

Katherine Reid responses to SORE 2022

Development has and will continue to be a challenge in Niagara-on-the-Lake given the unique heritage character of Old Town and the mix of multiple urban areas and agricultural land.

During the current Council's mandate, Council consulted on and approved a new Official Plan.

That plan is awaiting approval from the Region, which is expected shortly after the new Regional OP is approved by the Province. There is enormous development pressure on Old Town NOTL in particular given its world-renowned character and charm. The Rand Estate occupies a central and important place in Old Town as one of the last estate residential properties and is an essential part of the Town's cultural heritage history.

- 1. Do you agree with the statement that intensive residential development should be directed to Glendale and those areas of Old Town, Virgil, St Davids and Queenston that do not compete with or require compromising the Town's cultural heritage assets. I do agree with the intensive development concentrated in that area. It is not taking land out of the agricultural industry. Students can always use the housing and it is better connected to the region for transportation.**
- 2. Do you agree that large-scale residential developments should be required to thoroughly assess the planning merits including compliance with the new NOTL OP, heritage, servicing, traffic and environmental matters (including watercourses) before any development application is made? I would think that this should be done automatically. Many ecological and heritage sites have been affected, and**

there is not enough infrastructure as it is. There are ways to assist with traffic (shuttles organized) and traffic controls without having more traffic circles and buying land to use for them.

3. Do you support character studies to identify, the cultural heritage attributes of sites and their surroundings before development applications are made in Old Town? Yes, studies should be done before the inform goes to council for discussion. Measure twice, cut once.

4. Are you in favour of spending money to defend planning integrity in our community? Do you agree that funds spent to assess and oppose questionable/unsuitable development applications in Niagara-on-the-Lake is money well spent? If not, what approach would you take to uphold our Official Plan and the Ontario *Heritage Act* when faced with aggressive and litigious developers and problematic development proposals? I would prefer that more work could be done before it gets to Council. The same project going to council several times could be improved. That would save time, energy and money.

With respect to the Solmar/Marotta group proposals for the Rand Estate:

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being most important, how critical do you think getting the Rand Estate right is for the future of Old Town NOTL. I would rate it a 7, it is important but other items are equally important.

2. Do you support completion of the special character area study for the Rand Estate required by the new NOTL Official Plan before any decisions are made concerning appropriate land use at Randwood? That is a difficult one to answer. The plan was to be finished during this term of Council That was their number one goal.

3. Do you think the front and back half of the Rand Estate need to be comprehensively assessed before any redevelopment applications are approved rather than piecemealing the Estate into individual parcels? It would be difficult to rezone the agricultural parcel. There should be a balance and compromise between the new zoning, plot size, infrastructure and other aspects. Most of the details are done in meetings that are not public knowledge.

4. The Marotta group has proposed plans for the back half of the non end Estate which vary between 170 and 190 residential units, and which would remove substantially all of the remaining cultural heritage attributes of 200 John and 588 Charlotte. Are you familiar with the Marotta plans? Yes kitchen for the cooking school., I have been following Randwood since it was made into a school. I had a tour on my birthday in 1998 when Newark plumbing was doing the kitchen for the school and my employer, Dr. Joseph Pohorly, had done some of the engineering work.

5. SORE has published a conceptual plan for the back half of the Rand Estate showing how it could be repurposed for residential use in a manner sensitive to both the Estate and the surrounding residential neighbourhood while conserving the

cultural heritage attributes of Randwood. The SORE plan contemplates a mix of approximately 70 residential units and includes public access to this very important cultural heritage asset. Are you familiar with the SORE plan? Yes, I have seen several versions of the plan.

6. If you are not familiar with either the SORE or Marotta plans, can we send them to you so that you can respond to question 6 below?

7. Do you believe the SORE or the Marotta plan is preferred for the back half of the Rand Estate? Please elaborate. Actually, I did like the Trisha Romance version the best. As hurdles go up, the property will keep on being challenged.

8. The Town is currently prosecuting the Marotta companies under the Ontario *Heritage Act* for the November, 2018 clear cutting of a vast portion of the Rand Estate. If the prosecution is successful the Town is entitled to reinstate any illegally destroyed heritage landscape at the owner's expense. Do you support such reinstatement? I understand that many trees were cut down, and the heritage landscape has been altered. I also understand that many of the trees were elm trees that were having a problem. If the trees were to be replaced, I would look for a compromise. If not, than the challenge could be made.

9. Do you think Solmar/the Marotta group should be required to critically assess all access alternatives to access the Rand Estate, including adjacent land owned by the Two Sisters winery? I believe Marotta owns Two Sisters with his family. If he buys the land, he should have some input to the properties. As a

winery and vineyard, it is difficult to force what a grower can do or not do in terms of access.

10. The Marotta/Solmar proposal for a hotel/convention centre on the front half of the Rand Estate required a large traffic circle at the intersection of John St E and the Parkway, using lands owned by/under the control of the Niagara Parks Commission and likely impacting mature trees in that area. SORE's traffic experts believe the traffic circle will similarly be required for the proposed Rand subdivision. Do you support the installation of a traffic circle at that location? The circle on the parkway would be a good idea, although it is not good for the trees. It would slow down traffic. I hope it has good lighting as the one at Queenston Heights Park does not, and is not easy to understand later in the day. Many trees have been lost in the area over the past few decades, and the environment has been affected. Personally I miss the vineyards, orchards, trees and wildlife that were in the town many years ago. I miss the school that was in Randwood, but the more the location is challenge, it will continue to fall into disrepair. This is a beautiful Town, and I would like it to continue for decades to come.