



Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital
Alliance des espaces verts dans la capitale nationale

Postal address:

PO Box 55085, 240 Sparks Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1A1

Tel.: (613) 722-6039

E-mail: info@greenspace-alliance.ca

Web site: www.flora.org/greenspace/

Annual Report 2003

State of the Alliance

The Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital is the leading advocate of greenspace preservation and expansion in the National Capital region. This year marked a new era as we achieved federal incorporation as a non-profit member controlled corporation. This effort was led by Chris Szpak and allows the Greenspace Alliance to participate in hearings and activities as a group. We are already appealing aspects of the new City of Ottawa Official Plan as the Greenspace Alliance. We will also be able to apply for grants for some projects such as the Poets' Pathway that were previously unavailable to an unincorporated group. But there are also responsibilities associated with our new status. We need to ensure that our operations are open and transparent to members and that our finances are properly audited, with an annual report showing to members that we have been good stewards for the trust the organization is given.

Chief Activities

The chief activity of the Greenspace Alliance for this year was the scrutiny and active involvement in preparation of the new Official Plan for the City of Ottawa. This is the first Official Plan for the new amalgamated city, replacing Official Plans for all the old municipalities incorporated in the new city. When planning committee finally passed the plan, the Greenspace Alliance had provided more improvements than any other organization in the city, save the City itself. Our director, Barbara Barr was thanked by name by Planning and Development Committee chair, Gord Hunter, for her outstanding contributions to ensuring the OP reflected the "green city" goals of our city. Thanks to all the members of our Official Plan subcommittee, Chris Szpak, Barbara Barr, Amy Kempster, Erwin Dreessen and others who did such an outstanding job.

The other significant activity has been the opposition to the sale of the land at 5309 Bank Street to R.W. Tomlinson Corporation, a limestone quarry operator. This land was rated one of the finest natural areas in the City of Ottawa by the 1997 NESS study of the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton. It had been owned by the former City of Gloucester and was thought to be safe from development. But in 2002 the city considered a land swap with Tomlinson for land adjacent to a garbage dump in Osgoode Township. Neighbours rejected this after objections, but Tomlinson returned in May 2003 with a direct purchase agreement for \$1.77 million (\$10,000/acre), an offer too rich for the city to refuse.

A significant other project was the fight to preserve Moffatt Farm. Unfortunately it ended up losing at appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), showing the true lack of planning allowed in Ontario. As well, the Greenspace Alliance was a participant in several working groups of the City and NCC. Bill Royds represented the Greenspace Alliance on the Sawmill Creek Watershed update Public Advisory committee and also on the NCC's review of the status of Gatineau Park. Barbara Barr represented the GA on the Urban Natural Spaces study. Erwin Dreessen and Amy Kempster worked on the Development Approvals Process review. One of the accomplishments is that it is now called the Development Review Process.

Our efforts to create a Poets' Pathway in Ottawa met with some success in that the route for the pathway was preserved in the Ottawa Official Plan and explicitly mentioned in the Ottawa 2020 Heritage Strategy. A group called the Ottawa Literary Heritage Society, led by Steven Artelle, has been created to push for more recognition of the great literary heritage in Ottawa, with the Poets' Pathway as one of its prime goals.

Fund Raising and Outreach Activities

Our chief fundraising activity each year is the Run/Walk for Clean Air, held in partnership with the Friends of the Farm and the Sierra Club of Canada, Ottawa Chapter. This year our share was over \$1000. Our representative on the organizing committee has been Amy Kempster, aided by Sara Gagné.

The Greenspace Alliance also maintained a booth at the Wildlife Festival in April. We also co-hosted (with the Ottawa Field Naturalists') a workshop on "Smart Growth" presented by the Federation of Ontario Naturalists on April 22, 2003. The Ottawa Literary Heritage Society, a group spun off of the Greenspace Alliance participated in a number of activities, including the Ottawa Heritage Fair and the Ottawa Writersfest, to promote the Poets' Pathway, our initiative for a walking path in the City.