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Letter: Protect Carleton Island's quiet, rural character

Nov 19, 2026



A deer on Carleton Island, in the area where a campground is proposed, on May 17, 2024.

I have owned property on Carleton Island since 1992. My wife, son, and daughter share the property with me, and we are united in our opposition to the proposed commercial campground or any commercial development on the island.

Carleton Island has been a quiet, rural, family place for more than three decades. We value its natural shoreline, open space, and peaceful character. A commercial campground would permanently change that. It would bring transient visitors, noise, traffic, increased fire risk, and pressure on limited emergency services and infrastructure. Those impacts are inconsistent with the island's longstanding residential and low-density character.

The Town of Cape Vincent's own Joint Comprehensive Plan speaks directly to this. It calls on the Town to "discourage any type of development that would diminish or degrade the unique rural community lifestyle these islands provide to their owners." A large majority of Carleton Island property owners have already made clear that a high-density commercial campground would do exactly that. Their consistent opposition should carry real weight with the Planning Board and Town Board.

We support responsible care of the historic villa if it can be done in a way that respects the island's zoning, conservation protections, and character. We do not support converting any part of the island into a commercial campground or other commercial use.

I ask the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Town Board to uphold the Comprehensive Plan, honor the concerns of the property owners who have cared for Carleton Island for generations, and reject the special-use permit and any related variances that would allow commercial development.

Sincerely,

Vincent Williams, Trajanka Williams

Steele Williams, Navada Williams

Carleton Island and Syracuse