

Letter: Carleton Island must be protected from commercialization

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An artists rendering of a campground proposed for Carleton Island that nearly every island property owner is opposed to. Cape Vincent zoning application photo

Thirty three years ago, my family and I discovered the natural gem that is Carleton Island. At the time, there were only a handful of homes on the island and we were amazed at how pristine and untouched it felt. Over time, more homes were built, but the growth happened in a thoughtful way that limited change to the natural landscape. To this day, when I walk on the path, I'm in awe of the nearly untouched surroundings that look much as they did 33 years ago. Many of us have purchased additional lots with the main purpose of protecting the serenity and green space that makes Carleton so special not only for us but for the local

wildlife as well. I am extremely concerned that Mr. Clapp's proposal to build campsites for 50+ campers does not align with this conservation mindset.

I question the amount of light and noise pollution and human impact that would come with a campground of that size, that would forever change Cape Vincent's waterfront view of Carleton. I question how many more trees would need to be destroyed to fulfill this vision; how much wildlife will be displaced. How many more wave runners and small pleasure craft would a campsite like this draw to this stretch of the river? Will it remain the tranquil stretch of river that it is today? How will this affect this area's status as a top-rated fishing destination?

The proposed campsite plan will threaten the serenity and privacy of the island, which could devalue our properties, ultimately equating to less tax dollars for Cape Vincent.

Cape Vincent needs to take into serious consideration what is at risk with rezoning this property. To my knowledge there are about 34 houses on Carleton, the proposed campsite would nearly double the population on the island at any given time. Is Cape Vincent equipped to handle increased risk of wildfires from campers, as well as EMS emergency situations that will inevitably arise with a large group of transient people that aren't familiar with the dangers that come with life on an island.

If you open up the island to commercialization, what is to stop the next large landowner from coming in for rezoning on any of the islands? To my knowledge the only boat-only campgrounds in the area are owned and operated by State or National Parks. Perhaps that is for good reason.

It is not lost on me how fortunate I am to have been able to call Carleton island my home for so long. This area is a true hidden gem and I hope that we can protect it.

Ava Glantz

Carleton Island