

Citizens take an active role in helping to shape King

In 1971, when Ontario Hydro drew up plans for a large hydro corridor to cross King Township just north of the 18th Sideroad, old and new residents of King came together to voice their concerns and resist this possibility. CCKT, which had been an incipient ratepayers group, advocated to resist the project. They succeeded: the planned hydro corridor was relocated along Highway 7. Concerned Citizens of King Township, (CCKT) is a 40-year-old non-profit volunteer group, made up of concerned King residents who care deeply about preserving King's unique rural character and lifestyle; protecting and enhancing King's natural environment and farms; and building healthy, complete sustainable towns and villages that enrich our lives with a sense of character and natural heritage.

CCKT has had many board members in its four decades of service to the King community. Currently its board has seven dedicated volunteers.

Schomberg's Greg Locke is chair.

I moved to King with my wife Tracy in 2006 because we loved the rural setting of King, and the quaint, small-town heritage feel of Schomberg. Besides wanting to pursue my dream career as an artist, I have always been engaged in volunteer work. After moving here into Doctor Kay's house, it wasn't long before we learned of threats to the very reasons we moved here. I ran unsuccessfully for council in 2010 to advocate for my community; joining CCKT was a natural means for me to continue my efforts, many of which are aligned with the mission and goals of CCKT.

Locke is an MBA graduate from York University and a glass artist. The majority of his pre-artistic work was within marketing and public relations fields.

When the Big Pipe (Toronto sewer hook-up) was proposed for King City in the late 1990s, CCKT was there again, guiding the founding of Preserve the Village, a group of King City residents who demanded of council a local system which would limit the growth of King City. CCKT led the fight against the pipe, raising over \$180,000 to hire planners and lawyers, advocating at the OMB against the unprecedented and unwelcome suburban growth its approval caused, and is now being realized in King City.

Unfortunately, the OMB ultimately ruled to support the position of the council at that time.

King City's Bruce Craig is vice-chair for CCKT. This is his second year on the CCKT board following eight years as an appointed member of the King Environmental Advisory Committee. Bruce moved to King Township 20 years ago, bringing a strong interest in architecture and well-designed communities and his passion for gardening, the outdoors and excellent stewardship of our natural environment. Bruce is an elementary school teacher with the York Region District School Board and finds wonderful opportunities to teach and encourage students in conserving energy and taking care of the earth.

I strongly believe that citizen participation and input into public matters of interest is vital to a healthy community.

In the early 1990s, the group started a sub-committee to study the Oak Ridges Moraine, lead by local environmentalist Dorothy Izzard. They soon realized that King was only a small part of the moraine and brought together King's neighbouring Moraine territories to form the advocacy group Save The Oak Ridges Moraine (STORM), which convinced the Ontario government to create the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

Schomberg area Fred Jessop is treasurer. Fred is now retired, having worked as chief technician for 25 years at the McLaughlin Planetarium.

I moved to King Township in 1979 into a house I designed with my wife. We loved King's rural setting and we've always had an interest in its protection. We went to every OMB meeting on the Big Pipe.

Fred has a particular interest in how roads are being proposed by the province and region that may affect us, as many have been proposed to be built right through King, an increasing trend Fred strongly believes we must advocate against.

To me, roads are the single biggest threat that King faces today. The main problem is our small population within in the largest Township by geography in York Region, with almost all of its area on the moraine or the Greenbelt. With little development and few to complain we are vulnerable to growth problems seeking easy solutions.

When a new auto service station and used car lot was proposed outside Schomberg's village core on zoned agricultural lands, CCKT successfully advocated to protect these valued lands and to direct new business to the village core, where it belongs. council upheld this position.

King City's Fiona Cowles has been on the heritage path for many years as a member of Heritage King and presently on the board of the King Historical Society.

My educational background in geography and mapping, and more recently my involvement in creating the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail, have shaped my interest in rural planning and the sustainability of our beautiful rural Township.'

When a 'new' hamlet in a small residential enclave east of Nobleton was proposed earlier this year, CCKT supported local residents to oppose development on rural Greenbelt farmland, and prevent what would be a destructive and a dangerous precedent. Council shares their opinion on this application and CCKT is awaiting Township staff's final position on this application.

Happy Valley Forest resident Gill Watt is CCKT's longest-standing board member, representing the memory of all that CCKT has done in its 40 years. Gill was secretary for many years but now manages the group's membership and fundraising initiatives.

'Being on the Board allows me to enjoy meeting a lot of people who care about King's future.'

When designs for a new bank location for the No Frills plaza in Nobleton were recently re-submitted for the Township for approval, CCKT advocated for a design that respects and enhances the town's heritage and historic roots and sense of community. The site plan revision application was sent back to staff for review, and Mayor Pellegrini and Councillor Grandilli have agreed to work with the bank architect directly to improve the design.

Kettleby's Andrea Loepky initially joined the CCKT board in 2003. Applying her background in government policy and communications, Andrea was active in developing CCKT positions in response to drafts of the Province's Greenbelt Plan as well as their urban growth planning policy and the Region's transportation/roads development plans.

When in 2005, a power transmission station and shortly after, a gas-fired power generator were proposed to be built on prime agricultural lands in the Holland Marsh, CCKT was there, advocating against this most inappropriate land use decision. The provincial government, in the end, had to circumvent the Planning Act in order to force this industrial development on an unwilling agricultural community.

Nobleton's Lee Ann Kraft grew up in King Township and she treasures the place she calls home. Involved with CCKT for 16 years, she first joined to help with fundraising efforts to fight the Big Pipe. She currently also volunteers with the King Food Bank and she was on the KCSS Reunion Committee. Having grown up in rural King, spending countless hours exploring the countryside, Lee Ann developed an early understanding of the importance of protecting nature.

'I believe everyone has a duty to give back to the community in some capacity.'

A current development proposal near Kettleby on a 100-acre parcel of land located squarely on the moraine, calls for an outdoor multi-venue wedding facility and summer camp, against Oak Ridges Moraine Act requirements and of great concern to local residents concerning aquifer and water quality impacts, noise, air quality, and traffic concerns. CCKT is here, advocating for a rejection of this attempt to degenerate sensitive and protected moraine lands and the peaceful and healthy enjoyment of lands by our community.

CCKT values a positive working relationship with King Township council and staff. There were years, especially during the Big Pipe issue in King City, where there was significant acrimony between CCKT and council. With time and strong advocacy change has come, and today CCKT is grateful to enjoy a positive, respectful and constructive relationship with the current council.

'Our board is the latest in a long line of civic champions who have measurably protected and improved life for all of us in King. And you know, with our 'new' council, we see eye-to-eye on a lot of issues. So far, we have had quite a pleasant and productive relationship with council and staff,' Locke says.

And here is a great example - the CCKT board is very happy to see council embracing King's new Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP), passed by council one year ago.

'The ICSP happens to encapsulate just about everything CCKT supports: healthy, respectful growth of our villages and hamlets, cultural enrichment, environmental stewardship, economic sustainability and diversity, and financial responsibility. As a result we see our mandate being the 'conscience of our community' for the ICSP, to ensure it's properly supported and implemented for, and on behalf of, our vast residency,' added Bruce Craig.

On that note, CCKT is pleased to announce that Mayor Steve Pellegrini will be guest speaker at their April 7 AGM at the Trisan Centre at 2:30 pm. This event is open to all. Pellegrini will provide his vision for the ICSP now that it's a functional plan, particularly in regard to how he sees it impacting the Township's approach to broad rural life in King, and also, respectful growth and management of our villages.

In addition, Professor Art Weis of U of T's Koffler Scientific Reserve at Joker's Hill will be speaking on 'Seeding Tomorrow's Environmental Experts.'

CCKT is also pleased to announce that true to its roots as a transparent, interactive and educational organization, they have re-launched their website - CCKT.ca. It is powered by the world's most successful blogging software, called WordPress. It enables visitors to view real-time articles and information posted by CCKT in a friendly, easy to navigate format. But most powerfully, it allows visitors the ability to post comments that can be viewed and re-commented on, this is also the case for various [WordPress alternatives](#), each software comes with it's unique features, as well as pros and cons. And all articles are archived, so viewers can dig

back in time to research prior topics. CCKT hopes that the new website can become a real forum for dialogue and discussion of the most sensitive issues facing King.

For more information about CCKT and how to become a member and to donate to CCKT, please visit CCKT.ca.