

FOR COUNCIL'S CONSIDERATION

Re: Property Development Survey for 130 King Street West

Dear Mayor and Council:

At the April 7 meeting of Committee of the Whole, Council passed a motion recommending continued collaboration with the Georgian Bay Racquets Initiative. Meanwhile, the same group has launched what they're calling a "Response Guide" to help people fill out the Town's public survey on 130 King Street West, and I think that raises some serious red flags.

This looks like an organized campaign to steer the results. The Georgian Bay Racquets Initiative has sent out emails and attachments encouraging people to complete the survey in a way that boosts support for indoor tennis. They include sample answers, screenshots of the survey, and language aimed at getting indoor tennis to "poll as high as possible." They're also encouraging participation from *anyone*, regardless of where they live—whether that's Thornbury, Owen Sound, Wasaga Beach or anywhere in Ontario.

This is supposed to be a public consultation about a Town-owned property, but how meaningful is that consultation if one group is actively guiding responses with the goal of tipping the scale?

Many of us were under the impression that indoor tennis would be removed from the survey entirely, based on past public input as well as the staff and the consultant's guarantee. And yet here it is, asking respondents to state their choice and type of tennis courts (Question #16) and being pushed hard by one group with a very specific goal. It's confusing, and it leaves the impression that the process hasn't been transparent for residents or for Council.

I think this deserves a serious look. If the Town is going to base future decisions on the results of this survey, then we need to be confident that the results actually reflect what residents want, not just what one lobby group managed to mobilize.

Michael Seguin & Catherine Sholtz

 Thornbury