Alderman Dale Martin

City Hall, Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2 Telephone 392-7911
Ward Six

TO: Toronto Harbour Commissioners

FROM: Dale Martin, Commissioner

DATE: January 29, 1988

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS OF THE TORONTO HARBOUR COMMISSION

In past years the Toronto Harbour Commission's annual operating plan for the East Headland and Endikement project has been criticized by environmental groups. These groups - Stop Contaminating Our Waterfront (S.C.O.W.), Friends of The Spit, and others have very real concerns about the disposal and lake filling operations on the Leslie Street Spit.

It is both possible and advantageous for the Commissioners to work with these environmental groups in solving environmental problems in and around the harbour, including those resulting from the East Headland and Endikement project. As a Federal Commission it is in the best interests of the T.H.C. to consider the views of concerned citizens. As an owner and lessor of valuable land it is in the best interest of the T.H.C. to be environmentally conscious. As caretaker for Toronto Harbour it is arguably a part of the T.H.C.'s mandate to protect and enhance the quality of water in Toronto's harbour.

After meeting with some of the spokespersons of our city's environmental community I am able to voice some of their concerns to you. In relation to the T.H.C.'s annual operating plans the groups would like to make the following recommendations:

1) that the T.H.C. include within its planning process a mechanism that would allow for public input. This mechanism could take any number of forms but it should allow for maximum participation;

2) that the T.H.C. supply a copy of the annual plan to concerned citizens and groups each year in time for input to be given on the plan;

3) that the T.H.C. follow, as closely as possible, the plans that are annually written: the engineering plans vary too much from year to year; commitments, timetables, long term planning, etc. are not followed; the planning process is not as successful as it should be;

2/...

4) in this regard, the T.H.C. report on the progress of operations in the context of the annual operating plan. This could be done quarterly, or even monthly.

5) that the T.H.C. complete and stabilize the Leslie Street Spit as a priority to protect the lake from further contamination both from the containment cells on the Endikement and from the Headland;

6) that the T.H.C. make every effort to ensure that all fill used in construction of the spit meets, at the very least, the minimum quality standards for lake filling as outlined by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment;

7) that the T.H.C. study the problem of the spit as a disposal site with a view of curtailing lake filling as a means of disposal;

8) that the T.H.C. work hard to accommodate Harbour organizations who need to dispose of non-navigational dredgeate.

In general, it is the view of these groups, a view that they share, that the T.H.C. should take a leadership role in the environmental issues of the greater Harbour area. The T.H.C. must become an environmental advocate. In pursuit of this objective, the T.H.C. should adopt a set of environmental principles and procedures for the Toronto Harbour as well as an environmental agenda. The T.H.C. must become a main player in the development of the Waterfront Remedial Action Plan currently under consideration by the Federal and Provincial governments. These recommendations do not represent all of the concerns which environmental groups have but they do represent a good starting point for discussion.

I would recommend that the Commission agree to a meeting with representatives of the environmental community to discuss the ideas outlined above.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly

Dale Martin
Commissioner.
sm014e4