



# Cobourg Taxpayers Association

*Making Local Government Accountable*

To:

May 29, 2017

Councillor Aaron Burchat <aburchat1@cogeco.ca>,  
Councillor Brian Darling <bdarling@cobourg.ca>,  
Councillor Debra McCarthy <dmccarthy@cobourg.ca>,  
Councillor Forrest Rowden <frowden@cobourg.ca>,  
Councillor Gil Brocanier <gbrocanier@cobourg.ca>,  
Councillor John Henderson <jhenderson@cobourg.ca>,  
Councillor Suzanne Seguin <sseguin@cobourg.ca>

Dear Councillor

We are writing to provide our opinion about Venture 13 – A Business Incubator.

With the utmost respect, we would ask Council to receive this project proposal for information purposes only. Please do not take it any further during the term of this council.

Our rationale for the request is this: Our perception is that although some town projects are handled well (police, fire, town roads, grass cutting, and other similar projects), we have no confidence with respect to many of the others.

Town staff do not appear to have a strong foundation in getting things done effectively. Morale appears to be low and there seems to be a lack of systems, checks/balances and accountability. We would like to see council give direction to the CAO to get back to basics. Let's get our house in order before putting on another addition.

A list, in no particular order, follows below. In order to keep this Email short, we have not gone into lengthy explanations regarding each area. However, we would be pleased to provide more information/evidence/explanation. If you would like clarification, please ask us.

- Councillors are still not using financials as a tool to identify whether budget items are on track
- The CCC is currently operating at an annual loss of more than \$1.2 Million
- Marina operations have not been optimized
- Victoria Park Campground has not been optimized
- Council video recording launch date was missed. I am currently not able to view it (see screen shot attached)
- Town web site is still not fully functional and easy to use
- Municipal voting list is full of errors. We recognize that this is a province-wide issue.
- HMCSS Goose Bay was not able to come into the harbour last year
- Waterfront consultants
  - Our lack of confidence in this process was conveyed to Councillor Darling a couple of weeks ago
  - Much of the public also lacks confidence given that current consultants are studying previous studies
- Not having the pulse of the general public and instead moving ahead with ill-advised ideas not supported by the community; e.g. marina expansion, Park Theatre, and NMAI to name just a few.
- Duplication of services – the county already performs this business incubator function well with its Business and Entrepreneurship Centre Northumberland.

We would respectfully ask you to consider that there are approximately 16 months left until the end of this council. Please consider that it might be better to shore up our town's foundation by improving the effectiveness of current staff and systems rather than initiating additional projects.

Thank you for your service.

Sincerely

Lydia Smith  
President, Cobourg Taxpayers Association