

## **Walpole Island First Nation**

### **Participant Statement**

#### **LPAT Appeal by CAMPP Windsor-Essex Residents' Association**

#### **Request**

Our community requests to be added as a Participant to the LPAT appeal filed by CAMPP Windsor-Essex Residents Association of the decisions of Windsor City Council of 13 August 2018.

#### **Who we are**

Walpole Island is an island and First Nation reserve in southwestern Ontario, on the border between Ontario and Michigan in the United States. It is located in the mouth of the St. Clair River on Lake St. Clair, about 121 kilometres by road from Windsor and 124 kilometres from Detroit, Michigan.

It is unceded territory and is inhabited by the Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Odawa peoples of the Walpole Island First Nation, who call it Bkejwanong, meaning "where the waters divide" in Anishinaabemowin. In addition to Walpole Island, the reserve includes Squirrel Island, St. Anne Island, Seaway Island, Bassett Island, and Potawatomi Island. The river or creeks that separate these islands provide the area with its other commonly used name, Swejwanong or "many forks of a river."

Our people reside both on the reserve and elsewhere, including significant numbers in Windsor. The current population of Walpole Island First Nation is 4938 with approximately 2000 living off reserve.

#### **Summary of our submission**

We wish to be added as participants to CAMPP's appeal to LPAT in order to raise issues related to the lack of consultation with indigenous communities through the planning process in question, and to raise concerns about access to health care, and specifically culturally appropriate health care, for our community.

#### **1. Territory**

Chief Daniel R. Miskokomon states:

“The location of the New Mega Hospital will be situated within our Traditional Territory which is comprised of our people the Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi Nations of the Three Fires Confederacy, and the need for the Duty to Consult on the project will ensure our concerns are addressed prior to our Consent.”

## **2. Need for meaningful consultation with Indigenous communities on planning related matters**

The City of Windsor’s Official Plan requires that “Consultation with First Nations will take place as part of a development application or detailed planning study.” (10.2.1.14).

The Provincial Policy Statement states that “Planning authorities are encouraged to coordinate planning matters with Aboriginal communities.” (1.2.2).

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action also call on municipalities to do better when it comes to decisions that will affect indigenous peoples. Call 47 requires municipalities (along with other levels of government) to “reform laws, government policies and litigation strategies that continue to rely” on colonial concepts. Reforming colonial laws, policies and litigation strategies must mean offering indigenous peoples a meaningful seat at the table when important decisions are being made. It must mean offering meaningful consultation in a way which is culturally appropriate to our people.

We commend the work that has been done by the City of Windsor on other projects to improve collaboration with indigenous communities. Respectfully, however, with respect to the mega-hospital, there was no attempt at meaningful consultation. We request the opportunity to be able to work with those considering locations for the mega-hospital (along with other aspects of the planning process) to ensure that what is planned is suitable for our community as well as others.

## **3. Importance of considering healthcare needs of WIFN community members treated in Windsor**

The decision about where to locate a hospital which will serve the Windsor-Essex community is a decision that will affect the full community for generations. This includes both the significant number of indigenous persons (including members of Walpole Island First Nation) who reside in Windsor/Essex, and those who travel to Windsor currently for more complex medical care for themselves and their families.

Many of our community members reside in Windsor-Essex and therefore receive all needed hospital care in Windsor. In addition, the healthcare facilities of Windsor-Essex are used by

residents of Walpole Island for some complex medical treatments. We are therefore part of the constituency affected by any decisions being made about the quality and location of hospital care in Windsor-Essex.

#### **4. Need for healthcare to be accessible from populated areas**

A large portion of the indigenous community in Windsor/Essex regions resides in the downtown Windsor area. The proposed County Rd 42 site is far from where most of our community resides. It is not accessible by bus, and the proposed location will cost nearly \$30 each way. It is far from where our people live in the city, far from affordable accommodation, and far from the family and community support which sustain us when we or a family member is ill. Retaining accessible hospital care in the existing urban area of the city would provide much more support and accessibility.

We ask for the opportunity to be added as Participant in the LPAT appeal to bring these concerns forward.

(Original Signed)

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