

Grandsons of Nellie Lunn have their say

by CHRIS DROSTStaff

On Monday, March 7 at 5:30 p.m. Daniel and Joseph Claus, grandsons of Nellie Lunn, after whom the park in Wollaston was named, sent a letter by email to Mayor Lynn Kruger, and clerk Bernice Crocker expressing their "disturbance" at the approach being taken by the township. Daniel Claus contacted Bancroft This Week on March 21, after receiving no response to their letter from either the mayor or clerk, nor acknowledgement of receipt as requested. Claus gave permission at that time to have their letter printed in its entirety in the newspaper. To: Mayor Kruger and Bernice Crocker, clerk Wollaston Township From: Daniel Claus and Joseph Claus We are Nellie Lunn's grandsons. Though you have not heard from us, we have been closely following the dialogue about Nellie Lunn Park, the legacy Wollaston Township received from Bill (Boleslaw) Klineciewicz to honour the memory of our grandmother Nellie Lunn Claus. As you may imagine, we are deeply disturbed by the approach you are taking. The intention of this gift was not to finance reserves or fund projects. This is not the first time Wollaston Township has heard from our family and it troubles us to have to write again. Since Wollaston Township does not wish to own, protect and operate Nellie Lunn Park and has been unwilling to accept offers of help from Friends of Nellie Lunn, we have approached a charitable organization with a significant portfolio of parks. They are capable of receiving Nellie Lunn Park as a donation and permanently protecting and managing it, so residents of Wollaston Township, and visitors from across Ontario, will be able to enjoy the benefits it offers. The extensive experience and expertise they possess will ensure that access, relationships and all facets of management will be most competently handled.

We ask that you discuss this matter at your upcoming March 14th meeting. Please confirm your receipt of this email. Sincerely, Daniel Claus Joseph Claus Claus told Bancroft This Week that his request to have the letter included in the council package for the March 14 meeting, was not carried out, and there was no discussion of the letter in the public portion of the council meeting. Councillor Michael Fuerth told Bancroft This Week, that on March 11 he went to the office and asked Crocker if the Claus letter would be included in the council package for March 14 and if not, could it be in either the clerk's report or in correspondence. Crocker said that if she included it, she would have to include all the correspondence for and against the sale of Nellie Lunn Park. Crocker accepts documents for a council package up to 4 p.m. seven days prior to a council meeting. The Claus letter was not received until 5:30 p.m., seven days prior. It was not included in the package. Bancroft This Week wrote an email to Mayor Lynn Kruger and clerk Bernice Crocker on March 23 to get their version of events. Kruger and Crocker were asked to comment on why the Claus brothers have never received any kind of response to, or acknowledgement of their letter. They were also asked if council will consider the option of turning the park over to a charitable organization as suggested by the Claus brothers. And thirdly, they were asked if they plan to include the letter in the agenda package for the next meeting of council so it can be seen by the public, and to demonstrate transparency. On March 24, Mr. Claus was contacted by Crocker who told him that his letter from March 7 had gone to her spam folder so she had not seen it. This, after Fuerth had specifically discussed the letter with her in the office on March 11. On the morning of March 25, Councillor Michael Fuerth contacted Bancroft This Week to say that both he and Councillor Jeff Swartzman had received the Claus email. In a phone conversation with Swartzman, he also confirmed this to be the case and he says it appeared that the thread went to all of council and the clerk and not to spam. As of press time, Bancroft This Week has not received a response to the email sent to Mayor Kruger and clerk Bernice Crocker on March 23.