



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Office of the Vice-Provost and Assistant Vice-President (Planning and Budget)

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June 12, 1996

Ann Zimmerman
Director
Division of the Environment
33 Willcocks Street, Suite 1016

Dear Ann:

I am writing to respond to your letter concerning ZooWoods and the St. George Street project. This letter has been delayed until detailed plans for the sidewalk reconfiguration were determined by the consultants and could be reviewed by the project steering committee.

Bob Price has been assigned by Janice Oliver as the project manager. He will work closely with Grascan Construction to oversee progress on the project. Rob will be scheduling a meeting with you in the very near future to discuss the modifications you have requested for the area in the vicinity of ZooWoods.

The following modifications have been incorporated in the instructions to the contractor:

- a replacement for the fish, to protect the plants from salt residue and to discourage cutting across the planting area.
- replacing the sod initially planned for the verge with plantings which echo the elements of ZooWoods.
- exchanging the elm tree initially planned for the verge with an oak tree which will be consistent with the beech-maple mixed forest.

As you know, a construction banner has been located around the ZooWoods to protect and designate the area. Just today, Bob Price instructed Grascan to save the flagstones. However, they do not think that it will be possible to save the topsoil for re-use. Please let Bob know where the flagstones should be relocated.

The contractors are responsible for cleaning the site upon completion of the project, therefore we do not anticipate any rubble from demolition to be left behind.

In terms of compensation for plant materials and labour for the project, I would propose that the St. George Street revitalization project fund the relocation and purchase of any new plant material required for ZooWoods and the immediately adjacent verges. In the event that the plant material does not survive because, as you state, of a third move within two years, this office will pay for replacement materials as required.

Finally, I agree that a sign indicating the nature of the project and participants, recognizing the Duthy gift should be considered. I suggest that we wait until completion of the Revitalization Project when signage will be reviewed for the entire street.

Sincerely,



Daniel W. Lang
Vice-Provost and
Assistant Vice-President
(Planning and Budget)

DWL/ek

cc: E. Sisam
B. Price

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Director: Professor Ann P. Zimmerman

26 April 1996

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Elizabeth Sisam, Bob Price

FROM: Ann Zimmerman for The ZooWoods Landscape Committee

CC: Rob Pritchard, Don Dewees, Janice Oliver, Harold Harvey, Phil Garment, Nancy Dengler, Danny Harvey

RE: ZooWoods and the St. George St. Project

We appreciate the opportunity to discuss the plans for the St. George St. Project that yesterday's meeting afforded us. We believe that overall the project has the potential to significantly improve the appearance of St. George St. and we support it. However, now that we have seen the details of the project, we do have concerns about its potential impact on ZooWoods.

It seems important to us that the City realize that the ZooWoods project has always been a joint venture between the Department of Zoology and Facilities and Services. It is not an end in itself but a "laboratory" where we are "experimenting" with a suite of variables associated with naturalistic landscaping (*e.g.* appropriate plant species, cost savings, time lines, *etc.*). Both parties intend this experiment to continue around our entire building.

ZooWoods also represents a new partnership between our University's academic and administrative functions. ZooWoods was designed by faculty, students and Facilities and Services personnel, its development is being monitored by various classes in Zoology, Botany and the Division of the Environment. Ecological rehabilitation is an important emerging area of teaching and research. ZooWoods serves as a laboratory on rehabilitation and it represents an aspect of using the campus for teaching purposes (actively as well as passively) that is as valuable as the St George beautification and actually more in keeping with the University's mandate.

The entire Department of Zoology has put a substantial amount of work into ZooWoods. We have raised over \$3,506.72 to date in private funds for the project. Our faculty, staff and students participated in three plant rescues (from beech-maple woodlots being destroyed for highway and sub-division development) to provide material for some parts of the garden. We have designed a self-guiding, interpretive brochure that helps visitors identify the plants in the garden and come to an appreciation of the Beech-Maple forest ecosystem that once stood on this site. It is significant that last spring, blue cohosh again bloomed in ZooWoods after an absence of over 150 years.

The University of Toronto's Environmental Protection Policy clearly mandates respect for biodiversity. It is difficult for us to view the exchange of approximately 20% of the extant biodiversity of ZooWoods for concrete as progress. Given the uphill battles we have waged to bring ZooWoods to its current state, we would appreciate your bringing the following to the attention of the City:

Permanent elements:

1. **The "fish":** The fish sculpture has no intrinsic value to us. It can be removed. What cannot be removed is the function of the fish. Its purpose was to protect plants behind it from windblown salt, to catch some paper or other trash and to direct traffic onto the flagstone paths, discouraging "cutting" across our plantings or through the drainage channels. Our suggestion is to replace the fish's function with a low line of cedar posts. While these posts could abut the sidewalk, our preference is that they follow a curving line similar to the current curving edge of ZooWoods with a thin line of ground cover between the straight edge of the sidewalk and the curving line of cedar posts.
2. **Verge Plantings:** We are pleased with the decision to replace the "sod" identified for the verges along Ramsay Wright with ground covers or other plant materials that echo the planting elements of ZooWoods. We have included the plant list we worked with for ZooWoods. Some species are obviously not appropriate to the likely drier environment of the verges, others may not be available. Consideration of species that provide berries or seeds for small birds, pollen or nectar for insects or serve ecological functions besides visual appeal are preferred, but we would accept any plantings from the enclosed list..
3. **Ramsay Wright Trees:** We are pleased with the decision to exchange the elm proposed for the edge of ZooWoods for the oak that was directly south of it. We would hope the rest of the line of trees running along the Ramsay Wright would be comprised of the oaks, maples and perhaps an elm or ash (no ginkgo!) that are more in keeping with the beech-maple mixed deciduous forest of southern Ontario. It remains our hope the City will not plant any more Norway maples and any lost during construction will be replaced with more appropriate species.
4. **Signage:** We liked the models for permanent signage of ZooWoods that Elizabeth showed us. We think consideration should also be given to recognizing the initial Duthy gift to

ZooWoods on that or other signage.

Construction Issues:

1. **Tendering documents:** We would like to see a copy of that section of the tendering document related to the construction at the Ramsay Wright before it is goes out for bid.
2. **Consultation:** We want to be notified before construction starts and make sure that the contractor works closely with the Buildings and Grounds personnel responsible for our building and therefore with us.
3. **Construction barrier:** We want a construction barrier erected as close as possible to the new edge of ZooWoods to eliminate any possibility of construction vehicles "accidentally" driving over the garden.
4. **Flagstones, soil:** We want the flagstones saved from the parts of the path that will be lost. We also want to keep the topsoil that will be removed. Both will be used at other locations. We will take the responsibility for directing where these materials are to be placed.
5. **Rubble:** We do not want rubble from destruction of the retaining wall, the fish or that derives from dismantling sidewalk or current concrete planters left in ZooWoods.

Financial Compensation: We feel compensation for the losses we are being asked to take is warranted. The St. George Project will destroy about 20% of ZooWoods. Unfortunately, many of the herbaceous plants in areas to be paved over are not suitable for re-planting in the verges *e.g.* the Trilliums, blood-root, maidenhair fern, *etc.*, nor is there unlimited space to move them to other parts of the current garden. Even though we will try to move what we can, a third move in two years will be stressful. Unfortunately, in retrospect, we concentrated commercially purchased plant materials near the front of the garden, since our building's grounds person (who did most of the work) and his supervisor felt these container grown plants would grow more quickly than the "rescued" plants, making the garden "look" better more quickly.

We have our planting maps, our order and time sheets. The replacement costs of the plant material in the area of ZooWoods to be lost is approximately \$250.00. The labour to construct the fish and plant that fraction of ZooWoods that will disappear represents an additional \$250.00. It is difficult to put a value on the time members of the Department have spent on planting, weeding and watering and what they will now have to spend in attempting to move plants. All the members of the Landscape Committee have put in extra time given the advent of the St. George St. project. Sadly the loss of part of ZooWoods has demoralized some members of our Department to the point where they have totally withdrawn from the project. We feel \$1,000 in compensation is reasonable. That amount of money will allow us to replace lost plant material and establish the beginning of a fund to expand our interpretive program for ZooWoods and other naturalized areas on campus.