

15th Legislative Assembly

Third Session

February 9 - March 11, 2005

FEB 15, 2005

Deton'Cho Corporation Access To Commissioner's Land At The Sandpits

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My statement today is with regard to the decision the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs made in providing permission to the Yellowknives Dene's business arm, Deton'Cho Corporation, to access a portion of Commissioner's land located within the municipal boundaries of the City of Yellowknife – an area commonly referred to as the sandpits. First off, I would like to applaud the efforts of the Deton'Cho Corporation and the Chiefs of the Yellowknives Dene in embarking on this initiative. However, there are some serious concerns that I have with how this happened and why it happened the way it did.

I was a Councillor with the City of Yellowknife in 1997 when we applied, through MACA, for the same parcel of land. We had absolutely no response from the Department at that time. The City applied again in October of 2004 for the same parcel of land and was told that the consultation process would have to be embarked upon.

It came as a complete shock to myself and to the City of Yellowknife that MACA had given permission to access a portion of the sandpits for geotechnical and engineering work to the Deton'Cho Corporation and a southern firm that are planning a residential housing development on that site. My understanding of the interim measures agreement is that this action by MACA goes against the protocol as set out in the IMA. It sets a very dangerous precedent in going forward.

From much of the information I have seen, the future development of the Yellowknife Airport is on the west side of the property, which would abut the area currently under review by the Deton'Cho Corporation. I am not sure the Minister of MACA has ever flown in or out of the city of Fort McMurray, but I would like to tell him that the wheels of the plane almost touch the roofs of the homes in Fort McMurray.

By granting access of the sandpits to Deton'Cho, the Minister is saying that his department is condoning residential development in this area, even though he knows this is not in the General Plan of the City of Yellowknife, a plan which he agrees with and approves of.

What is happening with the joint survey the Department of MACA is undergoing with the Yellowknife Shooting Club and the City of Yellowknife? What about the seismic array? What about the Department of Transportation concerns? The City of Yellowknife issues, the Kam Lake access road – where do all of these issues fit if the Deton'Cho Corporation proceeds with a housing development at the sandpits?

Mr. Speaker, I am very interested and concerned over the decision and how it was made. At the appropriate time on today's order paper, I will have questions for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Thank you.

