

North York city council to rezone campus

Major changes at council meeting

By Mike Adler

North York's city council may vote Wednesday night to open most of York's Downsview campus for development.

"The decision was made and we didn't have a lot of choice," Mary Lynn Reimer, York's master planner, said last week. "The university is facing extremely difficult times."

The York University Secondary Plan—an offshoot of the new Master Plan adopted by the university in 1989—would divide the campus into a "university core" surrounded by three "precincts" where different degrees of commercial, residential, and light industrial development are allowed.

Several student groups will speak at a council meeting seeking

guarantees that campus ecosystems will be preserved.

The York Federation of Students will argue that a "green belt" designed by graduate students Donna Havinga and Jean-Marc Daigle to link natural areas on campus should be included in the secondary plan, said Vice President of Internal Affairs Nikki Gershbain.

"It's not enough to take a little piece of land and save it," Gershbain said, "to make an area naturally green you have to make it large enough to support several ecosystems."

Envision York, an environmental coalition, will be at the meeting to point out wild areas that are not protected by the secondary plan, steering committee member John Burke said.

"[Developers] think 'level it off and build.' The oldest trees on

campus didn't mean anything to them," said Burke, whose group conducts tours of natural areas on campus.

Ron Hunt, director of development for York's development corporation, could not be reached for comment.

The construction slump and the added expense of building sewers and roads on campus will probably slow the rate of development, said Reimer. York will offer most developers leases lasting 50 years or more.

The Downsview campus contains some of the largest undeveloped areas in North York.

Gershbain and Burke said they are not against development but, after one developer's plans to build over a campus hedgerow were accepted last year, they want the university to be more careful.

Reimer said the university had learned a "hard lesson" from the threatened hedgerow.

"That should have been in the very earliest negotiations and it was not," she said.

Alan Jones, president of the

graduate students association, said York's green spaces are the nicest feature of the Downsview campus.

"To see all that go under asphalt and concrete is a bit sad," he said.

Student continues rights complaint over access

by Cindy Reeves

The Human Rights Commission is investigating York University because of a complaint filed by a fine arts student who does not have access to her classes. The student is also suing for damages.

Joanne Doucette, whose mobility impairment makes it hard for her to walk, climb stairs or stand for more than ten minutes, does not have access to the second or third floors of Fine Arts Phase II where most of her classes are held.

"York has a direct responsibility under the Ontario Human Rights Code to be accessible and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities has a responsibility to fund accessibility," said Doucette, who also names the ministry in her complaint.

When she came to York in September 1990, Doucette was told the building would be accessible if she used the freight elevator. But many bad experiences, including a fall caused by her cane dropping through a gap between the floor and the elevator, prompted her to ask the Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Relations about the safety of the elevator.

She was told that the elevator is not licensed to carry passengers and should only be used by people handling freight.

The university suggested using student volunteers to assist Doucette, but she says this solution does not address the issue of safety or the indignity of having to travel with garbage.

"I want to be able to attend class with classmates, safely and with dignity," she said.

The university also suggested that Doucette be given videotapes or private instruction to replace the classes she cannot attend.

"Neither of these suggestions gives me the same quality of education as other students are receiving and both exclude me from valuable interaction with profes-

sors and other students in the classroom and studio setting," said Doucette in her complaint.

According to Harriet Lewis, York's legal counsel, the university has done its best to accommodate Doucette.

"I have met with the investigator... We've put in our formal response; we have tried and have continued to try to accommodate her. We have retained a consultant to modify the elevator," said Lewis.

Although she is happy the elevator may be modified, Doucette says it still may not be suitable for passengers.

"I want [York] to ensure me that garbage won't be stored in, or in front of the elevator," she said.

"I don't think [York] would have done a damn thing if I hadn't laid the human rights complaint," Doucette added. "I wish everyone who has been discriminated against laid a complaint with the Human Rights Commission."

Richard Allen, minister of colleges and universities, had not received notice of the complaint as of June 20, and would not comment on the matter.

But his office was told the concerns of Doucette and other disabled students on June 14, following a demonstration held outside the minister's office. The protesters demanded an independent investigation of the accessibility of colleges and universities. Also, that Ontario institutions be made fully accessible through the creation of a renovation fund. And that the use of freight elevators be investigated.

According to Anne Molloy, Doucette's lawyer, a similar complaint against Trent University has been launched by Trent's student union.

"One student sticking it out made a difference. Students don't need to have a second-rate education," she said.



PETERSON GETS CHANCELLOR'S CHAIR

Jazz great Oscar Peterson becomes the ceremonial head of York University July 1.

parking fees skid out of control

by Josh Rubin

Mammoth parking increases for the 1991-92 school year have some members of the York community up in arms.

"They realize they've got a monopoly, so they're hitting people they realize can't fight back," said one professor. The increases range from 18 to 109 per cent.

Among those hit hardest are York students living in residence. Parking passes for campus tenants are going up a staggering 109 per cent.

"Teaching assistant wages haven't gone up in eight years, but they're raising all our costs," said Dave Drew, a graduate student who works for the Faculty of Science.

"They figure because we live here, they can milk us," Drew continued.

Also going up are the decals for unreserved lots.

The unreserved passes are going up from \$105 to \$160, a hike of over 50 per cent.

Student leaders are angered by the move, which follows the substantial increases last year.

"Students are being forced to take on a disproportionate share of the burden," said Nikki Gershbain, vice president of internal affairs of York's student federation, citing the 34 per cent gap between increases for reserved passes and the unreserved ones

used most often by undergraduates.

Gershbain, who sits on the university's parking committee, laid much of the blame for the increases on the shoulders of York Vice-President Bill Farr.

"Bill Farr unilaterally decided to disregard the committee's recommendation, which was to raise the (unreserved) rate to \$120," said Gershbain.

Farr could not be reached for comment.

York closes Glendon health service clinic

by Doug Saunders

Glendon's health service clinic was shut down by the York administration last week, in a move that surprised students and clinic staff.

The decision was announced on May 27, only four days before the clinic closed. Keele campus health clinic has also closed.

Mark Adlam, president of the Glendon student union, said he suspects the university was attempting to prevent student protest by scheduling the closure in the summer and announcing it as late as possible.

"There are a lot of people who don't know about this, who are going to return in September to find the clinic is closed. I really don't know if this whole thing was professionally done, tactfully done," Adlam said.

Beth Hopkins, a York vice president, said the university's reasons for closing the clinic were "both financial and legal."

The closure of both York and Glendon clinics will save the university approximately \$200,000 a year, Hopkins said.

"As well, several universities that I've visited are getting out of [health service] as fast as possible because of liability," Hopkins added.

She recommended that Glendon students visit the Sunnybrook Medical Centre, about one kilometre north of the campus.

Keele campus students are advised to use the private clinic in the Jane-Finch mall until a private clinic opens in the on-campus York Lanes mall.

Jill MacArthur, Glendon's nurse, said she was given three weeks notice, the legal minimum, before her dismissal.

She declined to comment on the closure, other than to say that "it is regrettable."

Black Caucus

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The Black Writers' Caucus will meet every Wednesday at 4:30 beginning July 3. Or come in and speak to Jeannine.

Our issues • Our concerns • Our voice