

+ It is a pleasure to appear before you today, not in criticism, but in praise of a proposal, and a process, that is all too rare in this city.

+ The GA watched this development, but did not intervene because there was vigorous and effective representation by the local community -- the Old Ottawa East CA. The staff report makes it abundantly clear that it was the CA that was driving the deliberations with the developer.

+ The rarity is this: The community identified the potential of this land, even before the developer bought it. The community "owned" the CDP -- which is as it should be. What's more -- and this is something we have advocated should always happen -- the CDP was turned into a Secondary plan AND a Zoning by-law. So when the developer came into the picture, its options were clear. Credit goes to Regional for realizing that a better way than confrontation and antagonism was dialogue and cooperation. Fruitful discussion ensued. Compromises were made. The dialogue will continue into the finer points of implementation.

+ We can only hope that Regional will adopt the same attitude of openness and dialogue in its proposals for the former Remer and Idone lands south of Leitrim Wetland. We have extended an invitation to dialogue but it has so far been rejected.

+ Unfortunately, what is not so rare is that throughout this long process the planning staff did not play a constructive role. It was the by joint leadership of the community, the landowners and, later, the developer that overruled the City.

+ But there is hope in a younger generation of planners. We commend the author of this report for a responsive Consultation report (Document 3) -- in sharp contrast, for example, to the report on consultations the public got to see on the Wildlife Protection during Construction Protocol that went through Planning Committee and Council recently. The intelligent response to the Garden City Movement comment stands out.

+ Will lessons be learned from this? One would hope so. Strong community involvement is critical. The City's consultation and planning process should be structured such that such involvement is encouraged and assisted. Codifying the community's preferences into legally binding documents is essential. The lesson for the development industry is that dialogue and rational deliberation gets you farther and results in winning solutions.

Thank you.

Erwin Dreessen for the Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital

