



REPORT

TO: Mayor Lawlor and Members of Council

FROM: Kevin Okimi, Director of Parks and Open Space

DATE: May 23, 2023

REPORT NO.: RP-2023-005

SUBJECT: Park Naming Request

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. RP-2023-005 dated May 23, 2023 regarding a Park Naming Request be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Council approve the renaming of “Diamond #1” at the Georgetown Fairgrounds to “Kevin Burke Field”;

AND FURTHER THAT staff be directed to install signage outlining the new diamond name in accordance with the Park Naming Policy.

KEY POINTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- A request has been submitted to rename “Diamond #1” at the Georgetown Fairgrounds to “Kevin Burke Field”
- Renaming requests are permitted under the Park Naming Policy (CL-2012-001).
- The renaming request is consistent with the requirements of the naming policy.
- Public Notice was published in the local newspaper, posted on site, and circulated to local baseball organizations and Fairgrounds park users. A Let’s Talk Halton Hills site was available for residents to submit any feedback. Only one negative comments was received via any format throughout the notice period, and it was not supportive of any naming of any features generally, and not specific to this request.
- Staff recommend that Council approve the renaming and direct staff to install signage showing the new diamond name as per the Park Naming Policy.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

The purpose of this report is to seek direction from Council on a park naming request received from a member of the public, in accordance with the Park Naming Policy.

Council approved the Park Naming Policy CL-2012-001 in 2012 to provide guidance in the naming of parks or park elements. This policy outlines the process for residents, Council or staff to request naming of parks or park elements to reflect significant local persons in place of the standard park name. Typically, parks are named after the street on which they are located (i.e. Miller Drive Park) and fields and diamonds are numbered.

In February 2023, Staff were contacted by a group of citizens with a request to rename a Diamond #1 at the Georgetown Fairgrounds in Halton Hills in honor of Kevin Burke in recognition of the significant service he contributed to the development of baseball in Halton Hills. Kevin Burke was the founder and first head coach of the Georgetown Eagles (now Halton Hills Minor Baseball Eagles) and shared his love of baseball by teaching, training and coaching players, as well as fundraising. He was also responsible for the installation of the first lights at the Fairgrounds Diamond #1. The complete request with additional history and accomplishments is attached as Appendix A. The citizen group included a member of Kevin Burke's family.

The proposal aligns with the criteria of the Park Naming Policy, specifically recognizing the significant contribution of an individual to the community posthumously. The location of Diamond #1 at the Georgetown Fairgrounds is appropriate given Kevin Burke's involvement in the baseball community, specifically at the Georgetown Fairgrounds. Appendix B shows the location of Diamond #1 within the Georgetown Fairgrounds.

In March 2023, Council approved the renaming in principle, subject to a public notification process and comment period, as outlined in the policy.

In April-May 2023, Staff have circulated the intent of the park naming to the public for comment via the local newspaper, on-site signage, communications with local ball diamond groups and park users, and have received input through a Let's Talk Halton Hills consultation website.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report is administrative in nature and does not have an impact on the Town's Strategic Plan.

RELATIONSHIP TO CLIMATE CHANGE:

This report is administrative in nature and does not directly impact or address climate change and the Town's Net Zero target.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Public Engagement has been conducted as follows: Online Survey, Public Notice (signage and newspaper), direct emails to ball diamond groups and park users.

The public was advised of the intent to rename “Diamond #1” at Georgetown Fairgrounds to “Kevin Burke Field” through a posting on site, the Town’s website and local newspapers. Staff also consulted with local baseball organizations and community groups who use the Georgetown Fairgrounds Park. Halton Hills Minor Baseball recently announced the creation of a Kevin Burke Memorial Award. Only one negative comment was received. The comment was opposed to naming of any features in general, and not specific to this request.

INTERNAL CONSULTATION:

Staff worked with Communications staff on the Let’s Talk Halton Hills website and public notices.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This report will be funded through an existing approved budget source.

Park staff would install new field name signage at nominal cost should the naming be approved. Family/friends who made the nomination or other organizations would be responsible for any additional recognition signage or features.

Reviewed and approved by,

Paul Damaso, Commissioner of Recreation & Parks

Chris Mills, Chief Administrative Officer