

Proposed Official Naming of Future Park at 4208 Dundas Street West, Ward 2

Date: September 9, 2020

To: Etobicoke York Community Council (EYCC)

From: Janie Romoff, General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

Wards: Ward 2 – Etobicoke Centre

SUMMARY

The Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) Division is recommending that the future park located at 4208 Dundas Street West be named "Joshua Glover Park." The future park is located off of Ackley Heights, a new road which runs north from Dundas Street West and is west of Prince Edward Drive North. The recommended name meets the policy criteria in the Council approved 'City of Toronto Property Naming Policy.'

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Etobicoke York Community Council officially name the future park located at 4208 Dundas Street West "Joshua Glover Park."

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of July 7, 8 and 9, 2015, City Council adopted the 'Property Naming Policy,' item EX7.8, with the effective date of October 2015.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.EX7.8>

COMMENTS

PFR staff propose that the new park at 4208 Dundas Street West be named "Joshua Glover Park" in honour of the 19th century Etobicoke resident who was born into slavery in America and escaped to Canada via the Underground Railroad. Local Councillor Stephen Holyday supports the name and it is in compliance with the Council approved 'Property Naming Policy.'

Public Consultation:

PFR staff consulted with the former local Councillor John Campbell to solicit name suggestion for the new park at 4208 Dundas Street West. The Councillor suggested the honourific name Joshua Glover Park and included background information on Mr. Glover from the Etobicoke Historical Society.

PFR staff reached out to the Etobicoke Historical Society to confirm if Joshua Glover had any known living relatives, as descendant permission is a requirement of honourific naming. The Etobicoke Historical Society confirmed that there are no known descendants.

In December 2017, PFR created an online naming survey distributed through the Councillor's office and promoted through PFR's social media account. Respondents were able to choose between the names Joshua Glover Park, Prince Edward Park and Ackley Park. Joshua Glover Park won with 73 votes (56% of the total votes).

The new park will feature a piece of permanent public art that memorializes Joshua Glover, curated and provided by City of Toronto Arts and Culture Services. Arts and Culture Services issued a call for artists in spring 2020 and plans to install the public art this year, in collaboration with PFR.

Park construction will begin in August 2020 and will be complete in early 2021.

Biography of Joshua Glover:

Joshua Glover (1814-1888) was born into slavery in 1814. He escaped from slavery in 1852 from St. Louis, Missouri. He travelled four hundred miles, at night only, dodging slave hunters, to reach Racine, Wisconsin, where he found work in a sawmill. In March 1854, his former owner tracked him down and he was sent to jail in Milwaukee.

An angry crowd of abolitionists assembled outside the courthouse in Milwaukee, battered down the jail house door and freed Glover. He was guided along the "underground railway," a series of safe houses around Wisconsin, until he was able to take a ship to Canada in the spring of 1854.

In Ontario, Glover made his way to Etobicoke, where he found work at Montgomery's Inn. For over twenty years he worked cutting wood, harvesting crops and doing various other jobs around the farm. Not the only former slave to find refuge in the area, Glover became one of 39 Black people living in Etobicoke, out of a population of 2,900.

He settled into a small house in Lambton Mills and married Ann Glover. Joshua Glover died in the York County Home for the Aged in Newmarket in 1888 and is buried in Toronto's St. James Cemetery.

(Source: Finding Freedom, The Untold Story of Joshua Glover, Runaway Slave by Ruby West Jackson and Walter T. McDonald, 2007.) A longer version of this history is available at <http://www.etobicokehistorical.com/joshua-glover.html>.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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