



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Proposed renaming of Wharnsby Park to Birunthan Park

Date:	October 11, 2007
To:	Scarborough Community Council
From:	Brenda Librecz, General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	Ward 42 – Scarborough - Rouge River
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This staff report is about a matter for which the Community Council has delegated authority from City Council to make a final decision.

It has been proposed that Wharnsby Park located at Neilson and Finch road be renamed in honour of Birunthan Muralidaran Nadarajah an 11 year old boy who exhibited heroic actions in the face of adversity on December 10th, 2006.

On December 10th 2006, Birunthan, his friend Kishoban Alakeswaran and other boys were on their way to a soccer game at a nearby park when his friend decided to take a short cut across a pond. The 15 year old Kishoban fell into the thin sheet of ice and without hesitation young Birunthan went in after him in a failed attempt to rescue his friend.

Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff have exercised due diligence in ensuring that all criteria in the Naming and Renaming Policy have been met. On February 2nd 2007, the community was invited to discuss the proposed renaming of the Wharnsby Park to Birunthan Park. The majority of residents who attended the meeting were in favour of the renaming of the park. A few residents objected to the renaming citing a variety of reasons. A petition requesting the renaming was also circulated to the residents in the area by family and the local Morningside Heights Association members. Over three hundred residents signed the petition supporting the renaming of Wharnsby Park. A leaflet composed by Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff with details of the renaming was distributed to residents in the Neilson and Finch area surrounding the park. Seven responses received have opposed the re-naming.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division recommends that Scarborough Community Council, based on the criteria of the Naming and Renaming Policy and the response from the majority of residents, approve the renaming of Wharnsby Park, located at Neilson and Finch Road, to Birunthan Park.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

COMMENTS

Birunthan was a Grade 6 student at Thomas L. Wells Public School located on Nightstar Rd. He was the captain of his volleyball team and had a passion for theatre, singing, and sports. He was a bright student who enjoyed spending time with his friends and family.

On December 10th, 2006, Birunthan, his friend Kishoban Alakeswaran and other boys were on their way to a soccer game at a nearby park when his friend decided to take a short cut across a pond. 15 year old Kishoban fell into the thin sheet of ice, and without hesitation young Birunthan went in after him in a failed attempt to rescue his friend.

Birunthan's bravery has not gone unnoticed. A scholarship has been established in his name to ensure his heroic act is never forgotten. He was also honoured at a Queen's Park ceremony along with 16 other brave people who risked their lives to save others.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Brenda Librecz
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