

COMMENTARY

Councillors hoping non action will pay off

Once again, I find myself compelled to have to express my disbelief with the actions, or in this case, non actions of city hall.

Various media outlets have stated in the last week that council will be voting on whether to impose a construction moratorium on home development in the west end. The situation is apparently due to the fact that with the growth of the city in the west, that the infrastructure, in this case sewage related, is at capacity. One article goes on to say that this is the site which was at least in part responsible for the basement flooding in Glen Cairn last summer [about 11 months ago] and elsewhere that "the city is acting quickly".

I, perhaps naively, had assumed the city's Planning and Environment Committee ensured that the city planned. It should ensure that infrastructure is in place prior to growth occurring and capable of handling some contingency, not necessarily the storm of the century, but a major one.

Ms. Feltmate has stated she supports the freeze. As Vice Chair of the Planning and Environment Committee and the current member of council for Kanata South, she, of all people should have ensured the situation never got to the point where it is now. The Planners have to listen to the builders as they are the ones who through their businesses reflect the demands of the city citizens. If people did not have the desire to live in the western parts of the city, then people would not purchase housing there. All of those people who have purchased new homes have paid the city a development charge, part of which is to support, surprise, their areas infrastructure. This also includes the ability to handle developments that are approved but not yet for sale. Should the developers be upset/ Definitely! Should they be surprised about the lack of foresight? Not really.

This, I suspect is a 'tip of the iceberg' issue. If I was a resident of the affected area, I would be on the phone to all of city council asking why this has happened and why, after a year, a

further year has to elapse. Was the contract put out for bid? When? Has it been awarded? If it has, tell me when and where because I can find no record of it in the 2009 awarded contracts.

October 25 is the date when you have the opportunity to express, via your vote, your satisfaction or lack of it, for the City of Ottawa municipal government. If you are happy with a city council that works the way they have for the last 4 years. The ones who come up with Ottawawatermobiles, who treat their ward like mini fiefdoms, who dither and fret over minutia, pat themselves on the back at every media opportunity and yet, using this as an example, let the planning and implementation of infrastructure which supports growth of the city, its tax base, and improves the quality of life of all, then vote for the incumbent in your ward.

If you want change, a city councillor who works for his or her constituents and the city, instead of being out getting photographed or sound bited, I recommend you take a solid look at what each non incumbent brings to the table, what they stand for.

When I volunteer my time to help the city, I do it because the organization or cause is important to me, not to use the cause to leverage my profile. Every time you see an incumbent in the media, ask yourself whether it is for self promotion or are they actually doing productive work for the city, and yes, a number are. Remember, they are still employed as City Council members and your representatives until the new Council is sworn in on December 1, 2010.

The upcoming election should in my opinion be based on the issues, not who will win as Mr. or Ms. Congeniality. I am not and would not be so presumptuous as to tell you who to or not to vote for. In a democracy, we all are able to decide who we want to represent us. All that I ask is that you do use your privilege to vote in October and do so for the candidate you feel would do the best job for you and the city.

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