

SKOOTAMATTA DISTRICT RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

Box 146 Cloyne, Ontario KOH 1K0

www.skootamatta.ca

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Dear SDR Member:

For approximately 30 years the SDR, comprised of countless volunteers, has worked to advance the interests of property owners and their families resident on and adjacent to Skootamatta, Sheldrake and Pringle Lakes. In my position as the current President of the SDR, I want to assure you that the SDR Executive continues to meet our mandate as outlined in the constitution. To this end and in accordance with our constitution, the purpose of this letter is to provide you with information around a proposal for a planned **'Unique Economic Development'** (eg. **Eco Lodge, Resort, Spa...**) on Sheldrake Lake. Needless to say, this has been received with varying degrees of concern within the SDR and has been met with complete opposition by the Sheldrake Lake Cottage Association. In the paragraphs to follow I will attempt to do several things. Based on the SDR's investigation to date, I will, **1) Provide you with the background/history of this proposal, 2) Explain what the executive has done to involve itself in the process 3) Provide you with the contact information for the various partners involved in the project and 4) Let you know how the SDR plans to remain involved.** I would encourage you to consult the association's website at www.skootamatta.ca on a regular basis as this is how the SDR will be keeping you informed. Details of the proposed property are on our website.

Background/History of the Proposal

- In 2001 the **'AHEAD'** committee (Addington Highlands Economic Development) was formed by the Township and was primarily funded by a Provincial OSTAR grant. The purpose of the committee was to investigate and deal with ways that could improve the economic development of A. H.
- In 2003 the A. H. Official Plan (OP) was completed and part of the OSTAR grant was used to create a 'Tourism Report/Brochure'. This brochure is available on the SDR website.
- For the past 3-4 yrs or so, the **3** partners (Addington Highlands Township, Lennox & Addington County and the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), have been negotiating over the possible release of Crown land for a development.
- Initially, a potential sight was identified on McChesney Lake north of Skootamatta Lake, but this property was determined to be part of the *Aboriginal Land Claim* and was subsequently dismissed as a potential site.
- In 2006, an unknown developer was given a tour of the Sheldrake Lake property by the Township.
- The MNR agreed to the release of property on Sheldrake Lake and a subsequent **'Request For Proposal'** document was completed earlier this Fall. The County of Lennox & Addington hired a commercial real estate consultant to draw up and manage the **RFP**. The RFP document is also available on the SDR website.
- In late September 2007, the Sheldrake Lake Cottage Association was issued a notice announcing the advertising of the RFP. The SDR President was copied on this letter.
- On, or about, October 2, 2007, the RFP was advertised in Toronto and other centers.
- A **RFP Proponent's Meeting** was scheduled for Monday, October 29, 2007 in Napanee.

SDRA Involvement to Date

- I have been in contact with **Derek Mendham**, the Sheldrake Lake Association President, on several occasions and have offered him a 'directorship' on the SDRA executive. This is consistent with the SDRA constitution. We have included their membership list with the SDRA mailing list and have offered our support on this issue.
- As President, I sought executive consensus on this issue via telephone and e-mail. The consensus was overall opposition to this development.
- I have exchanged countless emails with representatives from the three partners to get clarification on the process and the RFP itself; with limited success.
- I have kept all of the SDRA executive members informed by phone or email of my findings.
- I personally visited the proposed location to get my own impression of the property.
- The SDRA, on the advice of Bill Garnish, submitted a '*Receipt Confirmation Form*' to the RFP, putting us in the position of a responder to the RFP and giving us direct access to the Partners and all information they provide to those responding to the RFP. The submission of this form ensures the SDRA will be informed of any changes or additions to the RFP up to the submission deadline of **November 16, 2007**. It also guarantees the SDRA a position to question the details of the RFP at the meeting.
- The SDRA attended the Proponent's Meeting in Napanee on Monday, October 29, 2007. I was joined in Napanee by Gordon McCulloch and Bill Garnish from the SDRA. Mike Vaughn, representing Sheldrake Lake, was also in attendance.

Summary of Proponent's Meeting

- The SDRA believes that there is at least one proponent, perhaps two, although we won't know for sure until November 16, 2007.
- The 'partners' are looking for a 'low impact resort development' (definition...unknown)
- The partners are open to any proposal as long as it passes an ***Environmental Assessment (EA)***.
- Should expansion be required, adjacent lands would be considered. This **may allow** for access to **Skootamatta Lake**, as Skootamatta is some 250 meters from the back property line. The Partners indicate they will consider access to Skootamatta Lake if the existing permit/EA process is followed.
- The MNR representative indicated that the evaluation/selection committee will consist of the partners only. There will be **no** public input! The SDRA is considered to be 'public'.
- If a Proponent is chosen then, the Environmental Assessment **would be open to the public**. We have asked that these public meetings be held in the summer months to ensure that seasonal property owners can be accommodated.
- All infrastructure requirements for the lodge/resort, must be paid for by the proponent. Ongoing ownership and maintenance of these roads could be negotiated with the Township.

Contact Information

- Addington Highlands - Henry Hogg (Reeve) 613-336-0227 henryh@sympatico.ca
- Louise Scott (Councillor Ward 2 - Skootamatta Lake Resident) 613-336-1133
- Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) - Robert Walroth robert.walroth@ontario.ca
- Lennox & Addington - Stephen Paul (Manager, Economic Development) 613-354-4883 ext 234
spaul@lennox-addington.on.ca
- Skootamatta District Ratepayers Association (SDRA) - Kent Farrow 905-274-4121
kentfarr@rogers.com

Where do we go from here?

- The SDRA recommends that you read the RFP and give careful consideration to the effect(s), positive or negative, it will have on 1) Our immediate area, 2) Sheldrake Lake, and 3) Skootamatta Lake.
- Personal concerns can be directed to the actual 'partners' at the numbers and addresses above.
- SDRA will be forming committees to review the RFP content, RFP process, development impacts, economic impacts, etc and ensuring clear communication of our concerns/interests to the Partners and other concerned groups. If you are interested in participating in these committees, please get back to me ASAP with your area of skills and interest.
- Please do not bombard me with emails unless it is absolutely necessary. As I mentioned earlier, we will be using the website to update you on a regular basis. Should items of significance surface then we will consider another posting.
- The SDRA will be notified if a Proponent(s) come forward with a response to the RFP after the November 16, 2007 deadline.

In summary, let me emphasize that your SDRA Executive is committed to being part of the RFP process. This will mark the first time that Addington Highlands has been involved in a RFP of this magnitude and we will do everything possible to guard the interests of our membership. The process could be a lengthy one, especially if the *public voice* is both loud and clear. Getting a comprehensive SDRA Membership consensus at this time would prove to be very difficult if not impossible, but if you have any worthwhile suggestions or comments then I'm open to any or all of them! Finally, if you think that you have skills or knowledge that may be beneficial to our cause and you would like to join an RFP committee then please contact me without hesitation.

Sincerely;

Kent Farrow

President - Skootamatta Ratepayers Association (SDRA)