

Feasibility of Beach Volleyball Courts at Marie Curtis Park

Date: December 12, 2017

To: Etobicoke York Community Council

From: General Manager Parks, Forestry and Recreation

Wards: Ward 6 - Etobicoke-Lakeshore

SUMMARY

This report responds to a request from Etobicoke York Community Council for staff from Parks, Forestry and Recreation to consult with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), and report on the feasibility of installing beach volleyball courts in Marie Curtis Park.

This report indicates that it is feasible to install four (4) beach volleyball courts in the sodded location proposed by the Long Branch Business Improvement Area (BIA), between the Waterfront Trail and the beach, to the west of the southernmost parking lot on the west side of Etobicoke Creek. Attachment 1 provides the preliminary plan for beach volleyball courts at Marie Curtis Park.

The TRCA who has regulatory control of the site has no objections to the proposed location of the courts, but needs to confirm through a geotechnical study how the courts will be built relative to existing grades and underlying fill from a former landfill site. The location meets their criteria for a minimum 30 metre setback from nearby wetlands. The recommended location is also in keeping with the proposal submitted by the Long Branch BIA.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, recommends that:

1. Etobicoke York Community Council receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

The geotechnical study, estimated at approximately \$10,000 as described in this report is included in the TRCA 2017 Approved Capital Budget and 2018-2026 Capital Plan.

Once the geotechnical study is received, Parks, Forestry and Recreation will develop an estimate for the volleyball courts for Council consideration in a future budget cycle.

The Acting Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of June 13, 2017, Etobicoke York Community Council requested staff from Parks, Forestry and Recreation, to consult with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, and report on the feasibility of installing beach volleyball courts in Marie Curtis Park.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.EY23.59>

COMMENTS

Background

Marie Curtis Park is a TRCA-owned park that is maintained and managed by the City of Toronto. It is located on the Lake Ontario waterfront in the Long Branch Community. The park is bisected by the Etobicoke Creek and contains several wetlands designated by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF).

In 2010, Parks, Forestry and Recreation and the TRCA jointly completed a Master Plan for Marie Curtis Park in order to guide the ongoing management of and investment in the park. The plan allocated space for beach volleyball courts on the natural beach, and there are currently net posts on the beach for three volleyball courts. However, during much of the 2017 season the high Lake Ontario water levels left the courts inaccessible and unusable.

Beach volleyball can be played on either a natural sand beach or an artificially constructed court of imported sand within a contained area. Examples of both types of courts currently exist in City of Toronto parks. The proposal from the Long Branch BIA showing the constructed courts above and away from the natural beach frontage at Marie Curtis Park.

Consultation with TRCA

Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff and the TRCA met on site in summer 2017 to review and investigate the proposed location. TRCA staff approved the location conditional on the plan being sufficiently set back from all wetlands, watercourses, and the beach. Subsequently, staff created a preliminary site plan which TRCA staff confirmed it had no objections to, as the site is set back over 30 metres from MNRF wetlands and the courts are also set back approximately 15 metres from the tree line at the edge of the beach.

The TRCA will conduct a geotechnical study in early 2018 to determine if the courts must be built up from the existing grade, or if it is possible to excavate in order to build the courts.

Design, Maintenance and Operations Considerations

Due to the potential landfill conditions at this location within Marie Curtis Park, the proposed new courts may need to be constructed on top of the existing grade if the geotechnical report and soil test indicates excavation is not possible.

Beach volleyball courts should be groomed weekly at a minimum, and nets removed nightly during the season. Staff have confirmed that the beach grooming equipment currently used on Marie Curtis beach could also access and be used at the proposed volleyball courts.

Operation of the volleyball courts and potential programming possibilities require further consideration by staff, however access to the volleyball courts could potentially follow two possible models: booking of the courts through Parks, Forestry and Recreation; or management of the courts through a third-party, similar to the existing model at Ashbridge's Bay.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Preliminary Plan - Beach Volleyball Courts at Marie Curtis Park