

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - MAY 15, 2012**

### **REVISED POLICY FOR NAMING OF STORM WATER MANAGEMENT PONDS AND ASSOCIATED SIGNAGE**

#### **Recommendation**

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works recommends the following revised policy be adopted for the naming of the City's storm water management (SWM), ponds:

1. Wherever possible, single name descriptors of the pond should be used.
2. The size of the signage be 30 cm x 90 cm,
3. SWM ponds that are located on the same property as a City-owned park or open space, shall incorporate the park or open space's name into the pond name. For example, the SWM pond at the Sugarbush Heritage Park would be named the "Sugarbush Pond".
4. SWM ponds located on lands containing City-owned facilities, such as the City's Joint Operations Centre, shall be named after the facility, or a derivative of. For example, the SWM pond fronting on Rutherford Road at the City's Joint Operations Centre, would be named the "J.O.C. Pond".
5. SWM ponds that are not part of a City-owned park or facility, and front onto a Regional road, shall be named after the Regional road fronting the pond. In the event that there are multiple ponds fronting on a regional road, the closest intersecting street name shall be included in the name. For example, the SWM pond located on the north side of Major Mackenzie Avenue, just west of Melville Avenue, would be named the "Major Mackenzie / Melville Pond".
6. SWM ponds that only front onto local streets, shall be named in accordance with the street where there is public access to the pond. For example, the storm pond located at Woodland Acres Crescent shall be named the "Woodland Acres Pond". In the event there may be multiple ponds fronting onto a local road, the closest intersecting street name shall also be included in the name.
7. In cases where SWM ponds only front onto local streets, and where there are multiple access points to the pond, staff be given sufficient latitude to name the ponds in accordance with the general principles noted above, taking into account: the abutting major and minor streets, existing storm ponds names (where they may exist), and other related factors.
8. SWM ponds located on private property, or City sites with no public access, not be part of this policy.

#### **Contribution to Sustainability**

Storm water management ponds are vital in mitigating the threat of flooding by slowing the flow of water into local creeks and rivers. They also serve to improve downstream water quality by allowing suspended materials to settle out of the water over time.

The recommended reduction in the size of the pond name signs to the 30 cm x 90 cm size will result in significant costs savings compared to the larger signs identified in the original report. This includes the initial project costs, as well as the ongoing replacement and repair costs.

### **Economic Impact**

Based on the size of the signage being reduced to the 30 cm x 90 cm size, it is estimated that the project cost will be under \$60,000.

Should Council wish to include additional pond name signage near the life saving stations, the cost would increase by approximately \$25,000, bringing the total to approximately \$85,000.

### **Communications Plan**

Conditional upon the approval of the above noted policy, and funding being approved for the project as part of the 2012 Water/Wastewater Budget, Public Works will work with Corporate Communications to develop a communications strategy to advise the public, and map producers and providers, of this initiative.

### **Purpose**

To adopt a revised storm water pond naming policy, taking into consideration the comments brought forward at the April 2, 2012, meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee.

### **Background - Analysis and Options**

At its meeting of April 2, 2012, the Finance & Administration Committee had before it a report concerning the naming of storm water management ponds. The recommendation contained in that report (Item 1), read as follows:

*"The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works recommends that Council approve:*

- 1. The proposed policy for naming storm water management ponds as outlined in this report;*
- 2. The Storm Water Management Pond sign design, consistent with other City signing, and reflecting the growing emergence of operating storm water management ponds as community amenities, as depicted in Attachment 2; and,*
- 3. That the Additional resource Request for \$309,955 be considered as part of the draft 2012 Water and Wastewater Budget submitted for Council consideration.*

A number of points were raised during the discussion on this item, and these can be summarized into 5 major categories, these being:

- The cost and size of signs
- The descriptor words "Storm Water Management" being on the sign
- The method to name the pond
- The placement of the signs
- Reviewing the potential to implement an "Adopt-a-Pond" program

Staff have reviewed these concerns and provide the following comments.

### **The recommended size of the signs has been changed to reduce overall costs**

There was considerable concern about the costs of the larger signs. As noted in the previous report, there were two size options presented. The recommended sign was based on a custom design, similar to those used for the City's parks. The second option was to use a standard aluminium 30 cm x 90 cm sign blank as the basis for the pond name sign.

The larger sign was estimated to cost approximately \$2,000 per sign, and the smaller sign was estimated to cost approximately \$120. The costs for installing the signs was considered to be approximately the same for either sign, and was estimated at \$29,955.

Given the concerns raised about the cost to manufacture the larger signs, staff agree with Committee's comments and recommend that the sign size be changed to the 30 cm x 90 cm size. The smaller sign will reduce the costs significantly, and will be easier and less costly to replace should it become vandalized.

**The descriptor words "Storm Water Management" have been removed from the pond name to better create a "sense of place"**

The original sign design was based on including the words "Storm Water Management Pond" after the name/location of the pond. For example, "Rutherford/Melville Storm Water Management Pond" was used on the example signs. While the words "Storm Water Management Pond" do reflect the actual purpose of these facilities, there was a concern that those words did not help to create a "sense of place", and that perhaps only the word "pond" should be kept.

As it is recommended that the size of the sign be changed to the smaller 30 cm x 90 cm size, staff concur with the removal of the words "Storm Water Management" from the signs.

**Wherever possible, the name of the pond will use a single word to describe the name/location of the pond**

There was a concern with having two words to describe the name/location of the pond. Using the above example of the "Rutherford/Melville Pond", the potential name would be changed to the "Rutherford Pond". Where multiple ponds are located on the same street, it was proposed that the largest pond be named after the regional road, and the others would be named after the closest abutting local street.

Staff have reviewed the locations of the City's storm water management ponds and have found that moving to a single word name for the ponds is possible; however, it may not be appropriate in all cases. If the secondary purpose of naming these ponds is to assist in the event of an emergency, then the inclusion of the closest abutting street would be beneficial where there are multiple ponds fronting onto the same street.

Therefore, while most ponds will have a single word name, in cases where there are multiple ponds located on the same road, it is still recommended that the ponds located along such roads include the closest intersecting street name in the pond name.

**Placement of the pond name signs will vary at each location, but will focus on pedestrian traffic**

The placement of the signs was raised in terms of where they would be placed and who was the audience. The intention of the original Council recommendation on developing a naming policy was to create a sense of place. Accordingly, it would be appropriate to place the signs in locations where they would be visible to pedestrian access as a first consideration, with visibility for vehicular traffic as a secondary consideration.

Each pond is unique, with differing site conditions at each location. As such, it is difficult to articulate in this report the exact location of each sign at each SWM pond. Staff will use their judgment in locating these signs, taking into account such things as entrances to the facility, pedestrian visibility, and location of underground services that may impact sign post placement.

Although these signs were not intended to be for emergency purposes, it may also be appropriate to consider installing additional pond name signage close to the life saving stations. This would increase the cost of this project by an additional \$25,000; however, it may be worthwhile in terms of assisting the public when calling for help in the case of an emergency.

### **The City's "Adopt-a-Park" program includes storm water ponds as areas for adoption**

As a means to offset the costs of this program, it was recommended that staff review the potential for an Adopt-a-Pond program.

Council, at its meeting on March 31, 2008, directed the following:

1. *"That the City of Vaughan approve of the recommendations contained herein as to the introduction of "life saving stations" in storm water management facilities throughout the City of Vaughan;*
2. *Staff be directed to finalize an implementation, operational, and financial plan to equip each storm water management facility in the City with life saving stations, and report back to a future Committee of the Whole meeting in the next 30 days; and*
3. *That the City of Vaughan Council approve of the proposal to amend the "adopt a park" program to provide for "adopt a pond" for all existing ponds."*

At its meeting of May 12, 2008, Council approved a follow-up report on the topic of life saving stations. In the report, there was the following reference to an Adopt-a-Pond program:

*"The City's current Adopt-a-Park program encourages the community to participate in litter cleanup, tree planting and flower planting. There is a possibility of including a storm water management facility as a component of the Adopt-a-Park program where the facility abuts a park. It should be noted that the landscaping around a storm water management facility encourages a natural environment of plantings and wildlife. Accordingly, a monetary contribution rather than hands on participation may be a better option."*

As can be seen from the foregoing, the City's current "Adopt-a-Park" program was amended by Council to include storm water ponds. The current program does not necessarily provide signage identifying who has adopted the park or pond; however, the program does acknowledge the group's or individual's efforts at a Volunteer Recognition Night sponsored by the City.

Parks & Forestry Operations staff indicated that to date, no one has adopted one of the City's SWM ponds.

### Summary

The comments made at the April 2, 2012 Finance & Administration Committee meeting focused around 5 major categories, these being:

- The cost and size of signs
- The descriptor words "Storm Water Management" being on the sign
- The method to name the pond
- The placement of the signs
- Reviewing the potential to implement an "Adopt-a-Pond" program

Staff has reviewed those comments and recommends that the size of the sign be reduced, and that the revised naming policy be adopted.

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

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and ties into the following Vaughan Vision 20/20 Goals and Objectives:

Goal: Organizational Excellence  
Objective: Manage Corporate Assets

### **Regional Implications**

There are no Regional implications as a result of the recommendations contained in this report.

### **Conclusion**

In accordance with Council's previous direction, and taking into account the comments made at the April 2, 2012 Finance & Administration Committee, it is recommended that the smaller 30 cm x 90 cm signs be used, and that the revised policy for naming SWM ponds be approved.

### **Attachments**

Attachment 1 - Revised Sign

### **Report prepared by:**

Brian T. Anthony, Director of Public Works, Ext 6116

Respectfully submitted,

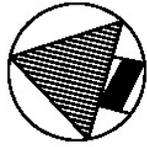
Paul Jankowski, P. Eng  
Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works

Brian T. Anthony, CRS-S, C. Tech  
Director of Public Works

ATTACHMENT No. 1



STORM WATER MANAGEMENT POND SIGNAGE



NOT TO SCALE