

Committee of the Whole CM-01-19
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Good evening, I'm Gary Hicks. I have lived in Burlington my entire life. I am not a boater, not a former boater, never will be a boater and don't particularly like being on boats. But I do like to see boats on the water. I totally see the value of boating and I love boaters because they are good every day folk – the majority just people who have worked and saved so they can afford a boat for their family. They are people, like me, who deeply care about one of Burlington's most important assets – the LaSalle waterfront. Boaters have been stereotyped as Gatsby folk by some to make their case, but the data collected doesn't support this. The huge contribution that boaters have made to the city has been under appreciated.

I speak on behalf of myself, but I would like to think I'm representing a very important stake-holder party I feel is not otherwise adequately represented. No, not the boaters. I'm talking about another stake holder. She is a massive force and she speaks loudly enough for herself, if we listen. ...although she speaks silently – without words. Miss Burlington. Full name, Burlington Bay. :^)

I am here because I care about the environment. Solid evidence-based thinking tells us that public participation in waterfronts has a significant positive effect on the long-term improvement of water quality. Ask

anybody if they would like to get rid of the sailboats and water craft to restore a clear view of the steel companies and the muddy bay waters. Everyone from 3 to 103 likes to see boats on the water. Miss Burlington may have been neglected, but she's still lovely, especially when she accessorizes with a few boats.

It took a lot of things and a lot of time to degrade the Burlington Bay water quality. It is well accepted that it will take a lot of things and a lot of time to restore to Burlington Bay water quality. If our community invests in its most significant Bay waterfront, the better our chances to one day restore the Burlington Bay's water quality. The Bay has warmer waters, fewer waves and warmer shores to sun bathe on than Lake Ontario. I wonder if people know that LaSalle was once the most popular swimming location in Burlington and had a large change house for the swimmers. I know people who when they were children swam in the Burlington Bay at LaSalle, but they are all almost all gone. Those of us, like me, that knew Burlington Bay swimmers, will also be gone one day. I want to do what I can to ensure that we do not forget the incredibly valuable resource the LaSalle shore once was. I want my grandson and other Burlington children to one day swim at LaSalle. You may say I'm dreaming. But there isn't a person in this room, that if they believe it possible, wouldn't want that. It is very much possible, if we act as it is possible.

I am happy with the current report and its recommendations. And I want to thank the Interim City Manager for his professionalism and effective leadership. I want to thank Council for making this appointment.

But here are some hard statements I hope will serve here...

- The last City Council and City Manager could have put in a rock wall – a much wiser, much less expensive in the long term, more effective solution and a better attractor of outside funding. The ball was dropped many times, when rocks could have been dropped. *This matter first came forward in 2009.* There was a lack of effort that led to not obtaining outside funding. A rock wave-break wall could have been done years ago and would now be serving the city for the next hundred plus years. Other local water-front municipalities have discussed, obtained outside funding, started and completed rock walls in the time that this city has been considering the LaSalle wave break. To what I hope is the ‘Ghost of City-of-Burlington Past’, I say *“Impressive how you’ve managed to use so much time and effort to accomplish so little.”*
- The last city council directed staff last July to move forward with a replacement floating wave break immediately, *with a sense of urgency* to have it ready for this boating season, which now weeks

away. The then City Manager made assurances that it would be done by then. Seriously, I don't know how the city can manage to be still meeting, discussing and reporting over this. I don't want to play a blame game in any way because that's too simple, there was a clear system failure. ...a lot of well-meaning people not seeing that they got in the way by creating small delays that added up thwarting doing the obvious right choice. You can't tell me Burlington really wants to close LaSalle Marina. And, yet if this keep up that is exactly what will happen. And, there is nothing in the system to stop that from happening. And, Miss Burlington has been treated more trivially than trees in Roseland.

Let's move on from this together quickly, by doing the following three things...

1. Council unanimously, with out creating delays, approve this report and Recommendation A. *Pitter patter, folks. Let's get at 'er.*
2. A clear apologetic remark be made to the boaters, invested parties and the citizens of Burlington noting that the system failed here, because it will take the City over 10 years to implement what can only be described as a last-minute minimal solution that is still quite a way off from being implemented. Indeed, it may be too late now,

and LaSalle Marina may collapse due to neglect to its most basic and essential maintenance needs.

3. Lastly, don't be afraid to aspire to bold leadership with vision for the future. Make some commitment now to a long-term process of getting a permanent rock wall in place eventually, instead of the current plan by default to replace one floating wave-break wall with another into perpetuity. *This is like the little piggy that built his house with straw and the big bad wolf of time will with certainty blow the straw house down. :^)*

My thanks to the boaters, who have been more than patient and have continuously been warm to everyone and well meaning in terms of the entire City's wellbeing. Who, truthfully, are the only reason we have and might still have a LaSalle Marina in years to come. Please give them the City's full support.