TORONTO

REPORT FOR ACTION

Emery Village - First Nations Park Hydro One Negotiations Update

Date: June 12, 2018
To: Etobicoke York Community Council
From: General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards: Ward 7 - York West

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the status of negotiations with Hydro One for the licensing of a portion of hydro right-of-way (ROW) for park use within the Emery Village Neighbourhood.

The Emery Village Business Improvement Area (BIA) has produced detailed design drawings of a proposed park on the hydro ROW that would pay tribute to the First Nations history in the area. These park plans have changed slightly based on initial feedback from Hydro One. Emery Village BIA held three meetings with the First Nation communities for review and approval.



Figure 1. Entirety of hydro right-of-way between Weston Road and the rail corridor. The eastern portion is requested to be licensed by PFR for the Emery Village BIA First Nations Park project.

As the future road identified in the Transportation Master Plan now aligns with the potential park design Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) is supporting, Hydro One is prepared to review the City's submission. The proposed park has been approved by the three First Nation communities, therefore the Emery Village BIA will now submit a formal application to PFR for submission to Hydro One.

The future development to the north will increase the local population, therefore the proposed park will offset pressures on existing parkland in the vicinity. PFR will continue to work with the BIA in a collaborative manor to secure the license with Hydro One.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Parks, Forestry and Recreation continue to work with the Emery Village BIA to advance the First Nations Park project and report back to Etobicoke York Community Council as required.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

DECISION HISTORY

City Council adopted the Emery Village Secondary Plan on December 4, 2001.
https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2001/agendas/council/cc011204/ny9rpt/cl011.pdf

At its meeting of August 5, 2009, City Council adopted the recommendations in the Emery Village Transportation Master Plan and Official Plan Amendment, through item PG26.8. The Official Plan Amendment for the new infrastructure was then approved by City Council on August 25, 2010.
https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2009/pg/bgrd/backgroundfile-21347.pdf
https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2010/pg/bgrd/backgroundfile-32841.pdf

At its meeting of September 6, 2017, Etobicoke York Community Council, through item EY24.49, requested the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation to report to Etobicoke York Community Council with a status update on the negotiations with Hydro One for the use of hydro right-of-way for a First Nations Park.
http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.EY24.49

On February 21, 2018, an update was brought to Etobicoke York Community Council, through item EY28.1, where it was requested that the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation and the General Manager, Transportation Services, to continue to negotiate with Toronto Hydro officials with respect to a First Nations Park in Emery Village, and report to the Etobicoke York Community Council for its meeting on April 4, 2018.
http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.EY28.1

At its meeting of April 4, 2018, an update was brought to Etobicoke York Community Council, through item EY29.29, where it was requested the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation report to Etobicoke York Community Council on June 6, 2018 with a status and outcomes of the continuing negotiations with the Emery Village Business Improvement Area, the First Nations communities and Hydro One concerning the proposed First Nations Park.
http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.EY29.29

At its meeting of June 6, 2018, an update was brought to Etobicoke York Community Council, through item EY31.38, where it was requested that the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation, in consultation with officials from Transportation Services, and Hydro One, to report to the Etobicoke York Community Council for its meeting on July 4, 2018, with final recommendations related to a First Nations Park to be located within the hydro right-of-way in the Emery Village.
http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.EY31.38

COMMENTS

Hydro One ROW lands are used across the City for recreational purposes. There are currently 67 licenses that make up the master license agreement between Hydro One and PFR, comprising 346.25 hectares of land.

This site, south of Finch Avenue West and east of Weston Road, was identified in a study done by Terraplan, under the direction of the Emery Village BIA, as a location to connect the bike paths on Finch Avenue to the existing bicycle network within the West Humber Parkland to the west. The BIA engaged the Huron Wendat, Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of New Credit First Nation to help design a potential park and bike path connection on the site as further investigation found there was evidence of historic First Nations habitation within the surrounding neighbourhood. The concept was supported by all First Nations groups that were approached as well as the local Councillor, who brought the motion forward to Etobicoke York Community Council. This report will update Community Council on the status of the negotiations with Hydro One for the licensing of the property.

Process for the Emery Village BIA Proposal

City staff, the Emery Village BIA and Hydro One met November 23, 2017 to get initial feedback on the design from Hydro One, as well as the proposals for next steps. The Emery Village BIA showed updated engineered drawings of the proposal, which mitigated some of the potential issues previously identified by City staff. Hydro One gave positive feedback on the design, but had some reservations regarding the proposed playground.

As a result of this feedback, the BIA made slight alterations to the design to ensure it was more in line with the requirements of Hydro One. Because of these changes, the BIA felt it was best to meet with each of the three First Nation communities involved with the initial design to ensure the changes would meet their approval. They have now received support of the new design from all three First Nation communities.

Transportation Services and PFR met with Hydro One on May 7, 2018 to present the new road alignments, showing that they would not impact the current park design while having minimal encroachments on the hydro corridor. These new concepts were met with positive feedback from Hydro One staff.

With the First Nation communities in support and the new road alignment not affecting the proposed park design, the Emery Village BIA will formally submit a proposal for PFR to bring forward to Hydro One. PFR is in support of this project, subject to agreements and licenses and therefore is willing to submit the proposal to Hydro One for review. Once the design has been met with Hydro One approval, it would then move through the PFR park design process with extensive public consultation.

CONTACT

Alex Shevchuk, Acting Manager, Planning, Design and Development, Tel: 416-392-0356, Email: Alex.Shevchuk@toronto.ca

Ann-Marie Nasr, Director, Parks Development and Capital Projects, Tel: 416-392-3078, Email: Ann-Marie.Nasr@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Janie Romoff
General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation