

Betty Disero responses to SORE 2022

Development has and will continue to be a challenge in Niagara-on-the-Lake given the unique heritage character of Old Town and the mix of multiple urban areas and agricultural land.

During the current Council's mandate, Council consulted on and approved a new Official Plan. That plan is awaiting approval from the Region, which is expected shortly after the new Regional OP is approved by the Province. There is enormous development pressure on Old Town NOTL in particular given its world-renowned character and charm. The Rand Estate occupies a central and important place in Old Town as one of the last estate residential properties and is an essential part of the Town's cultural heritage history.

1. Do you agree with the statement that intensive residential development should be directed to Glendale and those areas of Old Town, Virgil, St Davids and Queenston that do not compete with or require compromising the Town's cultural heritage assets?

YES

I realize your readers will have a lot to read through from all candidates, so I will try to be very brief and to the point in my answers.

The Glendale District Plan was a thoughtful process that took into account and put on paper, the spaces we wanted to keep that were environmental in nature, green spaces, trails and walkways and community amenities. Then we looked at what was left and placed development opportunities. We will continue to watch to ensure Glendale is developed properly, but it can accommodate more density than our heritage areas.

Protecting the community and community assets - heritage both built and natural are very important to me and to our town.

1. Do you agree that large-scale residential developments should be required to thoroughly assess the planning merits including compliance with the new NOTL OP, heritage, servicing, traffic and environmental matters (including watercourses) before any development application is made?

YES - and we should be looking at the history of the site and how it was used and fit into the community, which is slightly different than heritage.

1. Do you support character studies to identify, the cultural heritage attributes of sites and their surroundings before development applications are made in Old Town?

YES- I have in the past and will continue to do so.

1. Are you in favour of spending money to defend planning integrity in our community? Do you agree that funds spent to assess and oppose questionable/unsuitable development applications in Niagara-on-the-Lake is money well spent? If not, what approach would you take to uphold our Official Plan and the Ontario Heritage Act when faced with aggressive and litigious developers and problematic development proposals?

YES - I have in the past and will continue to do so.

With respect to the Solmar/Marotta group proposals for the Rand Estate:

1.

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being most important, how critical do you think getting the Rand Estate right is for the future of Old Town NOTL. **10 - it will impact all other new development setting a precedent, it is part of our cultural landscape, it will impact traffic if overbuilt, the view from our trails and from the Commons to name a few.**
2. Do you support completion of the special character area study for the Rand Estate required by the new NOTL Official Plan before any decisions are made concerning appropriate land use at Randwood? **YES**
3. Do you think the front and back half of the Rand Estate need to be comprehensively assessed before any redevelopment applications are approved rather than piecemealing the Estate into individual parcels? **YES**
4. The Marotta group has proposed plans for the back half of the Rand Estate which vary between 170 and 190 residential units, and which would remove substantially all of the remaining cultural heritage attributes of 200 John and 588 Charlotte. Are you familiar with the Marotta plans? **YES**
5. SORE has published a conceptual plan for the back half of the Rand Estate showing how it could be repurposed for residential use in a manner sensitive to both the Estate and the surrounding residential neighbourhood while conserving the cultural heritage attributes of Randwood. The SORE plan contemplates a mix of approximately 70 residential units and includes public access to this very important cultural heritage asset. Are you familiar with the SORE plan? **YES**
6. If you are not familiar with either the SORE or Marotta plans, can we send them to you so that you can respond to question below?
7. Do you believe the SORE or the Marotta plan is preferred for the back half of the Rand Estate? Please elaborate. **The SORE Proposal is better. It allows for better protection of both the natural and built heritage aspects of the property. It also allows for more trees and public spaces. It is a neighbourhood, not a subdivision. It better compliments the view from the Heritage Trail. There is no increase in the grading so the houses don't tower over the neighbours, which will keep the impact to the area minimal.**
8. The Town is currently prosecuting the Marotta companies under the Ontario Heritage Act for the November, 2018 clear cutting of a vast portion of the Rand Estate. If the prosecution is successful the Town is entitled to reinstate any illegally destroyed heritage landscape at the owner's expense. Do you support such reinstatement? **YES**
9. Do you think Solmar/the Marotta group should be required to critically assess all access alternatives to access the Rand Estate, including adjacent land owned by the Two Sisters winery? **I think the access should be through the Rand Estate and not through the greenbelt area, the Heritage Trail or the Dunnington Grub landscape. Also the numbers of houses should be reduced to allow for safe access. It is not our (the taxpayers) responsibility give/sell land to provide access. These are issues that developers need to address themselves on their property when they purchase land.**
10. The Marotta/Solmar proposal for a hotel/convention centre on the front half of the Rand Estate required a large traffic circle at the intersection of John St E and the

Parkway, using lands owned by/under the control of the Niagara Parks Commission and likely impacting mature trees in that area. SORE's traffic experts believe the traffic circle will similiarly be required for the proposed Rand subdivision. Do you support the installation of a traffic circle at that location?

NO - it will be eating into Paradise Grove. That area was just groomed and reforested this year. It is an historical culturally significant area and part of the parks system.