

June 22, 2021

Dear Mayor Harding,

Re: Sugarloaf Island

A number of members of the Muskoka Lakes Association (MLA) have become aware of development on Sugarloaf Island that involves severe blasting and tree removal over a large portion of the property owned by Mr. Azouri and his family. Members have also learned of the docks being extended in front of the boat slips, in such a way that it is not possible for a boat to drive into the slips.

A priority of the MLA is to advocate for responsible development that has a light environmental footprint. The protection of our natural environment is becoming even more urgent in light of the climate crisis, as acknowledged by the District's climate emergency resolution.

We believe that the extreme tree removal and blasting at Sugarloaf Island depicted in the photo below has destroyed the natural environment and beauty of a large swathe of this island. It also is a blight on the landscape for neighbours and tourists and negatively impacts the ability of neighbours to enjoy their properties.

We respectfully request that the Township take immediate steps to investigate and determine whether there has been any breach of the Townships' bylaws, site plan agreement or other regulations. If so, we urge you to take every available action to:

- Require full revegetation/remediation of the areas cleared that were not part of the TML site plan approval;
- Stop any further work on the property and maintain this stop work order for as long as it takes for satisfactory remediation and revegetation, legal resolution and a revised site plan agreement to be put in place;
- Take securities for a period of no less than 3 years to ensure establishment of the vegetation with release to be determined by a professional forester/arborist ;
- Confirm the location(s) where the blast rock was disposed and compel it to be removed unless properly disposed of;
- Prosecute the owner and every party involved in completing the illegal work for breaches of the Township's bylaws and site plan agreement, and impose the maximum permissible fines;
- Rescind all approvals where legally possible; and
- Require that any docks built contrary to the Township's bylaws, including those in front of the boat slips, be removed.

The MLA recognizes that it may be challenging to carry out onsite inspections for water access properties when inspectors do not have access to a boat. We encourage the Township to acquire a boat for this purpose to ensure ability to conduct timely inspections in an effort to prevent these types of incidents.

The MLA also urges the Township to create communications directed to realtors and contractors that educate them about tree preservation, site alteration and other bylaws and approvals relevant to building, as well as the ramifications of breaching these bylaws.

The petition asking Council to compel remediation of destruction on Sugarloaf Island has now received over 1200 signatures and rising rapidly. The hundreds of comments on the petition demonstrate how serious our community is about stopping this irresponsible destruction and remediating the property. It is time that an example is made of this owner and builder and their flagrant disregard for the approvals process and the special Muskoka environment.

We would appreciate knowing whether there has been an investigation and, if so, whether any breach of bylaws, site plan agreement or other regulations was found. We also would appreciate knowing what consequences will be imposed by the Township for any such breaches.

Thank you for your time and attention as we all work to protect the Muskoka we love and increase its resilience to climate change.

Sincerely,



Deborah Martin-Downs
President

Cc: Derek Hammond, Chief Administrative Officer
David Pink, Director of Development Services and Environmental Sustainability

