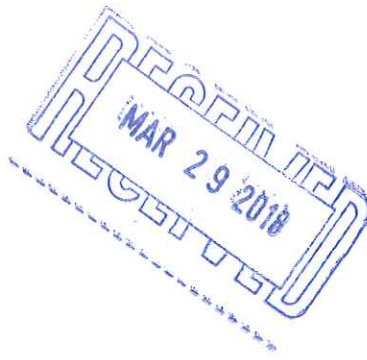


Via e-mail
March 29, 2018



Mayor and Council
Township of Bonnechere Valley
P. O. Box 100
Eganville, On K0J 1T0

Re: Restrictions on Trailers – Lake Clear

Dear Mayor Murphy and Members of Council:

Firstly, a brief personal biographical history. I have owned property on Lake Clear since 1976 and have a winterized cottage on the property since 1987. The cottage has been my permanent residence since 2006. My daughter owns a winterized cottage adjacent to mine and my son and daughter-in-law own a winterized cottage adjacent to my daughter. Collectively we own 125 acres of abutting land fronting on Lake Clear.

To clarify for the background knowledge of Council we do not have any trailers located on any of our properties.

I am writing this intervention on the topic of potential trailer restrictions on Lake Clear as a concerned municipal citizen and taxpayer but more particularly as a member of this community in which I have chosen to live in my retirement years.

As I have watched this local public issue develop over the past months I have become increasingly concerned at the escalating level of shrillness in the debate surrounding this issue and have found myself increasingly worried at the obvious potential for neighbour being pitted against neighbour in what may have very serious long term consequences to the unity and atmosphere of what is historically a congenial, co-operative, united community that has been a joy to live in and that unites in a vast array of worthy community causes as circumstances arise.

My sense is that the community unity, so cultivated so successfully by so many over such a long period of time is being strained to the breaking point by an issue that cries out for resolution in a calm, measured way that successfully seeks a workable compromise that all parties can find acceptable. And most importantly in working toward that successful compromise the level of rhetoric is toned down to the point where civil discourse prevails in the discussion.

I respectfully suggest to Council that this issue is sufficiently volatile that Council has a responsibility to immediately play a leadership role in seeking to work with the people representing the various positions toward the goal of acceptable compromise and not let this issue fester until the presently scheduled meetings where this matter is intended to be an agenda item.

As one concerned Lake Clear property owner who has no personal axe to grind on the issue it seems to me this is a totally resolvable issue providing good will is brought to the table of discussion. The fundamental question being posed in conflicting ways by the parties on opposite sides of the discussion is whether trailers are appropriate on Lake Clear water front property. Surely the answer is that they are no different than a cottage (and most are far more attractive than some cottages on Lake Clear) providing they are subject to appropriate environmental requirements. If I am correct and current in my understanding, the Renfrew County and District Health Unit is charged with the responsibility of ensuring environmental requirements are met. If they are not, why shouldn't the Township of Bonnechere Valley require them to be responsible?

With respect to equivalency of revenue to the Township from trailers and similar market value cottages the land on which the trailers sit is already assessed for taxation by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation. This then leaves the option that a trailer annual fee to the municipality be established based on the taxation resulting from a cottage building of equivalent market value recognizing that we are dealing only with the market value of the actual building or trailer since the land is already assessed.

In conclusion I have grave reservations about the position of those who demand of the Municipality that trailers on Lake Clear waterfront be subject to excessive regulation. This is hardly a reasonable position given the fact that the trailers placed by owners in good faith on their own property over the years did so in the absence of any municipal prohibition.

I respectfully urge Council to commence the leadership process of seeking an acceptable resolution to the issue and again express my concern that an escalation of this issue is going to result in extremely hard feelings and a damaged community that is in absolutely no ones interest.

Respectfully submitted.

Michael J. Johnson

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Cc – Bryan Martin, Chief Administrative Officer