



Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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Carleton-Mississippi Mills

January 17, 2011

Hon. Rick Bartolucci
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
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Dear Minister,

I am writing today regarding the development in the South March Highlands in Kanata, Ottawa in my constituency.

During the application for a subdivision a developer is required to undertake an archaeological study to ascertain that the proposed site has little or no historical significance. In other words, developers hire an archaeologist in the hopes that he/she will find nothing.

The South March Highlands are just that, highlands, which are believed to have formed an island in the Champlain Sea. Thousands of artifacts have been found on nearby lands at a similar elevation which prove that this area was among the first parts of what is now Eastern Ontario to be inhabited after the last ice age. It is the contention of many of my constituents that the original archaeological study (2003) is flawed in that it is based on the assumption that there were no physiographic changes since the last ice age. For further information please see the comments of respected archaeologist Dr. Robert McGhee, attached.

In response to letters about the flawed archaeological study, your colleague Hon. Michael Chan, Minister of Tourism and Culture, wrote to a constituent of mine, Mr. Paul Renaud, that he would only undertake a study if the City of Ottawa requested a new archaeological study. However, the City, which does not have an archaeologist on staff, says it relies on the Province to review and approve archaeological studies. My constituents are frustrated with trying to figure out who is ultimately responsible in this chicken and egg riddle.

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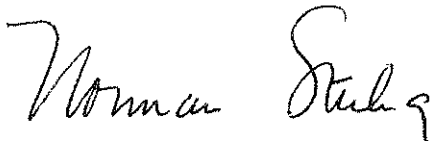
Recently five Chiefs of the Algonquin First Nation have become involved, calling for a halt to the development and demanding consultations. I understand that Minister Chan is planning to upgrade the Standards and Guidelines of Consultant Archaeologists to require consultation with aboriginal communities. Given his recognition that consultation with the aboriginal community is lacking from the existing process, I ask that you implore him to consult with the Chiefs of the Algonquin First Nation regarding the archaeological study of this site.

The developer has been cooperative with the City of Ottawa and aboriginal groups but is anxious to proceed and is ready to begin clearing trees from this forested area. Time is of the essence as any new archaeological study would be hindered by the felling of trees.

If there are significant artifacts to be found at this site, it is not the responsibility of the municipality to protect them; it is the responsibility of our Provincial and Federal Governments as all Ontarians and Canadians will benefit from the history they provide.

I have also written to both Hon. Michael Chan as Minister of Tourism and Culture and Hon. Chris Bentley as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs as well as Premier McGuinty to ask that the development be halted until an independent archaeological study of this area including consultation with the Algonquin Chiefs can be completed. I would also ask for a meeting with you at your earliest convenience so that I might further explain this request.

Sincerely,



Norman W. Sterling, MPP
Carleton-Mississippi Mills

encl.

cc: Councillor Marianne Wilkinson
Mayor Jim Watson
Steve Hulaj, President, Kanata Lakes Community Association
Paul Renaud
Hon. Michael Chan, Minister of Tourism and Culture
Hon. Christopher Bentley, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs
Hon. Dalton McGuinty, Premier