

# Reevely Discovers Walton Story

Posted on [March 15, 2013](#) by [Ken Gray](#)

So Citizen reporter David Reevely has deigned to discuss your agent and his mighty stories on Walton International.

I am blessed.

Usually Reevely's MO when he's beaten on a story is to ignore it. So my work is especially honoured because he chose to blow it off in an obscure blog post rather than blow it off altogether. But then I guess when you get your posterior beaten on an enormous story as badly as he has on this one (despite being at city hall every day), you can't ignore it altogether. Maybe he's contracted editors.

Reevely, who was a Citizen city hall bureau intern when I was covering municipal government fulltime (and took great pains to explain how I was doing my job wrong ... some things don't change), spends [a great number of pixels](#) explaining how he has covered this on the Walton proposal and that on the Walton proposal. That he covered their little development proposal previously. He has this completely covered if it were important enough to cover. You know, if it were more real, he'd write more. A fair amount of protesting there.

He rather dismisses the lobbying effort, forgetting to note that Walton consultant Richard Mahoney was pegged to be a Paul Martin cabinet minister were he to get by the ballot box in Ottawa Centre, a loss to be sure. And if we remember the pedigree of the [mayor](#), it is [Liberal](#) ... in name, if not in actions ... no bulldog to be sure but a man who knows what side his bread is buttered on, most times. As well, a mayor who is passionate about development.

Still Reevely is dismissive of these little works by yours truly on Walton.

In conclusion, none of this is to say that Walton shouldn't be taken seriously. They didn't hire a couple of guys here in town and start throwing money around, sponsoring stuff at city hall and going to OMB hearings and [meeting](#) public officials for nothing. Their ideas may not even be bad ones, if Ottawa finds itself needing more suburban land. Particularly if they really are offering to kick in a lot of money for public services that usually only come along long after development. But as of today, there's an awful lot standing between Walton and what it wants.

Perhaps then, Reevely should take it seriously. The usual MO of a reporter badly beaten on a huge story is to dismiss it. I've seen this a couple of times. A "PR thingy" he calls the Walton plan. He could check to see how many councillors have been privately briefed on this PR thingy. But that would mean abandoning the orchestrated city agenda or not tweeting a meeting for two readers.

So here's some advice for the aforementioned scribe (which he's not good at taking) from someone who covered city hall longer and better than he ever will. If a company has assembled for management at least 3,200 acres of land (and with partners probably more) stretching from Manotick to West Carleton of a size that it rivals that of early [Kanata](#) or the original Barrhaven or [Orleans](#) and that it is prime agricultural land and that it is worth hundreds of millions of dollars and that it would create thousands of jobs and homes for thousands and that the mayor's office is taking it very seriously and there might be a rail component from Baseline out, it might, just might, be worth a story (even if it is written in his prose that would put coffee to sleep) bigger than the yarn on computer geeks at the city hall lobbyist registry not being able to find 'H' for Hume and Hobbs on their keyboards.

Reevely worries about what he's not being told by city hall. One wonders if readers should be worried about what he's not telling them.

Maybe he could get out of all the meetings and press conferences, stop having his agenda set by politicians, stop tweeting on meetings that even I don't read let alone the public, and find a story. Perhaps put some shoe leather on pavement rather than be spoon-fed by the bureaucrats and politicians. And when they take the spoon away, Reevely whimpers. Or when someone else finds a real story, he ridicules it. He could get a source. Or develop a relationship with someone other than himself.

Look, continue to ignore this story if you like. Bulldog Ottawa had its biggest readership days in its history on this story because people couldn't get it anywhere else. It's good for for the dog. Maybe in Reevely's world the farmers of southwest Ottawa don't merit knowing what's happening in their area or the Citizen subscribers of [Richmond](#) or Kanata don't either. After all, they don't live in the [Glebe](#).

But after a couple of decades and change working at the Citizen, I still bleed its ink and wish it and my former colleagues well. A vibrant Citizen is important to this community. But a leaking ship doesn't need this anchor thrown out.

It's hard to fathom why the editors there haven't wondered where this story is despite it being out there for more than a week and served up on a platter in Bulldog Ottawa. The people of Ottawa and particularly southwest Ottawa might be curious.

But then I've just been doing this for 35 years. What would I know.

There were a number of reasons why I started Bulldog Ottawa. Want to guess what one of them was?

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## 12 Responses to *Reevely Discovers Walton Story*

1. *Ken Gray* says:

[March 16, 2013 at 6:42 AM](#)

@Keenan

Welcome back to my little world.

I look forward to some good debates with you.

cheers

kgray

2. *Keenan Wellar* says:

[March 15, 2013 at 10:53 PM](#)

This is fascinating. It seems like only yesterday Mr. Gray was writing under the Ottawa Citizen banner with headlines that included "Pity The Poor, Poor Blogger." Now that Mr. Gray is himself a small-c "citizen journalist" it seems the divide between "journalist" and "blogger" is a little more...gray?

As for some journalist or another not taking a story as seriously as you'd like, or not covering it the way you'd like, welcome to the club on that one too.

It seems your views on blogging have changed. How's your understanding of Twitter coming along? I was at a social media conference last year and almost fell off my chair when someone put up a slide with the quote: "It is a sad testimony on the state of society when people start to resort to Tweets and Friending to convey and get news." ~ Ken Gray to Keenan Wellar

3. *Ken Gray* says:

[March 15, 2013 at 2:03 PM](#)

@John

Didn't you ask me to engage with readers? But yes it is time for recess. I've got other work to do.

cheers

kgray

4. *John Wrigley* says:

[March 15, 2013 at 1:52 PM](#)

Is it time for recess yet?

5. *Ken Gray* says:

[March 15, 2013 at 1:39 PM](#)

David:

Reeveley chose to ignore a good news story after it was published in Bulldog Ottawa. Fine.

But I did a lot of work on this to get this story and broke it. Good.

I really don't mind what Reeveley does until he starts criticizing good reporting to cover his refusal to follow it.

He threw the first rock. I have a right to defend myself. I've ignored his shots in the past. Yesterday I decided to stop.

I have a right to respond to unwarranted criticism including yours. I will do it in the future when I choose.

I have that right. I will exercise it.

cheers and thank you for commenting.

kgray

6. *David* says:

[March 15, 2013 at 1:09 PM](#)

@Ken

If you would stick to news and things newsworthy, we wouldn't be having this conversation. Indeed, the very blog post in which this conversation is occurring wouldn't exist if you were sticking to newsworthy items. Taking disparaging jabs at former colleague David Reeveley's coverage of the Walton scheme does not constitute news or a newsworthy topic.

Moreover, you conflate news and newsworthy with likely to happen. Most of your reporting on this topic so far has been alarmist and without any serious analysis as to the likelihood of it coming to pass. You belittle and dismiss without support or even a rationale anyone who counters your claims. Furthermore, you keep claiming you know more just about anyone else on this topic, yet you have yet to produce a shred of actual evidence that city officials are even considering this. Just because Walton are lobbying doesn't mean it will happen.

Let's just take the rail transit claim again that this proposal seems to be premised on. We'd be looking at a minimum of 15 km of new track along undesignated corridors that the City has never had the faintest interest in running any kind of rapid transit along. Besides the obvious

problems of dealing with the MTO and the NCC to get from Baseline to your would-be Waltonia, the cost of such a line would easily be in excess of \$750M. Do you have any kind of evidence to suggest that Walton is willing or even able to front that kind of cash, or even half of it? There are serious, substantial costs to redirecting growth away from the designated corridors. These ‘facts on the ground’ can’t be wished away by intensive lobbying.

7. *Ken Gray* says:

[March 15, 2013 at 12:11 PM](#)

@David

Thank goodness I don’t have a monopoly on “nasty.”

David, I think it’s safe to say I might know a bit more about the Walton plan than do you.

I don’t think I need to explain why this is newsworthy because I explained it in the post just for people like you.

If you don’t think a proposal to build a city in the southwest of Ottawa and where intense lobbying by very high-powered people recently is not newsworthy (and where councillors are being briefed about the proposal in private), you might not know as much as you think about what constitutes news.

Sorry.

cheers and thx for the comment

kgray

8. *David* says:

[March 15, 2013 at 11:58 AM](#)

@Luke Chadwick

There’s little point in trying to reason with Ken Gray. When he refers to a post on the Citizen’s blog site – a site that Ken himself until recently used to blog on – as “obscure”, you know all rationality has gone out the window.

David Reevely was probably on to something when advising Ken Gray how to do his job; age and experience aren’t guarantees of expertise, after all.

It’s old news that Walton has been acquiring land in the southwest (indeed, in addition to David Reevely’s stories, I can recall one a few years ago by a citizen reporter – probably Mohammed Adam – interviewing some farmers who were “selling out” to Walton). The satellite city idea is old news as well since none other than former mayor Larry O’Brien put it in his platform during the last city election. Perhaps Ken Gray is just getting defensive that his former acolyte beat him to the story over two years ago. Ken Gray is still under the impression that this Walton scheme is actually going to go somewhere sometime soon. He keeps lending the vague impression that he knows more, but never comes forth with any actual sources or evidence that in any way suggest that City officials are about to make a major detour from over three decades of institutionalized growth policy and planning.

Ken Gray is also probably aware of the fact that in the highly unlikely event that the Walton scheme somehow makes it into the draft Official Plan that it will then quickly find its way into the mainstream media and the real firestorm will truly begin, with Ken Gray’s little blog left behind.

9. *Ken Gray* says:

[March 15, 2013 at 10:12 AM](#)

@Luke

Well, Luke, it was an opinion piece and that's my opinion. If you think it was nasty, so be it. I don't like important information that should be getting to the people ignored.

The Walton link was up for a couple of days. Perhaps now it doesn't work or somebody took down the document. I can't imagine why they'd do that.

Thx for your comment and reading.

cheers

kgray

10. *Luke Chadwick* says:

[March 15, 2013 at 10:06 AM](#)

When I go to that link in the 3rd of the numbered articles I get this message:

The requested page “/sites/default/files/From%20The%20Ground%20Up%20-%20February%202013.pdf” could not be found.

It goes to a Walton website.

Thanks for the additional details on what information has been published and what you claim Reevely does and doesn't know..but I still stick to my original point that your tone comes across as nasty.

Aside from that...I have grave doubts that this Walton plan will ever come to fruition and if it does it will be in a much more toned down size wise version.

About 10 or so years ago, I thought Minto had tied up lands within the Hope Side Road, Eagleson, Fallowfield, Richmond Road area but it looks like they have walked away from that and now Walton is trying their luck.

As Reevely pointed out, Walton are speculators and syndicators and they charge management fees to overseas investors, many of whom never visit the lands and don't follow the inner workings of City Hall to see if their investment has a hope.

11. *Ken Gray* says:

[March 15, 2013 at 9:54 AM](#)

@Luke

Thank you for your comment.

If you check the third of the three numbered posts on the Walton report, you will notice there is a link to all the Walton charts and maps.

Reevely copied one of Walton's maps and put it on his blog. I was concerned that there was a copyright problem with doing that so I linked to the whole report or “thingy” as Reevely put it.

Look, if it weren't for this publication, one of the biggest stories of the year would have been ignored and when the city released it, the deal would have been done.

What bothered me about Reevely's actions was not only did he ignore the story (it still hasn't appeared in the print newspaper), he belittled it.

He was beaten on a story but because he was beaten, he didn't want to tell the public of

something of critical importance – one of the biggest developments in the history of this city. When it appeared in Bulldog Ottawa, he still didn't follow.

That's terrible journalism and he needed to be called on it. It's not about him. It's about information getting to the public in an informed democracy. And where are his editors on this?

The city is doing a bad job of communicating. One would hope that journalists would not be following their example.

cheers

kgray

12. *Luke Chadwick* says:

[March 15, 2013 at 9:34 AM](#)

I read Reevely's article (1st one with an actual map) and I just read your post and this is getting rather silly and quite frankly your tone comes across as nasty. I have found that this City is rather small and you can easily burn your bridges with little recourse.

You say that Reevely focusses on irrelevant meetings. The counter point to that is that some of your postings rail against Councillor Hobbs in a very unseemly way bordering on obsessiveness and your intense interest on the inner machinations on minor league baseball and its possibility of coming to Ottawa have a limited audience. Baseball in many ways is a vestige of the 'old west end' (wherever that is) and Ottawa of a bygone era.

This is not going to end well.

If you had put up a map and brought forth the facts that Reevely has done rather than your musings that this is a huge development with far ranging implications without any meat on the subject, I would have given you more credit.

Hope that helps and that you and Reevely can kiss and make up.

13.