

Legislation Text

File #: 21-A-072, **Version:** 2

DEPUTATIONS CONCERNING MOTION 21-G-166, HEART BARRIE LANDMARK SIGN

The following individuals provided Deputations(s) regarding motion 21-G-166, Heart Barrie Landmark Sign.

1. Cathy Colebatch commended that she appreciated Councillor McCann's passion, enthusiasm, and love of Barrie. She noted that she felt that parks are for people and not signs, and expressed concerns related to the location, design, size or intent of what the sign brings to the City.

Ms. Colebatch explained that the City is in the process of creating a new master plan for Heritage Park and it is a small urban park that provides opportunities for fishing, swimming, children's splash pad and has more passive, reflective spaces.

She explained the sign is not representative of the City and suggested engaging with the Community to come up with something more representative of the City. Ms. Colebatch suggested having a competition for local artists where the public could vote on the design of the sign which could include celebrating our indigenous community with an indigenous design.

Ms. Colebatch read a letter to the editor article from Barrie Today concerning Landmark would 'spoil' Lakeshore's ambience. She advised of comments from a member of the public that the Waterfront and Marina Strategic Plan contained no suggestion of a sign plan and residents should be consulted for input.

2. Alyssa Wright provided a brief background of her career and her involvement with organizations and charities.

She described her passion for creative arts and the community and that she is not in support of the artistic unoriginal sign and uninspiring copycat sign. She expressed how she is unclear as to the intent of the sign.

Ms. Wright expressed concerns related to the sign and felt that Council is ignoring the majority of residents who are not in favour of the signage.

She asked Council to consider what personal message is being given with their vote should they choose to uphold the wishes of their colleague or the wishes of their constituents. She noted that positions on Council are to serve the greater good of the people of Barrie and not each other.

She commented there has been no evidence that a sign in Heritage Park will help the downtown businesses or analysis on how the City's other existing landmarks have contributed to the community. She explained that she felt that a sign does not offer any relief for the businesses struggling in the downtown or residents. She mentioned that due to liability concerns, a community fridge was not allowed on City's property which would assist Barrie residents with food insecurity.

She discussed her concerns related to safety of the sign, potential for vandalism and costs associated with ongoing maintenance and operational costs. She felt that kids would be climbing all over it and the lighting would be hazardous to the boaters entering the Marina.

She expressed how she is a fan of the Code of Conduct and the *Municipal Elections Act* and her concerns with the intent of the sign.

Two points of order were raised by Councillor Morales concerning comments made by Ms. Wright.

3. Ryan Hawkes advised that he moved to Barrie nine years ago from the east coast and opened the business Athletic Kulture, created 50 jobs and has a marketing company. He expressed that he is highly invested in Barrie and loves the community.

Mr. Hawkes commented that the community needs more prosperity, innovation, and creativity such as the landmark sign, and is open to a debate on the location and colour for the sign but felt that the community should have an opportunity to decide on that. Mr. Hawkes mentioned that in his establishment artists have drawn murals of athletes, and people take pictures and post them on social media, which he felt is the intent of the landmark sign by trying to get big companies support, creating morale for downtown and bring something beautiful and positive to Barrie. He described that this may inspire other people to get involved in charities and different movements.

Mr. Hawkes noted the landmark helps to make the Community great if it is not hurting anybody and the person taking the responsibility to do it themselves and not leaning financially on the Community to get it started.

Mr. Hawkes commented that there should be financial transparency for those who donate to the Landmark Barrie sign and input from the community on the design and location of the sign but that the sign is a positive movement.

A member of General Committee asked a question to Mr. Hawke and received a response.

4. Stefano Agostino provided a brief background and advised that he is a local business owner in Downtown Barrie. He expressed his support for the Heart Barrie Landmark Sign as it would boost morale, be a great addition to Barrie and create tourism for Barrie and put the City on the same track as other iconic cities or highly visited tourism spots.

He described some of challenges faced with being a local downtown business owner including lack of tourism and maintaining resident interest in the downtown core.

Mr. Agostino expressed that many residents and tourists would use the sign and take photos. Mr. Agostino noted the theme of the sign could be changed and be lit up to celebrate different holidays.

Mr. Agostino explained that his establishments feature a lot of art and that he considers the landmark sign to be tasteful art. He described that as a downtown business owner you have think of new innovative ways of marketing businesses for the downtown core.

He commented on the material and maintenance costs associated with the landmark sign and felt that the fees would be a small price to pay to see the smiles on individuals' faces and all the memories being created in Barrie. He advised that he had no concerns with adding a sponsor name to the sign as this would not cost the taxpayer.

Mr. Agostino commended any Councillor for thinking outside the box and that he felt good about the Heart Barrie Landmark Sign.

A member of General Committee asked a question to Mr. Agostino and receive a response.