

# The Fife and Drum

The Newsletter of the Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common

Volume 6 No.3  
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### Attention!

We must be vigilant and involved to ensure that the Front Street Extension respects Fort York. Another elevated expressway north of Fort York is our nightmare!

We need to show Council that we are interested and involved.

Please try to attend:

1. Public Meeting on December 3 (see notice on page 2).
2. Public Meeting on Proposed Secondary Plan for Central Waterfront:  
    Date: December 12, 2002  
    Time: 9:30 a.m.  
    Place: City Hall, Council Chamber  
          100 Queen Street West



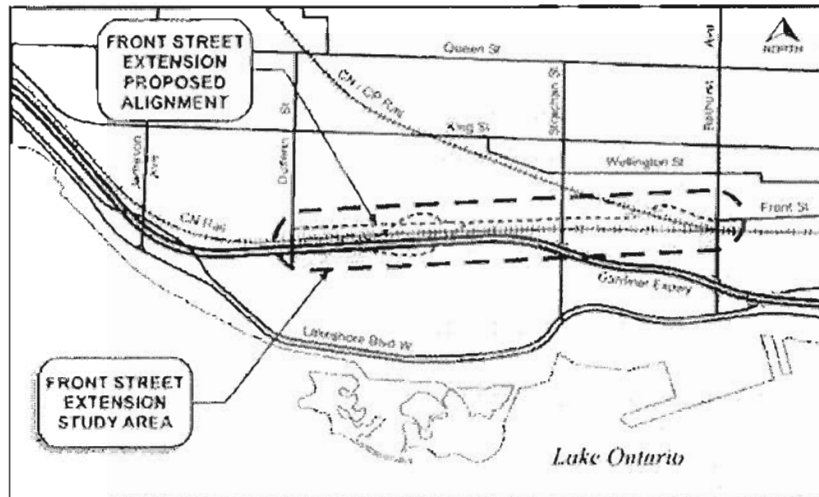
# Front Street Extension Environmental Assessment Study

## Notice of Public Meeting and Open House

### Background

The proposed extension of Front Street, from Bathurst Street to Dufferin Street including a new interchange with the Gardiner Expressway west of Strachan Avenue, has been an important component of the City of Toronto's transportation plans for many years. The plan to revitalize Toronto's waterfront has provided the momentum to move ahead with the planning, approval and implementation of this project.

The City of Toronto's Works and Emergency Services Department, on behalf of the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation, is conducting an Environmental Assessment (E/A) Study for the Front Street Extension project to fulfil both federal and provincial requirements.



### Opportunity to comment on the preliminary preferred alignment

The City will host a third open house and public meeting for the EA study. The purpose of the meeting is to present and obtain input on the preliminary preferred alignment for the Front Street Extension. After this open house and public meeting #3, the project team will finalize its recommendations to City Council. Pending Council approval, the EA notice of completion will be provided through the project mailing list and through a public newspaper notice. Comments on the preliminary preferred alignment must be received by Monday, December 9, 2002.

**Tuesday, December 3, 2002**

**Masaryk-Cowan Community Centre, Gymnasium**  
**220 Cowan Avenue (south of Queen St. W.)**  
**6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.**

(By TTC, take 501 Streetcar to Oshawa Avenue, walk east to Cowan Avenue)

6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. - Open House and information preview

7:00 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. - Presentation and public input on preferred alternative

Visit the project website at [www.toronto.ca/involved/projects](http://www.toronto.ca/involved/projects)

If you are unable to attend, but want more information, contact

Christine Iamonaco, Public Consultation Co-ordinator  
 Works and Emergency Services Department, City of Toronto  
 19th Floor, Metro Hall, 55 John Street, Toronto, ON M5V 3C6  
 email: [works\\_consultation@toronto.ca](mailto:works_consultation@toronto.ca)

## **A Review of the Issues Surrounding the Front Street Extension Project**

Introduction – Front Street is a major east/west roadway immediately north of the main rail corridor in downtown Toronto. To the present Front Street has ended at Bathurst Street because extending it to the west of Bathurst Street would require crossing the north-west rail corridor. (The main rail corridor running west from Union Station divides into the east-west rail corridor and the north west corridor immediately north of Fort York)

History -- The need for an extension to Front Street was identified in 1983 and an Environmental Assessment for the project was completed in 1988. A major constraint to the original alignment was the Inglis Plant on Strachan Avenue. Subsequent to 1988 the Inglis Plant was closed. With the closing of the Inglis Plant the alignment of the Front Street Extension was re-examined. A feasibility study recommended the westward relocation of the northwest rail corridor so that it would commence through the Inglis site west of Strachan Avenue (the Rail Relocation Option). This recommendation was adopted by the City of Toronto and would have permitted Front Street to be extended to Strachan Avenue along the north side of the consolidated rail corridor without a railroad overpass. Unfortunately, the redevelopment of the Inglis Lands as approved by City Council in 2001 precluded the Rail Relocation Option.

Building on previous work undertaken by the Niagara Neighbourhood Association and the Toronto Historical Board, the Friends have been involved in the environmental assessment process on the Front Street Extension since our founding in 1994.

The Friends strongly supported the Rail Relocation Option and the proposals to remove the elevated Gardiner Expressway to the south of Fort York, as those proposals have the potential to enhance the environment around the Fort. The Friends have continually and strenuously opposed the overpass option because of its negative visual and physical impacts on Fort York.

Following the elimination of the Rail Relocation Option, the Friends were involved in the formation of the Front Street Extension Review Committee and the determination by that Committee that a rail-underpass option for the Front Street Extension was both feasible and greatly preferable to the overpass option. The Front Street Extension Review Committee (FSERC) also concluded that a land bridge over the Front Street Extension and the rail corridor should be included as part of the project to mitigate barrier effects of the underpass option. The four lane Front Street Extension developed by the FSERC with the rail-underpass was adopted by Toronto City Council in January 2001. On November 6, 2001 City Council adopted the Open Space Plan for Fort York, an integral part of which is the creation of the land bridge.

From 1988 forward, the environmental assessment process for the Front Street Extension has dealt with a four lane proposal for the Extension. As the studies done as part of this process have demonstrated, a four lane Front Street Extension would adequately meet the City's traffic and other objectives. Later in 2001, however, Toronto City Council approved an "upgrade" of the Front Street Extension to a six lane structure as part of the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Initiative, in anticipation of the demolition of the Gardiner Expressway. We understand that it was assumed, but not studied in detail, that the four lane alignment developed by the FSERC could be expanded to allow for six lanes to accommodate the proposal by the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Initiative to replace the Gardiner. As a result, the current Assessment process is focused only on the design and engineering necessary to accommodate a six lane expressway.

The EA process continued in 2002 with public meetings in June and September. The four alternative proposals submitted by the Public Works and Emergency Services officials at the second public meeting under the EA all called for a six lane structure (eight lanes at Bathurst with exit lanes) to be built. However it was provided that initially only four lanes would be used for traffic.

The Alternatives – The first alternative provided for an elevated bridge to go over the rail corridor which would provide Fort York with a Gardiner-like structure on its northern boundary and surround the fort with expressways. It was stated that this alternative was the most straightforward and least costly. However, it was recognized that significant opposition to the elevated structure in the community, in the city planning and in city council made it undesirable. Nevertheless this alternative has not been withdrawn.

The remaining three alternatives all provided for the expressway to go under the rail corridor through an underpass. One of these alternatives would require the expropriation of the Toronto Abattoir (Quality Meats) to enable the expressway to swing north of the rail corridor before proceeding through the underpass. (Quality Meats is a large operation involving over 650 jobs). The remaining two alternatives would not significantly affect Quality Meats but would require a relocation of the east west rail tracks onto the land on the north side of Fort York (recently acquired by the city from CN thanks in part to much work done by Stephen Otto of the Friends). To date, the engineers have been unable to tell us how much of this land would be required. As well, the approval of CN and Via Rail to permit the shifting of their main tracks has not yet been obtained. Clearly there are uncertainties with these three alternatives which may yet bring the elevated “over the track” option to be forefront.

None of the alternatives provide for the construction of the land bridge to enable pedestrian and cycling access over the tracks and the Front Street Extension.

The Friends' Activity – The Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common have made two written submissions expressing our significant concerns about the various designs proposed for the six lane structure for the Front Street Extension. Our sole objective in our advocacy activity with respect to the Front Street Extension is to protect and enhance historic Fort York, Toronto's birthplace and most important heritage site, for the benefit of the citizens of Toronto and Canada, both present and future.

Specifically our positions are:

1. to strongly support the demolition of the existing Gardiner Expressway and its replacement in the area of Fort York with a tunnelled or buried roadway;
2. to strongly oppose an elevated option for the Front Street Extension between Bathurst and Strachan;
3. to strongly support the inclusion of a north-south land bridge connecting the Garrison Creek Park System with Fort York and various east-west trails south of the rail corridor for pedestrians and cyclists as part of any Front Street Extension project; and
4. to oppose any above grade incursions into Fort York lands including the properties recently acquired from CN by either the Front Street Extension project or the Gardiner replacement.

It is worth observing that there is a growing opposition to any possibility of a six lane Front Street Extension in the community led by a number of neighbourhood associations. They question whether it will ever make sense to create a six lane "expressway" to move large quantities of traffic to Spadina Avenue and east, even in the context of a revived project to remove the Gardiner Expressway. If this opposition grows and can gain the support of City Council, the Front Street Extension might revert to a "four lane only" project. This would not, however, change the engineering alternatives for the construction of the road and would therefore not have a bearing on the likelihood of the elevated "over the tracks" option proceeding. We must be vigilant to protect the interests of Fort York as the implementation of the project unfolds.

### **Murray Philp – A True Friend**

Murray Philp was one of the original Directors of the Friends of Fort York and served on the Executive Committee as Secretary from its inception. Murray and Don Brydges were co-directors of the Fort York Festival for four years. Murray was one of the individuals who worked daily to help make the Friends of Fort York a viable organization.

From 1997, the Friends of Fort York Executive Committee (John Barclay, Ian Keith, Don Brydges, Murray Philp and Joe Gill) met almost every Wednesday morning (except in "cottage months") at Joe Gill's house. The writer can vouch for the fact that these meetings involved much laughter, hard work, creative thinking – and almost never a harsh word. We worked well together and built on each other's strengths. Murray was an important part of those meetings and always brought a story (and a copy of the National Post) so that the meetings would begin on a cheerful note.

Murray passed away after suffering a heart attack at his cottage on July 22, 2002, doing what he loved best – fishing at the family cottage. His wife Carol and daughter Amanda are both supporters of Fort York, Carol being a loved and active member of the Friends. Those of you who see Cottage Life magazine will want to read the tribute to Murray in the FOCA portion of the Winter issue. Murray was a much loved treasurer of FOCA.

Murray will be missed by many. The Friends of Fort York will never quite be the same without Murray Philp and John Barclay.

### **Fort York Boulevard – Yet to Come**

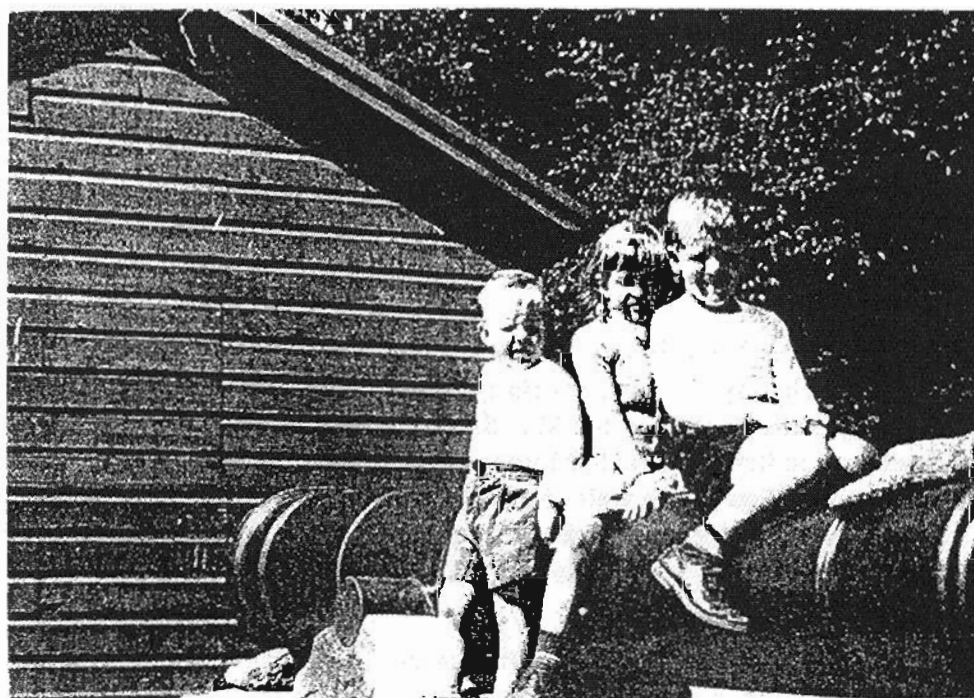
The ribbon to open Fort York Boulevard was cut on August 14 by Councillor Joe Pantalone and other dignitaries, including city officials Barry Gutteridge and Rita Davies. Geordie Beal of the Fort York Management Board was the MC. Since then drivers have found it a welcome addition to the road network in the downtown. More is to come in the Spring, however, when a stainless steel liner will be installed on the wall of the staircase near Bathurst Street, and a 32-pounder cannon placed on a plinth there to mark the southeast corner of the Fort York Precinct. The landscaping improvements for the boulevard were designed by Peter Smith, a partner in the firm of du Toit Allsopp Hillier.

On the steel wall will be etched a series of milestone dates and events in the history of the fort. The cannon will sit on an iron gun carriage cast specially made for this location, where a timber carriage would not stand up well to the expected salt and road spray. Iron carriages are no less authentic than timber ones, but they stood up to the weather better. Timber was preferred because it was better able to take the recoil shock of repeated firings and could be repaired more easily if damaged by enemy fire.

Locating a suitable 32-pounder turned out to be an interesting odyssey of discovery. Dr. Carl Benn, Chief Curator of the City's museums, provided a list of cannon in various parks around the City. They are largely anonymous in terms of their origins, although all bear maker's marks cast into their trunnions that hint at distinguished if obscure pedigrees. No. 70450, the one behind Riverdale (now Bridgepoint) Hospital on the west side of Broadview Avenue, was made in 1806 at the Carron factory in Scotland. One of five cannon that used to stand at the entrance to Riverdale Park off of Winchester Street, it was moved in 1896 to the Broadview side of the park, according to the minutes of the Parks Committee.

With these clues, Steve Otto of the Friends of Fort York headed off to the City Archives and through the courtesy of Michael Moir, the City Archivist, looked at a recent accession -- a fragile, uncatalogued scrapbook that once belonged to Alderman Peter Lamb who had been a moving force behind improving Riverdale Park in the 1880s. There he hit paydirt in an undated newspaper clipping documenting the arrival of the five cannon from Quebec City after Lamb had asked for them when the Hon. A. P. Caron, Minister of Militia and Defence, made a visit to Toronto in 1881. Some months later the cannon arrived and were hauled by dray to Riverdale, where they were set up on a wooden platform in a battery-like formation. The report also gave the marks on the other cannon: "No. 77355 Carron 1811," "No. 18 Carron 1807," "No. 63662 Carron 1803," and "No. 72 W. Co. 486 Carron 1803."

Armed with this information, Ken Purvis, Senior Program Officer at Fort York, found that "No. 63662 Carron 1803" is now located in Marie Curtis Park at the mouth of Etobicoke Creek, "no doubt enjoying retirement, soaking up the sun, and writing its memoirs." Where, one wonders, are the other Riverdale pieces? In the end, it was decided the cannon within the fort could be moved around to release one of them for display on Fort York Boulevard.



Dr. Mima Kapches, an Honorary Director of the Friends of Fort York, well recalls the Buster Brown shoes she was wearing when she had her picture taken with her cousins on the cannon behind Riverdale Hospital

### **Gardiner Expressway – An Update**

When the Development Plan and Business Strategy for the Revitalization of the Toronto Waterfront was released in October the Gardiner Expressway Project certainly had lost its position of importance. Virtually no discussion of the Gardiner project was provided. The budget allocated to the project was limited to \$4 million for a further study of alternatives and \$14 million for an Environmental Assessment. The study and the assessment were expected to be completed in five years.

### **Queen Charlotte's Birthday**

Once again, the staff at Fort York led by Melanie Garrison will celebrate Queen Charlotte's birthday by staging a fine heritage event in the Blue Barracks at Historic Fort York. Participants will gather at noon on Saturday January 18<sup>th</sup> for the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual symposium on Georgian Entertainment including an enjoyable dance workshop. A break in the late afternoon provides time to dress in appropriate garb (last year almost 80% of guests dressed in 1812 style) for an historic dinner and dancing in 1812 style – a Birthday Ball you will not want to miss. Please contact Melanie Garrison at 416-392-6907 ext. 100 for further information.

### **The Fort York Guard – An Outstanding Summer (and a new CD!)**

The Fort York Guard has another very successful summer. As well as performing daily at Fort York, trips included ventures to Stoney Creek (near Hamilton), Chrysler's Farm in Morrisburg, Fort Henry, the Ottawa War Museum and Fort Wellington in Prescott. The Fort Henry trip was particularly exciting. The Fort York Drums performed in the famous Sunset Ceremony before an audience measured in thousands. They did themselves proud.

We wish to thank Mike Putnam and Andrea Bouma for the very impressive job they have done in building the Fort York Drums. This was Mike Putnam's last year and he will be missed. Andrea Bouma will take over Mike's role as Drum Major for 2003 and Ewan Wardle will be the fifer Major.

We also wish to thank Andrew Olmsted and Keiko Twist for their fine work in leading the Fort York Guard to their successful summer.

The Fort York Drums have released their new CD "To Follow the Drum". The CD contains twenty tracks of music that they play at Fort York. It is most impressive. The CD's are being sold for \$15 and can be purchased by calling the Drums message box at (416) 392-6907 extension 555. All proceeds of the sale of the CD go toward the Drums and the Guard, for purchasing supplies, uniforms and equipment.

## **The Fort York Management Board**

The Fort York Management Board, with Geordie Beal as Chair, has been very active. The Management Board, representatives of the Friends of Fort York, Jo Ann Pynn and her staff at the fort and representatives of various city departments including City Planning, Culture, parks and recreation have all been involved in meetings with representatives of Parks Canada to re-define the boundaries of the "designated place" associated with Fort York as a National Historic Site. Special thanks go to Stephen Otto and David Spittal (our resident archaeologist) for many hours of preparation to ensure the success of these meetings. This work will also help determine revised boundaries for the Fort York Heritage Conservation District.

The Management Board is also working with staff to update the Strategic Plan for Fort York, a large but important project.

Lastly the Board recently held a very enjoyable reception at Fort York for members of the Board and staff at the fort.

## **Help Save The Site of Upper Canada's First Parliament Buildings**

Recent historical research and archaeological investigations have resulted in the discovery of the remains of the First Parliament buildings at Parliament and Front Streets in Toronto. Located in the heart of the old town, they were the first brick structures in York and represent the birthplace of Ontario's system of courts, land ownership and civil freedoms. They also housed the first Anglican congregation in the city and served as a military barracks and temporary home for newly arrived immigrants to Upper Canada. The burning of these buildings by American forces and the retaliation of the British by the burning of Congress during the War of 1812 attests to their international significance.

The availability of 265 Front Street East provides an unparalleled opportunity for the Province and others to continue to assemble the block of land, a significant part of which is already in public hands. On this land, we can create a new type of gathering space, an educational site and a tourist destination – a place where residents and visitors can discover the roots of our approach to government and explore the unique qualities of Canadian democracy.

**There is urgency to what must be done.** The Ontario Municipal Board has given the local heritage community until December to develop a purchase plan for the site; otherwise new retail operations will be approved.

To save the Upper Canada's first parliament buildings the Ontario Government must be convinced to demonstrate leadership by securing the site for future public use. Please express your support by contacting The Honourable David Tsabouchi, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet and Minister of Culture and Premier Ernie Eves. We would ask that you contact your own M.P.P. asking them to speak directly to Minister Tsabouchi in support of securing the site. Please contact them today. Tell them you believe the site of Ontario's First Parliament Buildings must be returned to public hands for the benefit of all. For more information, see the web site, [www.firstparliament.ca](http://www.firstparliament.ca) or contact Ernest Buchner, Executive Director, Heritage Toronto 416-338-0650.