



## November 4th Delegation - LPMA Expansion and the Trumpeter Swans

Dear Mayor Goldring, Members of Council, staff & citizens of Burlington. Thank you very much for the opportunity to delegate on this matter on behalf of BurlingtonGreen.

First of all, we would like to thank council for its cautious and measured approach to the Lasalle Park Marina Association (LPMA) expansion thus far. We understand that what is before council tonight is merely a report and a staff direction from the Community Services Committee, but we believe this expansion needs a sober second look NOW, so that we don't all fall victim to:

**\*\*Death by 1000 cuts...Stealth Expansion...or Creeping Normality.**

That is to say

**\*\*“a major negative change which happens slowly in many unnoticed increments, that are therefore not perceived as objectionable”. Scientists have called this process of many ‘harmless’ increments equaling harmful change ‘how to boil a frog’.**

We expect that many of you will agree that Creeping Normality is one of the more serious threats facing Burlington, now and in the years to come, as we try desperately to hold onto our city's natural jewels and liveability in the face of development pressures from all directions. Standing up to respect the rights for that which has no voice (the environment & wildlife) is where you've had your proudest moments and where your leadership is so imperative; it is where you can most create this council's legacy for our future.

The LPMA expansion, and the way it's been discussed until now can be considered to be a good example of "how to boil a frog".

**\*\*Here are the 'harmless' increments:**

The City has already paid for half of the EA, and was asked at Committee to pay for 1/2 of the detailed design costs. Now the LPMA is requesting that taxpayers pay for 1/2 of a possible Part II order, because, and I quote John Birch, President of the marina, "it's your citizens that are asking for it".

Once the money is spent - in other words, when the frog is boiled - how will council be able to show real leadership then?

**\*\*Meanwhile...**

We currently have a marina that appears to have the right balance for its location - a public park and open space that supports boaters, visiting public and the wintering habitat for the Trumpeter Swans. A "Safe Harbour" is available just 1.7 nautical miles away in Hamilton (10kms by car).

We have an unfinished Harbour Feasability and Capacity Study and we have a significant and rare natural asset ( theTrumpeter swans)that may be irrevocably harmed by expansion of ANY kind.

**\*\*In a recent open letter to groups opposed to the LPMA expansion, John Birch wrote that "LPMA leaves the science to the scientists, and the details to the EA process." If this is in fact the case then we would argue it is premature & inappropriate**

for the LPMA to propose financial consideration of any kind from the City for project design specifics. It is imperative that the many outstanding questions of the EA report AND a response from the Ministry of the Environment to the Part II order request be received.

You have all received a well researched and written response to the EA report, from BurlingtonGreen, The Trumpeter Swan Restoration Group, Oakvillegreen and Milton Green and if you have not already done so, we URGE you to read the submission to discover the science based concerns and outstanding questions that exist.

**\*\*Slide 2**

Another danger we see council facing here deals with Creeping Normality – it's an Orwellian concept called Doublespeak.

**\*\*An example that we have heard repeatedly in reference to this “Mega Project” – is that it is a “habitat improvement opportunity”. What does this mean? Where is the science, substantiated evidence to support this statement? We welcome the opportunity to learn of it.**

**\*\*Perhaps it is like that of the Karner Blue butterfly. It is endangered in Ontario. The reason; it thrives primarily after forest fires, and we don't have many of those anymore. A habitat improvement opportunity for the Karner Blue, means burning down forests - could this be the kind of habitat improvement opportunity being suggested here?**

Wildlife do not wait until habitat is restored or reclaimed after a “mega project” is completed to begin living again. Their survival depends on it.

The science states:

\*\*“The greatest threat facing (the Trumpeter Swan) is that of winter habitat quality and availability”.

Simply put, the risks are too high at Lasalle Park to prioritize the interests of the boating community over ¼ of Ontario’s population of Trumpeter Swans, a species of special concern that has fought its way back from extinction in this province.

A couple of further cautionary notes:

\*\*This is a photo of Burloak Waterfront Park, boasting about the unique queenston shale cliff that houses rare nesting colonies of threatened bank swallows. 30 years ago, LaSalle park was home to colonies of bank swallows so numerous, that you could see them from as far away as the Burlington Canal - that was until extensive landscaping and walking path “improvements” destroyed the swallow habitat at LaSalle; as Canadians, we have since lost 98% of our bank swallow population.

\*\*And finally a word from our friend the Jefferson Salamander: He asks “When is a fragile species worth protecting from development?”

\*\*Slide 3

In summary:

We ask that you don’t continue to fund a “Mega Project” in increments so they won’t be perceived as objectionable. Stick to your vision for our waterfront, protect a critical habitat...Don’t boil this frog.