



Examiner Letters to the Editor: Aug. 1

The homelessness problem in Peterborough is the flip side of the Bonnerworth boondoggle.

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Protesters carry placards against the redevelopment of Bonnerworth Park that includes 16 new pickleball courts, during a recent pickleball tournament held at the park.

Clifford Skarstedt Metroland

Morrow Building decision not surprising

Re: [“Councillors left in dark over decision to turn Morrow Building into temporary homeless shelter.”](#)

No one who has been following the Bonnerworth Park fiasco in the past months will be surprised by the approach taken by City of Peterborough staff in excluding residents and their elected representatives from their decision-making process.

Nor will they be surprised that our city’s mayor has once again evaded reporters on an important issue and left residents with only vague comments by a paid PR person designed to shield the decision-makers from public view.

The homelessness problem in Peterborough is the flip side of the Bonnerworth boondoggle.

Town Ward residents and business owners bear the brunt of the public mess made by people who have been forced out of low-rent apartments by the overheated real estate market. In the Bonnerworth case, city staff plan to pave over a large chunk of one of the few remaining greenspaces in Town Ward, directing public money that should be going toward solving the homelessness problem toward providing a few well-off citizens a place to park their cars while they play a game.

I expect that the majority of people who actually use Bonnerworth and Knights of Columbus parks would be satisfied to have a few thousand dollars invested in cleaning up the garbage and maintaining the existing facilities on a regular basis, rather than paying millions to a private contractors to redevelop them while leaving the homelessness problem to fester.

My sister visited Peterborough last week and stayed at the Holiday Inn. On the way into the patio we were greeted by a man urinating in the bushes. When she wanted to see the river from the bridge, she had to navigate a party of two-dozen homeless folks occupying the space between the hotel and bridge. How soon will she want to visit again?

A lack of common sense, vision, communication and respect has been evident at city hall since the last election. A whole-hearted effort is needed to tackle the housing crisis and make Town Ward a safe and welcoming place for families with children, visitors from out of town, and people without the means to shelter themselves in the current market. Such an effort would require a stark change in attitude toward Town Ward residents and our elected representatives by the mayor, city staff and councillors from other wards.

Brent Wood, Peterborough

Pickleball is fine, but not at Bonnerworth

The proposed redevelopment of Bonnerworth Park will accommodate 16 pickleball courts plus dozens of parking spaces in a space that is a significant, and much valued, urban park and green area.

Two thoughts come to mind. First, I can't think of any examples anywhere else in Canada where urban green space, which is usually in very short supply, is replaced with extensive hard surfaces.

It's just not done.

And second, as we contend with the very tangible impacts of the climate crisis, why would the city persevere with this project when we're all trying hard to reduce or eliminate urban heat islands caused by paved spaces in our communities?

I'm fine with the sport of pickleball in the right location. That's not Bonnerworth Park.

Mark Seasons, Peterborough

Bonnerworth decision is 'inexplicable'

I have been following with great interest the ever-growing support from residents to leave Bonnerworth Park as is.

I am among those supporters. The city has made a huge mistake!

The destruction of a park that is widely used by multiple sporting groups, two local high schools, and other communities is inexplicable.

As a taxpayer, I am struggling with why council is spending millions of badly needed dollars to build a 16-court pickleball park that only a few will benefit from.

Bonnerworth is surrounded by senior complexes including Peterborough Housing Residents and Mary Crest at Englwood, as well as residents in the surrounding streets.

I have family members who live in the vicinity of this development and they are very worried about how their quality of life will be impacted.

I have signed my name to a growing petition (7,800 last count) opposing this development, and I purchased a sign, which was unfortunately stolen a couple of days ago.

Our present council is making inexplicable decisions with city-owned properties and taxpayer dollars without appropriate engagement with city residents.

Lori Finlay, Peterborough

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