

## The Colibris dossier

2011/08/04 by R.L.B.



Based on positions taken by Urban Department and the Council, many citizens may have the impression that they suddenly have permission to build a pier anywhere on the lake. This is obviously complete nonsense!

First of all, for Brome Lake, and this has been the case for several years, the rules governing the length of a dock state that it cannot exceed 30 metres, measured from

the shoreline. Article 79 of the zoning by-laws states that "any private wharf cannot exceed 15 metres in length, measured from the shoreline. When the depth at the end of the pier during the low water period is less than 1.2 metres, it is possible to exceed this length, without however surpassing the 30 metre restriction." The piers that have been built in the Colibris sector are far from meeting these criteria.

Secondly, Renaissance Brome Lake has been asking for a global evaluation of the Colibris sector for the last 18 months and that the topography and bathymetry of the area be taken into consideration, that the needs of the non shore residents with beach access be considered, that the ecological sensitivity of the wetlands be observed and, finally, that the terrible decision by the town to allow construction of a pier to accommodate motor boats be revised.

Since the developer, the realtor and the new owners are well aware of the presence of a wetland area and the restrictions this imposes in terms of any building and landscaping, the town is playing deaf and continues to further drift into a position that is both absurd and illegal. Rather than recognize the error they have made and revoke the permit to then seek a global solution, the council is trying to get out of this already deteriorated situation by forcing the application of the permit in the strictest terms possible: providing access to a dock in the middle of a wetland complete with motor boat access installed in 36 inches of water in a silted bay which is part of an already fragile ecosystem. What a mess!

Renaissance Brome Lake continues to insist that the by-laws governing wetlands be fully respected including the Colibris bay sector. Despite a great deal of fishing activity on the lake and unfortunately even some acts of poaching, Brome Lake is still a lovely spot for avid anglers. This is due to the quality of the wetlands which surround it. Apart from their filtration properties, wetland areas are incubators and a rich source of food for young fish before they begin to grow. To disturb or destroy the wetlands eventually leads to the elimination of the essential settings in the life cycle of the fish in the lake. A lake without fish and a biodiversity is a lake which has been condemned.