

January 17, 2014

City of Burlington

Mayor Rick Golding

Councillor Rick Craven

Councillor Marianne Meed Ward

Councillor John Taylor

Councillor Jack Dennison

Councillor Paul Sharman

Councillor Blair Lancaster

cob@burlington.ca

I have spent a great deal of time trying to put the proper words to paper. I am so appalled that it is very difficult. I am appealing to all of you with this letter to make the right decision. Please don't turn this issue into another Pier or Performing Arts fiasco.

It has now come to light that the City of Burlington is planning an expansion to the parking lot at LaSalle Park. So, now the plans are to not only destroy the overwintering habitat for the Trumpeter Swans, but to also cut down the tree that the Eastern Screech Owl has been raising it's young in for at least the last 3 years (as long as we have been watching her). The Cliff Swallow's habitat was destroyed years ago. There will soon be nothing left of this jewel in the city for us, our children and our grandchildren, etc. to

enjoy. Nature in all its glory will be taken away from us, the ordinary folk of Burlington. The boaters however, will have their supposed safe harbour for their very expensive toys, and there will be plenty of space for them to park their cars

The city of Burlington has a population of 176,000. The marina currently has 219 slips and the proposal is to increase this by 120. I would be very interested to know how many of these slips are used by Burlington residents. To this point, the City of Burlington has spent in excess of \$300,000. for Environmental Assessments only, and that does not include the fees for the redesign of the parking lot. The 10,000 tons of rock that will be dumped into the lake for the break wall and expansion of the marina will cost Burlington taxpayers a minimum of \$9.2 million. I AM NOT VERY HAPPY that Council is considering spending my hard earned tax dollars to benefit a few.

I would suggest that the natural atmosphere at LaSalle Park is a better economic benefit to Burlington than an expanded Marina. Many people come from out of town to watch and photograph the swans, etc.

We met a young man just this week, who was here from New York State to see and photograph the Trumpeter Swans. I am certain that more people would come from far and wide to see the Trumpeters if they just knew about them. How many more people will come to Burlington to view the break wall? How many more people will the 120 additional slips draw to Burlington?

Maybe some of this money would be better spent promoting LaSalle Park as a tourist attraction for all that it has to offer.

How many people actually know that:

- This is the overwintering grounds for more than 200 of

Ontario's Trumpeter Swans

- Bald Eagles sit on the edge of the ice to fish in Winter
- In the summer the Osprey dive for fish in the shallows around the park

Just imagine how many more people would visit our city, enjoy our restaurants and visit LaSalle Park if they knew about it.

Our hospital needs improvements, children are going to school hungry, seniors need assistance and people are living on the street because there is not suitable housing. The \$9.2 million dollars would be of benefit to all these issues.

Burlington taxes could increase by over 4% for 2014. I don't object to a tax increase for legitimate expenses that would benefit everyone, but I do object to an expense of a minimum of \$9.2 million for a marina.

Susan L. McCreadie