

# Examiner Letters to the Editor: June 27

Reader would “really like to hear from some pickleballers about whether they would prefer more indoor courts, rather than a 16-court paved surface you could fry an egg on many afternoons.”

Updated June 26, 2024 at 10:32 a.m. | June 26, 2024 [📌](#) [🔗](#)



A reader asks, “Why doesn’t the city be consultative, open and transparent in its dealings with its residents?” in an effort to reduce the number of FOI requests.

Metroland file photo

## **We have a housing solution**

There was a housing crisis. People were moving into cities and towns. They needed somewhere to live for them and their families. They came to work in growing and new industries.

In Peterborough, it was General Electric. In Hamilton, it was the steel companies and manufacturers such as Westinghouse and Studebaker. In Halifax, it was the shipyard and dockyard and supporting industries. In Pictou, N.S., it was the shipyard where they built Park ships, the equivalent of the U.S. Liberty ships. It was a rapidly growing economy everywhere.

The period was the early 1940s. There was a war on, and Canada was gearing up to do its part to build the weapons and equipment needed to fight the war.

The answer to that housing crisis was rapidly built wartime houses. They were built to a standard pattern by a collaboration between government and industry. They were built to be temporary. Each one contained two bedrooms, a living/dining room, kitchen and bathroom. They were built by the thousands in any city or town where they were needed.

A drive down Wolsely Street in Peterborough will show that many of them are still there, more than 80 years since they were built. Most have been renovated with new siding or bricks. Better porches have been appended. Rooms have been added and some have even grown a second floor.

In our current circumstance, you have to wonder why such a solution cannot be tried now. A standard pattern or two used for all of the houses built. They don't have to be single dwelling, there could be row houses or modest sized apartments (high rises present more complex problems).

Big developers would argue against such an idea (not enough diversity and profit), but many smaller contractors would probably rise to the occasion and welcome the challenge.

It would take collaboration between different levels of government, and with contractors. The use of public lands provided by the owning government level would ease costs even more. Lower costs to own or innovative payment means such as rent-to-own would make these dwellings achievable for those most in need, such as new immigrant families and first-time homeowners, and even people who have been priced out of the existing housing market.

So, why aren't we trying to emulate a solution that worked so many years ago?

*Gordon Forbes, Peterborough*

### **Transparency will cut down FOI requests**

I noted with interest during council's budget discussions on June 11 staff's request for more resources to support the increasing load on staff from Freedom of Information requests.

I have a suggestion that could save the city money and avoid the need for more resources.

Why doesn't the city be consultative, open and transparent in its dealings with its residents?

Does the city not wonder why residents now feel the need to file requests? Here's the answer: Because the city is not open and consultative.

The hullabaloo over the Bonnerworth Park redevelopment clearly demonstrates what is wrong.

By the way, the city's 2023 strategic plan says it is committed to the values of: "transparency," "engagement and openness," "proactively collaborate to engage the community," "diversity, equity, and inclusion," "work in partnership with our community," and "ensure our community is well informed and proactively engage(d)."

Moreover, at the budget meeting on June 11, the chief administrative officer identified "community outreach and engagement" as the corporate priority for 2025.

Rescuing the disaster the city has created in its Bonnerworth “planning” process would be a good place for the city to start rebuilding trust with the citizens it serves, and which the Bonnerworth process has shattered.

*Renee Scott, Peterborough*

### **Add your voices, pickleballers**

In hot weather like we just had, I wonder how many pickleballers are using the outdoor courts, especially in the afternoons. Our summers are becoming hotter each year, meaning 16 pickleball courts will sit empty on many afternoons and, of course, all winter too.

I would really like to hear from some pickleballers about whether they would prefer more indoor courts, rather than a 16-court paved surface you could fry an egg on many afternoons.

Are you going to host tournaments where people, many of them seniors, are suffering from the heat? Other sports have tournaments using facilities spread around the city, indoor and outdoor. Why can't your group do the same? With more indoor facilities, you could host tournaments all year long. Playing outside might be preferable, but not always possible.

Come on, pickleballers. Add your voices to this debate about paving over the green space at Bonnerworth Park. Council has heard from the leaders of the pickleball association, but what about the rest of the members. Explain why you agree or disagree with these 16 courts taking over Bonnerworth.

I, for one, see those courts sitting empty a lot of the time while taking away a park that can be used and enjoyed all year round by many community members.

*Clare Keast, Peterborough*