

OTTY LAKE ASSOCIATION

1988-1

APRIL

SUBDIVISION ON MILE POINT

D.A. Carson Realty Ltd purchased 150 acres on Mile Point, bounded by Otty Lake, Jebb's Creek, Rideau Ferry Road and Mile Point Road. At a public meeting on December 1 in the N.Elmsley hall there was a presentation concerning the proposed subdivision of 49 lots. Several local residents, including representatives of this Association, expressed their strong concerns about the possible impact on the lake, especially on the wetlands that constitute most of the waterfront of this development.

Following the meeting, Mr. Carson's legal counsel approached the Township and this Association with a proposal to divide the project into two phases -- and to hold PHASE TWO (the waterfront area) "in abeyance for one year to allow any of the Ministries and other environmental agencies the opportunity to review the site over four seasons". We indicated our endorsement of this proposal

GYPSY MOTH

Each of you received twin circulars in mid-February, one from the Association and the other from the County of Lanark. The news from the County explained the policy reached through negotiation the Ministry of Natural Resources and the nine Eastern counties threatened by this insect. The amount of serious defoliation was much less in 1987; on the other hand there are high counts of gypsy moth egg masses at three locations close to Otty Lake. The government decision is that the threat to the southwestern half of the lake (in the Township of North Burgess) again warrants spraying but the threat to the northeastern half (in the Township of North Elmsley) is reduced enough to justify taking no action there this year.

The circular from the Association recommended participation by the owners who are eligible for the government-subsidized aerial spray.

AND NOW, THE REAL NEWS

The ice went out early this year, during the night of April 7. The bluebirds will soon be here, the loons are here already!

Soon, the sound of hammering will be heard again in the land. If you plan to build this year, please be sure to check with the building inspector first. Mistakes where the building and zoning laws are concerned could be costly - as well as embarrassing.



Otty Lake good neighbours

REMARKS BY DAVE CODE AT THE ANNUAL MEETING, 11 JULY 1987
ON HIS RETIREMENT AS PRESIDENT OF THE OTTY LAKE ASSOCIATION

As usual, I will begin my annual accounting to you with a brief of the good and the bad, as I saw them, in 1986-87.

On the GOOD side, .We continued to enjoy good relations with the Townships
.Water levels have been neither too high nor too low
.The loons are still with us
.Pollution consciousness appears to be spreading, in Canada and in the USA
.Some jurisdictions are beginning to prosecute polluters with meaningful penalties

On the BAD side, .There have been attacks on the standards for development on Otty Lake
.Pollution levels are still too high
.The ozone layer appears to be in trouble
.Some boaters have been inconsiderate
.Some persons have been placing fill on marshy shores, against the intent of the Official Plan, and against good advice from MNR

A BIT OF HISTORY

In 1975 you chose me to be your President; I had already served on the Executive since 1972. Our concerns then were mainly these two:

POLLUTION - primarily we were concerned for the preservation and improvement (remembering that for many of us Otty Lake is our our only true home).

LAND USE - concern included concern for the rules that govern development, because in those rules lies the key to many of the ways in which the environment may be respected.

We were very busy: our Association, the Townships, and other levels of government. During the period of 1975-1980 for example, your executive was dealing frequently with ten separate departments and agencies of government.

SOME MILESTONE DATES:

- 1970 - concern for pollution emerged
- 1973 - a bad scare heightened our concern for pollution-related sickness
- 1974 - Otty Lake information program began
- 1976 - Otty Lake Pollution Control Committee renamed Otty Lake Association and assumed a wider mandate
- 1975- The Official Plan, Zoning By-laws,
- 1980 Property standards committee

WHAT RESULTS FROM OUR WORK ?

In the matter of pollution and water quality, we rely mostly on two measures; here is a comparison:

Bacteria: in 1974 testing on a weekend in July showed
12 of 16 testing stations with a zero
reading for fecal coliforms - 75%

in 1986 testing on a similar weekend in July,
8 of 16 testing stations had a zero
reading for fecal coliforms - 50%
- a worse showing.

Clarity: the measurements show a seesaw over the same years, with no strong trend line; but this July so far, our clarity is worse than it has ever been, and there is surface algae growth in many areas.

On all indicators we are not getting better, and on some we (that is, Otty Lake) are getting worse. Why is that so? We can try to explain it away. We can try to rationalize it away. We can say that the rainfall was heavy in a certain month, or it was lighter than usual. we can say that our lake is not (yet) as bad as some others, or that it is better than it was last week, and so on.

But the plain fact is that we are NOT winning the battle to save our lake. Not even after all of our hard work, the education program, the negotiation of shoreline and zoning standards, the surveys, the advice from the health inspectors. We sometimes wonder "what if we had not done any of this? How much worse would our lake be now?"

Now is the time when we need to re-kindle our efforts. There are two ways we must do it:

by more and better education and information
for people who live on the lake, and

by a stricter and more conscientious
enforcement of the rules.

Our age of human rights was never intended to be the cause of lake pollution, of degradation of the environment; but this is what has occurred. Governments have been kind to individuals, lenient with the standards while sometimes forgetting what that was doing to the rest of the community. There is a need to restore the power of those whose job it is to protect the community.

LAND USE was our other big concern in 1975, and it still is today.

In 1974-75 our Association decided that the 100' setback for sewage systems was the key to improvement, the most important standard for our lake to embrace and maintain. Other standards are also important, but sewage disposal is the most important of all.

In 1975-76 there was a temporary freeze on development, followed by the introduction of conditions under which development might resume.

In 1976 the Minister of the Environment granted our request for the 100' sewage setback on Otty Lake, and this was later adopted for other lakes in the area. The Tay Valley Area Official Plan was adopted, and then the Townships adopted Zoning By-laws to give meaning in law to the standards of the Plan. We had standards for the protection of our community.

BUT, in recent years there has been an erosion, a number of attacks on the standards. How does it happen? Someone asks for an exception to the rules, and someone else grants it; so another asks, and another gets. Those who ask for the special treatment are being selfish; those who grant the special treatment are being unfair to all the others. Sometimes, in trying to be kind to one person, it is possible to be unkind to the others who have accepted the rules and obeyed them. This element of unfairness is just as disturbing as the failure to use the rules to improve the quality of our lake.

Therefore, I hope that the Township Councils and their Committees of Adjustment will soon begin to demand that applicants for minor variances come up with stronger reasons to justify their requests (and be refused if they can't produce one.) Otherwise, the only way we can protect our lake will be to press for the standards to be raised higher.

WE too can help as individuals. Check the rules before building or buying or severing a lot. Go one better than the minimum required, if you can see a way to do it. Improve what you have now: set that outhouse farther back from the shore; replace those old weeping tiles that have been damaged, and do it before the Health officer makes it a legal order. In short, be a good citizen.

Remember that the placing of fill on the shore, be it sand or any other material, requires the prior approval of the Ministry of Natural Resources. As a general rule, it is not advisable to place fill on the shore at all, in the interest of keeping the lake healthy.

Turning to a perennially popular subject -
WATER LEVELS - have been a bit high this year, but not seriously so. We must keep working at keeping a clear channel in Jebb's Creek, a job for which Glenn Girdwood can always use a few volunteers for an afternoon.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT - it governs many of the important facts of Otty Lake life, such as land division, building and services such as roads and, sometimes, garbage removal.

I have always thought it our duty as taxpayers in the Townships to exercise our vote.

It is said that people get the government they deserve. As for this Association and the support of candidates, there has only been one candidate who consistently offered his services from any of the lakes, and you know who he was. Sometimes we have been misunderstood, as in the election of 1980. But the Otty Lake Association has only ever wanted to see some representation on these Councils by someone who lives on a lake and can express its needs. Usually there is no such person on Council.

I believe that a lake representative would be an asset to Council, would make a valuable contribution to the entire Township, and I hope that both Councils would agree. Besides, how long are we to be content to be governed by people who do not live on our lake? or any other lake? There is room for us on Councils. In the meantime, we must keep the lines of communication open. After all, we are all on the same side.

And now I have served as your President for 12 years and it is time for a new team. A healthy association should always have eager new volunteers. And we can use new ideas. For example, do we want to organize nature walks? or a nature paddle? We could do either. How about reviving the swimming regattas, or having a community picnic?

The time has now come for me to say Thank You to all of the many fine OTTY Lake Good Neighbours who have served on the Executive, or as Area Counsellors or on the Advisory Council in the 12 years of my term as President. If the new Executive gives Rex the same support as I have been so fortunate to receive in all these years, he and we will all be well served.

Thank You. D.E.C.

OTTY LAKE MARKETPLACE

Got a cottage to rent?
A boat for sale? In the June
issue we could run your ad,
space permitting, of course.

REMEMBER THIS FAMILIAR ADVICE ?

KEEP OTTY LAKE CLEAN

MAKE LESS WASTE WATER

USE NO FERTILIZER WITHIN
50' OF THE SHORE. 100' IS
BETTER STILL

KEEP A PROPER SEWAGE
SYSTEM. IF A TOILET AND
SEPTIC SYSTEM ARE USED,
THE TILE BED SHOULD BE
LEGAL SIZE OR BIGGER

MINIMUM LEGAL SETBACK
FOR ALL SEWAGE SYSTEMS: 100'

MINIMUM SETBACK FOR NEW
BUILDING: 50'

MINIMUM FRONTAGE FOR NEW LOTS: 147.6' (45 m)

POWER BOATS MUST KEEP OUT OF THE WAY OF SAILBOATS, CANOES AND
SWIMMERS -- AT ALL TIMES

Otty Lake is a great place, when we treat it right.

