



# The Green Door

Citizens Supporting Ontario's Prosperous and Sustainable Future

The Yorklands Green Hub Newsletter

| April 2015 |

No. 3

## Greetings from the YGH Board



*The Superintendent's house*

We have important news to share with our supporters and members!

Last fall we were informed by the Ministry of Infrastructure Ontario that the Yorklands Green Hub lands and buildings will not be for lease, but will only be for sale. We are now fundraising to purchase the Superintendent's house and approximately 47 acres of the former Guelph Correctional Centre heritage site. This is a huge step for YGH, but one which will give us a more secure footing for our eco-centre for the public good.

We continue to have supportive discussions with the Ontario Minister of Education, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (OMECC) and other Ministries and organizations. The recent cross-Ontario townhall presentations by the OMECC indicate that change is needed and wanted. A quote:

*"Fighting climate change and working to keep our air, land, and water clean will ensure Ontario's prosperity and quality of life for today and for future generations."*

- Glen Murray, Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.  
<https://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/climate-change>

## GREAT NEWS: OUR FIRST A.G.M.!

**The Yorklands Green Hub will be holding its first Annual General Meeting on Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> at Innovation Guelph 111 Farquhar St. 7:00 PM**

### BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!



**YGH is now a membership organization.**

We need a strong membership to move ahead. **So we now invite you to become a YGH member, as an individual or group.**

Membership will give you a vote at our Annual General Meeting.

Join online today at:  
<http://www.yorklandsgreenhub.ca/become-member/>

As a member, you may stand for the board or nominate someone else as a candidate.

**Your input is vitally important as we create this exciting new public green hub.**

We see YGH as part of the change-making. We have been assured that if we can show enough public support for Yorklands Green Hub it will happen. **YOUR support is therefore critical to the Yorklands Green Hub.**

Food and water security as community health concerns, and sustainable urban agriculture (as outlined in the Ontario Local Food Act) will be central to our focus and research.

Our renewable energy demonstrations will be the third pillar of our outreach. Lifestyle changes are coming, and achieving carbon neutrality in our municipalities is a key overall goal.

The "adaptive reuse" and "significant natural area" designations on our chosen site are important for us.



*Clythe Creek runs through the proposed 47-acre heritage site.*

We will illuminate best practices of today's environmental innovation and promotion while honoring the site's rich indigenous, natural and cultural heritages.

**Our success will depend on you and your groups continuing to share the YGH vision and grow our support. Please help us reach more people to sign the petition, and now – become members. ☐**



## Re-Visioning the Land

### University of Guelph landscape architecture students' designs for YGH site on display



*Visitors view UofG student designs.*

On March 20<sup>th</sup>, Yorklands Green Hub held a public Design Showcase Event at eMERGE Guelph in the Old Quebec Street Mall.

On display were several designs created by fourth-year Landscape Architecture students at the University of Guelph for a stretch of York Road that includes YGH. "The objective was to develop a master plan for an urban corridor on the northern side of York Road, and a greenspace master plan for the south side, which is where we addressed the development of the 36-acre YGH site," writes Katie Brown, one of the designers.

It was a busy evening, as a steady stream of visitors scrutinized, discussed and voted on their favourite proposed site features.

Creating the details of an on-the-ground vision for transforming a site is a complex undertaking. In the fall of 2014, Yorklands Green Hub approached University of Guelph assistant professor Lise Burcher. Burcher and her final year class were offered the opportunity to imagine and create plans for how a part of the former Guelph Correctional Centre might become a 21<sup>st</sup> century sustainable environments centre and world-class demonstration site.

Burcher and YGH Chair Norah Chaloner accompanied the class on on-site visits. In preparation for design work, the class considered precedents to the type of adaptive re-use envisaged, including the Toronto's Evergreen Brickworks, an ambitious project which transformed a decommissioned brick factory and its water-filled quarry into a unique community environmental education centre, naturalized pond, and wetland.

Specific objectives for this portion of the design project were to meet the goals of the YGH vision for our proposed provincial sustainable environment centre: food production and security, water and wetland protection and restoration, renewable energy demonstrations and job creation.



*YGH welcomed visitors to consider, discuss and vote on site design features.*

"Our goal was to find out what everyone's favorite features were of each of the designs, so we could include them in our final plan," said Melissa Rasmussen, YGH Board Member and coordinator for the event.

"We also wanted to inform people about YGH and facilitate a conversation space where a variety of people with interest in that site, and in sustainability in municipalities, could connect with each other."

With the feedback received at this event, YGH will be convening a Design Committee to create our final

plan. (Interested readers should contact [info@yorklandsgreenhub.ca](mailto:info@yorklandsgreenhub.ca) to get involved.) A master design is key for turning visioning into planning, inspiring potential donors, and communicating our project; and creating one is an exciting next step for YGH.

The event was well-attended by people from sustainability and innovation communities from Guelph and beyond.

YGH would like to thank our sponsors and supporters – eMERGE Guelph, 10 Carden, Live Kombucha, Rawlicious, Trotters Butcher Shop, and Ouderkirk & Taylor – as well as our dedicated and capable volunteers, for bringing together such an exciting event.

And many thanks to all the student designers for such high-quality and inspiring work, and our best wishes on completing your program! ☐



*Student designer Natalie Gibbs (l.) with Prof. Lise Burcher for the University of Guelph*





## Grand River Heritage Celebrated Beside Proposed Guelph YGH Site

### A Neighborly Day for Yorklands Green Hub



It was a stroke of watershed neighborliness.

Every year, Grand River Heritage Day is held in a different part of the watershed, with a focus on a different aspect of the Grand River's heritage. This year, for their eighteenth annual all-day celebration, YGH enabled the gathering to happen in Guelph. On February 13th, over 200 heritage enthusiasts packed the John McCrae Royal Canadian Legion hall, a venue overlooking the Yorklands Green Hub proposed site along Clyde Creek and the Grand's tributary Eramosa River.

This annual celebration honours Parks Canada's designation of the Grand River watershed as one of the country's "heritage rivers." Canada's Heritage River System is a national program to "promote, protect and enhance Canada's river heritage, and ensure that Canada's leading rivers are sustainably managed." The Yorklands Green Hub will emphasize this special feature as part of their river and wetland restoration and education.

The grand finale of a day filled with stories of the natural and cultural heritage of the Guelph area was offered by YGH. Chair Norah Chaloner gave a presentation on the Yorklands Green Hub's vision: to transform a part of our section of the Grand River watershed land and

buildings into a place for research, education and work in sustainability. In keeping with the tradition of reform at the old Ontario Reformatory site, YGH unveiled its proposal to transform this property into a new model of community environmental centre. Ideas for renewable energy demonstrations, urban farmer stimulus, water protection and shared use captured the support of Heritage River Day audience. The YGH slide show demonstrated how the beautiful sloping landscape graced with stone walls, waterways, arching bridges and historic buildings will enable hands-on learning and green enterprise to grow a culture of sustainability for Guelph and beyond.

More details on the day's wonderful presentations can be found at [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca) under Heritage links. ■

## GET INVOLVED WITH YGH!

- If you haven't already, sign our petition to re-purpose the site  
<http://www.yorklandsgreenhub.ca/endorsers/>
- To sign up as a volunteer:  
<http://www.yorklandsgreenhub.ca/volunteer/>
- If you'd like to become a member of YGH – go to  
<http://www.yorklandsgreenhub.ca/become-member/>  
(we ask that committee members be YGH members)

***We look forward to working with you in what promises to be an exciting and fruitful year!***

## YGH Powers Up at Canadian Solar



Thanks to a connection made through the Elevator Project, in March two YGH Board Members gave a presentation about our project to Mr. George Zhang, General Manager at local green industry heavyweight Canadian Solar.

Mr Zhang was supportive and receptive, and full of good ideas for how to include various accessible demonstrations of solar energy technology as part of the community engagement and green energy mission of Yorklands Green Hub. This opportunity was facilitated by Gerrit VanNieuwenhuizen, a longtime employee of Canadian Solar and a new, but avid, YGH supporter.



*Solar demonstrations will be a key feature in the Yorklands Green Hub project.*

After Norah Chaloner and Melissa Rasmussen gave their presentation, they were guided on a tour of the factory floor. Canadian Solar produces over 5,000 solar panels a day, each capable of providing green energy for twenty years or more. ■



## The Green Hub Meets the Evergreen Brickworks



In terms of great adaptive reuse transformations, Toronto's Evergreen Brickworks is a notable local example of turning an industrial site - a decommissioned brick factory - into a 21<sup>st</sup> century environmental community centre.

A YGH delegation went for a March visit.

\*\*\*\*\*

Prior to a meeting, Jocelyn Kelly, Norah Chaloner and Colette Mesher took a short tour of the Evergreen Brickworks. This exciting repurposing of unused buildings and land was most inspiring as an example of what YGH can become: a dynamic eco-centre for community engagement, with a broad focus on wetland and water restoration, renewable energies and urban farming on an unused Guelph heritage site. Despite the winter cold, the sun was shining as we explored the detailed signage and outdoor artwork. We imagined our own watershed map with Clythe Creek making its way through our proposed site to join the Eramosa and then the heritage Grand River.

After our tour, we met up with Bob

Giza (Ontario Streams and YGH volunteer) and Celeste Longhurst from Evergreen Brickworks. Celeste has been with the Brickworks for a few years, with experience in fundraising as a grant program coordinator before moving over to being a project manager.



*LEED building and inner courtyard.*

Celeste discussed the target amounts of money we should be focusing on, and recommended some tools to help track our fundraising.



*Historic site, new uses*

Bob and Celeste strongly support our move to obtain charitable status, as there are twice as many grants available to charities as to non-profits. Celeste also said to collect stories on YGH events to help engage possible corporate sponsors, and to "think big" with regard to the capital campaign.

We thanked Celeste for her time and hoped to meet up with her again in the near future. ☐

## Where have you seen us recently?

YGH has had an active winter! Over the past three months, we have attended or been involved in the following events:

- The Elevator Project at 10 Carden
- the Compass networking event
- Pollinators Guelph
- the Guelph Farmer's Market, every Saturday
- the Grand River Heritage Day Celebration
- the EcoMarket/H2O-Go festival
- our own Design Showcase Event
- The Guelph Resilience Festival



*Guelph Mayor Cam Guthrie stops by at the YGH Quebec Street Mall booth to chat with Colette Mesher, our water committee biologist.*





## Honouring Those Who Came Before Us



### First Nations Land Acknowledgement of Yorklands Site

Yorklands Green Hub wishes to honour its

First Nations antecedents on the beautiful Guelph site where we are looking to create a sustainable environments centre.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, according to archaeologist Rob McDonald of the University of Waterloo, the area around the western end of Lake Ontario, into the Niagara Peninsula, and as far north as what are now Guelph and Waterloo was inhabited and hunted by people who called themselves the Chonnonton, or “people who tend the deer.” They are also commonly referred to as the Attawandaron, a name given them by the Huron, which translates as “people whose speak a bit differently.” But perhaps more familiar is the term Neutral Nation, a title assigned to these peoples by the French explorer Champlain. Despite the fact that they were a large and often warlike nation, Champlain called them ‘neutral’ for an important reason: they kept the peace with his allies, the Huron, as well as the Hurons’ enemies, the Iroquois of present-day northern New York state.

The Chonnonton or Neutrals were the largest Aboriginal group in Northeast America, estimated at up to 40,000 by the early 1600s. They were known for penning deer and using them for trade as far afield as Chesapeake Bay. Many were lost to epidemics of European-transmitted diseases or were driven out of their territories by wars that ensued between tribal alliances with European fur traders in the second half of the 1600s.

Those who remained were disbanded and largely absorbed into other Six Nations groups.

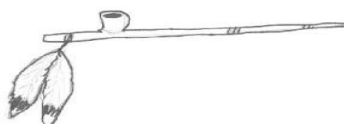
The most influential leader of the Chonnonton was Tsouharissen, a chief whose council united some ten First Nations groups to form, at a time when confederacies were the common form of tribal alliances, a powerful chiefdom. Tsouharissen, “Child of the Sun,” ruled as both priest and chief over his domain from the settlement of Ounontisaston (SE of present day Brantford). His influence was noted by French missionaries who were received by him at the peak of his powers.



*An early French map of the Great Lakes - the Chonnonton or Neutral lived north and west of Lake Ontario, and north of Lake Erie.*

Following Tsouharissen's death in about 1646, his chiefdom disintegrated, and the Iroquois dispersed and destroyed the “Neutral” nation by the mid-1600s.

Their history is an important part of our own history.■



## What is the Yorklands Green Hub?

The Yorklands Green Hub is a non-partisan citizens' group that is promoting the creation of an Ontario sustainable eco-centre at the former Guelph Correctional Centre (GCC). This will be a self-sustaining forum where institutions, groups and sustainable businesses can come together in a structured setting, with indoor and outdoor displays, rotating exhibits, demonstrations, lectures, videos and resource materials that promote greater understanding of the importance and possibilities for making the change towards a low-emissions, stable-climate future.

### Yorklands Green Hub Board of Directors

Norah Chaloner

John Dennis

Eduardo Garay

Val Morse

Melissa Rasmussen

You can contact YGH at  
[info@yorklandsgreenhub.ca](mailto:info@yorklandsgreenhub.ca)



**YGH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)**  
**Wednesday, April 23, 2015**  
**7:00 pm**  
**Innovation Guelph**  
**111 Farquhar St. , Guelph**

We're pleased to invite you to join us at our first **Annual General Meeting**, which we will be holding on April 23<sup>rd</sup> during Earth Week.



It will take place in Guelph at 7:00 pm, and we look forward to many of you attending. **Please check our Facebook page and Twitter for more details closer to the date.**

## OTHER EVENTS WHERE YOU WILL FIND YGH SOON:

**Jane's Walks Guelph** – early May

**2 Rivers Festival Guelph** – June

**En Plein Air arts festival** – July

**Bioblitz** – Summer 2015

## SUPPORT FOR YGH

Once again we wish to thank all our petition signers and endorsing groups. We now have more than 3,000 signatures on our petition to the Ontario government to re-purpose a portion of the former Guelph Correctional Centre (36 acres and two buildings) for use as a public eco-centre, and 45 endorsing groups. We're about to launch a campaign to seek group endorsements farther afield in the province. If you've already signed, you can support us by asking your friends to sign our petition too!

<http://www.yorklandsgreenhub.ca/endorsers/>

## DONATE TO YGH

Now that we know that our chosen site will be available only through purchase, we are embarking on an all-out fundraising campaign towards the goal of raising the needed capital funds. You can make a donation to support our work through our website. <http://www.yorklandsgreenhub.ca/endorsers/>

## BECOME A MEMBER

Now there's a new way to support YGH's work: you can take out a membership. It's easy to do on line at our website. <http://www.yorklandsgreenhub.ca/become-member/>

## JOIN THE BOARD

To become a candidate for elections, <http://www.yorklandsgreenhub.ca/join-the-board/>

"The Green Door" is a publication of the Yorklands Green Hub Communications and Outreach Committee. We welcome news, articles and letters. Each must include the author's name and full contact information. We reserve the right to refuse or edit all submissions.

Questions should be directed to the editor or a member of the Board of Directors at [info@yorklandsgreenhub.ca](mailto:info@yorklandsgreenhub.ca)

## Volunteer with the Yorklands Green Hub!



*Site bio-blitz!*

**Our organization is an all-volunteer citizens' group.**

**This opens up all kinds of excellent opportunities for our members to learn, contribute to community development, share knowledge and skills, and help us achieve our dream of a unique public sustainability centre in Guelph.**



**If you care about a sustainable future, we invite and encourage you to join us!**

**Sign up to get monthly updates with volunteer opportunities by emailing "Bulletin" to: [info@yorklandsgreenhub.ca](mailto:info@yorklandsgreenhub.ca)**

**If you're interested in volunteering on a committee, please fill out this form: <http://www.yorklandsgreenhub.ca/volunteer/>**