

Dawn Henneberry

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Shubenacadie

Good day councillors, Warden, and CAO;

I know you have seen documents from myself; the last being a rescind on your last vote; the idea was delay it, do not rush moving the monument so that it can be part of the redevelopment. I have also attached a letter from my spouse, as this comes from someone who owns a business and has grown up in Shubenacadie and still resides here. We have been speaking with many people with differing views. The one main common message we were getting is that no one knows the truth, what the options were, and what did the Shubenacadie Redevelopment mean. There were many people that said they heard there was going to be an apartment there; which they did not want. There were many people that liked where it is and there were people that wanted it to go back, however, when we talked to the people we did, they were under the assumption that the municipality was going to fix the old site up. We explained the options and most that wanted it back would like to see it as part of the redevelopment of Shubenacadie; they did not know the full options. There were people that did not think it would be moved back and wondered why there was such a negative rhetoric about the move. There are also many people that said, now that the monument is moved, they like it there and said that we should not have to pay that amount, due to mistakes from the beginning.

We opened the conversation to everyone. We listened to all of community's members and their comments and tried to help with the misinformation that was spread around. The most disappointing thing that we heard was that people were being "smeared" if they said anything in opposition. Due to the negative rhetoric on line, people did not want to get involved; they did not want to go through being intimidated; this can be detrimental for community residents, businesses (which did not want to speak for fear of being trashed) and of course yourselves. I even stopped trying online as they start spilling out accusations, which are not true and not one person needs to be intimidated. There were some that voted that started they do not go to the old site due to the sound issues. I am only sharing this with you all just to give you context of what happens when you do not have public participation.

1. The truth is not shared. There are personal opinions on each end of a matter, however the correct information is in the middle.

2. After there were issues with the move, if the municipality had have controlled the outcome by having an opportunity for public engagement. There are many people that are over the 65-year-old range, which is in the almost 50 % of the disabilities in Nova Scotia and we are in a community with many older people, that might not be on or own a computer. If they do have a computer they will stay away from the intimidation, which again leaves out many individuals.
3. When you have a petition, you should have signatures on both sides and should be of voting age.
4. There should not be allowed any hate rhetoric, and should be controlled by the municipality so that all votes are protected.

**Public Participation** Participation by the public is a key factor in ensuring a healthy and representative democracy. Residents should feel that their council provides enough opportunities for feedback and community opinions. **Your council should provide ample opportunities for public engagement.** Council should set regular meeting times so that members of the public know when council is in session. Holding meetings on weekday evenings is often the most recommended time period for promoting resident engagement. Council should also strive to provide as much notice as possible for any special or emergency meetings they may hold. Open and transparent meetings help residents feel connected to the municipal decision-making process and that their opinions are heard by council. **Nova Scotia is a diverse province. Almost 38% of Nova Scotians have a disability, and this increases to 49% for Nova Scotians aged 65 and older.** Council should consider developing 15 public engagement approaches to ensure participation from persons with disabilities, African Nova Scotians, Indigenous people, newcomers and others that may be underrepresented and underserved. Resources are available to provide guidance on engaging with persons with disabilities (<https://accessible.novascotia.ca/resources/engaging-persons-with-disabilities>) and other groups through the AMANS Equity, Anti-Racism and Accessibility Support Program. Nova Scotia is committed to addressing inequity, **systemic hate**, racism and ableism, and to supporting underrepresented and underserved communities. A more equitable and inclusive Nova Scotia includes being a more accessible province where all Nova Scotians have the opportunity to participate in all that our province has to offer.

**In Conclusion: What I have done.** I am in the process of joining the Legion and have others to help. I am going to help with trying to secure a grant for the Legion. One of the reasons, I believe the Legion is struggling is they do not have many people that can help them out, even if it is on social media. I will help them with the Monument.

The last item I wanted to say is that I cannot imagine the issues that you all have to deal with on a daily basis. I put the public participation in this letter, so that hopefully in the future we do not make the same mistake again. I know we have unbiased councillors, however, when there is only one side speaking, that is biased and needs your help to ensure that everyone has a say; everyone hears/ sees all options put on the table.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration,

Dawn Henneberry BA BScN RN CCNO

George Ettinger