

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – NOVEMBER 3, 2008

OFF LEASH WORKING COMMITTEE – UPDATE REPORT

Recommendation

Councillor Tony Carella, on behalf of the Off Leash Working Committee, recommends:

- 1) That Council confirm that the Site #2, the Hydro corridor south of Centre street, not be pursued; and,
- 2) That Council direct the Off Leash Working Committee to move forward with investigating Site #3 (the next in rank order) by arranging an open house for the community as soon as possible. Site #3 is located at the eastern end of Concord Thornhill Regional Park; and
- 3) That Council direct the Off Leash Working Committee support staff to concurrently contact relevant land owners and other agencies having interest in Sites #4 through #7 to gather information that may affect the feasibility of developing these sites as off leash areas.

Economic Impact

Not applicable.

Purpose

That Council consider and approve the above recommendations of the Off Leash Working Committee.

Communication Plan

N/A

Background – Analysis and Options

The Off Leash Working Committee met on October 30, 2008. At this meeting the Committee was informed by staff that, over the last several months, information has been gathered from various agencies having interests in Site #2 to determine its feasibility to be developed into an off leash area. It was discovered through the course of this investigation that the Ministry of Transportation owns Centre Street and that it is a Controlled Access Highway. As well, the old road bed that was proposed for parking and the access/egress intersection to the site is still a declared King's Highway. Based on these factors the MTO reported that it could take upwards of 18 months to get these issues cleared up before vehicular access could be allowed on to the ORC lands. The Off Leash Committee recommends to Council that this site not be pursued.

In December of 2007 Council approved the list of Top 7 sites as per the list below and directed the Off Leash Working Committee and Staff to consider the sites in rank order. The Off Leash Working Committee recommends pursuing Site #3 (refer to attachment 'A') and is seeking Council's approval to hold a public open house as soon as possible in an effort to gather community comments and feedback.

Top Seven Sites:

1. ~~William Foster Woods, on the NE corner of Major Mackenzie and Islington Avenue~~
2. ~~The hydro corridor abutting the Glen Shields neighbourhood, access off Center Street~~
3. A portion of Concord-Thornhill Regional Park, wither within the hydro corridor or at the east end of the site
4. The area north of the Patricia Kemp Community Centre, immediately south of the Operations Yard
5. The vacant lands northwest of the intersection of the intersection of Jane Street and Major Mackenzie Drive
6. The hydro corridor abutting the Patricia Kemp Community Centre
7. The vacant land immediately north of the Harry Putter driving range at the intersection of Islington Avenue and Rutherford Road

Also at the Off Leash Working Committee meeting, there was discussion regarding establishing a timeline for the development of this pilot project. In an effort to move forward with a pilot site as soon as possible, the Committee is recommending concurrently reviewing each of the remaining sites rather than approaching them in rank order. Sites #4 through #7 are not owned by the City of Vaughan and will require approvals and negotiations with various agencies including the ORC, Hydro, the TRCA and other owners. The Committee is recommending that staff communicate with owners, and other agencies with interests in each of the remaining sites in an effort to evaluate feasibility, requirements and also determine timelines associated with approvals for the use of these sites. The Off Leash Working Committee is recommending that Council approve that staff undertake these investigations in an effort to expedite the process of developing and off leash area.

Regional Implications

Not applicable

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have been allocated and approved.

Conclusion

By means of an objective process, potential sites for an off leash park have been identified. The Off Leash Working Committee is recommending that the Site #2 (the Hydro corridor south of Centre street) not be pursued. It is now appropriate that Council authorize staff to continue the process by investigating the Site #3 and to host a public open house to facilitate community feedback. Additionally, and in an effort to expedite the development of an off leash area in the City of Vaughan, it is appropriate to permit support staff to contact relevant land owners and other agencies having interest in Sites #4 through #7 concurrently to gather information that may affect the feasibility of developing an off leash area.

Attachments

"A"- Location Map of Site #3

Report prepared by:

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Respectfully submitted,

Tony Carella
Councillor – Ward 2

ATTACHMENT A- Location Map of Site #3

