



Garden City Lands Coalition

花園城市土地聯盟

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July 17, 2009

Mr. Mark Laroche, President and CEO
Canada Lands Company
1 University Avenue, Suite 1200
Toronto, ON M5J 2P1

Dear Mr. Laroche:

Thank you very much for your prompt response of July 15. You agreed with me about the success of Canada Lands Company's Upton Farm project, but I respectfully suggest that you are *vastly understating* the level and breadth of your company's success.

You may wonder how one can judge what you have done in Charlottetown from a vantage point in Richmond, BC, a 6030 km drive away. This outsider's insight began with immersion in the issue, mainly via the Web. I especially learned from the Upton Farm Preservation Network (UFPN) in various ways, including cross-country phone conversations and the UFPN blog. Since receiving your recent message, I have checked my facts and impressions with UFPN.

My assessment of your Upton Farm performance starts with your work with the local community—especially after Bob Howald, your senior vice president of real estate, got involved. The UFPN people have a lot to say about him, all good. He must be an incredibly thoughtful person, and I imagine he represents a Canada Lands approach. As well, your Upton Farm consultation process respected community input and patiently found its way to broad buy-in. We, the Garden City Lands Coalition, applaud you.

Our UFPN colleagues are appreciative of how Canada Lands "bent over backwards" to make it possible for UFPN and the company to achieve optimal community benefit. Bob Howald told UFPN at the November 2008 consultation meeting that the company needed to recover its costs, but he still managed to offer the entire 247.5-acre Upton Farm to UFPN for only \$2,000,000. UFPN was even given several months to come up with the funds.

When UFPN, representing the community, recognized that it did not have the fundraising ability to raise \$2,000,000 by the deadline (March 31, 2009), Canada Lands facilitated UFPN's leading role in the next-best solution. In UFPN's words, they "courted the PEI government" to purchase the property. Then UFPN ensured that the Biocommons Research Park and any care facilities would be placed in less-sensitive areas that left 152 acres of well-located green space.

It will be the Upton Farm Trust natural area, a true legacy. Thanks to community initiative and Canada Lands' support, it will be conserved forever. On a sad note, though, the keenly anticipated Acadian Forest had to be sacrificed, depriving Charlottetown of environmental, tourism, and wellness benefits.

I agree with you that there are some differences between your Charlottetown project and the Richmond one, and I may address them separately. For now, we just ask your company to transfer one thing to the Garden City Lands: the exemplary implementation of your community-benefit mandate in your Upton Farm process.

Sincerely,

Jim Wright, President, Garden City Lands Coalition Society, in consultation with Arzeena Hamir, Barbara Huisman, Jessica Lai, Daniel Leung, and Carol Southgate, Directors