

From H. Kobel,
656 Prince of Wales Dr.
Cobourg, On.

April 14, 2015

To: Brian Darling, Theresa Rickerby, Debra McCarthy, Forrest Rowdon (City Councillors)

Re: Wide-scoped disagreement with Marina Expansion Plan, status February 2015.

As a citizen, I am doing my duty by informing you of some serious concerns (Red Flags).

Intro

Retired from engineering management I moved to Cobourg because I love the Waterfront (as it is) and the people here. Today, the waterfront's peace and nature are very important to residents. But it also attracts new residents of all ages who love peace, who rent or buy houses and spend money not only 4 months but all year round. There is likely more steady influx and income from inland than from the lake or any marina expansion. And the best part, it requires no new budget, no new debts. So why would anyone borrow big money for that project and risk to ruin an existing good thing.

Red Flag 1: The question for many people is what is the pressing motive now: A problem, an interest group or both.

Items to avoid: Four items in the plan that should be discarded no matter what.

Red Flag 2: Boat storage in front of residences windows, 3rd St. (risk of class action suit).

Red Flag 3: Slips and boat traffic west of proposed dock J. (risk of proximity accident with i.e. sailing beginners)

Red Flag 4: User Group ejection from west basin with no place to go. (Throwing kids out who are on the right track and who are our future sets a very discouraging and disturbing example.)

Red Flag 5: Intrusions into green space in front of the board walk.

Items of serious concern that need verification and may need rectification.

Red Flag 6: Appears that the current harbour operation creates a deficit. So indicated twice, see Justification p2 and p8 bottom. (Make sure phase II, III plan not only recovers this but cannot ever generate a same situation much later in time. Which may be by the intent of starting reserves in 15 years; however that is at risk, see red flag 7 and 8.)

Red Flag 7: Financial figures appear "optimistic to wishful". Expense contingency overall seems less than 10%. (Capital is 10%) As for income, how outdated are slip demand figures (the economy declined. Any deposits?). The occupancy rate from given figures comes out very high. We could not afford empty stores AND empty slips AND a 10-years loan.

Red Flag 8: No Risk assessment/mitigation plan can be found. It is important for this size of project. Reassure it exists for both, Finance and for Engineering. Verify that it supports the plan's figures. This is required and is evidence that the figures are achievable and sound, even if unforeseen events occur. (And of course they will.)

Red Flag 9: Citizens of Cobourg are ignored in the Justification and Plan. That is a major mistake. Their needs for quality of live and other needs have to be met foremost, which is not evident, see petition and other voices and signs.

Red Flag 10: Implementing the Marina Expansion Plan as it is would not meet the Strategic Plan Series 4, desired outcome, bottom line. (A Strategic Plan which, apart from that, looks very good.)

Suggestions

Instinctively one might first consider fewer slips. Run financial spreadsheet with 96, see magnitude of \$ shortfall to target. Find other source(s) to compensate. (One-time property surtax or cost reductions elsewhere; brainstorming for other ideas and combinations.) Don't forget we have a growing influx from land.

Don't kill the land influx by changing the City's identity and by over-harbourizing. (it's not even a word! Yet.)

Summary and Recommendation

Long standing empty stores, a developing harbour deficit, and this plan do not instill a "feel good" confidence. With many red flags this plan is not ready for approval.

An optimized /modified plan that is **backed by evidence of being sound**, immune to surprises and set-backs and that **is acceptable to the citizens** is needed.

Recommendation: The plan dated Feb 2015, does not need a "patch-up as we go" exercise but requires a major "rethink, recheck and rework" process.

Best Regards,
Hans Kobel