

Lorne Almack – City of Pickering Lifetime Achievement Award Nominee

Lorne Almack, P. Eng., pursued a career first in Industrial Management followed for many years as Management Consulting Partner of a major international consulting firm. He has lived on his Brock Road farm near Claremont, Ontario for 53 years and with his late wife Rhoda raised four children. For the past 40 years Lorne has been highly involved in a very wide range of community and land use planning issues.

Lorne was a founding member of People or Planes and Chair of their technical committee with responsibility for studying aviation forecasts and technical developments, land use alternatives, and making presentation to municipal, provincial, and federal officials, airport commissions, and the media. These efforts played a major role in the organization's successful fight to stop the building of an airport on the expropriated lands.

Lorne was a Director of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists (renamed Ontario Nature) for 10 years and served as President in 1980/81. Lorne served as President of the Ontario Riding PC Association from 1978 to 1981.

Lorne founded the Green Door Alliance Inc. (GDA), a registered charity. He was also one of the catalysts in the formation of it's sister organization, the Durham Conservation Association (DCA). These organizations have merged with Lorne remaining as an executive committee member and director.

Lorne has taken a major interest in the development and use of conservation easements as a means or preserving land and ensuring better land stewardship. He helped promote the Conservation Lands Act. He proposed to the Region they insist the province register conservation easements on the Pickering Agricultural Preserve lands before the Province sold them. The Region did just that. When the Province resisted, he registered GDA as a party of the Ontario Municipal Board hearing convened to resolve the matter. Lorne's actions were instrumental in persuading the Province to reconsider, agree to easements, and finally preserve these lands. In keeping with this, Lorne has donated a conservation easement on his land and planted 80,000 trees and shrubs to create a nature preserve along the Michell Creek valley.

Lorne remains committed to preserving the 18,000-acre Federal land holding. In the 1990's he jointly authored a proposed plan for these lands. In 2000 GDA members met with Transport Minister Collenette to propose the Oak Ridges Moraine and other portions of the Federal lands be permanently preserved.* Minister Collenette subsequently created the Federal Greenspace Lands. A student and proponent of 'sustainable agriculture', Lorne continues to highlight the agricultural and natural features of these lands, which he has stated constitute a "magnificent public asset" providing a "unique opportunity...to protect and enhance a priceless heritage of a scale, quality, and character of which no other city in the world can boast."

Lorne has prepared countless briefs and presentations. His pioneering efforts and impact cannot be covered in 500 words. He has provided generous financial support to many organizations. He has been an inspiration to many people within as well as outside the community. At age 87 Lorne is a bit slower. Due to hearing loss he appears less at public meetings, however, he remains active and passionately engaged. He is a most worthy Lifetime Achievement Award recipient.

*Lorne had raised the issue months previously with Environment Minister David Anderson when the Minister presented him with a Nature Conservancy of Canada Certificate of Appreciation at the University of Guelph.