

REPORT

REPORT TO: Chair and Members of the Community and Corporate Affairs Committee

REPORT FROM: Heather Kaufmann
Community Development Supervisor

DATE: November 28, 2018

REPORT NO.: RP-2018-0030

RE: Norval Park and Area – Community Engagement

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report RP-2018-0030 dated November 28, 2018 regarding the Norval Park Area – Community Engagement be received;

AND FURTHER THAT staff be directed to continue to support the Credit Valley Trail initiative being led by Credit Valley Conservation;

AND FURTHER THAT staff report back on the details of the potential joint project for the Upper Canada College Trail for consideration by the Community and Corporate Affairs Committee;

AND FURTHER THAT future joint partnership projects for Norval Park and the Lucy Maud Montgomery Museum and Literary Arts Centre follow the Joint Capital Policy in coordination with the Public Engagement Charter;

AND FURTHER THAT staff be directed to conduct annual meetings with the Norval user groups as identified in Report RP-2018-0030.

BACKGROUND:

Norval Community Association Projects

In 2014, the Norval Community Association (NCA) was awarded an Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) grant for \$169,500.00 over twenty four (24) months for the development and operation of a Garden of the Senses located within the Lucy Maud Montgomery Gardens at Norval Park. The project was completed in 2016.

In September 2015, the Norval Community Association met with Town staff to advise of new and upcoming projects requiring Town support. Norval Community Association also came forward to Council to present a proposal that included several new projects within Norval, including Lucy Maud Montgomery Walking Trail, pavilion with washroom, Moccasin Trail, expanded parking in Norval Park, gateway/entrance signage features and a natural playground.

Council directed staff to work with the members of the Norval Community Association on the projects outlined and report back as part of budget deliberations.

Due to the various initiatives and activities occurring in the Norval area, including the Manse Project, Report CCS-2015-0005 was referred to Budget Committee and Resolution No. BU-2015-0011 read in part:

That Report CCS-2015-0005 dated September 18, 2015 regarding the Norval Community Association update be referred back to staff for further review;

AND FURTHER THAT staff be directed to work with the Mayor's Office to form a Norval Steering Committee comprised of key staff, Council representatives and members of the Norval Community Association in order to engage the community in a public consultation process for the projects outlined in Report CCS-2015-0005;

AND FURTHER THAT staff report back to Council on a funding strategy for initiatives arising from the recommendations of the Norval Steering Committee.

Lucy Maud Montgomery Museum and Literary Arts Centre

The Lucy Maud Montgomery Heritage Society (LMMHS) formed in 2015 with the goal of securing the site to preserve its historical significance as the home to LM Montgomery from 1926-1935. The LMMHS requested \$90,000 from the Town of Halton Hills for the acquisition of the Norval Manse with conditions to be met through the Joint Capital Policy. Resolution No. BU 2016-0004 read in part:

THAT a one-time payment of \$90,000 to the Heritage Foundation of Halton Hills – Lucy Maud Montgomery Heritage Society for the acquisition of the Norval Manse be approved subject to the terms and conditions administered by staff including proof of ownership of the site upon acquisition and property remaining in ownership of the Heritage Foundation;

AND FURTHER THAT the Heritage Foundation of Halton Hills – Lucy Maud Montgomery Heritage Society complete a business plan that demonstrates the viability of a Museum and Literary Centre.

COMMENTS:

The purpose of this report is to advise Council on the status of the various community initiatives proposed in Norval and to seek direction for ongoing consultation in response to public feedback received to date.

Since the time when Town staff received the original proposal in 2015 there have been several additional projects that have also been explored in Norval. These include:

- Credit Valley Trail (Credit Valley Conservation lead);
- Upper Canada College (UCC) Trail;
- Additional projects identified by Norval Community Association (NCA) for Norval Park (natural playground, interpretive trails) since the 2015 presentation to Community Affairs Committee of Council;
- Further development of the plans for the Lucy Maud Montgomery Museum and Literary Arts Centre (LMMMLAC).

The Town also has three existing agreements within the Norval Park area. These include:

- A lease agreement with Georgetown Daycare and Nursery School for the Norval Community Centre;
- A management agreement with Willow Park Ecology Centre (WPEC) for the operation of Willow Park;
- A management agreement with Norval Community Association for the maintenance and activities within the Garden of the Senses.

In order to address the Council directions noted above, staff brought the community partners together to include them in a community engagement strategy and community consultation. The purpose was to gain feedback from the residents regarding the projects proposed in Norval as well as identify next steps. It was also intended to review the feasibility and practicality of establishing a new committee as directed by Council. The groups included: Credit Valley Conservation (CVC), Upper Canada College (UCC), Norval Community Association (NCA), Lucy Maud Montgomery Museum and Literary Arts Centre (LMMMLAC) led by Heritage Foundation of Halton Hills, and Willow Park Ecology Centre (WPEC).

Community Consultation

Staff facilitated a public meeting in March 2018 at Upper Canada College. Approximately 60 residents attended this workshop, which saw participants spend time

reviewing each of the different proposals, as well as viewing display information from affiliated groups.

A summary of the consultation for the different initiatives from the community consultation is included as Appendix A. This summary was shared with the attendees of the meeting if contact information was provided. There was generally support for the two trails projects, but the LMMMLAC and NCA Projects had some concerns expressed. There were some property concerns around the Credit Valley Trail that will need to be addressed by CVC as part of their overall strategy.

In addition to the public meeting, all four projects (Credit Valley Trail, UCC Trail, NCA Projects, and LMMMLAC) were hosted on the Town's Let's Talk web page to gain feedback from residents who could not attend the meeting. An additional mail out was sent to 426 households in Norval and the new Enclaves of Upper Canada subdivision to ensure residents were aware of the online consultation. Approximately 100-120 residents participated in the Let's Talk Halton Hills initiative (across all projects). Detailed reports with all comments can be seen in Appendix B.

Additionally, comments were submitted by email as some residents preferred not to participate in the online forum, and were not able to attend the workshop. These comments can be viewed in Appendix C (note that personal information has been removed).

Community Feedback and Status Update

There are some additional items that have been brought forward by the community and/or groups in relation to the projects, as well as updates to the project status for each initiative.

Staff also notes that the lack of details for some projects may have contributed to the type of feedback received to date. There were also some concerns expressed around the lack of public consultation that had occurred prior to the public meeting and the Town's involvement in the projects to date.

Credit Valley Trail

Staff from the Economic Development, Innovation and Culture Department are working closely with Credit Valley Conservation to develop a tourism component to the trail and linkages to Town amenities. Recreation and Parks staff are also participating on the committee for the overall trail development strategy as it aligns closely with the Town's Trails Master Plan. This project is expected to be ongoing for a number of years.

Upper Canada Trail

The UCC Trail project was reviewed by the Active Transportation Committee prior to the Norval Park Consultation session. This partnership trail would be on the private UCC

property but open for public access. The trail would be 1.6 km long, extending from Highway 7 at Willow Park in the east to McFarlane Drive and the storm water management pond on Armstrong Ave to the west. The trail would form an important off-road linkage in the Town's trail system and part of the future Credit Valley Trail network. The cost for the initial phase of the trail has been estimated at approximately \$32,000. There have been no further developments since the online public consultation for this project. It is expected that in 2019, staff will work in partnership with Upper Canada College to finalize the details for a joint capital proposal including capital funding and ongoing maintenance requirements.

Norval Community Association – Projects

Norval Community Association proposed several projects which include a Lucy Maud Montgomery Interpretive Trail, a pavilion with washroom, a Moccasin Interpretive Trail, expanded parking in Norval Park, gateway/entrance signage features, a natural playground and a Veteran's Memorial. Appendix C includes written comments that were submitted which express concerns that Norval Community Association is not inclusive and open to all Norval residents, but leads many of the initiatives. The correspondence in Appendix C also indicates that members of the general public are not aware of NCA's Annual General Meeting (AGM) and are not able to attend. This is also noted in the petition discussed later in the report. Staff are working with the NCA to ensure that the public is aware of their AGMs and how to participate. The NCA's 2019 AGM is scheduled for January 2019.

Staff recommend that the NCA proposed projects that are required as part of the LMMMLAC proposal (i.e. parking, washroom, interpretive trails) be incorporated as part of a coordinated campus approach rather than based on their individual merit. This will assist staff and Council understand the linkages and connections between the Norval projects. Other minor projects (i.e. the Veteran's Memorial) could be considered by a joint capital proposal as similar projects of this scale have been in the past, or through the terms of the existing management agreement. The Town does not have any plans to implement any of the identified projects at this time.

Lucy Maud Montgomery Museum and Literary Arts Centre

The LMMMLAC planning team presented a broad overview of the project at the public meeting. There were some concerns about the lack of specific details for the project, as well as the potential effect of this project on surrounding neighbours with respect to traffic, and level of site use. Following the public meeting, the planning team attended a Town Development Review Committee meeting in June 2018. They were provided with comprehensive comments with respect to traffic, servicing and other related planning requirements that have to be addressed prior to any application being submitted. The Re-zoning/OPA amendment process for the Lucy Maud Montgomery Museum and Literary Centre is subject to a legislated public consultation process. The LMMMLAC team was also advised to include any proposed park changes required for the LMMMLAC as part of the rezoning/planning submission, so they could be considered by Council as

part of a consolidated clear proposal. The LMMMLAC was also recently successful in obtaining a Trillium grant to conduct a feasibility study for the Museum and Literary Arts Centre. At this time, the Town has not received the detailed business plan from the group or any planning approval applications.

Traffic

Traffic generated by any new projects is a general concern expressed by the community. The larger projects will be required to undertake traffic impact studies as part of the planning approval process. General traffic concerns will be addressed by the Transportation and Public Works Department through separate studies.

Petition

A petition has been received by Town staff from local residents in regards to two of the projects (LMMMLAC and Norval Park projects). It can be found in Appendix D.

Next Steps and Recommendations

Communication

A key theme identified by staff throughout the consultation process is that there is an overall lack of communication and coordination between the groups. This has resulted in misinformation about some projects and a poor relationship with neighbours with the residents of Norval who are not involved in the specific groups. The message on what is proposed and timing is not being conveyed clearly.

There is a strong need to create an effective communication plan to keep residents informed. Staff has worked hard to communicate the project information to the community and have a list of residents who wish to be kept apprised of the status of the projects on an ongoing basis.

Norval Committee

Several people have expressed a willingness to serve on a Norval Committee. Many are the same members of groups already participating in the projects. Given the complexity of the projects, staff do not feel that setting up an official committee for all projects will be beneficial. However, staff does feel there could be a benefit to establish a collaborative group that meets one to two times annually to facilitate collaboration, coordination and communication between groups and to the general public. This would be a similar model to the annual sports field user group meetings that staff conduct to meet with different types of user groups to collaborate, identify common issues, opportunities and challenges. All of the initiatives mentioned in this report would be part of this working group, as well as any new groups that may be formed in the Norval area. It is not recommended at this time that members of the general public or Members of Council would be part of this collaborative group, but would be informed by a

comprehensive communication plan that will be developed. The first meeting of this collaborative group would in the Spring of 2019.

Joint Capital Policy and Framework

A Joint Capital Policy was approved in 2006 as per Resolution No. GC-2006-0025. The policy applies to projects where groups who wish to collaborate on a capital project with the Town. The policy can be found in Appendix E. Town staff recommend that Council continue to receive community proposals through the Joint Capital Policy which outlines the framework whereby initiatives would receive support from the Town. This would include collaboration with other departments as required. It is recommended that staff continue to work with all four projects as part of the Norval collaborative group using the Joint Capital Policy as the guide, while integrating the principles of the Public Engagement Charter when considering each of the initiatives. Any proposed updates to the Joint Capital Policy would be brought forward by staff.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

- A.3.** To provide a broad range of educational, recreational and cultural services that meet the needs of our residents.
- A.9** To support and enhance a variety of arts and cultural opportunities for the enjoyment of residents.
- A.10** To encourage and promote community volunteerism.
- C.10** To promote opportunities for tourism that are linked to the Town's natural and cultural heritage and countryside character.
- I.5** To expand opportunities for communication with our community.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no direct financial impact with this report.

Community grants are being applied for by all partners separately. A collaborative approach should be considered and pursued by staff, in conjunction with the working group. Staff should work with community partners with all projects to facilitate a coordinated approach to funding.

Any capital funding requests to the Town must be presented to Council by the individual groups through a joint project proposal to Council. There are currently no approved joint capital projects for any of the projects discussed in this report.

CONSULTATION:

Staff have consulted with members from each of the respective groups and members from other departments including Economic Development, Innovation and Culture, Planning and Sustainability, Transportation and Public Works, Town Clerk and Manager of Corporate Communications. Staff from these departments will be meeting regularly to continue to coordinate on the various Norval projects.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

A comprehensive public engagement plan has been commenced as outlined in this report. Staff will continue to work on a communication strategy and community partnership process to identify where any public engagement gaps exist. Any joint partnership projects will be required to follow the Town's Public Engagement Charter as part of the approval by Council. Town staff's primary role in the projects outlined in this report is to provide community groups the information required to make a joint capital proposal to Council, and providing updates on the status of the projects to interested members of the community.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

The Town is committed to implementing our Community Sustainability Strategy, Imagine Halton Hills. Doing so will lead to a higher quality of life. The recommendation outlined in this report advances the Strategy's implementation.

This report supports the cultural vibrancy and social well-being pillar(s) of Sustainability and in summary the alignment of this report with the Community Sustainability Strategy is Good.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Upon approval of this report, Recreation and Parks staff will continue to work with Corporate Communications staff throughout the process to ensure a high level of public engagement throughout the projects. This will include other emerging initiatives in Norval, such as the Town's Economic Development & Tourism Strategy (2019), as well as coordination with Provincial and Federal Tourism Strategies that are planned for 2019, being coordinated by the Economic Development, Innovation and Culture section of the Town.

CONCLUSION:

The community groups working on projects within Norval present a great opportunity to collaborate. The Town has undertaken community consultation with members of the public and this report outlines the ongoing community engagement plan moving forward. It is important that all work together involving a cross representation of citizens, community groups and the Town to demonstrate community collaboration and engagement in the projects that affect the Community. This will foster positive relationships between municipal staff, community groups and the residents being served.

Reviewed and Approved by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Okimi". The script is fluid and cursive.

Kevin Okimi – Manager of Parks and Open Space

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Warren Harris". The script is cursive and somewhat stylized.

Warren Harris, Commissioner of Recreation and Parks

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brent Marshall". The script is cursive and clear.

Brent Marshall, CAO