

Ward system would bring ?accountability?, town into 21st century

I am proud resident of Aurora for the past 20 years.

I have been a vocal proponent of the Aurora ward system for the past 10 years.

I am one who will bear the heat of change to benefit the greater interest of all Aurorans.

Recently, the Mayor, in a news article, said that the ward system is ?Parochial.? I like the good Mayor as a person, however, I do not agree with some of his views.

In particular, I took exception to that belittling ?Parochial? statement. To me, the number one function of a Mayor should be to inspire and to uplift citizens, not to be the voice of negativity or doom and gloom.

I respectfully suggest, that the only thing ?parochial? in Aurora is the ?parochial? thinking of the past.

It amazed me to think how a Mayor could make such an outrageous comment that not only insults the intelligence of Aurorans as a whole, but certainly, by association, it insults municipalities to the south, east, west and north of us who do have a ward system in place.

Do our neighbours and others who disagree with our Mayor know something he does not?

Mr. Mayor, you must embrace, welcome and acknowledge change for the greater benefit of all Aurora.

Aurora is not the sleepy ?parochial? ?ol' boys club? Town it once was.

The new Aurora is a rich, diverse international Town, filled with innovation and genius.

Newmarket had an ?at large? voting system about eight years ago.

The people of Newmarket were not being properly served with that outdated system.

Council had the same predicament as Aurora has with red tape in realizing the ward system.

They faced (as we do) the almost unattainable resident voter approval of 51% to vote in a ward system. But, historically, we can't even get 30% of the voters to come out and vote in a regular municipal election. We are in a Catch 22.

The Newmarket Mayor and a savvy Council simply cut through the political red tape (as allowed by government regulations in all Municipalities) and voted the ward system in.

I am skeptical of our current ?at large? voting system. I do not trust that it represents the greater interest and direct proportional representation of the residents.

The at large system is an outdated ploy to benefit the few. The old system was perhaps useful when Aurora was a still an open space of farmland with neighbours living far apart. Today, Aurora is a bustling, thriving, enlightened community chock packed with new neighbourhoods, businesses and people from all parts of the world.

And as such, we need a proper ward system to reflect the immense diversity of Aurora, where a Councillor can represent, concentrate and be solely accountable to the particular needs of a particular ward in Town, not the ?at large? vast open farmlands of the past.

The direct election of Councillors by wards ensures that local government has a neighbour's face, not an ?at large? long distance face. Ward Councillors who have been chosen by the majority of voters in the ward are directly accountable to the ward voters, not to the Mayor's slate or ?ol boys club."

The ward Councilor lives, breaths, attends, solely to his/her ward's needs.

The ward Councillor serves solely at the behest and pleasure of the ward voters.

That's real proportional and democratic representation ? not the wool over your eyes at large system.

If that ward Councillor does not address people's genuine concerns, or does not serve with respect and integrity, or does not reflect the needs of the ward properly, then these Councillors will be voted out at the next election. The magic word here is accountability.

That word is non-existent in the at large system.

Fellow Aurorans, you are the real power in Aurora, not the Mayor, not Council.

Tell Council you demand accountability from them, and that you want a ward system with proportional representation ? not optical illusions.

Tell Council that you are part of the new International Aurora ? not part of a ?parochial? Aurora.

Anthony Pullano

Aurora

(Editor's note: Mr. Pullano is a registered Council candidate for this fall's municipal election)