

Aug. 3, 2021

To:

From: Peter Elliott, 112 Winding Lane, Carleton Place, Ont. K7C 4K8

### **OTTAWA HOSPITAL MASTER PLAN ON The Central Experimental Farm**

It has generally been agreed that a new Ottawa hospital is necessary. The question is, where is the most suitable location, considering access ability, land and financial cost. The primary site with its' master plan has been selected by the Ottawa hospital Board (OHB) and City Council to be the Central Experimental Farm (CEF), although the planners both in the City and National Capital Commission (NCC )plus the public recommend the Tunney Pasture site over CEF for various physical and heritage reasons. I understand from my sources that even the Toronto Hospital Board on review of the proposal strongly recommend the Tunney's Pasture site over CEF.

Who are they that have the final say on the leasing of the CEF for the development of this plan?

**Number one** is Agriculture and Ag-Food Canada. The main question is what is the Ministers' long term plan and goal for the CEF? What is the Ministers' response to the 'master plan' development? It is Ag Can's heritage and historic site and above all, the beginning of Ag research in Canada.

**Second player** is Parks Canada (PC) and its' historic sites monuments branch. The CEF was granted and certified the status as a **National Historic Site** in 1998 and also recognised as a **World Heritage Site**. The CEF is only one of three known functioning research farms within the centre of a city in the world. As a NHS it does not just mean the protection of it's buildings, but includes the green space, gardens, walkways, and in this case most significantly TREES. The extensive use of green space which is part of what is considered the lung of the City and the culling of 100 year old trees is unbelievable. It is equivalent to those who recently for other reasons, demolished statues of the Queen, Sir John A our founding father and others. Sir John Carling selected William Saunders of London

Ontario a noted tree expert as the first Director of Ag Research and who selected the CEF site in 1886 and he immediately began planting trees donated by Russia, England, Jamaica, Japan, California and Minnesota along Maple, Elm Drive and what we now know as the NCC driveway, researching their hardiness to our climate.

This was the beginning of the Arboretum. The Dominion Arboretum today between Prince of Wales and Dows Lake started in 1889. The plantings of Saunders donated trees made all the Farm, the Arboretum .

According to the present “master plan” 680 trees will be removed, (cut down) including the heritage hedge collection. The question is: does this meet the Parks Canada Historic Site Protection criteria? I also question if Parks Canada would even consider permitting this kind of development to take place on Halifax’s Citadel Hill or Quebec’s Plains of Abraham?

**The Third** party and most influential is the National Capital Commission (NCC) assigned by the Government of Canada is to protect, maintain and assess all development of all Federal National Capital Lands and adjacent properties of significant heritage interest i.e. Chateau Laurier Hotel and its glass and tin outhouse addition facing Majors Hill Park, with their approval and viewed from the Prime Minister’s office on the Hill.

The approval of this plan in this location by the NCC Board of Directors, made up mostly of respected representatives from across the country, under the Chair of Mr. Tobi Nussbaum (former Ottawa Councillor) would be a disrespectful HERITAGE decision for ALL CANADIANS.

Originally the “master plan” proposal was to only utilize the land previously occupied by the Sir John Carling Building (JCB) and it’s parking access plus the lands from SCB to the “O” train tracks. In this final “master plan” the SCB would not even be a quarter of the new building size plus the 4 story parking lot at Prince of Wales and Preston St. would cut out the Dows Lake Pavilion client parking and tourists, as the hospital parking lot would be only for hospital clients.

This is a “déjà vue”. In the 50s, politicians, developers and the Civil Service Recreational Board selected the Arboretum as the most favourable site to build the new RA Centre. Dr. Ken Neatby, Director of Science Services (now the Research Branch) met with Mr Taylor Deputy Minister of Finance who was a RA Director and convinced him that this project would jeopardize almost a century of Arboretum research. The RA was built on Riverside Drive. Is there a Dr. Neatby today???

### **The SILENT PLAYER “THE FRIENDS OF THE CEF (FCEF)**

This public incorporation was established in 1988 in partnership with Ag Can’s CEF Research Branch with the mandate to protect, preserve and enhance the CEF. Over the past 33 years some 600 plus past and present members have provided an average of 10K volunteer hours of labour assisting the CEF staff in the Arboretum and gardens. With public donations and under the supervision of the CEF’s curator of the Arboretum and gardens the FCEF has funded the introduction of new varieties of plants, trees, shrubs and developed a large hosta garden walk.

In the early 90s the FCEF invited the public to purchase trees selected by Trevor Cole the then curator to enhance and re-establish the research program of growth hardiness of various species. To date over 1200 trees and shrubs have been planted throughout the CEF, including around the Carling Building grounds. All these have identifying plaques of the donor. Recently the public were offered the opportunity to purchase a garden bench for \$7,000.00 to be placed in the gardens and arboretum sites and walkways. To date 12 benches have been installed. The FCEF’s enhancement programs and labour has been a tremendous saving to Ag Can and a plus to the tourism industry in Ottawa.

The projected culling (removal) of 680 trees and the heritage hedge rows is an historic loss to the people of Canada and an insult to those who originally planted these trees, such as William Saunders, dignitaries, government leaders and public donors. Who will send the tree bereavement notices?

The CEF location is only based on cost and political ego. The question is if we, the Canadian people give Ottawa this “inch” they’ll start taking the extra mile on other designated heritage sites. Shame, no sense, no moral value !!!

**The CEF belongs to all Canadians, not just Ottawans!! The SJC building was a Federal building, headquarters of Ag Can, not a provincial or City of Ottawa building. There is an alternate site....Tunneys Pasture!!!**

Deeply Concerned Citizen:

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FOUNDER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE CENTRAL EXPERIMENTAL FARM 1988 ,

National Coordinator of Ag Can Research Branch (43 locations) 1979

Ag Can Liaison Officer to U.N. World Food Congress 1979

Research Branch Mass Spectroscopist 1965-1991

President of the Canadian Tulip Festival

Cc: Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Environment and Climate Change

Cc: Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture – Ag Food Canada

Cc: Chairman Tobi Nussbaum, National Capital Commission