An aerial photograph of Hardy Island, a large, forested island in the Trent Severn Waterway. The island is surrounded by water and is connected to the mainland by a narrow strip of land. The surrounding landscape is a mix of green fields, forests, and some buildings. The water is a dark, calm blue-grey color.

Hardy Island
*Protecting the Natural Heritage of the
Trent Severn Waterway*

Presentation by:

North Seymour Ratepayers Association Inc.



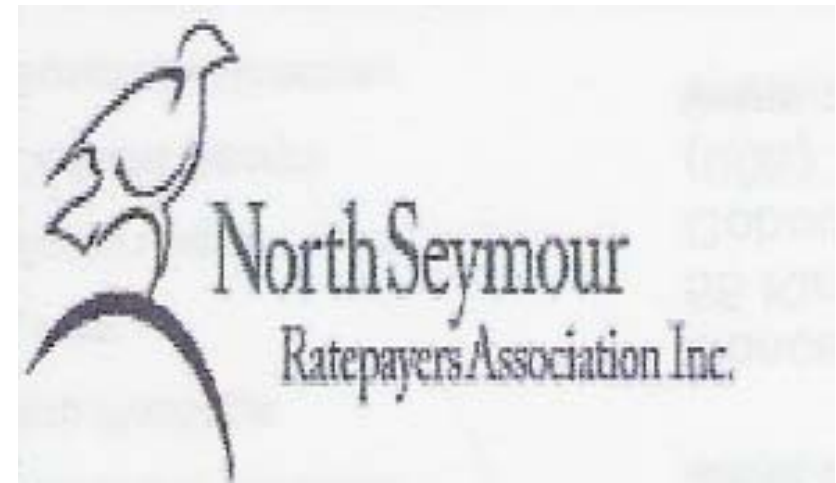
Overview

- NSRA-Who We Are
- Hardy Island Site
- Proposed Development
- Our Position
- Concerns
 - Ecological
 - Environmental
 - Socioeconomic
 - Heritage/Archaeological
- Recommendations and Conclusions

Who We Are

North Seymour Ratepayers Association Inc.

- incorporated in 1979
- 225 families
- represent ratepayers of the northern part of Trent Hills before all levels of government and private organizations
- NSRA functions for the benefit of our community



Hardy Island Site

- on the Trent Severn Waterway between Lock 18 (Hastings) and Lock 17 (Healey Falls)
- 150 acre island-undeveloped
- jewel of Lower Trent River
- primary component of the Greenlands System as identified in Trent Hills Official Plan
 - 80% of island perimeter is Provincially Significant Wetlands-Nappan Island Complex
 - long-term nesting habitat for the Endangered Bald Eagle
 - rich diversity of plant, fish and wildlife species



Proposed Development



Schickedanz concept plan.

- 94 permanent residences (more than doubles population of Cedar Shores)
 - long narrow lots cut through the provincially significant wetlands
 - most lots do not have water access
- 80 communal docks for residents
- surrounded by provincially significant wetlands
- bridge construction over the Trent Severn Waterway
- new road approaching the bridge runs through a long established high density residential area



Our Position

- At two recent public meetings of over 200 participants, NSRA members and other concerned citizens unanimously and unequivocally opposed the development of Hardy Island. They are determined to preserve the future of the waterways natural environment.
- If the development process for Hardy Island is to continue, it is the position of NSRA that all recommendations made in this presentation be fully implemented.

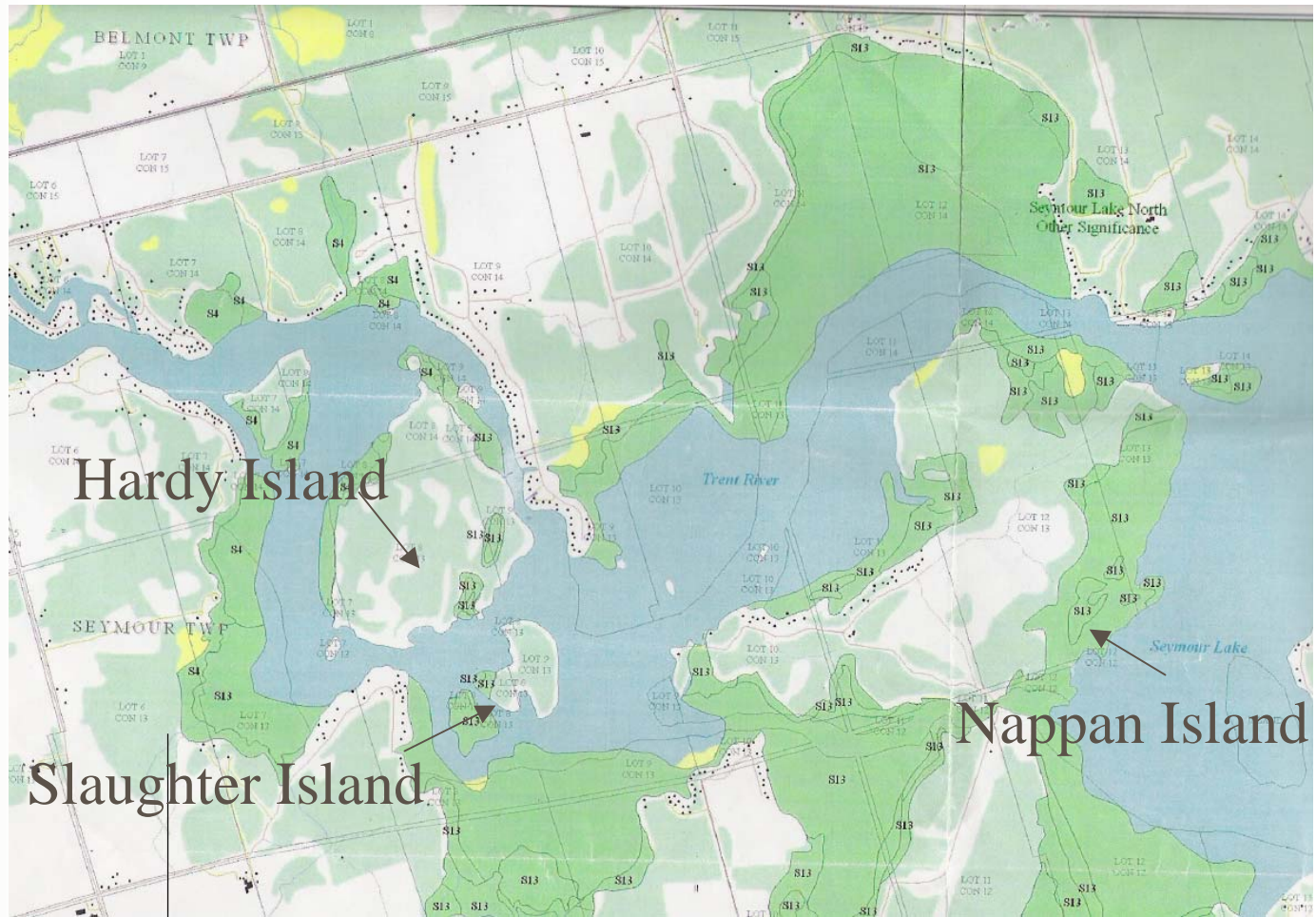


Environmental Considerations:

Provincially Significant Wetlands-Nappan Island Complex

- rich diversity of breeding birds including provincially significant Marsh Wren, provincially rare Cooper's Hawk, and the endangered Bald Eagle
- regionally significant spawning, rearing and nesting habitat for muskellunge and bass
- significant vegetation communities including Crested Arrowhead (*Sagittaria graminea var. cristata*)
- **Concern:** significant impact on the function and ecological integrity of the wetlands
- **Recommendation:** Prohibit development within 120 metre buffer of wetland boundary as identified in the Provincial Policy Statement and Trent Hills Official Plan

Provincially Significant Wetlands: Nappan Island Complex



Environmental Considerations: Species at Risk

- Bald Eagle nesting site
- Only active nesting site in Lower Trent watershed
- 5 turtles at risk are found in the Trent-Severn Waterway

Concerns:

- Eagles are highly vulnerable to habitat disruption particularly during breeding, nesting and fledgling stages.
- Eagles require large continuous areas of forest around shores of large rivers.

■ **Recommendations:** Prohibit development within 200 metre radius of the nesting site and restrict any human activity within 400 metres during the breeding/nesting period as recommended in MNR's Bald Eagle Management Guidelines.

■ **Note:** Proposed bridge site is within 200 metre radius of the nesting site.





Bald Eagle on Hardy Island.



Environmental Considerations: Water Quality and Quantity

Concerns:

- nutrient loading from 94 new septic systems
- groundwater recharge affected by increased population density and water use
- runoff to provincially significant wetlands from pesticides, fertilizers, road salt and other contaminants
- destruction of fish and wildlife habitat

Recommendations:

- Prohibit direct stormwater discharge into the Trent River or the provincially significant wetlands as identified in Trent Hills Official Plan.
- Strict enforcement of water quality, fish habitat and wetland protection regulations.



Environmental and Social Considerations: Bridge Construction

- bridge will span 44 metres (145 feet) across river with strong current
- disruption of navigation (height considerations, narrow well-used channel)
- safety concerns (short sight line, restricted space, increased and concentrated boat traffic, fishing off bridge, kids swimming, security, high water flows)
- road maintenance resulting in pollution from sand, salt, oil etc.
- infilling and possible dredging
- deterioration of quality of life of residences in proximity to bridge (noise, privacy, security, peace and tranquility, interruption of scenic vistas)
- proposed placement of bridge is within 200 metres of the bald eagle nest protection zone designated by the MNR
- Bridge is unacceptable in this location.

Recommendations:

- Move the bridge to another site.
- Require a federal environmental assessment of the bridge.
- Do not allow the bridge to be built until all other aspects of the development have been approved.

Proposed Bridge Site





Other Social Considerations:

- increased traffic and noise due to doubling of current population size
- deterioration of existing road quality (area has only one road access for all residents)
- privacy, security and road safety
- quality of life for existing residents diminished
- loss of natural scenic character –a major negative visual impact

Recommendations:

- Traffic study to assess initial and ongoing costs and safety issues.
- Minimize disruption of the scenic character-with natural buffer zones between development and the Trent Severn Waterway



Archaeological and Historical Considerations

- Trent Severn Waterway has a rich First Nations Heritage
 - travel/trade route 1000s of years old
 - aboriginal mounds identified in the immediate area by Parks Canada (Healey Falls)
 - adjacent Slaughter Island is reputed to be an aboriginal battle site
 - recognized in Trent Hills Official Plan as a significant cultural heritage landscape
- **Recommendation:** Mandate a detailed minimum Phase II archaeological assessment



Summary of Recommendations

- 1) Prohibit development within 120 metre buffer of provincially significant wetland boundary as identified in the Provincial Policy Statement and Trent Hills Official Plan.
- 2) Prohibit development within 200 metre radius of the bald eagle nesting site and restrict any human activity within 400 metres during the breeding/nesting period as recommended in MNR's Bald Eagle Management Guidelines.
- 3) Prohibit direct stormwater discharge into the Trent River or the provincially significant wetlands as identified in Trent Hills Official Plan.
- 4) Strict enforcement of water quality, fish habitat and wetland protection regulations.



Recommendations (cont'd)

- 5) Move the proposed bridge to another site. Require a federal environmental assessment of the bridge. Do not allow the bridge to be built until all other aspects of the development have been approved.
- 6) Traffic study to assess initial and ongoing costs and safety issues.
- 7) Minimize disruption of the scenic character-with natural buffer zones between development and the Trent Severn Waterway.
- 8) Mandate a detailed minimum Phase II archaeological assessment.



Final Conclusions

- Full independent peer-reviewed environmental assessment of the proposed development is required to ensure the protection of the rich natural, historical and cultural heritage of Hardy Island.
- *Hardy Island should be protected, not exploited. Any development could become a mistake that cannot be corrected.*



In Perspective

- Hardy Island is a strip of environmentally significant Greenland in the center of a National Heritage Historical Site surrounded by Provincially Significant Evaluated Wetlands.
- It is encompassed by water, wetlands and mature Greenland and is a significant natural water and air quality filter.
- Any development in this location will destroy the increasing importance of this natural ecosystem.
- The construction of a proposed 94 homes and a possible 300 residents in the center of a National Heritage Site is against the intent of the Official Plan, the Ontario Provincial Policy Statement, Greenlands and Wetlands protection, and the Species at Risk Act.
- Isolated locations such as Hardy Island do not appear to be the intent of the Places to Grow Initiative
- Any development in this location cannot be reversed.
- Our children...and their children will be forced to pay the ultimate price.



Sources

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*How do you save an island?
You send out an SOS
and hope people are listening.*

