



photo by Fred Loek



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Above: Volunteers from the Mississauga Garden Council including Executive Director Douglas Markoff (far right) and Mississauga based tobacco product manufacturers JTI-MacDonald Corp. lend a hand to planting trees during Riverwood's stewardship day.

property. It was built on the remains of an old pickle factory near the barn, and is referred to as the MacEwan house. The MacEwan house was used as a summer home until Riverwood was built. The original barn also still stands, which is an English tri-partite barn, of a type built between 1600 and 1900, and quite rare. It is heritage listed.

On February 27, 2002, City Council approved the master plan, which saw its first phase roll out on October 14, 2006. According to the Mississauga Garden Council, the vision is clear – “a garden trilogy, combining display, demonstration, and environmental stewardship in the design of the gardens and programs.” Key to the plan was the maintenance of the natural forestry and wildlife of the area, with the remaining 50 acres to be developed into four garden phases. This 50 acres of land had been previously used in agricultural and residential use, and the new plans for it will have gardens built on four terraces – MacEwan, Chappel, Bird and Zaichuk – named after the original owners of the land, who admirably left the land essentially untouched and allowed the natural wildlife to flourish.

Douglas Markoff, Executive Director of the Mississauga Garden Council, a key partner for Riverwood, is passionate about the vision for creating what he calls an “urban oasis” in the heart of Mississauga. “We play many roles in the Riverwood project”, he explains. “We provide outdoor education through our special events, a stewardship role in co-ordinating activities such as tree-planting, most of the volunteers on site are Mississauga Garden Council volunteers, and we also provide garden horticultural expertise in designing and maintaining the gardens around Riverwood.” He emphasises that Mississaugans are keenly interested in natural, cultural, and recreational heritage, and that the Riverwood site is unique in that it fulfills on all three levels. He encourages everyone to visit Riverwood for a tour, recreational walk, educational program, or a special event, many of which are planned to the end of November, and then starting up again in the new year. “You can read about it, see pictures, but nothing compares to standing on the trail looking at the pure majesty

of the trees, forest and wildlife.” says Markoff.

In order to develop the four garden sites, on four garden terraces, fund raising will be essential in building the capital budgets. The Riverwood Fund Raising Cabinet is made up of members from the Mississauga Garden Council, the Mississauga Board of Trade, and the City of Mississauga. Many fund raising events are currently being planned, and Mississauga residents are urged to donate time or money for this important environmental sanctuary's vision to be completed. High school students can complete their volunteer hours at Riverwood, while enjoying a healthy outdoor lifestyle and educational experience. Information on events, such as



Riverwood's Dave Taylor enjoys the woodland boardwalk at Mississauga's Garden Park.
photo by Fred Loek

the Riverwood Evening with Gardening Experts which took place on October 17, 2006, can be found at the Mississauga Garden Council's website at www.mississaugagardencouncil.org If you are interested in participating in fundraising and volunteering your time, or acquiring a membership in the Mississauga Garden Council, you can contact them via the website, or call 905-279-5878. **G** Kathy Buckworth is a frequent contributor to GoodLife. Visit her website at www.kathybuckworth.com



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