

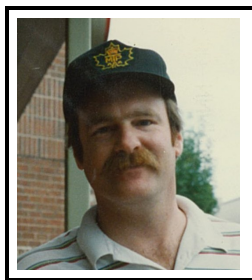
## Township's Official Plan – up for review

People's eyes can glaze over when talk turns to Official Plans and zoning by-laws. But planning is important. It's the roadmap for future development and we all can – and should - contribute our views to the process.

Right now is the perfect time, since the Township of Leeds & the 1000 Islands **Official Plan (OP) is up for review**. It will guide future growth, and establish what important natural, cultural, agricultural, and recreational features and resources should be protected and enhanced.

**Public consultation:** A fairly tight schedule for public input has just been announced, and by the time this newsletter reaches you, some of the meetings will probably have already taken place. **"Visioning Workshops"** were held on November 20 and 22 and if you were unable to go, we urge you to complete the online **Visioning Survey** on the Township website [www.leeds1000islands.ca](http://www.leeds1000islands.ca). It will take you maybe 10 – 20 minutes, but your thoughts about the area's future deserve to be heard. Deadline is December 1, 2017.

TIARA will be contributing to November's Visioning Workshops and a Stakeholder Meeting. The review process will continue over the winter, with Public Open Houses on December 7, 2017 and January 17 and February 20, 2018 to present draft and final recommendations. The draft OP will come before Council on March 19 and there'll be a final Public Open House on April 24.



**David Bull 1951–2017**

The news of David's death in early June was a shock to us all, and at the AGM we paused for a tribute to his long-standing contribution to TIARA and by extension, the 1000 Islands area. David joined the Board in 1997 and for the ensuing 20 years gave generously of his time, skill, wisdom and energy, as Board member, Executive Director and even Acting President in difficult times. We remember him with much fondness and gratitude.

## The Land Trusts' Conference

The Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust (IWLT) headed by Marnie Ross organized a valuable conference in mid-October: "Ecosystems, shorelines, education and official plans". The theme was a concern for the health and beauty of our area – with emphasis on waterfront, wetlands, rivers and lakes.

Marnie invited over 20 representatives from relevant government departments and agencies at the federal, provincial and municipal levels, as well as from environmentally-minded associations and groups (including TIARA).

We shared our priorities and resources. One recurring theme was how to convince decision-makers of the importance of a **natural shoreline**, especially when zoning by-laws are challenged.

There is **science** to back up the preservation of shorelines. A healthy, natural water's edge contributes to clean water and thriving fish populations. Softening "hard" shorelines with native shrubs (rather than steel or concrete) stabilizes the soil and prevents erosion – as well as providing a friendly place for birds, butterflies and fish. Shoreline plants filter the water run-off from the land as it enters the lake or river, thereby helping to keep the water clean and free from algae and scum.

It's our hope that once people understand that there is a good reason for water setbacks, and that this **"ribbon of life"** where the water meets the land is vital for the water's health, they will see why it's important to support planning that encourages shoreline protection. And it's good for the economy, too. Beautiful shorelines attract the tourists and cottagers that so many local jobs depend on.

To set a good example, last year the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands (TLTI) with the help of Watersheds Canada, planted the shoreline of Parks of St. Lawrence municipal park with native trees and shrubs. Go and have a look, and you'll see how attractive – as well as beneficial – a naturally planted shoreline can be.