

# Windermere By-the-Lake

## Site Walkabout

June 4, 2002, 6 – 7:30 pm

Members of the Swansea Community expressed an interest in finding out more about the remediation process which has been taking place on the old Stelco site in preparation for the residential development. In response to this request for information, REON organized an on-site tour of the East Site, on which demolition and remediation are now complete, and a perimeter tour of the West Site, where demolition and remediation are still active.

Bob Leech, Hydrogeologist with Gartner Lee, and Mike Peterson, CEO of REON Development Corporation, the firm which has purchased the site for the Brownfield development, led the tour. The Community was notified of the event by the posting of a sign on the property bulletin board, and through a listing in “The Villager”, the local weekly newspaper. Many of the people who had left contact information at community meetings were called to ensure that they knew about the Walkabout. In the end, nineteen people showed up for the tour.

### **First Stop - Ellis and Queensway Corner:**

The Walkabout began at the eastern corner of the property, near the Sales Office at the Ellis and Queensway corner.



- A stream emanating from Grenadier Pond runs under the Queensway and onto the East Site, where it emerges above ground for some distance near the eastern corner. This area will be turned into a public access park, and will preserve the waterway and incorporate it into the design.

- A berm, approximately two meters high, will be built along the length of the railway line.
- The pumping station situated on the Queensway is City property and will stay.

### **Second Stop – Midway on East Site:**

A fifteen metre grid has been laid out over the entire site, and bore-holes drilled at each node, to test for contaminants. They anticipated that two different types of contaminants were likely to be found, on the site: metals (like cadmium, arsenic, zinc, etc.) or petroleum hydrocarbons. Metals found on the East Site were from slag which was brought in as fill in the early 1900s, since the land was originally swamp and lowlands. Samples were tested by chemical analysis, the slag removed, and clean fill was brought in to raise the land level.



### **Third Stop – West end of East site:**

- The soil at the Western end of the East Site is contaminated with petroleum hydrocarbons. Likely this is from imported fill, since there were no underground tanks here. This area was offices and warehouses. The contaminated soils have been removed from the site.
- There will be another parkette on the southwest area of the East Site.

### **Fourth Stop - East Side of West Site**

*(Note: West Site was viewed from the outside perimeter)*

- The factory here was used for manufacturing from the 1880s till 1989.

- A transformer station on the site was removed as it was confirmed that it had contained PCG oils. After removal, the area was retested for PCBs and found to be clean.
- Below the floor in the middle of the factory a number of underground storage tanks were located. All the tanks removed to date have been free of product and do not appear to have contaminated soil materials below the tanks.
- An industrial storage tank was brought onto the site to temporarily hold liquid contaminants found in underground tanks, like oil from the machines, heating oil, diesel, and coolant oil. The coolant oil would have been used to “quench” (cool) the very hot nuts and bolts as they left the conveyor belt during the manufacturing process.
- Solvents were expected to be found on the site, which could have been used to strip the metals, but, after extensive testing, none were found. It is possible that Stelco steam-stripped the metals rather than using solvents.

#### **Fifth Stop - Midway on West Site**



- A 15 metre grid for verification sampling was used on the West site as well. Samples from the nodes are tested at outside labs. However, there are field testing facilities in the trailer as well, which are used for immediate analysis as required, in order that the work can move forward. The offsite lab can take two weeks to produce results, since it serves other clients as well, and is not dedicated to the immediate needs of REON. However, results from the on-site testing lab are calibrated against the off-site lab results, and all samples that are used for the required reporting are sent to the off-site laboratory for confirmatory testing.
- Two highrises will be built on the West Site. Between them, and at the far west and the southeast of the site will be parks. Behind them will be a landscaped berm.

- There is ongoing dust and odour monitoring. Internal site roads are watered down when it is dusty. An odour can occur when opening up new excavations.
- Groundwater levels are monitored regularly throughout site operations to ensure there is no impact on the water table.
- Reinforcing steel in the concrete floor slab is separated from the concrete during the crushing process, and is reclaimed as scrap metal.
- The big building remaining on the site is still standing because the demolition company wants to sell it as an intact building before removing it from the site. REON is eager to get rid of it, and will ensure that it will be gone within about three months.
- The hydro transformer on the far west side of the West site is not part of the REON site, and cannot be removed. REON will landscape around it, to minimize its visual impact.

### **Final Stop – Construction Trailer**

The group gathered in the construction trailer for further discussion, and viewing of a slide show on the demolition and construction activities.

Councillor David Miller announced the upcoming Open House at 7:30 pm on June 27 at the Swansea Town Hall. This will be an opportunity for the community to see the site plan, and offer comments.



**Questions and Answers: (Bob Leech of Gartner Lee answered questions)**

Q. Will any of the mature trees be left on the site?

A. Most will be left, though some will be removed, depending on the location and quality of the tree.

Q. Will any of the material from the demolished buildings be used as fill?

A. Yes, but only when it is tested clean.

Q. Are any other areas in the vicinity of the site contaminated?

A. Yes, slag was used to fill much of the swamplands, but it is mostly under roadways, and in other “isolated” locations, where it poses no problem. The metals in the slag are bound to lumps of slag. They have been here for 80 – 90 years, but there is no leachate in the groundwater.

Q. Where did the slag come from?

A. It was brought in long ago. We don't really know.

Q. What will the final elevation of the ground of the site?

A. It will be raised at least to street level.

Q. Is the contamination worse on the West site?

A. Yes, the factory was on the West site. It is fairly clean on the East site.

Q. It must be very expensive to remediate the site. Why did you invest so much in remediation?

A. We bought the site as “contaminated”, and we knew we had to remediate. Stelco wouldn't sell the site unless the buyer was intending to remediate to a residential standard, nor would the City of Toronto authorize the building permits without satisfactory remediation.

Q. What is the impact of pumping of water from the site on the groundwater?

A. The groundwater is 2 – 3 metres below the ground. Anything you see on the surface is runoff from rain. We are required to monitor groundwater levels, and have 7 – 8 monitors near the site, including sites north of the Queensway and one under each underpass. We monitor monthly, and if there is a decline in levels we have to stop pumping.

Q. Does the City come and monitor the levels?

A. No, but we must submit an annual monitoring report to the City. One was submitted in Feb. 2002, and the next will be Feb. 2003.

Q. Given that you are using fill to raise the ground level, will there be settling of the buildings?

A. No. Where the highrises are being erected, caissons will be founded some 15 – 16 m. on bedrock.

Q. When will the remediation be complete?

A. It will take at least the balance of the year.

Q. Will you do any bioremediation?

A. When there is both metal and petroleum hydrocarbons in the material we would have to remove it in any case, so bioremediation wouldn't make sense. However, we may use bioremediation in certain circumstances. Normally the process could take a year to 18 months, but if we add nutrients and aerate the material, the time can likely be reduced to 2 – 3 months.