



City of  
**Peterborough**

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**To:** Members of the Arts Culture and Heritage Advisory Committee

**From:** Ken Doherty, Director of Community Services

**Meeting Date:** April 9, 2015

**Subject:** Report APRAC15-016  
Potential Peterborough Recognition of Stompin' Tom

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## **Purpose**

A report to consider potential ways to recognize Stompin' Tom's connection to Peterborough.

## **Recommendations**

That the Arts, Culture, and Heritage Advisory Committee (ACHAC) approve the recommendations outlined in Report ACHAC15-016 dated April 9, 2015 of the Director of Community Services as follows:

- a) That the referral from the Arenas Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, of a proposal from Hank Fisher to rename the Simcoe and Bethune Street Park in honour of Stompin' Tom Connors, to the Arts Culture & Heritage Advisory Committee for consideration as either a potential public art project or other appropriate form of recognition, be received.
- b) That direction be provided to staff and/or the Public Art Committee regarding preferred options to be explored; and
- c) That direction also be provided regarding the potential renaming of the Simcoe and Bethune Park.

## **Budget and Financial Implications**

There are no budget or financial implications with the adoption of this report.

## **Background**

### **Arenas, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee Direction**

At its March 17, 2015 meeting, the City's Arenas, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee considered a proposal to rename the Simcoe Bethune Park in honour of Stompin' Tom Connors. They decided the following:

- a) That the correspondence from Hank Fisher proposing to rename the Simcoe and Bethune Street Park in honour of Stompin' Tom Connors be received;
- b) That the proposal for renaming the park not be supported or endorsed;
- c) That the matter be referred to the Arts Culture & Heritage Advisory Committee for consideration as either a potential public art project or other appropriate form of recognition;
- d) That staff be directed to establish a process to gather ideas / names for renaming the park and a report be brought back to the Committee outlining the process for receiving proposals.

### **Original Proposal**

Late last fall, the Director of Community Services received correspondence from Hank Fisher of 300 Simcoe Street. He proposed to rename the existing Simcoe and Bethune Street Park in honour of Stompin' Tom Connors, enclosed. He expressed concern that there either was no formal name for the park or that it just reflected the physical location.

He proposed renaming the park after Stompin' Tom because it is located just a block west of the former King George Tavern. That's where waiter, Boyd MacDonald, bestowed his moniker on Canada Day in 1967.

The City's Naming Policy, as approved in Report CSCH03-005, August 12, 2003 provides a context for both naming and renaming City Streets, Parks, and Municipal Buildings/ Facilities. The proposal complies with section 6.1 specifically as follows:

Parks and Municipal Building/ Facilities should be named to recognize individuals or organizations that have made a significant contribution to the public life and well-being of the City of Peterborough, the Province or

the Country, or to recognize significant local geographical or historical features/ events.

### **Considerations**

There is no question of Stompin' Tom's national contribution, or his local connections. The Peterborough Postman was one of his songs. He is recognized in the Peterborough Pathway of Fame. He was presented with the keys to the City. His longstanding promoter, Brian Edwards of Rockland Entertainment, is located here. And, he even helped plan his national tribute held at the Peterborough Memorial Centre in March of 2013.

If the intent of the proposal was to recognize Stompin' Tom's local impact and attract tourists, it falls short. Since Stompin' Tom had no connection to the park they would be disappointed. It is, however, a good idea to consider some other form of appropriate public recognition. Potential options include:

- take no further action
- consider a public art installation like a mural or sculpture, either downtown or at the Memorial Centre (refer to the Public Art Committee)
- consider a star of fame on the sidewalk outside the former King Edward Hotel, like the Ray McGregor tribute outside the Red Dog (refer to staff)
- interpretive panels, like the recent tribute to George "Red" Sullivan at an appropriate location (refer to staff)

### **Re-naming**

There are merits in considering alternatives instead of having the park named after an intersection. Staff will work with Recreation Division staff on a subsequent report to the Arenas Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee and keep ACHAC informed of progress.

Submitted by,

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Attachments: Appendix A - Correspondence from Hank Fisher