The CCFEW News

Citizens Concerned About the Future of the Etobicoke Waterfront April 2010

Colonel Samuel Smith Park Bird Festival

Come to Colonel Samuel Smith Park on **Saturday, May 29th** and check out the Spring Bird Festival. There will be a variety of events, displays and activities from 9:00 until noon. These include:

- 1 hour guided bird walks on the hour starting at 8:00 am
- Bird Box Building
- Live animal displays
- Whimbrel watch
- Children's activities
- Nature photography
- Grebe nesting platform display

We hope this will be the first of what will become an annual event! Participating groups and organizations include the City of Toronto, the TRCA, CCFEW, FOSS (Friends of Sam Smith), TFN (Toronto Field Naturalists), and Birds and Beans.

Annual General Meeting

CCFEW's Annual General Meeting will be held on **Thursday, April 29**, in the large Community Room at LAMP, 185 Fifth Street, at 7:00pm.

Our guest speaker will be Karen McDonald of the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA). She will speak on targeted habitat enhancements for birds and how TRCA monitors birds. She will also provide us with an update on the status of some of Toronto's breeding birds. Two of those projects are in Colonel Samuel Smith Park: Nesting rafts for Red-Necked Grebes and Monitoring of the Whimbrel migration.

We will also be electing our Board of Directors at the Annual General Meeting. The board positions are: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Serving on the board is a rewarding experience. It does not necessarily require a large commitment of time, just a commitment to your community.

If you are interested in becoming more involved, but don't want to commit to being a member of the executive, our monthly planning meetings are normally held on the second Monday of each month (except July and August). Everyone is welcome to attend.

Special Resolution

Also at out AGM, we will be voting on a special resolution:
That CCFEW supports and endorses public acquisition of any properties along the Lake Ontario Waterfront, the Humber River and the Etobicoke and Mimico Creeks that will expand and enhance public ownership and access to the Lake in Etobicoke and the Etobicoke-Mimico Watershed system.

This is essentially one of the core goals when CCFEW was founded over 20 years ago but it seems worth formalizing because we are continually faced with the same issue in different locations. It is currently in the forefront again because of the development proposal at 51 Lake Shore Drive. *(see the update below)*

51 Lake Shore Drive

The development proposal for 51 Lake Shore Drive we reported on last year is still unresolved. It went to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) last November. There was a strong showing of community concern at the OMB hearing. We couldn't fit everyone in the room on the first morning when nearly 50 community members showed up. One community member was given "party" status and 16 others (including a CCFEW representative) were given "participant" status at the hearing. Planning and zoning concerns are well represented by other community members, so CCFEW has chosen to concentrate on the issue of public access to the waterfront.

The hearing was adjourned on the third day in order to give the developer a chance to establish the limits of his property. The adjournment was triggered by the revelation that the lot size grew substantially between the 1909 survey and the 2006 survey. This raises the question of who actually owns the extra land created by the change in the shoreline.

In December, Dunpar (the owner of 51 Lake Shore Drive) applied to the provincial Land Registrar for absolute title to the property as shown on the 2006 survey. Our letter of objection to the Land Registrar states in part:

Title was questioned at the OMB hearing due to a significant discrepancy between the 1909 survey and the 2006 survey of the property The discrepancy arises from a change in the Lake Ontario shoreline. This suggests that a significant amount of lake filling has occurred since 1909. There has been no clear evidence presented to date establishing who filled the lake, or when it was done. It is our contention however, that since the lake bed was publicly owned, the filled land created above it is also public.

We see two likely scenarios of how this lake filling occurred:

- *The lake was filled by an owner of 51 Lake Shore Drive. This would be illegal and therefore the current owner should not be given title.*
- *The lake was filled by the municipality or*

> *a government agency in response to an erosion event. If a public body of water was filled at public expense, there is no reason to believe that the resulting land should not also be public.*

It is CCFEW's position that public access to and ownership of the waterfront should be promoted wherever possible. In this instance, where there is strong evidence to support the contention that it is already in the public realm, it should not be allowed to slip into private ownership. Experience has shown that acquiring public ownership of the waterfront is costly and time consuming. We strongly urge you to reject this application for absolute title.

If we are successful with this argument, it may change the picture of what's private and what's public along much of our waterfront. Although this is an extreme case, it is far from the only instance where lake filling has occurred.

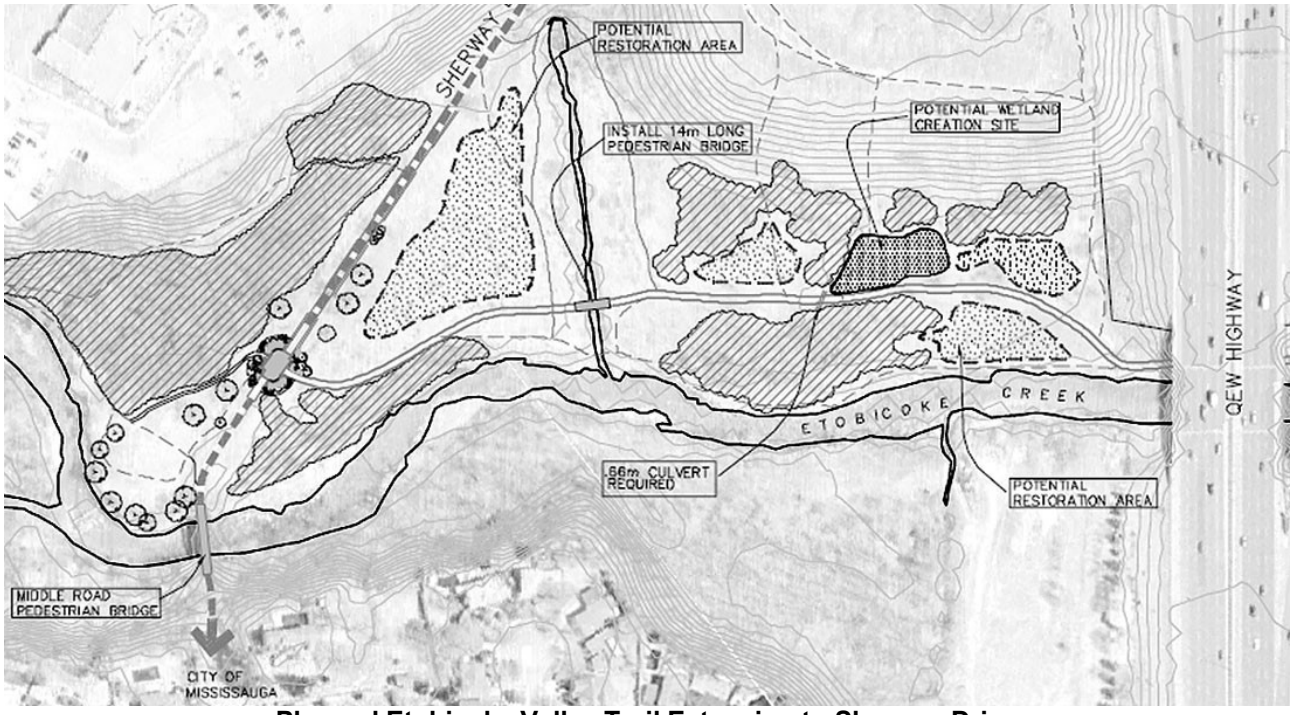
The hearing is scheduled to resume on June 14th.

Etobicoke Creek Trail Extension

By this fall we could see an extension of the multi-use trail which currently runs from Marie Curtis Park north to just south of the QEW. Plans are in place for a trail under the QEW up to Sherway Drive. This will provide trail users access to Mississauga via the historic Middle Road Bridge and Trillium Health Centre and Sherway Gardens via Sherway Drive.

The TRCA is ready to begin construction as soon as agreements are in place with the two provincial land owners involved: the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) and the Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC).

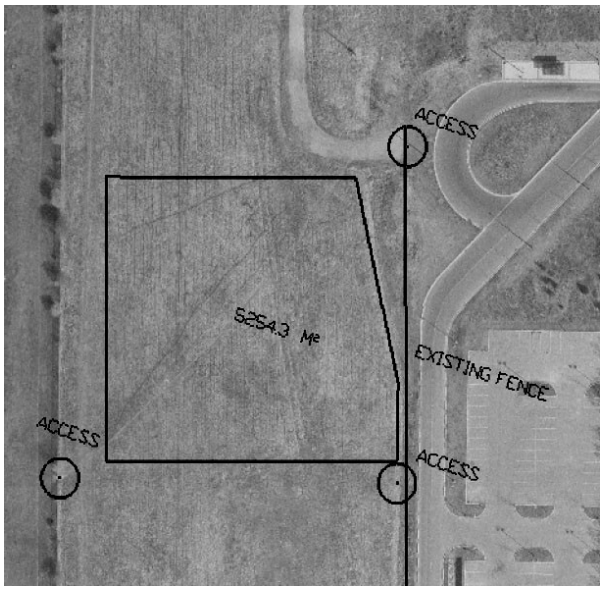
In addition to this new section of trail, the City is planning to repair sections of the existing trail this summer using funds from ISF (Infrastructure Stimulus Fund) and Rinc (Recreational Infrastructure Canada Program).



Planned Etobicoke Valley Trail Extension to Sherway Drive

Leash-Free Areas

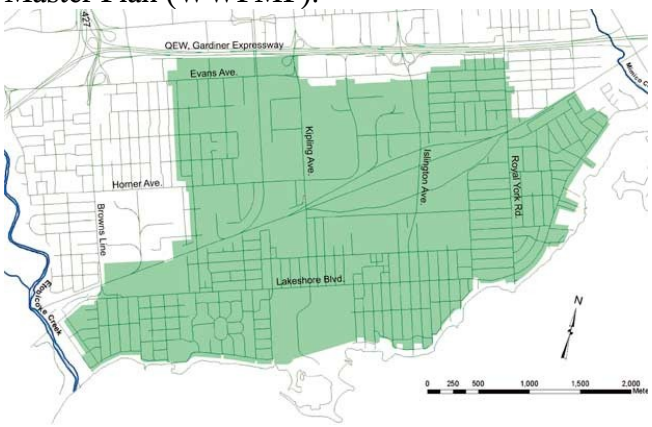
Two new dogs off-leash areas have been approved in South Etobicoke. The first one, at the R.L Clark Water Filtration Plant (adjacent to Colonel Samuel Smith Park) is already open. It is just in the field west of the TTC bus loop. The area is signed, but not well marked yet. The area is shown below.



The second area is at Humber Bay Park West at the western end of the peninsula. It will be signed and gated. It is expected to open later this year.

Stormwater Management

The City of Toronto has initiated a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) study to assess the consolidation of approximately thirty (30) stormwater outfalls within the Etobicoke Waterfront Drainage Area that discharge stormwater directly to Lake Ontario and to improve water quality by implementing stormwater management facilities. The Etobicoke Waterfront Stormwater Management Facilities Project was identified in the 25-year implementation plan of the Wet Weather Flow Master Plan (WWFMP).



The first public meeting of the EA process was held last November at the Assembly Hall. This is a very worthwhile project, but it will be very costly, and potentially very disruptive. The extent and duration of the disruption will depend on which stormwater management options are chosen. Some involve the construction of large sewer mains, including Lake Shore Blvd through most of Mimico. Others involve large stormwater detention facilities. These could be open ponds similar to the flow balancing facility at Humber Bay East, or underground storage tanks. Sam Smith Park plays a prominent role in most scenarios. Mimico Memorial Park is also being considered as a site for an underground storage tank.

CCFEW will continue to be actively involved in this EA process. While we fully support the goals

of the Wet Weather Flow Master Plan, the waterfront parks figure prominently in these plans. It is possible that some of these parks will be enhanced through this process, but we also need to ensure that they aren't degraded.

CCFEW has submitted a detailed response to the first meeting. These are some of our comments:

Colonel Sam Smith Park

We believe that there is a range of opportunities within this park. As the largest and most valued of our waterfront parks we would like you to consider:

- *Using natural processes as much as possible within the park area*
- *Daylighting of the buried Jackson Creek (currently part of a storm sewer emptying at Rotary Park)*
- *Restoring base flow to the remnant North Creek (terminates at the wetland pond)*
- *If storage tanks must be used that they be placed underneath the parking lots of Humber College and the Lakeshore Yacht Club. Contents of these storage tanks could be pumped into North and Jackson creeks to supplement base flow*
- *If a flow balancing system is selected for this site, the south east end of the park at the lake edge would be the preferred location*

Norris Crescent Park

We must express our total dismay with this park being considered for a facility of any kind. The park has only just been completed after many years of community participation and anticipation. We believe that this park should be removed from your list of identified locations. As we understand that a large sewer pipe will need to be installed along Lakeshore Boulevard we would recommend using this main sewer to take the water over to the Humber Bay Park into a wetland, hybrid pond-wetland or flow balance system.

Mimico Memorial Park

We do not support any stormwater management facilities at this location. We would suggest that the City consider placing a tank under the tennis court facility adjacent to the park, or under a parking lot at one of the nearby schools.

Humber Bay Park West

We would recommend that any new systems in this park should be a wet pond, constructed wetland or hybrid pond-wetland. We also believe that public access to the area currently fenced off for the yacht clubs' private uses should be re-configured to allow for public access similar to the arrangement in Sam Smith Park for the Lakeshore Yacht Club.

The full comments are available at **http://www.ccfew.org/html/what_s_up.html**

Rotary Park Revitalization

On Saturday, February 27, a group of local residents filled the meeting room at the New Toronto Library to participate in a design charette for the rejuvenation of Rotary (Peace) Park. The group shared a lot of good ideas and there was general consensus for a greener, more naturalized park as well as for "daylighting" the mouth of Jackson Creek. This creek originally started near Bloor Street and emptied into Lake Ontario in this park at the foot of Tenth Street. It has been buried in a pipe for over 60 years. You can still see it's path through the "swale" at the North-east portion of Colonel Samuel Smith Park.

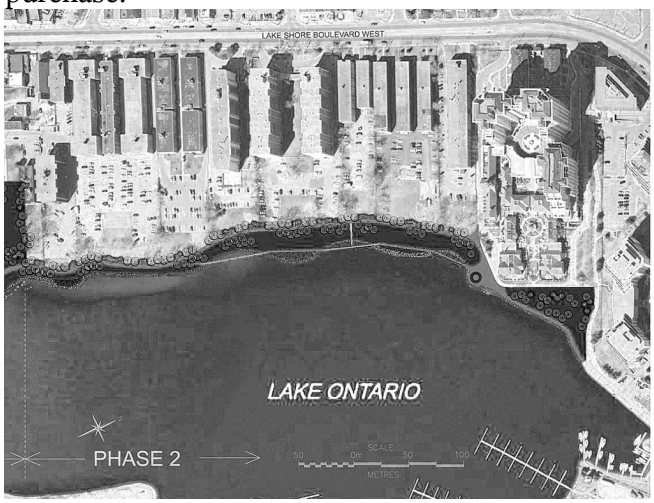
You can find our more about this creek and others on Michael Harrison's Lost Creeks of South Etobicoke blog:
http://lostcreeksofsouthetobicoke.blogspot.com

We will post details of plans and any future meetings on our website.

This newsletter was printed on recycled paper containing 100% post-consumer fiber.

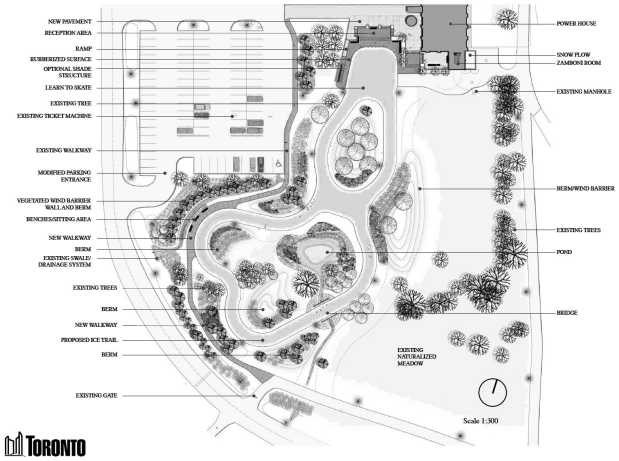
Mimico Waterfront Linear Park Phase II

There have been no recent public announcements, but construction of Phase II of the Mimico Waterfront Park is expected to begin this summer. This final phase will complete the connection from the east end of Phase 1 at Superior Avenue along the waterfront to Humber Bay Park West. Funding is in place and the TRCA have begun the expropriation process for the two remaining properties that they have not been able to purchase.



Skating Trail at Sam Smith Park

As it became clear last year that we would not be able to stop the construction of an ice skating trail in Colonel Samuel Smith Park, CCFEW representatives met with City staff in order to seek a compromise plan that would minimize environmental damage to the park. We were particularly concerned that the planned location to the north of the Power House would lead to the complete destruction of the woodlot there within a few years. While we didn't want to lose the meadow to the south either, we felt it was preferable to lose part of the meadow in order to save the trees. The final plan, illustrated below, pushes the trail as far west as possible.



It removes the south end of the existing parking lot and preserves the eastern portion of the meadow. While this wasn't our preferred option and we didn't get all of the changes we asked for, this plan goes a long way to addressing our concerns.

Construction started late last year and is expected to be completed early this summer. Watch our Activities page for news about naturalization planting events adjacent to the site this fall and next spring.

Waterfront West LRT

In our last newsletter, we discussed plans for a waterfront west light rapid transit (LRT) line along Lake Shore Boulevard from Parklawn to the Long Branch loop. We oppose the plan, and fortunately, that has become the popular view. Plans for that section of the LRT are dead for now. It is unlikely the LRT proposal will be back anytime soon considering the public and political opposition, as well as the recent delay in Provincial funding.

Volunteers needed: to help with the Spring Bird Festival
email: brian@ccfew.org or call **416-253-9811**

CCFEW Wins Urban Hero Award

Last October, CCFEW was honoured by Toronto Community News with a 2009 Urban Hero Award in the Environment category. This award recognizes CCFEW's current and past work so it really belongs to all of our current and past members for their efforts in making our community a better place. Thank you and congratulations to everyone who was a part of it!

CCFEW Contacts

Citizens Concerned About the Future of the Etobicoke Waterfront

Mail: **6 Meaford Ave, Etobicoke, ON M8V 2H5**

Phone: **416-253-9811**
E-mail: **info@ccfew.org**
Web: **www.ccfew.org**

CCFEW Annual General Meeting

Thursday, **April 29th**, 7:00 pm

at the LAMP,185 Fifth Street

(see page 1 for more details)

E-Mail Updates

There is more information on everything in this newsletter on our website. If you are not already receiving notices of events and meetings, send an e-mail to: **subscribe@ccfew.org**, and we'll put you on our list.

Join the Humber Bay Butterfly Habitat Stewardship Team!

Wednesdays 6-8pm

May - September

For more information please call: (416) 392- LEAF or email greentoronto@toronto.ca

Jane's Walk

Long Branch and the Lakeshore Grounds

Guided by Ruth Grier

Sunday, May 2

Start Time 10:30 am

Meeting Place:

The walk will start in the parking lot of Marie Curtis Park - take 42nd Street south from Lakeshore Blvd. W.

End Location:

We will end at Col. Sam Smith Park which is at the south end of Kipling Avenue. Walkers can retrace their steps or take a streetcar back to the starting point.

CCFEW Membership Renewal Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Individual : $10 ___ Family : $15 ___

Mail this form along with a cheque/money order payable to "CCFEW" to:

CCFEW, 6 Meaford Avenue, Etobicoke, Ontario M8V 2H5

SAM SMITH PARK CLEAN-UP

*Celebrate upcoming **EARTH DAY** with neighbours, friends and family!*

Sunday, April 25, 2009 @ 9 am – 3 pm

***Where**: Meet on the path southeast of the marina*
***Why**: Protect our urban green spaces by reducing the amount of garbage in the park and along the shorelines*
***Provided**: Garbage Bags, water & snacks*
***Bring**: Boots, gloves, rakes and shovels*
***Pack**: Picnic lunch*

CCFEW Bird Walks

Saturday, April 24th
Saturday, June 19th

9:00 am to 11:00 am
rain or shine

at **Colonel Samuel Smith Park**
(meet in the south parking lot)
***Sponsored by* Birds & Beans**

Humber Bay Shores Waterfront Cleanup

Saturday, May 15, 2009
9:30 am - Noon

***WHERE** Humber Bay Park West*
(near the pedestrian bridge across Mimico Creek by the ESSO station)

Etobicoke Creek Valley Garlic Mustard Pull and Planting

Saturday, May 15

10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Come learn about the impact of invasive plants. Help keep the Etobicoke Creek Valley beautiful and invasive-free by removing garlic mustard and planting native wildflowers.
***Location:** Etobicoke Valley Park at Westhead and Savona*

Spring Bird Festival

Saturday, May 29

9:00 – Noon

Colonel Sam Smith Park

See Page 1 for more details

For more details on these and many other events and meetings, visit
http://ccfew.org/html/activities.html