

MLAS SURPRISED BY REPORTED TALKS TO SAVE ROBERTSON HEADFRAME

MIKE GIBBINS—FRIDAY, JUL. 15TH. 2016 *CSO*

Kam Lake MLA Kieron Testart says he's disappointed regular MLAs have been left out of reported discussions to keep the Robert Headframe standing.

Earlier this week, reports started surfacing that negotiations have been taking place between the GNWT and the headframe's owner – Miramar Northern Mining Ltd. – to save the structure.

Details are scarce so far but the government has at least confirmed discussions are happening.

"The GNWT has been talking to the company about the terms and conditions of their lease in regards to the headframe," cabinet spokesperson Shaun Dean told Moose FM.

The demolition of the 76-meter structure has been a very real possibility since last February when the city ended talks to save it.

But if Yellowknife's most iconic landmark is going to stand, Testart says regular MLAs might not have much of an influence on the decision if they're being left out of negotiations.

"I was very surprised to see that again we're in a situation where decisions are being made without the involvement of regular MLAs," he said.

"We play a very important role in this government and this government is supposed to be inclusive and transparent.

"Again, we see an issue that's been critical for Yellowknife politics and the Yellowknife MLAs have not been informed.

"We have been informed on a number of other decisions that have taken place over the course of the term to date and this was not one of them."

Testart says he only learned of the negotiations this week through the media.

Earlier this year, he says a majority of MLAs appeared in favour of a 'new solution' pitched by a third party to save the headframe.

Since that time however, regular MLAs have been left in the dark and have only recently started pressing the premier and cabinet for more answers.

The red-topped headframe sits on the now-defunct Con Mine, where it has been a Yellowknife icon since 1977.

Miramar and the NWT Mining Heritage Society both declined to comment.