



Don Mouth Naturalization & Port Lands Flood Protection Project

Public Forum #2

January 10, 2006

Meeting Notes

PUBLIC FORUM #2
Don Mouth Naturalization and Port Lands Flood Protection Project
Tuesday, January 10, 2006

Toronto Fire Academy
895 Eastern Avenue, Toronto

6:00 – 9:30 p.m.

SUMMARY NOTES

1.0 Public Open House

The **Open House** portion of this event opened at 6:00 p.m. Members of the public viewed display boards showing different aspects of the Don Mouth Naturalization and Port Lands Flood Protection Project. There were boards describing the study area, the impact assessment site area, reasons for the project, “alternatives to” or discharge points considered, and their evaluation. A copy of the poster boards is found in **Appendix A** to these notes.

Toronto and Region Conservation (TRCA) and members of the consulting team were on hand to answer questions during the Open House. All participants received the following information as they signed in:

- Meeting agenda, presentation and key questions sheet.

The following information from previous meetings was also available to participants.

- Don Mouth Naturalization & Port Lands Flood Protection Project Newsletter, Volume #1 June 2005
- Public Forum #1, Meeting Notes
- Working Session #1, Meeting Notes
- Site Walk of the Mouth of the Don, Summary Notes
- Working Session #2, Meeting Notes
- Working Session #3, Meeting Notes

All of the meeting notes listed above are available on the TRCA website at:

http://www.trca.on.ca/water_protection/don_mouth/default.asp?load=whats_new

2.0 Welcome and Opening Remarks

Adele Freeman (Director, Watershed Management Division, TRCA) opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m. and thanked participants for attending. This meeting was the fifth public meeting for this project since it began in June 2005. Many people, with a variety of dreams and opinions for the Mouth of the Don, have been involved in this project. Moving this project forward is important to all stakeholders including businesses,

residents and the TRCA. All comments received have been very seriously considered by the TRCA, along with the project team and the Community Liaison Committee (CLC).

The CLC advised the TRCA that they need to be very clear with the public about the context for this project. This project is not about “selling out” to development; rather, the project is about realizing dreams for renaturalizing the mouth of the Don River that have been developed over many years.

Since June 2005, TRCA staff have met with a wide variety of stakeholders. The presentation tonight is intended to reflect all of these discussions. In early February, a Draft Terms of Reference will be made available to stakeholders for review. After a two week review period, any comments will be considered and the Terms of Reference (ToR) will be finalized and submitted to the Ministry of Environment (MOE) for their approval.

Any stakeholders who had to leave the meeting early were encouraged to submit comments to the TRCA within the next week.

Adele introduced key members of the consulting team, representatives from the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation (TWRC), and the TRCA staff who were present at the meeting. Also attending the meeting were a number of representatives from the City of Toronto and various interested agencies, in addition to all of the interested stakeholders. A complete list of project team members present at the meeting can be found in **Appendix B** to these notes. Attendees were requested to register as they entered the meeting facility. In total, 126 participants signed in to participate in this meeting.

Nicole Swerhun was introduced as the facilitator. Her role as a third party facilitator is to provide neutral, meaningful opportunities for stakeholders to comment on and to influence this ToR process and the Environmental Assessment (EA) process that will follow. Nicole reviewed the participant package and agenda.

3.0 Presentation

Paul Murray, Gartner Lee Ltd., was introduced. He provided a detailed presentation of the ToR process and recommended outcomes. A copy of the full presentation is found in **Appendix C** to these notes. Paul highlighted the following information during his presentation.

Paul introduced the following members of the project team:

- Don Gorber and Anneliese Grieve, SENES, who are overseeing the Environmental Assessment planning process; and,
- Dave Maunder, Aquafor Beech Ltd., who is overseeing the functional design elements of the project.

This project is about realizing a vision to naturalize the mouth of the Don River. This was first initiated by the Task Force to Bring Back the Don in 1991. This project is an opportunity to correct the most significant flood risk hazard in TRCA's jurisdiction and to naturalize the Don River mouth. This needs to be done within the context of the City's plans for the waterfront as outlined in the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan (2003), and supported by the TWRC and TRCA.

Paul outlined the Provincial Individual EA process as well as the Federal EA process that is being followed. The first step in an Individual EA requires the development of a Terms of Reference (ToR) for the actual development of the Individual EA. This stage involves the development of goals and objectives, "alternatives to", study areas, an "alternative methods" framework, evaluation framework, and a consultation framework for the EA. Numerous public consultation activities took place during Stage 1. Stage 2 involves following the ToR to complete the EA and satisfy both provincial and federal requirements.

Paul outlined 10 key messages that the project team has heard from the public during the consultation process. These include:

1. People are eager to see the Don Mouth Naturalization and Port Lands Flood Protection Project (Don Mouth Project) move forward.
2. The Don Mouth Project should have a mix of approaches to naturalization and flood protection that both "leave it to nature" and involve a "human fix".
3. Naturalization opportunities should be maximized, with mixed views on the relative importance of flood protection.
4. There is a desire to see a delta and/or marsh as a key part of this Project.
5. It is critical that the needs of this Project be conveyed to and inform other projects in the area.
6. This Project should not negatively impact use of the bike trails, Cherry Beach, the sailing clubs, and existing areas of environmental value.
7. The Don Mouth Project should create improvements to the trail system, increased appropriate accessibility (including handicapped), and more options for people traveling south through the City to cross into the Port Lands.
8. The Project needs to be developed in the context of the entire Don River watershed and be adaptable over time.
9. Broadly speaking, many people are generally comfortable with the evaluation approach.
10. Public involvement in the process is critical.

Paul outlined the project goal and objectives. He noted that although eight "alternatives to" or discharge points have been discussed, the project team feels that it is necessary to reduce the number of "alternatives to" to those that have the highest potential to meet the project goals and objectives. Using criteria which address the project objectives, the project team has carried out an "alternatives to" evaluation to determine which options should be carried forward into the EA process. Assumptions (length, width of river; footprint area; alignment; channel cross section) were made regarding each "alternative to" to enable this evaluation to take place. Alternatives 2 – 8 were described in detail.

Alternative 1 is the “do nothing” option. It must be carried forward as a requirement of the EA process.

It was determined that alternatives 2, 3 and 4 have the greatest potential to meet the project objectives. The project team does not think that, based upon its analysis, alternatives 5, 6, 7 and 8 have a high potential to meet the project objectives.

Members of the public have told the project team that greater clarity is needed to describe what “alternative methods” are. Paul outlined the process that will be followed during the EA to develop “alternative methods”. “Alternative methods” describe: how the water will get from the river to the discharge point; what the river mouth will look like; how the river mouth is going to function; and how it will link to adjacent ecosystems.

For each “alternative to” or discharge point carried forward, a long list of “alternative methods” will be developed. “Alternative methods” are different ways of designing the river mouth and will be developed based on reference sites found in nature, a thorough understanding of the river’s characteristics, and the ability to fulfill the naturalization and flood protection objectives.

After this, an evaluation will be carried out to narrow the long list to a short list of “alternative methods” based on their ability to meet other project objectives such as recreational opportunities, integration with infrastructure and operational management of the river. Two further levels of evaluation and refinement will be carried out on the short list to determine the preferred alternative.

To support this work, a framework for public consultation has been developed, including public forums, the continuation of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Community Liaison Committee (CLC), a site visit and a specialist design workshop (optional). These activities will take place at key stages during the EA process.

In early February, the ToR will be circulated for comments. There will be a 2 week comment period. Comments and feedback received will be considered during the finalization of the ToR. The final ToR will be prepared and submitted to the MOE, along with supporting documents in March. Stage 2 of the EA will commence following approval by the MOE.

4.0 Feedback on the Presentation

Nicole Swerhun introduced the open question and answer format for the remainder of the meeting. Questions are noted below in italics, followed by the response from the project team.

Contrary to what people are saying, the environmental community does not want the whole area for naturalization purposes. Is it possible, when you look at Alternative #4, to add a circulating channel/turning basin from the Hearn?

Editor's Note: We understand that this comment pertains to the desire for a waterway connection between the Ship Channel and Outer Harbour at the Turning Basin (near Hearn Power Plant) to increase circulation between the eastern parts of the Ship Channel and Lake Ontario.

Adele Freeman responded that this could be added to the list as a minor modification.

Is the study area boundary for the naturalization area flexible? From the point of view of the MOE, does the study area map constitute limitations for this project?

The project team recognizes that things may change to influence the boundary as the project moves forward, such as the potential influence of other projects currently ongoing in the area like The Don Greenway and the Lake Ontario Park.

Why is consistency with TWRC framework evaluated as "low" for "alternative to" #4 and why is #3 low for naturalization in your evaluation?

Naturalization is based upon the area available, therefore the options that have a larger footprint available for naturalization, would have scored higher. If there is more soil to clean up, this alternative would score lower.

Which plan will clean the water the most and absorb the greatest amount of pollution? When will this analysis be done?

None of the plans are going to do enough on this front. The marsh will not be the cleaning solution for the Don River. There will also be seasonal variations. Further detailed analysis will be done during the EA.

One of the objectives is the reasonable creation of recreation opportunities. Are there going to be any beaches created?

No.

Do you think that these solutions reflect an integrated planning solution with architectural designs adjacent to this plan? This could happen if a meaningful charette with the public would take place.

The Port Lands Precinct Plan will be informed by this project and vice versa. There will be many consultation opportunities for both projects.

How can an option like #1 be low in naturalization, but high in sustainability?

Naturalization criterion is related to the area potentially available for habitat naturalization. Under sustainability, this considers the area of land that may have contaminated soils and therefore need to be cleaned up. Therefore there is an inverse relationship.

On slide 32, you refer to a CLC. What is this?

The CLC is the Community Liaison Committee.

With regard to the project objectives, do they all have equal weight or are they in order of priority? How does naturalization weigh with the others?

There are seven objectives. To this point, they have not been ranked in order of importance. Naturalization and flood protection are part of the project goal and are therefore critical to this project.

I understand that silt is a concern related to the river movement, as is the dredging that takes place. I am concerned that this plan will not address this matter.

This is reflected under the objectives related to river management. This will also be reflected in the modeling in the next stage.

This is an exciting opportunity to do something positive. How are you going to pull together public and private ownership and balance the ambitions of both?

We are going to work with all property owners to understand their aspirations and balance this with the goals of the project. We have attempted to identify public and private lands and keep this consideration in front of us for the entire project.

How does "additional" recreation fit with maintaining the "existing" recreation, such as the sailing clubs?

It is not our intent to reduce the level of recreation in the area. Recreational uses may have to exist in a different location, but it is our intent to maintain and increase them.

At what point do you look at the costs of the alternatives?

There is an estimated cost currently within the TWRC business plan. During the alternative evaluation, we will be building in increased levels of consideration of cost. At the conclusion, we will have a detailed understanding of the costs, including operations. We may also look at phasing and integration with other projects.

Slide 4, why is Spill Zone 3 not highlighted?

Spill Zone 3 is covered by the Lower Don River West Remedial Flood Protection Class EA which is complete and currently being implemented.

There is only a token amount of land in the Port Lands being left for naturalization. I have a petition of 300 people that states support for additional naturalization, like the straight through option would provide.

When we look at the entire system, including Tommy Thompson Park, the Don Greenway and Lake Ontario Park, a protected network is being created. To the extent possible, we will provide for connections and linkages with these other natural areas as part of this project.

We heard that the sustainability framework is based upon the area of contamination. What constitutes contamination and where is it coming from?

The TWRC framework deals with more than soil contamination, although it is a key consideration. Uses employed upon the lands over time have left a legacy of contamination in some cases. Because of current legislation, we are required to clean this up. We are going to look at this in more depth as we carry out the EA. The intent is to reuse things, like bricks, where possible.

In the Don Valley, from the top to the bottom, watershed management has not addressed the need for wetlands to do polishing. These areas have all been destroyed in favour of recreation trails. If we have a proper watershed management plan in place to accommodate polishing, etc., how would this impact on the design and objectives at the river mouth?

In 1994, the Don watershed management strategy Forty Steps to a New Don was created. The City of Toronto has also completed the Wet Weather Flow Management Master Plan (WWF MMP). The amount of land that is needed to provide this function is just not available to us in this watershed which is about 90% developed. The City did a calculation during the WWF MMP project. It showed that an area much larger than the Inner Harbour is necessary to create a marsh of the size that would be needed to do polishing.

Editor's Note: The following information was provided by Dr. W. Snodgrass, Toronto Water, following the meeting.

The original calculations were prepared for a Wet Weather Flow Management Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting (# 11/02), held Friday November 1, 2002.

"Based on generic sizing criteria, the surface area of a "natural system based wet pond needs to be about 1 - 2 % of the watershed area, and the surface area of the wetland needs to be 5 times the surface area of a wet pond which means that for a watershed

area of 360 km² [the drainage area of the Don River watershed], a constructed wetland would need a surface area of the order of 18 - 36 km² [i.e. 6 km * 6 km] "

Since the Inner Harbour has a surface area of about 4.8 square kilometers, the constructed wetland would need to be of the order of 4 – 8 times larger than the Inner Harbour.

In addition, there are significant feasibility questions, not addressed, which include that a constructed wetland has a set of cells in which water flows from one cell to another with an elevation difference, from cell to cell. To create such a 'constructed stormwater wetland', the Inner Harbour would have to be filled in to create the depth of cells necessary (15 - 40 cm deep). In addition, the first cells would be above the Don River elevation and a pump would be necessary to raise the river water to an elevation from which river water could flow down-hill through the wetland exit into the lake.

The estimates of area for polishing can also be linked to other land areas. The area of the Port Lands is about 400 hectares (about 1000 acres), while the area of the main Ashbridges Bay Marsh, under pre-urban conditions, has been estimated at about 526 hectares. Relative to these land areas, for example, the constructed wetland would need to be 4 to 8 times larger. In terms of a floodplain wetland, whose function is not that of a 'constructed wetland', the pre-urban area represents about 1 % of the drainage area of the Don River watershed.

Nicole introduced the following two questions and requested input from those that were present. The following responses were given. Any project team response follows the comment in italics.

Q1. *What do you see as the strengths of the components of the draft Terms of Reference presented tonight?*

- This public process is ongoing, which is good.
- The main strength of alternatives #2, #3 and #4 is that flood protection is very high.
- One of the major strengths is that the area will be naturalized to the maximum extent possible. Human interests will be incorporated into the ecosystem. Naturalization will drive the plans for this district.
- It is exciting to see that there are concrete timelines (to 2008) to move this project along.
- Comfortable about the process and the outcomes presented tonight. The public interest shown tonight is great.
- There is a tremendous opportunity to clean up the river through things like voluntary downspout disconnection and yard naturalization.

Q2. *Do you have any suggested improvements to the components of the Terms of Reference presented tonight?*

- None of the footprints address the connectivity issue. Given the success of Tommy Thompson Park, is there a desire to link these two together? The project team needs to demonstrate that there are linkages.
- Slide 16 – 4th point integration with infrastructure – there is a built in bias that more infrastructure is a bad thing. There could be an opportunity here. The example of the bridge built on the Martin Goodman Trail over the Humber River was used. New infrastructure could be viewed as a positive feature in this project. Bridges over the water can magnify the focus on the water.
- Slide 25 – process – the evaluation chart has low, medium and high. The fact that there are no numbers shown, is a limitation to the understanding of trade-offs that were made in the chart. Without numbers it is difficult for us to understand what tradeoffs have been made between the various objectives. This should be included in the documentation to the MOE, or it will appear very arbitrary.
- Are the City's modeling numbers available to the public?

There was a commitment made by the City of Toronto representative to provide those numbers. (Editor's Note: See previous page)

- The Dutch have starved their wetlands. Have you done any liaison with other areas that have done things that are more innovative? The speaker offered to provide references to specific examples.

The project team has liaised with other jurisdictions.

- Why did the earlier flooding in August 2005 in the upper watershed not effect the lower Don as one might expect?

The storm occurred along a narrow band only impacting a moderate portion of the entire Don River watershed. The total amount of rain recorded during the storm dropped off quickly as did the amount of run-off entering the rivers and streams as you moved north and south of this narrow band of heavy rain. As a consequence, flows within the lower portions of the Don River system only resulted in moderate flooding. Don Haley offered to discuss the issue further individually.

- I worked on the Merrimack restoration project. It took 15 years, but the end result was a river that was clean enough to drink from. The process was carried out under the EPA during the Clinton era. This process needs to go back to its primary mandate of naturalization, and not be a compromise between too many competing factors.
- Option 4 - The document that goes to the MOE should include a larger study area, or should specifically state that the study area is approximate and intended to be flexible. This needs to be clearly stated. It is not good enough to say that these considerations will be part of other project study areas. The larger study area needs to be evaluated within this process.
- On slide 30, you have implied that a matrix based evaluation will take place, coming up with a total. I will recommend that the MOE reject this method if it is used in the

ways that have been typically used. This same old method does not work, as alternatives that are not actually the best are often chosen.

The ToR will include an evaluation framework. At each step, we will develop the details of this framework, not the absolute evaluation that will take place. The public will be able to see this detail and comment on it as we go along.

- In the river operations, one of the major functions is to flush the harbour. Any reduction of that may reduce the water quality in the harbour.

This will be evaluated during the modeling. One of the criteria under River Operations is changes to water quality.

- When I look at the table showing the evaluation of “alternatives to”, I don’t understand the relative weighting of the criteria.

This table is not the evaluation tool. This shows where we got to during our evaluation. More detail is contained within the draft ToR and supporting documents.

- One of the details that I have read recently about the function of deltas is that they behaved in a way that when there was a wet weather flow, they would spill over into meadows and wetlands. When there are levies, and the water rises above them, it spills over and is eventually absorbed. I would like to see elements of this for this project, recognizing the urban context.

Some cross sections have been done that show this type of “off stream wetland”. Because of the way that the TRCA manages floodplains, these areas are generally used in this way.

- The ecosystem approach needs to address the fact that there are many projects that are linked to this project, but are not included in this project.
- On slide 25, there is a lack of objectivity demonstrated. In this public consultation process, we need to avoid giving the impression that some people (CLC, TAC) are on the inside, and others are on the outside. The project team needs to do everything they can to generate trust. Members of the public have an interest in learning more about the CLC process and keeping it as open as possible.

Those on the CLC represent key community and interest groups interested in this project. CLC’s are a TRCA requirement for Class EA processes, not for Individual EAs. In this case, we had been given advice that a CLC would be valuable to this project. CLC members have worked together for many months to learn together and to provide advice regarding Public Forums. Members of the public who are interested in attending a meeting can do so. For this project, the TAC has roughly 50 members, consisting of relevant departments and agencies.

- Would like to see as much naturalization of the edges of the mouth of the Don, and the shipping channel, as possible for both humans and wildlife.
- Flood protection is and should be the primary goal. We should not lose sight of this. This recreated wetland would be very small. Although much has been said about water quality, one should not forget the vegetation and soil quality and other aspects of a wetland.
- In 1874, it has been said that the marsh came right up to the back of the Grand Trunk Railway.

Action Item: Wet Weather Flow Management Master Plan modeling results related to “polishing” will be appended to the minutes of this meeting. This information will come from Toronto Water.

5.0 Closing Remarks

Adele Freeman thanked all those who attended and provided comments at the meeting. Participants were invited to send in any additional comments within the next week. She reiterated that in early February, a draft ToR will be made available. A note will be issued to stakeholders to advise of this. The TRCA’s goal is to submit the ToR to the MOE in March. The TRCA hopes to deal with stakeholder concerns in advance of that submission. There was a sense tonight that many support this initiative. The TRCA is anxious to get into the detailed work of the next stage of the project.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

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Appendix A Poster Boards

January 10, 2006



Don Mouth Naturalization & Port Lands Flood Protection Project

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**Appendix B
List of Project Team Members**

January 10, 2006

Appendix B: List of Project Team Members

TRCA Project Team members

Ken Dion
Adele Freeman
Don Haley
Deborah Martin-Downs
Amy Thurston
Michelle Vanderwel

Consulting Team Project Team members

Phil Bosco	Gartner Lee Ltd.
Paul Murray	Gartner Lee Ltd.
Don Gorber	SENES Consultants Ltd.
Anneliese Grieve	SENES Consultants Ltd.
Dave Maunder	Aquafor Beech
Nicole Swerhun	facilitator
Tracey Ehl	Ehl Harrison Consulting Inc. (Meeting Notes)

Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Committee/Toronto Waterfront Joint Venture Steve Willis



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Appendix C Presentation

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Don Mouth Naturalization & Port Lands Flood Protection Project

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Appendix D Public Feedback Received in Writing

January 10, 2006

Consolidated Comments from Public Forum #2 Worksheets

January 19, 2006

1. What do you see as the STRENGTHS of the components of the draft Terms of Reference presented tonight?
 - Good community/stakeholder involvement. Alternatives well considered
 - The effort and time taken by the planners in consultation with the local community to develop eight alternative discharge points.
 - A really good presentation. Good content and well presented.
 - Clear. Balances a number of competing interests in a practical way. Provides good opportunity/basis for moving forward.
 - Clearly recognize the context- i.e. a degraded river in an urban environment and within the development potential for the Port Lands.
 - Recognizes the need to coordinate this process with other planning processes for important new initiatives.
 - Puts a high priority on the river mouth rehabilitation and naturalization. Incorporates the need to consider/incorporate public recreational uses.
 - Scoping of the alternatives had to be done – eight is too many. I agree that the four alternatives recommended are the best ones.
 - Public consultation program has been effective and comprehensive.
 - I'm very excited by the project and the work done to date.
 - Process of community consultation has been very extensive. We've all had a chance to say a lot.
 - Finally we've come to a process that has eliminated some of the totally unrealistic alternative options.
 - Short listing of common sense alternatives; obviously "off the wall" ideas discarded.
 - The draft ToR is coherent, well thought out and should be effective.
 - Integrating with existing infrastructure is the only practical, affordable approach to pursue.
 - You are correct in disregarding alternatives #5-6-7-8. These alternatives cover too vast an area and would preclude any meaningful Port Lands revitalization.
 - I support the narrowing of the EA alternatives to four, and I do not support opening up the other alternatives for endless "further discussion".
 - The greatest strength of the proposed draft Terms of Reference is to provide a defensible rationale for limiting and focusing the study to those options that provide the greatest chance of success. There are an almost endless number of "options" that could be studied, if time and money were no object. But this Environmental Assessment must finally move naturalization and flood protection of the mouth of the Don from a vision to reality. That will not be an easy task, but the three options left of the table are the only ones that have a chance of being completed. The simple fact that all but one of the options proposed by members of the public involves closing the Ship Channel, thus undermining port operations, illustrates

how unrealistic they are. And all of the options proposed by the public are in extravagant conflict with Toronto's Official Plan. We need to move forward with options that provide practical answers. That is what these draft Terms of Reference have done.

- I agree that having too many options to be studied tends to be counter productive. I also agree that the 3 options that avoid the Port Lands, Ship's Channel etc are the only ones likely to be implemented. In addition, the real options are those that can deposit sediments in the mouth. 480 Lakeshore is one of those.
- I think the people who hope to see the port lands realize its potential to serve the city as both the site of a beautiful natural river mouth AND a much needed recreational space for existing and future residents of the southeast part of the city will want other things considered. In particular, the effects on the ship channel and on Cherry Beach of the due south orientation are a big concern among the members of the organization I represent at CLC meetings. Whatever route the river takes, we must of course "continue to use all possible means to scrub/clean the urban runoff" but that is a separate issue from the location of the river mouth.
- I support the goal and objectives of the TOR. Like many who attended I would like to see naturalization of the mouth to the maximum extent possible. However it is important to recognize the physical constraints of existing infrastructure and to work within these confines to achieve an improvement in operations and functions of the river - and hopefully - something of beauty. To assume that we have a "tabula rasa" for redesigning the mouth would not survive the requirements of the EA process which must evaluate the social, economic as well as the environmental costs and benefits.
- I support the principle of limiting the number of scenarios that are carried forward for full evaluation (4 proposed including the "do nothing" option). This is essential in order to ensure a detailed and rigorous evaluation of each option and sufficient attention to the design of a new mouth to capture the approval and support of both stakeholders and the general population. Some flexibility could be considered as the project moves forward (which was requested by some at the meeting) but should be limited to details that could improve function or aesthetics but not expanded to include major changes such as alignment.
- In answer to the meeting's question as to what we see as the ToR's strengths, we are glad that the EA will not examine alternative river routes that would have deleterious effects on existing environmentally sensitive areas and recreational facilities; this would not be acceptable to the larger population of people who look forward to a revitalized waterfront. We feel that we must build on the treasures that already exist there, not put them in danger. Any damage to ESAs, in particular, would establish a dangerous precedent that irresponsible developers might cite in future. If we would suggest any improvement to the ToR's list of objectives, it would

be that item 5 might add to "encouragement of additional. . ." the protection of existing ESAs and recreational opportunities.

- The possible closing off of the ship channel is also of concern and we see it as a strength that the ToR will not examine alternatives that would necessitate this. While its value to commercial port activities is perhaps of less concern to our membership than its enormous potential as a site for recreational boating in future, we believe, on the other hand, that the port lands should be a balanced community that offers employment as well as residences and recreation, and the ship channel is crucial to this future.
- Congratulations to you and all your team for the extent to which you have heard and understood community wishes and concerns, as expressed at public and CLC meetings, and reconciled them with the technical challenges of this immense project.
- I am thrilled that the Don Mouth project is moving forward. I am supportive of the EA work that has been done to-date. I am comfortable with the process that has been followed to-date. I am in favour of limiting the scope of future study to alternatives 1 through 4 -- the alternatives that have the best chance of being implemented as part of the revitalization of the Toronto waterfront.

2. Do you have any SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS to the components of the draft Terms of Reference presented tonight?

- Strongly recommend that blocking of the Ship Channel not happen. Seems like all the options offered require blocking the Ship Channel. My recommendation is to run large pipes under the Ship Channel that will discharge into the lake.
- A re-think of the alternatives offered may be necessary. Just how do recreational uses of the Ship Channel, Inner Harbour, etc. continue?
- The "alternatives to" (slide 25) - project objectives are not defined appropriately in order to evaluate the alternatives. Naturalization and flood protection should be weighted or prioritized over infrastructure or culture/heritage. The result of the poor definition and lack of priority has been to eliminate alternatives that I am not convinced should be eliminated before the EA begins; i.e. hard to believe that #3, considered LOW on naturalization, is really HIGH on all other objectives, while #6 – 8 are low on everything but naturalization and flood protection. "Area" is a very crude measure to use. Note that only one option that is HIGH is naturalization is being considered by the EA.
- The TWRC Sustainability Framework has many aspects to it, not just remediation.
- Install surface skimmer to remove floating debris. Use suction pipes to remove silt, pump it to the discharge point in the lake. Install discharge pipes into the lake. We have large pipes pumping water into the City, use similar pipes to pump run off water far into the lake.

- Except for “Do Nothing” plan, most other plans involved blocking off the Ship Channel. What happens to the Port users who work here when they need to close and move away?
- The “naturalization” and “consistency with TWRC Sustainability Framework” criteria essentially measure the same thing. Consistency with the Sustainability Framework really seems to relate to cost/effort and perhaps that should be explicit.
- A bit more public education might help – perhaps a few events, e.g. a lecture about how wastewater treatment wetlands have limited potential to clean Don River water to the extent that people think.
- Re: alternatives matrix – more info on relative importance of each criteria would be helpful.
- There should have been more feedback throughout on the reality of the possibility to do some of the suggestions.
- It has been a long and tortuous process! Suggest that more feedback on “what is possible and what is impossible” earlier would have shortened this process and saved a lot of time and would have stopped some of the “dreaming in technicolour”. Openness is good, but let’s be realistically open.
- The section north of the Keating Channel (known as the Don Improvement Project) which straightened the river extends north of Gerrard St. East by about 200 m. Any instream naturalization done to the section south of Gerrard could also be done to the small section north of Gerrard.
- I think you need to revisit the high rating for flood protection given to Alternative 3. The advantage of Alternative 2 is that it allows a berm to be built on the east side of the river which protects Spill Zone 2. The straight south path of Alternative 3 doesn’t allow for that, therefore its flood protection rating should be medium. The same applies to Alternative 4.
- River operation in Alternative 3 should also be medium because a channel constructed south from the Keating Channel will be a now flow section, i.e. it will be lake not river.
- Can it be done any quicker? Should it really take two years? I would like to see this happen in my lifetime! Let the experts take over now and get on with it!
- The bend at the mouth of the Don to the Keating Channel was made necessary only because a large oil company owned and was using the land in front of the river. There is therefore no reason that the Don cannot just carry on straight out to the Lake. The hydrology, the river and delta bed grading can be done to minimize the flooding and provide the broad new river mouth wetlands that will maximize the natural treatment of the river’s improving, but far from sustainable water and silt runoff from the Toronto Don floodplain before they spill into the lake and over into deeper waters off Toronto. This ancient delta formation will no longer be influenced by the drift from the Scarboro Lake Iroquois dune bluffs to the east, but might finally turn the so-called outer harbor into the new Don marshes. All we need to do is to continue to use all possible means to

scrub/clean the urban runoff to actually recreate the best of the presettlement and pre World War and industrial revolution degradation of the Toronto waterfront ecosystems. This will also help to clean up Toronto harbor.

- There may be additional flood capacity if you consider expanding the “footprint” of the flood spillway in Alternatives 2 and 4 to include the area of the proposed Commissioners Park. This area need not be naturalized to the exclusion of active playing fields. (The proposed “camouflage” park design actually incorporates somewhat naturalized elements.) But designing the elevations such that Commissioners Park could accommodate flood waters on an occasional basis should not negatively impact the park. (Riverdale Park currently floods occasionally without serious impact. There has never to my knowledge been a risk to public safety from flooding in that park.)
- At the presentation it appeared that there was a reluctance to simply “say no” to several proponents of the Alternatives that are being set aside (Alternatives 5 to 8 with all their variations). I trust that verbal commitments, for example, to “look at” expanding beyond the scope of the proposed Terms of Reference or including the Circulation Channel do not become Trojan Horses for reintroducing the unworkable Alternatives back onto the table. Members of the public who want to move ahead will soon give up on the public meetings if they must continually spend their time reviewing unworkable or fanciful proposals.
- I don't think that the 7 objectives should be equally weighted. I feel that some are more important than others and should be given more priority or "weight". I think that more weight should be given to: #1 Naturalize and rehabilitate the mouth of the Don utilizing an ecosystem approach. Lower weight should be given to: #2, 4 and 7. I strongly feel that all effort should be made to restore the delta/marsh at the mouth of the Don River with lower priority going to protecting Spill Zones 1&2 from flooding.
- Re flooding: The proposed Commissioner's park can and should be floodable. The notion that working with floods where practical makes sense and can often be the least costly. An example of that is the Don Valley Brickworks.
- My impression of the presentation was two fold. First, there were too many options to get one's head around. I found it difficult to evaluate them in the absence of good graphics that could illustrate what the options might look like, how the elements fit together. Second is the fact that the new mouth cannot be 'natural'. Urban nature involves an integration of nature and culture, and recognizing that the entire area associated with the waterfront is filled with cultural and industrial artifacts, buildings, bridges, memories of streams, silos, regenerating lands, wetlands etc, all reflecting Toronto's history. The mouth of the Don will have to be a functioning combination of natural regeneration, hydrological forces, and places to come and see and celebrate the renewed Don.

- There was considerable concern expressed at the Public Meeting regarding the Evaluation Criteria used to eliminate certain options for the short list to be carried forward - in particular the decision to use the land area requiring soil remediation as the sole measure of "consistency with TWRC sustainability framework". In view of the fact that sustainability is one of the most important guiding principles in the eyes of everyone committed to a new vision for the waterfront it is paramount that opportunities for all components of the sustainability framework be factored into the evaluation criteria - not just the negative factor of soil remediation. Similarly the opportunities/barriers to naturalization should be included in the evaluation criteria - not just the land area.
- In view of the mounting evidence of global climate change I would urge that some consideration be given to the possibility that, in the long term, the Lake levels could rise significantly. This could result in future flooding from the Lake - not just from the rivers. I am not proposing that this be incorporated into the TOR but would suggest that worst case scenarios should be kept in mind in evaluating the various options.
- Irregardless of the special interest groups who offered comments, the one guarantee is that 'naturalization'--wetlands and marshlands---purify water and that being in nature is the 'one' recreation that ALL NEED and is therapeutic for ALL. It is 'the' optimum activity which incorporates healthy physical walking and mental stimulation and is imperative for all humans. Many fight traffic to go to cottages to satisfy this need and the great majority cannot. With disappearing gas resources and inevitable cost escalations, MANY more will be needing the connectedness of naturalization IN the city. Yet, a 'token' area in the Port Lands is being naturalized.
- Intensification (overcrowding), we have been told, is necessary for Toronto and the Port Lands. When there is intensification (overcrowding) the impact is felt immediately as it is beside us, all around, in our face, cannot be escaped, is crowding our space. Sprawl, on the other hand, is something not experienced by the majority either monthly or even yearly as it is something that is 'out there', further afield, not often observed and yet the Smart Growth Network had a seminar Oct '05 on the health impact of sprawl and increase in obesity, heart attacks, cancers, respiratory, mental health ++. What would the statistics be for intensification!
- Alternative #2 appears to be the one which has unanimous support. It can be combined with any of the alternatives, including #6.
- With \$72 million allocated to this project, substantial naturalization, wetland and marshland must be augmented and the start of a strategy to deal with pollution entering the Don implemented. There will be no justifying to our children that decision-makers supported this huge amount on a project with such inadequate naturalization or water improvement strategies and there will be no peace of conscience.
- One comment is given, as submitted, below. No editing was done.

PHASE 1 – TERMS OF REFERENCE COMMENTS

Reasons for this Project

I agree, with qualifications, with the two basic reasons for undertaking this project, those being the following:

1. an opportunity to correct the most significant flood risk hazard in TRCA's jurisdiction, and
2. to naturalize the Don River mouth

Flood Protection

It must be demonstrated that the flood alleviation component of this project either is an essential follow on to the West Don Lands flood proofing berm in terms of positive flood mitigation synergies and the quantitative extent of those synergies (i.e. 300, 100, 3 year flooding by geographical location). It needs to be demonstrated how this project will aid in the flood proofing of the Port Lands. Will other future flood proofing efforts also be required to adequately protect the Port Lands?

To the extent that this project, in conjunction with the West Donlands project, does little or nothing to mitigate up –stream flooding between Queen Street and the Brickyards – **now** is the time to undertake sufficient lower Don **system** hydrological modeling with a view to understanding how the two current projects - in conjunction with two possible future projects - would reduce/eliminate the disruptive one-three year flooding cycles (in a transportation sense) upstream as well as within the Portlands.

It would be interesting to blue sky somewhat (from a vision perspective) by assuming for the purposes of this study that someday in the future (1) the railway track north of Queen Street that is adjacent to the river could be relocated west of the existing westward track and (2) the existing Pottery Road and Bloor/Bayview snow dump sites could be reconfigured as river bottom lands/marshes.

Don Mouth Naturalization

Presumably this term sub-assumes an ecological framework (and parameters) pertaining to enhancing ecological functions and services, including mitigation of flooding.

This IS the essence of sustainability (Refer to book by Gretchen C. Daily, Editor, entitled Nature's Services: Societal Dependence On Natural Ecosystems, published by Island Press, 1997)

In this regard this project may have an additional benefit in cleaning up/mitigating/containing contaminated soils within a portion of the Don watershed.

Project Goal

The goal is elegantly crafted in the sense that it is conditional in that the project is defined "within the context of a revitalized City environment". The devil, of course is in the details – finding the balance between defining a minimum effective ecological functional improvement and the resultant permanent land sterilization.

I agree with this goal because it limits potential options within a reasonable land area that will be off-limits for re-development. All should be aware however that if the proposed general design options that pass the initial screening do not meet the defined flood mitigation standard then it may be necessary to either terminate the project or remove the conditional phrase in the current goal statement.

Project Objectives

Seven objectives are proposed. In principle I have no problem with them but I think that they are awkward and may create public confusion particularly between objective # 1 and # 7.

Perhaps these objectives should be combined in some manner?

"Alternatives to" Evaluation Criteria

See my comment in the previous section. The public may well ask why "naturalization" and "flood protection" are **not** part of environmental sustainability. Sustainability also relates to financial sustainability. Is this or is this not part of the "TWRC Sustainability Framework"? Please clarify this.

"Assumptions made regarding each 'Alternative To' to enable evaluation"

It is not clear as to whether or not these spatial and cross sectional factors are enshrined in stone or – at this stage – are just rough scale/orders of magnitude figures. I assume the later but perhaps this should be clarified.

Alternative Discharge Points Considered

1. Alternative #2, 4, 7 and 8

At a minimum, the rail replacement must extend to the Keating Yard which is adjacent to the Lakeshore Blvd (i.e. directly east of the Don Roadway and directly north of Lakeshore Blvd).

If the Tedco 'Wilson Yard' is ever to be removed there must be provision for its rail operation rail reuse potential alternative (as Monday-Friday Go Transit train storage) in addition to whatever is required for on-going industrial freight storage/switching uses).

Alternative 7 and 8 maps should also show rail replacement of the Keating yard lead – that is the track between the Go Transit Union Station Corridor and the west Keating Yard switch. (As per alternative #2)

2. Alternative # 6

This alternative would, if recommended imply the complete cessation of the Port of Toronto's salt and aggregate business. With 'business as usual' the lake boats enter the Ship Channel, unload and then **turn** in the turning basin at the extreme east end of the channel.

The details of this can be found in a 1999 study undertaken by The Mariport Group Ltd for the Port Authority entitled, Evaluating The Port Of Toronto Markets and Impacts on the GTA.

"Alternatives To" Evaluation

Consideration should be given to integrating "Naturalization" under the "Sustainability Framework"

All remaining points are from a four-page submission made by one respondent, received by fax on January 17, 2006.

- Comments on goal, p.6: "To establish and sustain the form, features and functions of a natural river mouth" contradicts "within the context of a revitalized City environment". This is an oxymoron. There needs to be a clearer, less contradictory goal. Priority should be given to a riparian/wilderness zone, which is not a zone compatible with an urban environment.
- Comments on objectives, p.7: Why is water quality not one of the objectives? It should be listed as its own objective and not a subset of #3 under river operation. In TWRC: "Our Toronto Waterfront" under principles

of renewal the first point is an environmentally friendly area that nurtures wildlife, restores and creates natural habitats and provides water that is clean and healthy. While it is evident that during storm events the volume of water to be treated is too large to be accommodated by the available size for a Don River delta marsh it is a worthy objective regardless that should be given priority. It is a goal that should be considered for the whole extent of the Don River watershed. The immediate benefit of the marsh would be to restore habitat and the primary historic function of the Ashbridge's Bay marsh. This was once the largest freshwater marsh in eastern North America and a major staging area for migrant waterfowl.

- The objectives are not clear. Objective #1: Naturalization: Where and what are we naturalizing and rehabilitating? Define the terms “naturalize” and “rehabilitate” and their context. Do these terms include human and natural history? Is it rehabilitation for shipping and industrial purposes? Would naturalization and rehabilitation include features like a delta-marsh? Can we substitute the term “ecological restoration” for the word “naturalization” in objective #1? If not, can it be made another objective?
- There seems to be several conflicting objectives. First, objective #1 Naturalization, conflicts with objective #3 river operation. Are dredging and recreation of a delta marsh not conflicting activities? Won't the delta marsh restrict water flow and exasperate flooding? Will flood protection objective #2 have a greater priority over a delta marsh? Does flood protection preclude restoring a delta marsh?
- Second, objective #1 Naturalization conflicts with #4: existing infrastructure. Infrastructure is incompatible with natural functions of river mouths. Maintaining the existing infrastructure will prevent natural river functions from having any appreciable impact on water quality improvements. You need to have space for either infrastructure or naturalization. Open space is compatible with flood plains. Naturalization is compatible with open space and flood plains. Existing infrastructure is not compatible with open space and/or flood plains. Removing infrastructure has a cost but building flood protection has a cost too. Not restoring the delta marsh and the flood plain in the long run will cost future generations even more.
- Third, objective #1 Naturalization conflicts with #7, TWRC sustainability. At the meeting, it was pointed out that the greater the area naturalized the greater amount of soil and water that needed to be rehabilitated and therefore a higher cost. In reality, all the land has to be rehabilitated not just that being naturalized. (Objective) #1 should not be ruled out because of a high cost for #7.
- Comments on alternative discharge points: It would seem that the sole focus of the eight discharge options, now reduced to four, is just on direction of water flow and points of discharge. These are all merely variations of the same concept whose purpose is restricting where the water goes in the flood plain and to remove the risk of flooding in the flood

plain. Where is the option to allow flooding? Where is the option to allow the flow of the river?

- Another concept would embrace flooding as a natural function the flood plain/marsh. It would treat the Spill Zones as marshlands with islands and approach the flooding in a different way “Islands in the Delta Marsh”. Designating these lands as marshlands would remove the risk of flooding altogether. Spillways would direct storm water throughout the Spill Zones 1 & 2 as per discharge alternatives in the terms of reference and marshlands would have to be elevated to protect them from stormwater. In this case present infrastructure would have to be moved or flood proofed allowing development on islands, stilted structures, ring-roads, causeways, boardwalks, etc.
- The Terms of Reference overall: The Terms of Reference are too specific at this point and are not allowing for an overall whole picture perspective. A larger, more encompassing, grand vision needs to be accommodated. Being too restrictive at this point inhibits a truly remarkable waterfront for Toronto. The above concepts would not be able to move forward under the present Terms of Reference.
- (See *Rivers Make Deltas* included on the following pages).

Rivers make Deltas:

Restoration of the former delta/floodplain should also be given consideration in light of the history and the sense of place it provides. The concept of a restored delta cannot and should not be ignored in the development plans. Restoring the delta marshes is a bold plan that doesn't deny. It embraces the problems. It turns liabilities into assets. What if you stopped dredging the Keating Channel? The sediment would clog the river channel and the Keating Channel. The waters would rise flooding adjacent lands, the Bayview Extension, and the north/south railway tracks, resulting in a raised delta marsh, an alluvial formation. This would be in conjunction with improved management of the upstream watershed to slow sediments. The infrastructure of road/rail can be placed on the east side of the river and tunneled or elevated. The delta marsh becomes the template or setting for the new urban design that embraces it.

The present delta proposal does not go far enough. It is a small token of its former stature. The delta needs to be restored to its original size and function. The decision on the delta impacts the planning for all the other precinct areas. It is essential that it be examined carefully.

A delta is where a river reaches its receiving lake and branches out rather like the roots of an oak tree as its energy dissipates through wetlands. If dredging activities were to cease at the Don mouth a delta reformation would occur over time. The waters would rise and wash over the filled lands of the historic marsh and become marsh/wetland once more. In an eco-system approach to planning and development a delta with a functionally restored wetland is an appropriate land use here at the Don-mouth. Deltas by their very nature are expansive. The surface area requirements for a functionally restored delta/wetland in the basin of this now urbanized watershed would be at least as large as the historic Delta-marsh. Despite the large spatial demands of a restored delta/marsh, a delta-wetland marsh is as valid a land use as other urban land uses.

...*Rivers Make Deltas* continued on the following page.

Could an expansive delta/marsh concept also accommodate passive recreational activities and related development opportunities? What sort of development opportunities might border the delta? Would the delta concept enhance opportunities for water quality improvements in the bay?

It is well documented that wetland/ marshes have remarkable water cleaning ability's and that if a new delta were allowed to form it would greatly enhance opportunities for water quality improvements to the bay. To be effective this delta would require an area of large expanse and be part of a larger Don watershed management strategy. A new delta formation would in several years reclaim these lands for itself, if dredging activities were to be suspended in the Keating channel. This large expansive raised delta/marsh reformation would be contained by a low dam topped with a ring-road with built-in spillways (water level control features) that satisfy both up stream flood safety concerns and water quality initiatives for the Toronto Bay.