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Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 11:41 PM
To: Allison MacEwen <AMacEwen@irac.pe.ca>
Subject: Proposal for Borden-Carleton

My personal thoughts:

As an avid historian and a self-proclaimed cheerleader of Borden-Carleton, I have watched lots of things change in this little town. And change can be both good and bad. I've learned through life that you have to pick and choose your battles as to when to fight change, because the only constant in life is change. Change can bring great things.

But, sometimes change is not about great things or betterment of a community. Sometimes change ruins what was beautiful.

Here's what I know after spending a lifetime living at the entrance to this beautiful province. Locals want to hang onto the town they grew up in or fell in love with or that moulds who they are.

Tourist come to PEI because they want to run away from the rat race. They want to step back to the smaller town vibes created by those locals, they want to hang on to the romantic idea of community, friendship, unity and love. They want to see small businesses, roadside stands, farmers fields, lobster boats in the harbour and endless beaches.

So I hold firm to the fact that the moment they come off the bridge, they get the best mix of that possible. You can see the beaches and lobster boats, you can see the fields, you can meet the amazing locals, you can buy strawberries and new potatoes at roadside stands. And you can shop at Gateway Village if you need a souvenir or a bite to eat.

But if you need gas, groceries, treats or coffee, we have you well taken care of already. Your first option entering the Island is the Esso, a welcomed addition to our community. Opened by a local who shared our best interests. Someone rooted in our town and it's people. It filled that quick stop feel for those coming off the bridge. Grab a coffee, fill up, perhaps wash the car. It met any of the towns missing needs, if there were any. We accepted it. But It put us over capacity for gas stations.

But, we also knew what the tourists really wanted all along was a minute down the road.

You have your pick of two local businesses, places of comfort and consistency, that have been part of this Island for as long as any tourist has been here.

Ceretti's Grocery and Hardware was opened in 1938 first by Henry, then James and now Chad. One of the main businesses that founded and built up Borden. Gas, groceries, the best meat on the Island, hardware supplies, whatever you need. Owners you can call at 2am for an emergency plumbing supply or ask at 2pm for a donation to a benefit/fundraiser. And the call is always answered with a yes. Businessmen yes. But also respectable community members and Islanders. The roots of Borden.

Howatts Tourist Mart was opened in 1968 first by Fenton, then Doug and Mary and now Chad and Nick. One of the main businesses that founded and built up Carleton. A place to get gas, groceries, directions, island hospitality and local souvenirs. A kinder family doesn't exist. Good people with good morals who care about their neighbours and every person they meet. The foundation of Carleton. So I guess I am perplexed with why Borden-Carleton needs a fourth stop. Tourists don't want what you see at the roundabout in Port Elgin. They want Ceretti's. They want Howatts. They want what the Island is. What the island should never lose. Our Gentle Island is gentle because of the locals, the scenery and the small businesses.

I support Ceretti's and Howatts and not commercializing the entrance landscape to PEI any further. My stance isn't based on emotion, although it may sound that way. My stance is based on economics, tourism and thriving small communities. Tourists want PEI small communities to stay quaint, welcoming and picture perfect like our beautiful postcards. Small businesses put money into communities, wages into pockets and profits that spread to others. Small towns need supportive small businesses that build a sense of community.

You kill the plant if you remove its roots. You crumble a house if you damage the foundation. You suffocate others when you over saturate the market. Let's build to compliment the local economy without hurting what already exists.

I ask in your decision making that you look at the bigger picture from the aspect of tourism - I have never ever heard a tourist wish for more commercial big business at the entrance to PEI. I've heard them ask for directions to see Green Gables, to get the best picture of the bridge, to find a fisherman or farmer, to the best beaches, on how to go bar clamming, on where's the best cottages, etc. Or I've watched as they excitedly enter Ceretti's and Howatts, places of comfort and consistency. They don't want what they get everyday in the big cities. They want what we value and what we should protect and keep sacred- our communities, our people and our small family owned businesses. Don't destroy what has worked for over 100 years.

I support Ceretti's and Howatts. And I also support PEI as a whole and what's best for its future. Perhaps Charlottetown or Summerside would want a new gas station, but Borden-Carleton is at its maximum and is not interested.

Kind regards,

Mary MacDonald-Pickering

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