

In the article “ [Council approves art gallery move](#) ” by David Hutton, The StarPhoenix, December 1, Mendel board chair Art Knight states: “The gallery came to the realization that this (renovation and expansion of the existing building) wasn't going to work at the current location . . . We had some stinging advice . . . that (the renovation) wasn't going to fly.” He doesn't divulge the details of this revelation and doesn't identify whose advice he was taking.

The question is begged: Why wasn't it going to fly? The plans were tender-ready and there was no problem with funding. The Mendel Art Gallery already had confirmation of \$4,092,877 from the province (Building Communities Program), \$4,500,000 from the city, and \$438,513 from the Government of Canada through the Cultural Spaces Canada Program for Phase #1. With expected additional funds in the amount of \$4,000,000 from the Cultural Spaces Program (for which the Gallery is eligible), \$8,000,000 from the Capital Campaign, and \$5,000,000 from the Building Canada Fund delivered by Infrastructure Canada (INFC) for a grand total of \$26,031,300, this initiative was absolutely achievable and would save both the province and city millions of dollars compared to building a new art gallery at River Landing.

In the same article, Mayor Atchison claims that the city did not guide the process of the move of the Mendel Art Gallery to River Landing. Naturally, Knight would say that the Mendel approached the city. He didn't say that he was appointed by the city to sit on both the board of the Mendel Art Gallery and the special volunteer steering committee charged with recommending the attraction for the proposed destination centre at River Landing. In the game of chess, although knights and pawns are different shapes and move differently around the board, both exist for the sole purpose of serving and protecting the King.

~ Martin Lerner