

WE'RE THRILLED TO INTRODUCE OUR...

2019 Youth Wing



No past-century thinking here! The next generation's interest in protecting the remaining Federal Lands is deep and decidedly 21st century. Filled with high spirits, high principles, intelligence, determination, energy, fresh new ideas, and hope, these young people are the future. *Top:* Sari Sarieddine, Matt Rock and Liz Beesley, Kate Collins, Andrew Larter. *Bottom:* Haseeb Hassaan, Marc Gibbons, Reid Williamson, Ellen Reesor, Alison Bezubiak.

Sari Sarieddine, who heads the group, entered the political arena last fall, running for a seat on Pickering Council. He emerged passionate and eager to be involved in our cause. With a business background and a love of community-building, he can tell you all about North Pickering Farms in English, French, and Arabic!

We have three farmer/entrepreneurs. **Matt Rock** and **Liz Beesley**, co-owners of North Pickering's Joyfully Organic Farm. Both hold Education degrees and love to talk farming as much as they love to farm. **Kate Collins** runs Foggy River Farm, near Sunderland, with her husband Phil. Kate has a Business degree and worked for Uxbridge Tourism until she became a mom.

Two Pickering members are U of T students. **Andrew Larter** has a degree in Physics and Mathematics and is now studying Civil Engineering (transportation infrastructure). He's passionate about local issues and politics. So is **Haseeb Hassaan**, who is studying Political Science. Haseeb got hooked during the 2014 municipal election, has since worked on federal and municipal campaigns, and was a constituency office caseworker. He was selected for a Toronto City Hall internship program as a Muslim Youth Fellow.

Scugog's **Marc Gibbons** is a software engineer, consultant, educator, and father, as well as a runner-up for a position on Durham regional council in 2014. During his many years in Montreal he learned firsthand the folly of Mirabel. He's determined to create a better world for his little girls by designing accessible, livable communities.

Reid Williamson and **Ellen Reesor** already sit on our board. Reid is the third generation of Williamsons to be involved in our cause; her grandparents were expropriated in 1972. An Environmental Studies grad, today she delivers programming for the p.i.n.e. project and Humber Arboretum in Toronto. Ellen is a ninth-generation member of a founding farming family and owner of KIND Yoga by Heart, a highly successful studio in a greenhouse on Reesor's Farm in Markham.

Alison Bezubiak was raised on the Federal Lands and has been embroiled in the airport battle all her life. With a degree in Globalization & History and a diploma in Ecosystems Management, she's employed by the Ministry of Natural Resources in Northwestern Ontario. Through her work with Aviation, Forest Fire and Emergency Services, she's seen how climate change is fuelling natural disasters, and is working determinedly to reduce her own carbon footprint. WELCOME, ALL!

PICKERING PUSHES AIRPORT

In the past two years, Pickering (with the Region's support) has ramped up its pro-airport campaign – first to local boards of trade and then to the public. In October, 2017, the City was caught assigning in its budget \$150,000 to a “Pickering Airport Feasibility Study.” Our treasurer called out the City for planning to use development charges for a study on an airport that hadn't been approved by Ottawa. Pickering's chief administrative officer blamed “a typo” and had the line removed, saying the funds were really to be used for consultations on development of the Hwy 407 corridor – part of which happens to include Pickering's Innovation Corridor and the federal area zoned for a potential airport.

In November, 2017, the City added an upbeat “Airport Lands” page to its website, peddling airport jobs galore and predicting an economic bonanza for Pickering.

Meanwhile, the Region's chair had commissioned two reports, both backing a Pickering airport. Some aviation insiders found the research woefully inadequate, armchair stuff, based on old information – but the reports served the Region's purpose and were used as the basis of an invitation-only stakeholder information session in April, 2018.

In May, 2018, the City hired Proof Inc. to do a public telephone survey on the 407 corridor. The calls, analysis, and “insights work” would cost about \$80,000. Over a 2-week period, 550 Pickering residents were surveyed. The survey (we obtained a copy) never referred to the corridor. It was all airport. One survey call was terminated when the resident was found to live on the Lands. One question implied that Land Over Landings (yes, we were mentioned by name) might not be as trustworthy as Pickering's mayor.

The mayor takes every opportunity to woo the public with visions of thousands of airport jobs – although the numbers keep changing and details and proof aren't offered.

In April, Pickering is funding a lunch-hour “economic engine” event in Toronto. All those old claims of needing a Buttonville replacement or a Pearson reliever have been overlaid by a fever dream of vast proportions. If we can't be a Buttonville municipal airport, we'll be a Dubai International-style *aerotropolis*, commandeering every inch of the Pickering Lands for runways, terminuses, office towers, hotels, residential areas (!), exhibition complexes, transportation corridors, and oh, lots, *lots* more.

The aerotropolis idea dates from 2000 and has been embraced in many parts of the world. But let's face it, 2000 was then. In 2019, preparing for a future dominated by the effects of climate change demands radical new thinking and the protection of food land. Reminder: Canada's hub airport, Pearson International, is just 56 km (38 minutes) away!

Major-international-airport decisions are not Pickering's (or the Region's) to make. Transport Canada has told us: Ottawa

will not restrict Pearson to help another airport survive. Their position: No decision has been made to develop an airport on the Pickering Lands. Any future decision on the development of the Pickering Lands will be made based on a sound business case and updated data on aviation demand and capacity.

STAY GROUNDED: WE'RE IN!

We're proud to announce that in January we joined Stay Grounded, a worldwide network of organizations seeking to reduce aviation's negative impact on communities and the environment. Consisting of 111 members so far, the network is committed to promoting a just, environmentally sound, global transportation system that includes a rapid reduction in air travel. We have also joined 171 (and counting) signatories of a position paper outlining the steps that need to be taken to achieve that goal.

Today, with many parts of the world already experiencing the disastrous effects of climate change, the necessity of taking a strong, united stand to protect our planet has never been greater. Too many business leaders are still ignoring the facts, and too many politicians remain cheerleaders and enablers of a sector whose mantra, in a nutshell, is “business pretty much as usual, just a lot more of it.”

Go to <https://stay-grounded.org/> to find out more.



Food for Thought

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