

Dear Mayor Glover, Councillor Anderson, Councillor Lacroix, Members of Township of Lake of Bays Council & Ms. Best-Sararas  
CC Mayor Moffatt, Councillor Shortreed, Township of Algonquin Highlands

**Re: Township of Lake of Bays By-Law Amendment Application – Z04/22 LOB, 21624 Highway 35, Roll No. 030-003-02900**

I am writing regarding the rezoning request for the Raven Lake Landing on Highway 35 on behalf of the Raven Lake Cottagers' Association (RLCA) and the Raven Lake Dock Association (RLDA).

My family have been residents of Raven Lake since 2008. My family cottage is the 10<sup>th</sup> property from the landing on the North Shore of Five Mile Bay (54 Raven Lake) within the Township of Lake of Bays (LoB). The view to the west from our family cottage is of the landing and of highway 35. I have been a member of the RLCA Board of Directors (BoD) since 2014, have been the president of the RLCA BoD since August of 2020 and the President of the RLDA since its creation in the spring of 2021. My wife, son and I are also Raven Lake water access rate payers within the Township of Algonquin Highlands (15423 Raven Lake South Shore). Although our cottage is located within Algonquin Highlands, we consider ourselves part of the Lake of Bays community. We frequent Dorset, Dwight and Huntsville for our shopping, dining, and recreational activities. We spend as much time as we can at our cottage throughout the year, spending spring, summer and fall on the water and winter on the snowmobile trails.

The RLCA has been engaged with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) regarding the stick docks at the landing since 2007. It was in 2007 that the MNR first indicated to the RLCA BoD that the stick docks at the landing were illegally occupying Crown Land and needed to be removed. In 2011 there were several high-profile thefts from the Raven Lake Landing. Subsequently, water access residents submitted requests for better docking, security cameras, lighting, and policing. At this time, the MNR reaffirmed that the stick docks were illegal and that they needed to be removed.

In 2012, after a vote of support by the majority of RLCA members at the 2011 August Annual General Meeting (AGM), the RLCA BoD established a Landing Committee consisting of members of the RLCA BoD. The newly formed Landing Committee began to work with the MNR Bancroft office to determine what a permanent docking solution would look like in order to provide access for all water access residents of the lake. At the 2015 and again at the 2016 August RLCA AGM's, the Landing Committee presented status updates on the project and shared potential renderings of what a docking solution could look like. This was based on similar docking layouts in use on other lakes in the area.

In the fall of 2019, progress began to accelerate with the MNR. Members of the Landing Committee presented a project proposal at the MNR Bancroft office. The RLCA proposed that it enter a lease agreement with the MNR to allow the construction of a docking project at the Raven Lake Landing. A condition of the MNR was that the RLCA **represent the needs of all water access residents** on the lake. The landing committee also presented the landing proposal to the Township of Lake of Bays and to the Township of Algonquin Highlands.

In 2020 following the Landing Committee's meeting with the MNRF in Bancroft, the MNRF conducted an environmental review of the Raven Lake Landing, reached out to Indigenous stakeholders for comment and posted a notice inviting public feedback on the proposal to provide a docking solution at the landing for water access residents of Raven Lake. As a result of this process the MNRF informed the RLCA that they were prepared to provide a lease for the docking project.

In early 2021, a new not-for-profit entity was created, The Raven Lake Dock Association. The RLDA was established, with the existing RLCA Landing Committee members as its board. In June and July of 2021, the Landing Committee reached out to all 96 water access residents of Raven Lake by email, dock notices, Facebook posts, phone calls and face to face discussions. A membership agreement to join the RLDA project was shared. At the August 2021 RLCA virtual AGM, a full update was provided on the status and progress of the Landing project. At this point, the RLDA had 58 signed members and another 7 verbally committed for a total of 65.

In October of 2021, the MNRF decided to issue removal notices for the illegal stick docks at the Raven Lake Landing. The removal and cleanup of the stick docks was a condition that the MNRF placed in order for the RLCA to secure a lease. At this time, the Landing Committee decided it was prudent to expand the number of committee members to ensure that the views, interests, and concerns of all residents and areas of the lake were being represented. The RLCA BoD voted to accept 5 additional members to the landing committee. The 2<sup>nd</sup> VP of the RLCA (a road access year-round resident from Algonquin Highlands) along with 4 volunteers (1 from the main body of the lake in Algonquin Highlands and 3 from 5 Mile Bay in Lake of Bays) joined the Landing Committee.

Also in October, a virtual Q&A session was hosted with an open invitation for all lake residents to attend. The expanded Landing Committee was introduced and a status update on all aspects of the project was presented, including the need to deliver the docking project in 2 separate phases. Phase 1 being limited to a dock length of 66' and phase 2 which would require a rezoning application. If successful, phase 2 would allow for the docks to be extended to provide a slip for each water access resident that joins the RLDA, as mandated by the MNRF. At the end of the meeting the floor was opened for any attendee to pose questions and or raise concerns to the Landing Committee and to all those in attendance.

In October of 2021 the landing committee began the process of encouraging lake residents to remove their stick docks and secured a contractor to complete any remaining cleanup of the landing in November 2021. At the same time, the committee began the process of selecting a vendor to provide the RLDA docks. The committee sent out a request for proposals to seven potential docking vendors, from which five proposals were received. The committee established a rating system with multiple criteria (tender review) to evaluate the bids, conducted site visits to check reference installations, followed up with questions to the bidders and ultimately selected R&J Machine from Lakefield, Ontario. R&J Machine was then recommended as the project vendor to the RLCA BoD. In November of 2021, the RLCA BoD held a meeting and unanimously voted to accept the recommendation of the Landing Committee. The RLDA then signed a contract with R&J Machine to secure them as the project vendor.

In December of 2021, a project update including a revised project budget and cost per slip was shared with all RLDA members. In January of 2022, a virtual Q&A session was hosted with an open invitation for all lake residents to attend. During this meeting, the landing committee was able to report that there were 71 members of the RLDA and that the landing cleanup had been completed and had passed MNRF inspection. A surveyor had been retained and completed a survey of the Water Lot adjacent to the Raven Lake Landing. The survey was submitted to the MNRF who issued a land use agreement to the RLDA. The vendor evaluation and selection processes were explained to all attendees, and it was announced that R&J Machine had been signed as the project vendor. It was also reported that the MNRF had approved the docking layouts for both phase 1 and phase 2 of the project, phase 1 building permits had been submitted and approved by LoB and the re-zoning application and planning justification report for phase 2 had been submitted to LoB. At the end of the meeting the floor was opened to all attendees to pose questions and raise concerns to the Landing Committee.

As of March 20, 2022, the RLDA has 76 members. Of the remaining 20 water access residents on Raven Lake, 13 have confirmed that they do not currently need a slip at the landing and 7 have not responded to multiple attempts to contact.

I hope that by walking through the history of this project it will show the level of work, dedication, community outreach and consultation that the members of the RLCA BoD, Landing Committee and RLDA have undertaken. Throughout this project we have tried to take the concerns and suggestions of all Raven Lake residents into account while also working within the guidelines and directions of the MNRF and the zoning and building requirements of the Township of Lake of Bays.

The Landing Committee is aware that several of the cottagers closest to the public access landing have concerns about the number of slips and length of the docks in phase 2 of the project. These concerns have been raised several times since the project began. The Landing Committee has done its best to listen to these concerns and have also done our best to address them while also serving the needs of all water access residents on the Lake who need a dock, as mandated by the MNRF.

When the Landing Committee asked our docking vendor to propose a docking layout that could **accommodate all 96 water access residents and fit within the boundaries of the water lot** that the MNRF has leased to the RLDA, they proposed a slip size of 12' x 24' which they indicated was a standard dock / slip size. The Landing Committee requested that the slip size be reduced to 11' x 22' to limit the length of the main docks and the overall size of the project. Silent hinges were also added to the project to reduce potential noise impact and a 2<sup>nd</sup> row of wood skirting was added to improve the visual appeal of the docks. These changes were made (**at additional expense to all RLDA members**) to recognize that the needs of cottagers closest to the landing were being considered to the best of our ability.

During the week of March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022, the Landing Committee was also made aware that some of the residents closest to the landing believe that the project has not been completed in a transparent and open manner, and that their interests have not been represented by the Landing Committee. Since 2007 the status of and updates on the landing project have been shared at the annual RLCA AGM with the opportunity for all present to raise questions and

concerns. A status update on the project has also been included in the annual RLCA spring newsletters for the past 6 years. In 2021 and 2022 there have been 9 separate communications shared with all email addresses that the RLCA has on file, and an additional 3 communications directly with all 76 RLDA members. These general updates are in addition to the numerous individual questions and concerns raised by email, phone and in-person conversations with Landing Committee members. The Landing Committee (made up of volunteers from Raven Lake) was expanded in the fall of 2021 from 4 to 9 members, 3 of whom are cottage owners in 5 Mile Bay within the Township of Lake Bays near the landing and 1 of whom is a road access resident. The Landing Committee has worked hard to ensure that views and concerns of residents from around the lake are being taken into consideration.

The removal of the previous stick docks, and the centralization of the RLDA docking project will move boat traffic to the center of the lake away from the cottagers to the north of the landing and will allow for the re-naturalization of a large portion of the shoreline at the landing. The overall visual profile of the landing will be drastically improved with a structured and visually appealing docking layout. There will be no increase in the amount of car or boat traffic at the landing as docks are only being offered to water access residents, the same residents who already use the Raven Lake Landing to access their properties.

If unfortunately, and regrettably, the RLDA is unable to secure the rezoning needed for phase 2 of the docking project, a situation will exist where the entire community of Raven Lake Cottagers is affected. Water access residents will be prevented from having equal and fair access to their properties, the public boat launch and public landing docks will be overloaded with boat traffic affecting all users of the public landing. Boat traffic will be centered around the public docks which are closer to the environmentally sensitive areas to the North of the landing, as well as the docks and properties of those cottages located to the North of the landing. The parking lot will be congested with additional trailers due to property owners being required to trailer boats in and out every weekend, and trailer parking will likely spill out onto the shoulders of highway 35, as often happens now on the August long weekend.

On behalf of the RLCA Board of Directors, the RLCA Landing Committee and the entire RLDA membership, I ask that the Council support the changes to the zoning regulations needed for the RLDA docking project (Phase 2) to proceed so that all water access residents of Raven Lake can have equitable access to their properties.

Sincerely,  
Sean Hungerford

President, Raven Lake Cottagers' Association  
President, Raven Lake Dock Association