

Residents still support keeping Belfountain small

Last April, I wrote a letter about the CVC's repurposing of Belfountain's Mack Park into the Belfountain Complex which was published under "Plans for Belfountain Park will just benefit CVC."

CVC is now presenting their preferred alternative for the dam and headpond. They are proceeding with development which has always been their intention. They will grow their business at the expense of Belfountain Heritage and the "small is beautiful" atmosphere of the village.

Environmental assessment is a requirement before an undertaking can take place. The EA is not suggesting what development should take place, but the choice to develop requires the EA. Consultations are a mandated part of an EA. In the past year, consultations were held in which options for development were presented, with assurances that no decisions had been made. These mandated requirements were presented as listening to the people.

The community at large does not support the project because of the negative effects upon the village and loss of historical heritage. The CVC presents like-minded environmental groups as stakeholders, which it holds up as support for the development.

The Ontario Heritage Trust has named its next door property an Ontario Heritage Property despite having limited public access and two less impressive dams. But the CVC chooses to ignore the Ontario Heritage Act because cultural heritage designation may limit its plans to grow their business. They state it wasn't a priority in their plans despite being subject to the Ontario Heritage Act.

The CVC board is made up of elected municipal officials whose responsibility is to decide the strategic direction and operational policies and provide oversight to CVC senior management. The senior management has authority of the day-to-day operations. The CVC has usurped the role of our elected officials and our officials have remained complacent. This is best exemplified by Councillor Johanna Downey's comment that "The CVC should be able to do whatever they want because they own the land." Councillor Downey sits on both the CVC board and the Caledon Heritage committee.

The park was created by inventor and manufacturer Charles Mack. He used a large portion of his fortune making a park land of beauty with a miniature Niagara Falls, swing bridge, cave, picnic areas, swimming and boating. Every summer the park offered business women who could not afford it a vacation with free cottage accommodations. To achieve Cultural Heritage Designation under the Ontario Heritage Act, a property must meet one criteria of eight. Mack Park meets all eight.

The only hope for saving Belfountain's heritage and preventing the park's expansion with its increased congestion and noise is to get enough public support so that our council will act. Please e-mail your support for our heritage and keeping Belfountain small to Mayor Allan Thompson at: allan.thompson@caledon.ca or phone 905-584-2272, ext. 4156.

Stephen Reave

Forks of the Credit