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LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE

Proposed development on Carleton Island

Just over two years ago, applications for both Zoning Variances and a Special Use Permit were submitted to the town of Cape Vincent by a developer who proposed to restore the Carleton Villa and develop a campground.

Since that time, much has been said and done, and the applications now await resolution of a lawsuit between the developer and the Thousand Islands Land Trust, which concerns whether the proposed development would violate long-standing conservation easements.

The TILT litigation involves many legal and factual disputes, and is likely to take some time to resolve; however, it is only one of the many legal issues that need to be addressed before the proposed development could proceed:

- The developer has applied for area and set back variances. That application needs to be considered by the Zoning Board of Appeal, and would be subject to appeal;

- Several environmental concerns related to the proposed development also need to be assessed pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act, and a determination made as to whether those environmental impacts are justifiable; and

- The developer has applied for a Special Use Permit to use the site in a manner inconsistent with existing zoning rules and regulations and long-standing policy. That application needs to be considered by the Planning Board, and would be subject to appeal.

While the foregoing grind on, no evidence of the feasibility of restoring the



The deterioration of the villa on Carleton Island. Contributed

Carleton Villa and/or successfully developing and operating the proposed campsite has been presented by the developer, and the developer's track record is essentially unknown. His financial resources for such a project also are unknown.

Many area residents, including the author of this letter, would love to see the Carleton Villa restored. I've dreamt of that possibility for 50 or so years; however, all the information known to me indicates that restoring the Villa would be financially impractical, if not impossible. The developer has not evidenced otherwise, which suggests the pending applications are either for

a campground alone or for some other commercial use.

As much time and effort has been expended by many parties on this two-year exercise, isn't now the time for the Town of Cape Vincent to require the developer to disclose his true plans and to demonstrate the resources necessary to pursue those plans? Let's not consider and decide upon an illusory plan, and inadvertently permit something much different.

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