



REPORT

REPORT TO: Mayor Bonnette and Members of Council

REPORT FROM: Kevin Okimi, Director of Parks and Open Space

DATE: December 15, 2020

REPORT NO.: RP-2021-0001

RE: Potential Disposition and Acquisition of Land – Block 176 and Block 177 Plan 20M-734 - Halton Hills Christian School

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. RP-2020-0025 dated December 18, 2020, regarding the Potential Disposition and Acquisition of Land – Block 176 and Block 177 Plan 20M-734 - Halton Hills Christian School be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to acquire the portion of Block 177 Plan 20M-734 shown in Appendix D of Report RP-2020-0025 from the Halton Hills Christian School in exchange for the Town owned lands described as Part of Block 176, Plan 20M-734, shown as Part 1 in Appendix C as outlined in Report RP-2020-0025;

AND FURTHER THAT the lands shown as Part 1 in Appendix C of Report RP-2020-0025 be declared surplus to the Town's needs;

AND FURTHER THAT the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute any documents required for the transfer of a portion of Block 176 Plan 20M-734 and the acquisition of a portion of Block 177 Plan 20M-734 as outlined in Report RP-2020-0025;

AND FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to consider the public comments received as part of the Site Plan application process.

BACKGROUND:

Halton Hills Christian School (HHCS) is an interdenominational Christian school in Halton Hills (Georgetown) located at 11643 Trafalgar Road. The school serves 335 students from the Halton Hills area and has 40 staff. HHCS has been operating in Halton Hills since 1965. The school has partnered with the Town of Halton Hills and local community groups providing community access to their indoor and outdoor recreational facilities. Appendix A shows the location of the HHCS.

The Region of Halton is undertaking plans for improvements to Trafalgar Road as part of the Trafalgar Road EA and corridor study, which will include widening of the road in front of the school. This will have a significant impact on the practicality of the existing entrances which are currently used by school buses and parents for dropping off students. These works are anticipated to be undertaken by the Region within the next 5 years.

In October 2020, Council approved Resolution 2020-0218, approving in principle the transfer of Town owned lands to the HHCS in exchange for open space lands, to facilitate the construction of a driveway to the HHCS property from Princess Anne Drive, subject to public consultation feedback.

COMMENTS:

The purpose of this report is to seek final Council approval to transfer a portion of the Town owned open space block south of Princess Anne Drive (adjacent to the HHCS property) to the HHCS, in exchange for a portion of the HHCS property (natural area), and to formally declare the lands surplus to the Town's needs for the purpose of the transfer now that public consultation has been concluded.

In 2019, HHCS board members approached Town staff to discuss the construction of a secondary access as a pickup/drop off for passenger vehicles from Princess Anne Drive, as an alternate to the current entrances from Trafalgar Road. The proposed access is intended to improve vehicular circulation and improve pedestrian safety for children being dropped off/arriving at school. See Appendix B for the preliminary site plan proposed for the site.

In order to implement an access at this location, the entrance is required to cross over a Town owned open space block (Block 176 on Plan 20M-734). The full open space block includes wooded areas and open field areas.

The area proposed to be acquired by the HHCS is largely an open area that is by and large an extension of the ROW. The majority of the land required by HHCS for the access is also the location of a sanitary sewer line that services the HHCS and associated church property (essentially a private service) and is subject to an easement in favour of the Region of Halton. The location of the proposed lands to be acquired by HHCS is shown as Part 1 in Appendix C. The HHCS understands that they would be acquiring these lands subject to the easement in favour of the Region.

Through discussions with Town staff, it was identified that since the HHCS also owns a significant portion of open space lands adjacent to the Town Block, it would be desirable and more practical to exchange a portion of their open space lands of equal area which are of a higher ecological value to the Town, rather than facilitate a purchase or other financial transaction.

As part of the initial review of the request by HHCS, HHCS submitted a preliminary Traffic Impact Study (TIS) and preliminary site plan in advance of a formal submission, for review by Town Transportation and Development Engineering staff. Based on the review of the materials submitted, there is rationale for the proposed entrance based on the technical merits of the proposal.

The Town's Sale of Open Space Lands Policy permits the sale/transfer of Open Space lands subject to a number of conditions focused on protecting significant habitat, maintaining access to recreational opportunities, and regularizing lot lines.

The transfer of this portion of land would not be contrary to the existing policy. The Town's Official Plan also supports the acquisition of natural and open space lands. The proposed lands to be transferred to the Town are shown in Appendix D.

The HHCS would construct a fence along the new property limit in order to secure their school yard and students during school hours (no fence currently exists). In the remainder of the HHCS open space lands, HHCS is planning to build a wetland and stormwater demonstration garden in collaboration with CVC, subject to regulatory approvals, which will provide educational opportunities for students with respect to storm water management, sustainability and climate change.

This proposal was recommended by staff and approved in principle by Council as it:

1. Provides Town ownership of more sensitive open space/natural lands;
2. Is in keeping with the requirements of the Sale of Open Space Lands Policy;
3. Provides an alternative vehicular access away from a major arterial road for the school supported in principle based on the preliminary Traffic Impact Study and preliminary Site Plan;
4. The existing lands to be transferred are already encumbered with the Regional Easement (minimal significant natural value remains, and the lands could be disturbed at any time for works on the existing sewer).

The proposed entrance will also require a revision to the previous Site Plan approvals pertaining to the site once the land transfers outlined in this report are finalized. As directed by Council, staff undertook public consultation as part of the land disposition review as the Site Plan application process is not typically a public process. The public consultation methods and comments received are summarized in the Public Engagement section of this report.

Staff recommends that Council declare the lands described as Part of Block 176, 20M-734 shown as Part 1 in Appendix C as surplus to the Town's need and provide final approval for the transfer of the lands to the HHCS. Staff further recommends that the Town acquire the lands shown in Appendix D from the HHCS as consideration for the lands to be transferred to HHCS.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

The content of this report is not directly related to the Corporate Strategic Plan.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact from this report. HHCS will prepare the final Reference plan to show the lands to be transferred and will be responsible for their own legal costs. Town staff will arrange for the transfers through the land registry office, and the HHCS will be responsible for any nominal fees incurred as part of that process.

CONSULTATION:

Staff from Transportation & Public Works and Planning & Development were consulted in the preparation of this report.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

The Town must comply with the policies set out in Bylaw 2007-0109 with respect to the sale and other disposition of lands and Bylaw 2008-0001 with respect to public notice requirements for the disposition of land.

In early November 2020, a Public Notice was sent to residents within a 200m radius of the site, as well as residents on Princess Anne drive west of Charles Street regarding the Town's intent to dispose of the lands required for the proposed entrance and acquire the additional open space lands. An advertisement in the Independent and Free Press was published on November 19th, 2020 and a notice sign was also installed on site in early November. A copy of the notice is included as Appendix E.

During the consultation period, three phone calls were received, and none of the residents were opposed to the land transfers, though some concerns were expressed about traffic and pedestrian safety. Four written submissions were received expressing concerns about the potential new driveway and are included in Appendix F (personal information redacted). Due to the low overall number of comments, no public meeting was held, and staff responded to each resident directly. Any interested residents who provided contact information were also advised of this Council report should they wish to speak to the matter further.

Generally, the concerns expressed focused on existing or potential road/pedestrian safety issues such as speeding and existing school drop off areas. It was noted that the proposed driveway would increase the number of children and school related activities at that intersection, and that the existing intersection is already very busy with school buses and traffic. There were some concerns about overall increases to traffic generated from the new driveway, including some requests to improve pedestrian safety by installing traffic calming measures at/near the intersection of Princess Anne Drive and Atwood Avenue. There were also some concerns about the impact to residential properties which would be adjacent to the new drop off area.

The proposed project would be subject to the Town's Site Plan application process which would address any of the site-specific concerns (i.e. noise, screening, traffic

impacts). Should the site plan be approved with the construction of the proposed driveway connection to Princess Anne Drive, Town staff will also study the intersection once the work is completed to determine if any additional changes to the operation are required on Princess Anne Drive or Atwood Avenue.

Staff recommend that the comments received from the public consultation be considered as part of the site plan application process.

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 report's recommendations are not applicable to the Strategy's implementation.

COMMUNICATIONS:

HHCS and any residents who submitted written comments will be advised of the outcomes of this report.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends that Council declare the lands described as Part of Block 176 Plan 20M-734 and shown as Part 1 in Appendix C surplus to the Town needs. Staff further recommends that Council direct staff to transfer the said lands to the Halton Hills Christian School in exchange for the lands owned by the Halton Hills Christian School described as Part of Block 177, Plan 734 as shown in Appendix D, subject to the conditions outlined in this report. Staff recommend that the public comments received be considered as part of the Site Plan application process.

Reviewed and Approved by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Warren Harris". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Warren Harris, Commissioner of Recreation and Parks and Acting Chief Administrative Officer