

# **THE TAYLOR MASSEY PROJECT**

## **Celebrating and Protecting Taylor Massey Creek**

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November 16, 2007

Janette Harvey  
Natural Environment Specialist  
City of Toronto - Parks, Forestry & Recreation  
Natural Environment & Community Programs  
City of Toronto  
PDF via email

RE: **Proposed Wetland in the Goulding Reach of Taylor Massey Creek**

Dear Ms Harvey,

Thank you for meeting members of the Board on November 6, 2007, at the site of the proposed Goulding wetland, and for the drawing of the wetland.

The visit clarified some of the questions in our letter of October 17, such as those related to trail surface and the way in which water will get from the pond to the Creek. It also provided useful detail of plan components such as the on-site use of excavated material to form small berms and add variety to the local topography.

The lack of detail on both the water and financial budgets for this project, however, remain serious concerns.

Further to your assurances that the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority is satisfied with the flow of water at the four test wells, we would like a copy of the technical data on flows in order to obtain an independent opinion that expected short-term impacts of a changing climate will not jeopardize the municipality's investment in the constructed wetland.

With respect to the financial details, we are discouraged that after having receiving emails stating that the City had data to share with us, your email of November 8 indicated that the City does not have preliminary figures for plan components, including grading and plantings, beyond the budgetary envelope of the \$300,000.00 approved by Council.

As a result, we continue to find that this project has not provided adequate information for meaningful public consultation.

We find this troubling and out-of-character, as Parks, Forestry, and Recreation has been doing an admirable job in seeking to protect and enhance natural heritage in Taylor Massey Creek. In addition to having pursued the *Environmental Baseline Study of Warden Woods* (2007), based on a motion following the TMP's submission to the Transportation and Planning Committee meeting of October 4, 2005, the Division has moved on many of the recommendations contained in *Restoration Priorities for Taylor Creek Park* (2001). Work based on this latter report has included the removal of non-

native species, the expansion of the Goulding Estate tree canopy, and now the proposed construction of the Goulding wetland.

This most recent effort, however, has suffered from inadequate public consultation, a lack of information, and the absence of an ecosystem approach to regenerating the Creek. Constructive recommendations offered by the TMP to address these short-comings for this and similar future initiatives include:

1. **That Parks, Forestry, and Recreation consider using the services of the Public Consultation Unit of Cluster B to either deliver or to provide guidelines for public consultation on projects such as the Goulding Wetland;**
2. **That core documents on the regeneration of City watercourses and valley-lands be made available to the public, in electronic format and/or on-line.** With respect to the proposed wetland, this would include *Restoration Priorities for Taylor Creek Park* (2001), information about water flows, appropriately detailed drawings of the proposed wetland, and a detailed budget; and,
3. **That the City move as quickly as possible to appoint Watershed Coordinators for each watershed in its jurisdiction and to adopt an ecosystem approach to watershed management.** Proposed consistently by the TMP over the last five years, the establishment of Watershed Coordinators would ensure cooperation across divisions on water quality, water quantity, natural heritage, by-law enforcement, and public use. For example, a Taylor Massey Watershed Coordinator might have pursued recommendation 8.5 in *Restoration Priorities for Taylor Creek Park* (2001) on the monitoring of leachate from the historic landfills located just downstream of the proposed wetland. This recommendation appears to have fallen into the cracks between Parks, Forestry, and Recreation, which has no mandate for it, and Toronto Water, which rejected the TMP's request to include landfill outfalls in the Storm Water Outfall Water Quality Testing program. As a result, Toronto taxpayers can only speculate about which might have been a higher priority for the funds in the capital budget: curtailing leachate that might be polluting the Creek or a constructed wetland that might be dry in a few years. Given the pending implementation of the City's 40-year, \$1 billion Wet Weather Flow Master Plan, the need to establish Watershed Coordinators to guide the development of an ecosystem approach to watershed management is urgent.

Hoping you find our comments helpful, we remain supportive of the natural heritage regeneration initiatives of the City.

Sincerely,

Andrew McCammon  
Founding Chair

cc Mayor Miller; Councillors Davis, Heaps, Thompson, and Kelly; selected senior management in the City and TRCA; Task Force to Bring Back the Don and the Don Watershed Regeneration Council