

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Waterfront Planning

The Greenspace Strategy for the Greater Toronto Region

Since 1957, the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority has been responsible for developing and implementing a program for renewable resource management. A comprehensive statement of this program was adopted by the Authority in its 1980 Watershed Plan, and was updated in 1986. At that time, the Authority recognized that its traditional preventive and remedial programs were not keeping pace with the pressure of development across its watersheds and that urgent action was required to ensure the future environmental health of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The Greenspace Strategy (1988/89) was proposed as the Authority's conservation vision for the future of the GTA.

In 1990, "Watershed", the interim report of the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront and "Space for All", a report to the Province identifying options for a Greenlands Strategy for the Greater Toronto Area, made recommendations to conserve and enhance the natural resources of the Greater Toronto Area.

The Greenspace Strategy, Watershed and Space for All are consistent in their proposals for a ecosystem approach to planning the future of the Greater Toronto Area; recognition of the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Niagara Escarpment, river Valleys and the Lake Ontario Waterfront as the principal physical resources of the GTA; recommendations for ensuring an interconnected physical resource system, with access and use for inter-regional trails; and the need for co-operative partnerships to implement long-term greenspace conservation.

Since 1957, Authority programs have pursued objectives which have provided the basis of an inter-regional greenspace system and have conserved and enhanced the renewable resources of the GTA. Capital projects for the acquisition of land have enabled the Authority to achieve its greenspace objectives and make a positive contribution to the quality of life across the GTA.

The Authority has jurisdiction over the Lake Ontario shoreline from Etobicoke to Ajax, excluding the central waterfront. The Authority has had great success in preventing erosion, acquiring environmentally significant areas, creating waterfront parks, and providing recreational facilities on the water's edge.

Lately, however, public and political attention has focused almost solely on the central waterfront, while public demand for recreation all across the lakeshore has increased. There are also concerns about water quality, the quality of fill, and the availability of sites for lakefill projects.

The Authority recognizes the need to complete its acquisition plans to ensure public access across the waterfront and re-evaluate the long-term direction of waterfront management.

The Waterfront strategy proposes that the Authority:

- continue the goals and objectives of the Watershed Plan;
- continue land acquisition and land creation across the waterfront;
- base all planning on the need for continuous public open space along the entire lakeshore;
- co-ordinate all monitoring programs;
- prepare management plans for environmentally significant areas;
- implement the Lakefill Quality Assurance Program, under an agreement with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment; and
- review the current funding formulas.

The Waterfront Development Program's current capital expenditures are in the range of \$1.7 million annually. To achieve the objectives of the Waterfront Strategy, the capital costs as approved would be \$3.1 million annually.

3.2 Tommy Thompson Park

On January 23, 1987, the Authority approved the Tommy Thompson Park concept Plan with the following resolution:

Res. #197

- (1) The recommended Concept Plan, as presented by Authority Staff for Tommy Thompson Park and appended as Schedule "C" of these minutes, be approved;
- (2) Staff be directed to proceed with Phase IV - Master Plan Report as outlined by the Tommy Thompson Park Planning Process;
- (3) An Advisory Committee be established, with representation from the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, the Canadian Wildlife Service, local Universities, the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, the Toronto Ornithological Club, the Friends of the Spit, and related groups, to prepare detailed implementation recommendations for the natural resource area with itemized budget estimates attached;
- (4) The letter, dated January 20, 1987, from the Toronto Harbour Commissioners, on the issue of long-term tenure for the community sailing clubs on the north shore and/or on the north shore of the T.H.C. Marina Spit of the outer harbour be received for information;
- (5) That the pedestrian and bicycle paths be separated.

Staff, in accordance with the Authority's direction, established the Natural Area Advisory Committee in April, 1987, with membership including the Friends of the Spit, Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Field Botanists of Ontario, Toronto Field Naturalists, Botany

Conservation Group (University of Toronto), Toronto Ornithological Club, Canadian Wildlife Service, Ministry of Natural Resources, Metropolitan Toronto Parks and Property Department, Aquatic Park Sailing Club/Outer Harbour Sailing Federation, and Chairman - J.C. Mather (M.T.R.C.A.). Invitations were also sent to the Ontario Field Ornithologists and the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

The Natural Area Advisory Committee had five (5) meetings in 1987 and reviewed the plans for the natural area. The many discussions and suggestions of the Committee have been consolidated into a Points of Agreement list which can be found in Appendix A: Public Participation, Section 7.2 of the 1989 Master Plan/Environmental Assessment document.

The Outer Harbour Sailing Federation Physical Planning Committee was established to provide input on the proposed sailing area, with representation from the Aquatic Park Sailing Club, Toronto Multi-Hull Cruising Club, Outer Harbour Centreboard Club, Mooredale, St. Jamestown, Westwood, Toronto Catamaran Club, Toronto Sail, Toronto Windsurfing Club and Ontario Sailing Association.

The Tommy Thompson Park Concept Plan was forwarded to Metro Parks, Metro Works, Metro Planning and the Ministry of Natural Resources for staff comment. The Metropolitan Toronto Parks and Property Department commented on the integration of food services into the Interpretive Centre, screening of the park maintenance facility, and careful consideration of the park entrance/Martin Goodman Trail intersection in terms of vehicular and public safety.

The Metropolitan Works Department had no objection in principle to the concept plan noting it is becoming increasingly important to ensure that the area east of Leslie Street be reserved for ultimate sewage treatment plant expansions with the increasing advocacy of water quality improvement - Provincial, MOE, MISA Programs and the City of Toronto and Provincial-Federal Remedial Action Plans. Their comments included a request that no major capital expenditures be made south of the plant and that any park facilities not be located in this area. The Authority decided at this stage to delete the area immediately south of the Main Water Pollution Control Plan from the Master Plan and ultimately from the undertaking. Metro Works in accordance with their 10 year plan for sewage treatment plant expansion will be preparing an environmental study report for the expansion and required lakefill under the Class Environmental Assessment for Municipal Sewage Works as approved by The Minister of the Environment - April, 1987.

The Metropolitan Toronto Planning Department supports the "Key Components" of the concept plan noting maintenance of Toronto skyline views along the neck of the Spit, reference to winter uses and provision of shelter/refreshments for the park users.

The Ministry of Natural Resources, Regional and District Staff, noted that the concept plan did not mention angling, access for public fishing or enhancement of fish habitat, noting the demand for fishing in the Toronto area is greater than current facilities can handle.

Meetings were held with the City of Toronto on the Central Waterfront Land Use Policies. The City of Toronto is preparing, as per Council direction, an open space/recreation plan for

the north shore of the Outer Harbour including access to the Spit (Tommy Thompson Park). The City of Toronto's policy on "Regulation of vehicular access to Tommy Thompson Park" is addressed in the Master Plan.

Other investigations and discussions up until December, 1987, included The Toronto School Board, Toronto Separate School Board, Toronto Urban Studies Centre, Outdoor Educators of Ontario, a visit from Prof. Allan Ruff - University of Manchester, a field trip to dredgeate disposal sites in Buffalo, New York State and review of dredgeate studies by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the dredgeate disposal requirements of The Ministry of the Environment.

The Metropolitan Separate School Board supports the unique educational opportunities at Tommy Thompson Park. The Toronto Urban Studies Centre/Toronto School Board view Tommy Thompson Park as the main focus of their recently initiated "Urban Ecology Programme" to complement the public school system science curriculum - historical, shoreline processes, natural succession, pollution, habitat studies, micro-climate, wildlife, snow studies, wetland studies, energy and sensory awareness. Key needs for these programmes include - shelter and washroom facilities and transportation to the interpretive facility.

At its Meeting #9/87 held on January 29, 1988 the Authority considered the recommendations of the Water and Related Land Management Advisory Board (January 14, 1988), and approved the following resolution:

Res. #228

THAT the following action be taken:

- (1) The Tommy Thompson Master Plan as appended as Schedule "A" of the Minutes, be approved;
- (2) The Tommy Thompson Park Master Plan and Environmental Assessment Report be submitted to the Minister of the Environment for approval under the Environmental Assessment Act as per Phase IV - Report and Approvals of the Study Approach;
- (3) Approval of the Tommy Thompson Park Master Plan be requested for the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto and the Minister of Natural Resources as part of the government review within the Environmental Assessment approval process as per Phase V - Report and Approvals.
- (4) The Authority continue to utilize committees similar to the Natural Area Advisory Committee and the Outer Harbour Sailing Federation Physical Planning Committee, and seek the input of cycling experts on the cyclists' needs, in an advisory capacity during the detailed design and implementation stages of the Master Plan.

By letter dated June 27, 1989, the Authority filed with the Minister of the Environment the Tommy Thompson Park Master Plan and Environmental Assessment document.

In a letter dated November 13, 1991, the Ministry of the Environment - Environmental Assessment Board returned the Master Plan without completion of the government review.

At its Meeting #1/92 the Authority adopted the following resolution:

Res. #21

"THAT the letter from Mr. Derek Doyle, Director, Environmental Assessment Branch, Ministry of the Environment dated November 13, 1991 be received;

AND FURTHER THAT staff be directed to prepare a report for consideration at Water and Related Land Management Advisory Board Meeting #1/92, scheduled for March 6, 1992, on a planning process and recommendations to enable resubmission of the Tommy Thompson Park Master Plan/Environmental Assessment to the Ministry of the Environment."

Staff, in preparing the 1992 Revised Master Plan, held discussions with the Ministry of the Environment - Environmental Assessment Branch, the Metropolitan Toronto Planning Department, the Metropolitan Toronto Parks and Property Department, the Metropolitan Toronto Works Department, the Toronto Harbour Commissioners, the City of Toronto Planning Department, the City of Toronto Parks and Recreation Department, the City of Toronto Environmental Protection Office and the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront.

The following represents a listing of the remaining key issues with the Tommy Thompson Park Master Plan/Environmental Assessment submitted July 1989:

- Private vehicle access to the endikement and public parking for 100 vehicles.
- Lakefilling to create a land base for Outer Harbour Sailing Federation Clubs.
- Community sailing clubs from the Northshore of the Outer Harbour locating on Tommy Thompson Park versus other preferred locations in Outer Harbour (eg. Northshore or Toronto Harbour Commissioners Marina Arm.
- Location of Interpretive Centre at the endikement.
- Land based facilities for and vehicle access to Aquatic Park Sailing Club.
- Level of Capital costs - \$4,850,000 (1987 dollars).

The Ministry of the Environment indicated that rather than preparing an entirely new submission, the Authority could refile the 1989 Master Plan document, accompanied by an addendum outlining the public process, modified master plan, revised capital costs, and

phasing. The Ministry indicated that there were very few problems identified through the government review process, with the original submission and that the review of a revised submission would be expedited.

At its Meeting #2/92 dated March 27, 1992 the Authority adopted the following resolution which had been recommended by the Water and Related Land Management Advisory Board at its meeting #1/92 held on March 6, 1992.

Res. #38

"THAT the revised Tommy Thompson Park Concept (March 6, 1992) be endorsed as a basis to obtain public and agency comment in preparing a resubmission of the Tommy Thompson Park Master Plan/Environmental Assessment in 1992 to the Minister of the Environment;

THAT staff be directed to prepare the necessary documentation for public and government review with a special public meeting of the Water and Related Land Management Advisory Board to be scheduled to enable consideration of a revised Master Plan by the Authority no later than its meeting of July 24, 1992;

THAT staff prepare documentation relating to the public transportation question as part of the revised Master Plan preparation.

AND FURTHER THAT the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Natural Resources, The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, the City of Toronto, the Toronto Harbour Commissioners, the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront and the Tommy Thompson Park Natural Areas Advisory Committee be so advised."