

*Metroland Letter to Editor*

## **Former mayor has concerns about current council workings**

Thu Apr 24, 2008

To the editor:

Under the Ontario Municipal Act, the mayor or head of council must vigorously maintain and uphold the bylaws of the Municipality.

A few months ago, councillors Gord Robinson and Adrian Foster challenged the mayor on the procedural bylaw where the mayor did not take the council position and represent that position at the Region, violating the procedural bylaw hence violating the statutory responsibilities under the Municipal Act.

A second occasion was when the mayor's campaign accountant was suing the Municipality, the mayor declared a conflict of interest. With a conflict of interest, the mayor is to remove himself from the council table and not participate in the voting or discussion. So what happens is that the mayor speaks on the very issue of which he has declared a conflict, violating the Municipal Act once again.

Most recently the Municipality set up a Green Committee and a terms of reference entrenched in a confirming bylaw. Once again the Municipal Act is violated as the mayor seeks the role of chairman. More disturbing is that his EA lobbies for the mayor in contravention of the code of ethics. Staff must follow the rules and bylaws and cannot be directed to break them and if they knowingly break them, they face disciplinary action by the Chief Administrative Officer.

The mayor and council have a duty to the public as defined in the Municipal Act to protect the public from blatant violations. Councillors that fail to challenge any violation by the mayor are not representing their obligation to the public. Leadership is seriously lacking on Clarington council, but as serious an issue is the trampling of the Municipal Act, procedural bylaw, conflict of interest and code of ethics while several members of council sit back too timid to protect the public's interest.

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