

Notes made at a Meeting of the General Membership of the Harmony Residents Group Inc. in the evening of Wednesday, March 10, 2010 in the Virgil Arena Mary Snider Room.

This meeting began at 7:17 PM with 15 people present including 3 members of the Group Steering Committee.

Ken Morrison thanked those who are contacting people who signed the Group petition opposing the Project Niagara proposal for a Music Festival on the federal Department of National Defence lands administered by Parks Canada, north of Lakeshore Road, asking for a contribution of \$20 per household to fund Group activities in the year forthcoming. About 500 households comprising about 770 people have signed the petition to date and about 20 donations have been received.

R. Busbridge distributed copies of the Group Vision for a Onghiara Natural Heritage Park on this Lakeshore Road property and a statement of principles agreed upon at a Group Workshop meeting on January 13, 2010, as well as potential programs of recreational activities agreed upon at the following Workshop session on February 10, 2010.

Tonight's session addressed the question of the types of research activity that might be attracted to this site, the design of an Interpretive Centre and sources of revenue that might make the Nature Park financially self sufficient.

Several people made suggestions which included extension of the research done already on these lands which proved the feasibility of structured wetlands to effectively treat wastewater in a cold climate to prove that result on a commercial scale, a fish hatchery, the study of the mating habits of wild turkeys, propagation of flora native to this area including reforestation, viticulture, lagoons as breeding sites for waterfowl, camps where school children could study the operation of natural environmental systems. It was agreed that the Group first must discover what research has been done already, or is in progress, and by what organizations. Niagara College was suggested as a first contact toward the accumulation of such information.

The second topic was the type of interpretive Centre that might be built and the Ball's Falls Conservation Area was briefly described as a starting point for this discussion. It operates independently of all municipal services except electricity, has relatively small history and exhibit areas and a small Visitors Centre and cost about \$5 Million to build. Other study examples might be Crawford Lake in North Burlington, the Halton Kelso Conservation Area, Fort Whyte in Winnipeg and the Quiet Waters Park near Annapolis, Maryland, USA. Any facility might be built in modules to facilitate expansion or could be only an addition to an expanded Sewage Treatment Plant, if that remains in its present location, a minimum cost option. The Group agreed that the fundamental choice is between a highly efficient, self sufficient structure, capable of the ultimate in energy conservation and independent of exterior sources of energy which might appeal to governments and make grants more likely, or a building that would portray the lifestyle of the earliest European settlers in this area, such as reconstruction of John Secord's 1782 house and barn. It was agreed that this decision requires more thought so attendees were asked to consider it further, perhaps discuss it with friends and bring their recommendation to the next Group general meeting.

There were discussions not related directly to the research and building design topics, with reference to existing facilities at Woodend and St. John's Wood Conservation Areas and rumours that Project Niagara is continuing to seek taxpayer money from the Build Canada Fund which has no expiry date like the present Stimulus Fund.

Next General Meeting: Wednesday, April 14, 2010, 7 PM, Virgil Arena Mary Snider Room.

Annual General Group Meeting: Wednesday, May 12, 2010, 7PM, Virgil Arena Mary Snider Room.

Adjournment: 9:02 PM.

Cliff James, Secretary.