

RECONCILIATION

REALLY?

**BY LYNN GEHL &
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Trudeau's rhetoric of respecting a "nation-to-nation" relationship and calling for "reconciliation," the current Liberal government is permitting the further desecration of this sacred place by a condo developer, Windmill Developments. We offer here a timeline of the continued destruction of the ultimate place of reconciliation inscribed by Creator.

DEPT. OF PUBLIC WORKS CANADA
PLAN 1000
FEDERAL GOVT. PROPERTIES
CHANNING, FORTIN, DUBOIS, HARRIS, CHAMBERLAIN, AND OTHERS
STREET LAYOUT
STREET LAYOUT
STREET LAYOUT



2003

Grandfather Commanda asks to see the NCC’s and Domtar’s land ownership deeds. Nothing materializes.

2004

The Ministry of Canadian Heritage grants Grandfather Commanda \$50 000 for the preparation of a Memorandum of Recommendation and Architectural Design Plans for the Indigenous Centre called Asinabka.

2006

The NCC endorses Commanda’s Asinabka Plan, allocating \$35 million to the development process.

Stephen Harper becomes prime minister and opens the doors to Windmill, a private developer, for their project on Chaudière and Albert Islands.

2007

F. Jette, a representative of Domtar, reveals Domtar has leased the land on Chaudière Island for \$100 per year: a lease that Domtar took over and extended from as far back as 1889.

Domtar closes their paper mill operation.

2010

The City of Ottawa endorses Commanda’s larger Asinabka Plan that includes freeing Chaudière Falls.

2012

Domtar places its interests up for sale. Desiring to fulfill their mandate as per the Gréber Plan, the NCC applies to the Treasury Board of Canada for funds but is refused.

Without public consultation the federal government allows the quiet transfer of Domtar’s hydraulic lease interests to Energy Ottawa, a municipally-owned power company.

APR 2014

Windmill announces its intent to submit an application to have

the lands that Domtar occupied re-zoned for their condominium / retail complex.

APR 24, 2014

Mayor Jim Watson pledges to cut red tape regarding the redevelopment of the islands. The Ottawa Citizen states the Cities of Ottawa and Gatineau are collaborating with the NCC to make sure redevelopment of the site “doesn’t get nibbled to death by process and red tape.”

JUNE 2014

The Circle of All Nations, an organization acting as the holder of Grandfather Commanda’s vision, discloses that according to the Service Ontario Land Registry most of Chaudière Island is not owned by Domtar.

OCT 7 2014

Kitigan Zibi (Algonquin) Anishinabeg First Nation publicly announces that “Our traditional territory has always been and continues to be, Unceded. We hereby put Canada, Québec and Ontario on notice that the status quo, in which our Aboriginal title lands are taken up by governments and industry, is not acceptable”, adding it is no longer “business as usual. The Tsilhqot’in case has come to significantly change the legal landscape.”

OCT 8 2014

The City re-zones the islands from “Parks and Open Space” to “Downtown Mixed Use.” City documents refer to this re-zoned land as 3 and 4 Booth Street, which according to the tax assessment roll is only a small portion of Chaudière Island.

DEC 2014

Douglas Cardinal, Romola V. Thumbadoo-Trebilcock, Richard Jackman, Larry McDermott, and Lindsay Lambert, a group of Indigenous and settler supporters of Commanda’s vision, file appeals to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) regarding the City’s rezoning.

2015

Archaeology curator Jean-Luc Pilon and Journalism professor Randy Boswell identify the larger area of Akikodjiwan and Akikpautik as a significant meeting place for four to five millennia.

JAN 2015

Windmill has a public competi-

tion to re-name their billion-dollar project known as “The Isles” and begins to sell condominium units on land they do not own.

The NCC changes its position regarding the islands and approves private development.

FEB 2015

Internationally renowned architect Raymond Moriyama argues the Windmill project is “heart sinking and idiotic.”

Windmill changes the name of their project to “Zibi,” an Anishinaabe word that means water.

Chief Gilbert Whiteduck of Kitigan Zibi announces he does not support Windmill’s project and argues the use of the word “Zibi” is cultural appropriation.

MAY 2015

The City and Windmill file a notice of motion that the OMB dismiss the appeals without a full hearing.

JUNE 3 2015

The OMB pre-hearing begins with OMB member Richard Makuch presiding and with no public record. The pre-hearing is adjourned until August 2015.

AUG 2015

The media reports Domtar has sold land on the islands to Windmill; land that Domtar has never proven it owns. According to the Service Ontario Land Registry, Windmill holds a five-year lease and a sublease from Domtar.

Four Algonquin First Nations in Québec – Wolf Lake First Nation, Timiskaming First Nation, Eagle Village First Nation, and Barriere Lake First Nation – publicly call for the protection of the Algonquin Anishinaabe sacred area and oppose the City’s rezoning for Windmill’s desecration project.

AUG 17 2015

The OMB pre-hearing continues. The appellants have an opportunity to rebut the City’s and Windmill’s attempt to dismiss them without a full hearing. They argue consultation is required and the rezoning was a departure from the Gréber Plan and Commanda’s Asinabka Plan.

City and Windmill lawyers argue that the Gréber Master Plan is no longer followed and Commanda’s Asinabka Plan is not legitimate; therefore the appellants lack planning grounds and further they are not qualified to present planning grounds. It is also argued that consultation with Pikwākanagān First Nation and the Algonquins of Ontario (AOO) occurred; Chaudière Island is no longer an Indigenous cultural site of significance because it was erased by the industrial era; and further much of the land is now in private hands.



Lynn Gehl with her giant Sacred Pipe on the June 17, 2016 walk from Victoria Island to Parliament Hill called “It is Sacred,” led by Algonquin leaders Jane Chartrand and Albert Dumont.

Photo: Peter Stockdale

NOV 17 2015

Makuch rules. He denies the appellants a full hearing with the OMB Board because the rezoning conforms to the City’s plan; there was adequate consultation with Pikwākanagān First Nation, the AOO and other Indigenous groups; and First Nations heritage will be respected. He further argued the appellants failed to raise *legitimate* land use planning grounds on which the Board could rely on to allow their appeals.

NOV 2015

Justin Trudeau is elected prime minister, having promised a renewed nation-to-nation relationship and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

DEC 2015

The Assembly of First Nations Special Chiefs vote to support a resolution to communicate with the government about the protection of Akikodjiwan.

MAR 9 2016

The appellants move forward with a leave to appeal to the Ontario Divisional Court, Justice Charles T. Hackland presiding.

MAY 26 2016

Hackland denies the appellants leave to appeal on the grounds that the OMB made no errors of law.

JUNE 2016

The appellants move forward with a second appeal to the Ontario Divisional Court.

Local activist Greg Macdougall releases a video where Jeff Weinstein of Windmill explains Windmill will be leasing the land from the Algonquin.

OCT 2016

The Ontario Divisional Court second appeal request takes place. The matter is heard before three judges who deny the appellants’ motion to “vary or rescind” the decision.

NOV 2016

A mosque in Ottawa is vandalized. On the event of an arrest Mayor Jim Watson argues some people have “a lot of hate in their heart.” When it comes to the vandalism of Indigenous sacred places, both writers of this timeline contend that it is the City and Windmill who have hate in their hearts.

DEC 2016

Windmill applies for \$62 million under the City’s brownfield rehabilitation grant program to restore heritage buildings, remove contaminated soil and clean up toxic chemicals on the former Domtar site.

JUNE 2017

Algonquin elder Albert Dumont organizes a “Faith is Peace” walk from Victoria Island to Parliament Hill. Dumont explains that Akikodjiwan is an Algonquin sacred site, that it is being violated, and that no one would tolerate the desecration of colonial sacred sites like a church or mosque. Many of the region’s faith leaders walked with the Algonquin in support of our struggle to save sacred Akikodjiwan.

DEC 2017

Although it is said the Tsilhqot’in decision ushered in a new paradigm of consent versus consultations, on December 15, 2017, the Government of Canada approved a series of land transfers between the NCC, Public Services and Procurement Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and Windmill Dream Zibi Master LP for lands on islands in the Ottawa River. This happened without the consent of the larger Algonquin Nation, which includes Algonquin with and without federally-recognized “Indian” status in both Québec and Ontario.

FEB 2018

On Feb. 5, 2018 the Ontario Land Registry identifies Windmill Dream Zibi Ontario Inc. as owners of parcels of land on Chaudière Island and Albert Island.



Photo: Peter Stockdale

Lynn Gehl, Ph.D., is an Algonquin Anishinaabe-kwe and a member of Pikwākanagān First Nation. In 2017 she won an Ontario Court of Appeal case on sex discrimination in the Indian Act, and is an outspoken critic of the Algonquin land claims process. Recently she published *Claiming Anishinaabe: Decolonizing the Human Spirit*. You can reach her through www.lynngehl.com and see more of her work there.

Lindsay Lambert, BFA, is an Ottawa-based published historian whose research is rooted in the archival record through a spiritual, justice, and anti-colonial lens. He was born in Swift Current, Saskatchewan, of a Russian immigrant mother and a first-generation Canadian English father. Currently his work is dedicated to the restoration and the preservation of the sacredness of Chaudière Falls and Islands, in what is now called the Ottawa River.