

From:

[REDACTED]

Subject:

Correspondence to Council

Date:

Wednesday, May 28, 2025 10:38:49 AM

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Mayor, Deputy Mayor & Council

I was deeply disturbed to be told Council was once again looking at the Collingwood Leisure Time property as a potential site for the Collingwood Arts Centre on May 26th at the Council Meeting. I had watched on You Tube I believe the May 19th meeting were after deliberations had been discussed on the pros & cons of the Collingwood Leisure Time a vote was taken by Council on putting the Collingwood Leisure Time back on the list of possible sites. It was a 4/4 vote so it was defeated & I thought that was the end of discussions. But sadly that was not the case. I realize Mayor Hamlin was not present, however I am very confused when it was obviously defeated why it would be brought up again by Council on May 26th!

What is even more disturbing is that no one from the BIA, Council or the Committee who I believe were the actual people looking for a suitable site had contacted anyone from the Collingwood Leisure Time Club to see what our thoughts on this site becoming a potential Arts Centre would be. I feel it is quite rude to not contact our Board Chair Dennis Seymour and have discussions on this. The fact that Council & the BIA seem to forget that the Town only owns the land which we have a lease agreement for the next 30 years but it is the Collingwood Leisure Time Charity that owns the building not the Town of Collingwood. Council should be reminded that when the folks of Collingwood felt there was a need for a SENIORS CENTRE as there wasn't one in Collingwood, that they fund raised to build the Collingwood Leisure Time Club and as they say the rest is history. Our Club not only draws members from Collingwood, but the surrounding area and we have activities for seniors going 5 days a week with many activities in the evening also. Last year we had over 700 members & this year with members renewing we have over 500 members already signed up. We also on weekends have many activities that the Club puts on & we also do rentals for dances, weddings, showers, etc. Depending on the day & the activity our parking lot is full & sometimes it is very difficult to find a parking spot.

To even consider trying to put an Arts Centre in that location is totally ridiculous. First & foremost there is not enough room in that location to put an Arts Centre & a Seniors Centre together even with a rebuild. Also, again no one from the Council or the BIA for that matter has

bothered speaking to anyone on the Board to find out exactly what programs we do have. And the fact that this is a Seniors Club you cannot arbitrarily decide to replace all of our Seniors who are members of the Collingwood Leisure Time Club to put in an Arts Centre. I believe Mayor Hamlin said it best when the first discussion & vote took place that the Arts Centre needed a large area to meet their needs. Also I find it interesting that the steering committee who are suppose to be involved in finding a suitable location, to the best of my knowledge, the committee had removed the Collingwood Leisure Time location as not a desirable location for the Arts Centre.

I believe that both the Collingwood Council & the BIA need to think outside the box. You could have the opportunity to find a location where you could put an Arts Centre along with a Recreational Centre which would be utilized all the time but Council needs to be realistic that there is not enough area in the Town of Collingwood around our main street & have to look elsewhere. Or maybe you could look at the Curling Club & Ball Diamonds & put an Arts Centre in with those organizations. But please do not even contemplate trying to put it on our location, you will have many angry seniors!

Thank you for your attention to this matter & hopefully this will finally be put to rest but I would hope that Council would take the time to talk to our Chair or better still become a member, you all are over 50 & I believe you would be pleasantly surprised to find out how many activities you could join. Everything from Pickle Ball, Line Dancing to so many other activities are going on at the Club. Please come & visit us.

Sincerely

Louise McCartney West
(Vice Chair of the Collingwood Leisure Time Club)