

## Lake Ontario Park Revitalization Study

### Staff Advisory Group Workshop #2: Meeting Minutes

*Time and Place:* Thursday, April 19th, 7:00-9:45, Front Lounge, Portsmouth Olympic Harbour

*Attendees:*

1. Councillor Beth Pater (City of Kingston Council: District representative)
  2. Councillor Bittu George (City of Kingston Council)
  3. Councillor Ed Smith (City of Kingston Council)
  4. Mark Fluhrer (Director, City of Kingston Culture and Recreation)
  5. Kristine Hebert (Parks & Open Space Planning Co-ordinator, City of Kingston)
  6. Robin Etherington (Manager, Culture and Heritage, City of Kingston)
  7. Marc Letourneau (Heritage Planner, City of Kingston)
  8. George Speal (Kiwans Club of Kingston)
  9. Jim Cannon (Portsmouth Villager's Association)
  10. Clint Hierlihy (Portsmouth Villager's Association)
  11. Suzanne Hamilton (Portsmouth Villager's Association)
  12. Hans Vorster (Commodore's Cove resident's Association)
  13. Barbara Bennett (1000 King Street West resident's Association)
  14. Enid Barnett (1000 King Street West resident's Association)
  15. Mary Vincent (Friends of Lake Ontario Park)
  16. Alida Moffat (Friends of Lake Ontario Park)
  17. Wendy Mayoff---- (Friends of Lake Ontario Park)
  18. Eartha (Urban Aboriginal Community)
  19. Jennifer Payne -Oddie--- (Providence Continuing Care)
  20. Mark Christie (Ontario Realty Corporation)
  21. Blayne Mackey (St. Lawrence College)
  22. Mark Lewis (Kingston Chamber of Commerce)
  23. Charlie Mignault (Kingston Economic Development Corporation)
  24. Carl Bray (Heritage consultant, lead consultant/facilitator)
- (Regrets: Jay Gazeley (Cataraqui Golf & Country Club))

Carl Bray called the workshop to order at 7:05 and gave a brief introduction to the study and to the workshop. He asked each person in attendance to identify themselves and the group for which they were the representative, and to summarize the comments they had received since the last workshop. Copies of the park history prepared by Jennifer McKendry were passed out to each participant. Carl then gave a brief presentation on the spectrum of improvement options possible for a park such as Lake Ontario Park, citing precedents from other parts of Ontario and beyond. He made reference to the website of the Project for Public Spaces ([www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org)) in which are found a wide variety of parks, as a good starting point for each participant to begin considering the types of improvements that would be most suited to Lake Ontario Park. Following a brief coffee break, Carl re-assembled the group and divided it into four working groups. Each group was asked to use base plans, photos and markers to prepare planning principles and rough layouts for the future improvement of the park. Each group elected a

representative to report back to the whole. Following these presentations, Carl thanked everyone and summarized the next steps in the study process. A third workshop devoted to reviewing precedents for different types of improvements is scheduled for May 25, same time and place. The workshop ended at approximately 10:15.

The following minutes are compiled from notes taken by Carl Bray, Kris Hebert and Advisory Group members.

**Summary of comments heard by group members since last workshop:**

*Urban Aboriginal Community:* park should remain as natural as possible with some activities, such as minimal camping, supporting services, and a reclaimed beach.

*Friends of LOP:* park is a natural area, family oriented, good for dog walking (an off-leash portion would be desirable); emphasize waterfront lands, think of a theme for park improvement (e.g. aboriginal links); existing park advertising board on King Street not well used; funding an issue; need four season use, ecological diversity; tie park into city-wide waterfront trail system, look at return of camping use, promote public ownership of waterfront lands

*Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC):* the Province is undertaking a long term planning process for the former asylum and PCC lands and an ongoing; harmonized approach to include open space planning is an important part of their process.

*Portsmouth Villager's Association:* park is a place for families, events, camping, (supported arts and cultural activities elsewhere in the city), comments are being solicited by the PVA newsletter; park as possible windsurfing centre; how to fund improvements a recurring theme in conversations about the park's future.

*Councillor Pater:* reassured about planning process, sees swimming and camping as needed in the park, echoes other ideas and thoughts from PVA.

*Chamber of Commerce:* his contacts had fond memories of the park, family and company picnics, park now deteriorated; park is natural, a family-oriented place, a bandshell, gathering place would be good, as would camping, events and swimming, not sure about midway, definitely opposed to wind turbines, would consider interpretive displays.

*St. Lawrence College:* College supports City and Advisory Group planning process for the park; hopes process takes into account what the College can offer; sees park as natural, meeting place, place for sustainable development projects; College is well into its own master planning process, has produced a master plan which will be available to the group.

*Providence Continuing Care (PCC):* wants safe access to the park for patients, good lighting, accessibility issues important, raised issue of future of boundary fence, need to have softer delineations at site limits. Open space critical to patient health.

*City of Kingston Culture and Recreation:* feedback from City's website link to the park planning process shows support for park as a public place and for bringing back camping.

*1000 King Street West:* have written article in condo newsletter and held residents' meeting to discuss the park planning process; maintenance an issue, see park as natural, family oriented, with camping, a place for all Kingstonians, not just neighbours; would like to see current City budget for the park, since the grounds and buildings seem more and more neglected each year; sees decisions on the park's future being made without public input (until now); wondered how best to fund improvements.

*Kiwanis Club:* at latest club meeting, Kiwanis says it wants to get involved but needs to understand the best role for its involvement; sees park as a family oriented place, would like to see challenging playgrounds for children and youth; cost of facilities an issue (don't want to see park commercialized and become too expensive for people of modest means); supports picnicking, supervised swimming area, winter use (e.g. cross-country skiing, artificial skating rink, ice sculptures)

*Commodore's Cove:* comments from article on park planning in residents' newsletter engender many of the same comments as those received by the Chamber of Commerce representative (see above); most people regret the deterioration in the park's condition

*Kingston Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO):* public waterfront is essential, park an extension of that; park can be a hub for city-wide/regional trails.

*Councillor George:* was on committee with councillors Smith and Pater that reviewed the park and its commercial operations (camping and midway), interested in current planning process.

### **Group presentations of ideas for park improvements:**

#### *Group 1 (Mark Lewis presenting)*

- Dog park area (northern section near camping area, with trees)
- Camping area (with serviced and eco-sites, private sector operated through CTA, with maximum length of stay to encourage turnover)
- Trails (should be divided into lanes for walking, cycling/blading, become cross-country ski trails in winter), lighting by Led lights.
- Water sports area (for non-motorized watercraft; no docking except for emergency mooring)
- Beach (supervised swimming area)
- Interpretive centre (with park and city information)
- Public art (commission a totem pole to depict native history and be an educational tool)
- Picnic area (large, for family/group picnics, with barbeques)? Metered electric BBQ's in other cities.
- Pavilion (re-vamp and establish cultural arts centre there)
- Concession area (snack food sales)
- Sustainable power supply (renewable energy project, with College and University)
- Change house (re-vamp)

- Maintenance (try adopt-a-park program with local service clubs, reforestation and habitat restoration projects)
- Youth recreation area (basketball, tennis court – convert to skating rink in winter)
- Lighting (solar powered lights on trails-LEDs)
- Extent revamping of park to include Elevator Bay Park (horticultural demonstration projects, benches)

(Each area shown on base plan)

*Group 2 (Kris Hebert presenting)*

- Existing buildings (demolish those in the upper area except for round washrooms; keep shoreline storage building)
- New buildings (new pavilion, with events complex and offices; interpretive centre)
- Fence (low fence along boundary, less visible) or combination of landscaping and low fencing.
- Entrance road (asphalt), remaining roads more natural in stonedust.
- Reduce number of roads and parking areas. Have a more efficient layout.
- Path system (improve main upper and lower path systems, need to make all areas accessible)
- Amphitheatre (events area, close to water)
- Tree areas (create transition areas between major uses)
- Wharf small craft only
- Windsurf beach and /scuba centre in conjunction with reuse of parks storage shed.
- Water quality (improve water circulation by punching holes in the breakwater)
- Play area (enhance existing make it interesting , add picnic area, merry-go-round (heritage), train )
- Beach (restore and naturalize as much as possible)
- Lighting (solar along paths)
- Camping (reinstate)especially in association with Waterfront Regeneration Trust waterfront trail linkage through the park.
- Dog walking (create off leash area)
- Meditative area (natural)
- Playing fields (e.g. soccer, in open area to north)
- Teahouse (with outdoor terrace)
- Drinking fountains (upper and lower trails)

(Each area shown on base plan)

*Group 3 (Mark Fluhrer presenting)*

*Components*

- *Emphasized the need for community partnerships to make the site work.*
- Camping
- Swimming
- Picnicking
- Parking
- Waterfront revitalization (wharf)

- Boating
- Trails
- Public transit access
- Therapeutic setting
- Dog walking (with off leash area)
- Open space/event space
- Natural
- Buildings/washrooms
- Playground
- Emphasize cooling breezes
- Bike parking

*Opportunities*

- Wetland enhancement (water quality improvement)
- Wharves
- Watercraft outfitter (canoes, kayaks)
- Camping (natural setting)
- Trail system
- Canteen/concession stand
- Security (year-round resident park supervisor/operator)
- Restaurant in pavilion
- Improve sight lines
- Family picnic area
- Terraces to water

(Each area shown on base plan)

*Group 4 (Blayne Mackey presenting)*

- No camping (not an ideal place for a campground)
- Soccer fields
- Waterfront trails
- Active playground (on a grander scale)
- Over-riding improvement principles: sustainable use; parents and children; waterfront pathways
- Beach improvements
- Campground replaced by larger events space
- Amphitheatre/bandstand
- Canoe/windsurfers/watersports
- Natural areas (retain woods)
- Cross country ski trails-groomed
- Outdoor skating area
- Improved infrastructure (roads, parking, washrooms, changerooms)
- Commercial uses restricted to restaurant/café food outlets
- Infrastructure improvements via long-term land lease to private sector operator, money re-invested in park services, infrastructure, programming and marketing

**(Each area shown on base plan)**

**Note:** Councillor Pater asked Kristine to outline the existing Waterfront Regeneration Trust path improvements slated for the Lake Ontario Park this year.

Kristine noted that under a SuperBuild proposal, which was approved for funding in 2002, the city is required to complete trail improvements by November of 2006 as part of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust vision to have accessible pathways around Lake Ontario. The City of Kingston's project is to extend the current asphalt link from the Richardson Wharf into the Lower (former) campground as far as the existing storage shed. An envisioned link across the terraced grass slope south of the boat access road will be held off until an approved concept plan for the park is completed. The remainder of the improvements would be widening the existing asphalt path from the edge of the PCC lands to the circular washroom along the upper terrace. The City of Kingston is covering 80% of the work and the Waterfront Regeneration Trust is covering 20% of the cost. The city has entered into a partnership agreement with the Waterfront Regeneration Trust for this project as have 27 other Lake Ontario fronting municipalities. It is noted that the group was pleased to hear of the project and did not object to the path improvements as all have identified this as a needed improvement.