

Joe Vanden Heuvel column: Committee knows best about windmill

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The Little Chute windmill project is in good hands. The project has experienced a little controversy lately because the windmill committee thought that it had found a better place to locate the windmill. Instead of putting it on Main Street, it's considering placing it in Island Park.

Some have said that maybe the people who donated to the project should get their money back because the location might be changed. I was informed that all of the major donors were consulted about the possible change before the proposal was made public. It was just the people who donated money for bricks who hadn't been given prior notice of a possible change.

Those people should trust in the good judgment of the members of the windmill committee to do a good job for them. The group is made up of a good mix of respected and informed individuals from the community. A couple of individuals are even former residents of Holland and have extensive studies of the Dutch culture.

The windmill committee's knowledge of this project far exceeds the rest of ours. It should be assumed that it only has the best interests of Little Chute at heart.

I'm all in favor of the proposed Island Park location, if it is at all possible. If that's not possible, then put it in the downtown.

Part of my educational background is in landscape architecture. Combined with that, I've always had an interest in architecture.

Last summer, while visiting a friend in Iowa, we decided to visit the windmill in Pella — Little Chute is using this as reference for its own windmill. Pella's windmill is in its downtown.

When I lived in Little Chute, I'd occasionally walk through Island Park. I think on only one of the half-dozen occasions that I walked through the park, did I see anyone else there. So apparently, in its present state, the park is seldom used.

Having been to Pella, I can imagine how the windmill would look in Little Chute's downtown. I also can envision how the windmill would look in Island Park.

I think that Island Park offers the ideal setting. I can envision extensive areas planted in tulips, like if a person were looking at a travel poster of the tulip festival in Holland, Mich. This all would overlook the Fox River. This would have the makings of a special tourist attraction.

Also, when a person sees the idealized pictures of windmills in Holland, it seems like they're usually next to water.

Another issue that people were concerned about is the downtown businesses. Well, Island Park is close to the downtown. Tourists will have to pass through the downtown when going to and returning from the windmill. The downtown will get the visitors' business.

My last name starts with Van, and so you can assume that I have some Dutch in me. My grandparents lived in Little Chute. My parents live in Little Chute now, and I lived in Little Chute until recently.

I come from a family of seven kids. Even though we're all adults now, it's almost impossible for all of us to agree on one issue. The same will probably also apply to Little Chute's windmill and how not everybody is going to be in agreement on one location.

My advice to the people interested in this project is to trust the people on the windmill committee to do a good job for you. I'm not a member of the committee, but I have confidence in their good judgment.

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