

Sheralee Mitchell-MacEwan

Subject: FW: Unwelcome Surprise

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Subject Unwelcome Surprise

I was completely shocked when I first heard that the Shubenacadie Cenotaph was being moved.

I was at a directors meeting in the spring for the Shubenacadie Community Development Association (SCDA) , sitting next to Sue Smith -both of us long time members of the Shubenacadie Legion. Sue was president for at least three years; and I served on the executive a number of years ago. I was past president of the Shubenacadie Lions, serving from 2019-2024.

At the end of the meeting Director Shirley Peach mentioned that she had heard the Municipality was going to relocate the monument to the Shubenacadie Legion.

Sue and I stared at each other in disbelief. We were both shocked that this could possibly happen, and what compelling reason anyone would have to move it. There was absolutely no knowledge of this insane idea - no mention to the Lions Club or SCDA, and certainly no mention to the most of the Legion membership. I found this unbelievable and a complete surprise. There was no announcement or mention to any people I know in the community.

I had heard talk about a plan last year that it potentially might be moved closer to the old station property in order to make a larger green space. This would have made some sense, but I was sure that any decision to relocate the monument would automatically entail further community discussion or consultation with the village residents.

It was subsequently reported in a newsletter from the Municipality that they worked with a number of community groups. These groups have never been identified, and there was absolutely no word in the community about these discussions. Carl MacPhee was asked who these groups were, and to my knowledge, he did not respond to this question, other than meeting with the executive of the Legion.

The letter that the Legion sent to Carl MacPhee clearly stated in two separate places that IF the monument had to be moved, they could move it to the Legion. It was clearly identified in the original engineer's plan that the monument would not be moved, and I question what happened to cause the rewrite of the engineer's plan to include moving the monument. The Legion did not say they wanted it to be moved, BUT if it had to be moved it could be moved to the Legion.

Question: Did the Municipality tell the Legion the monument had to be moved, and if so WHY did it have to be moved? The Legion only wanted it if it HAD to be moved.

The result of all this was protest from the community.

I was quick to remember the professional way the Municipality handled the acquisition of the Shubenacadie Hall and Grounds, including a new survey and the subdivision, which included a new plot plan, and a five year lease agreement for the lions Hut. There was complete consultation with the stakeholders involved on the community grounds - credit to the Municipality for the way they managed this significant change to the village core - WELL DONE!

What happened with this complete surprise to the community at large?

The difference in processes completely boggles my mind. This shock to the community was completely contrary to Municipal past practices when dealing with community infrastructure.

It is totally unacceptable that a plan that would involve serious community change would not have as a priority a requirement for significant public consultation. The original Municipal plan for the development of the area would have avoided all this community stress, and would have left the monument in place - in the center of our village - and more to that, the Cenotaph should be designated a heritage site as an attraction for tourism.

Respectfully,

William (Willie) Courtney

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