

Save the cow

As east-enders themselves readily acknowledge, Orléans is not exactly dripping in character, what with its strip malls and freeways. So anything to break up the retail blur is welcome.

Certainly that was part of the motivation behind the cow on the roof of Orléans' Cheddar Et Cetera, where the bovine plastic sculpture tells of dairy treats below. But what must have appeared at one time to be a good idea has offended some straight-laced Ottawan (no shortage of those), who complained to our ever-vigilant civic officials. Someone at our thoughtful municipality dusted off a bylaw that prohibits roof-top signs.

Thus began the battle.

The cow owner said no way. About 1,500 signatures were collected to save the bovine billboard and Orléans Councillor Bob Monette himself took up the cause of the cow. Monette plans to take the cheese controversy all the way to planning and environment committee.

Breaking the billboard bylaw can result in a fine of \$50,000. That's a lot of curds.

Now, Ottawa isn't alone as a city with a bylaw for everything. But in other cities many of these go unenforced because, frankly, people have better things to do than scour the landscape for technical infractions. But in the city of Ottawa it seems that meddling is part of our culture.

Monette rightly wants to have the roof-sign bylaw reviewed. While no one wants a city with garish commercial signs all over the place, there ought to be flexibility to allow something like the cow which is not obtrusive and seems to appeal to people.

Surely there is a way to compromise on this one.

OTTAWA CITIZEN

