

OFFICE OPEN HOUSE FRIDAY MAY 14-7PM

On Friday, May 14, EH invites you to visit our new offices at 22 Wilson Street in the Sonic Unyon Recording Company building (between James North and Hughson streets - see photo on right). The open house starts at 7 pm, timed to coincide with the month James North Art Crawl, and includes displays, visual art, live music, local wines and appetizers.

Our new landlords are letting us take over the building (for the night at least!)

On the 1st floor, we'll have a photo exhibit of farms on the new "Eat Local" farm directory and map (being launched earlier that day).

On the 2nd floor, sample some VQA (Vinter's Quality Alliance) wines with sommelier Karen LaVigne and taste the difference compared to international blends. Light refreshments will be provided - as locally sourced as possible, of course!

On the 3rd floor, EH is featuring local, multi-talented visual artist, Louisa Kratka. And Local musician and fellow tenant, Dan Medakovic will be performing live music. And be sure to tour our new office space - also on the 3rd floor.



STREETS OPEN FOR WALKERS AND CYCLISTS

Hamilton is joining a growing number of other North American cities such as New York, Portland, Winnipeg, Ottawa and Barrie to "Open Streets" for pedestrians, cyclists and shoppers to enjoy all that the street has to offer on two Sundays in early summer and fall of 2010.

On June 6th, from 10am to 3pm, James Street North, from Cannon to Burlington, will be closed to automobiles, and open to a festival of people walking, cycling, rollerblading, watching demonstrations, trying a new activity, listening to music and bands, or shopping in the various shops and restaurants along the street.

In March, a *Hamilton Spectator* article pointed to US studies that have "found associations between obesity and urban sprawl, suggesting that an increased dependency on cars decreases opportunities and motivation to walk". The article goes on to say that a new public health strategy is now "working with the municipality and schools to increase walkability, bike trails, active transportation and food policies" around the city.



Environment Hamilton's partners in this initiative are Green Venture, and Smart Commute Hamilton, along with individuals from the Public Health department and local resident associations of the Beasley, North End and Strathcona neighbourhoods. Momentum is also building among the businesses and communities along James St and beyond.

Information stations will be set up along the route and visitors will receive an Open Streets Passport to fill out throughout the day to guide you to all the events and for a chance to win some great prizes!

There is still a large team of volunteers needed to run the event - sign up now at openstreetsvolunteers@gmail.com. Send us your thoughts, questions and endorsements, and come visit us to celebrate Open Streets! www.openstreetshamilton.ca Find us on Facebook - join our fan page!

See page two for the current list of free events that are part of Open Streets.

Inside:

New Farm Map & Directory...2

Action on steel emissions includes upcoming meetings...3

Aerotropolis threat grows...4

Trees talk...4

Deeply flawed Karst report... 5

Members get a Taste of Africa...7

Bus project expanding...8

Going Solar workshop...8



NEW FARM MAP AND DIRECTORY

The newest guide to local food sources in Hamilton is being launched on May 14 at the EH open house, starting at 7 pm. The 2010-2011 edition of our farm directory and map reflects the growth and successes of the local food movement. It includes information on 68 farms – the most ever – and eight farm markets – up from four last year!

Designed by Tor Lukasik-Foss, the map is financially supported by Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation and the City of Hamilton and is being jointly issued by EH and the Conserver Society of Hamilton and District. This edition particularly highlights the opportunities to obtain locally-produced meat, along with the bounty of fruits and vegetables grown here in Hamilton.

If you can't make it to the Friday night launch (in conjunction with the James Street Art Crawl), don't worry! On Saturday May 15th, we will be giving out the new maps at two local farm markets – the Ottawa Street one (off Edinburgh, just east of Ottawa) during their Customer Appreciation Event, and the Mountain Market (19 Viewpoint Ave, just off Concession St) during their season Grand Opening!

For more information, contact Juby, Hamilton Farm Map Manager at 905-549-0900 or jlee.eatlocal@environmenthamilton.org.



FREE EVENTS

At various locations along the route, visitors can join in free events such as:

*Yoga – Yoga with Ona
Zumba & Boot Camp -
YWCA*

*Giant Puppet making –
Many Hands Art*

*Chalk Drawing – Bryce
Kambara with You Me
Gallery*

*Yellow Fish Road –
BARC*

There are even things for your bike to do:

*Bicycle repairs and
maintenance – Down-
town Bike Hounds*

*Helmet Fitting – Bikes,
Blades & Boards with
Public Health*

HAMILTON FARM MARKETS

Ancaster Farmer's Market

St. John's Anglican Church, 272 Wilson St East (at Halson)
Wednesdays, 3-7pm, Mid June to Mid October,

Binbrook Farmer's Market

Binbrook Fairgrounds, 2600 Hwy 56
Fridays 2pm-7pm, Mid June to Thanksgiving ,

Dundas Farmer's Market

Parking lot at the corner of Hatt Street and Miller's Lane
Thursdays 3-7pm, Mid June to end of October

Hamilton Market

(Downtown - Jackson Square)
Year-Round, Tues, Thur, Fri and Sat

Hamilton Mountain Farmer's Market

19 Viewpoint Ave (On the Mountain)
Saturdays 7am-1pm,
Mid -May to first Saturday in November

Ottawa Street Farmer's Market

204 Ottawa St North
Year Round, Fridays and Saturdays 7-3pm,

The Makers' Market

Christ's Church Cathedral (252 James St N)
Every Friday (3-6pm). 1st and 3rd Saturday (9-3pm, May – Oct,

Westdale Farmer's Market

Centre of village (King St West and Paisley Ave N)
Saturdays, 8am-1pm, Mid-July to October,



THE MINISTRY DATE HAS BEEN SET! CALLING ALL POSTCARDS!

ArcelorMittal-Dofasco has recently acknowledged that they are unable to meet current standards set out in Regulation 419/05 (an air quality standard made by the Ministry of Environment to protect our community's health and environment) and proposed standards currently being considered for inclusion in the regulation. As such, they are currently applying for an "alternative standard", which will allow them to continue to emit certain pollutants at higher levels than the regulation permits.

The alternative standard comes with a requirement for the company to implement an action plan to reduce their emissions. The action plan would see reductions in two key pollutants that we feel are not good enough. Cancer-causing benzo(a)pyrene, emitted from the company's coke ovens, will only be reduced by 27% over five years and total suspended particulate matter will only be reduced by 4% under the action plan.

As a community, we feel we deserve the best air possible! Thus, the Hamilton Good Neighbour Campaign, which is an initiative of Environment Hamilton, has been asking individuals to sign postcards. These postcards provide a way for individuals, groups, and organizations across the city to send a strong message to Mr. Juergen Schachler, CEO of ArcelorMittal-Dofasco – the message that, when it comes to cancer-causing pollutants, a 27% reduction is not good enough!

To sign an online postcard, please visit:
http://www.goodneighbourcampaign.ca/petition_hamilton

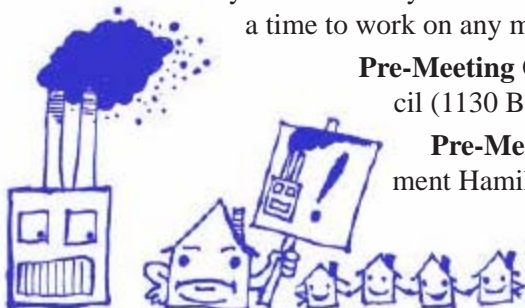
The intent of these postcards is to present them to the company at a community meeting which is to be set-up by the Ministry of the Environment. Here, the Ministry will announce the proposed alternative standard that is being considered for approval. The Ministry has given us word that *the meeting will take place on Thursday, May 20th, 2010 at the Royal Canadian Legion, East Hamilton Branch (1180 Barton Street East) from 6pm-9pm.* We welcome and ask that everyone come to this meeting to show community support for stronger reductions!

To help relieve any intimidation or apprehension that may be had when attending a ministry meeting, the Good Neighbour Campaign will be holding 3 optional pre-meeting sessions. These sessions will provide a simplified and detailed explanation of the issue and answer any questions that may be had. They will aim to ensure that everyone is on the same page and that everyone feels ready and confident when attending the meeting. It will also be a time to work on any materials that are to be brought to the meeting.

Pre-Meeting Option 1: Thursday May 13th @ Labour Council (1130 Barton Street East, Second Floor) – 7:00pm

Pre-Meeting Option 2: Sunday May 16th @ Environment Hamilton Office (22 Wilson Street) – 2:00pm

Pre-Meeting Option 3: Monday May 17th @ Beach Rescue Unit (316 Beach Boulevard) – 7:30pm



MINISTRY'S COMMUNITY MEETING:

THURSDAY MAY 20TH, 2010, 6pm-9pm

Royal Canadian Legion- East Branch (1180 Barton Street East)

For more information concerning the meetings or the postcard campaign, please don't hesitate to contact Katie Stiel at kstiel@environmenthamilton.org or 905-549-0900. Information can also be found at www.environmenthamilton.org



Join Us!



22 Wilson Street
Hamilton L8R 1C5

contactus@environmenthamilton.org

905 549-0900
www.environmenthamilton.org

Memberships
\$25 per year
\$15/unwaged
& student

FOODLANDS THREATENED BY AEROTROPOLIS

The city is pushing ahead with plans to urbanize over 1600 acres (660 hectares) of prime agricultural land around the airport. Although forced by the province to cut the proposed airport employment growth district (aka the aerotropolis) nearly in half, council is expected to vote this fall on an urban boundary expansion which will further reduce Hamilton's foodlands, and commit the city to unknown servicing costs.

The radical breach with human history has been the last 70 years. When the Arctic melts, that's a pretty good sign that you're running into fundamental limits. And the measure of the depth of our obsession with the economy and growth is that the melting Arctic seems less catastrophic to us than this temporary recession we've stumbled into. - Bill McKibben

The current proposal is to open 156 hectares (385 acres) for immediate industrial development, with the remainder to be utilized in the 2021-2031 period. The existing airport business park established in the 1980s is still 85 percent empty, and the city has over 600 hectares of already zoned empty industrial lands, plus multiple under-utilized properties in the older industrial areas along the bayfront. That supply already puts Hamilton third in the province in available industrial lands, but the aerotropolis addition is being justified on the basis of growth projections that so far appear wildly optimistic.

The initial 156 hectare parcel has been selected because city consultants believe it can be serviced with existing water and sewer capacity, while the second phase will require new trunk pipes to the Woodward Avenue treatment facilities 25 km away. Nevertheless, even the initial phase is estimated to cost local taxpayers at least \$35 million. That's assuming the successful collection of \$65 million in development charges - even though current city policies discount industrial charges by two-thirds. A recent city report has also suggested offering interest free loans to encourage private owners to make their lands available for industrial development.

To make the aerotropolis scheme more palatable, there has been much talk about making it an 'eco-industrial' business park. All of this, however, is being firmly relegated to a voluntary approach. A 30-page draft secondary plan for the area includes the word "encourage" 77 times, prompting EH director Joe Minor to suggest the city will need to hire at least ten "municipal encouragement officers" if the plan is adopted.

That plan also covers hundreds of hectares outside the 660 that the city hopes to industrialize after 2031. Writing a plan today for what will happen more than twenty years from now is foolish. It is especially unfair to the property owners whose lands are redefined by this plan.

For example, it sends the message that no one should expect a farming future on these lands and that these lands are only good for speculation. This will likely lead to the elimination of serious farmers, and the destruction of fertile lands through such practices as sod "farms".

When we are facing the twin threats of climate change and peak oil, it is crucial that we stop sacrificing scarce foodlands to more urban sprawl development. It is also irresponsible to leave the cleanup of older industrial lands to some future generation, instead of making those areas the location for new industrial jobs.



TREE SURVEY PHOTOS AND TALK

Tree lovers feasted their eyes recently at a meeting in Dundas, where results of a local tree survey were presented – as well as a talk about Old Growth forests in Ontario.

The first half of the evening looked back two summers ago when local residents conducted the Trees Count Too survey in Dundas. They inventoried more than 1200 trees in the area around Little John Park and found several unusual species growing in their neighbourhood – including a large Cucumber Magnolia.

Next Mike Henry recounted his canoeing trips across northern Ontario, and stunned everyone with beautiful photos of ancient forests, including 800-year-old cedars growing through cracks in rock faces.

The local tree stewardship group, the Dundas Valley Tree Keepers helped organize the evening. For more information about this volunteer group, visit www.dundastrees.ca.

KARST ASSESSMENT GROSSLY FLAWED

At the end of March, Environment Hamilton joined hundreds of individuals and organizations – including Friends of the Eramosa Karst, the Hamilton Conservation Authority and the City of Hamilton – in asking the Ontario government to reject a deeply flawed class environmental assessment submitted by the Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) to justify selling and developing 80 acres of the provincially designated Eramosa Karst Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI).

EH director Joe Minor (PhD, Biology) prepared a 17,000-word review of the environmental assessment and accompanying studies of Ecoplans and others. His work exposed not just a grossly flawed ORC submission, but also indicts an unacceptable environmental assessment process that clearly does not serve the public interest. Instead it suggests that the ORC’s hired consultants define their role in environmental assessment as serving the predetermined ORC objective of selling the ANSI lands for development.

“This environmental assessment (EA) was a real waste of the taxpayers’ money,” says Minor. “The main problem is that this EA was done backwards: the conclusion that the land should be developed was made before the start of the study, and the consultants then worked backwards to make observations and write a report that (surprise!) concluded that the land should be developed. The resulting EA document is a disorganized mess of inconsistent observations and illogical conclusions.”

Minor’s submission to the Minister of the Environment was 33 pages long.

“It only covers some of the errors,” he notes. “An item by item explanation of what is wrong with the EA would probably be longer than the EA itself, since there is little that is right in the document.”

Here is a brief summary of Dr Minor’s findings and conclusions. The full submission is posted on the EH website.

1. This environmental assessment (EA) was publicly funded and covers publicly-owned lands that form part of the provincially designated Eramosa Karst Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI). The question that needed to be asked was: “What is the highest public use for these lands?” Instead, the obvious real purpose of the EA is to justify the sale of these lands for development.

2. The EA documents submitted by Ecoplans and the Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) call for selling and developing 80 acres of this provincially-designated ANSI. That process will raze these lands – bulldozing off and removing the soils and wildlife habitat and paving and building and installing artificial landscapes over most of the area.

3. Both Ecoplans and the ORC misled the public, First Nations and others by repeatedly failing to mention that **the “subject lands” are part of the ANSI**. Instead they are falsely presented as being outside the ANSI.

4. Throughout this EA, the nature of the subject ANSI lands is misrepresented. There are repeated references to “active agricultural use”. There is no “active agricultural use” on the subject lands. None of the subject lands have been farmed since 2003. This straw-man is repeatedly and dishonestly used to argue that development is better than the existing situation.

5. Four Species At Risk have been observed on the ANSI lands (Chimney Swift, Monarch Butterfly, Milk Snake, Butternut), two of which were observed on the subject ANSI lands. The chimney swift is a Threatened Species At Risk, and the Butternut tree is an Endangered Species At Risk. Despite this, Ecoplans told the public that “No federally or provincially designated species of conservation concern were observed.”

6. The ANSI contains many cave features that are clearly specialized wild life habitat.



Long-eared owl found by Dr Minor in Karst lands, but missed by ecological consultants.

Despite repeated requests that began over 30 months ago (September 2007), Ecoplans/ORC have refused to conduct any biological inventories of the cave habitats. This means that the identity and habitat needs of the cave fauna known to exist in the Nexus and Olmstead Caves are absent from this EA. It also means that other potential specialized wildlife use of the caves, such as by cave-nesting birds, have had to be discovered by Boy Scouts rather than the ecological consultants paid to conduct this EA.



Consultants couldn't find this and other similar sized willows

7. Other examples of specialized wildlife habitat present on the ANSI lands but not considered by the consultants include hawthorn-hedge shrike habitat, Long-eared Owl nesting habitat, migratory bird stopover habitat, and a Monarch Butterfly migration stopover site.

8. The consultants have submitted an incomplete inventory of the plant and bird life found in the area, and made only incidental observations of other large groups of taxa (e.g., amphibians, mammals, lepidopterans) and no observations at all of other large groups of taxa (e.g., other Arthropods (Arachnids, Crustaceans), Lichens, Fungi, Mosses).

9. Ecoplans went to the public and agencies with inaccurate statements about the botanical character of the ANSI lands (both subject lands and conservation area lands) based on an incomplete survey that listed only 90 plant species instead of the 151 they eventually found – but which were only included in their final report. Even then, they missed at least 10 species entirely and 13 others in the subject ANSI lands. They also failed to notice at least eleven trees in the subject ANSI lands and many willow trees in the overall surveyed area that are so large they are visible in Google Earth.

10. The consultants' environmental assessment arbitrarily separates the subject ANSI lands from the already protected areas of the karst ANSI, ignores wildlife movement across this artificial boundary, and uses information gathered years ago in a drought year to unfairly denigrate the quality of these lands.

11. The botanical inventory also failed to mention endangered butternut trees, and offered no disclosure of the professional limitations of their survey work such as survey methods and timing. It ignored the existence of wetlands, to such an extent that it even failed to note the presence of watercress despite interpretative signage pointing it out!

12. Ecoplans incorrectly suggests that building houses on the subject ANSI lands will decrease the spread of invasive species into the existing conservation area, whereas exactly the opposite is likely true.



Vole in Karst feeder area - prime owl food.

13. The Ecoplans faunal survey was conducted more than two years ago during a drought period and thus seriously mischaracterizes the current conditions. Ecoplans found no live snakes anywhere in the ANSI, despite the fact that both garter snakes and Milk Snakes have been observed there by volunteers. In the Ecoplans Environmental Assessment, the Species At Risk Milk Snake is incredibly described as a bird! Ecoplans acknowledged that the subject ANSI lands could provide habitat for Milk Snakes but systematically and unreasonably downplayed this possibility. This went to the extent of arguing the species is "susceptible to road mortality" and then concluding the best option is to convert 80 acres of their habitat to a road-dominated residential subdivision.

14. Their avifaunal inventory found 45 species of birds, but casual observations by a single volunteer identified 7 additional species including Species At Risk (Threatened) Chimney Swifts, and regionally rare Long Eared Owls. The nesting owls constitute the first breeding record for that species in the Hamilton Study Area since 1969.

15. The existence of the cave fauna was made known to the ORC more than two years ago (September 4, 2007). This time could have been spent evaluating the importance of the cave fauna and what their habitat needs are, but this was not done. This *Environmental Assessment* of the Eramosa Karst ANSI should have *assessed* the nature of the creatures living in the *karst*

EH MEMBERS GET A TASTE OF AFRICA!

Ever wondered what cassava leaves taste like? Well, EH members were treated to this and other traditional African dishes of yam, rice and beans at our recent EH members' event.

The evening offered an opportunity to introduce the work of EH to newly-arrived families from the Congo, Rwanda and other African countries – as well as a way to venue to mingle with fellow residents who might not otherwise get to meet.

A big thank you to all who helped cook, arrange, set up – and entertain.

Our next monthly Special Event for Volunteers and Members will be a visit to the McQueston neighbourhood on Sunday May 30th at 2pm. We'll have a tour and find out first-hand how residents have initiated some terrific community projects, including a community garden and children's playground.

If you'd like to join us, please contact Julia Kollek, our Volunteer & Membership Co-ordinator at 905-627-5410 – (and by the way, cassava leaves are delicious and taste like spinach!)



KARST ASSESSMENT continued from previous page

caves, but it didn't. Scientists entering both the Olmstead and Nexus caves noted the presence of cave fauna in both caves. When the ORC asked the advice of the pre-eminent Canadian cave invertebrate researcher Dr. Stephen Peck, Dr. Peck indicated that there were "undoubtedly some invertebrates" present. However, this "final" Environmental Assessment still uses the words "if" and "potential" when referring to the presence of cave fauna and their cave faunal habitat. This Environmental Assessment has wasted more than two years of time and has produced a less than honest result.

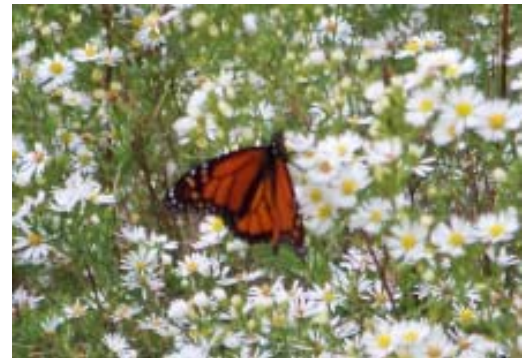
16. The Ecoplans survey noted the presence of Monarch Butterflies, but then neglected to mention that this is a Species At Risk during the Public Information Centres. The ORC preferred option of razing 80 acres utilized by the butterflies is directly counter to the Ontario management strategy to protect and encourage native wildflower habitat, and to protect migration stopover areas from disturbance – objectives which the lands in their current state help to accomplish.

17. The ORC assessment claims without documentation that its plan "provides balanced economic benefits to the taxpayers of Hamilton". In fact, provincial legislation prevents the city from recovering the full costs of residential development resulting in taxpayers picking up the remainder. This is currently exacerbated in Hamilton by a decision of council to freeze development charges as a result of lobbying by the homebuilders association led by a consultant to this ORC study.

18. The ORC alternatives chart dismisses the alternative of protecting the subject ANSI lands, then incredibly states that development will have no direct impacts on the ANSI. The ORC notes several potential risks attributed to other alternatives but fails to mention that these risks are much higher with its preferred option.

19. The subject ANSI lands and the adjacent ANSI core area function as an integrated whole and wild life, including Species At Risk, move both ways across the artificial human-defined boundary between them. Razing the subject ANSI lands will certainly disrupt their environmental integrity contrary to the dubious conclusions of the environmental assessment.

20. The best way to promote the long term ecological stability of the Eramosa Karst ANSI is to add the 80 acres of the ANSI feeder area to the Eramosa Karst Conservation Area, since it is well known from island biogeography that the number of species an area can sustainably support increases greatly with increased size.



Provincial strategy to protect Monarch habitat runs counter to ORC's plans for development.



PASSPORT BUSES INTO THIRD YEAR

EH's successful transit promotion project is about to enter year three. When Passport to Hamilton started in 2008 there were 59 locations, Last year close to 90, and in 2010 there are 143 locations offering discounts to anyone that presents a valid HSR day pass.

The \$9 pass allows families and groups of six people (maximum two adults) to ride the HSR in all directions for a whole day. Users just present their valid HSR day pass at locations that are part of the project and automatically receive a discounts - anywhere from 10% off to 50% off.

MAY 14 LAUNCH ON OTTAWA STREET

To celebrate the increase in participants, Passport to Hamilton's 2010 map is being launched on Ottawa Street on Friday May 14th as part of an all-day celebration. Start at the Ottawa Street Farmers Market, open from 7am-3pm. From 12:30-5:30pm hop on the HSR trolley for a free ride to discover the Passport locations on Ottawa St. North. From 2-4pm, Ghostwalks will be telling tales on the trolley.

Then stay for the Ottawa Street Silent Auction, all proceeds from the bids to benefit Camp Maple Leaf. And from 5pm-9pm, enjoy the Antiques Stores Open House.

Look for Passport to Hamilton folks and the new maps at the heart of the festivities (Ottawa Street North and Britannica). We have a whole list of activities planned.

For a limited time, we are offering free gifts; HSR day passes at half price, as well many other great surprises. Spend the day on Ottawa Street North as we celebrate all that grows in the spring time!

GOING SOLAR WORKSHOP WELL ATTENDED

While outside the weather was damp, windy and wet, inside Laidlaw Memorial United church, everyone was having sunny thoughts. *Going Solar: answers for faith communities, homeowners and businesses* drew together a huge crowd of well over 100, with people arriving not only from Hamilton, Burlington and Dundas but as far as Brantford, Brampton, Dunnville, Scarborough, Oakville and Cayuga.



Four speakers gave presentations. Kristina Inrig, Provincial Program Director of *Faith & the Common Good's Greening Sacred Spaces* project gave a general overview of solar, the green energy act and incentives to going solar.

Rick Salay of the *Neighbourhood Unitarian Universalist Congregation* in Toronto talked about the Solar project at this church and the debenture program they have going on to help with funding the project.

Dan Cole, director of *Direct Current Renewable Energy Systems* in Brantford talked about his Initiative for faith and 'not for profit' groups and coop buying in bulk. His company is the one putting the solar panels on Laidlaw this month.

Paul Charbonneau, President of *Energy Advocate* in Toronto wrapped it up by filling in the gaps and

basically concluded with words that left the audience thinking: "solar is natural. Oil and coal are the actual alternatives!"

A panel discussion followed where the audience got a chance to get their questions answered.