



Monthly Digest
June 2021 Volume 1, Issue 3

So Little Space - So Much to Share

(This one's a doozy, so you might wanna grab a refreshment and settle in)

TO JUMP DIRECTLY TO OUR BREAKING & URGENT NEWS STORY, CLICK [HERE](#)

Dear Friends,

It's been quite the month! May and June have proven to be an unexpected rollercoaster of lows and highs - terminating (as coaster rides usually do) with a final thrill for yours truly, in the form of an awesome site visit. More about that later.

You may already know that FOMOS presented at both the May and June Property Committee (PC) meetings, requesting an 8-week extension to our proposal deadline. This was passed unopposed, only to be denied 48 hrs later at Council. With 5 of the 7 Council members also sitting on the Property Committee, this was an unexpected and disappointing turn of events.

Further adding to the rollercoaster-iness, as the meat sandwiched between those two events, was the lengthy [Expositor article](#) detailing Central's revived plans for a recreation complex to be located adjacent to the township office. That this plan is yet again rearing its contentious head, was unexpected news to FOMOS.

Given the absolute relevance floating the concept of a new hockey arena in Central has on how FOMOS proceeds, that we were not advised of this subcommittee's existence immediately upon gaining our mandate at the beginning of the year, or indeed at any time thereafter, was rather a blow to the trust we thought we were building with the township, the property committee and council itself.

Ultimately, it was a deeply disheartening week, but despair not for like the [Phoenix](#), FOMOS has risen again, licked its wounds and with renewed vim resumed its rally around our objective and let us just tell you that we are SO thrilled that we have you, our membership, many in number and committed in action, behind us!

Not to keep harping on this, but we really do have to say it once more: We have such a dedicated and **amazing group of volunteers!** There is zero way we would have come as far as we have were it not for these truly invested folks. **You are all incredible!**

The renowned American cultural anthropologist, [Margaret Mead](#), famously said: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world” and while we may not be changing the world per se, in our endeavour to save the Old School we **are** hoping to at least steer a small bit of its local course in a positive, green and common-sense direction.

THIS MONTH'S
TOP STORIES



Hand Quilted on Manitoulin. For more info/to purchase contact weesheplady@gmail.com

FOMOS PRESENTS AGAIN (and again and again and again...)

We thought you might want the rest of the spicy details of the presentation we talked about in the editorial above (yeah, we have an “editorial” now. Fancy!), so here goes:

Board member Alison McAllister once again presented to the Property Committee on May 11. She briefly described the progress we have made in a number of areas, addressed some administrative frustrations we have been experiencing regarding gaining access to the Old School as these relate to communications between us and the township.

Alison also briefly spoke about Canadian Builder (a local real-estate developer) and closed by requesting an 8-week extension to our proposal deadline. Councillor Tribivenicius commented that he is pleased with our progress, while Councillor Scott asked a few questions and commented that in reading between the lines, he inferred that we believe the township to not be acting entirely in good-faith when dealing with FOMOS, a notion to which he vigorously objected. Alison politely and eloquently refuted any such implication. Eventually Councillor Johnston, seconded by Councillor Diebolt moved that the extension be granted and the motion was passed unanimously.

LOCAL DEVELOPER OFFERS TO REVITALIZE OLD SCHOOL AS SENIORS HOUSING (Or: So what is the deal with Canadian Builder?)

Earlier this year, having followed the media's coverage of our struggle to save the Old School, **Canadian Builder Inc.**, a well-renowned real-estate developer based in Sudbury, made itself known to FOMOS and through a series of informal interactions with us, laid out their vision and intent vis-a-vis the Old School building. A vision for which they sought our support.

Canadian Builder has extensive experience converting decommissioned, public spaces (old schools, fire stations etc.) into residences with the specific goal of increasing the availability of high-quality, accessible and affordable rental units. When they learned about the Mindemoya Old School they were intrigued and set out to learn more.

At the beginning of June, having completed their due diligence, Canadian Builder submitted an offer for the building to the Township of Central Manitoulin, simultaneously sending a courtesy copy to FOMOS. We have reviewed the offer and our assessment of its alignment with our mandate and are of the opinion that first and foremost it meets with our primary objective of preserving the historical building while also a secondary, very important municipal need by increasing desperately needed rental housing in our community.

But wait - there's more! This offer also creates an opportunity to establish a vibrant community-hub and beautify Mindemoya's main street, while helping reduce our local carbon-emissions and as an added bonus, the building itself will of course eventually become a property-tax generating entity. All of this at a fraction of the cost (and effort) that meeting these objectives could otherwise pose to Central's rate-payers.

For these reasons, we have informed Council that Canada Builder's offer has our unqualified support and it is our very sincere hope that Council either accepts it as presented or, in the alternative, opts to present Canadian Builder with a reasonable counter-offer.

OFFICE & ADMINISTRATION & YOUR APPEAL LETTERS

(because the pen/keyboard is always mightier than the proverbial sword)

Earlier this week we sent an urgent plea to our entire membership asking you to voice your individual support for the Canadian Builder purchase offer directly to the township. And boy - you guys are a reliable bunch - you have shown up in droves!

We want to take a moment to thank the many people who have sent letters of support to the Municipality. Naturally, many of you are curious about the offer details. Unfortunately, as FOMOS is not a formal party to the offer, we are unable to discuss any particulars of the offer until either the Municipality or Canadian Builder decide to make this information public.

Hopefully after the Office/Administration meeting, Tuesday June 22, the Municipality will provide some more detailed information regarding its intentions for the School. Our goal with the letter-writing campaign was to make it clear to Council that FOMOS and its rate-paying, municipal election-voting membership, support an offer to enable a constructive future for an important monument to our local history.

While it's unlikely that we will learn new information relevant to our cause, by attending this meeting, by attending we show a united front in support of Canadian Builders offer and our attendance also informs Council that we are actively involved, dedicated and serious about what happens on a legislative level in our community.

EXTRA, EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT! Our cause suffered a temporary set-back when the Office/Administration Committee passed a motion recommending to Council that the Municipality not accept Canadian Builder's offer to purchase. The committee also motioned that the Offer to Purchase be made public. (presumably after the June 24th council meeting).

What is perhaps the most crucial council meeting yet for the fate of the Old School takes place on tonight, **Thursday, June 24 at 19:00.** We hope that lots and lots of you will be able to attend via Zoom. By now we know you know the drill to register, but just in case: Please contact Patricia Mader via [e-mail](#) or by phone at **705-377-5726** to get your Zoom-access code.

PSA: We have a feeling you might be wise to make sure you're comfortable (drinks, popcorn, your Covid sweats-uniform ... the whole shebang) and prepare to make a night of it, because currently discussion of the Canadian Builder offer is slated as the last item on an agenda that seems longer than this also VERY long newsletter!

THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF MISCELLANY

SECOND (MAGICAL MYSTERY) SITE TOUR

Last Wednesday, under the guidance of George Strain, board members Alison, Lynn and Malene together with a local general contractor, had the opportunity to conduct an interior tour of the school. It was an exciting hour for all of us, and for some it was also nostalgic and a little emotional. For Malene, a veteran interior designer, who had not previously been inside the Old School's hallowed halls, the building proved even more impressive than she expected.

The visit reinforced our certainty that the structure is extremely sound and in fact in much better condition than various reports had led us to believe. The potential held within those walls is really quite something and we are so excited by the prospect of breathing new life into this venerable old gal (or guy, we suppose :-).

QUILTS & BAGS & MUGS & CLOTHES-PIN DRESSES (These are a few of my favourite things?)

We are very excited to share that one of the amazing volunteers referenced elsewhere in this digest, Judy, has finalized details for one-of-a-kind, numbered and limited edition (50 pieces) ceramic mugs and shopping bags which will soon be for sale. Both these attractive items feature the Old School as a motif.



Mock-mug (except pretty - your editor has limited photoshop skills!) & bag

If you wish to pre-order one of these items, please email us at mindemoyaoldschool@gmail.com or go to our [website](#) for more details. They are beautiful and, as the very delicious icing on the cake, we are so pleased to be announce that the canvas bags are designed, sewn and printed right here on Manitoulin. We anticipate prices will be set in short order.

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT (Shhhh!)

As is standard for most organizations, FOMOS has recently developed and enacted a confidentiality agreement, to be signed by all our directors, volunteers and potential employees. The purpose is to ensure that all personal information with which our supporters and our volunteers entrust us remain completely confidential. You can view a copy of the agreement [here](#).

THERE'S A PARTY GOING ON RIGHT HERE...A CELEBRATION TO LAST THE YEAR
AS we have previously said, we really do want to both thank and meet our membership and we think the perfect occasion for this is to celebrate the building's Centennial in style and **you're** invited!

The FOMOS board is comprised of a fairly boring bunch of nerd-like wonks, so all we can come up with as ideas for a good time is that the celebration should be somewhere near the school, out-of-doors, covid-compliant, maybe pot-luck with a fundraising bake-sale, live music and other entertainment (your talent here!).

From such a lacklustre vision, if you can even call it that, it should be glaringly obvious that none of us is a party-planner. But, there is hope yet because we **know** some of you are skilled in the entertaining arts and that you will jump on this chance to showcase your many talents.

And so, since we basically have no self-respect in this department, we're begging **you** to come forward and help us make this the most-enjoyed social event of the season. Grab this exclusive chance to get in on the ground-floor and make this blank party-slate your very own, 'cause you know...*We want you to bring your good times and your laughter too, we gonna celebrate a party with you* (... apologies to Kool and the Gang)

ODDS & SODS

- Our early June "pop up" plant sale added \$88 to the FOMOS kitty
- A very limited quantity of Medallions are still available. Contact [Jim Smith](#) to get yours before it's too late!
- Our Membership now tallies **234**. How fantastic is that?
- Previously published newsletters can be accessed [here](#)

Last but never least: Our members are our heart

As always, we encourage you to reach out to us if you have any questions or suggestions or if you would like to volunteer and/or become a member. Memberships are still a steal at \$10/single or \$20/household and a great way to show your support.

As we go gently into that good summer, some of us are now - finally - meeting in person, occasionally for the first time. Seriously awesome!

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)



FOMOS

Box 146, Mindemoya, ON, P0P1S0