
TIARA Newsletter

Autumn 2014

Water levels – IJC’s Plan 2014

TIARA supports the International Joint Commission’s proposed Plan 2014, which follows 14 years of scientific study and public engagement, as the preferred option for regulating Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River water levels and flows. The IJC says that more year-to-year variation in water levels is needed to restore ecosystem health. It puts forward Plan 2014 as a reasonable balance which will continue to moderate extreme high and low levels, better maintain system-wide levels for navigation, frequently extend the recreational boating season and slightly increase hydropower production.

The 2014 Annual Meeting

TIARA’s 39th Annual Meeting featured two presentations. We invited **Sandy Hay, Planner for the United Counties of Leeds & Grenville**, to speak about the Counties’ first ever Official Plan (OP) now being drafted, a tier above our own municipal plan. Due in 2015, it has to be consistent with Ontario’s Provincial Policy Statements and reflect local standards. (Each municipality will continue to draft its own Zoning By-laws.) Its purpose is to manage the distribution of the 7.2% growth and development forecast for the United Counties by 2031. It will establish a hierarchy of development areas: urban and rural settlement areas (most of our communities fall into this category), employment area lands and agricultural areas, each with its own set of planning guidelines.

Members questioned Sandy mainly about protection of our river’s unique beauty and recreational values, control of waterfront development and water quality. Sandy assured us that the new OP would provide increased emphasis on preserving the landscape and source water, important since our vulnerable aquifers lie under a thin layer of soil and fractured bedrock. One member asked if there was a 30-year vision for the County, and Sandy admitted that there wasn’t, but maybe there should be. TIARA will follow up on this.

For more information about the County OP, including dates of public open houses, please visit www.leedsgrenville.com and on the “Govern” page, select “View Official Plan” under “I want to...” on the right.

Pierre Mercier, Archivist for Leeds and the Thousand Islands, our second speaker, explained how the Archives could digitally record family photographs, documents and artifacts and return them (along with a copy of the digital recording). Pierre urged people to donate or lend their collections to the Archives. His display and slides gave us a taste of the Archives’ fascinating files about more than 200 local families. Besides recording, the Archives also mount displays, for instance in the lobby of the new TLTI municipal building. The Archives welcome visitors at 1367 County Road 2 in Escott. Its website www.ltiarchives.ca tells about what they do and their hours of opening.

The St. Lawrence River Heritage Project

We are delighted to announce that our project to nominate this stretch of the St. Lawrence River as a Canadian Heritage River is nearly complete. Over the last few months, our volunteers obtained renewed support from the fourteen riverfront municipal councils with one exception. As well, Henry Lickers, Director of the Department of the Environment at the Akwesasne Reserve, encouraged our efforts and suggested many ways to strengthen local, regional and national commitments towards its preservation and protection.

Our nomination document will soon be on its way to Ontario Minister of Natural Resources and to the Minister of Environment Canada, who is responsible for Parks Canada. If it is approved, a successful private member’s bill in the House of Commons will be required to achieve the designation.

This important project was initiated by the late Dr. Peter Macklem, then President of TIARA. His vision and forward thinking will be honoured when Canada finally recognizes the historic St. Lawrence as one of its Heritage Rivers.

New Board Members

At the 2014 TIARA Annual General Meeting, the following individuals were elected to your Board of Directors:

Laura Bell, Michael Bell (President), **Martin Bordt, David Bull** (Vice-President Planning), **Joy Macklem, Marion MacLeod** (Treasurer), **Dr. H.G. McAdie, Pierre Mercier, Margot Miller** and **Brian Reynolds** (Vice-President Education).

We want to thank **Pamela Bliss** for her many years of dedicated work as a member of the Board. Pam resigned this fall, and we wish her well in her new home.

Our new website

After a long hiatus, for which we apologize, our website is now almost completely restored with a new name, **www.tiaraweb.org**. Still under construction is the “Join Or Renew Membership” page with the popular PayPal option. In the meanwhile, we enclose reminder notices for those of you who have yet to renew for 2014, and we hope that you will use the old-fashioned cheque-in-the-mail method to stay with us. We appreciate and value your support and we don’t want to lose you!

The great big dock at Ivy Lea Club

About June 25th, everyone was surprised when a huge 4.4 acre dock, to accommodate about 68 large cruisers, suddenly appeared in front of the Ivy Lea Club’s Ivy Restaurant. There was an immediate outcry from neighbours and boaters who found the channel they had used for years was now obstructed, forcing them out into open water. Neighbours enquired how permission could have been granted.

It turned out that the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources had sent a notice to neighbours a year ago about the huge dock, but it hadn’t touched off

an alarm because it managed to give the impression that only a few more docks would be added to the small bay within the breakwater, not where it was actually located. MNR had already leased a water lot of 2.2 acres to the Ivy Lea Club in 2011.

The Cataraqui Region Conservation

Authority (CRCA) had given its permission, but this was misleading, since it was issued under Regulation 148/06 which concerned the dangers of building on floodplains – so not relevant here.

Transport Canada had given permission to the Ivy Lea Club to bring in the dock, even though it would obstruct the much used navigable waters. We understand they insist that they had involved the public, but that was only by putting a notice in local papers, which those most affected - neighbours and boaters - apparently failed to see.

The Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands was taken completely by surprise when the dock arrived in June, but it wasn’t until October 14 that it called a public meeting to consider a zoning amendment to permit the removal of the stone and rubble breakwater – a bit late, though, since by then it had already been removed.

Citizens can be forgiven for thinking that if a small homeowner wants to add a few feet to a deck, work can’t begin until every last permit is in place, whereas those with deep pockets appear to be able to make plans years in advance, confident that they’ll get retroactive planning permission when the work is all done. As this newsletter goes to press, Council has made no decision on the zoning amendment.

The owner of the Ivy Lea Club has certainly done excellent work in transforming the old inn into the very attractive Resort and Marina, and is involved in numerous developments in Gananoque which meet highest of standards. However, the outsized scale of this dock, the way it protrudes out into a well-used navigation channel and the lack of fore-warning makes it appear that this time, literally and figuratively, he has gone too far.

27 October Ontario Election Results

Leeds and the Thousand Islands

Mayor: Joe Baptista

Ward 1: *Harold Emmons, Jeff Lackie, Vicki Leakey

Ward 2: Liz Huff, John Paul Jackson

Ward 3: Geri Last *Sole Incumbent

Gananoque:

Mayor: Erika Demchuk

Councillors: Brian Brooks, Dwayne Fletcher, Jeff

Girling, Jan Hayes, Joe Jansen, Anne Warren.

Front of Yonge:

Mayor: Roger Haley

Councillors: Carson Massey, Jeffrey Poore, Gail

Williams, Richard Marcoux (all acclaimed).

Frontenac Islands (Wolfe & Howe)

Mayor: Denis Doyle

Councillors Howe Is: David Jones, Natalie Nossal

Wolfe Is.: Wayne Grant, Barbara Springgay

(all incumbents) 8

TIARA thanks all candidates for putting their names forward, and congratulate the winners, wishing them a productive four years in office.

Large Boat Storage Facility Proposed for the Parkway near Rockport

The Thousand Islands Parkway is all that many tourists see of this beautiful area. But, its scenic nature is now threatened by plans by Ed Huck Marine to erect three large storage buildings on the north side, nearly opposite Caiger's Resort immediately east of Rockport. Somehow the TLTI Committee of Adjustment approved a design in which the roof height will be three times what is allowed in the zoning by-laws. A sad decision as these large steel buildings will give an industrial look to the Parkway, totally out of keeping with their surroundings.

National Historic Site at Risk: The 1845 Darlingside Trading Store

The final meeting of TLTI's current municipal Council was a disturbing spectacle and a demoralizing blow to local heritage enthusiasts.

Back in the early 1800s, busy river traffic depended on wood for fuel. In 1845 Thomas Darling built a store, later followed by a separate home for his family at the river's edge. The Darlingside enterprise was located just east of where the Thousand Islands Bridge meets the Parkway. Farmers brought firewood and other goods for sale to passing steamers.

In 2000, Canada designated the "Darlingside" house and store a National Historic Site, a purely ceremonial title. Sadly, a previous owner demolished the house in 2007 and only the store still stands.

This fall, when the new owner of the store, a local Marine Contractor, applied for a Demolition Permit. A large group of alarmed citizens urged Council to follow the advice of the Township's Planner, as well as the TLTI Municipal Heritage Committee. Their advice; Issue an "**Intent to Designate**" the store as being "**of cultural heritage value or interest**" under the Ontario Heritage Act. This would allow time to negotiate with the new owner about his plans for the property and eventually to place restrictions on what could be done with the remaining historic building, one of the oldest in the Township.

The meeting started well with the Mayor declaring that Council recognised and appreciated Darlingside's heritage significance in the Township and it had no intention of permitting what remains at Darlingside to be demolished. It was encouraging.

However, as each Councillor spoke to the issue, their questions about the legal and planning recommendations before them somehow turned into arguments for the rights of private property owners generally. One Councillor, who happens to be Council's representative on the Municipal Heritage Committee, said that she was "tired of infringing on the rights of private property owners and it was time to take a stand." Another Councillor was highly critical of the Township's Building Department for doing its job investigating the demolition application. He said "We're spying on private property owners".

In the end, the motion of **intent to designate** failed by a vote of 2 to 5. We can only hope that the owners' intentions, which are still unclear, are not as dire as they seem.



Darlingside House (Demolished in 2007)
www.ltihistoricalsociety.org



Darlingside Store
www.ltihistoricalsociety.org

The Amazing Growing Island – 80B

Alert neighbours noticed that a small island near the Needle's Eye at the head of hill Island was mysteriously changing! Rocks and a cement mixer had been brought in. What used to be a pretty little island with a couple of trees and quite a few shrubs was suddenly a larger bare cement platform with a rocky edge and only the two trees standing. We understand that the Ministry of Natural Resources is looking into this extraordinary

situation whereby most of the natural resources of the island have been removed. It will be interesting to see if and how those green shrubs will ever re-grow, even when the cement "floor" has been removed. *(Photos courtesy of Peter and Janice Medcalf, Joyce Medcalf and Ken White)*



80B Before



80B After



80B After Miracle Grow

Thousand Islands Area Residents' Association

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 Brian Reynolds (President)

Please consider joining our Board.
Send a message in confidence to
info@tiaraweb.org

