



Don Mouth Naturalization & Port Lands Flood Protection Project

Working Session #2

Meeting Notes

August 23, 2005

Working Session #2
Don Mouth Naturalization and Port Lands Flood Protection Project

Tuesday, August 23, 2005

Ralph Thornton Centre, 765 Queen Street East, Toronto, Ontario

6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

SUMMARY NOTES

1.0 Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review

The doors were opened at 6:30 p.m. Members of the public viewed the display boards that were posted at the back of the auditorium. A copy of the poster boards can be found in the final summary notes, appendix A from Public Forum #1, held June 23, 2005. Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and members of the consulting team were on hand to answer questions before the Working Session began.

All participants received the following information as they signed in:

- Participant workbook
- Copy of presentation slides
- Don Mouth Naturalization & Port Lands Flood Protection Project Newsletter (Volume #1 June 2005)
- Advertisement for Community Working Session #3, September 7, 2005
- Meeting notes from Public Forum #1, June 23, 2005
- Meeting notes from Working Session #1, July 25, 2005 including a colour version of the map of Don Mouth Study Area with numbered feedback from participants

Thirty-seven participants signed in at the meeting. A list of project team members present at the meeting can be found in **Appendix A** to these notes.

Adele Freeman (Director, Watershed Management Division, TRCA) opened the meeting at 6:45 p.m. and thanked participants for attending. Summer meetings are being held at the advice from the public to keep the consultation process moving forward, rather than delaying work for a period of months through the summer. Anyone who is new to the process is invited to request any historical information from TRCA staff. Adele described the purpose of the first Public Forum (June 2005), the first Working Session (July 2005) and the Site Walk (July 2005). Due to popular demand from the public, another site walk is planned for 2006 as part of the EA. The flood protection solution currently being developed through this process will provide protection for the portlands spill zones from a storm that is much larger than the storm that hit Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area on August 19, 2005.

The purpose of this meeting is:

- To present information on the “alternatives to” that the study team is proposing to consider through the EA process
- To present the framework for the identification of “alternative methods” that the study team is proposing to use through the EA process
- To seek feedback on the proposed list of “alternatives to” and the proposed framework as to how the “alternative methods” will be identified

Nicole Swerhun was introduced as the facilitator. She indicated that her role is to provide independent, neutral facilitation services and to ensure all can express their views during the course of the meeting. Nicole indicated that she held no preference or opinion on the outcome of the Environmental Assessment (EA). It is the job of the TRCA, in partnership with the TWRC, to make this decision (based on recommendations from their consultants and the public), and ultimately for the provincial and federal government to approve.

Nicole pointed out the information that was available at the sign-in desk and walked participants through the agenda. The presentation will assist participants to understand the very specific terminology that is used during the EA process. Nicole explained to participants that the role of the consultants is to design a process that will result in an appropriate solution.

2.0 Overview Presentation: Alternatives

Paul Murray, Gartner Lee Limited, reinforced the message that the process being designed is sincere and robust. The TRCA and the TWRC will make a decision on whether to proceed, subject to provincial approval.

The purpose of the presentation is to reiterate how the EA process works, how a robust, transparent framework can be developed, and the alternatives that are being put forward for consideration. A copy of the presentation can be found in **Appendix B** to these notes. The next working session is to be held on Wednesday September 7, 2005, and will focus on the various evaluation criteria that will be applied to the list of alternatives.

Paul explained that the provincial EA process has two steps: first, creation of a Terms of Reference; and then once provincial approvals are received, undertaking an EA that follows the framework set out in the Terms of Reference. Both steps have a formal public consultation requirement. To date, consultation input has resulted in minor changes to the project goal, and other suggestions are being analyzed. The project goal now reads:

“To establish and sustain the form, features, and function of a natural river mouth within the context of an urban environment.”

The project team intends to submit the Terms of Reference to the province by the end of the year, with approvals anticipated within the first quarter of 2006. The Environmental Assessment will take one year from the time of approval.

Paul reviewed the definitions of a number of key project elements, including naturalization, “alternatives to”, “alternative methods”, “wetland”, and “discharge points”. A number of comments have been received related to the use of terms such as “alternatives”. It is important to remember that “public friendly” language can be used; however, the terminology of the EA must be ultimately used to uphold the intent of the legislation. The provincial EA requires the identification of “alternatives to”, or the different ways of carrying out the project (different discharge points), and “alternative methods”, or the design elements (building blocks) which make up the alternatives. Previous efforts will be incorporated into both of these areas of the study. In the TOR, the “alternatives to” will be identified along with the framework for identifying the “alternative methods”.

Paul described the 4 alternatives which reflect the historic activities related to this project. At the last workshop, a fifth “alternative to” was suggested. Alternative methods will be identified by combining different forms and features for each alternative.

The following terms will be used throughout the process:

Form – physical elements

Features – elements that help to characterize a natural area

Function – when forms and features are brought together

Some desirable functions of the river mouth are: control of flow rate, wildlife habitat, sediment management, debris management, flood risk reduction, habitat connectivity. The forms and features are the building blocks that will be used to achieve the desirable functions.

A long list of “alternative methods” will be developed, and then taken through a technical screening process to eliminate the options that will not technically work. The remaining alternative methods are then taken through a more rigorous screening process using the evaluation criteria that are developed.

The following statements were made/questions of clarification were asked. The response given by the study team follows each comment.

What will assure residents that serious, realistic alternatives will be considered? I have heard that the decision has already been made.

This issue will be recorded, as this is a transparent process with no predetermined solution. There are more than one alternative being considered here. At the next session, we will consider how alternatives will be evaluated. It should be submitted that TRCA has a strong track record for incorporating public comment into the design of past EA projects, including the Class EA for the Lower Don River West Remedial Flood Protection Project, which has recently been completed.

What is meant by the river's discharge point to the lake?

It has been identified as the geographical location where the Don River may enter Lake Ontario.

In the goals and objectives, how are the impacts on other areas accounted for? One objective should be not to impact on other areas.

This will be recorded and taken forward to the session where criteria are developed.

There have been several articles about New York's failures on a similar project. Some say that it is a choice between a stadium and a lakefront marsh. Is there still some thinking about a future Olympic Bid and putting a stadium on the Don? Has anything been suggested for the area south of Villiers Street?

During the development of the Olympic Bid, there was some contemplation of putting an Aquatic Stadium in the area. The TRCA has tried, through this process, to maintain a larger portion of land to maximize the naturalization and flood protection functions of the project. We are not being asked to give up any land north or south of Villiers Street in the area where the Olympic park was proposed in an earlier process. If you look at the functions being contemplated, they are not consistent with a stadium. We are not being asked to include a stadium in the design of this project.

To the best of your knowledge, there is no proposal that will come forward to compromise this process?

To the best of my knowledge, no. The TWRC is moving forward on its plans for the waterfront. This project is included in those plans. Extensive consultation is being conducted on all of the processes under the TWRC jurisdiction. No other plans have been seen, or are contemplated that will compromise this process.

Is it possible to naturalize the mouth of the Don without moving the Gardiner Expressway?

The objectives of the project need to be chosen carefully, and be manageable for the people and animals of the city. This includes setting objectives for naturalization that are attainable in such an urbanized setting.

There are so many agencies working on various projects on the waterfront. How are members of the public notified of changes to the project?

We collect names and addresses so that we can convey any changes that are made as we go through the process. Community members who have been through other processes with the TRCA can attest to how we have managed to address public ideas, and concerns. If one looks at the project objectives, there is recognition of the other projects that are ongoing. It is important for participants to clearly provide their information to us so we can maintain our database to the highest standard possible.

How is the Remedial Action Plan (RAP) involved in this process?

The RAP is involved through various stakeholders who are participating in this process, including the RAP team, the Ministry of Natural Resources, Federal Department of Fisheries, and Watershed Councils.

3.0 Facilitated Roundtable and Plenary Discussions

Nicole Swerhun introduced participants to the small group process. Community Liaison Committee Members who were to facilitate table discussions identified themselves. A project team member would also be at each table to offer technical assistance and answer questions. Table discussions were to focus on the following questions.

1. Review the list of “Alternatives To” (defined as the different locations where the Don will discharge into Lake Ontario) that the study team is proposing to include in the EA Terms of Reference (TOR). Are there any additions or other changes to the list that you would like to see considered? Why? (slide 19)

2. Review the approach that will be used to guide the identification of Alternative Methods. Do you have any comments on and/or suggested edits to: (slides 28 and 29)
 - i) the preliminary list of possible forms or features? (slide 28)
 - ii) the preliminary list of desirable river functions? (slide 29)
 - iii) the overall approach proposed to identify Alternative Methods? (slide 36)

Following the roundtable discussions, the findings outlined below were reported back to the larger group in a plenary session.

Group #1

Question	Response
“Alternatives To”: Are there any additions or other changes to the list that you would like to see considered? Why? (slide 19)	Have a floodway so that the natural river mouth will be natural whether there is a flood or not. It would operate like the Winnipeg floodway, only when flooding occurs. This would be a modified alternative.
Do you have any comments on and/or suggested edits to the preliminary list of possible forms or features?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building a public relationship to the river so that the whole community will wish to preserve and protect it. Form: Access Features: Boardwalks, ramps, beaches, boat tours, elevators or hoists for disabled

(slide 28)	<p>people; viewing platforms; boat tours; ferries from other parts of the bay.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation. Forms and Features: all of above plus channels for canoes and kayaks; interpretative signs and symbols; critter cams; well-publicized site walks; towpaths for barges (like Toad Hall). • Education. F&F: most of above; special boat tours for school children; interpretive walks. • Maintain or create employment. No Forms or Features suggested.
Do you have any comments on and/or suggested edits to the preliminary list of desirable river functions? (slide 29)	Answered above.
Do you have any comments on and/or suggested edits to the <u>overall approach</u> proposed to identify Alternative Methods? (slide 36)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify the way that the preliminary long list will be developed. • Proactively reach out to a more diverse population; for example (but not exclusively) non-English speakers, the illiterate, young people (can youth at risk be incorporated in the process in any constructive ways?). Advertise site walks more widely. Having a more inclusive approach to the design would build the richer public relationship to the river. • Should include studies of the industrial and marine heritage.

Group #2

Question	Response
“Alternatives To”: Are there any additions or other changes to the list that you would like to see considered? Why? (slide 19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a lot to add to existing list. The project team has done a good job. • Instead of having just two points (through Keating Channel, and through Cherry Beach), there should be another emptying point and therefore create more of a natural delta. Water wouldn't necessarily flow to all of these locations at the same time, but a flood overflow would be created for extreme events.
Do you have any comments on and/or suggested edits to the preliminary list of possible forms or features? (slide 28)	Estuary hooks (as the river flows down, there are hooks that flow backward to cause the flow to ripple and create a habitat for organisms to grow)
Do you have any comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve the quality of the water that enters the

on and/or suggested edits to the preliminary list of desirable river functions? (slide 29)	<p>Lake.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The river should have a safety function – friendly, but safe. • Ease of maintenance.
Do you have any comments on and/or suggested edits to the <u>overall approach</u> proposed to identify Alternative Methods? (slide 36)	The terminology should be simplified. For example on slide 36, point 3, “what are all of the things we want”, point 4 “what won’t work”, and point 5 “what is left”. Clear language and design.

Group #3

Question	Response
“Alternatives To”: Are there any additions or other changes to the list that you would like to see considered? Why? (slide 19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group did not want to answer the questions, as presented. • What kind of river mouth requires extensive dredging? How natural is this? An option to consider natural silting out should be added. • One option should consider cutting a channel across the Outer Harbour and Leslie Street Spit in order to allow natural deposition of silt and sediment into the lake – while recognizing the difficulties pertaining to flow velocities and discharge levels in the Don River. • This process could be informed by the way Denmark and Holland have dealt with this type of low profile river mouth.
Do you have any comments on and/or suggested edits to the preliminary list of possible forms or features? (slide 28)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A spillway/floodway should be considered (Winnipeg example). • Upstream sediment traps could be considered. • Bob Newberry Plan – engineering to create a gradient change and more velocity in river flow.
Do you have any comments on and/or suggested edits to the preliminary list of desirable river functions? (slide 29)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term promotion and protection of human health (West Nile virus, malaria could be introduced in a wetland environment). • Should consider long term aspects of sediment management (projections for 10/20 years should figure in to the design). • Should feature compatible cultural access, including birder’s pub, viewing centres, other facilities in private hands that would encourage stewardship. • Should perform an aesthetic function – should be beautiful.
Do you have any comments	

on and/or suggested edits to the <u>overall approach</u> proposed to identify Alternative Methods? (slide 36)	
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Group #4

Question	Response
“Alternatives To”: Are there any additions or other changes to the list that you would like to see considered? Why? (slide 19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including a discharge point to the east into Ashbridges Bay – historically the water went this way, may reduce problems of silt and debris. • Discharge to the west, near the Keating Channel.
Do you have any comments on and/or suggested edits to the preliminary list of possible forms or features? (slide 28)	Large emergent marsh: recreation as education is a worthwhile function, meandering trails, boardwalks, roaming countryside, unusual flowers, plants, birds, wildlife.
Do you have any comments on and/or suggested edits to the preliminary list of desirable river functions? (slide 29)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigation for small boats • Soil and water quality • Natural and sustaining beauty • Place for great bridges
Do you have any comments on and/or suggested edits to the <u>overall approach</u> proposed to identify Alternative Methods? (slide 36)	A more natural way.

Paul Murray commented that participants had provided really good thoughts that will be incorporated into the process.

The following comments were made by participants:

- The naturalization study area should be increased. We want to be able to have the possibility of recommending an expanded area to Ashbridges Bay or to the ship channel.
- We need to lay claim to the study area. We need to understand what all of the competing projects are and really promote this project as a priority for the City. A liaison group should work with the City's politicians.
- Ravines belong to the river. These should be assessed as an entire system. A longer term plan should look to a larger area. (*Response: we are down on the waterfront and don't have a ravine here. In this area we are creating a system.*)

4.0 Closing Remarks, Next Steps and Next Meeting

Adele Freeman thanked participants for their questions and input.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 7 at the Ralph Thornton Centre. Anyone on the mailing list will receive notice of upcoming meetings. Stakeholders were thanked and the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

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Appendix A List of Project Team Members

August 23, 2005

TRCA Project Team members

Ken Dion
Adele Freeman
Steve Heuchert
Deborah Martin-Downs
Amy Thurston
Michelle Herzog

Consulting Team Project Team members

Dale Leadbeater	Gartner Lee Ltd.
Paul Murray	Gartner Lee Ltd.
Don Gorber	SENES Consultants Limited
Anneliese Grieve	SENES Consultants Limited
Steve Willis	TWRC Representative
Nicole Swerhun	Facilitator
Tracey Ehl	Ehl Harrison Consulting Inc. (Meeting Notes)



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Appendix B Presentation

August 23, 2005



Don Mouth Naturalization and Port Lands Flood Protection Project

Working Session #2

Appendix C Workbook Summaries

August 23, 2005

Appendix C: Workbook Summaries

1. Review the list of “Alternatives To” (defined as the different locations where the Don will discharge into Lake Ontario) that the study team is proposing to include in the EA Terms of Reference. Are there any additions or other changes to the list that you would like to see considered? Why?

Responses:

- Provide natural sedimentation as much as possible.
- Harvest sediments at T-shaped mouth at Lake Ontario. In years from now, that should be valuable fertilizer/building material.
- As recreation, what I would like to see is.....Wetlands and marshlands with it's unusual and functional flowers, plants, birds, wildlife..... Meandering trails, boardwalks, lookouts, roaming, undulating countryside, forested areas
- It is human nature to be in nature. These areas are “recreational” as well as functional and NECESSARY.
- The Don River must come FIRST. It must have its meandering course 'starting' from Gerrard St with the DVP removed and replaced by a 2-lane road, which IS possible. The DVP is primarily 'single' occupancy vehicles and they are taking up a large amount of quality land. A great many have exited by Bloor St. On the east side of the DVP, there is room for a 2-lane road with only one building in the way. The city could easily buy it out.
- Alternative 3 (south) should be expanded to include areas east of the Don roadway

2. Review the approach that will be used to guide the identification of Alternative Methods.

Do you have any comments on and/or suggested edits to:

- i) the preliminary list of possible forms or features?

Responses:

- Consider current through Inner Harbour for ‘cleaning’.
- It is not ‘unnatural’ to let a river run through granite (refer to rocky mountains), however this is a ‘flatland’, so if possible, allow some marsh, some 2m banks for untouched plants/wildlife to sustain itself and is relevant to that setting (200 metres is better). Where marsh is wide, provide floating wood bridges.

- ii) the preliminary list of desirable river functions?

Responses:

- Naturalization is defined as a sustainable approach to allow sustainable ecology in an urban sustainable setting: allow fish, land animals and birds to pass all along;
 - Allow people, horses, bicycles, canoes, access all the way to the top of the ravines; and
 - Build inns, restaurants, horse barns, deer barns every so often along the River and ravines – for ownership of every piece. Only interrupted by natural flooding every 500 years.
- I think that one of the ‘functions’ of this project should be to create a situation where ‘Joe & Josephine Public’ can have a relationship with this River.
- Public access is imperative! The public may take more responsibility for keeping the River clean if they feel endeared to it.
- Support a natural city, by providing relief from built-up parts of the city and an alternative to these built-up areas

iii) the overall approach proposed to identify Alternative Methods?

Responses:

- Buildings (should be) constructed to let water through.
- It is necessary to keep minimum 2m of untouched bank from typical waterline. This is proven in Australia and Denmark (low/flat land rivers)
- In case of massive flooding, (there are) two options:
 - a) Build minimum 3m above normal water levels
 - b) Build so just 4m is on columns with lightweight enclosure for the flood to pass through.
(Refer to Tsunami, Denmark, Germany etc)
- Include expanded naturalization study area

Other Feedback or Advice?

Responses:

- The Don River and its ravines are vital to reach any point along the valley.
- Name tags for everyone!
- Food
- To re-iterate, the Don River must come FIRST and everything else to follow.
- I would also like to see the Don River following along a meandering course ‘starting from’ Gerrard St, with the DVP removed and replaced by a

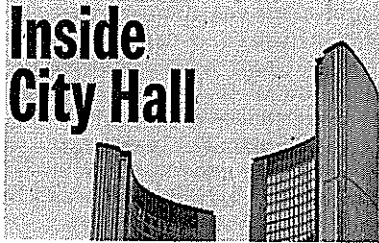
2-lane road, which IS possible. The DVP is primarily 'single' occupancy vehicles and they are taking up a large amount of quality land. A great many of these single-occupancy commuters have exited by Bloor St. On the east side of the DVP, there is room for a 2-lane road with only one building in the way. The city could easily buy it out.

- The whole of the DVP is expendable. It is an easy calculation to determine that approx 2 extra GO trains could accommodate all rush hour passengers and the DVP would now be a 2-lane road from 401 to Lakeshore. AMAZING... It is 'do-able'. All that is needed is the "WILL".

******* The following four pages including a newspaper clipping entitled "The mayor dons a waterfront hat" were circulated at the meeting by a public participant.**

The mayor dons a waterfront hat

Inside City Hall



How many hats can the mayor of Toronto wear? One more, it seems, if you are **David Miller**.

The mayor already heads up the Toronto Film Board and just joined the police services board. Now comes word that he will get his wish to join the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corp.

Until now, no elected officials had been allowed to serve as directors of the agency, set up in 2001 by the federal government, the province and the city to oversee a face-lift for the waterfront.

Since taking office in 2003, Mr. Miller has lobbied hard to have an elected city official (preferably with himself in the chair) on the board, currently comprising appointees from the three governments.

After months of behind-the-scenes haggling, the mayor will get his way (although whether he replaces current chairman **Robert Fung** remains to be seen).

With reluctant federal agreement, Ontario will revise the original legislation that set up the corporation, so an elected city official can join, too.

"The mayor is going to wear it whether things happen on the waterfront or not," said deputy mayor **Joe Pantalone**.

"Therefore, it is appropriate that the representative of all the people [the mayor] be there on the waterfront."

In the meantime, watch for the corporation to invite the mayor to "a seat at the table," pending passage of the legislation.

Such good friends

You would think relations could not get more sullen between the city and the Toronto Port Authority.

But oh yes they can.

It seems that the federal agency, whose jurisdiction includes the central harbour area, wants lease payments on new boardwalks, piers and parkland jutting out several metres from the water's edge. The port authority not only wants rent money from the city for HtO park (a new "urban beach" of grass and trees that will extend into the harbour) but from Harbourfront Centre, a non-profit culture agency funded in part by Ottawa.

TPA president **Lisa Raitt** said yesterday that the rents in question (believed to be several thousand dollars for Harbourfront and \$25,000 for HtO park) are "quite nominal amounts to the city but not nominal to us."

This week, it was announced that her agency lost \$2.7-million last year.

Deputy mayor **Joe Pantalone**, a Harbourfront director and a keen proponent of the new city waterfront park, notes that the TPA has not spent a dime of its own on any improvements to the water's edge.

"It may be legal," he says of the demand for rent money. "But it is completely inappropriate."

Mind your manners

Earlier this week, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation blasted the Toronto Transit Commission for spending \$32,000 to trumpet the arrival of new buses, funded in part through federal gas tax dollars.

But TTC chairman **Howard Moscoe** huffed back: "The federal government is handing us \$70-million and the least we can do is say thank you."

Got a tip? E-mail us at insidecity@globeandmail.ca

Background Lakefront Marsh (lacustrine) for ~~Draft~~ the Mouth of the Don River

Concept proposed May 1987 Press Conference at Keating Ch.

Proposed Marsh early 1989, Second Meeting of Interim Task Force to Bring Back the Don

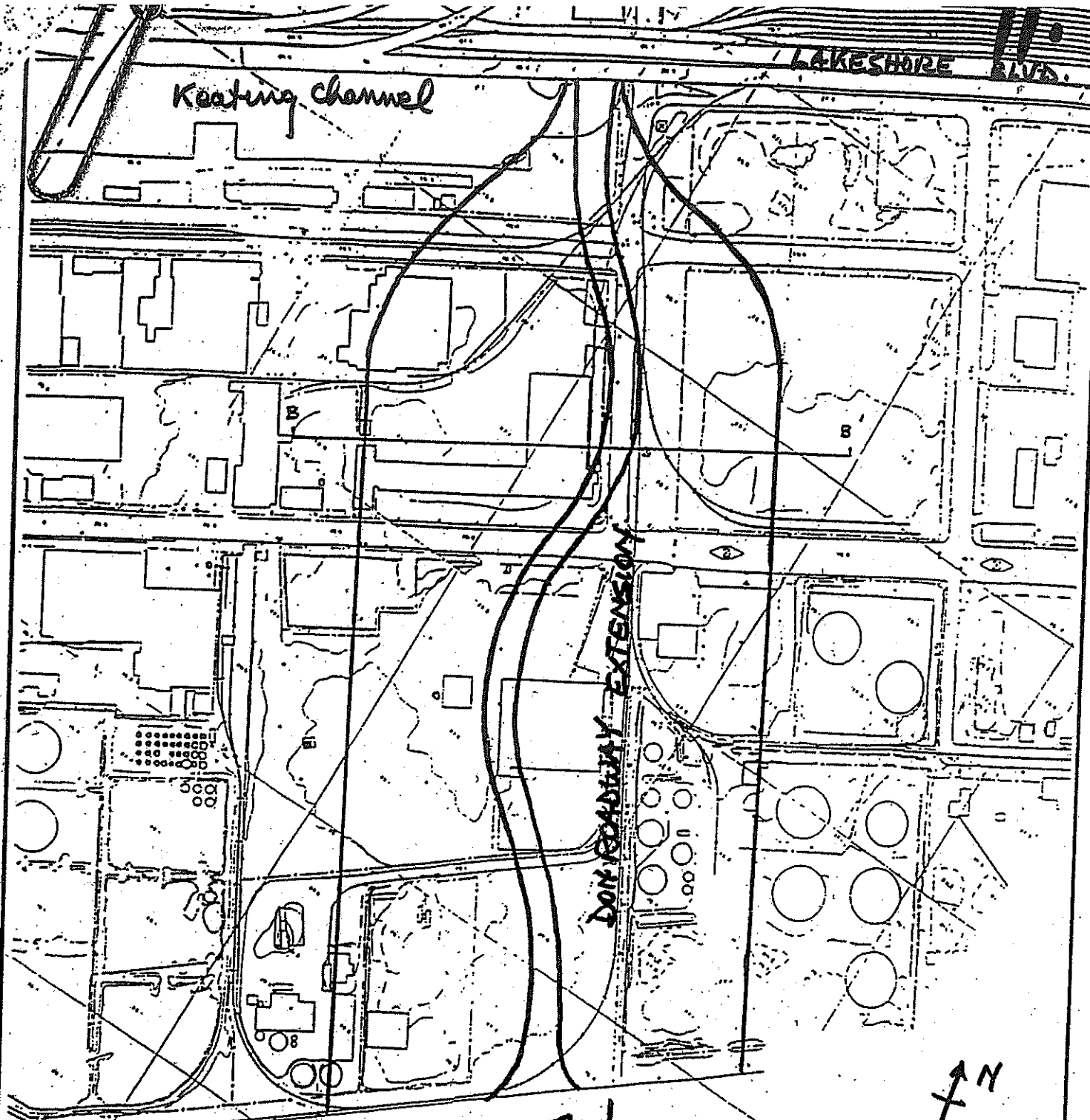
19 Aug 06 Marsh given a central location and central function in consultants report "Bringing Back the Don" (1991) Hough et al

Excitement about Olympic Bid 2008 starts a process to justify "relocating" the River through 480 Lakeshore, so Olympic Stadium can go where the Marsh was proposed - a central location west of Bay Roadway and South of the existing Keating Channel.

• engineer for Harbour Commission (John) and architect for City of Toronto (M.M.)

claim that the original Marsh Mouth was where the present "mouth" of the Keating Channel is. (This is false: (A) a cut was made in 1812 through the sand embankment on North-East corner of Toronto Bay, so boats called bateaux could be put there. (B) there was an entrance from the marsh (Ashbridge's Bay Marsh), caused by the flow of the Don, but it was much further South at the present location of the "mouth" of the Ship Channel. (C) there never was one particular location or spot where there was a Don Mouth. The Lake Marsh there and south-flowing streams created an ever-changing process. First Nations people (Algonquin, Huron) called it ATARATIRI: "a community of clay and soil supported by trees and water.")

Now we are not getting the Olympic Bid Stadium
lets give priority to a full, ecological Lake Front Marsh



CLIENT

CITY OF TORONTO

TITLE

SCHEMATIC PLAN OF
"SOUTHERN" CHANNEL
FLOODWAY OPTION



**Marshall
Macklin
Monaghan**

Consulting Engineers Surveyors Planners
20 Commerce Valley Dr. E. Thornhill, Ont. L3T 7W4
Tele (905) 882-1100 Fax (905) 882-3055

Checked R.B.	Drawn B.K.B.
Date 3-21-2000	Proj. No. 1499054-01-W01
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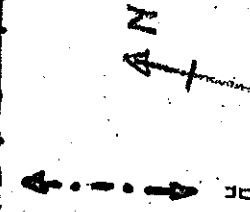
OAK RIDGES MORaine

BIOLOGICAL UNITY:

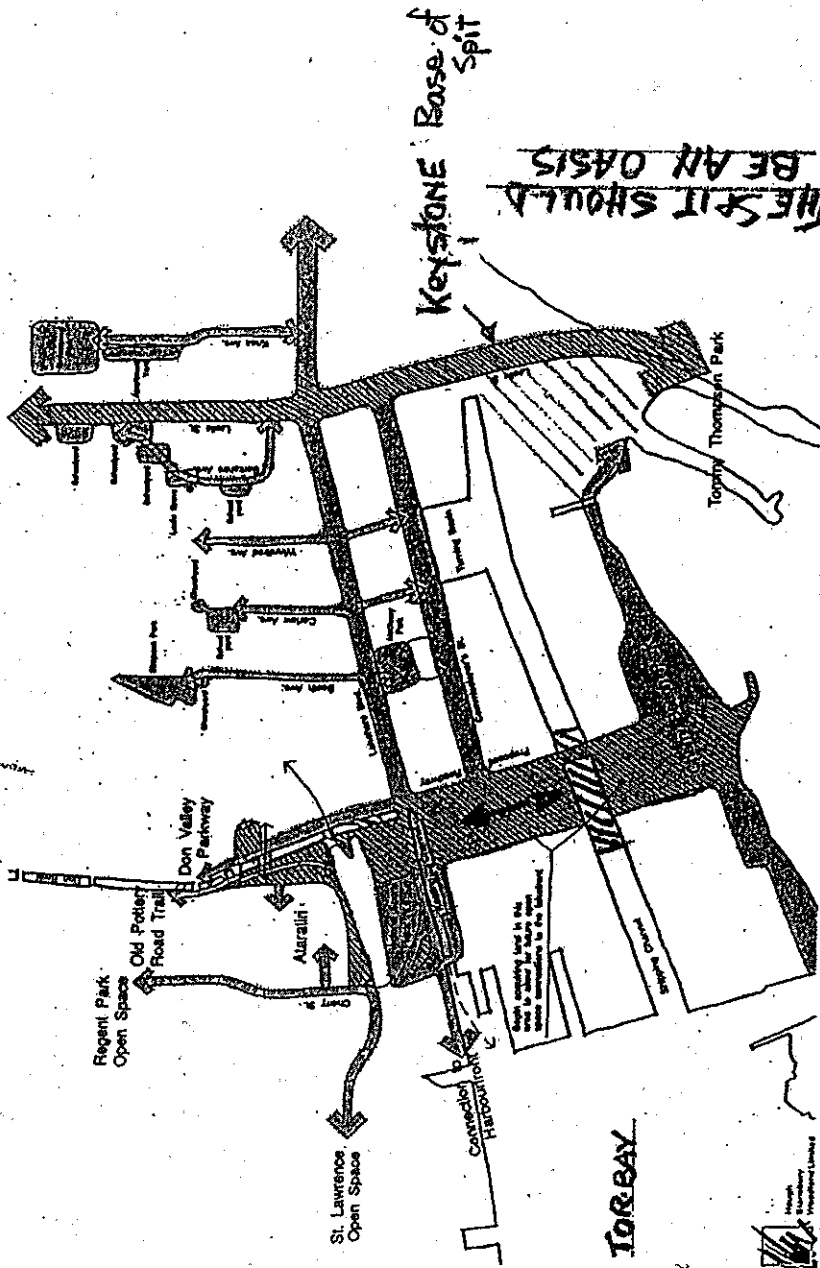
AQUATIC AND TERRESTRIAL

DON GREENWAY 300

← THE MISSING LINK!

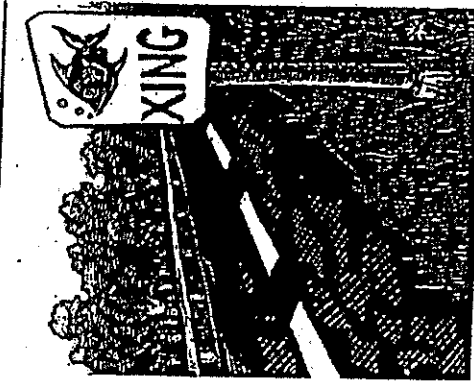


DRAFT



THE SPIT SHOULD NOT BE AN OASIS

FIG. 28 - GARDINER LAKE SHORE OPEN SPACE STRATEGY



**Nicole Schallman
NYTimes 1/3/06/01**

**▲ RIVER AS PRIORITY (RAP)
THEN TRANSIT
THEN ROADS**

