



WEST CARLING ASSOCIATION

9 Christie Street,
R.R. #1 Nobel, Ontario, P0G 1G0
Since 1921

Incorporated 1992

Georgian Bay Shoreline Concerns

FALL 2008 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Bruce Davidson

Curiouser and curiouser. While this famous quote from Alice in Wonderland would hardly seem apt to describe the behaviour of Carling Township Councillors, in fact it is exactly how your WCA Directors view the events of the last several months. I am disappointed to report that, despite a great deal of effort expended by your representing directors supported by a huge time commitment by the other major waterfront ratepayers associations in Carling, we may have fallen short in our desire to craft the new Official Plan in a fashion which we believe would preserve and protect the environment.

Many of you will be unaware that there are a couple of issues so fundamental to our core belief systems, that West Carling, Deep Bay and North Sound Associations representing a significant portion of voters in Carling have each found it necessary to file a formal objection to the Ontario Municipal Board. This is a pretty drastic step and one which we have not taken without extensive effort in conflict resolution and great deliberation. The three Associations above mentioned plus Smith Bay have retained the services of respected planner Randy French for guidance along the way. The crux of the matter is that, while nobody seems to want it, Carling's draft Official Plan will not prevent high density residential development from occurring along our precious shoreline. How this can possibly be is not easy to explain, but in a nutshell our Associations believe that developers like the one who created the notorious Red Leaves project in Muskoka, could do the same thing here if we fail to tell them by way of our Official Plan, that we are not open for new Tourist Commercial business. If they want to buy shoreline lots and rezone into a commercial designation (which would subvert our Residential zoning by-laws), well they can attempt to do so by way of Official Plan Amendment, but we are certainly not going to facilitate the process. Seems simple enough, but we cannot seem to convince our Councillors of the need to draft the document accordingly. As well, in the interest of harmonious relations, we have been very supportive of the 14 existing Tourist Commercial operators in Carling to ensure their right to redevelop their lands for ongoing commercial purposes using a ratio of one new building for each 30 meters of shoreline, as opposed to the Residential

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requirement of 100 meters of shoreline per new building. W think giving the existing resorts three times the density is a significant compromise indeed. However, it appears that it is not good enough for some.

Your association directors remain adamant that the demarcation between commercial and residentially zoned development remain clear and that the 100 meter minimum frontage for residential be upheld. The proponent of the Inverlochy Resort redevelopment has filed a formal objection to the Ontario Municipal Board, asking to be considered under the old 'cluster development' density provisions. Such an outcome would set a dangerous precedent for all the existing Tourist Commercial operators to redevelop as high density residential probably involving fractional or time-sharing ownership while masquerading as commercial operations. So that is why we had to act as we did in filing an objection.

As your associations continue to make representation to Carling Councilors, there is a glimmer of hope on the horizon, although our experience to date would suggest that we not get unduly optimistic. We and the three other large Carling ratepayer associations have been asked by the OMB to try and work out our differences prior to a formal Board hearing on the Inverlochy Resort redevelopment. This we intend to do, likely in the company of Carling Councillors, the Township's Planner and their legal representative. If we can resolve this matter, the chance of drafting an acceptable Official Plan is considerably enhanced. Also we continue to make representation to Carling Councilors in an attempt to show them why the language must be changed and so avert an OMB hearing on the Official Plan. My sense of it is that these efforts have clarified the issues and could well prove productive. We will just have to wait and see.

In the meantime, cross your fingers. There is no shortage of well heeled developers prepared to do battle with local municipalities in our area now that Highway 400 is being 4-laned from Toronto to Sudbury. I fear that the poor old Georgian Bay, spared the blight inflicted on more southerly communities by virtue of its more difficult access, may soon come under attack as never before. Even as we speak, our neighbours in McKellar Township are doing battle with a developer attempting high density residential on Lake Manitowabing. Closer to home, hard on the heels of the Inverlochy proposal the 100 acre Winatou Resort has just been listed and it is probably just a matter of time before we are embroiled in a redevelopment proposal there as well.

So the West Carling Association is morphing into a rather different identity from its historical role of environmental stewardship. As you recall, we were the body that first took up the Franklin Island cause. Following endorsement by Carling Township and other organizations, this initiative is now widely regarded as a great success, with the incidence of disruptive behaviour down considerably since the camping monitors were hired. We remain vigilant to the threat that inappropriate industrial uses, such as wind farms, may pose to our shoreline community. And our close involvement in the Official Plan for Carling continues this transformation into a more pro-active organization.

Stay tuned and supportive. Great challenges lie ahead!

Evaluating Carling Township's Coastal Wetlands The Eastern Georgian Bay Coastal Wetlands Project

Coastal wetlands are dynamic, productive and diverse ecosystems. They are an important part of Carling Township as they provide habitat for fish and waterfowl, improve water quality, protect shorelines from erosion and define the character of the Georgian Bay coast. They are also at risk from incompatible shoreline and road development.

That's why in the summer of 2008, landowners, the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), Georgian Bay Land Trust (GBLT), and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) initiated a pilot project designed to take a closer look at the wetlands found in the western portion of the Township. The project field work and evaluation was led by Beacon Environmental.

The wetlands under study encompass approximately 12,000 acres (4,856 hectares) of both Crown and private lands, including the north and west sides of Deep Bay, north and south of Snug Harbour Road, and from the Shebeshekong Bay and West Bay area south to past Snug Harbour. Local landowners were invited to join in the study and by granting researchers access to their properties greatly contributed to efforts to learn more about Eastern Georgian Bay's coastal wetlands.

Protecting coastal wetlands through Provincial Wetland Policy

Marshes, swamps, fens, and the globally unique coastal wetlands of Eastern Georgian Bay Coast are being evaluated following the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System. This is a standardized provincial method of evaluating wetlands to determine whether these natural features should be designated as 'provincially significant' and therefore given protection status through


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provincial and local planning policy. The OMNR has a provincial mandate to provide the final review and approval of the wetland evaluations and determine whether they will be designated as provincially significant.

The project evaluates wetlands through a scoring system in the context of their biological, social, hydrological, and special features' values. Biological values can include high habitat diversity; social values can include hunting or nature interpretation; and special features can include the presence of rare flora and fauna.

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For the Love of the Bay

By Bruce Davidson

A few years ago I recognized the passing of a very special lady who gave a lifetime of service to residents and visitors to the Snug Harbour area. Elinor Christie certainly deserved remembrance for her boundless energy and selfless dedication, and is still very much missed by many.

Now I have the sad task of recognizing another great lady who spent 86 consecutive summers on the Georgian Bay—my own mother. Elizabeth Davidson, or “just call me Lib” as she liked to say, came to the Bay as an 8 year old child way back in 1923. At the time there were only dirt logging roads crisscrossing Parry Sound's rocky terrain, and for those fortunate enough to own a horseless carriage it was a tortuous two day trip via Orillia and Bala to the end of the road at Snug Harbour. In her inaugural trip she and her mother took the train to Pointe au Baril station and overnights at the then fancy Ojibway Hotel. In the morning they chartered a sleek 'Muskoka' launch down to the Snug lighthouse where the keeper Mr. Bautreil hospitably put them up for the night. Her father joined them that evening after a hair raising journey by the Parry Sound Livery speedboat piloted unerringly by a native Indian who apparently could see in the dark as he sped past unmarked shoals in uncharted waters.

In the early years, the youthful Lib Davidson saw plentiful lake trout being caught on linen hand lines wrapped on wooden spools held by the rear passenger in the leaky lapstreak rowboat. She eagerly awaited the weekly arrival of the old Supply Boat plying the waters north from Parry Sound whose shrill whistle announced the presence of fresh goodies like milk and eggs for storage in the icehouse. Speaking of which, she saw husky unshaven men in torn dirty overalls (bent nails served as suspender clasps) hauling fifty pound blocks of ice over the Georgian Bay rocks. As a young girl, she heard of the Saturday night parties held by the fishermen families way out on the Mink Islands -- but this was the era before outboard motors, and visiting was out of the question.

She enjoyed the sight of the bright red canoes of the YMCA camp on Franklin Island being paddled by on sunny days, and she sadly witnessed the camp itself being torn down 40 years later. She remembered how exciting it was when the new Aladdin lamp was brought to the cottage so that my grandfather no longer had to sit by the fire and try to read by the old smudgy coal oil lamps. Being a girl back then carried few special privileges and she well remembered how great it was to have a hand pump so that no more buckets had to be carried up from the lake. Thirty years of cooking on a wood stove would pass before the marvel of propane changed her world. A few short years thereafter came another momentous event as the married mother of three heard contractors cussing in the attic as they pulled electric wires through dusty passages covered

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in cobwebs and mouse droppings and so delivered the greatest miracle of all: electricity.

My mother recalled with hilarity the time in the 50's when on a rare trip out to Red Rock Lighthouse she took a bunch of magazines out to the keepers only to discover on arrival that the magazines were Ladies Home Journals. She loved to point out the flocks of seagulls screaming and diving behind the fishing boats as they plied their way homeward laden with trout in the era before the devastation of the fishery wrought by the lamprey eel. Without newspapers or television, Lib treasured the occasional letter bringing news from back home, and spent nearly 60 summers on the island without a telephone.

So now we fast forward to the year 2008 in a brand new millennium. Lib Davidson at the tender age of 93 was taking enough medications to make Shoppers Drug Mart one of the premier growth stocks in the country. For the previous year she had been on oxygen 24/7 and was barely able to move ten feet, even with a walker. She survived several brushes with death including one where paramedics brought her back from clinically dead. Yet her mind was sharp as a razor and spirit unbroken. So what did she tell her "kids" in June? Why nothing other than "I'll go mad if you don't get me up to the island this summer!" Well wasn't that just great. We now had to figure out a way to get her 400 miles by car from home to Snug Harbour, into the boat, out of the boat, up the stairs at the landing and over the rocks to the cottage.

So with a huge effort from my sister, a little ingenuity on my brother's part and a helpful hand from neighbours at Snug we did all that and she enjoyed one final month as her 86th summer on the Bay. She had traveled the world and then made her final departure from the place she loved best. Can anyone make a more profound statement about why the Georgian Bay is special than my own mother did by way of her courageous act?

Imagine how incredibly young this beautiful Canada is when within one lifetime it was possible to enjoy a total wilderness experience in an area now just 2 ½ hours from Toronto! This is why present day members of the West Carling Association have such a responsibility, nay obligation, to preserve and protect what we have had handed down to us. There will never be another opportunity to do the right thing for generations unborn as great as the one we have right now on our doorstep. We absolutely have to ensure that tough measures to protect the environment are incorporated in Carling's Official Plan. My mother understood that.

Property Tax Reassessment

By Michael Gordon

Although we have had a reprieve for a few years, this fall all property owners received an updated assessment for the value of their property in 2008 (the first assessment since 2005). The change from the 2005 value that has been used as the basis for property tax last year to the updated 2008 value will be phased-in in equal steps over the next 3 years. For the 2009 property tax year, the average phased-in assessment of residential properties in Carling Township increased by 6.3% since the 2008 property tax year.

How does this increase in assessment impact our property taxes?

The answer to this question depends completely on the actions and decisions of our Carling Township Council. If Council is able to maintain the level of spending at an amount similar to last year than property owners taxes would increase or decrease a small amount based on whether the phased-in assessment increase for their property was above or below the 6.3% average mentioned above. It is critical that as property owners we keep a close watch on the budget and spending level of the Township – watch for future articles on the Township budget and spending in this newsletter. In many ways, we are fortunate in Carling Township that the majority of the residential properties are waterfront. This means that waterfront property owners effectively have control over electing Council (and not re-electing councilors with excessive spending habits). It also means that the potential for shifting the tax burden from non-waterfront properties to waterfront properties is less than in many other cottage areas.

How can I appeal my assessment?

Given the events of the past 6 months in the global economy and financial/real estate markets, it would seem reasonable to believe that the assessed value for a property on Jan 1 of last year is likely above the current value. If you think the assessed value of your property is too high, the documents included with your Assessment Notice outline how to request a reconsideration or file an appeal with the Assessment Review Board. Requests for Reconsideration must be made by March 31st of this year. Further information is available from the Georgian Bay Association website at www.georgianbay.ca

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER COMING IN SPRING

Look for your new 2009 West Carling Association membership roster (directory) with your Spring newsletter. We have decided to include it with the Spring newsletter going forward to ensure that we are able to include all the late membership renewals and still get it to you in time for next cottage season.

WEST CARLING ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
JULY 27, 2008
CARLING RECREATION HALL

President Bruce Davidson welcomed the approximately 65 members and guests present. The directors of the WCA present were introduced. Guests introduced included: Gord Harrison and Hans Muysson representing the Carling Township Council, Joe Ryman, Carling Works Superintendent, Mary Lee, Georgian Bay Association President. Bruce Davidson, WCA President acted as Chairman, and Sheila Tierney, WCA Secretary, recorded the minutes.

Approval of Minutes of the 2007 AGM

Moved by Sheila Tierney and seconded by Dave Turner that the minutes of the July 29th, 2007 AGM, as circulated and published in the fall 2007 newsletter, be approved. Carried

Approval of Actions of the Board of Directors

Moved by Doug Malvern and seconded by Peter Dey that all acts, contracts, bylaws and proceedings, appointments, elections, and payments enacted by the directors and officers of the WCA since the date of the last general meeting, as the same are set out in the minutes of the Board of Directors, or in the annual reports and financial statements submitted to this meeting, be and the same are here by approved and confirmed. Carried

Report from Carling Council

Gord Harrison gave regrets from Mayor Mike Konoval.

The Carling Township representatives responded to many and varied questions from the floor. **Communication Towers:** Concern was expressed regarding the location of a Bell tower off Remy Bay Road. Gord Harrison responded that 2 towers are required to serve the Township, one off Alves Bay Road and the Remy Bay site. Rogers and Telus will use the same towers and construction will begin this fall.

Official Plan: The Councillors were thanked for their vision and leadership at the Official Plan meetings. Gord Harrison commented that the major issue concerned the expansion and redevelopment of resorts and the need to balance the needs of resort owners with concern for the impact on the environment. A compromise resulted in allowing 1600 square foot cottages with a minimum of 30 metres of shoreline for redevelopment. Existing units could be expanded to 1200 square feet per 20 metres of shoreline. Total lot coverage allowed is 10 percent. Concern was expressed that resorts could be expanded by buying up adjoining properties for redevelopment. Gord Harrison responded that there would be no more commercial development on the shoreline. The final result was not unanimous and did not always follow the recommendation of the planner, John Jackson who was hired to review the Official Plan. major A



statement was made that the planner selected also worked for developers in the area. Gord Harrison responded that the Council had the responsibility to give clear direction to the planner to reflect the vision of the Council.

Commercial interests on non-commercial land: A question was raised about barging and building operators using non-commercial lands to conduct operations. Gord Harrison stated that Council was aware that this was happening and action would be taken to control it.

Water Access: Gord Harrison stated that the Township does not supply docking slips but the Official Plan recognizes the need for more docking facilities. Some crown land is available and some small docking areas would have the least impact.

New Municipal Building: Gord Harrison stated that the Council is looking at expansion or replacement of the present facility and wants to strike a citizens' committee to assist in the review of a needs study which has been prepared by a consultant.

Proportion of tax revenue from island and shoreline properties: Gord Harrison estimated that those properties provide two thirds or more of the total revenue.

The Councillors were thanked for their input and for their long and difficult work on the Official Plan.

Treasurer's Report

Alex Davidson presented the financial statements and the budget forecast. Documents were available for members. The statements showed an excess of revenue over expense of \$1,426. The 2009 budget is based on a membership of 260 and includes continued expenses for Franklin Island monitoring.

Moved by Alex Davidson and seconded by John Rohr that the Treasurer's report be approved. Carried. The Treasurer announced that Murray Hogeboom had retired and would no longer do the WCA audit. Murray was thanked for his work over many years. Unable to find a new auditor at this time and with the knowledge that organizations with less than \$100,000 in assets do not require audits, the following motion, passed at the previous directors' meeting was introduced.

Moved by John Rohr and seconded by Doug Malvern that the WCA dispense with the services of an auditor for 2 years and that a Financial Review Committee be appointed to oversee the accounting and preparation of financial statements and the budget. Carried.

The following directors volunteered at the previous directors' meeting to serve on the Financial Review Committee. John Rohr, Jeremy Gawen and Alex Davidson.

Membership Report

Michael Gordon reported that the membership averages about 250 members over the years. There are over 800 potential members with shoreline properties. He noted that it is important to have a larger proportion of shoreline owners in WCA for a strong voice to Council and other government agencies. Members were urged to promote WCA membership to their neighbours.

Nominating Committee Report

Sheila Tierney reported that Sue Cooper and John Crean had resigned. All the other directors indicated their intention to continue as directors. The slate presented included a new member, Marc Cooper. There is an opening for an additional director. Three calls for nominations from the floor were made.



* Open Sunday 10am - 3pm (during summer)

The following slate of directors was presented:

For re-election: Rob Brown, Christina Caap, Alex Davidson, Bruce Davidson, Sarah Douglas, Jeremy Gawen, Michael Gordon, David Hume, Ken James, Jill Kimberly, Doug Malvern, Phyllis Orted, Dave Rapson, John Rohr, Richard Stark, Scott Tomenson, Sheila Tierney, Dave Turner.

For election: Marc Cooper

Three calls were made for nominations from the floor. Hearing none, it was moved by Sheila Tierney and seconded by Doug Malvern that the proposed directors be elected. Carried.

The meeting continued with presentations by a number the following speakers:

OPP Constable Nicky: Stated the need for names and home phone numbers so that property owners can be contacted after hours. It was suggested that this information be obtained from the Township.

The fine for not having a boating license is \$255. He suggested that a photocopy of the license and boat registration be carried in the safety kit.

Even Paddle Boats and Personal Water Crafts need safety kits. There is a \$125 fine for missing safety items.

There is zero tolerance for liquor violations. Breathalyzer tests can be done on the water. Unopened liquor can be transported to your destination.

Respect posted speed limits, which are the responsibility of the Township.

Call in registration numbers and description of boats which are loud or for other infractions.

The OPP provide 24 hour ambulance transport.

GBA President, Mary Lee: Mary Lee recounted a brief history of the GBA which in 1915 was formed by four cottager associations in an effort to curb break ins and theft. Now there are 4000 cottage owners. The GBA was incorporated in the 1980's as an umbrella organization for cottager associations from Port Severn to the North Channel.

The \$40 per member fee paid to the GBA covers the salary of the CEO Bob Duncanson, part time secretarial services and a travel budget.

Mary addressed the following issues of concern to the GBA:

Population growth in the GTA and the extension of Hwy 400 will lead pressure for more development on Georgian Bay, which will impact the environment and cause land costs to inflate higher taxes and the inability to pass on the family cottage.

Demand for wind power on the Bay.

The growth of open net aquaculture causing effluent to go into the water. She noted that a fish farm is the equivalent of a large chicken farm.

Clear cut logging.

Control of grey water from boats.

The Georgian Bay Foundation is raising money to address these concerns.

Georgian Bay Land Trust, Richard Stark: Richard explained that the GBLT is a group of dedicated individuals interested in preserving special places who donate time, money and land because they are passionate about the Bay. There are four initiatives.

Land Acquisitions: 1000 acres of shoreline from Port Severn to Bayfield was purchased or donated.

Planning: Each area has a plan for land development.

Education: 200 volunteers communicate how to live in concert with unique species and identify special areas.



*Preserving unique properties along the eastern shore
and North Channel. Join with us in protecting
the natural beauty and character of
Georgian Bay.*

For more information visit,
www.gblt.org or call, 416-440-1519

Community Partnership: An example is working with other groups for the monitoring of Franklin Island.

Richard urged the WCA members to spread the word, develop neighbourhood plans, volunteer or donate money or land.

Franklin Island, Joe Ryman: The Public Works Superintendent reported that the monitors of Franklin Island were educating campers and collecting data for their year end report. They have motorboats this year and can take out garbage. The program has a budget of \$11,439 which is shared by the MNR, GBLT, Eastern Georgian Bay Stewardship Council, WCA, the North Sound Association, and Carling Township.

Species at Risk, Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve, Glenda Clayton: Glenda reported that of the 29 species of global significance which are at risk, 24 are in West Carling. These include the Eastern Fox Snake, Common Night Hawk, chimney Swift, Spotted Turtle etc. She urged people report sightings alive or dead and send pictures, help turtles off the road, leave dead trees standing, leave fallen trees to decay, have floating docks etc. Glenda is available to talk to any group interested in doing something for species at risk.

Adopt a Wetland, Meredith Crouch: Meredith has a guide for \$20 which helps to identify aquatic plants. Interested people can collect underwater plants and/or take pictures. Data will be collected and sent to MacMaster University to help identify significant wetlands.

Bass Nests: Pea gravel and literature was at hand at the meeting as well as at Snug Harbour.

Water Levels: Jeremy Gawen reported that the Upper Great Lakes Study from the IJC did not include comment from the authors of the Baird Report. Mary Muter is on the Advisory Board and is lobbying the USA and Canada to do three dimensional modelling of the St. Clair River to gauge the flow and assess erosion.

Wind Energy: Jeremy reported that there is a test tower on Parry Island. Other possible locations have not been released. An OPA generated report identified the best locations are in the water from Sans Souci north. Of the four biospheres in Ontario, the Niagara Escarpment, Point Pelee, the 1000 Islands and Georgian Bay, only Georgian Bay is unprotected.

Environmental Assessment of Carling Wetlands: Michael Gordon reported that several biologist had begun a six week survey, examining crown land and wetlands in four areas, Deep Bay, Remy Bay, West Bay and Hailstone Lake for species and biodiversity. A provincially significant wetland is required in order to make a conservation reserve happen. The scientist's report will be ready in the fall.

New Business: No new business was brought forward.

Adjournment: Moved by Jill Kimberly and seconded by Sue Cooper that the meeting adjourn with thanks to the chair. Carried



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