

STAFF REPORT: Engineering & Public Works Department



REPORT TO: Infrastructure & Recreation Committee
MEETING DATE: March 9, 2010
REPORT NO.: EPW.10.026
SUBJECT: Peel Street Snow Storage
**PREPARED BY: Jim McCannell, Manager of Roads and
 Drainage Division**

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receives Report EPW.10.026 entitled “Peel Street Snow Storage”; and

THAT Council authorize the use of the Town property accessed from Peel Street as a contingency snow storage area until April 2012.

B. Background

The Town currently owns 2 lots described as Lot 47 to 48 King Street (west of Little Beaver River) and Lot 40 to 47 Huron Street east of Little Beaver River. The lots on the east side of the Little Beaver River are Zoned M2, Public Industrial while the sections on the west side of the river are zoned D, Development. A location map is provided as Attachment #1.

The area on the east side of the river has been historical been used as the Town’s snow storage site and has been used during the 2009/ 2010 winter season. This site is the Town primary site and will continue as such. Access to this area is from King Street. Staff have been exploring options to using this site because of its proximity to the Little Beaver River, non-compatible land uses and possible space constraints. Staff have identified the otherwise unused Town owned lots off Peel Street as a contingency snow storage site in case the King Street site is unavailable. The site accessed from Peel Street will only be used if the site at the east end is full or is otherwise unusable.

The Peel Street site had the snow cleared off on February 4, 2010 to allow frost to penetrate the ground to permit trucks to drive into the site with minimal soil disturbance. This site was prepared in the event that conditions warranted the extra space.

The Town received inquiries from the Peel Street area residents as to the proposed use of the site. Refer to Attachment #2 for the chain of correspondence of their concerns. The key issues involved drainage, environmental, disturbance and nuisance. These are the same concerns that Staff have with evaluating any site for snow storage. Due to concerns raised by area residents, Staff will not use the site until authorized by Council.

The Town is scheduled in 2011 to conduct a study of Town properties to identify possible snow storage sites. In the mean while Staff feel it is a reasonable solution, regarding the space and environmental concerns with the current site, to utilise the Peel Street site as a contingency snow storage location should the need arise

C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan

Providing a snow storage area furthers the Town's Strategic Goal #2, "Addressing the Town's municipal infrastructure needs".

D. Environmental Impacts

Stock piles of snow tend to melt slowly over a longer period of time due to the mass and density of the hauled snow. The melt water will be released at a relatively slow rate to the road side ditches. Grass in the ditch line helps to capture particulates suspended in the water. The release of salts to the environment will occur similar to melt water released to the storm sewers.

E. Budget Impact

Site preparation costs

The entrance culvert was onsite and was relocated by Town staff	
2 hrs with the Town Backhoe	\$150
B gravel placed at entrance	\$150
4hr D4 bull dozer (\$65/ hr)	\$260
Total Cost	\$560
[Cost paid to "others"]	\$410]

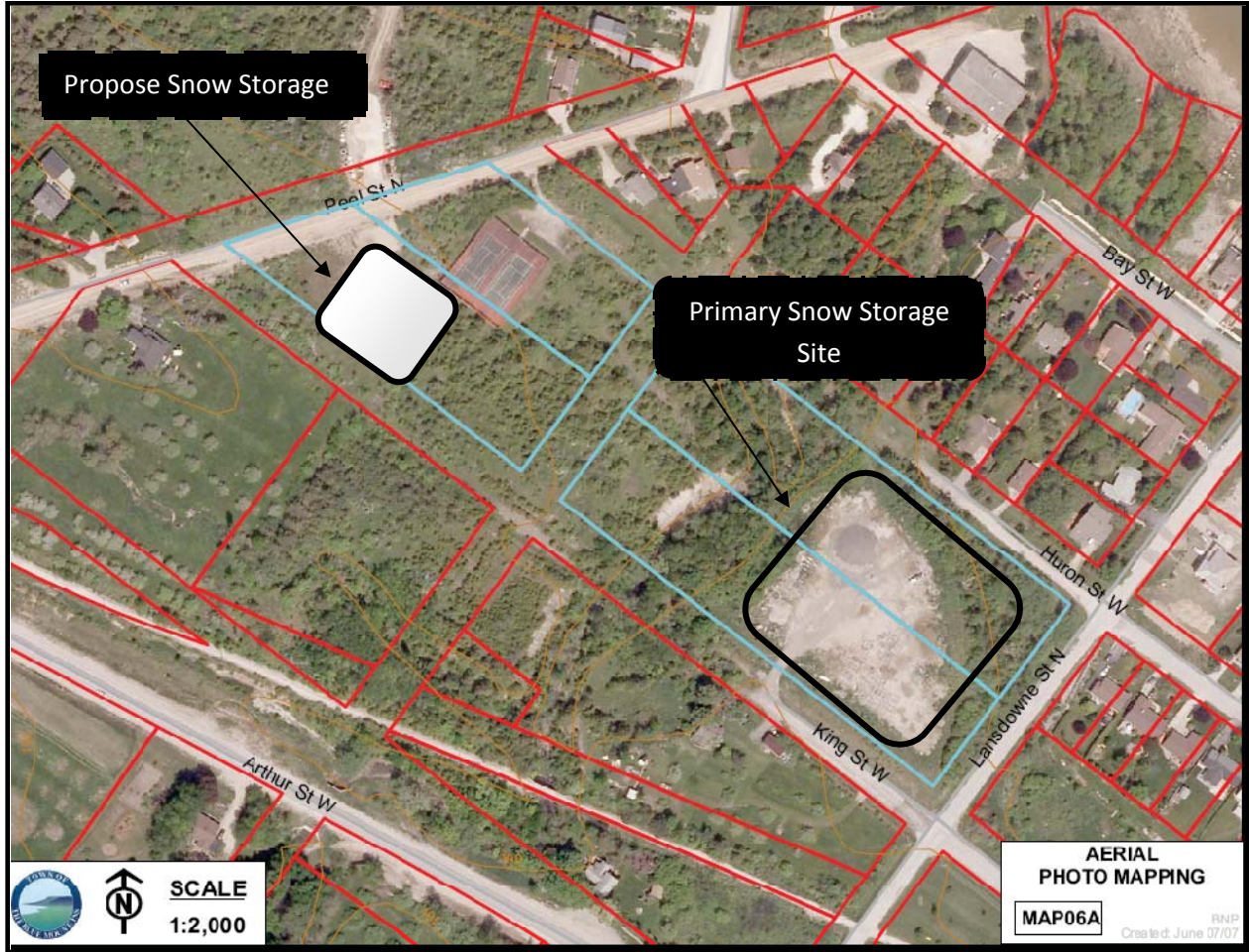
F. Attached

1. Aerial Photo of the Snow Storage Site
2. Correspondence dated February 5, 2010 to February 14, 2010 between Town Staff and Mr. Michael Seguin (edited for brevity)

Respectfully submitted,

Jim McCannell
Manager of Roads and Drainage Division
Engineering and Public Works
Office: 519-599-3131 Ext 271
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jmccannell@thebluemountains.ca

Reg Russwurm
Director of Engineering and Public Works



From: MICHAEL SEGUIN [mailto:mpseguin@rogers.com]
Sent: February-14-10 1:00 PM
To: Reg Russwurm
Cc: Duncan McKinlay; John McGee; John McKean; Robert Gamble
Subject: Re: Cleared area on Peel Street

Hi Reg:

Thanks for the information and I will plan to be at this meeting.

I would also like that my original comments, your response and my last comments be entered as correspondence and included as part of this meeting and part of the debate.

Thanks.

Michael

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From: Reg Russwurm <rrusswurm@thebluемountains.ca>
To: MICHAEL SEGUIN <mpseguin@rogers.com>
Sent: Fri, February 12, 2010 2:48:45 PM
Subject: RE: Cleared area on Peel Street

Michael,

Thank you for your comments and we've noted them. At our next Infrastructure and Recreation Meeting on Feb 23, we'll discuss this item.

- Reg

From: MICHAEL SEGUIN [mailto:mpseguin@rogers.com]
Sent: February-11-10 11:15 AM
To: Reg Russwurm

Subject: Re: Cleared area on Peel Street

Hi Russ:

Thanks for responding to my email and my list of concerns regarding the proposed snow dump area on Peel Street.

Firstly, your reference to the site as a contingency snow dump site, does not convince me that you are not planning to use this site. In fact, it almost sounds to me that you are committed to using it, especially after spending taxpayers monies to clear the site to minimize truck disturbance and damage to the ground. How do I know whether or not you have made every and any attempt to bring the snow elsewhere - I guess I don't. If you plan to dump snow on this site, then I guess the onus will be on me and others to investigate and then challenge you and your staff on the basis of environmental issues as well the possible flooding of residential properties in the immediate area.

Secondly, with regards to my points:

1) There are basically no real ditches on Peel Street that would carry a "flash" thaw, which we have experienced almost every year for the past 5 years. I also experienced flushing from the fire hydrant in front of the tennis courts and each time the ditches were filled to the "brim" and overflowed onto the driveways of the first two properties to the north of the cleared site.

2) The contaminants in the snow may not be an immediate concern to the "short term" drinking water but they will leach into the Little Beaver River, which we already determined from Fisheries and Oceans (see Lora Bay Heights high density townhouse proposal) is a cold water stream and spawning ground for fish. Also, just because the pipe is 500m out into the bay, doesn't mean that there will be no "long term" affects to our drinking water. This is the same type of attitude that has resulted in "global warming".

3) You are right about the movement of trucks in and out of a residential area being "not ideal". This means that there is a chance of a mishap that could result in serious injury to a resident in our area. Are you willing to take that chance or risk? Have you ever seen the way the Town's trucks speed up and down Peel Street? I'm sure John Caswell will deny this but it's a fact and there are many witnesses.

4) With regards to the garbage (litter and debris) - unfortunately, you don't have any control over the wind that blows most of the garbage that is exposed onto private properties. A when the snow has melted, there will be a substantail amount of sand and gravel that will create elevated levels of dust - I don't buy the fact that the disturbance to the vegetation will be minimal.

As I said in my previous email, there are more appropriate Town sites for this snow storage, which will provide better drainage and less threat to our environment. I must also remind you that the quality of our environment, especailly our drinking water, is one of the major platforms of our current Mayor. I wouldn't want to make this an election issue.

Regards.

Michael

Michael P. Seguin
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From: Reg Russwurm <rrusswurm@thebluемountains.ca>
To: MICHAEL SEGUIN <mpseguin@rogers.com>
Sent: Mon, February 8, 2010 4:32:23 PM
Subject: RE: Cleared area on Peel Street

Michael,

Thank you for sending us your concerns so that we can clarify any questions regarding the use of the Town owned lands adjacent to Peel Street as a snow dump. First off, I wish to point out that proposed use of this site as a snow dump is a contingency plan just in case we need it. By clearing snow off the site, we can get frost into the ground so that any surface disturbance by trucks will be minimised.

For ease of reading, I have copied your points and I will response to each in another colour and bold.

1) There are no drainage sewers in the area and the water run-off will penetrate to the Bay through our properties. The subject of drainage has always been a serious concern in this area and Trailwoods will be asked to address this problem when they develop across the road for this Town site.

You are correct to say that there are no storm sewers in area. We expect the melt water will run to the roadside ditch and not cross private property.

I'm not personally aware of the drainage concerns with the Trailwoods Development. I will review our files however I would welcome a chance to talk to you or the neighbours about specifics. I do not expect development activity in the near term but want to be aware of the neighbourhood concerns.

2) The snow will contain contaminates such as salt, sand and oil that will drain directly down towards the water treatment plant thereby exposing our drinking water to hazardous materials and will result in additional work and costs to treat our water supply.

I agree that there will be sand, salt and perhaps some oil in the snow. I feel though that with modern vehicles there is less oil spilt than may have been in the past. Since the intake to the Water Treatment Plant is almost 500m out in the bay, there will be no additional work or increase in the cost of treatment due to the Town using this site as a snow dump.

The purpose of placing the intake so far out into the bay is to avoid point impacts of surface runoff.. Furthermore, when the runoff moves across the grassed areas of the site and the road side ditches, some if not most of the contaminates will be scrubbed from the water. Granted, salt will not be removed however the net amount of salt entering the bay will not change whether the snow melts in a snow dump or at the side of the road.

3) The movement of heavy trucks in and out of a residential area is both a traffic and safety problem, especially at the bottom of a ridge where a safety problem already exists.

Although not ideal, the site line distances satisfy the minimum for the 50km/hr speed limit. Trucks will only enter the site a few times a season.

4) In the spring, the property will be mess and will be an "eyesore" without any vegetation - essentially a dirt yard.

We will hand pick large items (i.e. newspaper, wood, etc) to clean up the site in the spring prior to vegetation growing up. By getting frost deep into the ground now, the disturbance to the vegetation will be minimal. We expect grass and other plant material to re-establish itself normally in the spring. The grass and small brush root mass in combination with the soil will provide a solid driving surface if permitted to freeze. We will not be hauling snow if the ground surface is soft enough to permit rutting.

The hope that above answers your concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have additional comments or questions.

Reg Russwurm, MBA, P.Eng
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Town of The Blue Mountains
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Thornbury, Ontario
N0H 1P0
Tel: (519) 599-3131 x 260
russwurm@thebluemountains.ca

From: MICHAEL SEGUIN <mpseguin@rogers.com>
To: Mike Campbell
Subject: Re: Cleared area on Peel Street

Hi Mike:

Thanks for researching this information for me.

However, I have some major concerns that you need to pass on to Jim and Russ and I also need to pass on to the residents along Peel and Cameron Streets:

1) There are no drainage sewers in the area and the water run-off will penetrate to the Bay through our properties. The subject of drainage has always been a serious concern in this area and Trailwoods will be asked to address this problem when they develop across the road for this Town site.

- 2) The snow will contain contaminants such as salt, sand and oil that will drain directly down towards the water treatment plant thereby exposing our drinking water to hazardous materials and will result in additional work and costs to treat our water supply.
- 3) The movement of heavy trucks in and out of a residential area is both a traffic and safety problem, especially at the bottom of a ridge where a safety problem already exists.
- 4) In the spring, the property will be mess and will be an "eyesore" without any vegetation - essentially a dirt yard.

There are more appropriate Town sites for this snow storage, which will provide better drainage and less threat to the environment. I expect that the Town staff will give more thought to these alternatives, otherwise, I will need to bring this issue to Council.

Regards,

Michael P. Seguin
209 Peel Street
Thornbury, ON
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From: Mike Campbell <mcampbell@thebluemountains.ca>
To: "mpseguin@rogers.com" <mpseguin@rogers.com>
Cc: Jim Mc Cannell <jmccannell@thebluemountains.ca>; Reg Russwurm <rrusswurm@thebluemountains.ca>
Sent: Fri, February 5, 2010 11:57:52 AM
Subject: Cleared area on Peel Street

Hi Mr. Seguin,

Jim asked me to pass along a note on the cleared Town lands on Peel Street. The snow has been pushed off the site to allow frost penetration into the ground. This area is being prepared for a snow storage area that we expect will be required in a couple of weeks. If you have any questions please contact me in the office today (519) 599-3131 ext 275 or Jim McCannell on Monday.

Mike C.