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Staff Report

Community Services

Report To: Committee of the Whole
Meeting Date: March 29, 2018
Report Number: CSPW.18.35
Subject: Presentation of Draft Lower Whitby Formation ANSI Parks Management Plan
Prepared by: Shawn Everitt, Interim CAO

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report CSPW.18.35 entitled "Presentation of Draft Lower Whitby Formation Area of Natural Scientific Interest (ANSI) Parks Management Plan"; and,

THAT Council receive the Draft Parks Management Plan as presented; and,

THAT Council acknowledge Option 3 "Limited Permitted Access to the ANSI with Protection and Enforcement measures in place" as the recommended preferred option; and,

THAT Council authorize staff to proceed with a 21 day public comment period to receive input prior to approving the Final Parks Management Plan.

B. Overview

This report accompanies a presentation to Council from Skelton Brumwell Consulting outlining the findings of the research and public consultation for the Draft Parks Management Plan and presenting options for ensuring appropriate protection of the National significant Area of Natural Scientific Interest (ANSI).

C. Background

Since 2008, the Town has owned lands acquired through dedication of open space through the Peaks Bay East, Peaks Bay West and Neighbourhoods of Delphi developments along the shore of Georgian Bay.

The dedication of lands, the development process and the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), required the placement of a "H" Holding Symbol on the lands along the waterfront on these three developments. The development and implementation of a "Parks Management Plan" was the key requirement to the future use of the lands and also allowed for the removal of the "H" holding symbol from the lands.

Over the past 4 years, the lands along the shore have been the subject of significant concerns on a variety of fronts including historical use of the lands, encroachments onto the lands during residential development, continued encroachments both with permit and without permit, concerns of land use from current developers as well as significant destruction of vegetation in some cases by a developer, destruction of vegetation suspected by members of the public, unauthorized gatherings for (ANSI) tours and education and area resident conflicts over use of lands and access to lands.

From the Town's perspective, the main focus of the Parks Management Plan and the process to develop the draft plan is to ensure that appropriate management and enforcement is in place and that the permitted and prohibited uses are clearly identified for the security and protection of the "ANSI" itself.

The Draft Parks Management Plan places external issues and concerns aside to focus on the primary rationale of ensuring appropriate protection of the (ANSI).

D. Analysis

The overall analysis is contained in the Draft Parks Management Plan. The purpose of this report is to highlight for Council and the public the options that Skelton Brumwell Consultants have identified based on the science of the ANSI as well as the Planning requirements.

The three options contained in the Draft Parks Management Plan are as follows.

1. Installation of a Waterfront Trail Extension
2. No Permitted Access to the ANSI
3. Limited Permitted Access to the ANSI with Protection and Enforcement measures in place

As outlined in the recommendation, option 3 has been identified as the most appropriate option.

As part of the process of developing the draft Parks Management plan, staff from Skelton Brumwell Consulting facilitated two public information sessions and also met with the waterfront property owners of Peaks Bay East at the request of those property owners.

During the Parks Management Plan process, staff did receive a request to consider a portion of the lands contained within Block 29 of Peaks Bay East surplus. The request was to consider selling the lands to private land owners. By pursuing this request, the lands would essentially place this portion of the ANSI within Private Ownership.

As contained in the Draft Report on Page 36, Section 8.2 (Common Recommendations) states that "The ANSI should remain under the public ownership and management of the Town to ensure its long-term protection".

Dependent on this report being adopted by Committee, the proposed timing of next steps are as follows:

March 29 - Staff report CSPW.18 approved by Committee, including notification of public consultation process;

April 16 - Staff Report CSPW.18 considered at Council

May 7 - Public Meeting to be held

June 4 - Follow up Report to Public Meeting Comments to Committee of the Whole

June 18 - Follow up Report to Public Meeting Comments to Council

June 25 - Report to Committee of the Whole to approve Parks Management

July 9 - Report to Council for Final endorsement of Parks Management Plan

It is important to note, that the July 9 meeting of Council is the last meeting scheduled before Council's vacation break.

E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan

Goal #1: Create Opportunities for Sustainability

Goal #2: Engage Our Communities & Partners

Goal #3: Support Healthy Lifestyles

Goal #4: Promote a Culture of Organizational & Operational Excellence

Goal #5: Ensure Our Infrastructure is Sustainable

F. Environmental Impacts

Appropriate protection of the Lower Whitby Formation Area of Natural Scientific Interest is the purpose of this Parks Management Plan.

G. Financial Impact

To be identified in a future staff report pending approval of the Draft Parks Management Plan

H. In consultation with

Senior Management Team

Terry Green, Manager of Parks and Trails

Planning and Development Services

Public Consultation

I. Attached

None at this time

Respectfully submitted,

Shawn Everitt
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