

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – MARCH 23, 2010

INCREASING THE NUMBER OF SOCCER FIELDS IN VAUGHAN

Recommendation

Councillor Tony Carella recommends that appropriate staff be directed to provide a report in response to the suggestions contained in attached correspondence from Mr Sal Infante, President, Woodbridge Soccer Club; namely:

- the feasibility of converting the former tennis court lands at the rear of Holy Cross Catholic Academy to a mini-soccer field; and
- the potential conversion of vacant lands owned by the Ontario Realty Corporation (situated in the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Regional Road 27 and Milani Boulevard) to an artificial or turf soccer field or fields; the potential timing of such conversion; and the funding and an other options available to the City in pursuing this development; and that
- the requested report be provided to the Committee of the Whole meeting of April 20, 2010

Contribution to Sustainability

The future of recreational soccer in the City of Vaughan—the single most popular sport among young and old alike, depends on the provision of an adequate number of fields. Given the on-going growth in the number of participants, new locations for soccer fields are a perennial issue. This matter must be addressed in order to sustain this most popular recreational activity over time.

Economic Impact

To be determined by way of the recommended report

Communication Plan

Any action taken by Council in respect of the recommendation will be communicated to the Woodbridge Soccer Club.

Background – Analysis and Options

While the City of Vaughan continues to increase in population, the ultimate number of residents (based on provincial projections) will be well in excess of 400,000—still a long way off. Any increase in population increases the demands on municipal services: community centres, libraries, and soccer fields, to name just a few. Indeed, the City's Recreational Master Plan ("Active Together") indicates that of all the recreational activities that the residents of Vaughan participate in, soccer is the one where the supply of fields is expected to lag behind the demand for such fields for a long time to come. In light of that situation, the letter received by the councillor for Ward 2/Woodbridge West from the president of the Woodbridge Soccer Club is timely now, and will likely be so for years to come.

As Mr Infante has identified two vacant parcels that may serve as sites for additional soccer fields, it is appropriate that his suggestions be explored. While he does not specify to whom the former tennis court lands belong, the fact that they may not belong to the

to whom the former tennis court lands belong, the fact that they may not belong to the City (but to the York District Catholic School Board) does not preclude their being considered for conversion to a soccer field or fields in cooperation with the YDCSB, many of whose fields are currently among those owned by other entities but permitted by the City for use by local soccer clubs.

The ORC lands on Regional Road 27 have long been considered for possible conversion for use as a soccer field or fields. Indeed, a neighboring landowner has in the past evinced an interest in such a conversion, depending on the City's obtaining a license to that end from the ORC. Where this proposal stands at this time is not known. But given the shortage of fields referred to by Mr Infante, the proposal needs to be firmed up, or alternatives explored. Such exploration should consider the time needed to complete such a conversion, whether the conversion should be undertaken by the City alone, or in cooperation with a private interest or interests, etc.

Regional Implications

Nil

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

Without a doubt the need for additional fields is clear, and in light of that need, the suggestions advanced by Mr Infante deserve the City's attention, and without unreasonable delay. What is absolutely certain is that the failure to develop additional soccer fields will severely constrain the City's ability to meet the expectations of its residents interested in playing recreational soccer.

Attachment

Letter of Mr Sal Infante, President, Woodbridge Soccer Club, dated February 26, 2010

Report prepared by:

Councillor Tony Carella, FRSA

Respectfully submitted,

Tony Carella, FRSA
Councillor – Ward 2/Woodbridge West



February 26, 2010

Councillor Tony Carella
City of Vaughan
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, Ontario
L6A 1T1

Dear Councillor Carella,

Further to my earlier letter on the continuing and pressing need for additional soccer fields to meet a demand that never stops growing, I would like to make two suggestions:

1. That the City consider the development of a mini-soccer field on what was formerly a tennis court or courts behind Holy Cross Catholic Academy. I am not certain whether these lands are under the control of the City or the York District Catholic School Board, but if the latter, then I would urge the City to enter into negotiations to convert this vacant space into a soccer field this season, or next year at the latest.
2. That the rumored development of an artificial turf field on the provincial lands at the intersection of Highway 27 and Milani Boulevard be pursued vigorously, so that such a premium field can be added to those the City currently permits.

Please give this your immediate attention, as the need is great and growing.

Yours truly,

Sal Infante

Sal Infante
President, Woodbridge Soccer Club