Nov. 13, 2009

Mayor Fred Eisenberger & Members of Council
City of Hamilton
77 James St N
Hamilton, ON L8R 2K3

Subject: Hamilton’s Plans for the West Harbour Waterfront

Dear Mayor Fred and Members of Council,

The Bay Area Restoration Council (BARC) has been regularly engaged in, and supportive of, the process used by city staff to try to build consensus for such a plan in a multi-stakeholder environment that has been, at times, fractious.

We recognize that the planners and members of Council have received significantly more input from the boating community than any other stakeholder. BARC’s staff and Board of Directors ask that the needs and desires of all stakeholders be considered. This includes those who wish to restore and protect Hamilton Harbour’s environmental ecosystem, as well as the silent majority of Hamilton residents who want shoreline access along the west harbour. We want an open and accessible waterfront. Working out an arrangement with the yacht clubs to provide security for their boats, while allowing public access for all but special occasions, is essential.

With the environment in mind, we are very concerned about plans to locate the police marine facility in Macassa Bay for the following reasons:

- It contains the best fish habitat in the whole harbour; and,

- Water levels, already minimal in Macassa Bay, are forecast to drop significantly in the next 20 to 30 years, leaving the bay not navigable.

We ask that you give careful consideration to other locations in deeper water in a less sensitive part of the harbour, east of Pier 8. The naturalization of Macassa Bay is a vital component of the restoration of Hamilton Harbour. We support efforts to reduce the number of marine facilities operating there.

Although not within BARC’s mandate, you may also wish to consider factors such as access to land-based emergency services and travel time to most points within the harbour and lakefront.

Thank you for your consideration to the above points. It would be a shame to see the City of Hamilton spend hundreds of millions of dollars (e.g. through Woodward upgrades) only to put a marine facility in the midst of one of the prime areas we hope to protect.

Sincerely,

Jim Hudson
Executive Director

Debra McBride
President

cc. John Hall, Hamilton Harbour RAP office