

Peter Hume, Chair, Planning and Environment Committee  
Rob Jellet, Chair, Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee  
City of Ottawa, 110 Laurier Avenue West  
Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1  
Thursday, June 22, 2006

Dear Councillor Hume, Councillor Jellet, Mayor Chiarelli, Councillors and Citizens:

Re: Agenda 52, Item 18  
draft Greenspace Master Plan (Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces)  
and related Official Plan Amendment  
Date: Tuesday, June 27, 2006 (09:30)

For 20 years I have been advocating the protection of natural areas (biodiversity) in and around Ottawa, totally without success. During that time Ontario's delegated local municipal authority (currently named Ottawa) has knowingly destroyed approximately 8,000 hectares of greenspace in its jurisdiction of 279,000 hectares. This consumption is projected into the future via the land use plan (Official Plan), and as such Ontario sanctions no biodiversity in Ottawa.

That is also to state that the members of Ottawa City Council have no public understanding how the humans of Ottawa are kept alive on this planet via ecological goods and services. It is difficult to overstate the ignorance of this situation which may well be the will of the politicians of Ontario and Canada but it is not the will of this citizen.

On a personal level, due process has led me to attempt four appeals to an adjudicative tribunal, the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) to try and sanction what I perceive to be the habitat of living species including *Homo sapiens*. All appeals were opposed by the applicable local municipal authority (through Motions), and all my appeals were turned away by the OMB without adequate debate or decision (in my view).

Thus the view of this citizen regarding the broad policy document *Greenspace Master Plan (Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces)* before this Committee today is complicated by the fact that I support the rule of law but do not support the Official Plan of Ottawa or the existing Zoning By-law of old Ottawa, neither of which approach comprehensive scientific reality. Further, I do not support the current structure of Ontario which operates without appropriate accountability. Nevertheless I offer the following comments.

The so-called draft *Greenspace Master Plan* offers no direct compliance to the law of the existing Official Plan (OP). Nor, in my view does it follow the direction of the existing OP. Nevertheless, this policy document is being used to introduce an Amendment to the law of the Official Plan, an Amendment which if accepted will dilute the *language* of greenspace protection.

Further, in my view the document itself does not offer an adequate scientific approach to the matter of our existence which must include greenspace. Thus the derivation of the five stated

objectives is neither obvious nor accepted. I do readily acknowledge that greenspace protection is an extremely complicated matter from a scientific point of view. And that I am not aware of any existing template for what a *Greenspace Master Plan* might be in Ontario. But that doesn't change the inadequacy of the document before your Committee.

Putting the matter slightly differently, this draft *Greenspace Master Plan* is not characterized by an Annex in the law of the OP protecting greenspace. Nor, as offered in the staff report (page 3), does it require changes to the zoning or Official Plan designation of properties. By contrast the Transportation Master Plan (also a broad policy document) is partially characterized by Annex 1 protecting approximately 650 Rights of Ways for expansion.

In my view the core *land-use* direction of the city of Ottawa is the delivery of land (and related infrastructure) to unnamed financial institutions for mortgage creation in conjunction with the erection of buildings. This delivery of land, currently estimated by a staff document<sup>1</sup> to be approximately 500 hectares per year, is the crucible that would hold any greenspace network as proposed. The implication that a supply of greenspace (approximately 80 hectares per year given the proposed target of 4 hectares/1000 Homo sapiens) might be blended in with this supply of 500 hectares per year for buildings should be rejected as clearly cosmetic.

In conclusion, I support neither this *draft Greenspace Master Plan* nor the proposed Amendment, dependent as it is on the proposed policy document. Thus I don't support staff Report<sup>2</sup> Recommendations 1 & 2.

Thank you for considering my view on this albeit complex, dynamic matter. I offer more detailed comments in the Appendix and would be willing to try to answer any questions.

Given the fact there is only one planet (which includes the 279,000 hectares of Ottawa) and despite the inadequate protocol, I am also sending a copy of this submission to the Governor General of Canada, the Prime Minister of Canada and the Premier of Ontario. I feel it is time that the government of Canada be accountable for the destruction of Ottawa that is being carrying out implicitly in the name of the common good.

Yours truly

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1Report to Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee and Planning and Environment Committee, April 7, 2006. Ned Lathrop, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management, City of Ottawa.

2Report to Committee and Council. June 12,2006. John Moser, Acting Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management, City of Ottawa. Ref No: ACS2006PO2006-PGM-POL-0052.

## Appendix

I would now offer more detailed comments:

1 Ottawa's lack of comprehensive indicators	page 3
2 Science as an approach to existence	page 3
3 Citizen's Comments	page 8
4 Rule of law	page 9

### 1 Ottawa's lack of comprehensive indicators:

I believe it is fair comment to say that the City of Ottawa offers no comprehensive indicators of progress through time. For example these balanced indicators could be given as indicators of the environment, performance measurement, compliance to the direction of the law itself or the *common good*. While this situation is the will of Ontario and Canada it is not the will of this citizen.

Thus the silence of Ottawa over time with respect to the realities of Ottawa renders comments on policy matters such as the draft *Greenspace Master Plan (Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces)* more or less speculative in nature.

### 2 Science as an approach to existence

When I first approached the government of Ontario via the former Ottawa and the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton (now both renamed as Ottawa) it was simply with my desire to protect natural areas, starting with the *land* of these so-called local municipalities. After all, this *land* of Ottawa is the land where I am resident, a tax payer, theoretically part of the community and a citizen of a country.

Over time, as I failed to make any impact, I expanded my core value and I returned to my science training to advance my understanding of biodiversity. Throughout human history we have had many ideas and feelings regarding our existence. Towards the end of the last century some scientists started to feel that we were part of planet Earth (not separate from it) and that the planet itself was complex (in effect a massive variable)<sup>3</sup>. And that for the purpose of analysis and perhaps guidance this ever-changing planet could be approached from several perspectives.

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<sup>3</sup>Bradshaw, G. and Bekoff, M. August 2001. *Ecology and social responsibility: the re-embodiment of science*. Trends in Ecology & Evolution. Vol. 16, No.8.

The following perspectives were offered in the September 1970 issue of Scientific American<sup>4</sup>:

	Article	Author(s)
1	The Biosphere (Introducing an issue on the grand-scale cyclic mechanisms of life on Earth.)	Hutchinson, E.
2	The Energy Cycle of the Earth (Energy from the sun is broadly distributed by the atmosphere and the ocean.)	Oort, A.
3	The Energy Cycle of the Biosphere (Solar energy fixed by green plants is partitioned by communities of living things.)	Woodwell, G.
4	The Water Cycle (Water is both the medium of the life processes and the source of their hydrogen.)	Penman, H.
5	The Oxygen Cycle (There was no free oxygen in the atmosphere until it was put there by green plants.)	Cloud, P. and Gabor, A.
6	The Carbon Cycle (Carbon is comparatively rare on the earth, and its pathways are intricately woven.)	Bolin, B.
7	The Nitrogen Cycle (Nitrogen must be fixed by certain forms of life before it can be used by others.)	Delwiche, C.
8	Mineral Cycles (Living matter is mostly H, O, C and N, but other elements play key roles in it.)	Deevey, E.
9	Human Food Production as a Process in the Biosphere (The advances of agriculture yield a larger human crop.)	Brown, L.
10	Human Energy Production as a Process in the Biosphere (The release of stored energy races the cycles of nature.)	Singer, F.
11	Human Materials Production as a Process in the Biosphere (Closing the cycles of inorganic materials is difficult.)	Brown, H.

If you were to approach these complex variables all at once you would approach our existence on this planet. Yet Ottawa, speaking to the legal fiction of Ottawa, is silent on these matters. This is the current will of Ontario and Canada but it is not the will of this citizen.

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<sup>4</sup>Volume 223, Number 3. Scientific American Inc.

Scientists<sup>5</sup> continue to investigate this system approach to our existence on this planet:

No:	NATURAL ENVIRONMENT (by function) (Prugh, T.)	ECOSYSTEM SERVICE (Costanza, R.)	ECOSYSTEM SERVICE (Daily, G.)	ECOSPHERIC FUNCTIONS (Mosquin, T.)
1	Regulation	Gas Regulation	Food	Primary production
2	Carrier	Climate Regulation	Pharmaceuticals	Oxygen production
3	Production	Disturbance Regulation	Durable materials	Sequestering of carbon dioxide
4	Information	Water Regulation	Energy	Herbivory
5		Water Supply	Industrial products	Carnivory
6		Erosion control and sediment retention	Genetic resources	Control of soil erosion
7		Soil formation	Cycling and filtration processes	Population moderation
8		Nutrient cycling	Translocation processes	Seed & spore dispersal (plants); migration & larval dispersal (animals)
9		Waste treatment	Stabilization processes	Symbiosis
10		Pollination	Life-fulfilling functions	Soil & sediment creation/bioturbation
11		Biological control	Preservation of options	Moderation of macro & microclimate
12		Refugia		Decomposition
13		Food production		Maintenance of 3-dimensional structures

5i) Prugh, T. 1995. *Natural Capital and Human Economic Survival*. International Society for Ecological Economics. ISBN 1-887490-02-7.

ii) Costanza, R., d'Arge, R., de Groot, R., Farber, S., Grasso, M., Hannon, B., Limburg, K., Naeem, S., O'Neill, R., Paruelo, J., Raskin, R., Sutton, P. & van den Belt, M. May 1997. *The value of the world's ecosystem services and natural capital*. Nature. Vol 387, p253-260.

iii) Daily, G. 1999. *Developing a Scientific Basis for Managing Earth's Life Support Systems*. Conservation Ecology. 3(2):14. The Resilience Alliance.

iv) Mosquin, T. 1999. *Biodiversity in Canada: Ecology, Ideas and Action*. ISBN 1551112388. Bocking, S. (ed.). Broadview Press.

No:	NATURAL ENVIRONMENT (by function) (Prugh)	ECOSYSTEM SERVICE (Costanza)	ECOSYSTEM SERVICE (Daily)	ECOSPHERIC FUNCTIONS (Mosquin)
14		Raw materials		Communication
15		Genetic resources		Food webs and chains (trophic structures)
16		Recreation		Biogeochemical nutrient cycling and transport
17		Cultural		Stability
18				Harmony

As one considers these functions and services, eventually one arrives at *words* that Ottawa Planning Department would acknowledge such as (human) *recreation* and *waste treatment*. So there is a way to move forward.

I would like to offer two specific examples of reports that offer a link to (in my view) the correct direction of language and research for Ontario. The first is the abstract from an article that appeared in *Issues in Ecology* titled, “Biodiversity and Ecosystem Functioning: Maintaining Natural Life Support Processes<sup>6</sup>”:

Critical processes at the ecosystem level influence plant productivity, soil fertility, water quality, atmospheric chemistry, and many other local and global environmental conditions that ultimately affect human welfare. These ecosystem processes are controlled by both the diversity and identity of the plant, animal, and microbial species living within a community. Human modifications to the living community in an ecosystem – as well as to the collective biodiversity of the earth – can therefore alter ecological functions and life support services that are vital to the well-being of human societies. Substantial changes have already occurred, especially local and global losses of biodiversity. The primary cause has been widespread human transformation of once highly diverse natural ecosystems into relatively species-poor managed ecosystems. Recent studies suggest that such reductions in biodiversity can alter both the magnitude and the stability of ecosystem processes, especially when biodiversity is reduced to the low levels typical of many managed systems.

Our review of the available evidence has identified the following certainties

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<sup>6</sup>Naeem, S. (Chair), Chapin III, F., Costanza, R., Ehrlich, P., Golley, F., Hooper, D., Lawton, J., O’Neill, R., Mooney, H., Sala, O., Symstad, A. and Tilman. Fall 1999. *Biodiversity and Ecosystem Functioning: Maintaining Natural Life Support Processes*. Issues in Ecology, Number 4. Ecological Society of America.

concerning biodiversity and ecosystem functioning:

- Human impacts on global biodiversity have been dramatic, resulting in unprecedented losses in global biodiversity at all levels, from genes and species to entire ecosystems;
- Local declines in biodiversity are even more dramatic than global declines, and the beneficial effects of many organisms on local processes are lost long before the species become globally extinct;
- Many ecosystem processes are sensitive to declines in biodiversity;
- Changes in the identity and abundance of species in an ecosystem can be as important as changes in biodiversity in influencing ecosystem processes.

From current research, we have identified the following impacts on ecosystem functioning that often result from loss of biodiversity:

- Plant production may decline as regional and local diversity declines;
- Ecosystem resistance to environmental perturbations, such as drought, may be lessened as biodiversity is reduced;
- Ecosystem processes such as soil nitrogen levels, water use, plant productivity, and pest and disease cycles may become more variable as diversity declines.

Given its importance to human welfare, the maintenance of ecosystem functioning should be included as an integral part of national and international policies designed to conserve local and global biodiversity.

In my view the Members of Ottawa City Council, speaking to Ottawa, are silent over time on such matters described above, including for example the “maintenance of ecosystem functioning.” Similarly, Council is silent on compliance to “protection of ecological systems” (an example of Ministerial interest given in the Planning Act).

And secondly, recently under the auspices of the United Nations, a massive millennium ecosystem assessment was completed with the involvement of more than 1300 scientists. One of the reports was *Ecosystems and Human Well-Being (Biodiversity Synthesis)*<sup>7</sup>. Two sampler points of relevance and comparison to illustrate the inadequacy of the so-called draft *Greenspace Master Plan (Strategies for Ottawa’s Urban Greenspaces)*.

Firstly, the draft *Greenspace Master Plan* report offers in 2.1.1 (Data Sources and Assigned Values) an approach to greenspace which has ignored comprehensive biodiversity as given in the Biodiversity Synthesis report. For example Figure 1.1 (p.22) gives groups of eukaryote species (named and unnamed) not approached in the given data sources (eg. insects and myriapods, fungi, chelicerata, etc.).

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<sup>7</sup>Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005. *Ecosystems and Human Well-being: Biodiversity Synthesis*. World Resources Institute, Washington, D.C.

Secondly, under defining biodiversity, the Biodiversity Synthesis states:

Biodiversity includes all ecosystems—managed or unmanaged. Sometimes biodiversity is presumed to be a relevant feature of only unmanaged ecosystems, such as wildlands, nature preserves or national parks. This is incorrect. Managed systems—be they plantations, farms, croplands, aquaculture sites, rangelands or even urban parks and urban ecosystems—have their own biodiversity. Given that cultivated systems alone now account for more than 24% of Earth’s terrestrial surface, it is critical that any decision concerning biodiversity or ecosystems services address the maintenances of biodiversity in these largely anthropogenic systems.

Yet the so-called draft *Greenspace Master Plan* is silent about agricultural lands. Not supported.

In conclusion to this point I note that to me this approach to science is only one path, part of what should a vigorous societal discussion regarding our existence.

### 3 Citizen’s Comments

a) In a separate document I have included about 30 comments made in response to the draft *Greenspace Master Plan (Strategies for Ottawa’s Urban Greenspaces)*. These comments make it abundantly clear that I do not support the document in question especially with respect to what I see as an inadequate approach to science leading to not credible objectives for the plan itself.

b) Both the draft *Greenspace Master Plan (Strategies for Ottawa’s Urban Greenspaces)* and the report to Committee and Council<sup>8</sup> by staff offer what one might term as a broad advocacy of Ottawa. It describes a positive legacy of greenspace protection, land acquisition, land management plans with all levels of government working together. I have no problem with gentle boosterism but overall I have rather a different view of the corporation with respect to greenspace:

i) Greenspace protection: Personally over a 20-year period I have associated the Members of Ottawa City Council with greenspace development not greenspace protection. As such, barring active intervention by the Province based on serious science, I would prefer that the members of Council work through the Ontario Land Trust Alliance<sup>9</sup> (over 30 land trusts) to investigate possible arrangements of public partnership to sanction biodiversity/ecological goods, services and functions.

ii) Land acquisition: The report suggests that the corporation of Ottawa has carried out a credible job of land acquisition. This is a complicated matter but, in the past I had to apply under the freedom of information law when I wanted to see who was benefiting from the acquisition (and

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<sup>8</sup>Report to Committee and Council. June 12,2006. John Moser, Acting Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management, City of Ottawa. Ref No: ACS2006PO2006-PGM-POL-0052.  
<sup>9</sup>[www.ontariolandtrustalliance.org](http://www.ontariolandtrustalliance.org)



sale) of land that went through the hands of the City. I was offered an estimate of over \$17,000 dollars by the City for this information, so I don't associate this matter of purchase and sale of land with one of public knowledge.

Further, over approximately a 10-year period, the old City of Ottawa took roughly \$1 million a year from developers into a Parkland Reserve Fund without acquisition of greenspace. Further I know of no ongoing document describing the ecological well-being of lands that the City has purchased for greenspace.

Notwithstanding the potential power of designation and zoning, it is clearly cheaper to protect natural areas in rural areas, yet the Council is being directed only towards urban areas. A recent report<sup>10</sup> to Committee and Council shows that Council purchased 3.04 hectares of urban land for \$1,191,630. A yearly projection of 80 hectares/year would (if necessary) be of the order of \$30 million.

By contrast a look at the last three Annual Reports of the Nature Conservancy<sup>11</sup> shows (in Ontario) a total over 5000 hectares protected for less than \$30 million.

iii) Land Management Plans: I'm not aware of a set of ongoing Management Plans based on serious research for greenspace properties that the City owns.

Yet the current report to Committee offers "no direct financial implications". Surely we would all benefit from financial modelling on the costs and benefits of land acquisition/disposal and park/open space construction.

iv) Levels of government: The draft *Greenspace Master Plan* states (2.4.2) "In the 1990's the former City of Ottawa incorporated a Greenway System into its official plan and zoning by-law, identifying a network of natural and open spaces." At the time the reaction by the federal government through the National Capital Commission was to appeal every piece of greenspace it owned. Further I have never seen politicians of the two levels of government in the same room talking about the future land status of Ottawa. Presumably this on going situation is the will of Ontario and Canada but it is not the will of this citizen.

#### 4 Rule of law

When a citizen in Ottawa doesn't support the land-use as sanctioned by the elected Council, one is nevertheless offered the option of appealing to an adjudicative tribunal, the Ontario Municipal Board (the Board). I have appealed four times and four times the Board has not allowed my

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<sup>10</sup>Corporate Service and Economic Development Committee. Update on the City's Environmental Resource Areas Acquisition Fund. 19 May 2005. Ned Lathrop, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management. City of Ottawa. Ref No: ACS2006-PGM-POL-0036.

<sup>11</sup>[www.natureconservancy.ca](http://www.natureconservancy.ca)

Appeal to go forward.

I note that although I'm not a lawyer, I have never felt that my view of sanctioning life was incompatible with the law (e.g. *protection of ecological systems...[Section 2(a) Planning Act]*).

On Friday, December 5, 2003 I filed a so-called Notice of Appeal with the Board against the entire land-use plan of Ottawa (Official Plan). That was my fourth Appeal. Part of that Appeal was because there was no Greenspace Master Plan in the Official Plan. The substantive paragraph in my Notice read:

The reason for my appeal is that the country of Canada and the province of Ontario, working unaccountably and without legal opposition through the corporation of the city of Ottawa, appear to have no public functional knowledge regarding the past, present and projected conditions of existence of any living species the integrated sum of which constitutes biodiversity. Simply stated, the corporation of (the) city of Ottawa has no functional habitat plans for any species up to the scale of planet Earth, including humans (*Homo sapiens*). Thus if the Board allows, I wish to address the conditions of existence of the humans resident in Ottawa, in the context of the Planning Act and the public good. This request for an appeal is consistent with my three previous appeal attempts (all of which were rejected by the Ontario Municipal Board), my several unanswered submissions given during the process of writing the new Official Plan and my ongoing readings on such matters as sustainable development which continues to extend my assertions on this albeit complex matter...

My Appeal was dismissed by the Board.

Let me say in plain language, regarding the given agenda item before Committee today, that this so-called draft *Greenspace Master Plan (Strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces)* doesn't answer my previous appeal. And the Amendment will dilute the *language* of the current Official Plan with respect to the potential sustainability of the human community.