



City of
Peterborough

TO: Members of the Arenas Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

FROM: Ken Doherty, Director of Community Services

MEETING DATE: October 16, 2012

SUBJECT: Report APRAC12-031
Planning Department Presentation

PURPOSE

A report to receive a presentation from Planning Department staff as an update on the Crescent Street Urban Design/Land-Use Study and the Louis Street Urban Park/Public Common.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Arenas Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee approve the recommendation outlined in Report APRAC12-031 dated October 16th, 2012 of the Director of Community Services, as follows:

That a presentation on the Crescent Street Urban Design/Land-Use Study and the Louis Street Urban Park/Public Common by Brian Buchardt, the City's Urban Design Planner, be received and that feedback be provided.

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no budget or financial implications in receiving this report.

BACKGROUND

The Crescent Street Urban Design/Land-Use Study:

The Planning Division is very close to issuing a Request for Proposals for a two component project, which will specifically include the following: complete a “Schedule “B” Class EA to perform all the background work and conduct public consultations in order to position the City to have detailed drawings and specifications completed at a later date for the construction of the Otonabee River Trail around Little Lake from the George Street Wharf to Haggart Street, and b.) to conduct a land-use and urban design study for the Special Policy Area identified on Schedule “J” of the Official Plan and discussed in further detail in Section 4.3.2.2.9 of the Official Plan.

The urban design/land-use study component of the project was precipitated by several development inquiries for properties on Crescent Street and some properties fronting on Ware Street. Section 4.3.2.2.9 of the Official Plan recognizes the potential of properties within the Special Policy Area to support a growing tourism industry such as the establishment of bed and breakfast/inn accommodations, cafes/tea rooms, and boutique retail establishments. However, the preliminary proposals have been dominated by higher density residential development proposals, in new buildings greater in mass and height than the typical low density single-unit appearing dwellings in existence today.

The other component of the project is a first step to implementing the construction of the Otonabee River Trail around Little Lake. It includes the production of a detailed topographical survey, geotechnical investigation, together with the completion of a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment, which will include a preliminary design of the Otonabee River Trail (ORT) route from the George Street Wharf in Del Crary Park, around Little Lake along Crescent Street to Haggart Street next to the Little Lake Cemetery. The continuation of the ORT around Little Lake is highlighted as a key objective in the Little Lake Master Plan. The Little Lake Master Plan recommends the completion of trail links, and includes design concepts for the ORT extension.

After the selection of a consultant before the end of this year, the project should be completed by late spring 2013.

The Louis Street Urban Park/Public Common:

At the August 27, 2012 Planning Committee meeting, the Louis Street site was approved as the location for the development of an Urban park or a Public Common. The report and presentation to the Committee also included an investigation of the long-range planning horizon for the re-development of the area across from the Little Lake Marina at Del Crary Park. The plans and drawings presented showed the potential for the re-development of the Market Plaza property and all the properties around it

including the Public Works Site and the Holiday Inn property. Highlights of the plan included the development of multi-storey mixed-use buildings, a parking garage, the opening up of Jackson Creek, the development of a promenade into the Downtown Core along the creek, as well as the development of grand public open space such as a future square directly across from the Little Lake Marina.

The investigation of an alternative or additional site for a public square in the City's Central Area was requested by Council to strengthen the City's connection with its waterfront.

With respect to the current planning horizon (the short term), Planning Staff gave further consideration to the development of urban open space at the Louis Street site. It was explained how the public investment would provide the incentive for private investment, and would add depth to the quality of downtown life. To distinguish this project from the Downtown Public Square opportunity in the Waterfront Commercial Area, staff described the opportunity as a public commons or urban park.

The Planning Committee was advised that the Louis Street site offers the greatest potential to provide high quality urban open space in the near future. Its strengths were outlined as follows:

1. The initial phases of development can take place on land owned by the City.
2. Converting a large surface parking lot into quality urban open space would rejuvenate the area.
3. The improvement to the living environment for those who reside nearby, and the potential to draw people to the Downtown Core with events held at Louis Street would be substantial.
4. Its development would provide a catalyst for the development of property around it, such as the vacant property on the south side of King Street, the vacant (privately owned surface parking lot) on the north side of Charlotte Street and properties along Aylmer Street.
5. Close parking can be provided as the King Street Parkade is right next door.
6. Its design can be conceived in concert with the Charlotte Street renewal project, creating a seamless flow between the two, improving the "sense of place" for this area of the Downtown Core.
7. The site is on a City transit route with good proximity to the transit hub. There is potential to enhance the profile of City transit by including an attractive transit stop in the design.
8. The site can be developed in the short term (within the next five years).
9. There is existing programming (Downtown Farmer's Market and other events) looking for appropriate space
10. There would be frontage on Charlotte (a main street), King Street and Aylmer Street.
11. The site has excellent pedestrian access and good proximity to the planned Bethune Street trail.

Since the approval of the recommendation to designate the Louis Street site as an urban park/public common, Planning Staff have been talking to special interest groups and all the area property owners around the site. Staff have been connecting people so that fruitful discussions can take place toward the eventual programming and design of the space. These discussions are scheduled for completion in mid-October. This phase of the project will conclude in November with a community forum, similar to the community forum that was held at the conclusion of the public consultation phase for the development of Millennium Park.

At the end of the forum it is anticipated that the establishment of a design program for the space will result in the production of a preliminary design early in the New Year. With Council's adoption of the preliminary plan, staff will work on the detailed design of the space through 2013. The timing of the first phase of construction has not confirmed. However, staff will be recommending that it be carried out in conjunction with the first phase of construction of the Charlotte Street Renewal Project.

Respectfully submitted,

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