

# 'Farmers need compensation'

From page 1.

next week at all-party hearings on Bill 135, the Greenbelt Act, including a session Tuesday at the Radisson Hotel on Hwy. 7 in Markham.

The greenbelt plan is based on good science and already has seen more consultation than the moraine plan did, said David Donnelly, a lawyer for environmental groups supporting the greenbelt. "It is either the height of ignorance or hypocrisy to suggest the Tories got it right on the moraine but the Liberals are getting it wrong on the greenbelt."

## DRAW BOUNDARIES

Conservatives agree boundaries for a greenbelt must be drawn somewhere and they want to protect environmentally sensitive land and prime farmlands, Mr. Tory said, but added the government should take a few more months to investigate the need for an appeals process, compensation for farmers and support for those municipalities whose growth will be restricted.

*'This is a last ditch attempt by people who were hoping to make speculative profits to throw up a smokescreen of science.'*

The Conservatives aren't demanding farmers be paid for their land at development prices but some compensation is needed, Mr. Tory said. Accepting all or some recommendations of a provincial panel report on agriculture would be a good start, Mr. Tory said.



**JOHN TORY:** More time needed to investigate compensation for farmers, Conservative leader said.

While in power, the Tories cut Agriculture Ministry staff and cancelled programs, including the Duffin Rouge Agricultural Preserve in Markham and a program that would have paid cash to farmers in Niagara's fruitlands for easements forbidding development.

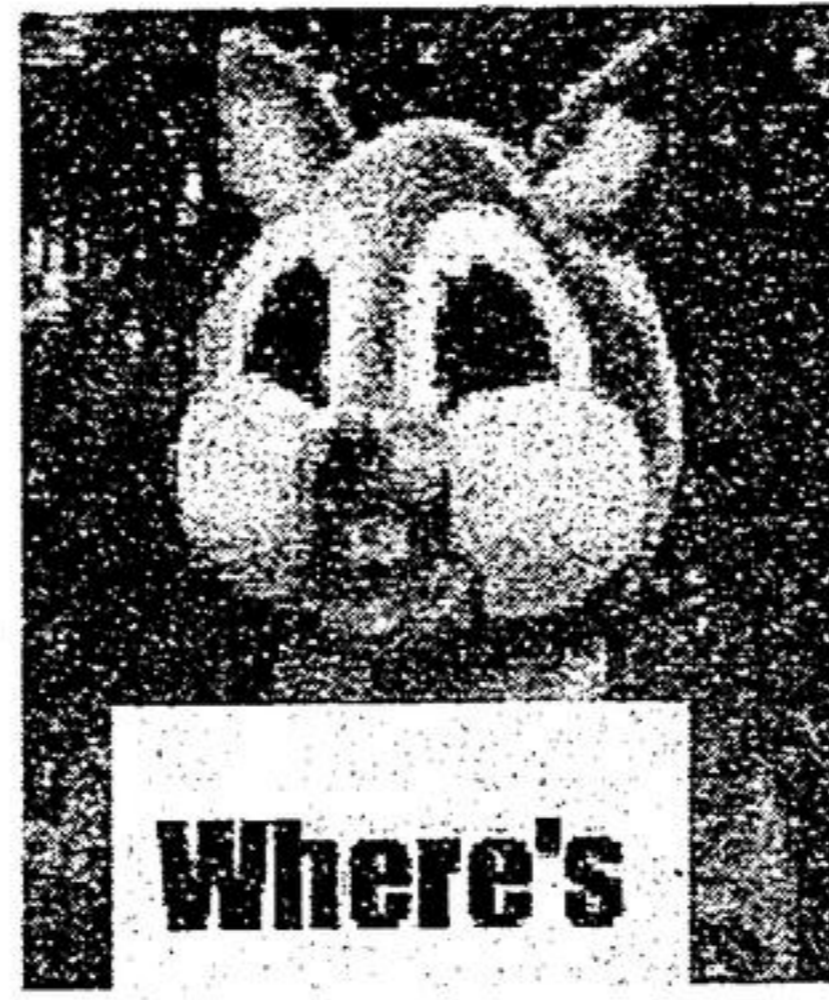
"I'm sure there were decisions we took that in hindsight may not have helped the situation," Mr. Tory said, arguing the Liberals also cut agriculture programs and failed to respond to farmers' needs.

## SCIENCE ACCEPTED

The science behind the greenbelt — meant to preserve ecosystems, watersheds and bioregionalism — has been generally accepted by politicians and citizens since David Crombie used it for a Royal Commission report on Toronto's waterfront 15 years ago, said Gerda Wekerle, an environmental studies professor at York University.

"This is a last ditch attempt by people who were hoping to make speculative profits to throw up a smokescreen of science," she said, arguing the battle is really about public good and individual property rights.

## CAN YOU TELL THE DIFFERENCE?



The Tory chipmunk (left) is featured on greenbotch.ca, while the Save the Rouge Valley System mascot (right) was a fixture at moraine protests.

# 'Tories stole my chipmunk,' environmentalist claims

The large chipmunk star of a new Tory website is one big phony, environmentalist Glenn De Baeremaeker says.

The unnamed rodent — actually a person in chipmunk costume — is on every page of [www.greenbotch.ca](http://www.greenbotch.ca), holding signs that say "Dalton, you lied" or "Where's the science?" as the site attacks the province's proposed Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt.

What angers Mr. De Baeremaeker is his Save the Rouge Valley System group rented such costumes over the years to pressure Tories to save the Oak Ridges Moraine.

The group also had a chipmunk (worn that day by Thornhill teenager Josh Shapero) in tow in November 2003 when Municipal Affairs Minister

John Gerretsen admitted in Richmond Hill his new Liberal government couldn't stop most moraine housing the Tories had approved in the town.

**"That is not our chipmunk. It looks like a cheap knock-off of our chipmunk,"**

Glenn De Baeremaeker, environmentalist

It's this event the greenbotch website, launched Tuesday, recalls with its repeated photo illustration and caption.

"That is not our chipmunk. It looks like a cheap knock-off of our

chipmunk," said Mr. De Baeremaeker, now a Toronto councillor leading a coalition that supports the greenbelt but wants it to include more territory.

The Tories admit their chipmunk is a fake, though the caption recalls a real event.

The image is "sort of a resurrection" of the protesting chipmunk, explained Catherine Pringle, a spokesperson for Conservative leader John Tory.

But Mr. De Baeremaeker called its use on the site "disgusting" and said Tory claims the greenbelt lacks scientific credibility are baseless.

"These guys are just hypocrites. They don't know what they're talking about."

—Mike Adler



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