

## New Rideau Lakes Township Office in Elgin?

No! Say Five Township Councillors as they contrive to ram through a retrofit of the Chantry Offices.

### What is Happening?

On August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, five Rideau Lakes Councillors, fixated on a **single** option for Township Offices, are poised to force a retrofit of the Township offices at Chantry.

Having pushed through a request for proposals to retrofit and add on to the Chantry Offices earlier this summer, five councillors, led by Councillors Paula and Jeff Banks, ignored all calls to conduct a comparable evaluation of retrofit versus new build. They even rejected a generous offer of free 5 acres on Highway 15 at Elgin for the Township's offices.

Now they have orchestrated a high-speed approval, setting a special council meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> of August to select the successful bidder, and one hour later, at the Regular Council meeting, ratify the contract award. This is not simply for an assessment of the Chantry office. The proposal, at a cost of about \$150K, is also to include the design of a retrofit and an addition to that building. The fix is in!

### Why it Matters to You?

- Because these 5 councillors want to sink our tax dollars into a Money Pit with zero economic benefit to the Township!
- Because there is a better option with significantly less financial risk and real economic benefit to Rideau Lakes!
- Because Township Offices should be central to our beautiful and vibrant community
- Because the party of 5 is attempting to avoid public input and discussion! Again!

### What can you do?

- Read the comparison of options on the reverse of this flyer: Chantry Retrofit vs New Build in Elgin
- Send an email to council telling them you support and want Council to consider a new build in Elgin.

### You CAN have an impact, but only if you ACT!

Did you know that over 150 Westport Constituents sent letters and emails to their council opposing the decision to explore dumping effluent into the Upper Rideau Lake? Taxpayers wrote letters and showed up at meetings to voice their opposition. ***And Westport Council listened to constituents and reversed their decision.***

Don't know what to say in an email to council? Here are some thoughts:

- I am concerned about the direction Council is taking for proposed new Rideau Lakes Township offices.
- Our administrative offices need to be more central and accessible within Rideau Lakes. Chantry is isolated.
- A retrofit of Chantry will not fix all the existing problems with the building, like drinking water or location.
- The likely need to remediate asbestos and temporarily relocate staff will substantially increase renovation costs.
- The free land available in Elgin, is ideally located on Highway 15 and a new building will not come with all the complex problems that will need to be fixed in the Chantry building at a high cost to taxpayers.
- New offices need to be located where they can contribute economically to a village, like the site in Elgin. And they should reflect the beauty of Rideau Lakes. Chantry will still look like a renovated garage no matter renovations.
- I respectfully request that Rideau Lakes Councillors alter their decision to retrofit Chantry and consider the site at Elgin before it is too late.

Send your email to: Mary Ellen Truelove, Clerk, Rideau Lakes Township, and request she distribute your email as correspondence to the CAO and all of council at [mtruelove@rideaulakes.ca](mailto:mtruelove@rideaulakes.ca)

Note: Please act even if it is after August 6<sup>th</sup>! There will still be time to insist on considering a new build in Elgin if you speak up, just like in Westport!

	<b>Chantry Retrofit</b>	<b>New Build in Elgin</b>
<b>Location</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Surrounded by beautiful farmland...acres of it!</li> <li>No surrounding concentration of population or businesses</li> <li>Isolated away from major highway (a priority for emergency services), no convenient access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5 acres of donated land in Elgin on Hwy 15 providing a central location and easily accessible from anywhere in the Township.</li> <li>visitors and staff would have ready access to businesses providing goods and services.</li> </ul>
<b>Local Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No anticipated population growth due to the active farmland in and surrounding Chantry.</li> <li>Consumer base too small to establish sustainable businesses</li> <li>No anticipated economic benefits to the Township</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Immediate economic benefits of 25+ staff working, plus visitors to the offices contributing to existing businesses</li> <li>population growth of Elgin is anticipated over the next several years with 70 acres of land poised for residential and commercial development</li> </ul>
<b>What's Wrong, What's Right, What's going to cost</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing building already too small for the current staff</li> <li>Requires an extension, or a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor added on or a new building on the adjacent parking lot</li> <li>Expansion options limited: septic system at the rear, fuel tanks and rear access to the west and well on the east side</li> <li>Second storey requires an elevator; rebuild of second story framing; foundation changes likely needed to accommodate additional loads and meet current building codes</li> <li>High probability of asbestos in original concrete blocks and foundation made with vermiculite. Asbestos already found in window frames.</li> <li>Replace and enlarge septic system (recent closures due to back-ups), new plumbing, wiring, and roof.</li> <li>New build architecture restricted to the adjacent parking lot space.</li> <li>Limited access to Federal/Provincial Grants</li> <li>Ongoing telecommunication issues as little to no incentive for providers to invest in additional infrastructure in an isolated location.</li> <li>Disruption of Township services in carrying out construction while maintaining admin offices at Chantry; even more costs if temporary relocation needed due to asbestos remediation</li> <li>Well water supply with high salt levels due to proximity to salt shed means drinking water will still need to be delivered</li> <li>Seemingly permanent rodent infestation as evidenced by traps everywhere</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plenty of land to accommodate new offices and future requirements.</li> <li>new building designed to the appropriate size and configuration to meet current and future needs of the township.</li> <li>Architectural design not constricted by limitations of existing infrastructure and potential for incorporating climate friendly and accessibility features.</li> <li>Several elements would qualify for Federal/Provincial grants.</li> <li>Safe drinking water supply</li> <li>Anticipated population growth expected to result in infrastructure investment by telecommunications providers.</li> <li>No temporary relocation needed or disruption to services</li> <li>No asbestos remediation</li> <li>No rodent infestation</li> </ul> <p><b>ADDED BONUS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chantry can be returned to its original purpose as a Public Works garage and maintenance facility that we know will be needed in the near future.</li> </ul>

*Rideau Lakes Grassroots Group (RLGG): individuals from all wards across the Township, focussed on raising awareness about the direction of current Council. For more information visit our website: [rlgrassroots.com](http://rlgrassroots.com)*