

October 30, 2021

To New Animal Shelter for Uxbridge-Scugog (NASUS) volunteers, donors and supporters,

As many of you know, we recently asked the Mayors and Councils of the Townships of Uxbridge and Scugog to provide a long-overdue update on the animal shelter project.

We were extremely disappointed with the defensive, aggressive tone Mr. Barton took, both in personal conversations with our Board and on Facebook. Unfortunately, this tone continued when our letter was discussed during the Monday October 18th *General Purpose & Administration Committee meeting*. Unfortunately, we were not invited to take part in this meeting or advised in advance that it would include a discussion of our letter.

You can watch a recording at this link (starts at about the 40 minute mark) <https://pub-uxbridge.escribemeetings.com/Players/ISISStandAlonePlayer.aspx?id=f77d6338-c81f-4e12-ad0d-a7a28080c28f>

We know you are often asked about the status of this project, and we share your frustration that things are not moving forward and that we have little insight into what is going on.

Sadly, on Facebook and during the Committee meeting, the Mayor and some Councillors made statements that we feel must be addressed. Rather than dissect every statement made, we would like to share some key points with you to use as you speak with others in the community:

- ✓ NASUS made many requests for updates. We shared with Mr. Barton copies of emails and update requests that went unanswered in both 2020 and 2021. If any of you would like to see these, please let me know. In short, NASUS has been asking for updates regularly.
- ✓ Councillor Garrod's attempt to focus on the numbers was also misleading as it relied on flawed information. As he acknowledged in his comments, the numbers mentioned did not include Scugog animals, or any species other than dogs and cats. But the bigger issue is that during both periods mentioned the shelter was functionally closed due to the pandemic. A better comparison would be pre-pandemic numbers such as 2018, where 71 dogs and 163 cats were taken in. It is also noteworthy that in the same year-to-date period discussed, other local rescue groups have provided emergency housing for 97 dogs, numerous cats and other animals. Additionally, local private cat rescues have taken in, vetted and found homes for over 200 cats so far this year, while still maintaining a growing wait list of at least another 300 local cats in need of help. Clearly there is a growing need for animal services in our community.
- ✓ Councillor Garrod mentioned his appreciation for the staff working at the current shelter. Some of the impetus behind building a new facility was to improve working conditions for Township staff and to enable a much-needed volunteer program to support them. How unfortunate that animal control officers continue to work out of a dilapidated facility that lacks potable water. How many other Township workplaces must bring in drinking water for their staff?



New Animal Shelter
FOR UXBRIDGE-SCUGOG

- ✓ While Council did agree to respond to our letter, we remain concerned about the lack of transparency and urgency around this project. We waited patiently while the culvert project took centre stage in 2019, and we understood the pandemic took a great deal of time and attention in 2020, but we are holding this Council responsible for completing the project.
- ✓ Mayor Barton says he never committed to building an animal shelter, yet, he was quoted in the Toronto Star saying it was a top priority. You can read the article at this link: <https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2018/10/22/councillor-dave-barton-elected-mayor-of-uxbridge-defeating-incumbent-pat-molloy.html>. Further, as the Ward 3 Councillor from November 2015 until elected Mayor, Mr. Barton was involved in many of the decisions being attributed to “prior administrations”.

As soon as we have additional information, we will share it with all of you.

We are optimistic that we can continue ahead in a respectful and positive relationship with both Townships to get this shelter built. Please feel free to contact your Councillor for more information and stay tuned for updates.

Also, In case you guys missed it, Roger Varley from the Cosmos wrote a great column asking the right questions: <https://thecosmos.ca/index.php/columnists/roger-varley-am-i-wrong/>

We will continue to be the voice for our community animals, and of course, you, the amazing donors and volunteers until the shelter is built!

Respectfully,

Tara Rosen, NASUS President and the rest of your friends from the New Animal Shelter for Uxbridge-Scugog
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P.S. if there is anyone currently looking for a cat to add to their family, there are a few rescues in town that have numerous kittens/cats currently up for adoptions:

<https://www.facebook.com/edwardsanimalsanctuary>

<https://www.facebook.com/BarnCatCoop/>

<https://www.facebook.com/UxCatRescue>