

Winging it

I was interested to read that Kincardine council has established an Environment Committee. Do we need another committee for council to ignore? The Works Committee studied the Huron Ridge and flooding issue for months, presented its recommendations to council only to have key parts dismissed, and council still has not come to a decision. How involved was the Accessibility Committee with the planning of the Davidson Centre? Was it asked to be part of the planning? No. Did council seek advice from the Heritage Committee before taking a chain saw to the lighthouse? It did not.

It would better serve the environment if environmentalists formed their own group. That way they would be available if council ever thought to ask their advice, they would avoid having their concerns lost in a cumbersome reporting system, and the environmentalists would be free to be proactive.

An on-going concern is council members' lack of preparation for meetings. Councillors, too many, fail to do the necessary reading in order to speak to the agenda with an informed opinion, nor do they have a fund of general knowledge to address the critical issues of the day that affect the well-being of the community. What is the point of an Environment Committee, or any other committee, presenting information and recommendations to councillors who

Municipal Musings

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have no concept of the issue under discussion? A multi-million dollar business cannot be operated successfully by winging it.

Related to the above is the latest fiasco by council, the botched-up lighthouse repairs. Considering the importance of the lighthouse as a municipal symbol, its care should be placed under an organization that has a strong sense of heritage and history's place in our community. Though the Kincardine Yacht Club does a terrific job operating the harbour and has greatly improved the harbour facilities, members are primarily sailors, not historians or heritage types. Perhaps that is why the club members apparently did not ask about the nature of repairs when they learned of the municipality's plan to stop the leaks at the Lighthouse. Understandably, it did not resonate.

If council reverses its irresponsible decision and immediately begins to repair the lighthouse under the guidance of the Heritage Committee, it also needs to consider what historical group should assume care of our priceless symbol, the l i g h t h o u s e .
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