



Urban design committee **rejects** Parliament Oak hotel plan

Dear editor:

The highly anticipated proposal for a hotel at the historic former Parliament Oak school site on King Street took centre stage at the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's urban design committee meeting on June 28.

The committee took a decisive stand by unanimously rejecting the proposed hotel development.

This decision carries significant weight, as this esteemed advisory committee wields substantial influence in shaping the town's final planning report, which in turn serves as a vital document for council's consideration in making its ultimate decision on the project.

The urban design committee, primarily comprised of accomplished professionals from the design community, brings together individuals with proven expertise in various fields, such as architecture, landscape architecture, environmental management, urban and regional planning, among others.



NOTL's urban design committee isn't satisfied with plans for a hotel on the former Parliament Oak school property. FILE

Their collective knowledge ensures a thorough evaluation of proposals that affect the town's aesthetic and environmental integrity.

Deliberating for nearly two hours, the committee engaged in an in-depth discussion of the proposed hotel.

After careful consideration, members reached

a consensus and formally approved a final motion, solidifying their rejection of the project.

The committee's decision highlights the significance of preserving the historical and cultural heritage of the Parliament Oak site.

It sends a clear message that any development on King Street must align with the town's vision for sus-

tainable urban design and responsible growth.

As the proposal awaits further consideration by town council, the urban design committee's resolute stance serves as a testament to their commitment to upholding the town's values and ensuring thoughtful, well-informed decisions are made for the benefit of the community.

The committee's motion rejecting the application for a zoning change on the site was approved by all five members: Allan Killin, Chrys Kaloudis, David Snelgrove, Peter Neame and Coun. Wendy Cheropita.

Among the points emphasized in the motion were that "staff and council carry out the required studies to define the need for and potential location of any new, designated commercial areas within NOTL's Old Town" before considering any development proposals in the area.

It also asked that town staff take into account a number of concerns when preparing a report for council on the proposal, including that:

The required market/impact study (as per official plan section 10.4 commercial policies) has not been submitted.

The proposed development is not consistent with the official plan, which requires that projects should be compatible with existing and planned land uses, den-

sities, height and massing in the surrounding neighbourhood, and "have an effective transition in built form between areas of different densities and scale."

The committee stated the massing of the proposed hotel is too large and inappropriate for the location as is its height, which is "much greater than current requirements."

No formal parking study has been done and the proposed amount of parking appears to be quite inadequate given the number of guests, hotel staff and visitors for the facility, the committee noted. As well, no formal landscaping plan has been prepared.

The committee also recommended that council require staff to ensure development proposals are complete, with all required documentation, before being subject to public consultation, advisory committee and staff review, and prior to submission to council for review and a decision.

Alan Gordon
NOTL

Columnist is correct, comprehensive bylaw on **lighting** is needed

Dear editor:

I read with great interest the opinion piece written by Brian Marshall in the June 1 edition of The Lake Report, "Of lights and rights and other things."

As an emeritus member of the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America and an executive member of the society's street lighting committee for many years, I found his in-depth knowledge and understanding of lighting to be refreshing.

He is correct in his assertion that a comprehensive lighting bylaw is needed in the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake to reduce the negative effects of poorly installed outdoor lighting that adversely affects our health and contributes to light trespass on neighbouring properties.

I have been involved in the development of published ANSI/IES recommended practices for street and area lighting as well as preparing outdoor lighting recommendations and standards for municipalities in the GTA and across the country for many years.

These standards and recommendations have always included light-source colour quality and control of glare and light trespass.

I am aware that the Town of NOTL has been working on a nuisance lighting bylaw for some time and I have offered my services to the municipality previously to help move this project along.

Perhaps with Mr. Marshall's opinion piece, we can expedite some action by our new council.

William Smelser
NOTL

Canada does not have a **food security** problem

Dear editor:

Premier Doug Ford's announcement about removing some agricultural land from the Greenbelt to provide housing for urban expansion is a forward-thinking mindset.

The misconception and propaganda by certain politicians, farm groups and lobby groups about food security is misleading and is having a detrimental and psychological effect on all Canadians, especially our youth.

According to federal government statistics, in 2021 Canada exported \$82 billion in agricultural and food products.

We export half of our beef and cattle, 70 per cent of our soybeans, 70 per cent of our pork, 75 per cent of our wheat, 90 per cent of our canola, 95 per cent of our pulses (beans, lentils, peas) and 40 per cent of our food processing, the Canadian

Agri-Food Trade Alliance says.

Canada is the fifth-largest exporter of agricultural products and seafood in the world, selling to more than 200 countries. More than 90 per cent of Canadian farmers are dependent on exports.

Therefore, we do not have food security problems (the ability to produce food) but have food insecurity (the ability to purchase food) due to financial constraints.

When was the last time you went to the grocery store and the following items were not plentiful: meats, produce, baked goods, canned goods etc.?

It is inconceivable that Canada, the second-largest country in the world, with a population of 40 million people, doesn't have enough land to build houses.

Tony Giordano
NOTL

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