need to know how their plans might work in the larger context. The current fine work produced by MVVA does not extend east of the Don Roadway – it needs to be extended so that the film precinct can proceed.

**Master Plan**

A Master Plan for the whole Port Lands is essential - the Film Precinct is the first likely development, the true catalyst that everyone wants - how are they expected to produce a cohesive and workable plan for their lands without a comprehensive context, and how is the City and other bodies having jurisdiction able to give approvals without the same Master Plan?

**Phasing**

While on the face of it the ability to phase more readily in 4WS Realigned is attractive for many reasons, the fact that the Phase 5 work on naturalizing the Don south of the Lafarge site cannot happen until Lafarge has ceased operations at the site begs a major question. What has been done to cost out relocating them earlier and analyze the other benefits of doing so? The naturalization of the Don mouth is the creator of the major value in the Lower Don lands and yet won’t happen until the end of the process. This must be re-examined if anything of real, value is to be created here.

Thank you for this opportunity – we look forward to the next steps in the process and to seeing the ideas put forward by so many credible parties incorporated into the final result which will then end up as a plan of which everyone involved and future generations will be proud.

**Larry Webb**

President

Corktown Residents & Business Association

[info@corktown.ca](mailto:info@corktown.ca)



## DON WATERSHED REGENERATION COUNCIL

June 7, 2012

**BY EMAIL: MNoble@waterfrontoronto.ca**

Ms. Michelle Noble  
Director Communications & Marketing, Waterfront Toronto  
Suite 1310 – 20 Bay Street  
Toronto, ON M5A 2N8

Dear Ms. Noble:

**Re: Portlands Acceleration Initiative, Public Consultation Round 3 – May 24, 2012  
Comments of the Don Watershed Regeneration Council on the Findings and  
Recommendations**

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The Don Watershed Regeneration Council (DWRC\*) supports the following:

- Retention of the 4WS option for the river rather than either of the other two that were under review (options 2 and 4W);
- Phasing, which provides a more realistic approach to the huge costs of flood protection and servicing by dividing the very large area into manageable pieces and providing some preliminary suggestions regarding sequencing;
- The realignment of the spillway eastward, which will create a “parkway” along the Don Roadway and Commissioners Street, and which will release a large portion of the flood prone lands from potential flooding in the early phases; and
- The provision of neighbourhood parks within the new communities.

However, these positive comments are qualified by a large number of detailed concerns, particularly regarding the character and implementation of 4WS realigned.

The realigned version of the river leaves the impression of a very constrained waterway, beginning with a sharp westward turn (not unlike the current flow into the Keating Channel) and a narrow river course created by the more restricted land area allocated to it. A naturalized mouth can only be achieved at such time as Lafarge relocates. In the meantime - and perhaps long after development has occurred – the river will be squeezed into a narrow, existing slip.

We understand that the realigned concept meets the hydrological requirements, but in diminishing the natural green areas on either side, it has sacrificed the iconic character of a meandering river offering pleasant walking trails along tree lined banks. There is no question that the new river will be an important catalyst in creating value and raising the development potential of the whole area.

.../2

Therefore, it seems unnecessary to severely constrain the river concept at this early stage. The river is the single most important transformative element that will leverage maximum value out of the Portlands. The more generous and aesthetically pleasing it is, the higher the adjacent land values will be, regardless of the shape of the development blocks. The DWRC proposes that a deeper reserve south of Commissioners Street to accommodate the original alignment and adjacent vegetated areas should be included in the recommendations going forward to Council, and that detailed design work to that effect be undertaken prior to finalizing the land allocation for the river.

There is concern that the delay in construction of the naturalized river (shown in Phase 3) could jeopardize the primary goal of this redevelopment project – to create a sustainable, mixed, urban community, and give new life to Toronto’s waterfront. This is not to diminish the value of expanding the studio precinct (Phase 2), but requests that serious consideration be given to including the river construction in Phase 2 in recognition of its regenerative role for the whole area.

In addition, full implementation of a naturalized mouth of the new river will be impossible until Lafarge ceases operation or relocates. This indeterminate timing creates a real risk that this essential element may never be realized, by virtue of the absence of hydrological “necessity” and escalating implementation costs over time. The DWRC recommends that consideration be given to actively assisting Lafarge to relocate at an early stage of the implementation plan by offering financial and fiscal incentives, and exploring alternate sites for its facility.

In the preliminary phasing plan the naturalized mouth appears only in the final build out (Phases 4 and 5). In the opinion of the DWRC, the river is the primary catalyst for attracting investment. Therefore, the DWRC underlines the importance of early construction of the new river in its entirety – in Phase 2. The challenge is one of the financial mechanisms needed (with special assistance to relocate Lafarge) rather than exclusive reliance on market forces and revenue from development.

Once an agreement is reached on the land area for the new river, the major concern will be how to protect it from temporary uses and intrusions until a market for the Portlands materializes. Policies and designations in the Official Plan and the Zoning By-law are the logical first steps. However, these are always open to applications for further amendments. Exploration of additional legal tools that can guarantee long term protection of the designated land area should be incorporated into the implementation plan.

In conclusion, the review to date suggests that market forces alone will not be sufficient to accelerate development in the Portlands. “Stimulus” uses, such as those particularly suited to a waterfront location (e.g., a water research facility), can be effective and there is general agreement that proposals will be received and reviewed with an open mind. Beyond these speculative possibilities, acceleration of the build-out process will require a strong commitment by government to create the necessary conditions to attract private investment. In the case of the Portlands, a new river regenerated out of a desolate brownfield can be the inspiration and catalyst for development of a first class community.

All three levels of government will need to participate, as they did in the Environmental Assessment. Once the current uncertain financial cloud has lifted, then the time would be right to present the business plan for the Portlands to the senior levels of government. This is the opportunity to make the case for the anticipated revenues (taxes, fees, special levies, etc.), compared with a “do nothing” scenario, together with the additional reward for government foresight and the potential international recognition for a unique waterfront recovery project.

Yours truly,



Phil Goodwin  
Chair, Don Watershed Regeneration Council

PG:MB:aw

cc: Gwen McIntosh, Director, Waterfront Secretariat, City of Toronto

**\*Don Watershed Regeneration Council**

*The Don Watershed Regeneration Council (DWRC) is a formal community-based committee established by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) in 1994 to help restore the Don River watershed to a healthy, sustainable natural environment. The DWRC reports to the Authority on a regular basis and is composed of community members, elected officials and representatives from businesses, agencies, environmental groups and academic institutions located within or concerned about the future of the Don River watershed*

*A new, updated regeneration Plan “Beyond Forty Steps” was endorsed by the DWRC and approved by TRCA in 2009 and guides the DWRC in commenting to other government agencies (federal, provincial and municipal) on matters pertaining to the future of the watershed. The new Plan addresses the broad watershed issues of sustainability including water and energy efficiency and emerging challenges such as climate change.*

## Friends of the Spit

P.O. Box 51518  
2140A Queen Street East  
Toronto ON M4E 3V7  
info@friendsofthespit.ca  
www.friendsofthespit.ca



31 May 2012

BY EMAIL AND MAIL

Waterfront Toronto  
Mr. J. W. Campbell, President and Chief Executive Officer  
20 Bay Street, Suite 1310  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5J 2N8

City of Toronto  
Mr. J. Livey, Deputy City Manager  
11<sup>th</sup> fl. E., 100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5H 2N2

The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority  
Mr. B. Denney, CAO  
5 Shoreham Drive  
Downsview, Ontario  
M3N 1S4

Port Lands Acceleration Initiative  
Commentary following the Public Consultation Round 3 – Public Meeting

Dear Colleagues,

Members of Friends of the Spit have participated in all Stakeholder Advisory Committee meetings and in all public consultation meetings. We have appreciated the opportunity to be a member of the SAC and contribute; likewise the public meetings have been informative and well-run. It is now time for us to place our comments before you.

As you know, our all-volunteer advisory group was established in 1977 expressly to preserve the entire Leslie Street Spit as a public urban wilderness, car-free, with no admission charges. Since 1977, our organization has been represented at, and has participated in, every planning forum pertinent to the Spit and Port Lands at large. Our “corporate” knowledge of the history is unparalleled.

In general, it has become obvious to us that economic forces will dictate the pace of Port Lands development, and that acceleration is unlikely. The hope for a transformational or catalyst use is only that: a vague hope.

Secondly, what has also become obvious is that the original plans for the mouth of the Don (the original 4WS), and the plans gradually being formulated for the rest of the Port Lands, were well-thought-out and well-delivered.

Thirdly, by re-opening the public participation and consultation, a great service has occurred. The general public has awoken, and is now interested in the Port Lands at large. This is a tremendous thing, as from personal experience at the various meetings, we have seen hither-to-fore uninvolved individuals stepping forward and, almost to a person, declaring that there should be more parkland and more public realm. They fear a repetition of Harbourfront: they fear that the wall of condos will continue further east, they fear that the public realm will be sacrificed at the cost of acceleration or expediency, they fear almost to a person that 4WS is not enough – that 4WS is simply a good start that will be forgotten and not amplified; or worse, never realized in full.

Therefore, our first recommendation, from Friends of the Spit, is that the public realm be built and that the parkland and associated green uses be expanded from 4WS throughout the Port Lands. The 4WS scheme for the Don is the best, and should form the starting point. [As part of the ongoing Port Lands Acceleration Initiative, we ask that the implementation phasing analyses applied to “4WS Realigned” also be applied to 4WS.]

From the Friends of the Spit perspective, the green connection must be made large, wide, and viable between the Leslie Street Spit, the Base Lands, and the mouth of the Lower Don. Anything less will be seen by future generation as meagre and unworthy of the city.

Coupled with the public realm of parkland, a satisfactory transit infrastructure must be built so that people can be brought to the parkland areas and so that people can use the areas irrespective of ownership. Again, from Friends of the Spit perspective, the Spit is poorly served by public transit (it, currently, seasonally stops at Commissioner’s) and all Spit users will benefit from better transit service.

The public consultation discussions have been interesting, wherein consultant after consultant spoke of a “higher order” of use for land, and then referenced housing, or retail, or corporate campus uses. Our organization believes that parkland is the highest order of use and that all other development must be subservient to that parkland imperative.



In order to create this public realm, a number of things must happen. First, the Spit and Baselands boundaries must be enshrined and protected. No incursions of errant canal rowing courses and the like, through the Spit, can be tolerated. In other words, Lake Ontario Park touches gently to the Spit and Baselands.

Secondly, Lake Ontario Park must be enlarged. For decades, Friends of the Spit have advocated that all lands south of the Ship Channel be parkland: parkland of varying recreational intensities. Our suggestion always has been that the active recreational uses be at the west and taper in intensity through to the passive recreational areas of the Spit.

In the course of the various meetings in the last six months, two things became clear. First, as acknowledged by the City and Waterfront Toronto, there won't be any development by Waterfront Toronto or any other agency south of the Ship Channel for at least 30 years! Secondly, the port users have made a strong case that some of the leased lands around the Ship Channel are important and valuable for the functions that help run our city. Both of these mean that there will be no residential development south of the Ship Channel, and, again, that is logical as there is presently no servicing and no amenities.

Far better then to declare all land south of the Ship Channel as parkland, and proceed on that basis to ensure that, as leases expire, as uses change, that the lands enter the public realm and be developed and maintained as parkland. That is a legacy worth striving for!

In the interest of stimulating discussion, we have attached our map of "Parkland in the Port Lands". For ease of comparison, we have used the Port Land Acceleration Initiative's mapping, and modified it to show our proposal.

In the current context, this green space would fit admirably to an expanded 4WS parkland scheme and provide the desired green connections.

It would take strength and political will to achieve this, but, from what we saw at the various public meetings, this would be universally applauded by the vast majority of those attendees.

Finally, the former Hearn Generating Station is a tantalizing structure: tantalizing, because so many people are willing to put their aspirational uses to it; and as stated at the May 24<sup>th</sup> meeting by Mr. Kusturin "something may or may not happen to the Hearn". If something were to happen, the first stricture would be that the use has to be compatible with parkland. It would be crazy to place a casino there; it would be crazy to put a stadium there. Secondly, whatever function it takes, it should be serviced by bridges and access from the north side of the Ship Channel. In other words, automobile traffic and truck servicing traffic south of the Ship Channel should be limited. Again, this would take a brave planner with a strong sponsoring organization.

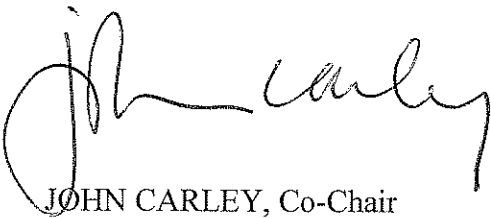
These suggestions emanate from our organization's constant involvement in all matters of importance to the Spit since 1977. We are hard put to think of another organization with such a long history of having such a significant impact. The enjoyment that the Spit provides to the citizens of Toronto and beyond, to the hundreds of thousands of visitors annually who come to the Spit, could also be translated to the lands west of the Spit, south of the Ship Channel. As Toronto grows and expands, these lands would be essential for the enjoyment of the citizenry in both active and passive recreation.

This is the time and this is the place for a grand gesture. Go for it!

"Parkland in the Port Lands!" Go for it!!

Yours sincerely,

FRIENDS OF THE SPIT  
per:



JOHN CARLEY, Co-Chair



GARTH RILEY, Co-Chair

cc. Councillor P. McConnell  
Councillor P. Fletcher  
Councillor M-M. McMahon  
P. Tabuns, M.P.P.  
M. Kellway, M.P.  
Craig Scott, M.P.  
CodeBlueTO  
Interested parties

# Parkland in the Port Lands

May 31, 2012



“PARKLAND IN THE PORT LANDS”: This map has been prepared using the Port Lands Acceleration Initiative mapping in order to illustrate the parkland imperative for all lands south of the Ship Channel.

**Friends of the Spit**



## Gooderham & Worts Neighbour Association response to the Port Lands Consultation 3

We would like to express our appreciation for the amount of detailed analysis that has been done to date and the opportunity for the public to provide feedback. We are gratified that the preferred option for the flood protection and naturalization 4WS has been confirmed as the best option. We are also pleased to see that between Consultation 2 and 3, in response to the public feedback, there has been great effort to bring back some of the lost green space.

We do, however, still have some concerns.

### The river is *the* transformational initiative

It is the beauty and the magic of the river that will make this area valuable. The approved river plan maximises the amount of waterfront land, i.e. maximises land values throughout the Lower Don Lands. The revised version puts roads along the water thus reducing the value of many parcels. As well, the diminished amenity value of the revised version will have the same effect.

## What do you think about the current findings and recommendations?

### Naturalization

- Need for more technical information about the naturalization of the river – **are the costs to naturalize included in the Flood protection?** Naturalization should not be confused with flood protection – they have 2 different purposes. We would like to see these costs broken out.
- Loss of the river mouth estuary in the final phases, 4 and 5 if Lafarge does not want to leave – that is the major part of the naturalization – **how much park and open space is included in those phases?** We have already lost 8.3 hectares with the realigned plan if fully implemented

-

- Realigned 4WS has the river making a sharp right turn similar to the current situation which has been established as a non-preferred option in the process. All the grace of the river form is lost.
- Realignment along the Don Roadway means less opportunity for trees. This has an impact on the bird migration. Many of the species that cross the lake to head north are nesting birds that need trees to rest along their way. A channelized floodway and spillway means no trees can be planted.
- In addition, the realignment and phasing will impede the ability to realize some of the Terms of Reference in the EA to enhance the biodiversity of aquatic and terrestrial habitats and encourage the restoration of the species that have been lost through our neglect.

#### Transit

- This appears to have been an afterthought. Discussions with developers have proven that, without an effective transit system approved or in place, there will not be a market for any development either commercial or residential. A transit system plan is required as one of the pre-requisites to the infrastructure work. This does not mean a bus way as proposed for the East Bay Front precinct. This was a last minute proposed solution because there is no official transit plan in place for the LRT the developers and landowners have been fighting to have. What is needed is a fully planned rapid transit system.

#### Business Plan

- Need to understand the amount of opportunity costs due to lack of green space and phasing of the river naturalization. For instance, Phase 1 of the flood protection will allow for development in Cousins Quay and Polson Quay. This could be built without any of the naturalization beauty and magic of the river and with brownfields across Cherry St that may be decades away from development.  
**How much value could be gained by waiting for the completion of the river?**
- Transformational Initiative – **where is the land that is being retained for this?**

- **Will any funds revenues or development charges be retained for use in the further Port Lands development? How will this be guaranteed?**
- More information about the possible financing – **what about granting borrowing powers to WT? Have TIF's been discarded too quickly because it is not necessarily an easy solution?**

### Comprehensive Planning for the Port Lands

- Need to see the street plans – bridge to extend Munition St to north of Keating has been removed – what about the 2 pedestrian/bicycle bridges connecting the west side of Cherry St to north Keating and the one that connects to the West Don Lands east of Cherry? Central Waterfront Plan places an emphasis on North/South connections as well as East/West
- The planning shown to date does not include all of the Port Lands. The lands south of the Ship Channel and the section east of Carlaw have not been included in the analysis to date. A high level framework plan is still required. We would like to ensure that at least some planning of roads and services are included so there are no major surprises when that day comes.

## What do you have any suggested refinements to the current findings and recommendations?

- Bring Michael Van Valkenburgh back to consult on the realigned 4WS
- Once there is an approved plan, lock it down so every time a new council is elected, we do not have to go through this process all over again.
- We would like to see some public workshops or a charette to delve deeper into the analysis of the realigned 4WS to ensure it can meet the naturalization goals of the EA

Response to Round 3 Public Meeting Presentation  
Port Lands Acceleration Initiative

John P. Wilson  
June 8, 2012

**Naturalization:**

My observations about the most recent round of presentations focus largely on naturalization, the matter I have the most experience with. I'm going to omit the usual acknowledgement of great effort on the part of the PLAI team and go straight to the point:

Anything positive about the naturalization opportunities presented on May 24 derives from the original work on the DMNP EA, Option 4WS and the Lower Don Lands Framework Plan. What I see here is a step backwards.

**First**, simple metrics: It is proposed that the land area available for naturalization be reduced by 8.3 ha. Park Space has been reduced 3.7 ha. and the Flood Plain has been reduced by 4.6 ha. These two categories totaled 45.1 ha. originally; they are now proposed to total 36.8 ha. for a reduction of close to 20%.

**Second**, potential conflict with other uses: Park Space, and perhaps also Flood Plain, must accommodate shared use between naturalization and other uses such as active recreation, community centres, passive-use lawns, event space, community gardens, etc. This places already-constrained naturalized areas in conflict with space reserved for playing fields, etc. It is likely that naturalized area will be reduced more than the other uses (meaning that naturalized area will probably be reduced significantly more than 20%) unless naturalists engage in unwanted and unnecessary conflicts with other park users.

**Third**, quality of naturalized area: We must remember that the DMNP EA was only part of the picture in the Lower Don Lands. The full MVVA plan, as it came to be expressed in the Lower Don Lands Framework Plan, included not only flood plain naturalization, it also had eight "Wooded Prospects". These reflected the work of an ecology team who provided terrestrial habitat for migratory birds. Four of these woodlots aligned with the Don Greenway link between Lake Ontario Park and the Don River Valley. Two along this alignment, as well as a third in Promontory Park, appeared to approach 1 hectare in size – small woodlots, no doubt, but comparable in size to very productive wooded areas of the Baselands in Tommy Thompson Park, where migratory neotropical birds (and bird-watchers) flock each Spring and Fall. By contrast, the realignment of 4WS shows nothing but flood plain along the orientation of the Don Greenway, where woody plants (even shrubs) will be excluded by flood plain requirements of the province.

Simply put, a migratory route for passerine birds without trees is like a wetland without water. Unless the realignment of 4WS is radically altered, for terrestrial creatures it would be worse than the current condition!

Even with regard to aquatic habitat, the narrower flood plain would make for smaller “total area of wetland”, and smaller “patch size of wetland” – crucial “Indicators” in the DMNP EA (Appendix E-2). Also the narrower river mouth, greater amount of dock wall and other features of the land-water interface suggest that there would be smaller, poorer open-water aquatic habitat.

It appears certain that 4WS “realigned” would significantly underperform 4WS “preferred” in Naturalization as evaluated in the DMNP EA. From the information provided my guess is that six of the nine “Criteria” would be worsened by the “realignment”, as regards reaching the Naturalization objective of the EA. This is unacceptable.

### **City-Building:**

A great deal of weight has been given to increasing the area of developable land, as if all developable land were of equal value. But there is a significant body of research that indicates that, by impoverishing the open spaces of the Lower Don Lands, the city would reduce the value of developable lands. To quote from a 2005 study by Wilder Research, *The Economic Value of Open Space: Implications for Land Use Decisions:*

“Almost all studies of urban areas indicate that parks have a positive and significant impact on the prices of homes located very near the park, but the magnitude of the results vary widely... Natural parks and passive use parks tend to have more impact than active use parks... (Page 11)

“Natural parks could add as much as 20 percent to the value of nearby homes, and the effect seemed to extend much farther from the park than for other open spaces. Moreover, they also found that the larger parks had the largest effects.” (Page 13)

Finally, it was stated during the most recent round of public consultations that the relation of city to open spaces would be improved by the realignment because the Lower Don Lands Framework Plan places the backs of development lots against the open space. This is incorrect.

The Lower Don Framework Plan by and large places residential or smaller streets facing open spaces (all the more to improve land values). Where that Plan does not show a street facing open space, there are great park-related uses –a trail, school, community centre or day care. It would seem to be rather unusual and a lost opportunity to place an arterial street or commercial boulevard abutting much of the open space.

Much more work needs to be done, with intensive public input, to make the PLAI Round 3 effort acceptable.



Quite a while ago I sat on the Gardiner Expressway EA hosted by Waterfront Toronto. When we toured the mouth of the Don River Kevin Bouchard mentioned that there was a relationship with the Clinton Climate Change Initiative. My understanding was that the offer was not for funds but rather for expertise. Could we not use them for the planning for the mouth of the Don? It was evident after the Thursday public meeting that most are not happy with the revised plan, “the accountant” design. Is there a way we could tap into their expertise?



## West Don Lands Committee response to the May 2012 SAC/LUAC and public consultations on the Port Lands Acceleration Initiative

The West Don Lands Committee endorses and adopts the response of CodeBlueTO, including the requests for stakeholder briefings and the initiation of a design process for Don River Mouth alignment, naturalization and public realm plan. The WDLC adds the following comments:

### **1. A naturalized Don River Mouth must be recognized and promoted as a transformative feature in itself. A spectacularly designed river:**

- Creates a powerful symbol of regeneration, transformation and sustainability within the Port Lands;
- Contributes to rebranding a challenged brownfield site;
- Contributes a critical component to the creation of a continuous wildlife corridor from the Spit through to the Don River Watershed;
- Provides highly valued public amenity space;
- Creates a river edge amenity that significantly enhances the land value of adjacent and neighbouring development parcels - even to the extent that additional costs of this approach may be more than fully recovered by increased land value;
- Is strongly supported by the public who are concerned about the loss of opportunity to create a more balanced relationship to nature within the City.

**It would be a mistake to stint on this feature for the sake of gaining as little as 4 hectares of additional developable land.**

### **2. Strengthening Linkages -The Keating Channel:**

- A core principle of the Central Waterfront Plan is making connections to bring the waterfront back into the life of the city. This couldn't be more important for the Port Lands, which are isolated logistically and psychologically from the city centre and from neighbouring communities, such as the West Don Lands and East Bayfront.
- The Keating Channel precinct will be an important connector between these communities and we are concerned that the City has pulled back from revitalization of 480 Lakeshore and the east Keating area at a time when certainty around development on both sides of the Channel is important for creating a positive investment context.
- We are also concerned that elements that would reinforce the north-south connections over the longer term, such as the vehicular and pedestrian bridges over the Keating Channel are no longer included in the infrastructure plan.
- We would recommend that precinct planning for the Keating Channel East be incorporated into the work plan coming out of the PLAI and that enhancing connectivity between 480 Lakeshore and the Lower Don Lands be identified as an objective to be explored through that process.



### **3. Strengthening Linkages – Transit planning:**

- A clear commitment to transit is a key to acceleration according to the market sounding done in connection with PLAI.
- It is critical that the current business plan incorporate an upfront commitment to higher order transit, building on the work done to date in the Waterfront Transit Environmental Assessments.
- Both public sector contributions and value capture techniques to access private sector contributions must be employed to provide funding for transit in the Port Lands.
- The transit commitment needs look beyond the boundary of the Port Lands to ensure that the Queens Quay and West Don Lands LRT lines are developed and connected to the Port Lands in a timely way.

### **4. Creating a positive investment context**

- Certainty as to the planning context will naturally accelerate development. We know this from the WDL precinct planning process, which has significantly accelerated private sector investment in neighbouring areas such as Corktown.
- A commitment to a spectacular public realm also spurs private sector development and that public realm planning must be moved ahead in the Port Lands.
- Building consensus through the kind of robust consultation process undertaken by Waterfront Toronto is another way in which certainty and investor confidence can be enhanced. It is critical that the Waterfront Toronto's high quality work in this area be continued.
- Identification of a planning and consultation timetable, including consultation on the precinct structure and precinct planning priorities should be part of the deliverables for the PLAI.

### **5. Financing and Public Sector Investment:**

- The PLAI work to date has reinforced lessons learned from development of the West Don Lands: These are complex development lands that require the public sector to lead with public realm investments in order to attract and maximize private investment.
- Spectacular public realm planning spurs private sector investment.
- While the current fiscal environment is difficult, it is reasonable to expect that a visionary plan will attract public sector investment at a future date.

### **6. Waterfront Toronto must continue to lead the planning process**

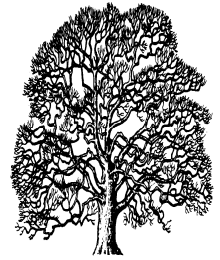
- It is the only entity with the capacity to carry out the complex planning work.
- It has a demonstrated track record.
- It is highly regarded by the public and has built up invaluable social capital with government and regulatory agencies.
- And very importantly, it is structured to engage all levels of government.





## WESTON VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

C/O 2100 LAWRENCE AVE. W., SUITE 102  
WESTON ON M9N 3W3  
416.243.0686



Wednesday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Nicole Swerhun,  
Swerhun Facilitation & Decision Support  
720 Bathurst Street, Suite 308  
Toronto, ON M5S 2R4

Dear Nicole:

### **Re: Port Lands Acceleration Initiative**

Thank you for allowing me to comment on the revised plan. After leaving the SAC/LUAC meeting on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, I could not help but think "what is the real gain and for whom?" The anticipated cost savings of \$150 million when you look at it amortized over centuries is marginal at best and make the land much less valuable in the long run and more importantly, less likely to leave a legacy of quality for generations to come.

One of my comments at the meeting (which I did not see recorded) was that "the 4WS "realigned" plan looks more like the Rideau Canal than a majestic river like the Humber." This re-configured plan has lost its "magic" and is common and crude in its execution. In particular, the naturalization of the river mouth has been altered so as almost not to be recognizable as the same award-winning design.

Finally, why must we keep re-visiting plans that have already been decided on by the politicians of the day in consultation with the public? As someone at the meeting said, we, the tax paying public MUST be protected from this! Talk about "respect for taxpayers"! Plans like Transit City and now the Port Lands are used by an ego-driven Council as bargaining chips in tough economic times - penny-wise, perhaps but pound foolish in the long run. We need to "stay the course" with respect to this award-winning design. I believe that some very minor "tweaks" could have been made without stripping the plan of all its beauty and integrity.

Sign Me,

Not Impressed with a Ditch!

Laura Alderson  
Vice-Chair  
WestonVillage Residents' Association

Cc: John Campbell, Waterfront Toronto,  
John Livey, City of Toronto  
Councillor Frances Nunziata