

12<sup>th</sup> February, 2008

One morning in late May, while I was waiting by the Old Mill for two classes of school children whom I was taking on a Heritage nature tour, I had the wonderful opportunity to watch a tiny Goldfinch chase a Crow, landing on the Crow's back and pecking it, in full flight! They flew right through the space which the proposed ten-story condominium building would occupy.

Open Space is not empty, waiting to be filled.

The Old Mill complex, despite its very considerable intensification over the past twenty-five years, forms a transition barrier from the River with its ravines and wetlands to the highly urbanized high-rise development on, and adjacent to Bloor Street.

The Mill nestles in the slope and floodplain of the river at a place which the aboriginal people called "where it crosses over". The land here subsides uncharacteristically from the plateau and steep ravine at Bloor, which resumes again a short distance to the north. The River widened here, with an island in the middle. The stream flowing on the west side of the island was used to feed the mill race for the 1793 King's Mill and eventually the 1850 Gamble Mill, which would become Home Smith's Old Mill and Tea Garden. In no way will ANY construction represent "an appropriate level of residential intensification" for this area zoned Open Space.

The nonconforming use of parking for the Old Mill in the area zoned Open or Green forms a continuing transition from the Old Mill complex to the natural setting of the Humber – Canada's twenty sixth Heritage River.

The Planning Report shows no respect or understanding of this, and the site description is skewed, presenting it as a dense, highly urbanized setting, totally ignoring the transitional aspect.

For Planners to recommend rezoning ANY land from Open Space, particularly in juxtaposition to Natural Park and River is Not in the Common Good of the People. The Official Plan states that such lands should be "protected, improved and added to whenever feasible"

The existing 1985 Etobicoke by law does this; at least it "protects". It was a result of the agreement with the City of York, which transferred title and jurisdiction of land on the west bank dating from the 1793 survey and boundary, from York to Etobicoke

This site, because it is so close to a major artery and Subway already represents an intrusion and stress on the River's green space!

Standing in the Valley, the quiet is amazing, as is the general non-intrusion of visible hard structures, which both cause and intensify sound pollution, while landscape acts as a baffle.

To present mitigation, or compensation is a flat admission of site degradation and damage to the environment.

Should you lose your hand, you receive compensation to mitigate the damage – but you still only have one hand left.

The Valley is the neighbourhood, much more so than Bloor Street.

A more appropriate recommendation, which would not have been recognized or made by individual City departments when circulated, would be the expropriation of the Old Mill's property zoned Open Space and then the continuance of the area's use for parking, renting it to the Old Mill.

The land is NOT underutilized!

The report states that Old Mill Road is very narrow; that the building has been appropriately designed to reinforce the Street edge.

The narrowness of the road was established a hundred and sixty years ago by the bridge over the Mill Race and the Street edge, has always flowed into the shrubs and trees which, along with the captured Russian Crimean cannon (now relocated across the road) separated it from what became the parking area.

The building **WOULD** create an edge reminiscent of downtown Toronto, off Bay Street and south of Bloor.

The land is NOT underutilized.

It is open space!

It was this when the owners purchased it, in full knowledge of the zoning. Its history reinforces the intent of the people and their elected representatives as well as the integrity of the municipality at least over half a century.

While it is Provincial Policy to favour intensification to preserve green space in the moraine and greenbelt, I am absolutely certain that such intensification is not intended to

take place at the sacrifice of precious urban Open Space, particularly when in adjunct to a major River valley environment.