

Letters showed ?lack of professionalism?

I remain extremely disappointed in the lack of professionalism exhibited by Town Councillors John Gallo, Wendy Gaertner and Chris Ballard in their jointly authored letter that ran on page 4 and 6 of the February 12th edition of the Auroran.

In it several factually incorrect statements were made regarding the proposal from Lucid Community Development Group.

Thankfully this misinformation was clarified in a follow up letter that ran on page 6 of the February 26th edition by Mayor Dawe.

One outstanding issue I have with the letter of February 12th has to do with three elected officials soliciting public input and then providing personal email addresses for such a purpose.

Considering how the three Councilors' letter spoke to the themes of "transparency" and "acting in the community's best interest" I find it both conspicuous and hypocritical that these same Councillors would provide personal email addresses to communicate town business.

How circumventing corporate email could be construed as being in the Town's best interest is beyond me, especially when it appears to contravene my understanding of all four objectives laid out in staff report : CS08-038 dated October 7th 2008.

Emails sent to personal email accounts are not subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act which is one reason municipalities, the Town of Aurora included, provides and maintains at a cost to tax payers, a secure email service along with mobile devices to all members of council.

As recently as last month the entire issue of email communications was reviewed by Council suggesting to me that the decision to include personal emails in this letter wasn't some honest mistake, and makes me question the motivation behind it.

Back in May of 2010 the City of Vaughan's integrity commissioner provided direction through a series of guidelines that spoke to accountability and transparency with regards to corporate email.

Surely it doesn't require a code of conduct, an integrity commissioner, and/or a full on policy review by staff here in Aurora for these three Town Councillors to realize they should use their corporate email accounts when acting in their capacity as Councillors.

Council members are either doing the town's business or they're not and email accounts should be used appropriately.

Going forward when communicating to members of council by email I would encourage fellow Aurorans to pay extra attention as to where exactly your concerns are being directed.

Christopher Watts
Aurora