

## **Urgent Appeal concerning the Bartley Smith Greenway (March-May 2011)**

Dear Friends,

We are asking for your help in the David & Goliath fight of our community to save the Concord West Greenspace in Vaughan - a natural heritage land which our residents have walked in and enjoyed for generations, and which is continuous with the Bartley Smith Greenway. The very existence of this greenspace (and of our community) is presently threatened by the Ministry of Transportation's plans to locate on this land an intermodal transit hub.

The way you can help us is by participating in our email campaign directed to Premier McGuinty and the Ontario Legislature. We have set up an email interface at

<http://www.saveconcordwest.org>

You can either send the form letter you'll find there, or replace it with your own message to the Province. It will only take a few minutes and, if enough of you will take the time to send your message in, it just may make the critical difference.

At the above link you will also find extensive up-to-date information about the greenspace and our fight, but a short summary follows below.

The Concord West Greenspace adjoins the eastern border of the Concord West community. Lying within the Don Watershed Plan, in a TRCA-regulated, ecologically sensitive area, and abutting the West Don River, it comprises part of the landscape habitat for the endangered Blanding's turtle, is home to numerous open-field, forest and wetlands birds species, is a feeding, staging and stopover site for numerous migratory birds, including the Special Concern Great Blue Heron, and for the monarch butterfly, now also protected by the Species at Risk Act.

On February 28th, 2011, Environment Minister J. Wilkinson, despite repeatedly voiced serious and formal objections by local residents, Vaughan Municipal and Regional Councilors, and other concerned citizens, issued a Notice to Proceed with plans for the construction, on this very land, of a GO/intermodal station hub and parking lot. Throughout the 'fast track' TPAP TOR, planning and decision making process, local communities were neither forewarned of MTO's plans, nor consulted, nor heard. Therefore, extraordinary protection of this greenspace is now urgently needed.

On March 22nd and 24th, MPP Peter Shurman read in Parliament a petition (bearing 1229 signatures) appealing to the Ontario government to order the immediate transfer of the title of our greenspace from the Ontario Realty Corporation to the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. This transfer would allow the Concord West residents to protect this land, which is ecologically part of the Bartley-Smith Greenway natural heritage system, and implement for its preservation the responsible stewardship solutions for which they have been pressing during a 16-year campaign. It is in garnering support for this petition from members of the Legislature that we urgently need your help.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Correa  
for the Ad Hoc Committee to Save Concord West