Water, water Everywhere?
With that record-breaking rainstorm this month, images of kids playing in oversized puddles floated about my neighbours. And for many of us, memories of previous watermarks came, well, flooding back. Who can forget the high water times in the 70s, when people were sandbagging the perimeter, sump-pumping the interior and having inspectors inject dye into their toilets to see if it came up on the lawn? And those charming chemical toilets! July’s deluge unleashed more rain than Hurricane Hazel, an event Jimmy Jones calls a night to remember, having driven the Minnie D, a 23 passenger boat through 8 foot waves to the city, only to be ordered to tie up because of the danger. After five hours of waiting, and much pleading from Islanders, he made the decision to make a single run back to the Island at midnight, with a full boat including George Merrick. Jimmy says trees were down, the power was out, but since it was in October, the water that collected on the Island receded within hours because the levels were so low. Maybe less fun for the kids than our more recent version, but fewer mosquitoes, too.

Running of the Rectory Gallery
The Rectory Gallery is a community gallery that showcases the work of Island artists. Though it is held in the Rectory Café space, it is independent of the Café. Over the years the Café has been very cooperative with our operation and has helped with our openings every month. The Rectory Gallery is run by volunteers on a not-for-profit basis. Marci Crist, Alison Sterry and Andrew McHaffie have been running the gallery for the last six years, but it is now time to pass the torch. If you are interested in taking over the running of the Rectory Gallery, or have any questions about what running the gallery entails, please contact Andrew McHaffie at 416.203.7792 or andrewmchaffie@mac.com or Marci Crist at 416.203.0813 or isl2isl@sympatico.ca
The Land Trust: Why we have one and why it matters

PENNY LAWLER

As I look out over the beach and birch trees at Ward’s, the landscape so different from when I first came to the Island in the early 1970s, I think how amazing it is that we are still here.

So much has changed and yet it seems most of the time that nothing has. The coyotes are new, that is true, but we still walk the boardwalk, bike, take the ferry, create art, theatre and music, borrow onions and garlic, celebrate with fire, food, laughter and song, and care for each other when bad things happen. We skate through the winters and take to the beach and our boats in the summers – just as we did in the past. But now we have a Land Trust.

Because of the Land Trust, the past two decades have brought us a measure of peace after more than 30 years of political struggle. It has allowed Islanders to get on with just living our lives. As a provincial agency, the Land Trust has served as a buffer between the politicians at all levels and the community. It has also kept us connected to the province, and as a result given us a certain margin of safety from the turbulence of local politics.

Many Islanders may have forgotten, but the Trust was established not just as a political solution supported by three levels of government (provincial, metro and city), but also as a framework for realizing the goals we, as a community, adopted in the 1970s and 1980s for our future. The key ones were a mixed-income and a year-round community.

A Mixed-Income Community

The Island has always been home to the eccentric and the creative and that has produced an interesting, vibrant community. The community is a mix of artists, writers, doctors, carpenters, lawyers, clowns, teachers, musicians, gardeners, and they make our life here that much richer. Especially the clowns.

But I remember the 1980s here, when we no longer even had title to our houses, and still the Island housing market went crazy, with people spending extraordinary sums just to have a claim on a house. Watching houses (very basic cottages, in most cases) go from $10,000 to $120,000 and higher in a couple of years made it clear that the market would soon create an enclave of only the rich. It was also obvious that preserving a mixed-income community would require both an inexpensive lease and some kind of control on house prices.

A land trust was chosen because it allowed the separation of the land and the house, giving Islanders freedom to do what they wanted with the house, with the exception of selling into an open market, while ensuring a fair but not market-based lease. This has preserved relative affordability for Island housing, compared to the Toronto downtown market whose average price is now around $630,984.

A Long-Term and Year-Round Community

During the 1970s and 1980s the Island evolved into a largely year-round community, as young people came for the cheap housing and stayed to winterize and renovate the houses. The Island’s future then depended on a year-round community able to manage the buildings and day-to-day life of living on an island. Volunteers now run three clubhouses and a seniors’ residence, do work in the two schools, and run TICA, the community organization that represents us all. We need all hands on deck to keep things going. Therefore, the legislation establishing the Land Trust required that the houses be occupied year-round and designated as an owner’s principle residence, within a framework that allowed sabbaticals and other minor leaves of absence.

It is important to remember that no level of government was interested in preserving a summer-only community. A year-round community was also essential in order to justify public investment for improved services on the Island (schools, fire and emergency services, sewer installation and upgrades to utilities).

The Future

The Land Trust is not a perfect institution but it is a good one, one that has protected us for more than 20 years and, we hope, for the remaining time of our leases. Islanders need to work with the Land Trust if it is to keep us safe for the future. The waterfront is growing and changing, and the Island is part of that waterfront whether we like it or not. One result is that recently there has been a remarkable growth in the number of visitors to the community parts of the Island as the waterfront condo residents now consider the Island and Ward’s Beach as their “Central Park.” Visitors also come from farther away: the Island is listed in most guidebooks as one of Toronto’s top-10 attractions.

This means that we will receive a lot more scrutiny as a community than we have. And some of the new waterfront interests — developers, for example — may have a different future in mind for us than a 99-year lease. We should not forget that we live here because we were organized politically and we enjoyed public support for our unique Island community. We need to ensure that that public support continues.

Ambassadors and Stewards

We used to think of ourselves as “stewards” of the Island, trying to protect the things that make it special—the water, air, quiet, flora and fauna, its car-free nature, and its history as a community and landscape. We can do more of this and build new relationships with city residents, and in the process become ambassadors for this unique place we think of as home. By engaging with visitors from the city, we can become a valued part of the new waterfront and continue to enjoy the support that has kept us here.
Dear Islanders,

I would first like to thank all of the volunteers both on the board and on the various committees for making me feel so welcome and making my first seven months on the job so enjoyable. The Toronto Island community is very lucky to have such dedicated volunteers.

I would also like to thank the community at large. I have been invited into your homes, I have been invited to your events and I have been treated to tea many times. Thanks to everyone who has made me feel so welcome.

It has been a very interesting and busy time at the Trust since I started in November. It began with the Purchasers’ list renewals, continued with the ongoing process of levy collection and culminated with the administration of the four house sales, some of which are still ongoing. This was the first time in many years that the Trust has had so many house sales to administer, and as you can imagine there was much to be learned. I am working with the board and the various committees to make sure this becomes as seamless a process in the future as it can be. I have already completed a ‘lessons learned’ document that the board is reviewing.

The board currently has five working committees: Finance, Management, Communications, Properties and Governance. I sit on all five committees offering full administrative support.

In January of this year, in order to properly assess where my time is being spent, I began using an online time tracking system called Toggl. I also started a phone log. This information will not only help with future planning, but is also a great oversight tool for the administrator position.

At the end of this article is a list of phone calls from January 1 of this year to the end of May and the total number of calls to date.

What’s coming up? This summer I will be working with Geoffrey Gladdy, a former board member on a technology plan. This will include of course, online payments of levies and purchasers’ list renewals. Because these are only once-a-year payments, the costs may outweigh the convenience, but we will look into all possibilities. I will provide the board with a thorough report on the options we have found. We plan to implement these technological updates before fiscal year end.

The Purchasers’ list will also be opened up this fall. As some of you may have noticed, I keep fairly regular office hours. In the summer I am working Tuesday to Friday 9 to 5 and on Fridays from 9 to 1. During the other seasons the office will be open from 10 to 4, Tuesday to Friday.

The photocopier is in great working order, we have a fax machine for Islander use and the board room is also available for use by Island residents. Drop by and see me any time and feel free to call or email if you have any questions. I have been doing my best to answer all your questions in a timely manner, and I thank you for your patience.

Lastly, I would like to thank Gaye Jackson, Elizabeth Roerick, John Jackman and Michael Smith for all their assistance. Without them the Trust would not have any paper, nothing would get delivered, you would have had to trudge through a lot of snow to get to the office this winter, the office would be a mess and I would not have got paid!! Thanks to you all.

Amanda

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**Total calls received Jan. - May 2013:** 531

- Leaseholders 103
- House Sales 125
- Purchasers’ List 161
- Public 39
- Administration 72
- Other 31

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**Garbage Disposal at Queen City Yacht Club - Please Don’t**

It appears that some Island residents are using the garbage compound at Queen City for disposal of their own household toxic waste. We ask that those doing this please discontinue the practice. QCYC has no greater facility for dealing with this waste than any other Island resident and this additional quantity is taxing the club’s resources.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Ron Mazza,
Queen City Yacht Club
Toronto Islands Residential Community Trust Corporation

Community Meeting Tuesday, June 11, 2013, 7:00 to 9:00 PM
Ward’s Island Association Clubhouse  DRAFT MINUTES

Attendees:
Board of Directors:
Lorraine Filyer (Chair); Susan Wang (Treasurer); Ravi Bhusia (Secretary), Annie Szamosi

Regrets: Astero Patsali (Vice-Chair), Richard Stromberg

Administrator: Amanda Street-Bishop

Welcome and Introductions

The chair welcomed community members to the meeting and introduced the board members in attendance, the Trust administrator and TICA members in attendance.

Trust Updates and Committee Reports

The chair presented the Trust’s Strategic Plan, highlighting key areas of the report. Copies of the report are available in both paper and online.

The chair of the properties committee, Barry Lipton, made a brief presentation. He discussed building inspections, the status of leases and the need for a tree inventory to assess the current condition of the Island’s tree canopy in the residential community.

The chair of the communications committee, Annie Szamosi, reported on her committee’s work to date and plans for the coming year regarding the newsletter and upcoming information bulletins.

The chair of the governance committee, Susan Roy, reported on the work of the committee to date.

Administrator’s Report

The administrator gave a brief presentation on her activities to date and thanked the community and the many volunteers for their assistance. The administrator provided copies of the time-tracking graph and the phone log for the current year to date.

Trust Motion: “That the community approve the Toronto Islands Residential Community Trust Corporation’s 2013/14 Operating Budget.”

Susan Wang, chair of the finance committee, presented the budget and answered questions regarding its content.

MOVED by Susan Wang, seconded by Tony Fairbrother, that the community approve the Toronto Islands Residential Community Trust Corporation’s 2013/14 Operating Budget. The vote was held by secret ballot at the end of the meeting. 69 yes, 7 No, CARRIED

Trust Motion: “That the community approve the revised Purchasers’ List by-law.”

Susan Roy gave a brief synopsis of the changes made to the by-law.

MOVED by Susan Roy, seconded by Liz Amer, that the community approve the revised Purchasers’ List by-law. 64 yes, 5 abstentions, CARRIED

Community Member Motions:

1a. “Be it resolved by the Community that the 2013-14 Trust Corporation Budget show no increase in household levy and no use of reserve funds.” 1b. “In the event the proposed 2013-14 budget as presented to the Community shows an increase in levy, the community hereby votes to only approve the same amount it approved in 2012, requesting the Trust executive to reduce the proposed expenditures accordingly.”

MOVED by Martin ter Woort, seconded by Frank Sullivan.

Martin ter Woort gave a brief presentation regarding the reasoning behind his motion.

WITHDRAWN by the mover and seconder

Community Member Motion:

“That the Trust make more efforts to perform the duties described in 10.1(l) and (m) in the Memorandum of Understanding.”

Motion withdrawn as there was no mover.

Closing Statement and Motion to Adjourn

The chair thanked all those in attendance.

MOVED by Eliza Moore, seconded by Mary Middleton, that the Toronto Islands Residential Community Trust Corporation Community Meeting be adjourned. CARRIED.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I confirm that these minutes were approved by motion on July 11, 2013.
Lorraine Filyer, Chair, Board of Directors
A la carte!

The transportation committee, Tom Davidson of Pam McConnell’s office and I met with William White, supervisor of the ferries, to discuss the Islanders’ concerns over carts. We believe that we came to some positive resolutions to these issues.

First, it was agreed by all that the cart storage at the city docks is too small and needs to be enlarged. As well, the opening gates should be relocated to the side which will ease access to the carts within. Peter Freeman is working on a drawing to submit to William.

Second, the large postal carts will no longer be allowed on the ferries. But, the good news is that the city has purchased two heavy carts similar to the ones used at Home Depot for Islanders’ use – a flat bed cart 60” long x 30” wide, 10” deck height, 2,000 lb. capacity and a lumber cart 60” long x 30” wide, 11.5” deck height, 2,000 lb. capacity. They are parked near the W1A clubhouse in the small paved area by the road.

These carts are a one-time only gift to the Island and we are responsible for their security and maintenance. The last thing we need is for the carts to go walkabout. So, we have come up with a method that we hope will be equitable and reasonable for their use.

Lorraine Pelletier (9 Third Street) has agreed to become the keeper of the key, for a fee. Here’s how it works: if you want to rent a cart, you must email Lorraine at lbpelletierster@gmail.com in advance. Give her your name, address and phone number and the type of cart and arrange for a time for her to meet you at the carts. Bring $60 with you in cash. Lorraine will unlock the cart of your choice, you will give her the $60, proceed with your pick-up-and-delivery and arrange to meet her when it’s all over. Lorraine will keep $20 as a rental fee and return $40 to you. You may not keep the cart for more than 24 hours.

We are hoping this works for everyone. And that everyone will be reasonable and not demand carts at 10 at night or 6 in the morning. There are other issues, of course; maintenance is one. We'll have to hope there are enough willing technicians out there to keep the carts in working order. And the carts certainly do not have the capacity of the postal carts, which can bring an entire room full of Ikea furniture in one load. Perhaps in the future we can take up a collection to have someone make us a cart that has more capacity but is more wieldy than the postal carts. We welcome ideas and thoughts on all of the above. Please direct them to me at lorraine5thst@rogers.com.

Lorraine Filyer

Even in the blackout, we can see a good neighbour....

At around 10:30 the night of the blackout, I could hear the portable generator at the pump back of me on 4th Street, and I went out to check if there was a problem.

There was Paul Horne, all by himself in the dark, flushing out the sewer lines. He was going from pump to pump making sure the lines were kept clear.

Our pumping stations require power to function, and that gets supplied by Paul and the portable generator during blackouts. I have no idea how many years Paul has done this, or how many times he has been out by himself at night looking after us.

The first time I was aware of it was 15 - 20 years ago when I was awakened at 2:30 am by an unfamiliar sound. I walked around the block to see what in the world it was, and there was Paul sitting patiently in a hammock waiting for his generator to flush the lines out.

If you see him around, give him a big thank you for his loyal service. Lynn Robinson
Bathing beauties present (Barb Roerick and Bella Beazer) and future (the ladies in Yolanda’s cart), surrounded by signs of an island summer. Top: a fire parade lantern, below left, a houseboat returns to Sunfish Cut and Sarah Willinsky next to the boat (which she hadn’t seen for years) named for her grandfather by one of the founders of IYC.