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## OPINION LETTERS

### Letters to the editor, Nov. 13, 2017

Monday, November 13, 2017 7:43:20 EST AM



#### **Cobourg residents used to being ignored**

*Re: Are Cobourg taxpayers really apathetic, Nov. 9, 2017*

Mr. Strauss has put in print that which describes a lot of Cobourg residents in my view, however too many are silent and hesitant to vocalize their beliefs.

Is it apathy?

I would wholeheartedly agree that it is definitely the cause of today's ills and that old worn out saying "You can't fight city hall" has become the accepted norm by too many people, hence anything can be proposed by the town.

The town has become so accustomed to a possible initial negative response but then it fading away, and the town proceeds with what they have in mind as usual.

One latest example (amongst others) are of very few people publicly questioning how, and from what source, the marina expansion issue reappeared in this expensive consultation re the waterfront development. Why not ?

Those that have questioned, including myself, have received no response from the town nor consultants and it appears we won't, which speaks volumes about promised council transparency.

Where is the public outrage in response to this totally irresponsible behaviour by the town council? Crickets !

Does the town council and staff know better than the majority of their constituents who pay their wages?

They are elected or hired to act in the best interests of the people and town and they have betrayed that trust repeatedly, yet no lessons learned nor any repercussions.

The most shocking and important fact is that it was initiated at the very top with Mayor Brocanier and then Councillor McCarthy's behaviour. Who's next ?

Is this in response to townspeople actually having the nerve to question the council/staff stance or is it personal bias coming into play?

We'll never know obviously but we can look forward to having a chance at the next election to have our voices heard and remedy this highly unsatisfactory situation.

*Bill Thompson, Cobourg*

### **Dealing with council was a difficult experience**

*Re: Are Cobourg taxpayers really apathetic, Nov. 9, 2017*

I read Ken Strauss' opinion column about the engagement of Cobourg taxpayers in municipal affairs with great interest.

I attended the Cobourg council meeting where Councillor Debra McCarthy delivered her rant against the idea of a question and answer period and I found it insulting to Cobourg residents that she would conclude that those calling for it only want to "debate," and that this would be impractical and a waste of time.

In my mind, Q&A would facilitate public engagement, and judging from the empty gallery at the council meeting, this is something the town needs to actively encourage. Changing council meeting times from 7 pm to 4 pm certainly won't help!

I can't help but feel that there is a political culture at Town Hall that views public engagement as a nuisance. The views of the public are seen as secondary to those of staff, contracted "experts" and even imagined Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) scenarios.

As opponents to the rezoning of 394 College St, Mayor Brocanier publicly characterized us as unintelligent and uninformed, and Councillor McCarthy labelled us "nimbys." Political engagement has been a bruising experience!

I agree that part of the solution lies with a change of leadership in next year's election.

*Emily Chorley, Cobourg*

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