

Deputation for the COW Meeting Tuesday October 29th, 2024

From: Katy Leighton

After almost a year of protesting the disruption and destruction associated with the somewhat random selection of Bay Street for the new forcemain, the residents of the area are becoming increasingly concerned with the lack of respect and inclusion of both the TBM citizens and its councilors in the management of this town.

Not only has this route never been clearly approved by the majority of councilors, Bay Street has unnecessarily been named in the HEWSF grant to the government, prior to a number of motions filed months ago have been discussed and clarified. This grant would appear to be the golden egg which distracts all councilors from their actual duty of responding to their voters and citizens.

I would think that it would be difficult to approve today's staff report as written, given the overwhelming resident discontent with the planned destruction of Bay Street. This route was planned without ANY community input, in fact with two input sessions after the decision had been made, simply to let the community think that they had a say. The community advisory group which was initially suggested was also deemed unnecessary by someone. All this without any knowledge or input from councilors.

All councilors must be clear on their duties and responsibilities to their citizens and the rule of law. Approving this funding is a heavy responsibility, and you will be held responsible for whatever lies ahead with not only this project, but for the reason this project is moving ahead with such haste; the Campus of Care. The Campus of Condos, as it is now being referred to as, is such a massive building project with virtually no oversight or accountability and very little transparency or guidance given to councilors and the public.

The golden egg which has arrived in the form of the HEWSF grant, and now requires the approval of the councilors, was planned and executed very discreetly with little communication to councilors or residents. There was no specific route required to be entered in the grant application, however Bay Street was named as the location for the project – before the reconsideration to the route had even been heard and determined – making it appear as a done deal. To change the route, in fact, is a simple amendment which we have been assured that the government grant people will willingly accept. In contrast to much of what you have heard and read recently, the funding will not be jeopardized by a change in route.

I request that the Mayor and Council consider the motions before you (listed a G.2.1 through G.2.3 in the September 30th, 2024 Council Meeting), prior to approving this funding. These motions have been conveniently delayed over the past few months.