

## **NEWS RELEASE: Chiefs from Algonquin Nation Secretariat request separate meeting & no NCC staffer with conflict of interest present**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE--Ottawa, ON May 5, 2016

On the heels of two previous meetings that involved other First Nations, the chiefs associated with the Algonquin Nation Secretariat (ANS) are asserting the need for separate meetings with the National Capital Commission (NCC) in the matter of the sacred site Akikodjiwan. The ANS is also insisting that the NCC's Aboriginal Liaison, Mr. Rene Tenasco, whom they say is in a conflict of interest, "not be involved in our consultations with the NCC on any matter."

[Full text of the letter and supporting documents](#) appear on the ANS website.

The ANS said is committed to talks with the NCC, and preferably with the Hon. Melanie Joly (minister responsible for Canadian Heritage and the NCC) regarding "changes to the status of lands and islands within our Algonquin sacred area Akikodjiwan (Chaudiere waterfalls and the adjacent Ottawa River waterfront and islands)."

"Our communities have not mandated any other entity to negotiate or represent our interests with respect to our Aboriginal title and rights, or consultation matters within our territories. If the NCC intends to engage in meaningful consultation with our communities, it must do so through the ANS," said the ANS spokesperson, Chief Harry St. Denis of Wolf Lake First Nation.

Dated May 3, 2016, the letter deals with a number of issues related to consultations over the island sacred site, for which the NCC announced public support for a \$1.2 billion condominium proposal by Dream Windmill, subject to consultations with Aboriginal groups.

ANS is suggesting a meeting with the NCC on May 11, 2016 with the following items on the agenda

- Proposed Developments at Chaudiere, Albert Islands.
- Proposed Developments at Coffin and Victoria Islands.
- Proposed Developments at LeBreton Flats.
- Proposed Canada 150 Celebrations.
- Next Steps (ANS-NCC Consultation Process)

The letter cites parts of a Memorandum of Understanding the NCC entered into with Windmill Development Group and Domtar Inc. that point to the NCC knowing that Windmill was itself meeting with aboriginal groups about "the subject lands."

"It appears from this MOU that the NCC has delegated aspects of federal Crown's duty to consult to the project proponent, Windmill Development Group," the letter says. It describes this as raising "serious concerns, including the fact that that subsequently, the proponent has proceeded to meddle in the internal affairs of the Algonquin nation by promoting their Zibi Urban Development Project on our sacred area, and bypassing our legitimate leadership."

Finally, the letter raises concerns over a conflict of interest on the part of Mr. Rene Tenasco, employed as Aboriginal liaison for the NCC.

"Mr. Rene Tensaco, has been involved in the consultations regarding Windmill Development Group's Zibi Urban Development Project with [the AANTC](#) and the [so-called "AOO"](#), even though his wife is Chair of the [Memengweshii Council](#), an Algonquin and First Nations Women's group, which appears to have been established primarily to promote Windmill Development Group's Zibi Urban Development Project on Chaudiere and Albert Islands."

The letter describes this Council as "having been created to be a cheerleader for the Zibi development."

Addendums to the letter ([available here](#)) provide examples of Facebook posts by Mr. Tenasco in support of a founding partner of Windmill, Jeff Westeinde, and cite the statement on Facebook by Mr. Tenasco that, "I will defend the vision that my people have entered into with Windmill."

-30-

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