

Report on the Dr. Secord Monument

Submitted by:
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Outline

1. Land Acknowledgement
2. Overview of Key Issues
3. Review of Themes from Survey and Community Conversations
4. Review of Questions for Council
5. Q & A

1. Land Acknowledgment

- Acknowledging the traditional territory of Indigenous Peoples, whose ancestors were the first to inhabit, care for, and live on this land, is a small yet very important step in the process of reconciliation.
- We would like to acknowledge that we are on the traditional lands and treaty territory of the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, which includes the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation and the Chippewas of Saugeen First Nation.
- We recognize and deeply appreciate the contributions that Indigenous Peoples have made, both in caring for this land and shaping and strengthening this community.
- Learning and acknowledging Indigenous history and culture moves us towards a journey of truth, healing and reconciliation with the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and the Historic Saugeen Métis (HSM).

(Land Acknowledgement, Municipality of Kincardine, retrieved from: <https://www.kincardine.ca/live-here/inclusion-diversity-equity-and-access-idea/journey-to-reconciliation/>)

The survey, report, and community conversations were developed, disseminated and analyzed from my home in Waterloo Region:

I respectfully acknowledge that I live and work on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (Neutral), Anishinaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples.

Kitchener-Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.

Dr. Lindo's reflection:

Before you can move to reconciliation, we must have truth. I believe that this process, the vast engagement with and through community, in public and in private, has been a journey in search for truth.

2. Overview of Key Issues

- Tensions online/ public forums
- Differing opinions on what is at issue (e.g. Racism/ Inclusion vs. Preservation of History)
- Requests for clarity on decision-making process to be undertaken by Council

About the Survey

3. Review of Themes from Survey and Community Conversations

1. Concerns About Bias in the Process

- If people in the municipality believe that Black people have a propensity for bias (e.g., me as the chosen facilitator), while white people are deemed to be “neutral” (e.g., the deeply held believe that Dr. Secord would have helped people of all colours because he was a commendable doctor who took his profession seriously), what does this tell us about how race is understood in the Municipality of Kincardine?
- **If people in the Municipality of Kincardine are worried that speaking about race means that they are being “racist,” how can Council continue to engage meaningfully in a discussion about experiences of racism in the Municipality of Kincardine?** How can they effectively guide the community through their fears when engaging in these discussion so as to facilitate honest, caring, and compassionate discussions about the people in the community and their experiences as people of colour?

2. Fear of “Woke” Ideologies

- It is clear that some understand the connection between the conversations about the Secord Monument and racial justice and/ or equity and inclusion work being initiated in the Municipality of Kincardine, while others are struggling to see the connection between these two important ideas. **How might council assist community in better understanding that the conversation about the Secord Monument and the consequent response (especially those made in public) has now resulted in a decision that is larger than simply deciding what to do with the second Secord Monument?** How can Council guide community through the challenging, and potentially fruitful conversation about inclusion in the Municipality of Kincardine?
- **What might be needed to help bridge the gap between those who worry about “woke ideologies” and those that interpret “woke” as an awakening to new ideas and fresh opinions about how the world is structured?** How might current understandings of these ideas be mobilized to address rising tensions in the Municipality of Kincardine as the discussion of the Secord Monument continues?
- How is “activism” being understood by the people of the Municipality of Kincardine and how can activism be re-imagined to better account for calls to address very real experiences of discrimination and/ or racism as they arise in the community?
- How can we ensure that discussions that create a space for people to share their experiences of racism and/ or discrimination in the community are taken at face value as a call in to assist in making all residents feel a much-needed sense of belonging?

3. Call to Share Clear Decision-Making Criteria

- What can Council do to re-build trust between Council and community members who feel that the process leading up to the current public engagement sessions did not sufficiently address the fate of the Secord Monument?
- How can Council help community members to learn to take seriously issues raised by the Municipality of Kincardine residents when it comes to discrimination or the lack of sense of belonging? How can Council play a leading role in supporting the community in their own ongoing growth as a caring and compassionate community?
- **How can Council ensure that the rise of tensions between “us” versus “them” or those with deeper roots in the Municipality of Kincardine and those newer to the community begin to build bridges to work together in creating a caring community where everyone can thrive? Might council be able to serve as a model for critical exchange across ideological difference for the rest of the town to see and learn from?**

4. We Can't Erase History

- How might Council encourage community members to approach those with differing opinions about the Secord Monument with care and compassion no matter what side of the argument they fall on?
- **How might Council support an educational campaign that serves to honour the questions raised by community, and the need to continually re-evaluate history as historical societies teach us to do?**

5. Roots of Racism Must be Meaningfully Addressed

- **Should the number of complaints guide the process aimed to address the root causes of racism, or is it the nature of the complaint that has it taken more or less seriously at the Council table?**
- How might Council clarify and/ or better express their position on why the issue of the Secord Monument and its connection to building inclusive communities is being raised now to assist community members who worry about what is driving the process at this time?
- What has been done to date to ensure that community members are aware of why Council acts on some issues with more or less priority? What is it that moves Council to take a concern seriously when it is raised in community and how can we better share that information so that Municipality of Kincardine residents understand why the conversation about Secord Monument is taking place in the manner that it is today?

6. Learning from History Requires Accurate Historical Records

- **Given the nuances of history when told from the perspective of those enslaved and brought to Canadian soil, how might Council help educate community members in the Municipality of Kincardine about the challenges faced by Black community members post-emancipation from slavery and during the rise of Jim Crow?** Using historical record as Council's guide, what limitations may have existed in the Municipality of Kincardine for Black communities at that at time that may impact their experiences in town today?
- Where can Council go to expand upon historical data about Dr. Secord and what can be done to ensure that this new information, if retrieved, is shared with the people of the Municipality of Kincardine? Even if the full legend of Dr. Secord is not able to be "proven" as often happens when relying on historical records that may or may not exist, how can Council help community separate fact from myth or legend?

7. Honouring Ancestors in the Municipality of Kincardine

- **How might Council help educate the community on inclusion in a way that allows them to co-create community spaces and better understand Council decisions to become intentional creators of caring and inclusive communities?**
- What can be done with the leadership of Council to ensure that older generations of residents are recognized for and supported in their growth in an increasingly diverse community rather than be made to feel guilty of the deep ties they have in community?

8. Identity and the Municipality of Kincardine Today

- What role should monuments play in the Municipality of Kincardine in 2024 and how can this new vision be used to support community as they grapple with historical monuments today?
- **Given that monuments are not the only way that community members are celebrated, what other types of celebrations of local people might Council support to ensure that diverse communities are honoured in more official capacities?**

About the Community Conversations

Key Themes from Community Conversations

1. Need for Community Healing

2. Centering Black Voices

3. Challenges Tying Identity to a Legend, Myth, or Historical Recollection

4. The Municipality We Want to Be

5. Learn More, Do Better

6. Navigating Complicated Histories

The background features a series of thin, light gray curved lines that sweep across the frame, creating a sense of motion and depth. Some lines are solid, while others are dashed. In the center-left, there is a large orange callout box with a white border and a small triangular pointer at the bottom center. The text '4. Final Thoughts' is written in white, sans-serif font inside the box.

4. Final Thoughts

A portrait of Dr. Laura Mae Lindo, a woman with her hair styled in braids and a purple and yellow patterned headwrap. She is wearing a black jacket with a yellow and white geometric pattern. The background is a light beige color with faint, concentric circular lines.

5. Q&A

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