

Deputy Mayor speaks to boardwalk blues

To the Editor,

Having attended several community functions over the last week, and being asked a multitude of questions surrounding the boardwalk decision, I would like to clarify several of the points in last week's *Bancroft Times* and *Bancroft This Week* articles. Council decided by a recorded vote of four to three to take sole control for the upkeep and future planning of the Boardwalk. Mayor Jenkins, Councillor Kilpatrick and myself were not in favour of this approach and voted against the motion. As indicated, a more inclusive and collaborative approach that included the existing Boardwalk Committee was brought forth by Kilpatrick but this was rejected. One of the reasons stated for total town control was to ensure adequate maintenance on the boardwalk however, this responsibility already rests with the town. On the issue of landowners who declined to participate in the project, this is their right and at no time was expropriation ever considered by either the Boardwalk Committee or the town - I support landowner rights and these individuals were well within theirs. With respect to the location of the boardwalk, several studies going back 25 plus years have identified the untapped potential of the riverfront and the existing location was identified to maximize potential recreational and commercial benefits. My last point concerns the actual members of the Boardwalk Committee, Burke Chamberlin, Steve Huszarik and Gord Krieger. These gentlemen spent much of their own time and resources to make a long time vision a reality. They also enlisted the support of many local businesses who donated time and materials to the project and everyone involved deserves our gratitude for this painstaking effort. Community groups are the backbone of our town in many different endeavours and deserve our support to move our town and region forward in a positive way. A recent editorial concerning the boardwalk in the *Bancroft Times* summed up the situation best - let's take the completed sections of the boardwalk and maximize their potential through beautification, benches, lighting, historical signage etc., in a positive and constructive way and encourage more people and groups to undertake such projects.

Paul Jenkins, Deputy Mayor
Town of Bancroft