



November 26, 2018

Dear Collingwood Town Councillor:

On behalf of Save Our Shorelines (SOS) Collingwood we wish to extend our congratulations to you on your recent election to Collingwood Town Council. We look forward to working with you in the months and years ahead on a constructive agenda to preserve and enhance Collingwood's pristine shoreline and wetland areas. We trust you agree, these areas are one of Collingwood's most valuable economic and cultural assets and they deserve special care and attention when it comes to planning for their use or development in their proximity.

While the recent municipal election focused on many issues, it was clear that improved transparency in municipal decision making and improved consultation and involvement with local residents were paramount. Collingwood residents not only voted for change in the composition of their Town Council, they voted for change in how that Council conducts its business. Residents made it clear, they not only want their concerns to be heard, they want them to be addressed and they want to be involved in the process.

One of the major shoreline development proposals in front of Collingwood Town Council today is the proposal for the Living Waters/Bear Estate property at the corner of Balsam and Harbour Streets. As you are undoubtedly aware, SOS Collingwood and its supporters have raised serious concerns with the current development plan for this property. Those concerns are multi-faceted and include:

- An Environmental Impact Study ("EIS") that is outdated and inadequate for the scale of the project;
- Excessive density, as evidenced by a parking plan that doesn't comply with the Town's Zoning Bylaw;
- The inappropriate siting of a 5-storey 889-person conference centre only 1.2 metres from an Environment Protection Zone that contains a Provincially Significant Wetland;
- The proposed destruction of much of the remaining tree canopy and greenspace on the site;
- Non-conformance with Official Plan requirements for buffering and gradation in building height next to residential areas; and,
- A site plan approval process that has been ad hoc, incremental and has involved no formal public consultation<sup>1</sup>.

While SOS Collingwood has highlighted these issues, we have also made it clear that we are not opposed to any and all development on this site. SOS Collingwood is not anti-development. That said,

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<sup>1</sup> More detailed information on SOS Collingwood's concerns can found in our August 13, 2018 submissions and deputations to the Town's Development & Operations Services Committee.

we do believe that any development that does occur must conform with the Town's Official Plan and the Town's Zoning Bylaw, with due consideration of the Town's Waterfront Master Plan, and it must involve a robust and meaningful consultation process with local residents. The current development proposal and approval process do not meet those requirements. Lastly, given the environmentally sensitive nature of the site, any decision to allow development on it must be informed by a thorough and detailed Environmental Impact Study.

In that regard, SOS Collingwood, with the financial support of local residents, recently hired Birks Natural Heritage Consultants Inc. to conduct a peer review of the EIS Update submitted by the developer in support of their current site plan application. We have attached a copy of that report, which is being released for the first time, for your review.

As you will see, that peer review notes that the developer's EIS Update, "*provides a **very high-level site characterization of the proposed development and the assessment of impact to adjacent natural heritage features is generally lacking**". The review goes on to itemize a number of significant items that are missing from the developer's EIS Update and that "*... are necessary **to complete a thorough ecological impact assessment** of the proposal.*" It is SOS Collingwood's view that these items can only be addressed through the completion of a new and more thorough EIS and that that EIS should only be completed after the development proposal has been re-designed to comply with the Official Plan, the Zoning Bylaw and the Waterfront Master Plan.*

SOS Collingwood offers and submits this EIS peer review to the new Town Council in the spirit of collaboration and in the hope that we can build upon it and work with you to construct an open, transparent and inclusive consultation process to move forward on the site plan approval process for the Living Waters/Bear Estate site.

Sincerely



Jeff Newton  
Director  
SOS Collingwood



Bern Gorecki  
Director  
SOS Collingwood



George Irwin  
Director  
SOS Collingwood

c.c. Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority  
Blue Mountain Watershed Trust

Encl. Birks Natural Heritage Consultant's Peer Review of EIS Update for Proposed Cranberry and Living Waters Expansion, Town of Collingwood, prepared by the Hensel Design Group Inc., November 17, 2017