

German Mills Meadow & Natural Habitat Liaison Committee

May 3, 2017

Building Boardroom

3:00 p.m.

<p><u>Committee Members</u> Deputy Mayor Jack Heath Councillor Valerie Burke Pat McCann-Smith Kimberly Seymour Bernard Sze</p> <p><u>Regrets</u> Artem Pozdnyakov John Saul (although able to participate to a limited extent by speaker phone) Gail Lavery</p>	<p><u>Staff</u> Nory Takata, Parks Planner Prathapan Kumar, Senior Manager of ROW & Environmental Assets Robert Penner, Manager of Utilities Surveys & Assets Database Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator</p>
---	---

1. Opening Remarks

The German Mills Meadow and Natural Habitat Liaison Committee convened at 3:10 pm with Kimberly Seymour presiding as Chair.

2. Presentation

Bob Penner provided a presentation on the German Mills Meadow and Natural Habitat. The presentation included an update on the following: gas monitoring results; environmental monitoring results; settlement at the property line; fill at the North-West corner of the meadow; and the work plan for 2017. A copy of the presentation will be circulated to the Committee.

Discussion

The following was discussed:

Planting Wildflowers

Nory Takata advised that he will be planting wildflowers in the meadow and that volunteers may be needed to help with the project.

The Committee asked how large the garden will be. Staff advised that they plan to start with a modest size garden and add to it each year.

Japanese Knotweed

Nory Takata advised that some Japanese Knotweed has been found in the meadow. It is a very aggressive and invasive species. The Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) will use pesticides to kill the weed. Currently, it is only in a very small area of the meadow. Staff are unsure how the weed got into the meadow. A picture of the weed was displayed to the Committee.

Signs on Trail

The Committee suggested that signs be erected, by some Committee members, advising residents to stay on the trail in the meadow, as it was worried that residents will wander off the trail and disturb the natural habitat.

Repair of Gas Collection System

The repairs to the gas collection system are anticipated be done in the fall or early winter, but the dates were still to be determined.

Meeting with Affected Households regarding land settlement

Some Committee Members held a meeting with the affected households in the northwest area of the meadow, namely, those owners/residents of 3-5-7 Pine Knoll Gate and the odd numbers of 51-69 Dawn Hill Trail, regarding the settlement of the meadow and their property lines. At the meeting the affected households asked about the cost of the fill, Members responded that they did not know the details of the costs by the homeowners or the City at this time, if the City was to add fill to their side of the property line.

Only one resident at this time expressed concern with respect to paying for the fill. The other residents will wait and see what the cost of the fill is prior to commenting.

The Committee agreed that a public meeting hosted by the local Councillor should be held on the matter with affected residents/owners, ideally on Thursday, September 14, 2017, and suggested the location of the Thornhill Community Centre in the Fireside Lounge.

Moved by Pat McCann-Smith

Seconded by Bernard Sze

That the German Mill Meadow & Natural Habitat Liaison Committee recommend to Council that a public meeting be held to discuss with affected residents/owners the proposal on settlement remediation; and,

That the program be presented by staff.

Carried

Trees

The Committee asked what will happen to the trees that have grown where the fill will be put. Staff advised that some of the trees will need to be removed. The adding of fill will be timed with the gas line repair to minimize the disruption to the meadow and the number of trees that need to be removed.

Fence

The Committee discussed the fence on the property line between the homeowners and the City's property. Staff advised that the fence would need to be moved onto the City's property line to repair it. The cost of replacing the fence is approximately \$25K. Staff will investigate what can be repaired without affecting private property.

3. New Business

Bird Houses

Bernard Sze advised that two birdhouses were put up in the meadow. If a success, more birdhouses will be put up in the meadow by members of the Committee.

Sign Plate for Seasonal Posts

The Committee asked if a plate could be added to the sign pole to add seasonal community posts. Nory Takata will look into this request and report back to the Committee.

Bernard displayed a sign that the Committee would like posted in the meadow. Nory Takata advised that once the design of the sign has been finalized he can look into having it printed on a more durable material. It was suggested that the sign have both the City of Markham and the Settlers Park Rate Payers Association logo on it.

Dogs off Leash

The Committee noted that many residents have been taking their dogs off their leashes in the meadow and have reached out to Christopher Alexander, Acting Manager of By-Law Enforcement about this matter. The Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) who manage animal control services for the City will be monitoring the park on a regular basis and will enforce off-leash infractions with an initial warning followed by the issuance of a ticket for a fine of \$150 if the pet owner fails to comply with the By-law on a subsequent occasion.

Stairway Repair

The Committee asked when the stairway off Cottonwood Street will be repaired. Staff advised that the repairs to the stairway will be timed with other work being done on the road.

Dumping

The Committee asked if a “no dumping” sign could be put on Leslie Street near the entrance to the area at the south end.

Garbage Can

The Committee asked that another garbage can be put in the meadow and at the Leslie Street entrance to the park. Staff suggested that this request be made through the City’s Contact Centre.

Salmon

The Committee wanted to ensure that salmon were able to swim upstream to spawn, as there may be garbage obstructing the stream. A Committee Member noted that City staff will be removing the shopping cart and tire from the stream. A call to the contact centre should be placed for this. Anything that has been there more than three years becomes part of the natural habitat and needs to be removed by a third party.

Committee Vacancy

A Committee Member asked if there is a vacancy on the Committee, as a Member from the German Mills Residents Association has demonstrated an interest in joining the Committee. Laura Gold will look into this matter and report back to the Committee.

4. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the German Mills Meadow and Natural Habitat Committee will be held on October 19, 2017 at 3:00 pm.

5. Adjournment

The German Mills Meadow & Natural Habitat Liaison committee adjourned at 4:50 p.m.