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SIMCOE CHAPTER LAMBDA ALPHA INTERNATIONAL

The Honorary Society for the Advancement of Land Economics

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Fall 2008 Land Economics Weekend

by Jim Ayres

Plans are well underway for the Lambda Alpha International Land Economics Weekend hosted by Simcoe Chapter on October 23-25, 2008. We will be kicking things off on the Thursday evening with a "President's Reception" at the Park Hyatt (our host hotel) hosted by LAI President Les Pollock and our President Frank Clayton, where they will be welcoming our international guests.

A number of Simcoe Chapter members will be assisting with the events, starting on Friday morning with Elizabeth Sisam's walking tour of the University of Toronto. Later that morning, Jung Jung will be showing our guests the new "Ontario Investment and Trade Centre" located at 250 Yonge Street. This will be followed by a tour of the Yonge-Dundas Square, where Kyle Rae, the local councillor, has agreed to provide a brief presentation on the history of the Square.

On Friday afternoon Russell Mathew will be touring various developments and sites on Queen Street West, including a brief reception at the Gladstone Hotel with a talk by Christina Ziedler. Leslie Yager will also be showing us the Liberty Village project. On Friday evening there will be a wine and cheese reception in the Thompson Landry Gallery in the Distillery District, followed by a speech by Glen Murray, President of the Canadian Urban Institute.

On Saturday morning, we will be touring Greek Town and the Markham Business Park Corridor, with a reception at the Markham Centre hosted by Remington.

Our buses will then be heading across town to the Mississauga City Centre with a presentation by Ed Sajecki and perhaps Mayor Hazel McCallion. On the way to Mississauga, we will be visiting the new Hindu Temple. *(continued on page 2)*

President's Column

by Frank Clayton

I want to thank all of you who have attended our dinner meetings this past year for your interest and participation. For those of you not able to attend many of the meetings this past year, I hope you will make a determined effort to get to the meetings in 2008-2009. The strength of our chapter depends on the active participation of all our members.

I will be attending the semi-annual Land Economics Weekend in Phoenix/Scottsdale and it looks like a very full and educational time. The highlight of the Weekend is the tour of local real estate venues by the local chapter.

Our planning for the October Land Economics Weekend is moving ahead under the leadership of Jim Ayres. Members of the planning sub-committee include: Scott Burns, John Jung, Ian Lord, Russell Mathew, Robert McBride and myself. Many of our members are being asked to help us by being tour guides on the buses, organizing trips to particular developments and giving short background presentations. Please help us out if asked. We will also be looking for sponsors for the Weekend. More information will be forthcoming in this regard.

I urge you to consider attending two of the special events of the Toronto Weekend: the reception at The Distillery District on the night of Friday, October 24th and the keynote dinner on Saturday evening (the 25th) at the Gardiner Museum. Mark these dates on your calendar.

I found some interesting items in the April issue of the International's Online *Keynotes*. In particular, the active program provided by Ely/Chicago chapter was impressive. That Chapter hosted six luncheons, two evening Chautauquas that include a panel of speakers and in-depth discussion with the audience, four social events, and two Sunday afternoon "salons" in a member's home. One salon was a discussion of a book with the author. A book discussion is something I would like to consider hosting next year (after checking with my wife, of course). If you are interesting in this type of session, please let me know. The Ely Chapter also has a Technical Working Group that meets periodically to discuss a research topic in depth such as a regression method for ascertaining the price level in the condominium market. Lots of good ideas.

I wish you all the best for enjoyment with family and friends over the summer period and look forward to see you all at the fall dinner meetings.

Fall 2008 Land Economics Weekend

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We will then proceed along the Lakeshore back to Toronto, visiting sites along the way and taking advantage of Barry Lyon's in-depth knowledge of condominium developments and the condominium market.

We will wind up events with cocktails and dinner at the Gardiner Museum, with a keynote speaker (yet to be confirmed).

BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir
Hindu Temple



Michael Lee-Chin Crystal at the
Royal Ontario Museum



Yonge-Dundas Square



University of Toronto Campus



Historic Distillery District

The Simcoe Chapter will be hosting LAI's Land Economics Weekend from October 23-25, 2008.

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Event Horizon: Program Committee Chair's Column

by Susan Schiller

Our Spring meeting season has been a busy one with wonderful attendance and a few surprises.

On **April 8**, we had a session on **“Planning Our Communities in an Age of Diversity: Front Yard Cab-bages, Funeral Parlours Next Door and Four Grandparents Under One Roof”**. Russell Mathew opened with an overview of just how incredibly diverse Ontario is today. Sandeep Agrawal, Director of the Graduate Program at Ryerson’s School of Urban and Regional Planning, who specializes in housing patterns of different cultural communities in the Greater Toronto Area, provided texture and background on cultural preferences and the need to think creatively about involving diverse groups at the planning stage. Our surprise was delivered by Gary Gregoris, Vice-President, Land-Halton Division, Mattamy Homes Limited. From the perspective of a greenfield developer, Mattamy – counter-intuitively -- has found that there are virtually no product adjustments necessary to reach an ethnically diverse market. Gary spoke about the importance of price and some flexibility of design sought by buyers generally, but little or no special adjustments. This led to a lively discussion and exchange with members who contrasted greenfield experience with infill challenges and debate about whether the adjustments are seen more frequently at the master plan level.

On **May 6** our topic is **“Another Layer of Development Review and Approvals? The New Reality of Native Land Claims”**. The Haldimand

Tract runs along the length of the Grand River and stretches for 10 kms on either side. This is where the Haudenosaunee Development Institute (HDI), a Six Nations Confederacy initiative, is seeking consultation and development application/approval fees for works – provincial, municipal and private – proposed within the Tract. HDI brings a new wind blowing from Caledonia to Tobermory and beyond as native bands rethink their options and approaches to development. Planning departments? Official Plans? Development permits? Approval requirements? When is consultation required and how must it be carried out? What are the emerging standards and procedures? And how does this all fit with financing plans and timelines for investors, proponents and landowners? Our expert panel includes David Crombie, Richard Brookes who is a solicitor with the Region of Waterloo, and Joanne Davies who is the Director of Legal Services with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

This is the last meeting of our Spring season. We’re organizing our fall programs now. Some of our topics include:

“A New Urban Format for Old Land Extensive Retail” Intensification isn’t just a by-word for downtown Toronto anymore. Places to Grow is bringing phenomenal development pressure to 905 and beyond. And with it comes pressure for a much more urban form than previously seen in many of these communities. Yet suburban proposals for that big old box with lots of parking just keep coming in. This session will look at what are the new walkable urban formats and do they only work in retrofitting old neighbourhoods?

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Program Committee Chair's Column

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“Should Municipalities Play a Direct Role in Local Economic Development?”

In this session we'll explore the role of municipalities in economic development, what the experience has been and what lessons are there for the future. We all know that the regulatory planning regime has an impact, but this session will explore the more direct financial instruments and approaches. Some elements to be examined are: TIFFs, direct funding, sole ownership, and P3s. Do any really work? Are any efficient and effective in the public interest? What's been the experience here in Ontario and what lessons can we learn from other jurisdictions?

“Consistent, Predictable and Timely: An Elusive Trio in Development Decisions”

Proponents would always prefer outright approval, but if that isn't forthcoming then the next best things are development decisions that are consistent, predictable and timely. Yet this elusive trio is too often missing, with uncoordinated staff priorities, policy shifts, and vague standards that leave proponents guessing. We will look at what changes need to be made, what changes can be made and do the lessons from other jurisdictions apply here?

Check our website at www.lai-simcoe.org for details on upcoming events. Remember that guests are always welcome at Simcoe Chapter events; consider taking the opportunity to introduce a friend or associate to LAI at one of our sessions.

Got an idea for a topic or speaker? Willing to help organize a program? Have a suggestion for how we can improve our sessions? Drop me line at susanschiller@earthlink.net

New Member Selection Process for 2008

by Robert McBride

The Board of Directors of Simcoe Chapter of Lambda Alpha International is initiating the new member selection process for 2008 and invites your support and participation in this regard.

Please note that the Board has determined that this year Simcoe Chapter will induct a maximum of fifteen (15) new members at its Annual General Meeting.

The Process for New Member Selection

The Board has determined that the new member selection process should be refined. The process will be:

- Chapter members are requested to provide the Membership Chair with names of candidates they believe to be suitable for membership in Lambda Alpha. The Board requests that each nomination be made by at least two Chapter members acting jointly.
- The nomination will consist of: 1) a memo outlining why the Nominators believe the Nominee is suitable for membership in Lambda Alpha International (no more than one page in length, suitable for distribution to the membership and signed by the

Nominators); and 2) the candidate's up-to-date and complete personal resume. The nomination should be emailed to the Membership Chair at mcbride@bagroup.com or transmitted by fax to 416-961-9807 by May 31, 2008.

- The Board will review the nominations and will assess each candidate in relation to the membership criteria and new membership focus outlined below. In the event that there are nominees who are NOT selected to be included amongst the maximum number of 15 candidates, the reason for this decision will be provided in confidence to the Nominators by July 31st.

- The candidates selected for membership will be notified during August and early September and asked to indicate their acceptance within two weeks. The membership will be notified of the new members in early October.

- The new members will be inducted at the Chapter's Annual General Meeting to be held in November, 2008.

Confidentiality

The Board would like to remind all members that the new member selection process is to remain confidential to the Nominators and the Board. In particular, the Nominee is not to be advised that he/she has been nominated or is under consideration for membership. The confidentiality is intended to protect the Nominee, the Nominators and the Board should the nomination not be accepted. This confidentiality requirement --

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New Member Selection Process for 2008

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established long ago by Lambda Alpha International -- can be a little difficult to manage; nevertheless, the Board must ask members to respect the tradition.

Membership Criteria

Lambda Alpha International guidelines for membership specify that candidates shall satisfy the following criteria:

- “achieved professional distinction, with a minimum of 10 years of work experience;
- “made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of land economics; and
- “distinguished themselves in the community through public service.”

Simcoe Chapter expects new members to become regular and active participants in Chapter activities and dinner meetings.

New Membership Focus

The Board has determined that Simcoe Chapter should presently seek new members from amongst active real estate developers, and the academic and public sector communities. The Board also will seek to ensure that the membership fairly represents women and minority groups. This focus reflects the Board’s desire for a broad and representative membership, but does not preclude the acceptance of any qualified candidate.

Taking the Pulse of the Membership

by Frank Clayton

Early last September your Board of Directors decided it was important to survey the membership for their feed back regarding the venue for our events and the structure of the evening in terms of dinner and presentation. We had a very bad experience back two annual meetings ago when many of our members and their guests succumbed to flu-like symptoms shortly after the dinner and it was uncertain what members thought of continuing to have our functions at the University Club.

Rowan Faludi therefore prepared a questionnaire that, following review by the Board, was circulated to the membership last fall. We had responses from 58 of our members, nearly half of our active members at the time. We want to thank all who responded.

What did we find out and how is your Board of Directors responding?

The bulk of members responding (80%) are satisfied or very satisfied with the University Club as the venue for our events. With this amount of support, we are continuing to use the University Club as our event host in 2008-09.

Unlike many of the Lambda Alpha chapters in the U.S. that have their events at lunch time, our respondents (74%) prefer the evening. The evening events will continue through 2008-2009.

The membership has made it quite clear that they like the networking time for our evening events to start at 6 o’clock (97%) and be finished

between 9:00 and 9:30 p.m. (87% at 9:30 or before).

Susan Schiller, our Vice President in charge of Programs, is very much aware of the desire not to prolong the evening. Her goal is to start dinner by 7:00 at the latest and get the presentation part of the evening underway by 8:00.

Most members are satisfied or very satisfied with the cost of the dinners (90%) which covers food, wine, room rental and audio-visual equipment.

Your Board wants to standardize the cost of the dinners rather than have varied like at present so that members can prepay or bring a cheque to the meeting. This will save admin time and speed up our cash flow. It looks like an average price of \$75 to \$80 will be established (subject to approval by the Board) for the coming year except for the annual meeting near year-end, which is a unique event.

No consensus was reached on handling alcohol at the dinner meetings. Exactly half of the respondents support continuing with our current practice of having wine available at the pre-dinner reception and the dinner with the cost including in the dinner price. A significant group (36%) support a cash bar before dinner and wine at dinner that is part of the dinner package.

Your Board has opted to continue with the current practice for the coming year but with a maximum of two glasses of wine at dinner, in order to keep the cost under control.

Nearly half (46%) of the respondents expresses interest in a site visit to an interesting development or venue and *(continued on page 6)*

Survey Results

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31% say they are interested in a full or half day seminar. Your Board will be giving thought to some alternative function in the coming year.

We plan to send out another membership survey this fall in order to monitor the pulse of our members and to provide the best possible functions and programs that advance our knowledge of land economics in the broadest sense.

LAI Charitable Foundations: Call for Interest

by Ian James Lord

Simcoe Chapter Members may be aware that historically the membership has contributed to charitable foundations of Lambda Alpha International in the charitable objectives of education, research and study in the field of land economics. Since the early 1960s, LAI, by way of a "Declaration of Trust", created the Land Economics Foundation of Lambda Alpha International. This is a charitable foundation incorporated in the state of Illinois for the purposes of administering an Investment Fund being trust funds contributed by LAI members and their estates. LEF has a Board of Directors and is comprised of that Board together with the Chapter Presidents of all chartered LAI Chapters.

If you have attended any of the Land Economics Weekends sponsored by LAI and local chapters, attendant to each are meetings of the Board of Directors of LAI and the Land Economics Foundation.

In a parallel action, when exchange rates were dramatically different, the Canadian Chapters of LAI also established a charitable foundation known as the Canadian Land Economics Foundation. (CLEF). Due to fewer chapters, high maintenance costs and a lack of focused fund raising efforts, the Canadian Land Economics Foundation languished with relatively small capital in its investment account.

With high costs and the absence of a champion to project its interest, the Canadian Land Economics Foundation was determined to be wound-up in favour of the Canadian Chapter LAI contributions being made to local foundations in Chapter cities. The windup occurred in 2008 and the distribution of the corpus of the existing capital account of CLEF in accordance with their share contributions to the Vancouver Community Foundation and the Toronto Community Foundation. No contributions had been received over the years from the Members of the Ottawa Chapter of LAI.

Each year, with the assessment of Dues, Toronto Chapter Members have been invited to make contributions to the charitable objectives of Lambda Alpha International. The Toronto Executive, in 2007, authorized and entered into an agreement for the constitution of a trust fund to be managed by the Toronto Community Foundation. The Toronto Community Foundation, for its part, assumes the cost of administration and will accept direction, from the Simcoe Chapter of LAI, in the distribution of the Simcoe Chapter's account for charitable land economics purposes to qualifying beneficiaries.

It is the hope of the Executive that Simcoe Chapter Members will continue to invest generously in the pursuit of land economics values and ideals as directed through the Simcoe Chapter's account with the Toronto Community Foundation. Indeed, the Executive is calling for interest among its members to pursue fundraising, provide advice and direction to the Executive and to undertake efforts and investments by the Chapter for charitable purpose objectives.

In its turn, the Land Economics Foundation of LAI annually makes investment fund decisions and enters applications for fund disbursement for charitable land economics objectives. In 2007, Frank Clayton, current Simcoe Chapter President, was elected as Vice-President of the LEF Board of Directors.

Anyone having an interest in the objectives of the Simcoe Chapter's efforts in this regard, please speak to any member of the Executive at your earliest convenience.

Ian James Lord is the LAI Regional Vice-President -- Midwest, as well as a Simcoe Chapter Board Member.

Don't forget to regularly check our web site at:

www.lai-simcoe.org

for updates and information about upcoming events.

Please direct any general inquiries to our Chapter Administrator, Kevin Harper, at:

kevin.harper@sympatico.ca