

City of Ottawa Planning & Environment Committee

Ottawa Forests and Greenspace Advisory Committee

Greenspace Master Plan Comments

June 27, 2006

Presenter Jackie Oblak, OFGAC Vice-Chair, GMP Subcommittee Chair

OFGAC Recommendations

- 1. Accept proposed Greenspace Master Plan.**
- 2. Direct staff to develop Implementation Strategy for completion 2007, in cooperation with OFGAC, Parks and Rec. Advisory Committee**
- 3. Direct staff to develop rural plan for *completion 2007*.**
 - a. Ensure fair and balance representation of all rural and urban interests during that process**
 - b. Include OFGAC, EAC, RIAC, & Parks and Rec. Advisory Committee in development/consultation process**
 - c. Ensure issues to be addressed in a timely manner and process not stalled indefinitely (as with some other issues such as the proposed Good Forestry Practices in Sensitive Natural Areas By-law)**
- 4. Include consideration of rural land acquisition requirements during upcoming Acquisition Fund discussions**

Comments

- OFGAC subcommittee worked with staff, attended open houses, provided written comment on both the original draft which was all inclusive and the urban version
- The current version is very focused on human use, and convenience, much less so on ecological protection and function
 - Example of this is in determining in the GMP document (vs. implementation document) that pathways should be wide and cleared, without consideration or caveat regarding ecological implications of this amount clearing in natural areas
 - EIS requirement for anything done on natural sites should be incorporated into implementation strategy. Rigid protocols for pathway width, hard surfaces and other work may be convenient for people but provide an edge effect in natural areas which allows degradation of the natural system through allowing invasive species and interrupting forest canopy cover
- OFGAC would like the implementation strategy to clearly include priorities during greenspace network trail planning and placement to include protection of ecosystems and trees on site.

- OFGAC is disappointed that the urban area was only area addressed though we understand the reasoning behind taking it forward
 - Result is that the rural area is in danger of becoming ‘have not’ (do not?). As rural residents, I and many others, have chosen to address rural challenges within the City in a positive way through working with the city, and are distressed that much of our work is being derailed.
 - Many of our rural residents are watching badly needed rural initiatives fall by the wayside, GMP being the latest example
 - We are losing the window of opportunity to develop an effective rural greenspace strategy which could be implemented, due to the combination of unplanned and therefore unguided rural development and an apparent reluctance to address these issues.

Closing

OFGAC accepts this urban GMP as a good first step, with recognition that an ecologically sensitive implementation strategy is crucial. There is an important rural component still to come which must be completed *in a timely fashion* to complete promises made and meet intentions of the Official Plan and the 20/20.