

August 2008



INSIDE:

PASSPORT TO HAMILTON...3

KIRKENDALL WALKS...4

AEROTROPOLIS SECTION...5-8

EXPANDING THE GREENBELT...9

THE FUTURE OF LOCAL FOOD...11

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE EXPANDING...12

AEROTROPOLIS THREAT INCREASING

Consultants ignore or avoid crucial issues to conclude project is 'feasible and justified'

The aerotropolis is alive and well in the minds of city planners and consultants who have recently declared it to be "feasible and justified" and the centre of Hamilton's economic future. Council approved continued plans for the scheme in late June.

In this issue, we examine the fuzzy thinking behind this highly problematic proposal which openly contradicts the city's official vision of sustainability, swallows thousands of acres of prime agricultural land, disrupts the headwaters of four major streams.

Despite an attempted name change, the scheme remains based on a pollyanna view of the future of air travel that seems entirely disconnected from a world confronted by climate change and peak oil. Its promise of future jobs

is dubious, especially the kind of employment that Hamilton needs, and the still uncalculated infrastructure servicing costs appear likely to further compromise the city's tenuous long-term financial situation.

The latest moves are now also specifically abandoning the bayfront industrial lands – assuming no possibility of job improvements there and leaving the cleanup of contaminated properties to some future generation in favour of what the city's consultants are calling a

"clean slate" on the far southern edge of the city that is the key to finally reversing the city's 30 year downward employment figures.

Not surprisingly, we have gotten this far through a deeply flawed process that has largely excluded the public and blocked intelligent debate on the wisdom of this grand scheme. Unfortunately, that exclusionary approach continues to dominate the current process.

Inside, beginning on page 5, we describe these obstacles to help you get involved in this critical debate on the future of Hamilton.

MORE AIR POLLUTION

ArcelorMittal Dofasco expansion plans

ArcelorMittal Dofasco is trumpeting its plans to invest over \$119 million in upgrades to its Hamilton plant. This includes bringing 20 dormant coke ovens and a blast furnace back into operation, and introducing pulverized coal injection (PCI) systems to all of its blast furnaces.

The company claims the plans are a huge plus for Hamilton to secure existing jobs and add 40 new ones. The move will also allow an increase in annual steel production at the plant from the current 4.2 million to a whopping 5 million tonnes per year.

The strong interest in expansion is a direct result of rocketing global steel prices. With the price

per tonne for steel doubling over the past year, there are huge profits to be made.

Environment Hamilton has been following these developments very closely, in light of chronic problems with visible emissions and industrial fallout in the city's north end.

Our research shows that these changes will require new provincial environmental approvals or amendments to existing approvals, which must be posted to the provincial Environmental Bill of Rights registry for a minimum 30-day public comment period.

This means the public will have the opportunity to provide

see next page

NEW PROJECTS



See page 3 and page 4



MORE AIR POLLUTION from page one

feedback to the Ministry of the Environment on the proposed changes.

In order to introduce their plans to the community and begin to solicit feedback, the company held a public open house on July 31. Company staff and consultants were on hand to explain the plans and answer any questions.

Environment Hamilton's Lynda Lukasik attended the open house seeking detailed information regarding potential environmental impacts of the plans, as well as the timelines the company is following in submitting its applications for provincial approvals that will generate opportunities for public comment.

Based on the responses from company representatives, their applications will be submitted some time in August. Company representatives say they are managing to decrease the level of pollution generated per tonne of steel produced at the plant, but also confirmed that an increase of 800,000 tonnes per year will mean that the plant's overall air pollution releases will increase.

When asked what the magnitude of the increase will be, company representatives indicated that they are still undertaking modeling and emission testing to better predict what the likely levels will be.

The upgrade/expansion plans are not the only initiatives that we have been tracking at ArcelorMittal Dofasco. The company has also initiated efforts to secure what is called a provincial basic comprehensive (site wide) certificate of approval for all of its emissions to air.

Such comprehensive approvals are designed to replace the multitude of individual approvals

for air emissions that industrial facilities like this one currently have for each emission source.

On the plus side for the environment, these new certificates are also designed to consider all sources of emissions to air, both point sources (stacks) and fugitive emissions such as road dust. These approvals therefore bring an opportunity to ensure that current unapproved sources of emissions to air are considered.

The certificates also bring perks to companies, allowing them to make some process modifications without having to always seek advance approval from the province, thereby enhancing operational flexibility. Columbian Chemical recently applied for such a certificate.

ArcelorMittal Dofasco hopes to submit its application for a comprehensive certificate of approval for air emissions in the fall of this year. And, once again, this certificate must be posted to the Environmental Bill of Rights for a 30-day public comment period.

Not that the situation isn't complicated enough, but there are more approvals that the company will likely be seeking in the coming months.

Under the new provincial air regulations, the iron and steel sector will be required to comply with tougher new air emission standards in the coming years. But the new air regulation provides a bit of an escape clause in the form of alternative standards.

Companies that feel they will be unable to meet the tougher standards for certain pollutants within the required timeframe can argue, on the grounds of economic hardship or technology limitations, for an extension.

The iron and steel sector has

until October 31 of this year to submit such requests and it is looking very likely that both ArcelorMittal/ Dofasco and US Steel/ Stelco will be requesting an alternative standard at least for benzo(a)pyrene, a cancer-causing PAH (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon). The main source of benzo(a)pyrene at both facilities is the coke ovens.

Under the new air regulation, companies are required to consult with the public on any alternative standards they request. This includes providing the public with detailed information on modeling and monitoring information used to justify requests for alternative standards.

So, on top of the upgrades/expansions and the pursuit of a basic comprehensive certificate of approval for air emissions, we are very likely to see ArcelorMittal Dofasco applying to the province for a delay on the timeline for meeting the tougher new provincial limits for emission of benzo(a)pyrene to air.

Company representatives, while they won't confirm that they will need to pursue an alternative standard, have indicated that if they do so, they will argue on the grounds that the current pollution control technologies available are not capable of getting plant emissions of benzo(a)pyrene down to the required levels.

When considered within the context of the company's plans to increase overall production, including increasing the amount of coke produced on-site, this situation also generates cause for concern.

Given the significant nature of these changes, Environment Hamilton will continue to closely track the plans at ArcelorMittal Dofasco and will provide regular updates on our website.

\$8.00 TICKET TO FAMILY FUN

Innovative EH Project to Build HSR Ridership

Here's a great new reason to take the bus in Hamilton. A whole family of up to six people can ride the HSR all day on one \$8 ticket. And at over 70 locations around the city, they'll receive discounts on admissions, products and services - for showing their ticket.

The HSR day pass isn't new, but it might as well be, because almost no one knows about this great deal. Despite 60,000 riders a day on the HSR, the average sales of the ten-year-old day pass is 30!

That's already changing because of the ideas and energy of EH's Brenda Johnson who has put together our new program dubbed



Passport to Hamilton.

The project grew out of EH's work in low-income communities and a real need for affordable holiday opportunities for families.

We have now partnered with over destinations across the city, ranging from museums and recreation centres, to restaurants, cafés and several waterfront attractions.

Families (or any group of at least one adult and up to five kids under 18) can take the bus down to the Art Gallery of Hamilton, where they'll get \$10 off the regular family price, then hop on a bus down Main Street and visit the Hamilton Children's Museum and receive buy-one-get-one-free admission.

They can finish the day off with a free kids ice-cream cone with one adult purchase at Hamilton Waterfront Scoops, or go swimming with your family at the YMCA for free. This simple program offers literally thousands of possibilities for low-cost family adventures.

Over the next year and a half, we'll be helping Hamiltonians to discover the pleasures of our city without ever turning on the car - or even owning one.

A full colour fold-out brochure and map shows all the bus routes and all the discount locations with a description of what they have to offer. Most are publicly-owned recreation, art and entertainment facilities, but as word spreads of the project, we are quickly signing up more eating establishments and other private businesses.

Corporations are stepping



forward to cover the cost of free passes - in addition to some provided by the HSR - so we can take them into the schools this fall to encourage students to plan a day trip and get their whole family onto the HSR.

Major funding is being provided by Transport Canada's "Moving on Sustainable Transportation" program, supplemented by a \$15,000 grant from the city of Hamilton, and extensive in-kind assistance from the HSR, Tourism Hamilton, the Chamber of Commerce.

Planning and development for the project was backed by the Hamilton Community Foundation who are actively supporting its implementation.

The July 18th launch at Williams Coffee Pub on the waterfront included MPs David Sweet and Wayne Marston, MPP Andrea Horwath, and Chamber executive director John Dolbec - who promised to double the number of private partners in the project for 2009.

For more information go to the Environment Hamilton website (click on Passport to Hamilton). It lists all the discount locations, as well as all the outlets where you can purchase HSR day passes.

Call Brenda and her team at (905) 549-0900

Email us at passporttohamilton@environmenthamilton.org

LOCAL FRUIT SHARING

The Hamilton Fruit Tree Project is back again for 2008. Volunteers pick fruit that would otherwise be wasted from backyard city trees and the bounty is then divided between homeowners, volunteers and food banks.

Project coordinator Juby Lee has been busy re-connecting with volunteers and homeowners and is looking for more volunteers and more trees to pick.

Please note – if you are especially interested in this project, we could use picking leaders that would contact a small group of volunteers and organize picks.

The Fruit Tree Project is connecting with other like-minded individuals and groups to increase the visibility of the eat local movement. In early August, we are going to be a part of “Sustainable Lifestyles” that will feature free workshops to address our approach to food.

And we are working with local students from Promoting Eating Alternatively Sustainably (PEAS) and are pleased to announce an urban bus tour that will look at various food growing initiatives taking place in Hamilton.

Look for us the Dundas Cactus Festival and the Peach Festival in Winona where we will be signing up volunteers and homeowners.

EH is grateful for the generous support from the Edith Turner Foundation and from Healthy Living Hamilton who have funded our project this year.

If you are interested in joining our project, email Juby at jlee.eatlocal@gmail.com or call 289-439-1543 or 905-549-0900.

KIRKENDALL WALKS

Lowering your footprint by making many

The average North American car makes 2,000 trips a year that are shorter than about three km. Half of Hamilton's current car trips are less than five km according to the Transportation Tomorrow Survey. Replacing short distance trips with walking, cycling or transit is thus a very significant way of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It's also a great way to improve our communities. Since passenger road transportation accounts for half of personal GHG emissions in Canada, even driving 10 percent less reduces those emissions by 0.2 to 0.8 tonnes per year, depending on the vehicle.

Kirkendall Walks is an Environment Hamilton pilot project to evaluate and enhance transportation alternatives in one local neighbourhood and help its residents replace car trips with more sustainable options that also strengthen their community. It is funded by the EcoAction program of Environment Canada.

At the centre of the project will be a website (under development) that shows all local destinations of interest in and near Kirkendall, and responds to entry of a user's address by displaying distances and transportation options. It will include walking paths, bike lanes and signed routes, transit routes and stops, and links to other transportation options such as GO Transit.

It will also provide information on community events, walking clubs, neighbourhood meetings, and other information that enhance community life, as well as where to obtain specific goods and services – nearest skating facility, choices of restaurants, places of worship, etc.

Staff and volunteers (please do!) will conduct walkability assessments, lead cycling and walking tours, map destinations, and lobby for community enhancements that make non-car travel more accessible, enjoyable and frequent.

Planning that assumes car dependence has left our neighbourhoods with an inadequate transit system, obstacles to walking and cycling, and a shortage of local amenities. While we want healthier local communities, old habits die hard and the perception remains that one must drive to reach one's destination.

Popularizing and supporting alternatives to cars improves cardiovascular health, reduces obesity, lowers stress, increases neighbourhood friendships, creates demand for more local businesses and other local destinations, and builds community spirit and quality of life.

As individuals start using alternative modes, even if only initially for very local trips, these advantages will lead them to make more use of these modes for longer trips and begin to reduce car dependency. Benefits tend to accumulate in a positive direction. For example when a community is walkable, studies show that it is easier to implement public transit systems and bike routes.

Our objective is to create a model alternative transportation program that can serve as an example for the whole city and can be easily expanded to other neighbourhoods. To get involved please contact Beatrice or Jarah.

beatrice.ekoko@gmail.com / happyfolks@sympatico.ca **4**

THE AEROTROPOLIS THREAT

HEADWATERS OF FOUR MAJOR STREAMS

As the highest point of land in the city, the proposed airport employment growth district falls within the jurisdiction of three separate conservation authorities – Hamilton, Niagara and Grand River. The area includes the headwaters of the Welland River, Twenty Mile Creek, Sulphur Spring (also known as Ancaster Creek) and Big Creek (that flows into the Grand River).

The consultant studies released in May say development will have to be controlled to prevent damage to fisheries and water quality in these streams. Their reports also admitted that “airport deicing operations and stormwater runoff” are already causing problems.

“It is our understanding that the airport currently lacks the necessary infrastructure to treat and store contaminated runoff and uncontaminated stormwater,” states the report. “Recent flow monitoring by the city indicates that significant quantities of stormwater and meltwater runoff generated at the airport are pumped to the sanitary sewer during both cold and warm weather. The city’s system also receives glycol discharges.”

ABANDONING THE BAYFRONT

When Hemson Consulting endorsed an enlarged aerotropolis business park in March of 2007, the newly elected mayor and several councillors suggested the calculated land need was far too large. They demanded an accounting of the redevelopment potential of the of existing underutilized industrial lands in the 7800 acre area stretching along the harbour.

The responding staff and consultant reports unveiled in March essentially write off this area, concluding that no more than 50 acres is available there for new job opportunities. And they argue even more farmland around the airport is needed to meet job targets over the next 25 years.

The extremely low availability of bayfront lands was apparently calculated by only counting properties that are both vacant and not paying taxes. Staff went on to argue that the bayfront lands only appear underutilized,

and that boarded up properties and empty parking lots obscure ongoing economic activity. There was no mention of the fact that over 30,000 jobs have disappeared on the bayfront in the last 30 years, or that successful tax appeals, mainly by industrial property owners, chopped a record \$12 million off city revenues in 2007 alone.

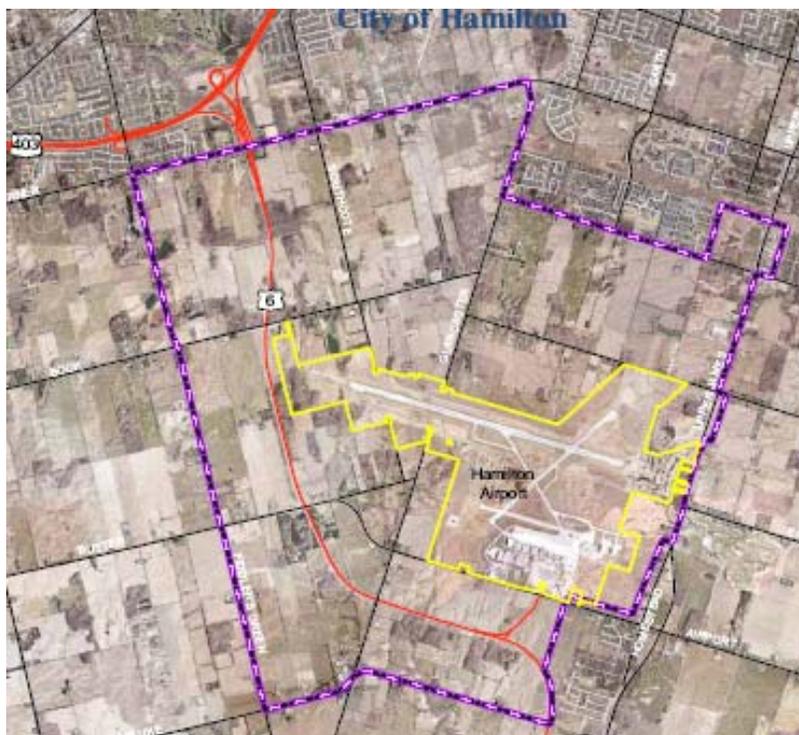
Several councillors described the conclusions as unbelievable. One asked how much of the older industrial lands would likely become available by the end of the planning period in 2031.

The response is that staff assume a further net decline of 10,000 jobs in those lands, and consultants anticipate that the only redevelopment there will be for residential use – as has happened in the Toronto portlands.

The essential message is that Hamilton should forget about its brownfield sites and plan its economic future on the “clean slate” of agricultural lands around the airport.

This strategy not only abandons the bayfront lands for our grandkids to remediate; it also cripples any vision of revitalizing the lower city.

The irony is that the main employment opportunities that the consultants predict will be attracted to the aerotropolis lands are warehousing and trucking companies, but the idea of locating these low density uses on empty bayfront properties apparently hasn’t been contemplated.



THE AEROTROPOLIS THREAT

SWALLOWING FARMLAND

As the world lurches into what's being widely described as a permanent food crisis, the aerotropolis plan contemplates paving over several thousand acres of prime agricultural land. Environment Hamilton's eat local campaign has focused on reduction of greenhouse gases and support for the Greenbelt and local farmers, but consuming local food may increasingly become a necessity.

Prime agricultural land is defined as class one, two and three soils, making virtually all of Hamilton's agricultural area prime. The city formally "recognize[d] prime agricultural land as irreplaceable" in the Vision 2020 statement in 1992. That sustainability exercise tracks the amount lost to official plan amendments as one of the key indicators of "how we're doing" in following the vision. The most recent report was published in 2004 and showed a cumulative 11-year loss to that point of 950 hectares. The aerotropolis plan would more than double that depletion in a single step – converting 1134 hectares to urban uses.

The consultants' report says

notes that "The large pocket of rural designated lands to the east north of the new Highway 6 also provides an opportunity to concentrate employment lands in that location as one option", but conclude that "More analysis is required to determine which lands should be removed from agricultural production and which should be left for the long term."

They go on to talk about potential "synergies" between agricultural activities and industry in the airport employment growth district [AEGD].

"Agricultural uses could be compatible with the AEGD; the local farms could provide food supplies for Airport operations and for Hotel/Food/Beverage businesses."

A related "constraint" noted by the consultants is the presence of hundreds of homes in the proposed AEGD.

"Appropriate transitional land uses or buffering may need to be considered on the lands bordering residential uses," says the report. "Nonetheless, from a land use perspective, the study area lands represent a feasible area for employment uses."

WHAT JOBS?

The consultants' report released in mid-May on the airport employment growth district states: "it is anticipated that a large percentage share of the future employment growth in this area will be dominated by land extensive, low-density employment in the warehousing/transportation and wholesale trade sectors".

It calculates these sectors will provide "approximately 41% of total employment growth" around the airport, but that it will eat up nearly 70 percent of the land area. And that may be underestimated.

The job densities used to calculate Hamilton's industrial land needs were subjected to a peer review. It concluded that the projected densities are likely 20 percent too high, but city staff have rejected this conclusion because it would force higher densities on new residential subdivisions since the province is requiring an average minimum density on all greenfield development.

The next largest aerotropolis employee group is forecast to be "accommodation and food services" with 10 percent of the new workforce. On manufacturing the report has this to say: "Over the forecast period, it is likely that the overall rate of employment growth in the manufacturing sector will be minimal."

These forecasts of job types don't seem to offer anything to cheer about, but perhaps explain why the consultants argue that the lands around the airport are such a good place to build Hamilton's main economic engine – "the proximity of the 403, the new highway 6 extension, and the airport."

A SLIPPERY SLOPE – GREASED BY OIL

Key points in the aerotropolis plans and cost of oil per barrel

May 2001	First mention in <i>Hamilton Spectator</i>	\$ 25
Jan. 2003	Identified as city's number one priority	\$ 30
June 2005	City attempt to expand urban boundary	\$ 52
April 2006	Peak oil report delivered by Richard Gilbert	\$ 64
Sept. 2007	Consultants hired for aerotropolis studies	\$ 76
July 2008	Current (peaked at \$147 earlier in July)	\$ 125
June 2009	City target to finalize boundary expansion	\$???
June 2013	Expected start of development on site	\$???

THE AEROTROPOLIS THREAT

AFTER 7 YEARS THE PRICE TAG IS STILL SECRET

New expressway, 25 km trunk sewer and water connections, just the start

Seven years into the aerotropolis planning, city officials have still not revealed what it will cost to service this huge addition to the urban area. The latest reports say the AEGD is “justified and feasible” but when questioned at the public information meeting in late May, both consultants and city officials were unable to provide cost figures, leaving citizens to continue guessing.

Major requirements include a new 25 km trunk sewer between the airport and the Woodward Avenue sewage treatment plant that would run up Centennial Parkway and then through 12 kilometres of rural land along Dickenson Road. The consultants report characterizes that as a “significant amount of infrastructure”. Part of the water supply would come by the same route, requiring a new feedermain on Centennial.

Both systems will require new pumping capacity – the sewers because part of the area slopes in the ‘wrong’ direction. Indeed, all servicing is challenged by the fact that the airport is the highest elevation in the city. Stormwater management is further complicated by the headwaters of four major streams that originate in the aerotropolis lands, forcing “enhanced or level one stormwater treatment from a water quality / fish habitat perspective” according to the consultants.

If all the wishes come true, including a mid-peninsula highway, road costs alone will trump all of this. The consultants call for “creating an east-west link connecting the Highway 6

extension from the airport to the Red Hill Valley Corridor”. They also warn that the current width of “Highway 403 through the escarpment may pose transportation capacity constraints to the development of the area.”

Suggestions have been made in the past that servicing costs could

ONLY THE NAME HAS CHANGED

City officials no longer refer to it as the aerotropolis, apparently in response to the negative reception the idea received from local citizens, but the basic premise of the airport as the growth engine of the future continues to dominate the re-named “airport employment growth district”.

The latest consultant reports conclude that “the airport lands, new Highway 6, Highway 403 and the existing Airport Business Park provide key infrastructure and strategic land uses upon which to develop a larger business park and create land use options.”

In defence of this view, they point to “the current trends of the ‘new economy’ such as e-commerce, supply-chain management, just-in-time delivery, and an increasing consumer preference for made-to-order products have all created a demand for guaranteed, time sensitive delivery, which in turn has placed increasing demand on cargo airports across North America.”

Hamilton’s airport has been struggling for most of this decade, especially in cargo shipments. Those stood at 90,000 tonnes last year – precisely the same level they hit eight years ago – but the

be paid by the new tenants of the aerotropolis through development charges. But one of the “competitive advantages” of the business park, according to the consultants, is the fact that Hamilton has very low industrial development fees – less than a third of Milton and Mississauga.

consultants continue the long-standing practice of predicting big improvements just ahead.

“Forecast cargo volumes are anticipated to significantly increase over the short to medium-term (i.e. 2012) largely due to recent expansions at Cargo Jet, combined with the growing demands for air cargo shipment across the [sic] North America.”

These rosy projections are not accompanied by any analysis of the implications of the rapidly rising fuel prices that have pushed at least nine American airline companies into bankruptcy in the first five months of this year. Oil at \$130 a barrel has incited the largest carrier – American Airlines – to start charging a fee for all checked baggage pieces, and the biggest Canadian companies to impose fuel surcharges on ticket prices.

Similarly, the widespread predictions of \$200 a barrel in the next two years are not mentioned, nor any discussion of peak oil.

The 500 pages of studies also fail to mention climate (except for “the investment climate”) or its implications for the future of air travel, as even governments adopt greenhouse gas reduction targets.

THE AEROTROPOLIS THREAT

PROVINCE CHALLENGING CITY CALCULATIONS

(abridged from CATCH News
www.hamiltoncatch.org)

The provincial government disagrees with key assumptions used by the city to decide the size of the aerotropolis and told city staff this last November, but this only came out when a provincial letter was handed to councillors as they were deciding to approve staff recommendations.

The letter challenges six city assumptions “not supported” by the ministry. The largest appears to be the decision to plan for 59,000 new industrial jobs, rather than the 49,000 number set by the province – an increase of about 20 percent.

The province is also rejecting city assumptions that 10 percent of its industrial lands will never be utilized, and that another 10 percent will have non-industrial uses.

It also challenges the city's failure to count existing uses of the land, infrastructure, utility corridors, and floodplains in their calculations. And it opposes “using a net-to-gross factor of 20 percent” which it suggests violates the provincial Growth Plan.

“The assumptions have the potential to result in an overestimation of the land needed for future employment growth”, says the letter

“The continued use of these assumptions increases the estimate of additional land needed to accommodate the Airport Employment Growth District.”

Perhaps most significantly, the letter bluntly disagrees with the city's decision to locate all future industrial expansion exclusively on greenfield sites.

“The Growth Plan requires municipalities to prepare intensification strategies and plan to accommodate significant amounts of both future residential and employment growth in existing built-up areas,” says the letter. “To date, Municipal Affairs and Housing / Public Infrastructure Renewal have not seen any intensification analysis related to employment lands.”

Mayor Eisenberger suggested that the provincial calculations of actual greenfield need amount to less than half of the city's, and even less than the 546 hectares that he urged councillors to support as “a first step” in zoning airport area lands for industrial use.

“This number's actually higher than the original number that the province would suggest, what they think is a reasonable expansion on the employment growth side,” Eisenberger argued in an unsuccessful attempt to amend the staff recommendation.

His motion was supported by Bob Bratina, Scott Duvall, Brian McHattie and Rob Pasuta, but the change was voted down by Brad Clark, Chad Collins, Lloyd Ferguson, Tom Jackson, Sam Merulla, Dave Mitchell, Maria Pearson and Terry Whitehead.

It was also strongly opposed by the general manager of the city's economic development and planning division, Tim McCabe, who recommended the city “stay the course” and fight the provincial challenge.

“We feel we've justified this area,” argued McCabe. “We feel the number, just cutting it in half, is somewhat arbitrary. We feel the airport employment lands is critical

to the future economic success of Hamilton. We know there's going to be a fight. We think we should only fight this fight once.”

Guy Paparella, the director of airport development, responded with pointed criticism of provincial officials.

“Having been at those meetings over that six or eight months that we've discussed with the province about our assumptions, they have not provided any technical basis for their position,” he declared. “They have just indicated that they have a concern that it may not be, you know, sufficient to lead to a conclusion that meets the philosophy and the vision that they have.”

WHAT'S NEXT?

Phase two studies are underway but must include consideration of the implications of peak oil.

The aerotropolis “community liaison committee” is continuing to meet monthly in Mount Hope. EH is represented by the committee is heavily stacked in favour of the aerotropolis

City officials currently plan to include all the aerotropolis lands in the amalgamated city's first Official Plan, due to be finalized next June.

Citizens will likely only get to make further comments in the context of the provincially required public consultations on the overall Official Plan.

All boundary expansions, including the Official Plan, must be approved by the province before they are finalized.

Decisions can be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board.

SUPPORT EXPANSION OF THE GREENBELT



Environment Hamilton has called on city council to support local expansion of the 1.8 million acre provincial Greenbelt established three years ago. The call came in a media release timed to coincide with provincial requests for input on the criteria for "Growing the Greenbelt" that came before council in May.

"Hamilton should be at the head of the line in seeking more protection for the valuable farmland around our city," our statement argued, noting that the city pays lip service to the crucial goal of preserving our agricultural capability, but repeatedly erodes it in practice.

We pointed to rapid rises in

VOLUNTEER

Troy Smith, an Environment Hamilton "Volunteer of the Month" recipient, has been instrumental to the success of the Hamilton Eat Local project and its Buy Local! Buy Fresh! local food map.

Troy has devoted numerous hours to delivering maps to the area's farms, community centres and other distribution points for the maps. He has also represented Hamilton Eat Local at community events, handing out maps to the public and answering their questions.

food prices and the cost of fuel as reasons to permanently protect more local farmland, and challenged councillors to re-think city plans for urban boundary expansions into prime agricultural land around the airport and near Elfrida.

"It's extremely foolish to be undermining our ability to feed ourselves at a time when the global price of grain and other basic foodstuffs has doubled in the last two years," EH pointed out. "Our food security is also threatened by rapidly escalating fuel prices that make importing food more costly and agricultural production more challenging."

EH also made formal comments

to the provincial government on the criteria to expand the Greenbelt. We asked them to allow members of the public to initiate requests to grow the Greenbelt, noting that it is "very unlikely that many municipalities will be willing to consider" taking this step.

"A process that enables community members to initiate the process and require municipalities to engage in a process of discussion and consideration of such community desires is very much needed at this point in the life of the Greenbelt," we suggested.



Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone#: _____ Email: _____

Annual membership \$25.00

Student/Unwaged \$15.00

Membership fee: _____

Donation: _____

TOTAL enclosed: _____

____ I would like to volunteer

Mail to: Environment Hamilton
1130 Barton Street East, Suite 207, Hamilton, ONT L8H 7P9
Please make cheques payable to Environment Hamilton

Website www.environmenthamilton.org

Email contactus@environmenthamilton.org Phone (905) 549-0900

VEHICLE LOG

Barbara Hale was the winner of two VIA tickets to Quebec City. She was among 50 people who volunteered to record their car use for one month to assist EH in determining ways to help people reduce vehicle use.



DUNDAS TREES COUNT TOO

2008 marks Environment Hamilton's second summer of work in Dundas for the Neighbourhoods Trees Count Project.

This year's project, entitled "Dundas Trees Count Too," is focused on surveying the area from Little John Road to South Street, and Tweedsmuir to Lynden. The project assesses the health of the urban forest. Data collected is sent away to the University of Toronto for analysis, resulting in a cumulative report at the end of the year.

This year's project has been moving along quite well, with the completion of Little John Park, Little John Road, Lynden, and South Street. Volunteers are the backbone of Dundas Trees Count Too, and they have enabled the project to move forward at a great pace, despite weather condition setbacks.

The current tree count is 655 trees, and that will be increasing over the next few weeks.

Among the more common trees,

Dundas Trees Count Too has still been able to locate some rare beauties.

A 27-meter tall Cucumber Magnolia was found in the backyard of William Osler's old estate along South Street. The Cucumber Magnolia is the only magnolia tree that is native to Canada. It is the northernmost species of the Magnolia family and is currently on the endangered species list.

As Dundas Trees Count Too progresses, we hope to encounter more new and enthralling trees. There are currently two inventory sessions held each day from Tuesday to Saturday at 10am-12pm, and 6pm-8pm.

Any person interested in hearing more about Dundas Tree Count Too is encouraged to come to the Cactus Festival on Saturday, August 16.

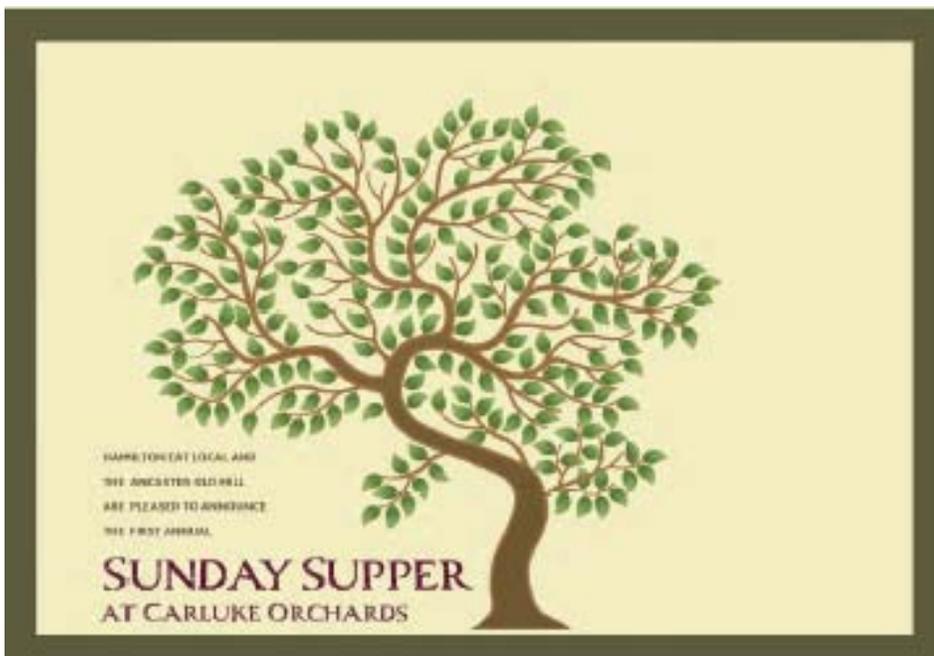
Last year's results and report will be available at that time, and any findings from this summer will



The flower of the Cucumber Magnolia is often hard to discern from its large, bright green leaves.

be explained in a cumulative report at the end of the year, open for public viewing.

SUNDAY SUPPER AT CARLUKE ORCHARDS



SUNDAY, AUGUST 17th 6:00 pm

CARLUKE ORCHARDS
2194 SHAVER ROAD SOUTH
ANCASTER, ONTARIO
\$150 PER PERSON

Includes wine, tax and gratuity. All proceeds raised will support the 2009 Buy Local Buy Fresh! Local Food Map. A delicious and ambitious partnership between area chefs, artists and farmers

To reserve your place or for more information: The Ancaster Old Mill
905 848 1827
info@ancasteroldmill.com

LOCAL FOOD FOR BUSINESSES AND INSTITUTIONS

Hamilton Eat Local has been completely overwhelmed by the positive response from the community over our second annual local food map. Local food – it seems – is on the tip of everyone's tongue, and we've received a lot of feedback on what local food enthusiasts would like to see in Hamilton in the future. Here's a rundown:



The new Ottawa Street Market is proving popular.

The recurring issue that arises is distribution – how to get more local food to more consumers? Farmers' markets, on farm markets and CSA delivery programs are enjoyable, relatively convenient and great sources of fresh, healthy food but it is difficult, and often expensive, for most residents to travel beyond the urban boundary for locally grown food and the vast majority of our local farmers do not attend local farmers' markets.

Moreover, there are only a handful of active farmers' at the Hamilton Farmers' Market – the more central of the two and the general consensus is that there should be many more.

There are those who believe in the benefits of eating locally and incorporate this into their businesses, such as Chef Jeff Crump of Ancaster Old Mill make a point of going the extra mile (literally) to source his menu with fresh locally-grown ingredients, but he admits the extra effort pays off.

He often works closely with his suppliers to ensure quality and supply. Boo's Bistro, The Spotted Pig, Café Troy, Farm Fresh Country Market, Picone's, Punchbowl Country Market and Amuse

Bouche are just a few other businesses striving to include local foods on their menu and shelves because they know that by buying local they are providing customers with the finest food available.

However, it remains a logistical challenge to drop off the food service delivery truck route and purchase ingredients from up to a dozen individual suppliers. The chefs, restaurateurs and business owners that do source local ingredients for their menus must be commended for their fine efforts.

There are many different models of local food distribution that can inspire similar developments here, in our city. One such example is the Elmira Produce Auction Cooperative (EPAC) - a mini-terminal at which farmers from within a 75 km radius of the warehouse are able to sell their produce to other farmers, restaurants, caterers,



EH's work on local food is generously supported by Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation

retailers and institutions at market prices.

After over five years in business, the coop continues to grow - in the 2007 season, EPAC had over \$1.2 million in local food sales. Local Food Plus (LFP) in Toronto has successfully launched its own producer certification program meant to clearly highlight local, sustainably produced food.

LFP certified food is now available for purchase at the University of Toronto and retailers such as Fiesta Farms and the Big Carrot, among many others.

The City of Ottawa recently welcomed the official opening of the Ottawa Valley Food Co-op, a 100 member organization (including 20 producers) whose goal it is to source and distribute locally grown food year round.

These organizations and scores of others highlight that it's possible to relocalize the food economy in a way that benefits producers, consumers and all those other actors who strive to insure the sustainability and integrity of our local food system. Hamilton has one of the finest and most productive agricultural economies in the province.

We boast one of the most diverse ranges of agricultural production in the region and enjoy proximity to the country's largest market for local food. Add to that a growing food scene, a passionate environmental and social justice community, a strong and vibrant farm community, and a supportive political environment.

Hamilton has what it takes to become a provincial leader in supporting a sustainable local food system for generations.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROJECT SUPPORTED

Successful work in North Hamilton being extended across the city

The Hamilton Community Foundation has renewed funding for EH's work in lower income Hamilton neighbourhoods.

North Hamilton has been the focus of this environmental justice project for the past three years of operation – helping residents improve the quality of life in their communities – both by reducing negative impacts and improving public services.

The project has now been expanded to low-income neighbourhoods across the city.

Achievements so far have included:

- convincing the city to establish a new north-south HSR route on Victoria and Wentworth that ends a situation where some families were more than one kilometre from a bus stop
- reducing waste in an elementary school from 96 bags to 4 per month, and engaging the students in a bird house construction, school grounds beautification and other environmental projects
- winning compensation for residents whose homes were damaged by demolition and construction activities connected to a new industrial facility
- developing the *Passport to Hamilton* transit promotion program that provides discounts at over 60 locations to families using the low-cost HSR day pass (see page 3)
- questioning outdated and

ENERGY-EFFICIENT

EH continues to offer tours of Dave Braden's super energy-efficient home. Call (905) 549-0900 to register.

inadequate Ministry of the Environment regulation of polluting steel industries, leading the Ministry to step up its monitoring and enforcement activities

- supporting community festivals and fundraising events to expand park facilities in low income areas
- distributing free energy saving kits to several thousand homes
- drawing wide media coverage of industrial soot and fallout that has been plaguing north Hamilton residents
- publishing a monthly column of environmental advice that is circulated to 4000 homes
- getting action to stop unacceptable industrial odours
- using the Environmental Bill of Rights to require emissions stack testing at a facility using toxic chemicals
- conducting a transit and energy use survey of over 3200 households
- helping to draw public attention to significant wildlife habitat adjacent to and near the harbour and assisting residents in protecting these areas
- obtaining a provincial review of a metal cutting operation that was producing significant emissions and convincing the company involved to move the operations indoors
- building good neighbour relationships between residents



The Keith bus wedding party (from left to right: Brian Henley, Barb Teichman, Don MacVicar, Jarah West, Brenda Johnson, and Don Hull)

and industries operating near their homes

The ongoing work is supported by the HCF's innovative Tackling Poverty Initiative that is committed to make Hamilton the best place to raise a child.

CLIMATE CHAMPIONS

Climate Change Champions is an exciting new program that invites 24 organizations, schools or businesses across the city to create their own plans to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by at least 10 per cent.

The 18-month project is a first-time official partnership between Environment Hamilton and Green Venture. Plans are in their early stages, but work with the first four "Champions" are under way and the program will have its formal launch in the fall.

For more information contact Julia Kollek at Environment Hamilton jkollek@gmail.com or Jordan Fysh at Green Venture energy@greenventure.ca.