

# "The Elephant in the Room, or the Ship in the Marina:" What Next for the Norgoma?

By **Riley Smith** - September 24, 2018



City Council almost had a split vote over the fate of the M.S Norgoma – a hot topic in the last year, with some citizens believing the alleged 'eyesore' should be scrapped while others see it as an opportunity for tourism, events, and the preservation of history.

The historic ship has caused turbulence for council and citizens alike.

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| <b>RAAM</b><br>Rapid Access Addiction<br>Medicine Clinic | <b>What is the RAAM Clinic?</b><br>The RAAM clinic is a Rapid Access Addictions Medicine Clinic for people looking for help with their addictions.<br><b>Please call for an appointment</b><br><b>705-759-3434 Ext. 7200</b><br><small>A collaborative initiative of North East LHIN funded organizations.</small> |  |
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City Council voted to end the ship's berthing rights at Roberta Bondar, [effective August 31<sup>st</sup> 2018](#). It was determined at Monday's meeting that if a suitable location cannot be found by February 1<sup>st</sup>, council will return to discuss their options. Deputy CAO Tom Vair said there are some "possible locations in mind," but there are no alternate sites confirmed.

Julia Piskiewicz, member of the St. Mary's River Marine Heritage Committee, spoke at Monday's council meeting, explaining the work that has been done by the "seven young professionals" who have taken on the management of the ship to make it self-sustainable.

She described this season as "record breaking" and wants to remain within Sault Ste. Marie's cultural corridors to continue operations.

Stats show almost 6,000 people visited the ship, which also employed 11 summer students.

Despite this, the resolution was passed to move the vessel. Councillor Shoemaker said "I fail to see how giving the Norgoma yet another year would achieve much different than what has been achieved in the last 47 years, or up until this point."

Councillor Myers made a desperate plea to keep the Norgoma. She urged council "not to act based on a personal opinion or bias, your own or that of others. This is too important of a matter to be defined as "beauty in the eyes of the beholder;" That being that one might see it as an ugly eyesore while others see it is as a viable opportunity. Dear council – Opinion is not wisdom."

The plea fell on deaf ears.

In a 6-7 vote, it was decided that the ship would be scrapped if the St. Mary's River Marine Centre Board cannot find a new location for the vessel – whether it be permanent or temporary – by April 15<sup>th</sup> 2019, or as soon as weather/ice conditions permit.

A huge point of contention is the fact that the request will come for new docks to replace the old, deteriorating wooden docks at the marina – and whether the Norgoma is there are not largely impacts the configuration of plans for the marina.

Those in favour of the resolution to move the ship in the spring include Mayor Provenzano and councillors Butland, Christian, Shoemaker, Hupponen and Bruni.

Those who voted against the resolution included councillors Myers, Hollingsworth, Turco, Fata, Krmpotich and Grandinetti.

### Riley Smith

Riley Smith is an enthusiastic and versatile critical thinker who has been with SaultOnline since January 2018. She holds a double Honours Degree in History and Political Science from Algoma University, and a Postgraduate Certificate in Public Relations and Event Management from Sault College. She is Google Marketing Fundamentals certified, and is also working towards a Certificate in Diversity and Intercultural Relations. When she's not reporting, you can find her MC'ing the Soo Greyhound home hockey games, spending time with her basset hound, Douggie, or seeing the world one breathtaking view at a time.

