

From: [Mike Rice](#)
To: [Stewart Cressman](#); [Kris Wilkinson](#); [Lillianne Dunstall](#); [Steven Martin](#); [Natasha Salonen](#); [Prime Ministers Path](#); [Clerks](#); [Kaitlin Bos](#); [Chris Catania](#); [Greg Clark](#); [Candice Greenley](#); [Jennifer Smith](#)
Cc: benny.skinner@uwaterloo.ca; [Denise Soueidan-O"Leary](#); info@lura.ca; [Ecumenical Working Group](#)
Subject: Re: Notice of Motion Regarding the Working Group for the Future of the Prime Ministers Path
Date: November 21, 2024 1:13:55 PM

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Dear Members of Wilmot Council,

I am writing to express my opposition to the motion that requires the Terms of Reference for the Prime Ministers Path working group to exclude non-residents of the Township of Wilmot.

The Prime Ministers Path was promoted as a way to honour and represent Canada's complicated political history while also serving as a tourism attraction for non-residents of the Township of Wilmot. The Path's statues depict former Prime Ministers from cities and towns in Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, and Alberta; however, none of them hail from the Township of Wilmot.

It is troubling that this motion seeks council's endorsement to implement a policy that suppresses participation and voices in a working group for a controversial project promoted to celebrate political efforts to unite the country yet simultaneously attempted to silence, assimilate and eradicate the voices of original inhabitants.

Many aspects of this project require expertise and perspectives found beyond the geographical boundaries of Wilmot. Firstly, the various sculptors who have contributed to the Prime Ministers Path do not live in Wilmot. Regardless of whether this project receives community support to move forward, it could not exist or continue without artistic contributions from across Canada. Like the project itself artistic talent, historical expertise and supportive or concerned voices should not be confined by municipal boundaries.

Secondly, many of the Township's corporate management team and staff who guide and assist this council and have been involved with the project in the past, present and possibly its future are non-residents of the Township of Wilmot.

Lastly, the consultants from Land Use Research Associates Inc. (LURA) who also don't appear to be from Wilmot, have been entrusted with overseeing an inclusive engagement initiative. LURA's experience and professional capabilities are vital to ensuring a fair and comprehensive public engagement process. Handcuffing the consultants by limiting the working group to Wilmot residents would undermine the objective of achieving a broad, inclusive and fair representation of all voices.

Ironically, another Notice of Motion on the same agenda addresses the potential installation of a Veteran's Crosswalk. This initiative recognizes the sacrifices made by veterans and their families for the freedoms enjoyed by everyone across the nation, not just those who currently reside in Wilmot Township.

While localism has its merits—such as supporting artisanal goods, small businesses, and farm-to-table food, thereby enhancing community and environmental connections—it can also have drawbacks. Political localism, in particular, can be risky and may lead to isolationism – the exact opposite of what the Prime Ministers Path was to somehow celebrate.

In conclusion, if the Prime Ministers Path is promoted as a project of national significance

that has received federal funding, council needs to adopt a more inclusive approach. This should welcome contributions from both residents and non-residents who can demonstrate their commitment to ensuring inclusive and fair representation of all voices.

Thank you for considering my views on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Mike Rice

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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