

Friends of the Spit

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4 May 2021

BY E-MAIL

Infrastructure and Environment Committee
City of Toronto

RE: Non-Motorized Water Craft Storage and Launch Locations

Dear Committee Members,

Our organization, entirely volunteer, with currently in excess of 1200 members, has advocated, since 1977, for the entire Spit/Tommy Thompson Park (TTP) and Baselands to be a car-free public urban wilderness.

The Spit is celebrated and known world-wide as an amazing urban wilderness on the waterfront doorstep of an immense City.

As you know, the City and the TRCA manage the Spit/TTP under a Joint Management Agreement, based on the Revised Master Plan.

Recently, we've received a number of calls and emails from users of the Outer Harbour, seeking our support for non-motorized watercraft uses in the Outer Harbour; and secondly, seeking clarification as to the Spit/TTP access regulations for watercraft. The recent Marine Strategy initiative of the City and Waterfront Toronto has brought to the fore concerns about the Outer Harbour ecosystem, congestion, and has exacerbated the ongoing debate of motorized watercraft versus non-motorized craft.

We support non-motorized uses in the Outer Harbour, as they are far preferable to motorized watercraft. Fewer motorized uses mean the Spit/TTP environment, wildlife, and users all benefit from reduced noise, reduced shoreline erosion from wake, and reduced air and water pollution.

However, there are no provisions in the Revised Master Plan for the addition or inclusion of non-motorized craft launch or storage locations at the Spit/TTP. We would continue to vigorously oppose any attempt to locate launch or storage facilities at the Spit/TTP.

Unfortunately, the intrusion of canoes, kayaks, paddleboards, and kite-sailors into the embayments and cell three of The Spit/TTP has, in the last year, become a serious concern. Instances of wildlife

harassment have even been noted. The Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA), the Important Bird Area (IBA), and the fisheries can so easily be compromised by misuse.

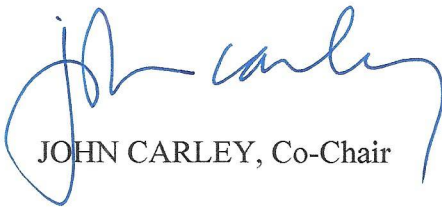
Ideally, an education plan for the Outer Harbour users, as well as barrier buoys and signage, would hopefully deter those users from attempting to enter the Spit/TTP embayments, or land on the shore.

Should the committee approve the installation of new watercraft storage facilities at the eastern waterfront, they should be at non-ESA locations easily accessible by transit and car, ideally coupled with existing infrastructure. Locations such as Cherry Beach or the North Shore would be compatible with existing uses, as would locations to the east of The Spit/TTP at Ashbridge's Bay or The Beach.

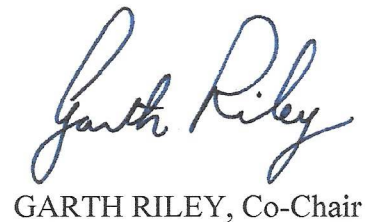
Should you wish further elaboration, please do contact us.

Please add us to your contact list for all items pertaining to this matter.

Yours sincerely,
FRIENDS OF THE SPIT
per:



JOHN CARLEY, Co-Chair



GARTH RILEY, Co-Chair

Celebrating 44 years: since 1977, Friends has been advocating for the entire Leslie Street Spit and Baselands to be a car-free Public Urban Wilderness.

Without Friends of the Spit advocacy, The Spit and Baselands would not exist as they do today: a wonderful urban wilderness, enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of visitors yearly.

cc Parks, Forestry, and Recreation, att'n Ms J Romoff
Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, att'n Mr. J. MacKenzie
Ports Toronto, att'n Mr. C. Sawicki