

Letter: Proposed development on the head of Carleton Island, what does the developer really want?

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TILT says that many trees and 90-95% of the understory and 30-35% of trees on the property were cleared. Provided photo

What does developer really want on Carleton Island?

A casual reader of all that has been written about the proposed development on the head of Carleton Island might be confused: is the proposal a proposal to restore the Carleton Villa or to construct a campground. Well, supposedly both.

Coincidentally, essentially all of the developer's passionate communications refer only to the renovation of the Villa, whilst most of the concerns expressed by The Friends of Carleton Island and others refer to the construction of a campground.

If the proposal is truly about the restoration of the Villa, why don't the developer's plans and permit applications include any detail about the restoration of the Villa, and why hasn't he indicated how he will finance the restoration, which is estimated to cost more than \$20 million?

The developer has suggested that the campground is necessary to finance the restoration. If the proposed 12 cabins were occupied 75% of the nights from Memorial Day to Labor Day, and the average nightly rate per cabin was \$200 (both generous assumptions), the gross revenues for a season would be \$176,000. If the campground was properly staffed and maintained, expenses most likely would consume essentially all of the revenue, and little or nothing would be left to cover the required investment, let alone contribute toward the restoration of the Villa.

If the developer truly believes a campground can contribute meaningfully to the restoration of the Villa, why hasn't he shared that analysis?

The developer, the Friends of Carleton Island, the Thousand Islands Land Trust and the Town of Cape Vincent are all now engaged in expensive and time-consuming administrative processes and litigation.

If the developer's true intention is to restore the Villa, why doesn't he limit his proposal and permit applications to just that?

The Friends of Carleton Island most likely would support the restoration of the Villa, and the time wasting and expensive administrative processes and litigation could be ended, and the developer could get on with the exciting work of restoring the Villa.

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A Member of the Friends of Carleton Island