

**ENGINEERING SERVICES****Town of Newmarket**

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September 26, 2016

**DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES REPORT  
ENGINEERING SERVICES 2016-42**

TO: Committee of the Whole

SUBJECT: Lions Park Drainage Update – Public Consultation Process

ORIGIN: Director, Engineering Services

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**THAT Development and Infrastructure Services Report – ES 2016-42 dated September 26, 2016 regarding “Lions Park Drainage Update – Public Consultation Process” be received and the following recommendation be adopted:**

- 1. THAT the Lions Park Drainage Improvement Budget be increased to \$615,000 (from the original \$304,000) with \$171,000 being funded by grants from the LSRCA and Environment Canada, and \$444,000 from the Asset Replacement Fund, as outlined in Engineering Services Report – ES 2016-34, entitled “Ray Twinney LID and Lions Park Drainage Update”, dated August 4, 2016.**
- 2. AND THAT Staff be directed to proceed with the project;**
- 3. AND THAT Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to the foregoing in advance of the October 3, 2016 Council meeting.**

**BACKGROUND**

At the Council meeting of September 12, 2016, Council considered Engineering Services Report 2016-34, entitled “Ray Twinney LID and Lions Park Drainage Update”, and the following resolution was adopted:

**“THAT the Lions Park Drainage Project be deferred to the next cycle to ensure that notice is provided to area residents.”**

Council directed Staff to conduct additional public consultation with those households on Lorne Street and Timothy Street that bordered onto the proposed wetland. This report will summarize the public consultation process that took place for the Lions Park drainage project, as well as the additional consultations that took place to poll residents of Lorne and Timothy Streets whose homes border onto the proposed wetland area, along with results of those consultations.

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

### **1. CONSULTATIONS PRIOR TO THE COUNCIL MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2016**

#### **1.1 Opportunity to Comment at a Public Information Centre (PIC) Held June 9, 2016**

Once the design drawings were completed, a Public Information Centre (PIC) was scheduled for Thursday, June 9, 2016, in the Council Chambers. On May 18, direct mail notices were sent through Canada Post to all residents in the area of the project to invite them to the PIC.

As per the Town's consultation policy, advertisements were placed on the Town page in The ERA Banner to invite all stakeholders to attend the PIC. The ads appeared on two occasions, namely May 26 and June 2, 2016. A notice inviting all Town residents to the PIC was also posted on the Town's Facebook page on June 3, 2016. The Notice of Commencement of Study and invitation to the PIC was also placed on the Town's website, under the "Notices" section in May-June 2016.

The PIC of June 9, 2016 was very well attended. Town Staff, as well as three (3) technical staff including the Project Manager, Project Engineer and Environmental Planner from our Consultant, AECOM, were present to explain the project and answer questions. In addition, several representatives of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) were in attendance.

Attendees at the PIC were asked to sign in and to complete a comment form. In total, eighteen (18) individuals signed in and 8 comment forms were received. One additional response was received by email and one resident physically attended the Engineering counter at the Town Hall requesting further information. In general, respondents indicated that Lions Park is a very important park to the community. Most said that flooding within the park was a common observation and that it limited their use and enjoyment of the park, and they were in favour of the improvements proposed.

#### **1.2 Opportunity to Comment via the Environmental Assessment (EA) Process**

The Town completed a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) study in accordance with Schedule "B" projects for the proposed elements of the drainage and recreational space improvements at Lions Park. The results were presented at the PIC of June 9<sup>th</sup>. The study assessed alternatives to address the drainage problems and rationalized that the preferred solution included rehabilitating the existing watercourse that runs along the southern edge of the park, developing a wetland area within the western portion of the park including plantings, signage and walkways, and placement of the excavated material within the eastern portion of the park to raise the grade and reduce flooding.

On August 18, 2016, a 2<sup>nd</sup> direct mail-out was sent via Canada Post to all residents who would be affected by, or who flanked the area of the project to advise them of the "Notice of Study Completion", describing various elements of the project, including the proposed wetland. The notice stated that this was the beginning of a 30-day review/comment period. Instructions were given on how to comment further on the project, if residents desired to do so.

Residents could provide further input and make comments either directly to the Town, or to the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) if they were not satisfied with the Town's response. The Review Period ended on September 19, 2016.

On August 18, 2016, the Notice of Study Completion was also posted on the Town's website, under the "Notices" section, where it still appears to this date, along with the original Notice of Commencement and the original invitation dated May 18, 2016, for the PIC of June 9, 2016.

### 1.3 Additional Efforts to Facilitate School Consultation

In addition to the above communications to invite the community and Stuart Scott Public School to the PIC, there were several efforts made to engage the School and York Region District School Board (YRDSB) directly, as follows.

On May 26, 2016, a digital copy of the PIC Notice was sent to the school's general email address and to the school board. Emails were sent directly to Stuart Scott P.S., inviting officials of the school to attend the PIC of June 9<sup>th</sup>.

No one from the School participated at the PIC and therefore, Town Staff reached out further by leaving several voice messages at the school in order to discuss the project with them. As some time went by without any response from the school, Town Staff decided to contact the YRDSB. Staff was finally able to reach a Planner at YRDSB. This Planner was able to comment on behalf of the school. Several discussions ensued between the Planner and our Town Staff.

On August 3, 2016, the Town received an official response from the Planner at the YRDSB, thanking staff for the opportunity to review the project and stating that the YRDSB had *"no position on the preferred alternative solutions but welcome any improvements to Lion's Park which will provide additional opportunities for students and the school for outdoor play and instruction."* They did indicate that they would like to be involved in the construction management plan process regarding the D'Arcy Street access, pick-up and drop-off points. The official letter was signed by the Planner, and was sent by email, with a cc to the school principal.

## **2. CONSULTATIONS AFTER THE COUNCIL MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2016**

Direction was given to Staff by Council at the Committee of the Whole meeting of August 29, 2016 and the Council meeting of September 12, 2016, to contact residents from households backing onto the proposed wetland area. The purpose would be to advise them of the project and to solicit their input one additional time.

In order to do this, Staff prepared a leaflet containing a map of the proposed wetland with respect to the properties that surrounded it, as well as information about the project and instructions on how and by when to provide their input. A cell phone number, a business number with voice mail, and an email address were listed for the residents to contact. They were asked to provide their comments by 9:00 p.m. on Sunday evening (September 18), and Staff was available all weekend to answer phone calls.

The Senior Environmental Coordinator, Climate Change Adaptation attended the site on the morning of Thursday, September 15. The Coordinator knocked on every door of the homes that adjoined the future wetland area. These homes included 217 Lorne Street, and 334, 340, 348, 352 and 356 Timothy Street. If someone opened the door, Staff discussed the project and solicited input right on the spot. Furthermore, the residents were invited to still contact the Town later if they had further questions or concerns. If no one was home, Staff left the leaflet very visibly on the door, along with a business card inviting residents to call in with their questions or concerns.

Of the six (6) households visited, 2 opened the door and spoke with the Town's Coordinator, and four (4) were not available. The two who were available had no issues with the project and one commented on how the new wetland would improve the biodiversity in the area. There were no phone calls nor any emails received from any of the households contacted.

### **BUSINESS PLAN AND STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGES**

- **Living Well....** By providing improved stormwater drainage and protecting our natural environment
- **Well Balanced....** By increasing accessibility to green and open spaces.
- **Well Respected....** Through managed partnerships and cooperation with stakeholders.
- **Well Equipped and Managed....** Through fiscal responsibility.

### **HUMAN RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS**


There is no impact on current staffing levels.

### **IMPACT ON BUDGET**

The original 2016 budget for the Lions Park project was \$304,000. However, this was based on an assumption that grants totaling this amount would be obtained. Due to changes in funding availability, the Town received a reduced amount of \$171,000 in grants. Staff recommends that the additional balance of funds for the Lions Park Drainage project (\$444,000) be taken from the Town's Asset Replacement Fund.

## **CONTACT**

For more information on this report, please contact Rachel Prudhomme at 905-895-5193 extension 2501; [rprudhomme@newmarket.ca](mailto:rprudhomme@newmarket.ca).

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