

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - NOVEMBER 29, 2004

OUTDOOR ICE RINKS IN NORTHWEST WOODBRIDGE

Recommendation

Councillor Carella recommends that staff of the Legal and Parks Department be directed to

- (1) ensure that the report on issues relating to the development of an outdoor natural (i.e., unrefrigerated) ice rink on the basketball court at Sunset Ridge Park---which report was ordered in response to a deputation before the Committee of the Whole meeting of November 15, 2004 ---address the following specific matters:
 - a) the justification for the 1% surface slope,
 - b) the appropriateness of asphalt as a surface for such a rink
 - c) the design and operation of similar rinks in other parts of the municipality
 - d) whether the rink is structurally safe as built and whether a letter to that effect will be provided to the principals of adjacent schools who have expressed an interest in programming student activities on such a rink during school hours
 - e) how local residents/volunteers willing to operate and maintain the said rink will be identified and/or recruited
 - f) what training local residents/volunteers will receive in the proper operation and maintenance of the rink
 - g) whether the local residents/volunteers will be covered by municipal liability insurance
 - h) and other matters identified in writing by local residents and communicated by them to the attention of the Commissioner of Community Services no later than December 13, 2004, assuming any questions in regards to said matters are of a reasonable and relevant nature, and

- (2) address the feasibility of constructing a outdoor refrigerated ice rink at the most appropriate location in northwest Woodbridge (i.e., north of Langstaff Road, east of Highway 50, south of Major Mackenzie Drive, and west of Pine Valley Drive)

Purpose

To address in an equitable manner the provision of outdoor ice surfaces to the residents of Vaughan

Background

At the public meeting held to discuss the preliminary design for Sunset Ridge Park, the local residents expressed an interest in seeing a skating rink included in the final plan for the park. Staff indicated that natural (unrefrigerated) rinks are a feature of several City parks and that one could be incorporated in the park as a secondary use of a proposed basketball court, providing that local residents/volunteers were agreeable to maintaining the rink, as is the practice with similar rinks across the City. The basketball court/natural ice rink was subsequently built. In the interim, a number of questions have arisen as to the functionality of this and similar rinks, which questions are detailed in the recommendation above. It is assumed that these questions can and will be addressed to the reasonable satisfaction of local residents by the report staff was asked to prepare by Council at its meeting of November 22, 2004.

In the interim, it has been noted that there is in northwest Woodbridge no outdoor refrigerated rink---such as found at Father Ermanno Bulfon Community Centre in west Woodbridge, Chancellor Community Centre in east Woodbridge, and as will be a feature of the new community centre at Vellore Village, in northeast Woodbridge. If this deficiency is to be addressed, the most appropriate location needs to be identified and the budgetary implications of such a project established.

Assuming that a relatively small neighbourhood park such as Sunset Ridge Park (or the neighbourhood park on the north side of Napa Valley Avenue immediately to the east of the hydro-electric corridor) is not an appropriate location for a major infrastructure enhancement such as a refrigerated outdoor rink, the most appropriate location would have to be of some size: perhaps the new district park at Islington Avenue and Major Mackenzie Drive, or the Al Palladini Community Centre at Islington Avenue and Rutherford Road, or some other sizeable location.

Relation to Vaughan Vision

Section 1.2 of Vaughan Vision 2007 reads: *Establish and communicate service level standards that are affordable and sustainable.*

Conclusion

Prompt action is required in respect of the proposed rink at Sunset Ridge Park, if local residents are to have the use of it over the 2004-2005 winter season. At the same time, it is appropriate that the question of the best location for a future refrigerated outdoor rink in northwest Woodbridge be addressed as part of the on-going capital budget process.

Attachments

1. Memorandum to Mayor and Members of Council from Parks Department with Attachments

Report prepared by

Councillor Tony Carella

November 22, 2004

Sunset Ridge Park Ice Rink / Basketball Court Community Meeting

This correspondence is intended to address the issues identified at the Committee of the Whole meeting of Monday, November 15, 2005.

A community meeting was held Thursday, March 27, 2003 with respect to the conceptual design of Sunset Ridge Neighbourhood Park. The purpose of the meeting was to receive input from the residents regarding proposed facilities and location of these facilities within the future park.

During the course of this meeting, residents requested an ice rink. It was agreed by all in attendance and confirmed by City of Vaughan staff that, if the budget could accommodate this request, concrete curbing and a water service would be provided around the proposed basketball court (refer to Item #26, page 6 and recap page 11 of the meeting minutes Attachment 'A'). In addition, it was noted by City of Vaughan staff that the municipality did not operate these facilities and that the community would be responsible to organize itself and maintain the rink. Based on the general consensus reached with respect to the park facilities and the positive response to the design of the park, a further public meeting would not be required.

The park construction was substantially completed on October 10, 2003 and the concrete curbing and water service discussed at the public meeting were implemented around the basketball court. This facility is functional and was constructed to high quality standards. No other commitments were made to the community regarding the ice rink / basketball court facility.

Existing City of Vaughan Ice Rinks / Basketball Courts

The design and construction of the ice rink facility at Sunset Ridge Park meets City of Vaughan standards applicable in 2003 respecting that the facility may be utilized for basketball in the summer months and as an ice rink in the winter months. The standard construction techniques utilized for ice rinks / basketball courts by the City of Vaughan in 2003 exceeds levels of service currently provided by other GTA municipalities – most municipalities provide a flat grassed area with a non-freeze water service.

Based on community requests, the City of Vaughan has constructed eight (8) outdoor rink facilities throughout the City including the one at Sunset Ridge Park. Seven (7) of these, including Sunset Ridge Park, are constructed utilizing an asphalt surface, concrete curbs and water service (refer to Attachment 'B'). The eighth outdoor natural ice rink is located at Mast Park and was designed and implemented in 2004 on a flat grassed area.

City of Vaughan staff, as evidenced in an e-mail dated February 4, 2004 (refer to Attachment 'C') are concerned about user safety due to the fact that all outdoor ice rinks

memorandum

are established, maintained and monitored by residents and that it is incumbent on the community to ensure a consistent, quality ice surface. The City of Vaughan does not currently establish, maintain or monitor the community ice rink facilities.

Members of the community were made aware that it would be their responsibility to establish, maintain or monitor the ice rink in Sunset Ridge Park both at the initial public meeting of March 27, 2003 and in a subsequent e-mail dated October 1, 2003 (refer to Item #26, page 6 meeting minutes Attachment 'A' and Attachment 'D').

Community Meeting of November 11, 2004

At a community organized meeting held Thursday, November 11, 2004, at St. Stevens Catholic Elementary School, staff were requested to provide additional information with respect to the ice rink at Sunset Ridge Park in preparation for a deputation on Monday November 15, 2004 by Mrs. Donna Giustizia.

The community members requested that a list of potential options and associated costs be prepared in order to alleviate their concerns regarding safety of the users and quality of the ice. Notwithstanding that the physical requirements and materials of construction of the ice rink / basketball court are reasonably safe and in functioning order, Parks Department staff prepared options and costs that may facilitate the establishment of an ice surface. The options below were presented as additional information memorandum to Mayor and Members of Council prior to the Committee of the Whole meeting held Monday, November 15, 2004.

Additional Options

| # | Option | Estimated Cost |
|----|---|----------------|
| 1. | implement heavy gauge white plastic to rink surface | \$1,000.00 |
| 2. | implement white plexiglass insert to rink surface | \$20,000.00 |
| 3. | paint rink surface with light coloured paint | \$18,000.00 |
| 4. | regrade location within park to allow for turf surface for ice rink and modify water service location | \$32,000.00 |
| 5. | replace asphalt surface with concrete | \$42,000.00 |
| 6. | supply and install refrigerated concrete ice skating facility (excl. fieldhouse and zamboni) | \$700,000.00 |

An Evolution of Design Guidelines for Ice Rinks

Based on increased community demand and significant costs to provide the concrete curbing around the ice rink / basketball facilities, the Parks Department initiated a review of the outdoor ice rink construction guidelines, operational protocols and potential liability issues early in 2004. This review was initiated to identify potential ways of providing a similar community service but at significantly lower costs.

Parks Department staff have been in contact with, and continue to review other GTA municipalities as well as Charlottetown, PEI to assess their guidelines for construction and operational protocols. Based on information gathered to date, most other municipalities allow for outdoor, natural ice surfaces on flat grassed areas with a non-freeze water service.

The City of Vaughan Insurance and Risk Management Department has been working closely with Parks Department staff to address potential issues relating to establishment, maintenance and monitoring of these facilities by community groups and signage that may be appropriate (refer to Attachment 'E').

Next Steps

The City of Vaughan implemented the basic requirements (asphalt surface, concrete curb and water service) required for establishment of an outdoor ice rink / basketball court at Sunset Ridge Park as requested at the public meeting of March 27, 2003.

The City of Vaughan, Parks Department staff are committed to working with and resolving the concerns of the St. Stevens Catholic Elementary School Ice Rink Committee.

Respectfully submitted,



Paul Gardner, OALA
Manager of Parks Development



Marje Fraser
Manager, Parks Operations & Forestry

Copy: Marlon Kallideen
Commissioner of Community Services