



## The Corporation of the Municipality of Central Elgin

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August 12, 2010



To The Residents of Central Elgin,

In recent weeks the community of Port Stanley has been caught in a whirlwind by the name of HMCS Ojibwa.

The Elgin Military Museum is proposing moving the vessel to Port Stanley using a \$1.9 million federal grant, which must be used to put the submarine in place by March 2011 or the money disappears.

Many people in the community have expressed support for the submarine locating in Port Stanley.

I want to state from the outset that all members of the Municipal Council are among those who would like to see the submarine in Port Stanley.

However, where the submarine will ultimately be located is in dispute.

At a public meeting on Tuesday, Council, Central Elgin staff and our consultants explained that it is not possible to put the submarine on the east berm – the site preferred by the Elgin Military Museum. The area is part of the land covered by our agreement with Transport Canada that is under study so that Central Elgin will be protected against environmental issues that may compromise its use as parkland. The study won't be completed until mid 2012 at the earliest.

Council offered two alternative sites. One in the water next to the Olmstead building, which the Museum representatives rejected outright because they say the Navy will not allow the submarine to remain in the water or on a cradle coming out of the water. The second proposed site is next to the west breakwater on land that would be created from dredged materials and deposited next to the breakwater.

The Museum reps and others have rejected that site because it's their opinion it can't be done in time. Our experts say it can.

The real issue comes down to the use of the east berm.

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Central Elgin has been involved in divestiture talks since 2005 and from those talks and public consultations we have developed a vision for the future of Port Stanley. That vision is based on linking Port Stanley's past with its future. The east berm is the centrepiece of Port Stanley's future development. Even if the environmental risk assessment were completed, Council stands firm that it would not allow the submarine to be on the berm.

Placing something as huge as the submarine – a football field in length and five storeys high – would dominate the berm and proclaim to the world that coming to Port Stanley is a visit to the submarine community. While Council appreciates that a submarine might be a nice added attraction on the west pier, it can't be the centerpiece for Port Stanley without unravelling the direction we are headed. Rather than being known for upscale restaurants, shops, beaches and a place where tourism boat traffic is welcome, we would be the village of the submarine. We do not believe the majority of citizens want that as Port Stanley's vision. The submarine has nothing to do with Port Stanley's past.

The greatest trend in tourism today is authenticity.

While Disney World and lesser artificial tourism experiences are struggling for audience share, a simple theme of "human, enduring and dramatic" is expected to increase Scotland's tourism industry by 50% by 2015. How? Real experiences are identified as the key consumer-driver for future tourism. And it's not just Scotland, from B.C. to India to Montenegro authentic tourism is growing. Think of your own vacation experiences. Did you look for an artificial experience or one where you could learn about the history and the people. The nice thing about authenticity is that it is easier and less expensive to do it right.

Port Stanley has a rich and vibrant history. Tourists want to know about Guy Lombardo and the Royal Canadians' favourite place to play. They are interested in Port Stanley's role in the Great Lakes fishery. They are interested in the Great Lakes. They are interested in locally grown food.

We're told that Navy doesn't like the locations we've offered. The last I heard, this is our community. We don't take orders from anyone in the Navy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Marks', written in a cursive style.

Tom Marks,  
Mayor.