

May 12, 2025

Members of Wilmot Council,

Thank you for being on Wilmot Council. Thank you for the opportunity to verbally give some thoughts regarding the PMP.

My verbal thoughts are a supplement to my written submission dated May 6, 2025.

My level of support for the PMP in Wilmot Township has diminished over the years as the controversy has increased and the cost to Wilmot taxpayers has increased.

I think it is important for Wilmot Township to know their order of priorities and act accordingly. Where on Wilmot's priority list is "trying to teach Canadian history appropriately by displaying statues of prime ministers outdoors?"

I feel we have given the PMP more than a fair chance with the \$175,000 in tax supported dollars Wilmot Township has already spent on it. This amount would be substantially more if the cost of Wilmot Staff PMP related time since 2016 would be added on.

Funding of many millions of dollars would be required to get statues of the first 22 prime ministers up. Statues alone cost about \$100,000 each. If funding and/or interest dries up at any stage Wilmot Township will be stuck with an uncompleted PMP. Accordingly, thought should be given to obtain guaranteed funding to put all 22 Prime Minister statues up before putting the first statue up.

As well, there has been so much controversy regarding statues of Sir John A. Macdonald. Currently there is only 1 of at least 10 Sir John A. Macdonald statues in Canada left up and uncovered outdoors. It is located on Parliament Hill.

If you are looking for a viable option of what to do with the statues please consider the following:
The estimate is the statues should last at least one hundred years outside. Put them inside and the statues as well as accompanying educational components can last thousands of years since they are not exposed to weather-related deterioration. Plus, there isn't the cost of weather-related maintenance. Plus, there are many more options for the educational component and varying it. Plus, there is much less risk of vandalism.

The Federal Government continues to invest in teaching and displaying Canadian history appropriately. This is in keeping with the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015.

Wilmot Township could donate the existing 9 statues to the Federal Government who already own many buildings where one or more of these statues could be displayed. An example of a possible placement might be the William Lyon Mackenzie King statue at his childhood home located at the Woodside National Historic Site in Kitchener. If it is decided to continue with more statues, some federally owned buildings would have room for 22+ statues such as the Canadian Museum of History or The Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

If Wilmot Township is required to pay shipping costs for the 9 statues it should not be too costly since Wilmot Township has already paid \$29,409 to remove the 5 statues that were up. That means all 9 statues are in storage and 4 of the statues are still in their original shipping crate. Perhaps the Federal Government would pay some or all shipping costs or Wilmot Township could access a grant that would pay some or all shipping costs.

This option:

- will minimize the hurt the statues can cause people since qualified experts hired by the Federal Government will be involved in deciding on an appropriate location, educational component, etc.
- is a workable solution with little expense for Wilmot Township that can be implemented in a short time period (possibly less than a year)
- will help to prevent the current 9 statues from being damaged or destroyed by vandalism
- enables the PMP to be put to rest as much as possible for Wilmot Township

I don't think the Indigenous will oppose this option. I feel some of them are hurt every time they hear Wilmot Township is still thinking about putting the statues back up.

If you decide to go ahead with this plan, perhaps Wilmot Township's MP, Tim Louis, might be able to give some helpful suggestions for contacts re donation, government grants, etc.

Unless someone can come up with a better viable solution, there should be no good reason why pursuing this option should cause an explosion or hard feelings.

Closing

Wilmot Council, please use your elected position to make wise decisions regarding the future of the Prime Ministers Path in Wilmot Township.

If you are interested, there are more PMP related thoughts I am willing to share with you individually or as a group in a less formal setting.

Thank you for listening.

If there are questions, please ask.

Karen Doehn