



**Ashbridges Bay Treatment Plant (ABTP)
Neighbourhood Liaison Committee
Meeting #85**

Mennonite New Life Centre, 1774 Queen St. East
Tuesday, February 12, 2008
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Attendance:

Karen Buck	Citizens for a Safe Environment, Beaches Resident
Bob Kortright	Toronto Field Naturalists, Resident
Jim Neff	Citizens for a Safe Environment
Michael Rosenberg	Economics of Technology Working Group, ICMC
Karey Shinn	NLC Community Co-Chair
Aliss Terpstra	International Institute of Concern for Public Health, Citizens for a Safe Environment

Observers:

5 students from U of T

City of Toronto:

Robert Davis	Public Consultation Unit
Roman Kaszczij	Toronto Water
Emily Zegers	Toronto Water

Consultants:

Suzanne Barrett	Barrett Consulting
Ian Dance	ENVision - The Hough Group
Bob Dobbin	Landscape Architect, EarthTech Canada
Derek Weckers	ENVision - The Hough Group
Avin Duggal	Earth Tech Canada
David Pearl	Artist
Michael Wheeler	Veolia
Mike Ryder	Veolia
Michael Vujicic	Veolia

Regrets

Shabbir Dato	ABTP Engineer, Toronto Water
David Done	
Connie Demb	

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting took place on the evening of a severe winter storm. Travel by automobile or TTC was very slow, so most attendees arrived between 20 and 60 minutes late.

2. ABTP Landscape Plan Update Presentation

The presentation focused on three potential options for the ABTP landscape plan. The options were displayed visually using PowerPoint and accompanied by a verbal description (presentation posted at http://www.toronto.ca/water/wastewater_treatment/treatment_plants/ashbridges/nlc.htm) Photos of some of the different features, such as art and tree layouts were also included. The presentation was similar to the one that will be given at the public workshop on Tuesday February 26, 2008.

Michael Rosenberg asked, regarding option A, whether it was common to plant trees in a linear pattern. The consultant responded that it is common.

While looking at option A, it was asked whether the natural grove in the area near the "T" in the circle will remain. The consultant replied that they can look at incorporating it into the plan.

It was asked whether options A and B have the same number of trees. The consultant answered that the number of trees are about the same. However, in option B there is the opportunity to have more trees as they are more intensely planted.

It was noted that there is a lot of cycling in this area. Cyclists will be competing with pedestrians, unless pedestrians and cyclists are separated. The consultant answered that the Coxwell Path area is quite wide and would be able to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists. It is set back from the Coxwell roadway edge by about five metres. There will be an opportunity to create areas for cyclists, if needed.

It was asked if a snow dump area has been designed. It was noted that the parking lot will likely be less used in the winter and will provide space for snow storage.

Karey Shinn asked if the public art would all be done by David Pearl. She asked how he was selected and whether he would be the artist or a supervisor for the art. Karey said that it would be fun to have artifacts there that relate to water and sewers, like a row of fire hydrants or sewer grates. The works yard could be a source for these materials. The consultant said David Pearl is the artist for the project, selected by a panel through a shortlist process. David Pearl said that he was looking at going beyond just water-related art and focusing on features

relating to the wastewater plant itself. **A consultant** asked that any sources for the public art piece be passed along to the landscape project team.

In terms of clarity, it is unclear what the colours shown in the presentation mean. The consultant said there will be more description at the public meeting. It was noted that the current plans have lost that the elements relating to the historical shoreline; capturing this in the interpretive process will be reviewed again.

It was noted that along the western edge there could be shrubs for the birds. The consultant answered that we can bring more images of what the landscape will look like at the public meeting.

Michael Rosenberg said that the design has to work at all scales. The scale shown in the presentation (aerial view) is the least important. He noted that Option C works the best because it does not have an attempt to create a uniform feature at a large scale. He also liked the central square in option A.

The consultant said that the finesse happens at the next scale, but they are looking at the functional elements now. After this the plan can be looked at in more detail. Option C has a more organic landscape and still recalls the Master Plan without being directed by it completely.

It was noted that appropriate tree shade is needed for people watching sports. The consultant answered that this was a good point and images will be brought to the public workshop to show how this could be done.

It was noted that it is important to cap the lights at night as they attract birds during migration. The consultant replied that for the sports fields, cutoffs will cast light directly on field. With the pedestrian lighting, we will try to keep it down low.

It was noted that it will be important to tell the public that the project team is aware of the need for separating bicycles and pedestrians early to avoid concerns about this during the meeting.

It was asked if this presentation would be available online. The consultant replied that it will be available after the public meeting. Hard copies will be available on the tables at the meeting.

3. Announcement

Aliss Terpstra, Citizens for a Safe Environment and International Institute of Concern for Public Health, said that there has been recent action regarding concerns about fluoride addition to drinking water. Two citizens in Waterloo petitioned to discontinue water fluoridation. The Ministry of the Environment has agreed to review fluoride in water and they will do something about the conflict by 2010 (letter attached). This provides a clear signal that the government is aware that they cannot legally add Schedule 1 toxins to drinking water. The chemical that is actually used to fluoridate community drinking water is hydrofluorosilicic

acid. It is a by-product from the scrubbers in the smokestacks in the fertilizer industry. The majority of assays they do for the drinking water act indicate that lead and arsenic are added at the same time the fluoride chemical is added. The petition was to review the legality of fluoride that is in use.

Aliss noted that the Ministry of the Environment will require input from the provinces and municipalities. Ashbridges Bay Treatment Plant is the largest treatment plant in Ontario and it is a huge party to the Great Lakes Water Treatment System. Toronto could be a leader in terms of the Great Lakes water quality agreement.

4. Veolia Pelletizer Presentation

Michael Wheeler, from Veolia, gave a presentation on the pelletizer (presentation posted at http://www.toronto.ca/water/wastewater_treatment/treatment_plants/ashbridges/nlc.htm). It is currently in the commissioning phase and is moving toward being able to operate on a full-time basis. He explained how the process works and identified potential marketing applications. The primary use for pellets is agriculture, but expansion to other markets is possible. For example, he said they could look at working with Milorganite to market one millimetre pellets to golf courses.

Karey Shinn said that if ethanol was used the concern was that some ethanol crops, such as corn, create a problem for the environment. She could not see a problem for growing crops on reclaimed land, as long as it was not in direct competition with food. She felt that many ABTP NLC members are in favour of beneficial use for the pellets and we do not want to create problems in terms of where the pellets are going. She hears rumours of pellets being stockpiled on a farm, and wants to be able to defend the pelletizer operation, rather than giving ambiguous answers. **Michael Wheeler** responded that so far the pellets have been used in agriculture within Ontario. Ethanol and thermal uses are unlikely options even though they were listed in the presentation as potential uses.

Karey Shinn asked if the pellets are distributed under federal Fertilizer Act. **Michael Wheeler** replied yes, Veolia has an approved label under Nutri-Pel. This happened some years ago and was updated in 2007. **Karey Shinn** said it is unfortunate that 'repel' is included in the title and more positive name is needed. **Michael Wheeler** said that different branding might be in order. **Michael Ryder** asked that if anyone had any name suggestions that they pass them on.

Karen Buck said Milwaukee must cater to the bulk markets, such as Florida. **Michael Wheeler** said they have so many orders that they do not need to do that.

Karen Buck asked what the cost would be if thermal use was considered. **Michael Wheeler** said that the cost of transportation for thermal use is not viable. This would only change if something changes in the market and that does not

seem likely. When looking at the value of the pellet, the value is not energy related.

Karen Buck asked if the nutrients produced in Toronto would be similar to those produced in Milwaukee. **Michael Wheeler** confirmed that they would be similar. Milwaukee had more orders than they had product. So it could work to get material in Toronto to replace orders they already have.

Karen Buck asked if the pelletizer would be able to handle more than fifty percent of the plant's biosolids. **Michael Ryder** replied that probably between fifty to sixty percent of the biosolids production would be within the pelletizer capacity. A third of Milwaukee's material is about twice what we can produce in Toronto, in terms of scale. The Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago's Stickney Plant claims to be the world's largest treatment plant. At the Chicago facility, Veolia was able to find homes for the pellets in high end uses, rather than just farming.

Karen Buck asked if the pelletizers in Chicago have been commissioned. **Michael Wheeler** said that the Chicago facility is also in commissioning.

Karen Buck said it was hard to understand why the Backriver plant was commissioned in eighteen months and it is taking Chicago years and years to commission their dryers. **Michael Wheeler** said that the ABTP facility did not begin commissioning until July 2007. Construction in Chicago was delayed by legal issues.

Karen Buck asked how successful Toronto could be with a one millimetre pellet. She also wondered how it would be bagged. **Michael Ryder** said it will be a matter of the market and the marketing efforts. **Michael Wheeler** said that golf courses would only need pellets during a short time of the year; there is no intent to produce all pellets within the one millimetre range. A third party would bag it.

Michael Rosenberg asked whether silviculture is being looking at as a potential use for pellets. **Michael Wheeler** said in the immediate future they were not looking at this use. But, it has been an outlet in other areas. Transportation cost and distance to outlets is the limiting factor on this. He noted that where potential customers are already using similar products, the education process is shorter. It is hard to show someone what a product is if you cannot show it in your hand; Veolia has only recently been able to do that.

Michael Rosenberg asked what they have found with the agriculture market in terms of this product versus cake. **Michael Wheeler** said in terms of application pellets are easier to apply and have less of an odour than cake. It can be marketed to places where cake cannot be applied. He noted that Veolia does not plan to compete with the City's agricultural land application program.

Karey Shinn asked for a copy of the Fertilizer Act certification and label on behalf of the NLC. **Michael Ryder** said that information should be requested through the City.

Action Item #1 – **Staff** to provide a copy of the Fertilizer Act certification label for pellets.

Karen Buck asked who Veolia reports to on their marketing efforts. She also wondered if they were allowed to divulge their customers. **Michael Wheeler** replied that Veolia reports to Frank Quarisa in the Wastewater Division. The customer list can not be divulged. Any commercial company would keep this information confidential. Tonnage by category is reported instead. Veolia does not want the competitors to go after their customers.

Karey Shinn asked if the pellets could be used by the City. **Michael Wheeler** said if the City will use them then they will be provided. It would be ideal to publicly show the benefits of pellets on City properties.

Karey Shinn said the group Green Minds, Green Fuel were reluctant to use pellets in the past as they wanted reassurance that it would not make the mine tailings worse. They need encouragement to use biosolids. **Michael Wheeler** said he ran up against this concern previously, and it was specific to mine reclamation. The people administering the program were not knowledgeable about the various products they could put on their land and they were buying things that made no sense to put on that land.

5. Next meeting date, agenda topics and adjourn

The next meeting of the NLC was set for Thursday, March 20.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.