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Subject: Contradictions in Wilmot Township Council's Approach to Community Engagement
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Dear Wilmot Councilors and Mayor,

I am writing to express my concern about the selective application of community engagement by Wilmot Council. While the council has demonstrated a significant appetite for the Prime Ministers Path statue engagement, there has been a stark lack of similar engagement regarding critical life-sustaining issues such as farmland preservation, food security, and the economic and cultural importance of Wilmot's local agribusinesses.

Farmers and residents have voiced their frustrations about the lack of transparency in preserving farmland, repeatedly emphasizing the vital economic and cultural significance of the local agricultural community. Wilmot Council needs to adequately address public concerns about the unjustified destruction of 160 acres of corn within its jurisdiction and the pressing issue of land acquisition for industrial development. It was disheartening to learn from the Regional Chair that the Region worked very closely with the Township of Wilmot staff on actions that led to the destruction of 160 acres of corn.

Preserving agricultural heritage and dwindling prime farmland is essential for sustaining local food production, supporting the local economy, and ensuring food security amid rising food bank usage. The loss of farmland threatens the livelihoods of local farmers and impacts the community's ability to produce food locally, increasing reliance on external sources. This issue is far more critical than the fate of lifeless manufactured bronze idols, which do not positively contribute to sustaining the community's well-being and actual economic prosperity as farmers do.

As elected officials, council has a duty to listen to all voices and address public concerns with equal diligence. Food security is crucial for public safety, especially in emergencies, and sustainable agricultural practices are key to building a resilient and healthy community. A genuine commitment to the community's well-being means prioritizing food security and recognizing the vital contributions of the agricultural sector's authentic local heritage. This is far more important than maintaining decorative inorganic shrines that misrepresent any actual connection to Wilmot's local history. The inhumane 'policy of starvation' implemented by 'Indian agents' under Macdonald for the sake of land acquisition and growth is a path no modern politician should willingly follow.

To regain credibility and trust, and as leaders of character, Wilmot Township Council must apply a consistent approach to community

engagement, particularly on critical issues that impact the well-being of residents. Council must ensure that all constituents' voices are heard and valued, fostering a more inclusive decision-making process while prioritizing the community's best interests, as is your responsibility.

Regards,
Mike Rice

New Hamburg, Wilmot Township, Ontario



I would like to have this correspondence added to the upcoming Council Agenda Package under correspondence to form part of the official record.