

**BREAKING!! Transport Canada has released the KPMG Study Report. NO NEED FOR A PICKERING AIRPORT!! Details on our website and social media. Stay tuned.**

## THE POLITICS OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY DECLARATIONS



Screen captures from Rogers TV

Brian Kelly, Sari Saredidine, and Adeline Cohen speaking before Durham Regional Council prior to the vote on the Climate Emergency motion.

With over 1,400 local governments in 28 countries having declared climate emergencies to date, it's hard to know whether to be encouraged or cynical. The answer is: it depends. Certainly the climate strikers, especially the young ones, inspire! The politicians? Not so much.

Canada, in June, 2019, was one of the first countries to declare a climate emergency. But the cheers quickly faded when, the very next day, the same government approved the Trans Mountain Pipeline. Just days after that, Whitby became the first municipality in our area to make its own declaration. Whitby was followed in September by Ajax, although the mayor, Shaun Collier, said he didn't, in fact, believe it was an "emergency."

Pickering's own declaration, in December, was spurred by passionate, articulate students from St Mary High School, but the motion that came before Council – and was passed – had been amended: the City also wanted to "maximize unique development opportunities ... to further advance the establishment of key industries and support the supply chain of business." In other words, "but we still want an aerotropolis!" Just some old-fashioned political doublespeak? That age-old desire to

have one's cake and eat it too? Or pure hypocrisy? It's hard not to be cynical when "maximize ... development opportunities" and "supply chain of business" are made part of a climate emergency declaration.

Which is why, when it came time for Durham Region's declaration, we sent the Chair of our Youth Wing, Sari Saredidine, to aim the spotlight squarely at the elephant in the room. Sari shared the stage with Adeline Cohen, of Fridays For Future, the striking students who are following Greta Thunberg's lead, and with Brian Kelly, the Region's former Sustainability Manager, who quit his job because he didn't believe the Region was implementing the award-winning program he'd helped create.

Sari told Regional Council that the aerotropolis idea was "*flat-out incompatible* with climate-change mitigation. A Pickering airport would *lock in* a permanent, massive increase in GHG emissions in Durham Region." Was Council listening? The declaration passed, even though, once again, one councillor said he didn't really think it was "an emergency." The Region, since that day, has been pushing for an airport. Maybe with today's breaking news from Transport Canada, reason will start to prevail.

## GOOD NEWS & GOOD WORKS

No need for cynicism when it comes to the York farmers in Rouge National Urban Park! Just pure good works. They've joined forces with Parks Canada, which has provided 42 acres for farming by the Canadian Food-grains Project, "a Christian Response to Hunger." The RNUP acres were part of 250 in York Region's growing project, one of 100 CFP projects province-wide.

Meanwhile, Uxbridge, on Pickering's north border, is a shining example of what North Pickering Farms could be, with good-news stories and successes in agri-tourism piling up.

We are so proud of our partners!! Uxbridge Farmers Market was recently named the best farmers market in Ontario!! It didn't hurt that their new location is on the



Photos: Second Wedge, Banjo Cider

grounds of the Second Wedge Brewing Company, which itself led a heart-warming campaign to allow dogs in brew pubs. Sadie can stay! And you can bring *your* pooch, too. Second Wedge knows what it means to be a "local,"

and continues to showcase area artists and food. This month, it's Foggy Water, a new "gruit ale," co-developed with our Youth Wing farmers, Kate and Phil Collins of Foggy River Farm.

Just down the road, we welcomed a new partner and new business, Banjo Cider. Owners Patty and Tony are passionate about reviving the lost art of traditional cider-making, which all but disappeared during Canada's prohibition years, when true cider apple trees were cut down. Their handcrafted cider is made slowly, in small batches, with 100% Ontario apples.

## 48 YEARS AND COUNTING...

Remember, the York lands now in Rouge National Urban Park, and a good chunk of southwest Uxbridge too, were all expropriated for the airport that was never built. Their preservation within RNUP is celebrated by all of us as we mark 48 years since the expropriation on March 2, 1972. Still no airport, folks, but the Lands – the fertile lands and clean, fresh streams – are still here, thanks to all of us and especially to the original People

or Planes heroes, not least the late, great Bill Lishman, recently named by *Canadian Geographic* one of Canada's 90 Greatest Explorers. For all his visionary genius, Bill could never have foreseen, in 1972, that we would still be fighting this fight almost half a century on.

## AIRPORTS & AVIATION: NEWS FROM NEXT DOOR & ACROSS THE POND

The year began with a brief flurry of articles and op-eds making unsubstantiated claims that support was building for a Pickering airport. Really? Most public reaction has been consistently negative.

On to Buttonville: Since 2010 it's been the mantra that Buttonville's "imminent" closure made Pickering airport inevitable. Last month, it was announced that the ambitious development plan for the Buttonville site had been abandoned and the site will be sold. (The airport still operates there, though in depleted fashion, as much of its business has moved elsewhere.) General aviation airports in the area have been expanding for years, so all the remaining tenants and users will surely find new bases.

Refuting misinformers: Boeing's director of strategy says that "an all-electric or hybrid-engined aircraft capable of carrying the same number of passengers as a Boeing 737 is still decades away." We can expect only "smaller, regional-type airplanes in the 2030s," while scaling up to power a "737-sized" aircraft is "a long way off." Meanwhile, Max Wakefield, of Possible, a UK climate action group, has trashed airlines' shameless embrace of carbon offsetting: "Offsetting's real power is to provide not a climate solution, but a social licence to continue with business as usual. ... it works against the essential imperative of the climate emergency: that emissions, and therefore the number of flights, must fall."

And finally, on Feb. 27, the Court of Appeal of England and Wales ruled Heathrow's proposed 3rd runway illegal, since the government, as its own lawyers admitted in open court, hadn't taken into account its Paris Agreement commitments on climate change. A mighty precedent! Says lawyer Tim Crosland, of Plan B, the climate litigation charity that brought the challenge: "What we're hearing is the bell tolling on the carbon economy ... We're delighted to see that the government has decided not to appeal this decision and to embrace the opportunity to show real climate leadership." Heathrow plans to appeal the decision to the Supreme Court but, we trust, will fail. *Ottawa, keep your own Paris commitments. Reject a Pickering airport.*

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