

December 13, 2016

**Chair Edwards and Members of Committee of Adjustment
AND
Mayor and Members of Council**

**Township of Muskoka Lakes
1 Bailey Street, PO Box 129
Port Carling, Ontario P0B 1J0**

Dear Sirs:

**Re: Centre West Management Ltd
Concurrent Consent application B63/16 and
Zoning by-law amendment ZBA 54/16
Pt lots 24 and 25 Conc 4, parts 2-6 plan 35R-6501
Vacant land with frontage on District Road 7
extending to Cox Bay, Lake Joseph**

The Muskoka Lakes Association (MLA) represents more than 2000 families within Muskoka and has addressed committee and council numerous times striving to achieve a Muskoka that provides for the responsible use, enjoyment and conservation of Muskoka unique environment for its present and future residents and its economic viability.

The MLA understands that policy-making in such a unique area as Muskoka will always involve a measured balance of interests. Maintaining this delicate balance in the Township of Muskoka Lakes is everyone's job: local politicians, assisted by their staff; residents and property owners, and local associations. All have had their say over the years, and the result is a set of guiding documents that includes the District of Muskoka Official Plan, the Township Official Plan, its Zoning By-Law, and its Strategic Plan. All of these documents speak clearly to preserving the natural environment as an essential overall priority.

As an example, the Official Plan (2012) notes that, "Through its Official Plan, the Township of Muskoka Lakes endeavours to maintain a strong sense of community while embracing economic enhancement and growth opportunities that:

- Respect the environment;
- Maintain a high level of protection for our lakes;
- Nurture the protection and conservation of significant natural and cultural heritage features;
- Contribute to a year-round sustainable economy; and
- Enhance the quality of life of all citizens."

The Official Plan also recognizes that development in Muskoka can be challenging given the area's natural attributes and physiography. Most lands that are easily developed have already been developed, the more challenging lands are still vacant.

The rezoning and consent applications by Centre West Management Ltd have been described by planning staff as difficult. Perhaps they are difficult because they propose the wrong development of the property.

The property is large, over 100 acres, with frontage of approximately 360 feet (?) on District Road 7. It is vacant and future development is indicated as residential without any details as to number of units or specific location. It appears that the owners wish to create one waterfront lot for a quick sale and then possibly develop the remainder of the property as backlots. Although an Environmental Impact Study has been submitted, it is incomplete. It does not include all the lands subject to the rezoning nor does it address issues of the development's impact on water quality.

The residents of Cox Bay have submitted comments. They question the future use of the backlot area, the compatibility of the proposed waterfront lot with the established lot frontages and character of residential development on Cox Bay, and the precedent set by developing remnant parcels of land too small to be considered building lots. Their questions deserve to be answered.

This application should either be deferred, pending further consultation with staff to answer staff's questions and consultation with the area residents as to the proposed use of the entire property, or it should be refused.

We recommend that it be refused.

The MLA requests notice of any additional meetings with respect to this item. Notice of the committee's and council's decisions is also requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne McCauley , MCIP RPP
Muskoka Lakes Association