

PUBLIC FEEDBACK VITAL TO OUR PLANNING

REGION'S OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW REPORT SHOULD BE DELAYED UNTIL PROPER CONSULTATION CAN BE DONE, WRITES RICK BONNETTE



RICK BONNETTE
Column

At our last council meeting, Coun. Jane Fogal brought forward a resolution that everyone should take note of.

Her resolution requests the Region of Halton delay its final report on its official plan review until there is proper, in-person, informed consultation with the public.

Also, it asks the region to suspend the timetable for the conformity to the provincial growth plan and the provincial policy statement to ensure the public can fully participate in the process of planning their communities.

You see, folks, the planning horizon has been moved out to 2051 by the province. Council must approve plans to accommodate population to this time.

This means designating rural land now to provide housing up to 30 years in the future.

We haven't even seen a shovel in the ground for Vision Georgetown to take us to 2031. Your council is being asked to make these decisions in the middle of a

world pandemic as to how much growth we plan to have to the year 2051, without — in our view — any proper community consultation.

Sure, we have Zoom meetings, but they are not the same as having in-person conversations. I remember the last go-around where we were getting over 200 people out to public meetings that were held at Christ the King Secondary School, Gellert Community Centre and other locations.

The province has made significant changes to a number of provincial policies, all aimed to assist the development industry.

I chaired a citizen/council committee that brought in a Halton Hills Charter of Public Engagement. Now this is being compromised, as the province has given marching orders to complete the plan in 2022.

Needless to say, council unanimously supported Coun. Fogal's resolution.

In other news, council is continuing its advocacy efforts for local businesses, calling on the provincial and federal governments to further invest in the Digital Main Street Program.

This program assisted local businesses to enhance their online presence.

The pandemic has certainly driven home the fact that this is the world we live in now. Our businesses need our help

Rick Bonnette is the Mayor of Halton Hills. Follow him on Twitter @RickBonnette1 and Instagram @rick_bonnette1.

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SNAPSHOT



Carolyn Van Hinte photo

Doves find a resting place amidst snow-covered trees in the Glen. Do you have a great local photo you'd like to share? Send it to sleblanc@metroland.com, along with a brief description.

UNIVERSITY'S HARDSHIP A SIGN OF CHANGING TIMES

DIFFICULT CHOICES AHEAD FOR MANY ORGANIZATIONS AMIDST ONGOING PANDEMIC, WRITES PETER WATSON



PETER WATSON
Column

Many organizations are enduring financial hardship with COVID-19.

Many will have to adjust to post-pandemic times, and this could include ceasing to exist.

Laurentian University just filed for credit protection. The reasons for this are not likely unique to this institution.

Laurentian is located in Sudbury, and its president acknowledged having years of declining enrollment because of changing demographics in northern Ontario, recurring deficits and a failed attempt to ex-

merging and in some cases ceasing to exist.

But this is not a normal period. COVID-19 is the most significant event since the Second World War. Its ripple effect on many aspects of current daily life is significant.

Consider COVID-19 a catalyst. The rate of change and evolution has been dramatic. I suspect many of the changes in how we live our lives will be permanent.

Do I think Laurentian will be operating 10 years from now?

Yes.

Do I think many other organizations will have to make hard adjustments in the years ahead?

Yes.

Laurentian's current problems could be a signal of what lies ahead for other organizations.

Peter Watson, of Watson Investments MBA, CFP®, R.F.P., CIM®, FCSI offers a weekly financial planning column, 'Dollars & Sense'. He can be contacted through www.watsoninvestments.com.

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