



**November 1, 2017**

**To: Our Muskoka MP's, Various Districts and Townships (Planning, Economic, Councillors) contacts**

**Re: Muskoka Proposed Developments**

All,

My name is [REDACTED] am a Realtor, Builder and Developer in Muskoka. I live on Lake Rosseau in the bay next to Cleveland's House and the Marriot. Of note, I am not opposed to development in our region and in fact have requested the support of your organizations on many occasions and have respected the process, rules and regulations when both supported and declined.

The property that I purchased had 1800 feet of frontage and ten acres. We were allowed to create four (4) lots on our property after various consent and rezoning applications.

My letter will address my concerns related to the development under way at Legacy and proposed at Cleveland's house. In short, I find the proposal to be ludicrous! I believe the same or similar circumstances will apply to The Villa's and Touchstone. I also believe that this is not a BIG three problem alone. We have seen failures at many other facilities- Deerhurst in the past and Grandview. The surprise here is that there are actually winter activities near these sites.

I understand that the District is responsible for establishing development policies through the Official Plan so let's start there. The idea of turning current failing resort properties into high density residential properties flies in the face of what planning departments and townships have been supporting for years.

Let's be clear, allowing another town/ lake development to be built on the lake system, in the case of Minett, and to be modelled after Port Carling will not be a success. Please review the Plan that was proposed with the JW Marriot- how has that fared with the same developer? Hanna's Landing- stalled! Rocky Crest partially completed and can't give them away, The Joe Club where

the Inn and facilities have never been built. I deal with these end users every day trying to get out. Who do you think they blame for the failure of these facilities- times up- Its you!

For example, a JW unit was bought at 750K plus- today no bid. Talk to a Rocky resident or Touchstone- their units are worth about 20% of what they paid. Have you calculated this in to your expected property tax grab?

So here we go again. A huge project, potentially 3,000 residences (1500 proposed), no parkland, no parking (a huge issue in Port), high density at the waterfront, imposed rental requirements that will have no enforcement, no monitoring and no oversight. The marina facility and docking that will have in and out provisions for potentially 1500 residents with boats and seadoos, add the current islanders that require the facility, there is no way this can environmentally viable.

The developer will get approvals, make his money, and leave the mess to the Township which has neither the financial or human resources to make it succeed. I understand that the Township will be required to takeover the treatment facilities and I suppose all other services related to this like assuming roads etc....

The hope is that this is a year-round neighbourhood. Go to Port Carling anytime between October and April and try to find an open establishment. Why don't we look as cases like these and learn from them, build our standards to address the shortcomings and fix the problems our current developments have.

We had an interesting occurrence in Port Carling this year. Once the Tim Hortons went in we had several weekends where traffic was backed up to where proline is located. I have never seen this in almost 40 years in this town. How do we think this will work at the Port Sandfield single lane bridge? I'm sure there are studies that say no problem. I'm sure there were for the Tim Hortons. Who vets these reports?

Make no mistake if these developments are approved the floodgates will open. The Sherwood Inn, Bangor Lodge, The Joe Club, Rocky Crest, Windemere House- the list goes on. How will you stop those developments from extreme expansion once precedent has been established?

Next, The Township is responsible for the fine tuning. By-laws, zoning set backs and other property standards. Why in the world would we ever allow anyone to replace a facility that has an advertised occupancy of 117 rooms and a developer stated 180 rooms (Cleve's) with potentially 1500 units. That is over a tenfold increase when we take in to account the Marriot and Legacy. Legacy has its own numbers for us to worry about. What was about 20 little cottages have now become 43 cottages, and a dock that could handle 6 boats we are now looking for 40? Again, who vets these numbers? who vets the required traffic, environmental and fundamental business plans for these developments.

There are no historical bases for the what is being proposed in unit volumes or waterfront density. We are merely a few years away from when we were trying to push 100-foot setbacks on these lakes and here we are approving 60 foot lots on the Big Three lakes. Tell me how that makes any sense.

So here is the math. If you allow this development to proceed these units will sell for an average of 5 - 600,000. If history proves correct they will be worth about 200,000 in ten years when people realize they left the city to go to another for the weekend. You will be getting 1/3 of the expected tax base against an increasing services budget.

I truly want to place my faith in the process and the areas various governing bodies that oversea this great area. Unfortunately history has not been kind as evidenced in the examples of mass development previously mentioned in this correspondence.

As a reasonable approach why could we not consider

- In the case of Cleve's allow 117 units as they have now
- The Marina has no residential units allow that to be commercial (the village shops)
- The point lots have 4 residences – allow 4 residences

The above approach allows the developer to reconfigure what they purchased and does not change the density. Obviously the waterfront should be preserved with limited division.

Let's take a step back, review the process for considering these developments, create some standards (such as you can not increase the total unit count of a current property), implement them and monitor a few approved developments over the next few years and make sure what is promised actually gets created and succeeds.

Sincerely

