

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - JANUARY 13, 2009

### DAVOS ROAD PARK – ADOPT-A-PARK AND PROPOSED PARK RENAMING

#### RECOMMENDATION

Councillor Bernie DiVona, in consultation with Regional Councillor Mario Ferri recommends:

1. That the letter and petition dated December 12, 2008 from Mr. Peter Bottoni and Ms. Laura DeFilippis be received;
2. That the request to adopt Davos Road Park be approved and final agreement be referred to the Commissioner of Community Services in consultation with the Directors of Parks Development and Parks Operations and Forestry; and
3. That the request to rename Davos Road Park to Matthew Park be approved.

#### Economic Impact

N/A

#### Communications Plan

N/A

#### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council approval to have the Bottoni family adopt and rename Davos Road Park in memory of their son Matthew James Peter Bottoni who died of a heart condition at the age of 21 months. The family has been provided with details of the Adopt-a-Park Program and are fully aware of the requirements of this program - promoting partnership between the City of Vaughan and the Community.

Further, the residents and applicant has requested the City of Vaughan rename Davos Park to "Matthew Park". The meaning of the name "Matthew" means "a gift from God" and would be a befitting name to remember those in which we have a warm memory and wish to honour.

#### Background - Analysis and Options

The City of Vaughan received correspondence from Mr. Peter Bottoni and Ms. Laura DeFilippis, dated December 12, 2008, requesting that Davos Road Park be adopted and renamed in memory of his son, Matthew (refer to Attachment 1).

The Adopt-A-Park policy states: "The City of Vaughan Adopt-A-Park program has been established as a public service program promoting environmental stewardship and civic pride. It is a way for environmentally responsible citizens beautify their own neighbourhood."

By adopting the park the family, friends and residents are taking an active role in monitoring the park or organizing a cleanup to create a more beautiful environment.

The City of Vaughan encourages residents and groups to get involved with this program.

The Parks and Forestry Department staff will arrange to meet the applicant and get them involved in the formalization of a final agreement.

The City of Vaughan's Policy (No. 04.3.08) for Renaming City Parks, Open Spaces, Community Facilities and Other Municipal Buildings and Properties allows for name designation in honour of Individuals or groups providing that the individual meets any of the following criteria:

#### Criteria/Guidelines for Names Honouring Individuals or Groups

"Names for consideration shall be those of distinguished persons, organizations, corporations, foundations or the families:

1. where there has been a significant contribution to the quality of life, well-being of the City of Vaughan and is consistent with Vaughan Vision; or,
2. to memorialize or otherwise recognize substantial gifts and significant donors, individuals designed by donors, or individuals who have made exemplary or meritorious contributions to the City of Vaughan; or,
3. where there is a strong historical or cultural connection to the City and has made a major contribution to the historical or cultural preservation of the City; or,
4. where there is a strong contribution toward the environmental preservation, conservation or enhancement of the City; or,
5. where there is a major contribution made to the acquisition, development or conveyance of land or building, in question and/or its subsequent development; or,
6. where there is a direct relationship or association that exists between the place former place of residence of the person or group and the facility/park/street to be named.

#### **Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan**

Enhance and Ensure Community Safety, Health & Wellness – To advocate for, protect and enhance community safety, health and wellness through education, design and enforcement.

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council.

#### **Regional Implications**

N/A

#### **Conclusion**

The Bottoni family are long-time Woodbridge residents who have supported and been active members of their community. They are committed to ensuring that the park will be kept clean and well-maintained and plan to hold an annual event at the park in memory of their son.

#### **Attachments**

1. Letter
2. Pictures of Matthew
3. Petition

**Report prepared by:**

Councillor Bernie DiVona, ext. 8339

Respectfully submitted,

Bernie DiVona,  
Councillor – Ward 3

December 12, 2008

Mr. Bernie DiVona  
Ward 3 Councillor, City of Vaughan

Dear Mr. DiVona,

We are writing this letter as a request for consideration to rename and adopt the Vellore Village District Park (at the corner of Davos Rd and Fossil Hill Rd) in memory of our son, Matthew James Peter Bottoni, who passed away September 19, 2008. It is our mission to keep Matthew's joy of life alive in our community. Matthew was a 21 month-old boy whose smile warmed your heart every time you saw him. We, the parents, Laura and Peter, have lived in Woodbridge for over 30 years, and specifically live in the community where this park resides.

Matthew played at Vellore Village Park almost every day and enjoyed the outdoors immensely. Not a day would go by that Matthew did not request to go outside, or to the park down the street that he loved so much. Matthew played with and met many friends at this park. We are certain that the community would strongly support keeping his spirit alive by renaming this park in his honour, "Matthew's Park". We have obtained the support of over 300 members within the surrounding community vis-à-vis signed petitions.

Matthew was born on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2006, with a minor heart defect that doctors felt did not pose a real threat to his immediate health, until one sudden evening in September. Matthew was feeling under the weather, so we brought him to his pediatrician that afternoon. Once getting a clean bill of health we drove home as we always did passing by Vellore Village Park. As soon as Matthew caught a glimpse of the park, he yelled out in excitement "Mommy, park! Mommy park!" We re-assured him that after dinner we would take him to the park. Unfortunately, that evening, Matthew had severe heart complications and was rushed to The Hospital for Sick Children. Matthew slipped into a coma and remained at the hospital for almost 2 weeks. Doctors were baffled at his drastic deterioration of health and were unsure how to treat our very sick son who just days ago was full of energy and had enthusiasm for life. After endless days of agony and countless hours at his bedside, Matthew passed away in his mother's arms at the tender age of 21 months.

As you can imagine, this has been a tragic event, and we can only look back at the wonderful times we shared with Matthew in his short time with us. As residents and active citizens of the Vaughan community, renaming this park in honour of Matthew James Peter Bottoni would be one of great meaning to our family and many friends in this community. Matthew touched the lives of everyone who met him and he can continue to do so if this request is granted in his honour. His 6 month old brother Lucas did not have the opportunity to get to know his older sibling, but as he grows up and plays in the same park as Matthew did, he will know that his big brother must have been someone very special to have a park named after him in Vaughan. Matthew truly touched the hearts of everyone he met.

Matthew's passing has made us all aware of how precious life is and that we should enjoy and cherish every day that we are granted. We strongly believe that we can make the renaming of this park and the Adopt a Park Program an annual event that will become a day that reminds us and teaches us the significance of family values

and stresses the importance of community cohesiveness. At our annual event, our intentions are to bring families together for a picnic and involve everyone in planting trees and flowers. We will also be committed to ensuring that the park is kept clean and well maintained.

We envision "Matthew's Park" to be enjoyed by many children and their families for years to come.

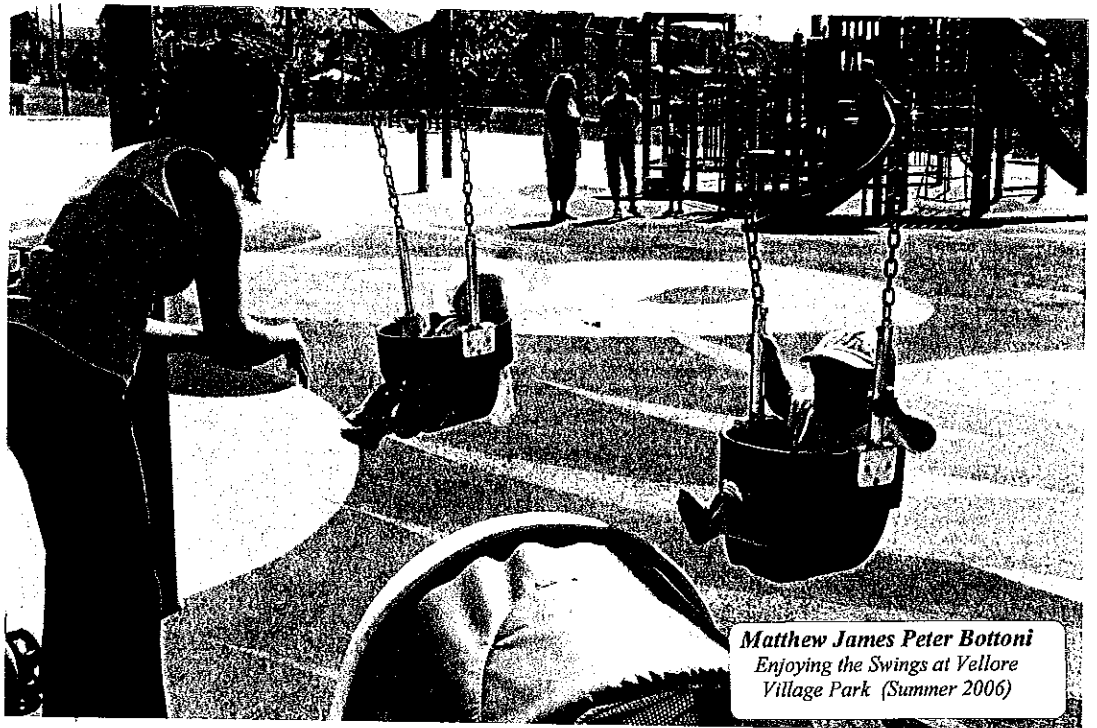
Thank you for your consideration and support regarding this matter and we look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Laura De Filippis & Peter Bottoni

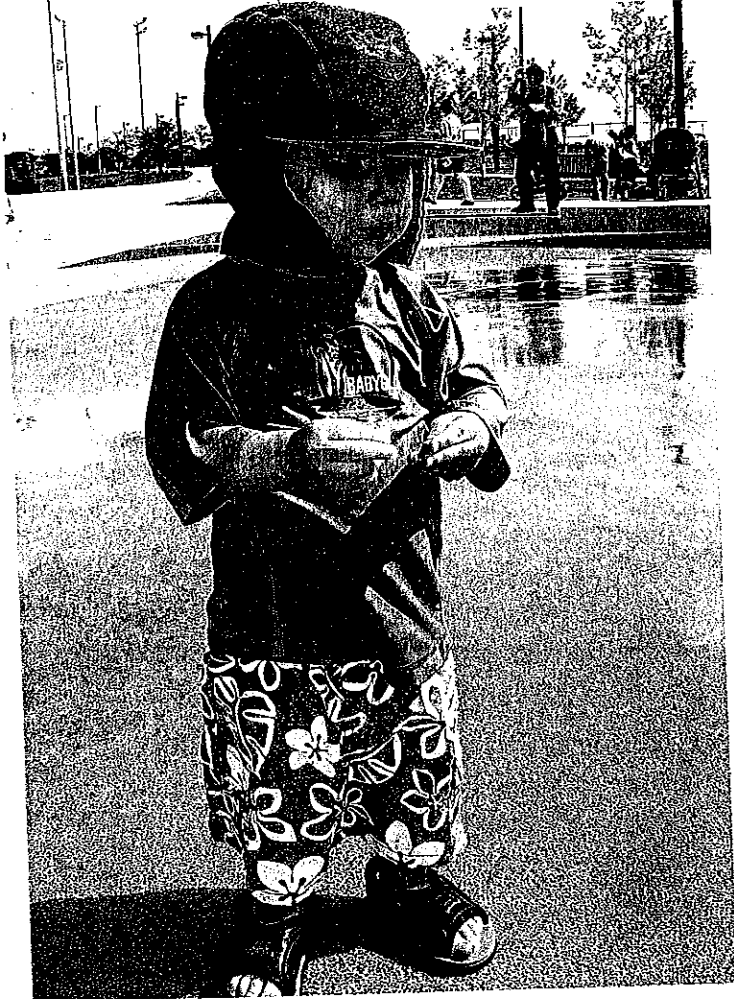


*Matthew James Peter Bottoni  
Enjoying a Sleigh ride at Vellore  
Village Park (Winter 2008)*



*Matthew James Peter Bottoni  
Enjoying the Swings at Vellore  
Village Park (Summer 2006)*

*Matthew James Peter Bottoni  
Enjoying the Splash Pad at Vellore  
Village Park (Summer 2008)*





## **NOTICE OF PETITION**

**A petition has been submitted with respect to the following matter and a copy is on file in the office of the City Clerk:**

**Agenda Item No.:** 14

**Item Name:** **DAVOS ROAD PARK – ADOPT-A-PARK AND PROPOSED PARK RENAMING**

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### **Particulars of the Petition:**

**Dated:** December 12, 2008

**No. of Signatures:** 309

**Submitted by:** Local Residents

**For a copy of the petition contact:**

**City of Vaughan, Clerk's Department, 2141 Major Mackenzie Drive, Vaughan, L6A 1T1  
Tel: (905) 832-8504 Fax: (905) 832-8535**