

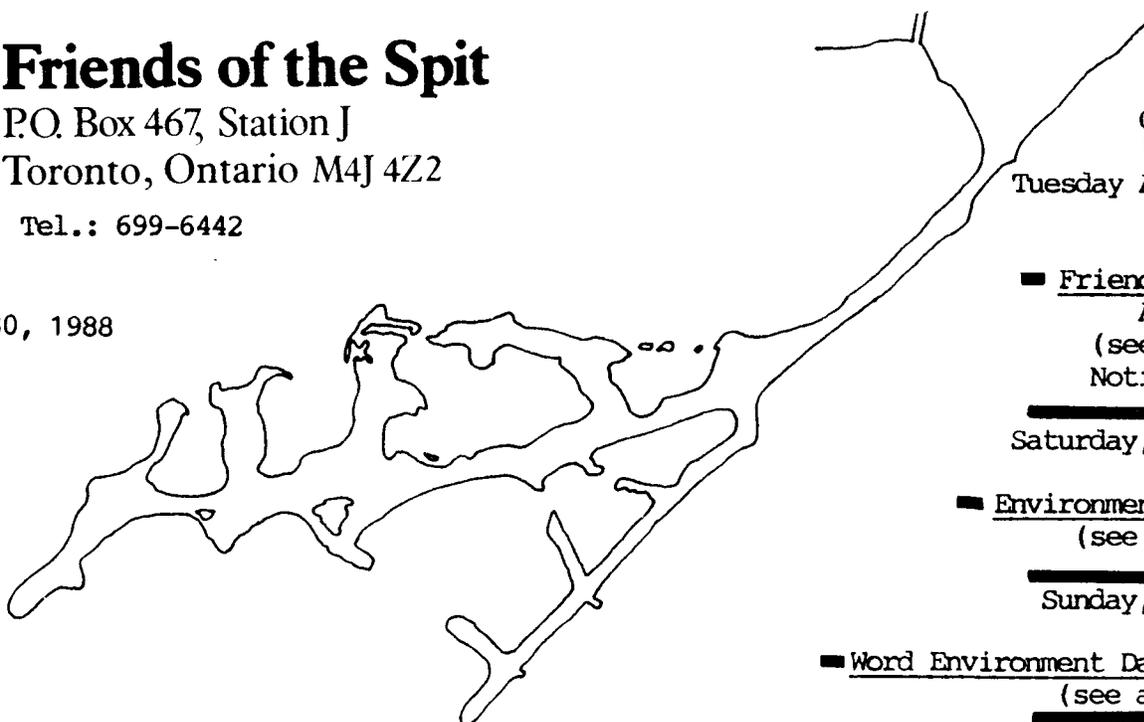
Friends of the Spit

P.O. Box 467, Station J

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March 30, 1988



ON YOUR AGENDA

Tuesday April 26, 1988
7:30 p.m.

■ Friends of the Spit
ANNUAL MEETING
(see the attached
Notice of Meeting)

Saturday, June 4, 1988

■ Environment Move-a-thon
(see article over)

Sunday, June 5, 1988

■ World Environment Day at the Spit
(see article below)

MTRCA BOARD APPROVES DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE SPIT

On January 29, the Board of the Metro Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (MTRCA) approved Phase V of the Master Plan for the Spit (see previous newsletter) in spite of strong opposition from a growing number of conservation, recreation and citizens groups.

The January 29 meeting confirmed again that the MTRCA's "consultation" process is nothing but a sham, and that neither the quality nor the fairness of the arguments put forward by the "Let It Be" groups and individuals (who constitute the vast majority) were going to change a mindset ensconced since the very beginning of the master planning exercise.

It was evident at the meeting that Board members had consistently refused to acknowledge the many weaknesses in the plan and in the public consultation process, which were pointed out by Lois Griffin (Etobicoke) and Joyce Trimmer (Scarborough) - both of whom voted against the development plan.

We wish to thank the many Friends and the many group representatives who attended these meetings, and wrote and spoke so eloquently in defense of the Spit. While it is disheartening to see these enthusiastic efforts hit the wall of prejudice, they have been and will continue to be critical to the achievement of our objective of a Public Urban Wilderness. Just as important, these representations constitute evidence of an ever-widening circle of grassroots support for this option.

The next step: Environmental Assessment

The MTRCA plan is to be submitted to the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) for approval. At the time of this writing, we have been informed by MOE that no Environmental Assessment documents have yet been filed by the MTRCA.

We hold from informed sources that we have grounds to challenge the MTRCA plan within the Environmental Assessment process. As a first step towards this challenge, we have invited several groups to join us in a coalition. Response up to now is very encouraging. We will give you more details in upcoming newsletters.

CELEBRATE WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY AT THE SPIT

Friends of the Spit has received a grant from Environment Canada to hold an event at the Spit to celebrate World Environment Day, Sunday June 5. We are extremely pleased of this official recognition of our efforts and of the importance of the Spit for the environment.

The objective of our proposal is to increase the use of the Spit by the large number of downtown residents who are not aware of this unique resource accessible by public transit, and to help them experience and understand the concept of "environment" in a concrete and pleasant manner. The event will be held in cooperation with the Toronto Field Naturalists and the Botany Conservation Group at the University of Toronto.

The program will be widely publicized, with emphasis on groups who are not normally reached through environmental channels. People will be invited to come to the Spit, where they will have the opportunity of taking short, informal introductory tours - on foot, by bicycle or using the bus - and be encouraged to continue exploring on their own... and to come back.

Volunteers needed

To make this day a success, we need your help. A large number of volunteers will be required both in the weeks prior to the event and on June 5. Please read the enclosed sheet and mail or phone your commitment as soon as possible. We are looking forward to hearing from you and feel you will enjoy participating in this positive project.

ONTARIO ON THE MOVE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT ON JUNE 4 - FRIENDS OF THE SPIT TO PARTICIPATE

Another major event to celebrate World Environment Week (May 30 to June 5) is a province-wide "move-a-thon". The objectives of this massive undertaking are to make people more aware of their environment - the disaster areas (such as dump sites) as well as the high points - and to help organizations raise money.

In Metro Toronto, the move-a-thon is coordinated by the Toronto Environmental Alliance, an umbrella group for environmental concerns (Friends of the Spit is a founding members of the Alliance).

Raising money

Friends of the Spit's involvement is primarily to get members and sponsors for the event and to staff a checkpoint. According to experts, each sponsored "mover" can raise \$100 and more in pledges. The money raised by our members will be deposited into a special account to help defray the costs of an Environmental Assessment Hearing.

Five routes

The organizers are planning five different routes, each about 20 kilometres long: East Toronto (with a checkpoint at the Spit); West Toronto; North Toronto; North York; and the Rouge. You can walk them, cycle them, wheelchair them, jog them. You can do part of a route or all of it (there will be several checkpoints). Starting points and many intermediate points will be near transit.

And some fun too

Checkpoints will be located at environmental landmarks and staffed by members of the organization concerned with the issue. There will be displays, entertainment... even poetry readings. YOUR PARTICIPATION WILL MAKE THE EVENT A SUCCESS. GET YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS INVOLVED. See the attached sheet to get pledge forms and to volunteer.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

If you have not yet renewed your membership for 1988, you will find a renewal form enclosed with your newsletter. Membership cards for members who have renewed will be sent with the next newsletter.