

**From:** [Bondy, Sherry](#)  
**To:** [Auger, Robert](#); [Nepszy, Chris](#); [Brown, Shelley](#)  
**Subject:** Fw: Surplus Lands: Colchester Schoolhouse  
**Date:** Friday, January 8, 2021 6:47:32 PM

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Robert I have talked to Monica pls include her email at the Jan 18th

Sherry

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**From:** Monica Carruthers [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 11:34 AM  
**To:** Snively, Larry <lsnively@essex.ca>; Meloche, Richard <rmeloche@essex.ca>; Bowman, Morley <mbowman@essex.ca>; Bjorkman, Steve <sbjorkman@essex.ca>; jgarron@essex.ca <jgarron@essex.ca>; Vander Doelen, Chris <cvanderdoelen@essex.ca>; Verbeek, Kim <kverbeek@essex.ca>; Bondy, Sherry <sbondy@essex.ca>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Surplus Lands: Colchester Schoolhouse

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Mr. Mayor and Council members,

I am writing to follow up on my brief presentation at the last meeting of council on December 21, 2020.

At that time I expressed my concerns about the fact that the council would like to sell the historic schoolhouse to a developer for a boutique style short term rental development.

Here are my points;

- I was a presenter at an open house at the schoolhouse in 2011 and presented MANY ideas that would be well suited to the schoolhouse community centre, following that open house I waited for further progress on the schoolhouse project- perhaps further community input on the project.
- The schoolhouse lands are listed in the Colchester Hamlet Landuse plan as residential and recreational and there were discussions of using the schoolhouse as a community centre. A few years ago it was listed in the Town Of Essex recreation guide for rent, but when I called to rent it for an event, I was told that it was not for rent.
- As improvements to the building have been made (roof, windows, gardens, etc.) I was certain that this was all part of the plan to complete the community centre as was discussed, many residents have been eagerly awaiting the completion of our community centre
- The schoolhouse community centre has valuable green space, the park at the beach is often overcrowded and there is no parking at the beach. Local residents are often unable to get a picnic table/parking spot due to the very busy summer crowds, most from out of town. Reducing the green space in the village would decrease the beauty of the village and places to gather
- The chimney of the schoolhouse is habitat to a colony of Chimney Swifts and is to be protected. Many birders come to watch the birds roost at sunset during the roosting months. This is a wholesome family activity and promotes stewardship and a

connection to nature.

- During this time of food insecurity the community garden is an opportunity for gardeners to share food growing practices with new families and increase their access to fresh seasonal foods, and increase their sense of engagement, belonging and well-being.
- During village events the schoolhouse grounds are used for parking; fishing derby, Explore the Shore, Family Fun Day, Flute Fushion event, etc. Loss of this parking area could certainly create chaos during events and would have a huge impact on the residents in Colchester
- The small community center at the marina is only usable during nice weather (it has previously been closed for 3-4 months during the winter due to snow and ice and the door blows open on cold days) Regularly scheduled exercise classes were cancelled due to this closure. Also, the community centre at the marina does not have green space that can be accessed by families with young children unless they leave the venue and cross the busy streets.
- The schoolhouse community centre would be accessible all year, has tons of green space for family events, and lots of places to park. If there were picnic tables it would be used far more.
- There are approximately 25 Short Term Rentals already within a 8 block radius. Having a row of STRs along Sullivan Street would totally change the sense of community and safety. This quiet place to live is fast becoming a party centre. There are more places to rent for a weekend and less places to live. Many of us have come here to live/retire and settle in this quiet, lakeside community
- The Hamlet of Colchester has small town charm, history, a sense of community, neighbours are connected. We *expect* the Town Council to protect our **quality of life** as we live here and pay taxes here. You have been elected to represent all of the people in your community and to stay in touch with them and seek out their input.
- I strongly oppose the selling of the historic schoolhouse and subsequent development of a short term rental strip and expect you all to upkeep the character of the hamlet of Colchester for the people who live here and love this wonderful community.

Respectfully submitted,  
Monica Carruthers

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