

Meeting Notes
Community Meeting/Workshop
Otty Lake Management Planning
February 03, 2007
North Elmsley Hall, 121 Station Road, Port Elmsley

Background: Members of the Otty Lake community were invited to the meeting to discuss the draft Otty “State of the Watershed” Report and help identify goals, objectives and action strategies that will assist the Otty Lake Association and government agencies and organizations in long-term planning to ensure that Otty Lake will be a healthy and beautiful lake for future generations to enjoy. Recommendations incorporating these goals, objectives and action strategies will be developed into the Otty Lake Management Plan.

Participation: The workshop was attended by 52 participants that included seasonal and permanent residents from the Otty Lake shoreline and near shoreline areas (including representation from Maple Glen and BurgessWood) along with Sheanna Tinlin, Program Manager, Lake Management Planning Program; Lynn Preston, Watershed Planning/ Community Monitoring Co-ordinator RVCA; John Miller, TVT representative to the Rideau Valley Conservation Upper Advisory Board and Past Chair RVCA Board of Directors and an observer from the Pike Lake Management Planning Committee

Introduction: Karen Hunt (Chair, Otty Lake Management Planning Committee) welcomed everyone to the meeting, overviewed the Otty Lake Management Planning to date since its inception in 2004 and reminded participants that the draft Otty State of the Watershed Report is a compilation of the historical and current information we have about Otty Lake and the Otty Lake watershed area. The next step is to develop the recommendations and action strategies which will become the Otty Lake Management Plan.

Karen stressed the importance of the Otty Lake Management Plan being a community – based undertaking.

Wally Robins was introduced as the facilitator for the workshop.

Wally explained that the **purpose of the Feb. 3 workshop** was to provide an opportunity for the workshop participants to help establish key objectives and short and longer term strategies/recommendations which would assist the Otty Lake community in caring for the long-term health of Otty Lake.

Wally overviewed the **layout for the workshop**.

Intro - 1- 1:30

Process Overview - 1:30- 1:40

Task One – Identifying Key Priorities - 1:45- 2:15

Task Two – Developing recommendations and action strategies - 2:20- 3:20

Task Three – Sharing ideas for Lake Management Planning
Committee - 3:25- 3:40

Wrap-Up - 3: 40 - 4:00

Task # 1 - Your Key Priorities

Participants were asked to review the 11 major themes/issues posted on flip charts around the room (themes are based on areas of concern identified by the Otty Lake community and the Otty Lake Community Partners in the first stage of the Otty Lake planning process). Participants were then asked to use coloured sticky dots to indicate their top 2 priority issues.

Results:

Issue # 1 Surface Water Quality - First Priority – 8 participants
Second Priority – 8 participants

Issue # 2 Aquatic Vegetation - First Priority – 0 participants
Second Priority – 4 participants

Issue # 3 Ground Water Quality and Quantity – First Priority – 8 participants
Second Priority – 0 participants

Issue # 4 Water Levels – First Priority -3 participants
Second Priority – 3 participants

Issue # 5 Development Pressures and Land Use – First Priority – 18 participants
Second Priority – 4 participants

Issue # 6 Fish and Wildlife Health – First Priority – 0 participants
Second Priority - 9 participants

Issue # 7 Mining Rights and Claims - First Priority – 0 participants
Second Priority – 1 participant

Issue # 8 Shoreline Protection and Health – First Priority – 8 participants
Second Priority – 8 participants

Issue # 9 Impacts of Boating – First Priority – 1 participant
Second Priority - 0 participants

Issue # 10 Responsibilities of Landowners in Protecting Lake Health – First Priority – 2
Second Priority – 9 participants

Issue # 11 Partnerships in Lake Management – First Priority -2 participants
Second priority – 2 participants

Task # 2

Participants were asked to go to the flip chart topic that they had identified as their personal first priority. After selecting a recorder for the group, participants reviewed the flip chart data from the Oct. 17/06 Community Partners meetings (data posted on the OLA website) and added their recommendations based on the following question.

Question:

What strategies/recommendations in the short term (immediate - 2 years) and longer range (2 years and beyond) should the Otty Lake COMMUNITY (including individual property owners) implement to address this issue?

A resource person was available for each break-out group to assist as needed. At the end of the time allocated for Task #2 notes were collected by the resource person.

TASK TWO RESPONSES

Issue # 1 - SURFACE WATER QUALITY

Short Term Goals

1. Ensure feedback to residents adjacent to testing sites, when poor bacterial samples of lake water are obtained.
2. Lobby Drummond/North Elmsley Township to adopt a septic reinspection program, as does Tay Valley Township.
3. Septic systems are designed to last 25 years. Put into place an inspection program with a priority on systems over 25 years of age.
4. Identify the prime contaminants and the methods of their access to the Lake. Find better ways to isolate (contain) the sources of water contaminants.
5. Find ways to promote the use of septic system friendly cleaners and soaps.
6. Make people aware of new developments in septic technologies and also rebate programs for upgrades.
7. Reduce/eliminate the use of pressure treated lumber

Long Term Goals

1. Adopt all strategies presented by the Community Partners Meeting, October, 2006.
2. Implement an inspection of septic systems on sale of property at the municipal level.
3. Attempt to develop some "teeth" (i.e. through government legislation) to deal with lake "issues".

Issue #2 – AQUATIC VEGETATION

There were no recommendations from participants but the following concern was noted:

Is it possible that elevated levels of phosphorous could be leached from the Perth Dump on Wildlife Road through the swamp to Thoms Mud Lake and down to Otty Lake? The culverts are full and, because of the two municipal jurisdictions, there are problems of keeping the culverts open. (This concern was expressed by participants who farm along the Otty Lake North Shore Road and Wildlife Road.)

Issue #3 – GROUNDWATER QUALITY

The group discussed why they thought that groundwater was an issue.

Suggestion of a municipally run septic pump-out system

- Every septic system pumped every three years; economies of scale and in being critically inspected periodically.

- make sure that all existing septic systems are up to standard

Mandatory municipally paid septic pumping system every 3 years to include

- municipal inspector looking for trouble areas
- inspection of containment
- inspection of weepers not as easy
- Suggest a special levy on Otty Lake property owners to have inspection done if municipalities will not pay.

Recommendations

1. (Short term) would like to know exactly the flow of groundwater in the Otty Lake watershed.
 - all affected by ground water quality – any steps to protect it are good for everyone
 - need more education about what does/doesn't go into septic systems - people move in and don't know anything about it. e.g. use of latex paint - it is washable so it ends up in the septic system.
 - Is there any information on the state of existing wells on Otty Lake?
 - new developments must ensure no adverse affect on existing wells
 - with new construction, quality of wells and septic good ?
 - renovations can put groundwater at risk
2. Identify all new and old wells and septic systems (take inventory)
 - ensure periodic pumping and inspection of septic systems e.g. every 3 years
 - individuals have responsibility for their wells – this should be a strong message!
3. More frequent public information systems {such as the Feb 3 meeting}
 - more legislation and enforcement, follow through
 - education – use people's desire to do the right thing (emphasis on education and enforcement going hand in hand)
4. Make it a condition of a change of ownership that an engineer's report of the state of the septic system and the well be prepared

Small steps first –

 - Permanent residents a major impact with their urban lifestyle – laundry, showers lawns, constant use, etc.
 - all legislation must come with enforcement
 - Comprehensive Education Program
 - ✓ more specific information need for people – often too generalised
 - ✓ personalised or small groups, personal contact
 - ✓ how to reach the people that do not want to be reached
 - Where can we exert influence – municipal level!
5. Consult with lakes that have run into difficulty and ask what they felt would have made a difference- Pigeon Lake, near Edmonton
 - Be very careful of new development that everything is done right because we may not get another chance on that property to check the well and septic

Issue #4 – WATER LEVELS

Short Term

Alternative Goals and Objectives

Short term - emphasise concern for water in, not just water out.

- Identify budget to study beaver problems (participants in this group felt that beaver population needed to be reduced)

- Develop action plan and implement removal of beaver dams (involvement of townships)

- Establish a budget for Drummond/North Elmsley to remove beaver dams at Jebbs Creek
- Encourage education and coordination of township officers

- Study/monitor impact of run off from Perth Landfill Site into Otty Lake

- Test water in swamp by the Landfill Site
(Verification of type of test required due to Landfill Site)

Issue #5 – DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES

Recommendations

Short Term

1. Develop appropriate zoning for the lake – seasonal to limited services residential.
2. Establish redevelopment controls to protect capacity which the lake can sustain
3. Approval process for redevelopment applications should be more open.
4. What controls can the townships have over conversion from seasonal to permanent use changes?
5. Promote redevelopment education for the property owners so property owners understand what approval process is to be followed.
6. Planning requirements should be consistent between Townships of Tay Valley and Drummond/North Elmsley
7. Official plans of Tay Valley Township and Drummond/North Elmsley should be examined as their 2007 review is being undertaken by Townships.
8. Educate property owners as to how to maintain their property landscaping to protect the lake – a healthy shoreline?
9. How do you track changes in landscaping that could adversely impact the lake quality?
10. Develop property standards bylaws and enforce in both townships, Tay Valley and Drummond/North Elmsley.
11. Have the municipalities develop lake friendly standards for anything that they can control.

12. How do you publish a process for maintaining your waterfront?
13. Have a student survey and promote lake management health – led by township
14. Petition the province to complete their development of a “Lake Carrying Capacity Model” and use Otty Lake as a “pilot project”.
15. Develop “Code of Environmental Ethics” to be followed on the Lake and encourage voluntary participation - Leadership and Best Practices
16. Implement a community process for development discussions as a plan is being conceived before positions have been established
 - encourage a collaborative approach rather than a confrontational approach
 - municipalities should establish a process, which requires community consultation in their Official Plans prior to finalization of concept plans.
17. Establish moratorium on development until the results of the Otty Lake Management Plan are published.
18. Join the Otty Lake Association to protect your investment on Otty Lake!

Long Term

1. County Official Plan is required to provide consistency between adjoining municipalities.
2. Promote voluntary guidelines for lake use among neighbours encouraging
 - Leadership
 - Best practices
3. Protect the quality of lake water through all initiatives by limiting development to ensure lake quality is protected.
4. Lake Association to continue to be informed of all severance applications and to provide comment on community behalf and benefit.
5. Lake Association be informed of all variance applications and provide comment on community behalf and benefit.
6. Otty Lake Association should act as a champion for lake protection, both through the Lake Management Plan and through influencing the townships on behalf of the Otty Lake community.

Issue #6 FISH AND WILDLIFE HEALTH

No input provided by workshop participants

Issue #7 MINING RIGHTS AND CLAIMS

No input provided by workshop participants

Issue #8 – SHORELINE PROTECTION AND HEALTH

Short Term (except as marked)

Incentives to plant water vegetation

- Spread word (long term)
 - through newspapers/newsletter articles
 - information packages through community/residential groups
 - door-to-door – volunteers (groups) utilize private road associations to deliver information
 - newsletters – topic of the month; email addresses or telephone numbers to be included for accessing free information. ‘Shoreline Directory’ for shoreline issues

- Develop demo sites (In long term, expand and maintain)
 - showcasing restoration of waterfront
 - 1.e. BurgessWood Maple Glen Beaches (long term)

- Real estate agents to educate buyers (long term)
 - real estate agents to provide waterfront plants to waterfront buyers as gifts (long term)
 - explain benefits to waterfront owners to naturalize e.g. increased property values

- Township bylaws
 - enforce site plan requirements (long term)
 - tree bylaw enforcement (long term)

Issue #9 – IMPACTS OF BOATING

5.5 Strategy

Inform community about new technologies in both 2 and 4 stroke engines.

Inform community of positive effects of motor maintenance.

5.3 Strategy

Post signs regarding speed and wake in those areas of Otty Lake where boats are close to shore i.e. large dock areas, between islands, between islands and shore.

Issue #10 – RESPONSIBILITY of LANDOWNERS in PROTECTING LAKE HEALTH

Look after the pennies and the dollars will look after themselves

This is the beginning of all other issues

The organizational tool (the starting tool)

Education

- annual septic system information kit
- annual info package to all residents provided by the OLA
- take active part in school (health, science, social science) programs to enhance the quality of lakes and rivers
- “shoreline clean up” badge in Scouts/Guides
- OLA increase their profile – take active involvement

- get teachers and school boards on board – lake clean up becomes one their “projects”

Involvement

- need to improve membership in the OLA
- “off-shore” groups create subgroups to increase membership
 - ✓ subdivision membership to promote OLA membership
- need handouts to be sent to all within the OLA community to encourage membership
- use youth to encourage membership
 - ✓ How? Scout Camp, Summer Camp, School Programs
- OLA attend Maplefest, etc.
- more press coverage – monthly article in the Perth Courier

Responsibility – need accountability as well

- The OLA Lake Management Plan needs to be incorporated into the [OLA bylaws] so that all this hard work will be “enacted” and maintained going forward for years.
- Accountability – to whom? Rewards or penalties?
- Is it legislation (i.e. government body) or doing the right thing?
- it's dealing with the 10 topics [output of Community Partners meeting] posted (neighbour to neighbour peer pressure)

Advertise – OLA membership car decals

Part of membership

- promise to give 1 or 2 hours volunteer work at Maplefest (3 or 4 hours top)

Consider:

- Lake clean up day – focus one area or competition between areas
- Lake Appreciation day
- Lake Celebration day

Encourage

- Composting - either at home, or within each area, or at town dump
- Use of compost rather than fertilizer
- Garden tours – seeing “wild scapes” vs. ”cultivated scapes”

Who can teach us the right things? Horticultural associations

Septic

- encourage/pressure local governments for compulsory septic inspections
- How to get information disseminated?
 - OLA newsletter
 - counsellors to collect email addresses of non-members to assist in dissemination
 - Can the townships assist in the dissemination of the OLA newsletter
- Hats, t shirts, window decals, newsletter
 - This is what your membership provides
 - encourages a sense of community

Pollution by boats

- noise, water
 - educate regarding the types of motors, new 2 and 4 stroke engines

Issue # 11 PARTNERSHIPS IN LAKE MANAGEMENT

- No input from workshop participants

Task # 3

Occurred in plenary.

Participants were asked the following question:

What one recommendation/ piece of advice do you have for the Lake Management Planning Committee?

Task 3 responses were recorded on a flip chart as follows:

1. Engage the Townships of Tay Valley and Drummond/North Elmsley and the County of Lanark in protecting the asset of Otty Lake.
2. Establish three key priorities and engage/educate candidates in the upcoming provincial election about these issues and ask them to adopt them as part of their election platform.
3. Keep up the good work.
4. The Lake Management Planning (LMP) Committee should make a continued effort to engage others in the lake planning process.
5. The LMP Committee should evolve a community plan for the next steps in the lake planning process.
6. The LMP Committee should consider how to encourage young people in protecting the health of the lake through camps, clubs, school curriculums, Boy Scouts and Girl Guides (e.g. certificates, shoreline clean up” badge in Scouts/Guides)
7. Encourage ongoing self education for lake watershed residents re their environmental footprint e.g. mini meetings, annual information package
8. Compile a list of resources available for watershed residents e.g. information on funding sources available for septic upgrades
9. Explore the possibility of lake association partnering with educational institutions to obtain additional data collections

Wally encouraged members of the Otty Lake Community who wish to provide further input to the Otty Lake Management Planning process to contact a member of the Lake Management Committee or a member of the Otty Lake Association Board of Directors.

Wrap Up

David Reesor, President, Otty Lake Association, thanked Wally and the participants and re-emphasized the importance of the Community's involvement in the Otty Lake Management Planning process.

Information from the workshop will be available on the OLA website and in the spring issue of Capt. Otty's Log.

There will also be a second community meeting to invite additional input from Otty Lake community members to assist in the development of the recommendations and action strategies for the Otty Lake Management Plan.

Once the draft Otty State of the Watershed Report is finalized it will be available for the Community.

It is hoped that a draft Otty Lake Management Plan will be ready for review by the Community by July 2007.