**December 5, 2024**

**Dear Members of the Cape Vincent Town Board,**

My wife and I had the opportunity to visit Cape Vincent this fall for the first time, during the October Fest celebration. We spent a week exploring the town and surrounding area and were invited to visit Carleton Island. I am writing to express my deep concern over the Board’s decision to support a Restore New York Grant application for a commercial development project on Carleton Island.

I am Technical Director for an Ecological Restoration company, and a previously licensed Construction Supervisor in Massachusetts.

During our walk around the island, we were told about the commercial development that Mr. Clapp was proposing. I enjoyed the walk about and observed that the island is currently, and with success reverting to native habitats, from the previous agricultural use.

I see Mr. Clapps quixotic adventure to restore the Carleton Villa by constructing a commercial campground as a folly fraught with potential failure. The potential income from a campground might help to cover the future cost to maintain the Villa, but if there is not sufficient capital to cover the total reconstruction, of the completely dilapidated structure, this will be an open-ended money pit.

My experience with environmental permitting demonstrates projects that start with a developer who is not pro-active with environmental permitting from the beginning will continue to be a violator and not be able to sustain any project, without exceedingly deep pockets. Needing grants does not demonstrate the capacity to complete this project.

It would be in the best interest of the town Of Cape Vincent to require completion bonds rather than helping to seek State monies for projects of this sort.

In our brief time in the lovely village of Cape Vincent, we discovered a vacant theatre building that would offer so much more to the town by revitalization. A functioning theatre company in town would do so much more to develop community and commercial vitality than a campground on an island many miles from the shore.

Sincerely,

Jay and Jennifer Putnam

Chatham, Massachusetts