

More Haudenosaunee land sold without consultation

By Jim Windle

BRANTFORD – A recent announcement about a Chinese Private School purchasing the long-empty Victoria School in Brantford has caused some to see it as a forward thinking step toward the globalization of education.

Others take an exactly opposite position, saying the sale of the school by the Grand Erie Board of Education is an all too familiar slap in the face of the Haudenosaunee of the Grand River.

In a letter sent to Mr. Xie Fuzhan, Governor of Henan, China and to Norman Zhang, Principal and Executive Director for

Victoria Academy (Henan Education Canada Inc.), a Brantford based Neighbourhood Association made up of Six Nations people living in Brantford and non-Native allies, questioned why the sale took place without consultation with who they believe to be the underlying title holders.

"I represent the Haudenosaunee & Raseron:ni Neighbourhood Association of Brantford, the Haudenosaunee are the Five Original Sovereign nations who maintain Alignments with the British and Canadian Sovereign this relationship is guided by the peace and friendship entered into by our forebears," begins

the letter penned by Benjamin Doolittle on behalf of the Association.

He goes on to inform the proponents of the Chinese-owned school of the stake the Haudenosaunee have in the matter.

"The former CEO and Mayor of Brantford Bob Taylor commissioned a report in 1994 and concluded that the debt owed for use of the lands was \$250 Billion dollars, saying that payment of the debt would bankrupt not only Brantford but possibly all of Canada," writes Doolittle, noting an article first published in the Brantford Expositor.

He also points to the most recent Expositor story regarding the

school.

"He (Mr. Norman Zhang) said he wanted a 'pure Canadian' environment for the school," the letter continues.

An explanation of the Two Row Wampum is included in Doolittle's letter as well.

"Wampum laws are ancient and continuous

and remain unbroken as the original laws of the land, the people of North America and never been lawfully conquered," says Doolittle.

It is the understanding of many people of the Six Nations that when the Crown set aside land for schools it was with the Chief's consent, but

would be returned if the property were no longer needed for that purpose.

To date, neither the Grand Erie Board of Education or the owners of the new private school have responded to the questions asked by the association.