

# TICA TALK

*News From the Toronto Island Community Association Executive*

## *Committee Updates*

### **COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS**

#### ***Nina Nakajima***

Our website, <http://torontoisland.org>, is being transferred from the current host to a new one. Eric Zhelka and Glen Newbury are undertaking this for the purpose of improving service.

### **STEWARDSHIP**

#### ***Kiloran McRae***

#### **Speeding Vehicles**

If you see a vehicle speeding on the Island, please write down the license plate number and phone the police. It is imperative that we do what we can to enforce the speed limit which is 10km/h within the community (Ward's east of the Algonquin Bridge and all of Algonquin) and 30km/h elsewhere (everything west of the Algonquin Bridge).

#### **Winter Carnival a Success**

On Sunday, February 10, 40 or more children ages three to fourteen and various parents and others braved extreme cold and high winds. Diana Booth, Toronto Island Recreation Coordinator, organized wonderful games, prizes, and activities. Christopher Pinheiro's face painting was fantastic. The canoe races in the snow, giant underwear races, and tug of war were hilarious. The kids roasted marshmallows and hotdogs over a fire and there was a pot of steaming lukewarm hot chocolate. Diana worked very hard to make this a special day and various Parks employees contributed by delivering firewood, lending the propane hotplate, and cleaning and opening the washroom.

#### **Trees**

A tree removal company was on the Island for a couple of weeks in February taking down "the worst of the worst": in total 14 large willows and 2 large poplars. There will

be more planting this year of native trees and Warren is experimenting with rooting willow cuttings.

On a related note, Warren's tree tour is scheduled for May 26 at 6:00 pm.

#### **The Maze**

Recent serious winter damage has given impetus to a plan to restore the Maze as a community project. The Maze would be closed after Labour Day 2008 and reopened in June of the following year. Funding for new higher fencing and cedars will need to be found.

#### **New Fencing**

The low iron fencing for the water treatment plant (along the main road near the Gibraltar Point Centre for the Arts) is being replaced this summer with a higher, more secure terrorist-proof fence. Warren assures us that it will be very attractive - wrought iron and masonry.

### **TORONTO ISLAND HOUSING INITIATIVE**

#### ***Jane Davidson-Neville***

The Toronto Island Housing Initiative (TIHI) is once again in action. Many of you will know that, before the Harris government was elected in 1995, a non-profit co-op of eighty units was planned for the then Trust lands between the Annex and the new fire hall (the "Promised Lands"). This co-op, along with over one hundred other non-profits and co-ops, was disallowed by the provincial government. Ever since, there has been a desire to see new housing on the Island.

The Committee has begun meeting again to review the previous proposals and to discuss possible future actions including type and mix of housing, re-zoning of the land and community consultation.

*April 21, 2008*

If you have any comments or suggestions about this, please contact any of the committee members: Ellen Allen, Jane Davidson-Neville, Martha Farquhar-McDonnell, Mary Middleton or Eliza Moore.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **Adam Zhelka**

The Ongiara went to dry-dock on April 9 and will be out of service for three to four weeks. The Sam McBride and William Inglis will run the Ongiara schedule but vehicles will have to travel via the Island Airport ferry.

The City budget as passed includes a fare increase for the ferry. All individual ticket rates will increase by 50 cents and passes and bulk ticket prices will rise by a few dollars. The exact date of the increase is not yet determined. Attempts to eliminate both the first and last ferries were stopped so there will be NO reduction in the hours of operation. It was the Provincial Legislation that prevented the city from changing the ferry schedule, otherwise

we think it would have been a battle. The Legislation states that ferry service must be maintained at the same level as it was in 1993. What foresight. Nice to know we have that protection.

We are looking for volunteers to form an Accessibility Sub-committee to work with the ferry management with the goal of improving accessibility on the ferries

## **WATERFRONT ISSUES**

### **Pam Mazza**

CommunityAIR is holding a fundraiser on April 24 at the Tranzac Club. There will be a great band, auction items, and food, all for \$20. I hope you and friends will come. I have tickets. Porter continues to expand and get a ton of press. There are two articles related to the airport and Port Authority on pages 3 and 4 of this issue: Bill Freeman's article about the Canada Malting Silos and a report on the Western Gap wall.

# *Toronto Islands Residential Community Trust Matters*

## **Marty Crowder, Administrator**

### **Purchasers' List**

The Purchasers' List was open for two weeks from November 26 to December 7. Three hundred and seventy-five applications were received for 46 positions on the List. Congratulations to the lucky 46. Letters have gone out to all who applied.

Now the renewals have been completed and there are less than 25 vacancies on the List. The Purchasers' List will *not* be opened in 2008. Lots of thanks to Enid, Anne, and Wendy who handled the renewals again this year.

The Purchasers' List is available for viewing. A binder has been prepared with hard copies of the Purchasers' List for all the years. You need to book an appointment with the office in advance in order to view the list. Reproduction of the list by any means is not permitted. This includes hand or electronic copying.

### **Levies**

The Trust's year-end was March 31, 2008 and that was the deadline for paying the levy. After March 31, 2008 an interest charge is incurred of 15% per annum. If you have

not paid do not be surprised by the interest charge on your next reminder notice. Reminder notices were hand delivered before March 31, 2008, to Islanders who have not paid their annual levy. There are still about 50 outstanding. Please contact the office to arrange payment or drop your cheque off in the TIRCT mailbox. Thank you very much.

The Finance Committee has prepared the budget for 2008-09 and there will be a community meeting to have it presented and passed on Wednesday April 30, 2008 at the WIA. The meeting will begin promptly at 7:30 pm. Please bring your own mug for tea or juice.

### **House Sale**

Welcome to Barbara Brachi, the new owner of 14 Nottawa. She was number 90 on the Purchasers' List. At the present time the Trust has no other houses available for sale.

### **Office Hours**

The office is open Mondays from 10:30 to 4:00, Tuesdays from 12:00 to 5:00, and Wednesdays from 11:00 to 4:00.

# Canada Malting Silo Charrette

## **Bill Freeman**

On Sunday, March 30th a large group of community residents, architects, planners, students, politicians and city staff members met at the Harbourfront Community Centre to talk about the Canada Malting Silos.

The silos on the water's edge in the west end of the harbour, on Eireann Quay (formerly Lower Bathurst Street) stand almost seven stories high. These great, grey towers are one of the last remnants of the industrial core of the city that once stretched from the Western Gap to Cherry Street and from the CNR tracks to the water.

The city has made a decision to preserve the Canada Malting silos as a reminder of Toronto's industrial era, but there is an uncertainty about what should happen to them. An earlier proposal to convert them into a "metronome" to be used by musicians was ultimately rejected. Now city politicians are suggesting that the site be turned into a museum dedicated to telling Toronto's story but there is uneasiness about this. Museums cost money, a commodity the city seriously lacks. The intent of the charrette was to provide an opportunity for members of the community to bring forward their ideas about what should happen to the site.

The silos are a great icon of the industrial past, but the site is also a valuable asset. Not only does the property have a spectacular location on the water's edge, but it occupies a significant amount of land in the Bathurst Quay community. Just to the north of the property is an elementary school and community centre, across the street is Little Norway Park, and in the immediate area is the high-density community of co-ops, condos and affordable housing units.

Bathurst Quay is a mixed income community filled with people of all ages, ethnic and racial groups. It is a community that works, but it has one major problem. Just across the Western Gap is the Island Airport and the airport is set to expand as Porter Airlines ramps up to 20 aircraft and dozens of flights a day. Already traffic on Eireann Quay has increased several fold and it is bound to get worse.

This is the context of the redevelopment of the Canada Malting silo site, and everyone who came to the charrette

to discuss its future were well aware that its transformation would have a huge impact on the community. That is the reason for the high turn out. At least 150 community members showed up on a Sunday morning to contribute their ideas to the project.

The first major order of business was a discussion about what we couldn't do. "The city has a limited amount of money," Rita Davies, the Executive Director of the Toronto Arts Council, explained. "The silos are built of concrete and the walls are very thick. Don't propose that the city use the inside of the building. We can't afford it. Make suggestions about what you would like to see on the rest of the site."

With those instructions in mind the participants were organized into twelve or more separate groups, or tables. Each table of about 15 people was made up of community members and students. The leader, or facilitator, of the groups was an architect or planner.

The table I joined focused primarily on the design of the site. We talked about which buildings could be saved and the new facilities that might be built. We proposed some affordable housing units and suggested ways that they could be integrated into the community. The group felt that some space across the road from Little Norway Park should remain open, and proposed an older building be converted into artist lofts and community offices. We were particularly keen to open the access to the water's edge so that visitors could stroll in an uninterrupted way from Queen's Quay to the Irish Park and then along the edge of the Western Gap. For the silos we suggested a glassed elevator to the roof where there would be a look-out and small café. The ground floor of the silos, we felt, should be opened so that visitors could see up into the silo tubes that once stored grain. Finally, we placed the Toronto Museum on a strip of land adjacent to the Music Gardens, on the east side of the slip.

These were the conclusions of the group at the table where I participated. The people at all of the other tables were equally involved in discussions about what they would like to see. At the end of the day members from each of the tables reported their conclusions to the broader assembly. Groups focused on different things. Some emphasized design. Others focused on proposals for

architecturally spectacular buildings, and still others suggested ways to integrate the site into the community. All of this work will be gathered, condensed and integrated into a report that will be sent to the city.

To me, the charrette was important not just because it was an opportunity for community members to express their views on a significant part of our architectural heritage, but it was also a way to help build and strengthen the Bathurst Community. After this day I am convinced more

than ever that the silos can be turned into a magnificent asset that will contribute to the community and the Waterfront. I was happy to be a part of that effort.

I will also confess to another not so hidden part of my agenda. If the silos are redeveloped it will underline, once again, that the Island Airport is incompatible with the Waterfront redevelopment and the type of city that we want to build. The airport must close.

## *Western Gap Dockwall*

### **Brian Iler, CommunityAIR Chair**

Last summer, the City erected "Keep Off Danger" signs on the Western Gap dockwall along the south side of Stadium Road, as a precaution following the collapse of a 20-foot portion adjacent to the National Yacht Club in December 2006. As local MPP Rosario Marchese says, "This is a huge safety hazard and there's no telling when the rest of the wall will collapse."

What's interesting is the degree of finger-pointing, as both the provincial government, which admits it owns the land on which the wall is located, and the federal government, which has responsibility for harbours under the Canadian constitution, look to the other for action.

Olivia Chow, MP, and Rosario Marchese, MPP, called a press conference on February 21, in which I participated on behalf of CommunityAIR. My view, not surprisingly, was that the Toronto Port Authority, having as its primary

responsibility the effective operation of the port, should actually assume that responsibility and devote resources to the task of repairing this essential port facility.

To our complete surprise, the following story appeared in the media the next day: A large portion of the western harbour wall that fell into Lake Ontario more than a year ago will likely be repaired in the spring, said the Toronto Port Authority (TPA). "We've taken the matter extremely seriously and we're trying to find the best way to go about repairing it," said Lisa Raitt, president of the TPA.

Olivia Chow's office followed up and reports that the TPA is surprised to know that the wall is confirmed as provincial crown land and can't confirm that they're fixing it this spring. They're investigating options. So no progress, really.

## *Community Messages*

### **SHORELINE CLEANUP**

#### **Joanna Kidd**

Sunday April 27th from 10:00 am to noon is the shoreline cleanup. Bags can be picked up from the AIA, Canoe Club, and WIA porches. It's easy. Pick up garbage bags. Pick an area of the island that you care about. Fill bags with litter and flotsam. Place bags near the street or road so that Parks staff can pick them up. Repeat until you've had enough. Take the rest of the day off. Thanks in advance for helping to make our shorelines healthier, more beautiful, and better for people and wildlife!

### **STREET SWEEPING**

In the spirit of spring cleaning, everyone is encouraged to sweep the street adjacent to their home.

### **QCYC HIRING**

Queen City Yacht Club is now accepting applications for full-time and part-time grounds/house staff. Please forward resume in Word or PDF format to office@qcyc.ca, attention Don Ferguson, Manager. No phone calls please.