

**Friends of Kingston Inner Harbour:  
President's Report for AGM, November 12, 2015**

**TRAIL UPDATES:**

**1) K&P Trail from Binnington Court to Kingston's downtown - to be constructed in the spring and summer of 2016.**

Earlier this year Councillors Peter Stroud and Jeff McLaren put forward a motion for staff to "prepare options for the creation of a detailed work plan, including necessary steps, costs and all possible route segment options, that would allow the work to be completed in time for a Trail opening on July 1st, 2017" - in time for Canada's 150th birthday. Currently the K&P goes from the Trans Canada Trail in Sydenham as far south as Binnington Court in north Kingston. Staff prepared a report that was presented at the Environment, Infrastructure and Transportation Policies Committee on October 13, 2015 but due to both the high costs suggested as well as what were thought to be poor choices of trail alignment, the report was sent back to staff.

It was presented again at the November 10 EITP meeting where it was accepted unanimously. This report will be presented to Council December 1.

The basic trail alignment is to go from Binnington Court along Dalton Ave., across Sir John A Macdonald Boulevard to Cattail Place, then behind the IMAX theatre and Canadian Tire to the intersection of Division St. and Weller Ave. From there, pedestrians and cyclists will cross Division St. and proceed south on the sidewalk of the Division St. bridge to John Counter Blvd. Going east on John Counter to Elliott, trail users will proceed south on the section of completed trail to Hagerman Avenue, then south on Hagerman to Hickson, then east and south off Hickson via the Veteran's field behind the Legion to the intersection of Railway, Rideau and Montreal Streets. From here cyclists will cross Montreal and proceed south on the old rail trail to River Street. The trail will then proceed east to the water becoming one and the same as the existing Inner Harbour Heritage Trail. The route then proceeds south beside the water along what will be a new section of the Inner Harbour Heritage Trail - a renovated pathway in front of the Kingston Rowing Club and Emma Martin Park, then around the Woolen Mill to Doug Fluhrer Park. A 3m wide asphalt pathway will be constructed going from the north end to the south end of Doug Fluhrer Park. The trail will also include a disability pathway down North St. to the park and a sidewalk in front of the Leeuwarden. On the whole, we are pleased with this alignment. We fought long and hard to have the trail constructed of stone dust but were voted down by City

Staff who are determined that asphalt is necessary for an urban trail such as this that will be heavily used. The trail has effectively bumped all other parks projects for the summer of 2016. Most of it should be completed by the end of the 2016 summer season.

## **2) Inner Harbour Heritage Trail**

In conjunction with the K&P Trail to the downtown, the section of the Inner Harbour Heritage Trail around the Woolen Mill and through Doug Fluhrer Park will be constructed in 2016 - a year ahead of schedule. It is our sincere hope that the many Kingstonians who will come to use this trail will also come to appreciate the beauty of the Inner Harbour and begin to understand the devastation that would ensue should the Wellington St. Extension be built.

## **3) Waterfront Master Plan**

This past year the City of Kingston embarked on an ambitious plan to determine how best to utilize the 200 kms of shoreline that constitutes the city's shoreline. Six Focus Areas were delineated and public meetings were held where citizens were invited to express their concerns, hopes and dreams. Focus Area #1 was Kingston's Inner Harbour.

A public meeting where the first draft of the final plan will be presented will take place Monday November 16 at the Press Lounge of Portsmouth Olympic Harbour from 7-9 pm with a presentation at 7:15. A final draft plan will go to the Arts, Recreation and Community Policies Committee in early January.

## **INNER HARBOUR HERITAGE TOURS:**

### **1) Jane's Walks**

This year, as in past years, FKIH participated in Janes Walks. These tours were started in memory of Jane Jacobs, a community activist who was dedicated to preservation of neighbourhoods. A tour of Inner Harbour neighbourhood and history was conducted in early May by Mary Farrar with about 30 people in attendance. Of particular interest this year was the tour of the Memorial Centre where John Grenville from one of our sister community associations (The Williamsville District Community Association) talked about its history as well as the history of the Kingscourt District. Plans are afoot to have the Kingscourt area designated as a heritage district due to its post war housing and associated history. Also included in the Jane's Walks this year were: The Heritage District of

Barriefield conducted by another of our sister organizations (the Barriefield Village Association), a history of Oppression and Resistance by OPIRG, and Bagot Street North: Meeting labourers and shop keepers led by Laura Murray of Wellingtonx and the Swamp Ward and Inner Harbour History Project.

## **2) Inner Harbour Heritage Tour**

This past summer, Laura Murray, professor of English and Cultural Studies at Queen's University, received a grant for students to work on the Inner Harbour Heritage Tour that Mary and Edward Farrar had been working on for the past 5 years. Her two students did a lot of background research, verifying the collection of facts Mary had put together. They also conducted interviews with local residents about their memories of the Inner Harbour of the past. Bronwyn Jacques, one of the students, gave a dry run of the tour this past September that was a truly excellent experience for all involved. Laura has arranged for the City to create an app of the tour at some point in the future.

See [www.swampwardhistory.com](http://www.swampwardhistory.com) and [www.facebook.com/swampwardhistory](http://www.facebook.com/swampwardhistory) for some fascinating glimpses into our shared history.

## **3) Exploration of the old rail lines north of Railway**

On May 9 and on June 21 of this year hardy cyclists from various Kingston communities had a great time exploring possible routes for bringing the K&P to Kingston's downtown.

## **GRANT APPLICATION FOR INNER HARBOUR AND SWAMP WARD BOOK:**

Laura Murray has applied to the City's Heritage Fund for a heritage grant in conjunction with Canada's Sesquicentennial Celebration in 2017. At an FKIH meeting this past September, FKIH agreed to support Laura's Swamp Ward and Inner Harbour History Project (SWIHHP) application. Because FKIH has charitable status and SWIHHP does not, we are agreeing to be their umbrella organization for this project. The project rationale states:

"In the spirit of John Lorinc et al's remarkable *The Ward* (Coach House Press 2015) about a lost immigrant neighbourhood of Toronto, and following in the footsteps of Mary Alice Downie and M. A. Thompson's indispensable *Written in Stone: A Kingston Reader* (Quarry Press 1993), this project will result in a compendious and attractive book of oral history, historical analysis, literary and artistic imaginings, photographs, maps, and archival finds about Kingston's Swamp Ward and Inner Harbour. Laura Murray, Director of the Swamp Ward and Inner Harbour History

Project, will be the editor of the book and will coordinate the project. Friends of Kingston Inner Harbour will provide management of its finances, some assistance with outreach and publicity, and also, through its membership, a resource for information, assistance, and a ready audience."

Elizabeth Durno, our treasurer, has kindly agreed to supervise all financial duties associated with this grant. These duties should be mostly writing cheques for honoraria that will come out of the grant money.

A copy of Laura's grant application is available for FKIH members.

## **HERITAGE UPDATE:**

### **1) Bailey Broom Company**

As far as we know at the moment, Raw Design of Toronto is still interested in occupying and repurposing the building although they want the city to offer the property at a more reduced rate. Other rumours are abound but nothing concrete.

### **2) Nine North Street**

Work was to have been started repurposing 9 North St. this past September and, as is evident, nothing is happening. We know that Hank Doornekamp wanted to take apart the Outer Station and rebuild it in Doug Fluhrer Park along with the 9 North St. project but that the federal government has so far not completed the sale of the property and the building on Montreal St. Perhaps this is the reason for the delay.

### **3) The Davis Dry Dock and the National Grocer's Building**

We would like to see both of these sites receive heritage designation at some point in the future. For the time being, they are on the back burner.

## **ART AND ARCHITECTURE:**

### **1) ON THE WALL**

A meeting was held with Aaron Forsythe, Primrose Craig, Harley Brushey, David Dossett and Yessi Belsham-Rivera last January with the aim of getting something off the ground in terms of a PowerPoint presentation to the Downtown BIA concerning the value of Street Art. Aaron Forsythe was to create the presentation but personal events interrupted this effort. Yessi created a webpage called Street

Art Kingston to showcase the work of street artists. In addition David Dossett has volunteered to do publicity for the event if artists are interested and willing. On the other hand some members of the Inner Harbour community have expressed dislike of the event - seeing it as part of a corporate take-over of the park. The Downtown BIA remains totally opposed to street art in general. Because of these objections and because of a lack of people taking on the project, it was left undone for the summer of 2015. The application for a Trillium grant was unsuccessful. So for the time being, this project remains in abeyance.

## **2) Martello Alley**

We are so delighted that one of the artists of ON THE WALL, David Dossett, used it as a means of starting a new career as an artist. Part of this initiative has been his creation of Martello Alley off Wellington Street. Based on La Rue du Tresor in Quebec City, it has become a showcase for local artists, a great place for them to sell their works. Fantastic job David! It would actually be wonderful if someone were to take on as a project the idea of fixing up Kingston's old alleyways in the downtown. They could be repurposed to become such an amazing addition to the downtown.

## **3) Kingston by Design**

Don Campbell, one of our voting members, has started a new group called Kingston by Design. The purpose of this group is to advocate for interesting architecture in the City of Kingston. Kingston has wonderful examples of 19th century architecture and it would be truly wonderful if we could also encourage great 21st century architecture. It would be in keeping with Kingston's desire to be a smart and liveable city. The Inner Harbour, the North Block and the Tannery site could all be appropriate sites among others. Don and Mary Farrar met with Jennifer McKendry to talk about these possibilities and Don gave a presentation at the Arts, Recreation and Community Policies Committee this past year. He also arranged a telephone conference with Darryl of In8 Design, Councillor Jim Neill and Mary Farrar to discuss the repurposing of the Capitol building in Kingston's downtown.

## **WELLINGTONX**

This wonderful young sister organization has been working tirelessly throughout the past year to advocate against construction of the Wellington St. Extension. Principle organizers are Laura Murray, Sayyida Jaffer and Anne Lougheed.

Recently they have engaged in community outreach to try and determine how the local community feels about this issue. They have surveyed approximately 500 households in the Swamp Ward and Inner Harbour areas. In addition, they have met with councillors and staff and written submissions regarding the Transportation Master Plan, the new Secondary Plan and the Official Plan. Their webpage is [wellingtonx.wordpress.com](http://wellingtonx.wordpress.com)

### **SPEED BUMPS ON PLACE D'ARMES:**

Although this was not officially an initiative of the Friends of Kingston Inner Harbour, thanks are due to Gillian Kelly of Frontenac Village who created a petition and lobbied the city to create some measure of traffic calming along Place d'Armes. Her efforts resulted in the creation of a couple of speed bumps.

### **PARK AND TRAIL STEWARDSHIP:**

#### **1) Park and Trail Clean-ups**

Once again this past spring community clean-ups of Doug Fluhrer Park and the trail leading from River Street to Belle Park took place, the first on April 25 and the second on May 9. Thanks so very much to the many community members involved. It truly makes such a difference. And each year it demonstrates a wonderful sense of community. And, as always, thanks are due to Quattrocchi's, Bread and Butter Bakery, Main Street Market and Sleepless Goat for contributing coffee, fruit and sweet treats.

#### **2) Wild Parsnip Infestations**

In early March, 2015, FKIH contacted Commissioner Hurdle to request that something be done about the wild parsnip infestations on a) the section of K&P Trail from Binnington Court to the Sydenham Road, and b) on Belle Island. After a month a response was received stating that staff had examined the areas and that there was no wild parsnip. So Mary Farrar picked a stalk, took it to Prof. Dale Kristensen in Queen's Biology Department for verification and then took it to Public Works with the suggestion that she accompany staff to show them where to find the infestations. No uptake ensued. So Mary contacted Michael Lea of the Kingston Whig Standard and he wrote an article. The following day the wild parsnip on the K&P Trail was cut, thankfully before it went to seed. The article subsequently was republished in Kingston This Week. As far as we know, nothing has been done with the infestation on Belle Island. This remains a serious health

issue. We will continue to work on this issue hoping that Public Works will take the infestation seriously when work on expanding the K&P begins. Wild parsnip is a biennial and needs to be cut each year before it goes to seed. Seeds can remain dormant in the ground for up to 5 years. When the chemical in the plant contacts human skin, a bad rash develops that is sensitive to exposure to the sun. It is quite dangerous for dogs as well.

### **PRO BONO STUDENTS CANADA:**

This past spring FKIH was approached by Adam Geil of Pro Bono Students Canada to ask if there was any way that our non-profit might be able to use their legal service. In discussion with him, we agreed that information regarding federal, provincial and municipal laws regarding the Wellington St. Extension and the so-called 30 metre Ribbon of Life along waterfronts could potentially be of use should the city decide to build the Wellington Street Extension and should a group of neighbourhood associations decide to mount an OMB challenge. The Pro Bono group is only allowed to provide information. They cannot advocate. A Calgary lawyer who studied at Queen's and is interested in the Kingston environment has been chosen and a telephone conference is currently being set up including three young law students and Mary Farrar. Other voting members interested in participating in this initiative are most welcome to join in.

### **AD HOC CYCLING GROUP:**

Yet another initiative of the Friends of Kingston Inner Harbour is the Ad Hoc Cycling Group. Members include Roger Healey (KCAT) the chair, Mary Farrar (FKIH), Aaron Jackson (Gears and Grinds), Hal Cain (Kingston Velo Club), Councillor Jim Neill, Steve Lawrence (Kingston by Bike) and Brandon Plckard (Tourism Kingston). Three major initiatives are being worked on by this group:

**a) The K&P Trail to the downtown.** See above

**b) Cycle Priority Routes.** These are safe quiet back roads that moms with kids and seniors among others will feel safe to ride on. They will be roads with lots of stop signs or quiet roads in neighbourhoods. No new infrastructure will be required. Just signage and a low speed limit.

**c) Web presence re cycling in Kingston and Area.** Roger and Mary met with Murray Matheson of Kingston Accommodation Partners to discuss how our collection of 90 cycling maps for Kingston and area could be uploaded to the city's webpage and used for cycle tourism promotion. Murray is in the process of

creating a new interactive webpage and was most interested in what we had to offer. More anon.

### **THIS YEAR'S INNER HARBOUR EVENTS:**

**1) FKIH Participation in Cycling Week, the first week of June.** Once again this year, about 25 hardy souls got up early to ride or walk from Belle Park to Kingston's downtown with the Mayor Bryan Paterson. Also several members of FKIH also participated once again in Kingston's Commuter Challenge.

**2) FKIH Participation in "Train of Thought".** A fascinating Aboriginal counter-colonial cross-Canada train tour organized by the Jumblies theatre company of Toronto arrived in Kingston May 29 and were hosted by various community arts and culture groups for the evening. Original planning for the Kingston event had included the possibility of using the Outer Station and/or Doug Fluhrer Park because of the railway connections of both sites. However, in the end the Tett Centre proved more feasible as an all-weather venue.

**3) Picnics in the Park - Fridays in July.** Once again a great success. Thanks to Burgandy Dunn for organizing these and to Audrey Helmstaedt for taking over for a couple of Fridays. Groups involved included the Queen's Barefoot Players, Matt Ellerbeck Salamander Man and the Kingston Field Naturalists.

**4) Caravan Stage.** After much work on the part of FKIH trying to help this group of struggling actors, in the end Transport Canada still refused them entry into Canadian waters and our signature event of this season in Kingston's Inner Harbour had to be cancelled. To see this exciting performance on the rigging of a tall ship, one had to drive to Clayton, NY to the Antique Boat Museum. Perhaps next year.

**5) Wellingtonx's Really Really Free Markets.** Thanks so much to Wellingtonx for organizing these really fun exchange events in the fall.

**6) Climb for the Cure.** Once again this great community fund raiser was put on by the Boiler Room the third weekend in September. We are so grateful that they choose to put on this event each year. It helps make Kingston's Inner Harbour Inner Harbour a fun and lively place to be.



**7) Kingston Dragon Boat Festival.** As always the Kingston Dragon Boat Festival, also the third weekend in September, was a huge success, enjoyed by all.

**8) Mary's 75th Birthday fund raiser for Toonies for Turtles.** Thanks so much to everyone who showed up on Sept 21 and gave a toonie for the turtles. We managed to collect \$350.

**8) Wildlife Tour.** Thanks so much to Lesley Rudy and Kurt Hennige for leading this tour and to Wellingtonx in cooperation with Lesley and the Kingston Field Naturalists for organizing it. The approximately 40 people who came out to look at the migratory birds and learn more about the creatures that abound in Kingston's Inner Harbour enjoyed themselves and learned a lot. [www.wellingtonx.wordpress.com](http://www.wellingtonx.wordpress.com) to see the report.

## **POLITICAL ISSUES AND REPORTS INVOLVING PUBLIC INPUT**

Because of the obligatory **Official Plan update**, many subsidiary plans that feed into the Official Plan were also in need of updates this past year including most importantly the **Transportation Master Plan** and the **Parkland By-Law** updates. To those who attended meetings and submitted comments a huge vote of thanks is due. It is not easy to read through the hundreds of pages necessary to be able to make informed comments. Upcoming reports will include the **Secondary Plan** for Kingston's Inner Harbour and Old Industrial Areas and the **Active Transportation Master Plan**. We will be heavily involved in both of these initiatives in the year ahead.

## **POSSIBLE UPCOMING SUMMER INITIATIVES:**

### **1) TOONIES FOR TURTLES**

This summer we would really like to do what we can to improve turtle habitat and the likelihood of turtle eggs surviving in Douglas R. Fluhrer Park. This past summer, it appeared that there was a marked increase in turtles wanting to cross the park to lay eggs along the retaining wall. In one hour, on one Friday evening, one local resident saw five Northern Map and Snapping Turtles crossing the park to lay eggs. Numerous other caring citizens rescued turtles wandering on nearby city streets. Although planning is still in the very early stages, we would like to

form partnerships with organizations such as the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, the Kingston Field Naturalists, Turtles Kingston, Sandy Pines, the Toronto Zoo, Ontario's Ministry of the Environment, local school boards and community members to both go into local schools with an educational workshop on turtles and also provide covers for eggs that are laid. Volunteers are very much needed and appreciated.

## **2) DESIGNATING THE RETAINING WALL BEHIND RIDEAUCREST AS A LEGAL STREET ART WALL FOR 2 YEARS**

Due to the huge amount of time and money required to put on ON THE WALL, and due to a few mixed feelings in the community as to its value, we are wondering if perhaps instead of organizing the event, we were to work towards getting it designated as an official legal art wall. This would involve collecting a few of the artists together, formulating a delegation for City Council and drafting a motion.

## **3) COALITION OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

Following a) FKI's success in getting links on the City's webpage for a number of community associations along with relevant contact information, and b) the stated interests of various sister community organizations in forming closer ties for the purpose of working together on issues of mutual concern, an initial exploratory meeting has been scheduled for November 18 at 7 pm in the party room of Frontenac Village. All voting members of FKI are welcome to attend.