

## A Reflection on The June 24, 2024 Council Meeting and the MZO Request of Avenu

*An invitation to all stakeholders to put on the bridle of a locally a locally created/approved Avenu build out.*

There was a crowded council room that provided standing room only of concerned citizens, ratepayers and debutants at the June 24 Council meeting. Local democracy and the Compassionate Spirit of our valued community, was fully in evidence. For the most part peopled listened with respect to the deputations, the interchange between council, as well as, the debate that followed regarding the proposed motion to approve the MZO request of Avenu by Councillor Rock and seconded by Councillor Wright. That being said there were moments of tension at the interface which caused Mayor Wotten to publicly call some citizens to account, for their behaviour, as well as, give herself time to share the personal hurt she has received from the public response of attacking her commitment for the common good of the Township since this proposed development was initiated by the proponent's public awareness and marketing campaign.

The mayor to her credit called for a recess for Council to reconsider which brought forward a new motion from Councillor LeRoy to refer the MZO request back to staff for a recommendation re the MZO order request. The staff report is to be brought back to the planning committee meeting in September. It passed with a close majority of four votes to three.

While addressing Council regarding our written correspondence I proposed the idea of a Council ad hoc committee consisting of representation from Avenu properties, regional and Scugog planning staff, Kawartha Conservation Authority, Scugog Lake Stewards, Mississaugas of Scugog First Nation, Castle Harbour residents, and the Ward 5 Councillor.

Its mandate would be to review the concerns of the local body politic by deputations and correspondence, the necessary technical reports of planning staff have requested, the sign off from of the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) for the well and septic system, as well as, sign off from other key agencies to confirm there are no technical impediments to the proposed size of the project proceeding.

Following this step and the developer wishes to proceed, a complete application which would include a legal agreement, including a ADR clause to deal with township and public issues during the construction phase. It would also include applications to amend the Township's Official Plan and zoning by-law.

Such a committee would begin the process of building relationships of trust, as well as, the necessary healing the division that this project has caused. It could also access the wisdom and expertise of a broader network including the province with the possibility of expediting the process leading to shovels in the ground earlier than that of a MZO order process. Maybe it could be viewed a pilot project in fast tracking a much-needed development for affordable senior housing in Port Perry for the region and the province to consider.

As to the issue a number of people including council members and the Avenu representative referencing their position on our local official plan, I made the point that this plan is long beyond its shelf life (every official local plan according to provincial statute must be revisited by the local township and region every five years and we are well beyond that time). Great change with respect to environmental awareness and technology with regards to best management practices in housing development practices has occurred since 2011. I would add also, the consciousness that created this problem will require an integral one to find a creative viable solution.

Another issue of common ground was the issue of affordability for much needed housing for seniors, families and individuals. However, there was no referencing a definition of same backed by government policy, statistics such as cost per square foot and the demographics for Scugog as to age and financial income. Such data would perhaps address the concern about the cost of this project with the proposed units would be far too expensive and not available to Scugog seniors or citizens at the lower end of financial scale..

To conclude on a note of poetry by (President John F Kennedy), “Never fear to negotiate but never negotiate out of fear”

May it be so,

Larry Corrigan, Community Elder and “Good Trouble”