



**COMMUNIQUÉ  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Message to citizens**

**IMPORTANT UPDATE FROM THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ON THE WENTWORTH  
INTEGRATED TOURISM RESORT DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT**

**Wentworth, September 13th, 2019**

Dear fellow citizens of the Township of Wentworth,

We believe it is necessary today to provide you with an important update on the Wentworth Integrated Tourism Resort development concept (WITR). In recent weeks, and particularly over the last few days, the executive of the Lake Louisa Property Owners Association (LLPOA) have been engaged in a genuine campaign of fear and misinformation on this topic, relying on allegations that are often false and misleading.

This is especially astonishing and unfortunate given the many meetings that took place between the municipality and the leaders of this association. During these meetings, we have responded, in good faith and to the best of our knowledge, to all their questions and inquiries. As well, we have held numerous municipal council sessions and a public hearing on June 8th, during which your municipal council attentively listened to the association's concerns and patiently answered them, in addition to providing all available explanations and information.

Most recently, the association's executive suggested on their website that the Mayor of Wentworth colluded with the developer to make changes to the zoning By-Law to facilitate the realization of a potential recreational tourism project on the municipality's territory. Nothing is further from the truth and this constitutes a serious and unacceptable attack on the reputation not only of the mayor, but also on all members of the municipal council and the municipality's staff. We are calling on the civil sense of Wentworth's citizens to change the tone of the debate and the methods used. We have no problem with citizens being against the project and expressing their concerns – that is the very essence of democracy – but it must be done within a civilized and respectful dialogue.

**A rigorous process**

More than two years ago, the municipality of the Township of Wentworth began a regulatory amendment process in response to the amendment of the Argenteuil RCM land use plan that came into force August 8, 2017. Like the other eight local municipalities of the RCM, Wentworth was obliged to amend its By-Laws to comply with the *Act respecting land use planning and development* and to comply with the revised land use plan.



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The new zoning By-Law, after having been the subject of several working meetings of the Planning advisory committee and the environmental advisory committee, was submitted to an initial public information and discussion session on July 23, 2018, at which some forty citizens participated. Although the law did not require the holding of such a consultation, the municipality, for the sake of transparency, deemed it appropriate to initiate a dialogue with citizens before filing a draft By-Law.

Following this, drafts of Wentworth's Planning Program, zoning By-Law and subdivision By-Law were filed on August 6, 2018. A new public consultation was held on August 27, 2018. The new regulatory framework was then adopted unanimously by your municipal council on September 4, 2018 and came into force January 14, 2019.

### **The promoter's actions**

With no link to the municipality's process to amending zoning By-Laws, the promoter (WITR) verbally informed Wentworth's mayor in May 2018 of its interest in acquiring land on our territory.

The promoter made an initial request for administrative information from the municipality on August 20, 2018 to learn about the regulatory framework in force in Wentworth. **The proposed new zoning By-Law was not affected or modified in any way by the promoter's actions and requests for information.**

Thus, the new zoning By-Law was developed and adopted as part of a rigorous process that complied in all respects with all applicable laws.

### **Unfounded fears and false information**

For several months, LLPOA's leaders have been working to sow unfounded fears in the community about the environmental impacts of a potential recreational tourism project in Wentworth. This was the case, particularly, for the heronry, which nevertheless enjoys excellent protection in the new zoning By-Law, equivalent to that provided by federal government standards.

Regarding the potential establishment of a golf course in zone RU6, contrary to what has been conveyed by LLPOA's leaders, this was already allowed under the old zoning By-Law, to the extent that the various applicable standards were respected, such as those relating to the use of pesticides, insecticides and fertilizers. The new regulation has extended this pre-existing right, but with stricter environmental standards (e.g. the obligation for the operator to recover run-off water from the land).



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We must note the blatant bad faith of LLPOA's leaders. We would have expected them to exercise responsible leadership and engage in a truly constructive dialogue with the municipality. On Sept. 11, 2019, LLPOA's executive received a formal demand by the municipality to retract and withdraw a recent publication on their website containing false and misleading information. It attacks, in a serious and unacceptably harmful manner, the reputation of the Mayor, Councillors and the municipality's staff.

Rest assured that your municipal council has only one goal in this regard – that of ensuring the best interests of Wentworth and its citizens by providing for the municipality's harmonious development.

Thank you for the attention you have given this message. We wish everyone a beautiful autumn.

Your Township of Wentworth municipal council

\* Municipal councillor David Smith is presently on vacation and could not be contacted for the purposes of this message.

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