



Novæ Res Urbis

GREATER TORONTO AREA EDITION

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SCHOOL BOARD REAL ESTATE AGENCY

New CEO chosen

The **Toronto Lands Corporation** has a new CEO and her name is **Shirley Hoy**.

"She was an obvious choice," the interim CEO of the **Toronto District School Board's** real estate asset management agency, **Dino Chiesa**, told *NRU*.

The agency, which is chaired by former Toronto mayor **David Crombie**, has been in place for more than a year and is charged with leveraging property owned by the school board. When Chiesa came on, he said he would help set up the corporation but only stay until a search for a full-time CEO could be launched.

In October, he told *NRU* that the search had begun and that a number of qualified people with knowledge of Toronto were making the list. (*See NRU Toronto edition October 31.*)

On Tuesday, the corporation's board of directors announced the official appointment of Hoy.

"We are delighted to have found a high-calibre individual with superior skills and expertise in leading a growing corporation," said Crombie.

"Hoy's passion and commitment to the broader public sector will provide a critical eye in overseeing (school board) properties and lands. Her knowledge of and relationships with all levels of government will provide an opportunity to foster innovation and commitment to broader public interest at an expert level."

Chiesa, who will stay on as a board member, echoed Crombie's sentiments by saying her knowledge of Toronto's neighbourhoods, the city councillors and her past experience at the provincial government will be valuable to the corporation at this stage.

Originally, the corporation was given a list of 97 non-operating school properties identified as "saleable" by the school board and in June, the board deemed surplus 16 of the 28 recommended by the corporation.

Hoy, who announced her resignation as the City of Toronto's city manager in August and departed October 6,

CONTINUED PAGE 4

10TH ANNUAL GTA RANKING

Top ten development law firms

The 2007-2008 *NRU GTA* law review is peppered with several high profile cases, including some long-running OMB appeals. The ongoing Big Bay Point, North Leslie and *Lefroy Settlement Area Secondary Plan* cases all still had legs in 2007-2008. Other major cases include challenges to Collingwood's new official plan, appeals against Mississauga's zoning by-law framework, Brampton's new official plan and *Bram West Secondary Plan* and growth management policies in Oakville, as well as the settlement of appeals against Caledon's *Mayfield West Secondary Plan*.

Appeals by James Dick Construction Limited for a commercial quarry in Caledon and Greenfield South Power Corporation's successful appeals for a 280-megawatt natural gas plant in Milton are two important industrial cases that went before the OMB this past year.

Major residential cases such as the Kaitlin Group's 185-unit subdivision in Brock Township, Queenscorp (Lakeshore) Inc.'s 235-unit Mississauga apartment building, Consulate Developments' 386-unit proposal for Collingwood, Whitby By The Lake's plans to build hundreds of units in the town, Empire Communities' proposal for three apartment buildings with 539 units in Oakville and Moscorp Development's 3,000-unit residential proposal for Caledon featured prominently at the OMB.

CONTINUED PAGE 5

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Coming Up

DECEMBER 17

Halton Region Council, 9:30 a.m.

DECEMBER 18

York Region Council, 9:30 a.m.

JANUARY 1

Mississauga New Year's Levee, Civic Centre Square, 300 City Centre Drive, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Brampton New Year's Levee, Rose Theatre, 1 Theatre Lane, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Pickering New Year's Levee, Pickering Civic Complex, 1 The Esplanade, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Milton New Year's Levee, Hugh Foster Hall, 53 Brown Street, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

JANUARY 4

Scugog New Year's Levee, Scugog Arena, 1655 Reach Street, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

JANUARY 8

Institute on Municipal Finance and Governance: Shaping the Toronto Region—Past, Present and Future: Planning for Intensification, Vivian and David Campbell Conference Facility, Munk Centre For International Studies, University of Toronto, 1 Devonshire Place, Toronto. 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. Register online at www.imfg.org.

Halton Region—Community Sustainability Forum, Halton Regional Centre Auditorium, 1151 Bronte Road, Oakville, 6:00 p.m. More info at www.halton.ca or call 905-825-6000.

JANUARY 12

Mississauga Planning & Development Committee, 1:30 p.m.

Brampton Planning, Design & Development Committee, 7:00 p.m.

JANUARY 13

Durham Region Planning Committee, 9:30 a.m.

JANUARY 14

York Region Planning & Economic Development Committee, 1:00 p.m.

Halton Region Planning & Public Works Committee, 9:30 a.m.

PLANNING FOR OLD AGE

Sea of seniors on horizon

Suburban living has not been designed for an older population, resulting in issues such as transportation presenting a barrier to Canada's quickly aging population.

Gordon Harris, president and CEO of the **Simon Fraser University Community Trust**, made the criticism during a December 12 **Canadian Urban Institute** panel discussion, entitled "Bracing for the Demographic Tsunami: From Health Care to Community Building."

"Within our own neighbourhoods we make it difficult for people to get around if they have mobility issues," Harris told the audience, noting that individual buildings are constantly being upgraded to achieve accessibility. "Is there a way to make our neighbourhoods as accessible as our buildings?"

Harris went on to highlight how the SFU Community Trust's UniverCity development is working to reverse that trend. The development consists of a mix of housing types, as well as various amenities and a commercial centre built in the area around Simon Fraser University.

It has been designed so that no building is more than a five minute walk from the commercial core and the plan is heavily transit-oriented, which has resulted in approximately 30 per cent of residents taking transit regularly, compared to 11 per cent in the wider population.

Harris cites the UniverCity project

as an example of how a community can be designed for full accessibility by all.

Waterloo Region community planning director **Kevin Eby** presented the issue of an aging population in the context of where people want to live.

"Do I want to age in place?" Eby asked, referring to his home in a single-detached neighbourhood. He noted that many people would like to stay in the same neighbourhood as they age, but in many cases there is no retirement home or nursing home nearby. Eby encouraged the development of multi-unit buildings geared toward independent living in established neighbourhoods as a way to help ease the aging population into retirement while letting them stay within familiar areas.

WITHIN OUR OWN NEIGHBOURHOODS WE MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR PEOPLE TO GET AROUND IF THEY HAVE MOBILITY ISSUES.

• Gordon Harris

Environics Analytics senior vice president **Doug Norris** presented demographic data on the coming wave of aging baby boomers. Norris noted that the boomer population, which will become "tomorrow's seniors," bring with them different challenges in planning for their future care. Boomers tend to have smaller families than previous generations of seniors, meaning there are fewer family members to take care of aging parents.

Another issue with future generations of retirees, Norris said, is greater life expectancy and therefore a longer period of retirement living and potentially a longer period in which home care or other forms of assistance may be required.

NRU10



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YORK POWER SITE

King gets plant

By Mark Ostler

The **Ontario Power Authority** has awarded the contract for the northern York Region generating facility, a natural gas-fired plant intended to ease the increasing pressure on the region's grid, to **York Energy Centre Inc.** a partnership between **Pristine Power Inc.** and **Harbert Power, LLC.** The plan for a natural gas facility is also intended to help the province achieve its goal of shutting down coal-powered facilities by 2014.

Five other proposals were submitted but at its meeting December 10, OPA's board of directors approved construction of the 393-megawatt facility at 18781 Dufferin Street in **King Township.** The contract mandates York Energy Centre, which will be the owner of the new facility that is projected to cost \$365 million, to operate it for 20 years.

"King is an unwilling host, so this is not a welcome decision," King Mayor **Margaret Black** told *NRU*, adding that the OPA and Pristine Power need to address certain issues surrounding the facility. "They really have to strongly address the concerns raised about health and environment and the possible effects on agriculture."

However, Black noted that energy and infrastructure minister **George Smitherman** will be setting up a meeting in the town to discuss such concerns and Pristine Power officials have already been in touch with her regarding opening a dialogue on the project.

Smitherman will speak at a public meeting, to be held in the new year, alongside officials from OPA, as well as other experts, with the aim of engaging residents and stakeholders in a dialogue regarding issues and concerns surrounding the power plant.

Pristine Power president and CEO **Jeffrey Myers** told *NRU* that the company will seek to engage residents and the municipality in a dialogue.

"I think if you look at the resolution...that's been passed by King, it does say that they are an unwilling host," Myers said. "But it goes on further to qualify that comment by saying that they are an unwilling host because of their concerns about the impact on the environment and human health. Part of our process...is to show that those impacts can be

mitigated to a very great extent."

Myers added that the concerns of many residents focus on the perception that the OPA misjudged the region's energy needs. Myers said that Pristine Power is not in a position to address those concerns and will focus on discussing environmental and health matters with residents and stakeholders.

Pristine Power will consult with the town throughout the site plan process and also has plans to provide community benefits, possibly in the form of a sustainability fund or infrastructure fund.

The plant is expected to be in operation by the end of 2011 and will be run by seven full-time employees. The construction of the facility is expected to generate 150 jobs.

"The new energy centre will certainly help solve the urgent need in northern York for adequate and reliable power and it also supports the province's clean air renewable target," said OPA vice president of electricity resources **JoAnne Butler.**

Now that the selection process is complete, the OPA will take on the role of project management, overseeing the construction and operation of the facility.

"We'll monitor the contracted company's project development and we'll make sure that the facility that we've contracted for will be available when we said it was going to be available, and that all the approvals are obtained under the contract," Butler said.

The OPA put forward a northern York Region electricity plan in 2005, which included provisions for the new plant. The plan also includes

emphasis on conservation, upgrades for the existing Armitage Transformer Station in **Newmarket** and construction of a new transformer station at Holland Junction.

The OPA identified **Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina** and King as potential host municipalities. This past summer, all four municipal councils declared they would be unwilling hosts of such a facility. **Bradford West Gwillimbury** adopted the same position in the fall.

Plans for the northern York Region facility have raised the ire of some local residents, who have formed a group, **MegaWHAT? Citizens' Collective**, to oppose development of the facility.

(See *NRU-GTA Edition August 20, September 24, October 22, November 5 and 19, 2008.*)



WE'LL MONITOR THE CONTRACTED COMPANY'S PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND WE'LL MAKE SURE THAT THE FACILITY THAT WE'VE CONTRACTED FOR WILL BE AVAILABLE WHEN WE SAID IT WAS GOING TO BE AVAILABLE, AND THAT ALL THE APPROVALS ARE OBTAINED UNDER THE CONTRACT.

• JoAnne Butler

BOUNDARY REVIEW

Vaughan responds to growth

Vaughan staff has been working on a ward boundary review and are calling for public input into the new boundaries, which could be set for the 2010 election.

“The city is growing rapidly,” said Mayor **Linda Jackson**. “We need to respond to that growth by first determining where it’s happening in Vaughan. City staff has been diligent in preparing a preliminary review of ward boundaries; now we need public input.”

THE CITY IS GROWING RAPIDLY. WE NEED TO RESPOND TO THAT GROWTH BY FIRST DETERMINING WHERE IT’S HAPPENING IN VAUGHAN. CITY STAFF HAS BEEN DILIGENT IN PREPARING A PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF WARD BOUNDARIES; NOW WE NEED PUBLIC INPUT.

• Linda Jackson

There are currently five wards in Vaughan and in each ward residents vote for one local councillor, three regional councillors and the mayor. The city estimates that each local councillor represents between 36,700 and 58,000 residents.

If ward boundaries are left unchanged, councillors could represent up to 117,000 people, by 2018 according to growth forecasts.

On the city’s website, the public can fill out a ward boundary review questionnaire and it is also available at community centres and libraries. The deadline for submitting comments is January 23, 2009.

Committee of the whole will receive a staff report compiling the public input at its February 2 meeting and a report with ward boundary options is expected to come before council February 24. A public meeting will be held on March 9 to outline ward boundary recommendations and a final report with recommendations will go to council in spring 2009.



COUNCIL UNREST Mayor asked to resign

Vaughan’s eight councillors held a media conference, Monday, publicly pleading with Mayor Linda Jackson to step down.

She later told reporters that she will “remain steadfast” and will not resign her seat as mayor.

The councillors backed their request by saying they have waited two years for Jackson to provide leadership. Some councillors called her committee attendance into question and others said some of her expense claims violate city policy.

Jackson’s office expenses were recently audited and a report came to council stating her claims were legitimate—but councillors rejected the report and demanded accounting firm Ernst & Young redo it. In the report, there was

nearly \$14,000 in claims without receipts, which fuelled councillors’ allegations of Jackson’s inappropriate behaviour.

Jackson’s term has been plagued by controversy since she was elected by a narrow 90-vote win over former mayor Michael DiBiase. It began with a recount and continued with council deciding to prosecute Jackson over alleged Elections Act contraventions during her 2006 campaign, which she is challenging in court.

Her colleagues on council have also contributed to the controversy with the former mayor and Councillor Bernie DiVona currently facing audits of 2006 campaign expenses. An audit of Councillor Joyce Frustaglio’s 2006 campaign expenses was released in October, which found her spending under the limit but some “sloppy” accounting. (See NRU GTA edition November 12.)

CEO chosen continued from page 1

will takeover the evaluation of the value of the board’s entire stock of properties, oversee the management of a portfolio of leased properties and recommend redevelopment and/or sale of designated properties.

The former city manager comes with seven years of experience in that role, as well as, experience from working for the province as both assistant deputy minister of operations and CEO of the Ontario Housing Corporation with the Ministry of Housing.





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Top ten development law firms

continued from page 1

In our tenth annual ranking of the GTA's most prominent planning and development law firms, *NRU* looked back at the OMB decisions from August 2007 to July 2008. There was some movement in the bottom half of the top ten this year, with two newcomers making the list, though the first four spots remain unchanged.

Keep an eye out for the Toronto edition of the top 10 development law firms in this Friday's *NRU*.

1. [1] AIRD & BERLIS

Eileen Costello, Robert Doumani, Patricia Foran, Tom Halinski, Patrick Harrington, Kim Kovar, Leo Longo, John Mascarin, Josephine Matera, Jane Pepino, Christopher Williams, Steve Zakem



Reasons for Ranking: Aird & Berlis hangs on to the top spot yet again, as the most mentioned law firm in *NRU*'s GTA edition. This marks the tenth consecutive year that the firm has placed in the top ten. Aird & Berlis spent the past year representing clients across the region in a number of high profile cases. The firm was involved in the Lefroy case, appeals against Brampton's new official plan, the Mississauga zoning by-law appeals and the Whitby By The Lake development.

OMB and Court Matters or Hearings: representing Victoria Street (Cookstown) Developments Inc. regarding its appeals to permit 53-detached houses in the Town of Innisfil (Pepino) (settlement); representing Milton regarding appeals by RioCan Real Estate Investment Trust to permit a food store (Matera) (X); representing Serenity Park Cemetery Corporation regarding appeals of the Steeles Avenue Community Improvement Plan in the City of Vaughan (Foran, Harrington); representing Collingwood regarding appeals by Consulate Developments (Ontario) Inc. against the new town official plan, and for a zoning by-law amendment to permit a residential development totaling 386 units (Longo) (X); representing Brooklin Golf Course Limited, Runnymede Development Corporation Limited and Highmark Homes regarding appeals against regional official plan amendments resulting from the Durham Region official plan review (Pepino, Doumani); representing Helder and Zelia Barcelos, Loblaw Properties Limited, Orlando Corporation and Queenscorp (Lakeshore) Inc. regarding appeals of Mississauga's policy framework for a new comprehensive zoning by-law (Costello, Kovar, Longo, Zakem); representing John MacCharles regarding appeals by Birchgrove Estates Inc. to permit nine townhouses and a 241-unit residential building

in Oakville (Pepino); representing The Lefroy Settlement Area Management Inc., Bellair Properties Inc., Cassandra Innisfil Estates Inc., Esther Holdings Inc. and 1648024 Ontario Limited regarding appeals against the *Lefroy Settlement Area Secondary Plan* in Innisfil (Pepino); representing Bayview Cemetery and Crematory Inc. regarding appeals to permit development of a cemetery or crematorium in Burlington (Foran); representing Milton and Halton Region against appeals by Shellrock Developments Ltd. to permit development of a 178-unit residential subdivision (Matera, Costello, Doumani) (settlement); representing Queenscorp (Lakeshore) Inc. regarding appeals to permit the development of a 235-unit apartment building and 10 townhouses in Mississauga (Kovar); representing Summit Golf and Country Club regarding its appeal against York Region's refusal to grant a tree removal permit (Pepino, Harrington) (X); representing Runnymede Development Corporation Limited regarding appeals to establish a prestige employment area in Ajax (Zakem); representing King Township regarding appeals to permit an 86-unit subdivision (Halinski, Matera); representing Burlington regarding appeals by Waterdown Bay Ltd. to permit a residential subdivision in the city (Doumani); representing Collingwood against appeals by Consulate Developments (Ontario) Inc. to permit a residential subdivision (Longo); representing King Township regarding appeals against cer-

CONTINUED PAGE 6



Processing and obtaining approvals to plan, zone and develop land can be a daunting task. In the preparation, submission and support of applications, project proponents rely on the Municipal and Property Development Group of Fraser Milner Casgrain LLP (FMC). With six offices across Canada and one in New York, FMC offers the expertise necessary to guide your applications successfully through the approval process.

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Top ten development law firms continued from page 5

tain aspects of the zoning by-law (Halinski) (settlement); representing East Gwillimbury regarding an appeal by 1263509 Ontario Inc. against York Region's decision to modify an amendment that altered the town's Queensville Community Plan (Matera) (settlement); representing Whitby Mental Health Centre regarding appeals by Whitby By The Lake Inc. to permit development of 302 medium-density residential units, 124 low-density units and a high-density block (Pepino); representing Runnymede Development Corporation Limited and Highmark Homes regarding appeals against a Durham Region provincial conformity official plan amendment (Zakem, Longo); representing Orlando Corporation and Akeda Holdings Limited regarding appeals against Brampton's new official plan, as well as official plan and zoning by-law amendments and amendments to the *Bram West Secondary Plan* (Longo).

2. [2] DAVIES HOWE PARTNERS

John Alati, Jeff Davies, Mark Flowers, Nupur Malaviya, Michael Melling, Matthew Rea (no longer with firm), Susan Rosenthal



Reasons for Ranking: Davies Howe Partners is spending its second consecutive year in the number two spot, taking on a large caseload. The firm represented clients in the Big Bay Point and North Leslie cases, as well as in the Mississauga zoning by-law and Brampton official plan appeals. Davies Howe also challenged the Town of Caledon for permission to develop a 3,000-unit residential community in the Mayfield West area.

OMB and Court Matters or Hearings: representing Kimvar Enterprises Inc. in the Big Bay Point case (Davies, Alati, Rosenthal, Melling); representing Chinguacousy Farms Limited regarding appeals for a subdivision within Brampton's *Sandringham Wellington Secondary Plan* (Davies, Flowers, Stewart); representing Taylorwood Management Inc. and Rick Shea regarding appeals against Oshawa official plan and zoning by-law amendments for intensification and mixed-use along the Simcoe Street North corridor (Melling, Flowers, Rea) (settlement); representing Bayview East Landowners Group in the North Leslie case (Flowers); representing Monarch Mayfield Inc. and Coscorp Mayfield Inc. regarding appeals of the *Mayfield West Secondary Plan* (Flowers) (settlement); representing Amacon Development (City Centre) Corp., Amacon Development (Hurontario) Corp., F.S. Port Credit Ltd., F.S. Port Credit Development Ltd. and Cabot Trail Estates Ltd. regarding appeals against

Mississauga's policy framework for a new comprehensive zoning by-law (Alati, Rosenthal); representing Beechnut Development Corporation Inc. regarding appeals for a zoning by-law amendment and plan of subdivision in Oshawa (Malaviya); representing F.S. Port Credit Limited regarding its appeals to permit development of residential and commercial uses at Park and Hurontario streets in Mississauga (Alati); representing Moscorp Development I, II, and III Inc. regarding appeals to permit a 3,000-unit residential development in Caledon's Mayfield West community (Flowers); representing 1556615 Ontario Ltd. regarding its appeals for site plan approval and zoning by-law amendment to permit development of a building containing 95-condominium units and 35-commercial units in Vaughan (Alati); representing Kindwin (Mayfield) Development Corporation, Osmington Inc. and Heathwood Homes Limited regarding appeals against Brampton's new official plan, as well as official plan and zoning by-law amendments and amendments to the *Bram West Secondary Plan* (Melling).

3. [3] KAGAN, SHASTRI

Paul DeMelo, Ira Kagan



Reasons for Ranking: For the third consecutive year Kagan, Shastri maintains its

third place position in the annual rankings. The firm was involved in high profile cases, such as the Big Bay Point and North Leslie appeals, and Empire Communities' residential proposal for Oakville. Kagan, Shastri also maintains its prominent position in the rankings by often representing municipalities, like the cities of Mississauga and Burlington, as well as Niagara Region.

OMB and Court Matters or Hearings: representing Sandycove Acres Homeowners' Association and the Residents of Innisfil Association in the Big Bay Point case (Kagan); representing Oakville regarding appeals by Maurice Garden Development Inc. to permit a multi-unit townhouse development (De Melo) (settlement); representing S. + Z. Mizrahi Investments Limited and Richmond Gardens in the North Leslie case (Kagan); representing Mississauga regarding appeals against the city's policy framework for a new comprehensive zoning by-law (De Melo); representing Burlington regarding appeals by Smart Centres Inc. for official plan and zoning by-law amendments to permit development of a retail warehouse (Kagan) (settlement); representing Mississauga regarding appeals by Queenscorp (Lakeshore) Inc. for official plan and zoning by-law amendments to permit development of a 235-unit apartment building and 10 townhouses (De Melo); representing the Credit Valley Conservation Authority regarding appeals by

Top ten development law firms continued from page 6

James Dick Construction Limited for official plan and zoning by-law amendments to permit a commercial quarry in Caledon (De Melo); representing 1688971 Ontario Limited regarding appeals against a proposed regional official plan amendment in the Town of Georgina (Kagan); representing Niagara Region regarding appeals by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Lafarge (Canada) Inc., Lester Shoals Ltd., the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, City of Port Colborne, Beatrice Phelan, John Allan Reed/MAQ Aggregates and Sherston Resorts Inc. against a regional official plan amendment updating environmental policies (De Melo) (settlement); representing Heather Hand regarding an appeal by Larry and Colleen Romanovich against Markham's rezoning approval conditions for commercial uses (Kagan) (settlement); representing Empire Communities regarding appeals to permit three apartment towers, totaling 539 units in Oakville (Kagan); representing Cougs Investment regarding its appeal against Ajax's official plan amendment requiring pre-application consultation (Kagan) (settlement).

4. [4] DAVIS

Chris Barnett, Laura Bisset



Reasons for Ranking: Davis stays at number four for the second year in row, handling prominent cases across the GTA. The firm represented the Town of Caledon in the *Mayfield West Secondary Plan* and commercial quarry cases, as well as Whitby By The Lake Inc. in its appeals. Davis also achieved a settlement for the Kaitlin Group Ltd. for its proposed subdivision in Brock and was involved in the Brampton official plan appeals.

OMB and Court Matters or Hearings: representing Garden Homes Inc. regarding appeals to permit development of a 92-unit subdivision in Newmarket (Barnett) (settlement); representing Caledon regarding appeals of the *Mayfield West Secondary Plan* (Barnett, Bisset) (settlement); representing Uxbridge Developments Inc., Holloway Developments Inc., Runnymede Development Corporation Limited, Tribute Communities and Beechridge Farms Inc. regarding appeals against Durham regional official plan amendments resulting from Durham's official plan review (Barnett, Bisset); representing Runnymede Development Corporation Limited regarding appeals to permit development of a 182-unit subdivision in Ajax (Barnett) (✓); representing Runnymede Development Corporation Limited regarding its appeals to permit development of 36 houses, as

well as commercial space in Ajax (Barnett) (settlement); representing Caledon regarding appeals by James Dick Construction Limited to permit a commercial quarry in the town (Barnett); representing the Kaitlin Group Ltd. regarding appeals to permit development of an 185-unit subdivision in Brock (Barnett) (settlement); representing Alcona Capital Properties Inc. regarding its appeal for an official plan amendment to expand the urban boundary of the Town of Innisfil (Barnett, Bisset); representing Senator Homes (Discovery Phase 3) Inc. regarding appeals to permit development of a residential subdivision in Brampton (Barnett); representing Whitby By The Lake Inc. regarding appeals to permit development of a high-density residential block, 302 medium-density units and 124 low-density units in Whitby (Barnett, Bisset); representing Northview Downs Development Ltd. regarding appeals against Brampton's new official plan, as well as official plan and zoning by-law amendments and amendments to the *Bram West Secondary Plan* (Barnett, Bisset).

5. [10] LOOPSTRA NIXON

Quinto Annibale, Brent Duguid, Kevin Ryan



Reasons for Ranking: Fifth place has a new face, as Loopstra Nixon jumps five spots to the middle of the pack. The firm represented the Town of Innisfil in the Lefroy and Big Bay Point cases, as well as in appeals by Alcona Capital Properties to expand the town's urban boundary. The firm also represented Brock Township in its settlement with the Kaitlin Group over the latter's proposed subdivision in Sunderland.

OMB and Court Matters or Hearings: representing Innisfil regarding appeals by Victoria Street (Cookstown) Developments Inc. to permit development of 53-detached houses (Annibale) (settlement); representing Innisfil in the Big Bay Point case (Annibale, Ryan); representing the Township of Scugog regarding appeals by Scugog Shopping Centres Ltd. for a commercial development in Port Perry (Annibale, Duguid) (✓); representing Uxbridge regarding a zoning by-law amendment appeal addressing the types of uses permitted within the Uxbridge Train Station (Annibale) (settlement); representing Markham regarding appeals by 1547155 Ontario Limited to permit development of a 92-unit residential building (Annibale, Duguid); representing Innisfil regarding appeals against the *Lefroy Settlement Area Secondary Plan* (Annibale, Ryan); representing Brock regarding appeals by Kaitlin Group Ltd. to permit development of a 185-unit subdivision (Annibale) (settlement); representing Majormack Investments Inc. regarding an appeal by Euro Estates Inc. against draft subdivision plan approval conditions in Vaughan (Annibale); representing Innisfil regarding an appeal by

Top ten development law firms

continued from page 7

Alcona Capital Properties Inc. for an official plan amendment to expand the urban boundary of the town (Annibale, Ryan).

6. [6] WEIRFOULDS

John Buhlman, Jeff Cowan,
Jill Dougherty, Bruce Engell,
Blake Hurley (now with the

WeirFoulds LLP
Gain and protect advantage.

City of Burlington), Barnet Kussner, Constance Lanteigne, Ian Lord, Michael McQuaid, George Rust-D'Eye, Christopher Tzekas

Reasons for Ranking: WeirFoulds stays in sixth place in 2007-2008, after last year's leap into the top ten. A number of high-profile cases, as well as numerous subdivision appeals have helped the firm maintain its position. This year the firm represented clients in the Mississauga zoning by-law case, the costs portion of the Big Bay Point appeals and the Caledon quarry case.

OMB and Court Matters or Hearings: representing Glen Ellen Properties Inc. and Jen Pierre Nolet regarding appeals of Mississauga's policy framework for a new comprehensive zoning by-law (Dougherty, Hurley, Kussner); representing Oakville regarding appeals by Birchgrove Estates Inc. to permit development of a 241-unit residential building and nine townhouses (Lord) (settlement); representing 935860 Ontario Limited, Greenvilla (Sutton) Investments Limited, Sung Ran Lee, Cheon Woo Lee and Greenvilla Development Group Inc. regarding appeals to permit development of two separate subdivisions, of 158 and 139 units, in Georgina (McQuaid, Lanteigne); representing Shellrock Developments Ltd. regarding appeals to permit development of 178-residential homes in Milton (McQuaid) (settlement); representing Gilberts LLP regarding the costs portion of the Big Bay Point case (Cowan); representing York Region regarding an appeal by Summit Golf and Country Club against the region's refusal of a tree removal permit (Kussner) (✓); representing James Dick Construction Limited regarding its appeals to permit development of a commercial quarry in the Town of Caledon (Buhlman); representing Lebovic Enterprises Limited regarding its appeals to permit development of 75-condo units and an 18-hole golf course in Aurora (McQuaid).

7. [11] TOWNSEND, ROGERS

Susan Rogers, Lynda Townsend

Reasons for Ranking: Townsend, Rogers is the first of two newcomers to this year's top ten, having been involved in commercial and residential cases, as well as some high-

profile policy challenges before the OMB. Representing clients in the Mississauga zoning by-law case, as well as appeals against Hamilton's development charges, Brampton's official plan and growth management policies for Oakville helped the firm jump four spots.

OMB and Court Matters or Hearings: representing Maurice Garden Development Inc. regarding its appeal to permit a multi-unit townhouse development in Oakville (Townsend) (settlement); representing the Hamilton-Halton Home Builders' Association regarding its appeal against the City of Hamilton's development charges (Rogers) (settlement); representing Pioneer Petroleum Management Inc. and Orchard Garden Markets Ltd. regarding appeals of Mississauga's policy framework for a new comprehensive zoning by-law (Rogers, Townsend); representing Birchgrove Estates Inc. regarding appeals to permit development of a 241-unit residential building and nine townhouses in Oakville (Townsend) (settlement); representing Giuseppi Morelli and Ritajo Developments Limited regarding appeals to permit development of a commercial plaza in Vaughan (Townsend) (settlement); representing Euro Estates Inc. regarding its appeal against draft subdivision plan approval conditions in Vaughan (Rogers) (✗); representing 445312 Ontario Limited regarding its appeal against Oakville's approval of an official plan amendment addressing built form issues on a particular piece of land (Townsend) (partial settlement); representing QEW-Bronto Development Inc., 1401114 Ontario Inc. and 445312 Ontario Limited regarding appeals against an Oakville official plan amendment addressing growth management between Dundas Street and Lake Ontario (Townsend); representing Shayma Dick Holdings Inc. regarding appeals against Brampton's new official plan, as well as official plan and zoning by-law amendments and amendments to the *Bram West Secondary Plan* (Townsend).

8. [9] THOMSON, ROGERS

Roger Beaman, Al Burton,
Stephen D'Agostino, David
Germain, Beth Stacey, Jeffrey
Wilker



Reasons for Ranking: Thomson, Rogers climbed one spot this year, having represented clients in several of the past year's largest cases. From the North Leslie case to the Mississauga zoning by-law, Lefroy secondary plan and Brampton official plan appeals, Thomson, Rogers has maintained a prominent place among GTA firms.

OMB and Court Matters or Hearings: representing Richmond Hill in the North Leslie case (Beaman, Burton); representing Greenfield South Power Corporation regarding

Top ten development law firms continued from page 8

their appeals of Mississauga's policy framework for a new comprehensive zoning by-law (Burton, D'Agostino); representing Greenfield South Power Corporation regarding its appeals against official plan and zoning by-law amendments that prohibit development of a proposed 280-megawatt natural gas plant in Mississauga (D'Agostino) (✓); representing Vincent Fava regarding appeals against the *Lefroy Settlement Area Secondary Plan* in Innisfil (Beaman); representing Glenwoods Investments Inc., Glenwoods Developments Inc. and Woodglen Developments Inc. regarding appeals against a proposed regional official plan amendment in Georgina (Beaman) (settlement); representing Aurora regarding appeals by Lebovic Enterprises Limited to permit development of 75-condo units and an 18-hole golf course (Beaman); representing Halton Region, the Town of Halton Hills and 2055835 Ontario Inc. regarding appeals against Brampton's new official plan, as well as official plan and zoning by-law amendments and amendments to the *Bram West Secondary Plan* (D'Agostino, Wilker); representing Halton Region regarding appeals by Empire Communities to permit three apartment towers, totaling 539 units, in Oakville (Germain).

9. [7] DAVIS WEBB

Neil Davis, James Macdonald,
Ellen Pefhany, Ronald Webb



Reasons for Ranking: Davis Webb slipped two spots, but remained in the top ten, representing clients in the Mayfield West, Mississauga zoning by-law, Caledon quarry and Brampton official plan cases. The firm was also involved in subdivision appeals in Georgina and appeals of Brampton's Kennedy Road South Revitalization Area Secondary Plan.

OMB and Court Matters or Hearings: representing Clearbrooke Developments Limited regarding appeals against the Town of Caledon's *Mayfield West Secondary Plan* (Webb) (settlement); representing David Harris and Creebank Developments Ltd. regarding appeals of Mississauga's policy framework for a new comprehensive zoning by-law (Davis); representing Eldomar Investments Limited regarding its appeal against Brampton's Kennedy Road South Revitalization Area Secondary Plan (Davis) (settlement); representing 2143811 Ontario Limited and Jeff Lebofsky regarding appeals by 935860 Ontario Limited, Greenville (Sutton) Investments Limited, Sung Ran Lee, Cheon Woo Lee and Greenville Development Group Inc. to permit development of two separate subdivisions, of 158 and 139 units, in Georgina (Webb); representing G.C. Jain

Investments Ltd. regarding appeals for official plan and zoning by-law amendments to permit development of a seniors' residence and a temple in Brampton (Webb); representing the Coalition of Concerned Citizens regarding appeals by James Dick Construction Limited to permit development of a commercial quarry in Caledon (Webb); representing Maple Lodge Farms Ltd. and Brampton Brick Limited regarding appeals against Brampton's new official plan, as well as official plan and zoning by-law amendments and amendments to the *Bram West Secondary Plan* (Webb, Davis).

10. [NA] FRASER MILNER CASGRAIN

Patrick Devine, Andrew Jeanrie,
Jason Park, Andrew Salem,
Katarzyna Sliwa (now with
Davies Howe)



FRASER MILNER CASGRAIN LLP

Reasons for Ranking: Fraser Milner Casgrain did not even place in the next ten last year, but in 2007-2008 leapt into the number 10 spot. As with many of the top ten firms, Fraser Milner had clients in the Mississauga zoning by-law case, but snuck into tenth place by its involvement in other high profile cases, such as the Brampton official plan case, appeals of Oakville's growth management policies and the Whitby By the Lake case.

OMB and Court Matters or Hearings: representing Pinnacle International (Ontario) Inc. regarding appeals of Mississauga's policy framework for a new comprehensive zoning by-law (Park, Sliwa); representing Times Markham Centre regarding appeals by Agnes Lee-Chang, Ying Sun Chang and Wang Hui Dong against a zoning by-law amendment enacted by Markham increasing the limits on building height and number of units for Times Markham Centre's proposed development (Jeanrie) (✓); representing Sun Life Insurance Company of Canada regarding its appeal to permit conversion of a 119-unit rental apartment building into condo ownership in Burlington (Devine, Sliwa) (✓); representing Dawsco (Cyran) Development Corp. regarding appeals to permit development of an 86-unit subdivision in King Township (Salem); representing First Capital Realty Corporation regarding appeals to permit a mixed employment/commercial development in Milton (Devine, Sliwa) (settlement); representing Moldenhauer Developments Inc., 2056409 Ontario Inc. and 2094138 Ontario Inc. regarding appeals against an Oakville official plan amendment addressing growth management between Dundas Street and Lake Ontario (Devine); representing Ivy Manor Estates Inc., Lorwood Holdings Inc. and Destona Homes (2003) Inc. regarding appeals against Brampton's new official plan, as well as official plan and zoning by-law amendments and

GTA in Brief

Rail link EA

Metrolinx announced that an environmental assessment will begin in the spring of 2009 for a rail link between Union Station and **Toronto Pearson International Airport**. The agency also announced that it is the new proponent for the expansion of GO service on the Georgetown GO line to Etobicoke, Bramalea, Brampton and Georgetown. Interested parties will

have a chance to comment on service improvements on the Georgetown line and to the airport.

In a news release, the **Greater Toronto Airports Authority** stated that it applauds the union station-airport link EA, since both identified “mobility hubs” move more than 300,000 passengers every day. In the first year of operation, it is projected that this will eliminate about 6.6 tonnes of carbon emissions and remove about 1.35 million cars from the roads, the GTAA estimated.

GO 2020

GO Transit unveiled its strategic plan, GO 2020, at its monthly board of directors meeting in Toronto last week. GO 2020 synchronizes with both the **Metrolinx** regional transportation plan and the MoveOntario 2020 provincial investment. It provides a framework for developing the transit agency’s capital and operating plans and budgets.

By 2020, GO ridership to the Toronto core will more than double, and outside the Toronto core ridership

CONTINUED PAGE 11

Top ten development law firms

continued from page 9

amendments to the *Bram West Secondary Plan* (Park); representing the Ontario Realty Corporation regarding appeals by Whitby By The Lake Inc. to permit development of 302 medium-density residential units, 124 low-density units and a high-density block in Whitby (Devine).

THE NEXT TEN

Based on mentions in *Novae Res Urbis - GTA Edition*, here is the ranking of the next ten firms with last year’s place indicated in the square brackets: (11) [15] **Ritchie Ketcheson Hart & Biggart**; (12) [16] **Blake, Cassels & Graydon**; (13) [n/a] **Garrod Pickfield**; (14) [n/a] **McMillan**; (15) [20] **O’Connor MacLeod Hanna**; (16) [n/a] **Polak, McKay**; (17) [n/a] **Cassels Brock**; (18) [8] **Goodmans**; (19) [17] **Parente, Borean**; (20) [12] **Turkstra Mazza Associates**. 

Annual ranking

The end of year tradition at *NRU* examines the legal side of planning and development in the GTA, primarily focussing on cases that have come before the Ontario Municipal Board from August 2007 to July 2008 as reported by *Novae Res Urbis - GTA Edition*.

Send us your interesting board and court decisions and development applications by email or fax, to ensure *NRU - GTA Edition* publishes them. We’ve already started keeping tabs for the eleventh annual ranking.

How the information is collected—Using manual research, we track each of the law firms mentioned in *Novae Res Urbis - GTA Edition* (OMB News, predominately) over a one-year period between August and July. From

there we determine the firms that are most frequently mentioned and sort through their projects and hearings. Some firms are involved in a variety of developments across the GTA, while others have particular associations to major clients. The original data is collected from OMB files plus our research for news stories.

Determining the top 10—The most difficult task is balancing the number of clients, the range of projects and the difficulty of cases, as well as some unique features about each project or case. This list is based only on items covered in *Novae Res Urbis - GTA Edition* and does not account for the vast number of cases and firms involved with such matters as minor variance applications, assessment appeals or for those that participated

as part of a development team without our knowledge. Hence, there is a certain degree of subjectivity in our ranking.

The listings—The lawyers that are part of the planning and development law team for each of the top-10 ranked firms are noted. In cases that involved an OMB decision where a clear winner/loser or settlement was determined, the appropriate symbol (✓) or (✗) or (settlement) follows the case description. If there was no clear win/lose or settlement or the matter involved a pre-hearing, or is still pending before the OMB, no symbol appears. A square bracket after this year’s ranking indicates the firm’s placement in last year’s *NRU* listing.

GTA in Brief continued from page 10

will triple. The plan includes improving service reliability so that 92 per cent of train trips arrive within five minutes of their scheduled time; making seats available for every passenger on 95 per cent of train and bus trips; ensuring 100 per cent accessibility on bus and rail services by 2016; and integrating public transportation, including a common fare card, with provincial, regional, and municipal partners.

The plan also aims to have two-way all-day service within the GO core service area by 2020, having a train or bus depart every 15 minutes during peak periods and every 30 minutes at off-peak, adding more train service and extending rail lines.

Rental vacancy rates

The average rental apartment vacancy rate in Canada's 34-major centres decreased to 2.2 per cent in October 2008 from 2.6 per cent in October 2007, according to the rental market survey released by **Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation**.

Between October 2007 and September 2008, 14,908-rental units and 50,794-condominium units were completed in Canada's major centres. Condominiums are a relatively inexpensive type of housing for renters moving to home ownership. Also, some condominium apartments are owned by investors who rent them out.

The centres with the highest vacancy rates in 2008 were **Windsor** (14.6 per cent), **St. Catharines-Niagara** (4.3 per cent), and **Oshawa** (4.2 per cent). On the other hand, the major urban centres with the lowest vacancy rates were **Kelowna** (0.3 per cent), **Victoria** (0.5 per cent), **Vancouver** (0.5 per cent), and **Regina** (0.5 per cent).

The highest average monthly rents for two-bedroom apartments in new and existing structures were in **Calgary** (\$1,148), **Vancouver** (\$1,124) and **Toronto** (\$1,095).

Mayors call for infrastructure funds

Member mayors of the **Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative** issued a statement last week urging the federal government in the United States and Canada to implement economic stimulus packages aimed at creating jobs through public infrastructure investments. At last week's meeting, the initiative's board of directors approved a resolution calling for federal funding so that construction, and thus job creation and economic stimulus, could begin as soon as possible.

DURHAM

Protecting land in the valley

Four natural heritage conservation easement agreements have been signed to protect significant heritage lands in **Durham Region**. The properties total about 101 hectares in the Enniskillen Valley, approximately 10 kilometres north of **Bowmanville**, and have been acquired by the **Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority**. Long-term plans for the area will focus on developing strategies for resource management, including rehabilitation and protection of the natural heritage system while also providing for public access and recreational use. The conservation authority now protects more than 600 hectares of sensitive land in the valley.

Oshawa record breaker

The number of building permits issued by **Oshawa** hit a new record high for the city in November. A total of \$19,096,000 of commercial construction value was issued establishing the highest commercial value ever achieved in the month of November. It also represents the second highest commercial construction value issued in any one month. The total construction value for November was \$31,982,800 and of that the residential value was \$12,886,800.

Major projects issued in November included: **Wal-Mart** (1471 Harmony Road North) valued at \$16.5 million; a retirement-apartment building (1255 Bloor Street East) valued at \$8.8 million; and a family-apartment building (1529 Ritson Road South) valued at \$1.6 million. The two apartment buildings created 104-new residential units.

Oshawa off-campus housing

A joint December 15 meeting of Oshawa's development services and finance and administration committees considered a report from the Student Housing Task Force, recommending council's endorsement for a strategy to return land uses in neighbourhoods surrounding the **University of Ontario Institute of Technology** campus "to their original built form and permitted use(s)." The report also recommends an off campus housing communications plan be developed.

A short-term plan, developed by the task force and intended to be in effect until April 30, 2009, calls for 28 properties, whose owners were found guilty of operating illegal lodging houses, to be stripped of their residential rental housing licences and cease to operate at the end of the school year. The plan states that a further 17 houses, whose owners were convicted of operating lodging houses, be permitted to operate with up-to-six bedrooms until the 2010-2011 academic year if they are brought up to code. The long-term plan is still under development.

Durham surplus

Durham Region may have a \$2.77-million surplus this year, thanks to surpluses in departments such as social services, and water and sewer services. These surpluses more than make up for the \$2.13-million deficit that the region's works department has accrued in 2008, due in part to significant snowfall. The region's snow budget for the year is currently \$1 million over

GTA OMB News

Settlement approves Vaughan townhouses

In a decision issued December 10, board member **Reid Rossi** allowed appeals by **Elm Thornhill Woods Inc.**, approving a settlement with regard to Thornhill's appeals against the failure of the **City of Vaughan** to approve a zoning by-law amendment and plans of subdivision and condominium to permit development of 32 townhouses at **8777 Dufferin Street**, north of Highway 407.

Thornhill proposed the zoning by-law amendment to permit the townhouses to front onto a private condominium road, proposed as part of the development, whereas the by-law requires the townhouses to front onto a public road.

Keith MacKinnon (KLM Planning Partners Inc.) provided planning evidence in support of the settlement. MacKinnon testified that the settlement, which includes the townhouses front onto the private condominium road, conforms to the regional and local official plans, adding that city staff was in favour of the amended zoning by-law.

The board allowed the appeals, amending the by-law and approving the draft plans of subdivision and condominium.

Solicitors **Barry Horosko** and **Catherina Facciolo (Bratty & Partners)** represented Elm Thornhill Woods Inc. Solicitor **Claudia Storto** represented the City of Vaughan. Solicitor **Gabriel Szobel** represented **York Region**. (See OMB Case No. PL080360.)

Caledon settles one environmental designation case

In a decision issued December 11, board member **Reid Rossi** allowed an appeal by **Sunvalley Estates Ltd.** against official plan and zoning by-law amendments for the **Town of Caledon** implementing environmental policy area designations. Other appeals against the official plan and zoning by-law amendments remain outstanding.

Sunvalley Estates had appealed the re-designations for lands it owns along Highway 10. Town planner **Todd Salter** provided planning evidence in support of the settlement, testifying that it represents good planning. The settlement

removes the environmental policy area designation from Sunvalley's lands.

The board allowed the appeal, approving the settlement.

Solicitor **Nicholas Macos (Black Sutherland)** represented Sunvalley Estates Ltd. Solicitor **Nadia Koltun** represents the Town of Caledon. (See OMB Case No. PL070319.)

Brampton subdivision update

In a prehearing decision issued December 4, board member **Marc Denhez** provided an update on appeals by **Royalcliff Developments Inc.** and **Lake Path Holdings Inc.** against failure of the **City of Brampton** to approve official plan and zoning by-law amendments to permit development of 1,443-residential units at the southwest corner of Sandalwood Parkway East and Conestoga Drive.

At the prehearing conference, the city and appellants disputed whether or not Royalcliff and Lake Path's applications were premature, in the context of the city's efforts to achieve conformity with the provincial growth plan.

The city sought to include paragraphs on the issues list questioning the ability of the board to ensure compliance with growth plan policies in a case to be heard before the city has completed its growth plan conformity exercise.

While the applicants opposed the suggestion that the applications are premature, the city continued to question whether the board could determine whether the applications conform to the growth plan before the conformity exercise is complete, and suggested that the application may alter the outcome of the city's work toward growth plan conformity.

The board approved inclusion of the city's issues. The board also granted a request from **Ornstock Development Ltd.** to be withdrawn as a party to the case.

Solicitor **Scott Snider (Turkstra Mazza)** represents Royalcliff Developments Inc. and Lake Path Holdings Inc. Solicitor **Barnet Kussner (WeirFoulds)** represents the City of Brampton. Solicitor **John Gescher** represents **Peel Region**. Solicitor **R. Domes** represented Ornstock Development Ltd. (See OMB Case Nos. PL071168 and PL080144.)

NRU10



CASE CLOSED...



Have you been involved in an interesting hearing at the OMB? Contact Mark Ostler, Planning Reporter at Novae Res Urbis, with your OMB decisions.

Tel: 416.260.1304 **Email:** marko@nrupublishing.com

GTA in Brief continued from page 11

budget and Durham may still have more snow before 2008 is out.

Clarington design review

The **Municipality of Clarington** will undertake a review of its *General Architectural Design Guidelines* next year. The guidelines were developed by **John Williams Architect Ltd.** and adopted by the municipality in September 2002. The review will consider the effectiveness of the guidelines and will update the criteria for higher standards of built form. Preliminary meetings are currently underway.

HAMILTON

First LEED silver

Hamilton's Woodward Avenue environmental laboratory recently received notice that it has been awarded a LEED silver certification by the **Canada Green Building Council**. The building is the first in Canada to receive the silver certification confirmation. The lab, which houses city staff who operate and maintain the

city's water and wastewater services, focuses on sustainable initiatives in the area of air quality, water conservation and energy efficiency. The building is equipped with high-performance, well-insulated fiberglass windows, occupancy sensors for room temperature control, under-floor heating and air conditioning and more. There is an anticipated 30 per cent savings in energy costs.

HALTON

Milton's budget

After two evenings of deliberation over the proposed budget, **Milton's** budget committee has approved a 2009 budget of \$101,659,982. The budget calls for a 4.5 per cent increase in Milton's residential tax rate, which is lower than the increases proposed for the surrounding communities of **Brampton, Burlington, Oakville and Halton Hills**. It translates to an average increase of \$34.67 per year for urban households and \$28.85 per year for rural households. The original proposed tax rate increase of 5.6 per cent was lowered to 4.5 per cent due to a combination of factors, including increased assessment growth that

resulted in greater revenues than were expected for 2008.

Funding has been allocated for 90-new projects, including \$16 million for land and buildings; \$9.5 million for roads; and \$6.5 million for parks and trails.

YORK

Vaughan mayor audit sent back

On December 8 **Vaughan** council voted to send back an independent audit report, prepared by **Ernst & Young**, which cleared Mayor **Linda Jackson** of alleged 2007-expense violations. Council declared it wants the firm to rewrite the report.

Last month council ordered an audit of regional councillor **Joyce Frustaglio's** 2006-election campaign expenses. Election finances of Mayor Jackson, former mayor **Michael DiBiase** and Councillor **Bernie DiVona** also have been audited. Jackson is facing legal charges, ordered by council in June, though the mayor is currently challenging them. (See *NRU-GTA Edition, Nov. 12*)

REMINDER: NRU GTA Edition will not be published on December 24

GTA People

Lisa Backus has recently been promoted from planner to senior planner in **Clarington's** community planning and design branch.

Mississauga has appointed deputy fire chief **John McDougall** the new fire chief of the city's fire and emergency services. McDougall has been the acting fire chief since February. He began his career with the city in 1973

as a probationary firefighter and became deputy chief in November 1999.

Peel Region council has appointed **Kent Gillespie** commissioner of employee and business services and **Dan Labrecque** as commissioner of environment, transportation and planning services. Gillespie is the former Peel corporate services commissioner and regional solicitor and has held senior positions at the

region for 19 years. Labrecque is the former treasurer and CFO, who has been the acting commissioner of environment, transportation and planning since September. Of his 27 years of public service, 23 have been at the region.

Toronto has appointed **Mike Williams** the new general manager of economic development, culture and tourism. Williams most

recently worked as the senior vice president, investment attraction with the Toronto Region Research Alliance. He has worked at Statistics Canada as assistant regional director and spent time overseas with the multi-national information and marketing company, R.L. Polk. He has also served on the boards of the Toronto Board of Trade and Dixon Hall. Williams will begin working at the city on February 2, 2009.