



MINUTES
ROUGE PARK IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW TASK FORCE
ONTARIO ROOM, MARKHAM CIVIC CENTRE
July 27, 2012

ATTENDANCE:

Members: Deputy Mayor Jack Heath, Chair Councillor Colin Campbell Regrets: Councillor Logan Kanapathi	Staff: Brenda Librecz, Commissioner of Community Services Trinela Cane, Commissioner of Corporate Services Keely Grasser, Executive Assistant to Deputy Mayor Jack Heath David Pearce, Manager, Real Property Graham Seaman, Sustainability Office Lead Paul Wealleans, Director, Revenues Margaret Wouters, Manager, Policy & Research Carlie Turpin, Council/Committee Coordinator Ian Buchanan, Manager Heritage & Forestry Environmental Services, York Region
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The Rouge Park Implementation Task Force convened at 1:35 p.m. with Deputy Mayor Jack Heath presiding as Chair.

1. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

There was no conflict of interest declared.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the July 13, 2012 Rouge Park Implementation Review Task Force were approved as presented.

3. Business Arising from Minutes/Staff Update

Review of Action Items

- Tompion (Parcel 9)

- The joint York Region Transit (YRT) and Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) project to have a bus loop located on park lands is not supported by this Committee. Committee would like representatives from the organizations to come in to discuss how this will benefit Markham and the park. Staff will work with representatives from these organizations to allow them to facilitate a presentation and discussion with the Development Services Committee
- Concern by the Committee that the TTC and YRT has moved forward without securing the land and performing its due diligence for the project as well as failing to consult with Markham.
- Recommend that this matter be placed on first DSC meeting in September for discussion
- Staff advised that buses currently utilize residential streets to turn around – bus loop would accommodate 2 TTC routes and 2 YRT routes.
- Land holders table
 - Parks Canada has transferred maps over to Committee to review. Maps confirm Markham lands under consideration for transfer, further confirmation will be August 10th and staff are reviewing the proposal. Agreement to agree to transfer the land over is a precursor to the actual land transfer agreement. Next meeting will be August 23rd at the Civic Centre. The fall agreement is for due diligence, parties responsibilities to facilitate due diligence and interim management.
 - York Region Update – staff are currently undertaking a mapping and boundary exclusion exercise to confirm the maps by August 10. Issue is parcel by parcel analysis, where they are expecting the land owners to provide due diligence by August 10. Region advised they would need 4 to 6 months to complete this. Land Transfer Agreement embed the principle of reverse expectation that lands being transferred to Parks Canada be treated the same as lands being transferred back to the region down the road.
 - City is targeting the second week of September to enter into talks with Parks Canada regarding the land transfer.
- Public meeting
 - On July 24 Parks Canada held a public meeting to outline their process to date and moving forward. Reviewed the study area and highlighted the 4 park concept pillars (connect people to nature and history, support a vibrant farming community, conserve natural heritage and celebrate cultural heritage character).
 - Community was asking a number of questions including private property, environmental issues, tree planting and preserving/rebuilding the park.
 - Residents inquired what will attract them to the park. Staff need to examine how they are going to address resident concerns and determine how to attract residents to the park.

4. DISCUSSION REGARDING ROUGH NATIONAL URBAN PARK FOCUSED ON RECREATION USES

- Review of original 2009 RPITF recommendations
 - Committee recommended that lands and property owned by Markham continue to be owned and managed by Markham
 - Camping – recommend that ecological focused camping be permitted within the park.
 - Dog off-leash – that staff work with RPA and secure dog off-leash areas.
 - Group picnics – that RPITF review the potential for locations for large group picnic areas – recommendation was put forth because of cost benefit analysis that supports large picnic areas. Difficultly managing a large number of smaller sites instead of a few large areas. Large areas are more efficient to manage. Recommended to sit down with Parks Canada to discuss the picnic facilities possibilities throughout the park.
 - Trails and trailheads – staff & Alliance review the preparation of Rouge Park trails and pathways plans. Committee recommends that attractions be located near trails and the YRT/VIVA terminal. Ensure there are enough parking for each entry node and trailhead.
 - Outdoor activity and Cultural Centre
 - Recommend that staff and the Alliance identify a location for an outdoor activity centre. RPITF recommends that staff and the Alliance identify a location for an outdoor activity and cultural center.
 - Rough Park Office & Welcome Centre
 - City supports the relocation of Rough park offices with a vision of locating in or near the park. City staff will make all reasonable effort to find a suitable location at a reasonable cost. The Committee recommends that staff formalize documents and explore all available options for funding.
 - Other Outdoor Activities
 - Activities have been listed and provided by Council. Reviewed a number of outdoor activities that could be available. The concept behind the list is to have no organized big sports taking place in the park. Emphasis is on drop in recreation for all residents to participate in.
 - RPITF recommends that By-law 323-86 be amended to specifically prohibit the use of bows and arrows from Rouge Park. Wardens from Parks Canada were asked to have this ban established prior to parks opening to monitor and enforce terms of use of the park. These wardens will work with all parties involved to ensure enforcement is regularly provided in the park.
- Milne 2 Concept
 - Outcomes and Principles: accessible, people focused, respecting the environment, educational, supporting active and healthy living, visible spaces,

- connections to Markham and remaining Rouge Park (trails, perspectives, images and reputations).
- Key components for consideration based on council direction.
- Size and scope of concept park is 150 acres compared to Milne Park is 100 acres.
- Features will be designed based on land forms with picnic areas and outdoor amphitheatre to be built into the natural environment, active living areas, interpretative station and signs, celebration areas, reflection areas and enclosed dogs area, parking locations and access.
- York Region advised they are exploring a different view of dog off leash enclosures – one where it is enclosed entirely versus dog off leash trails (options could be hybrid of both) species and wildlife implications of the off leash trails will need to be examined (can fence the trails if appetite for it).
- Concern the land being provided will be barren and will require a few years of landscaping and designing the area. Time should be spent on identifying the right site for this park that includes environmental characteristics.
- Discussion on location options that can be based on the natural settings. Different options were discussed and the environmental impacts of each area were discussed.
- Linkage of this park to other Markham/Toronto nodes – the park must be part of an entrance and connect to other areas.
- Community Centres
 - Staff advised that they are looking at all of the community centres that are run by boards and how they operate. Review how they are used by the community and what the impact is on the community by having the centre there. Recommendations will be made as to how it should operate and how it can fit into the hub concept. There will be a number of options looked at as part of this review.
 - Expand scope to possibly include other community buildings located on the park land. Re-frame as a community access agreement and review operating/ownership models.
 - Concern there is a duplication of efforts with the heritage properties. Upcoming meeting will be about heritage properties and other community buildings under consideration to develop an all encompassing strategy.
- Trails Master Plan
 - Review of the Markham Multi-Use path environmental assessment study.
 - Bob Hunter Park Master Plan – most trails have been completed in this section. Phase 4 and 5 subject to further discussion due to land ownership issues. Trails are mixed surfaces, hard and nature based. Part of the trail area is a parking location.
 - Explore possibility of having a walking bridge over Don Cousens Parkway.
 - There are a few missing connections amongst some of these trails.
 - Review of Rouge Park Pathway maps. Major constraint at Steeles Ave. and Reesor Road, solution will be longer term solution due to ongoing

construction. Constraint area at Steeles Ave. and Tompion lands and lands in the area still need to come into national park lands.

- Central Rouge Park features agricultural trail as well as the main north south spine along Little Rouge River. Would like to move part of the trail off the road and into the land. Crossing is required at 14th Ave. still.
- Northern Rouge Park connection from main east west trail to this location. Two areas of accessible trails that will move north and connect to the isolated parcel of land.
- Review of planned/potential public use. Concern that Parks Canada will not be open to active public uses of the park land. Explore potential for land transfers to enhance the space.

5. NEXT STEPS

- August 10 has been cancelled
- August 17 – heritage/properties of interest
- August 20 – Markham and region infrastructure/services
- August 27 – financial impacts/agriculture
- September 7 – new date – hamlet boundaries/Reesor Rd employment
- Week of September 11 – tentative bus tour of lands considered for transfer to park Canada
- Week of September 18 – workshop draft and finalize vision developed – half day
- Mid September – negotiations with parks Canada begin based on vision
- October 15 – council report to GC to gain authority to hold public meetings for comments on land transfer process
- Late October – public meeting for comment on lands considered for transfer
- Early November – update vision as needed
- November – legal review of finalized land transfer agreement
- TBD – council report to gain authority to execute finalized land transfer agreement

6. OTHER BUSINESS

- Discussion on Markham's preferences for these parks including locations, operations etc. Review of principles and acknowledgement that Parks Canada is tasked with running this park. First step is to determine what Markham is transferring over and work with Parks Canada for establishing these parks. Further discussion will be required at future meetings.
- Next meeting Committee should articulate what they are looking for from this process and determine where this project is going.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The Rouge Park Implementation Task Force adjourned at 3:37 p.m.