

Mississauga News

Starr cleared by integrity commissioner

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Page: 1
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The City of Mississauga's integrity commissioner has found that Ward 6 Councillor Ron Starr did nothing wrong by having his daughter run his former consulting business.

In a report to Mayor Hazel McCallion and members of Council, **George Rust-D'Eye** said he was responding to a request from a member of the public for an investigation into a specific councillor's involvement with a company. The report doesn't mention Starr by name, but refers to "alleged activities of a business corporation said to be previously owned by a Member of Council prior to being elected to office, and transferred into the hands of a 'child' of the Member."

"The writer of the complaint believes that 'a preventative investigation should be undertaken' to provide the family with 'appropriate guidance they will require for current and future conflicts of interest in (the councillor's) role' as a member of a municipal council," wrote **Rust-D'Eye**.

The report went on to state that, "there is no evidence, or even a suggestion, that the Member of Council has contravened either the Code of Conduct of the City, or the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act."

Starr told The News today he's pleased with the findings.

"It feels good to know that the integrity commissioner basically is agreeing with what I've been saying all along," said Starr. The report further noted that members of Council have a "legal right" to continue to engage in business while serving as a councillor, as do their children, as long as they comply with the City's Code of Conduct and the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.

Rust-D'Eye also said he has not been granted a "preventative" investigatory role into the actions of Council about potential problems or conflicts.

About a week before Starr took office, his daughter, Michele Starr, sent a letter to the City discussing Deanlee Management, which she has run since last July. The letter, dated Nov. 25, stated the company "would like to offer our assistance to the residents and businesses of Mississauga for non-compliance zoning variance orders, new and renewal applications for zoning variances and consents."

Some councillors argued that the company operating in Mississauga would cause Starr to be limited in his ability to do his job. However, not all councillors felt it would be a problem.

At the time, Starr dismissed suggestions it would affect his job performance. He said he hadn't had to declare a Deanlee-related conflict since taking office in December and noted there were no projects involving his former company coming before Council of which he's aware.

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