



Staff Report

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Report To: General Government Committee

Date of Meeting: January 4, 2021

Report Number: PWD-003-21

Submitted By: Stephen Brake, Director of Public Works

Reviewed By: Andrew C. Allison, CAO

Resolution#:

File Number:

By-law Number:

Report Subject: Stuart Park Tennis Courts

Recommendations:

1. That Report PWD-003-21 be received;
2. That Council provide staff with direction on the following potential upgrades:
 - a) That the Guildwood Park tennis courts be resurfaced.
 - b) That the Stuart Park tennis courts and basketball court be resurfaced.
 - c) That one of the Stuart Park tennis courts be re-configured to provide for up to four pickleball courts.
 - d) That lighting be provided on the Stuart Park basketball and tennis/pickleball courts;
and
3. That all interested parties listed in Report PWD-003-21 and any delegations be advised of Council's decision.

Report Overview

This report addresses Council resolution #GG-217-20 that was carried at the June 22, 2020 General Government Committee meeting. The resolution specifically directed staff to undertake contracted tennis court repairs at the Avondale Park and Guildwood Park locations as well as host a Public Information Center to receive feedback on the Stuart Park tennis courts. This document provides a summary of the public responses such that staff can include the proposed upgrades in the 2021 capital budget.

1. Background

- 1.1 At the regular General Government Committee Meeting held on June 1, 2020, Council passed resolution #GG-131-20. This resolution requested that staff report back before summer break on capital improvements to the Stuart Park tennis courts, and other tennis courts in Clarington, as well as other infrastructure projects which may be included within related budgetary allowances.
- 1.2 At the June 22, 2020 regular General Government Committee Meeting, staff presented Report [OPD-005-20](#). This report provided a conditional assessment of all public tennis courts in Clarington and requested approval to undertake contracted repairs as well receive direction to host a Public Information Center regarding possible upgrades to the Stuart Park Tennis Courts.
- 1.3 At the regular General Government Committee Meeting held on June 22, 2020, Council passed resolution #GG-217-20 providing this direction.

2. Discussion

- 2.1 During the summer of 2020 staff completed the tennis court improvements recommended within report OPD-005-20. These improvements included the general clean-up of court surfaces, gate adjustments, fencing repairs, brush removal, tree pruning and the replacement of worn-out line markings. The court surface repair proposed for Guildwood Park, however, could not be undertaken due to the absence of a budget to contract out the necessary resurfacing requirements.
- 2.2 Due to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, a traditional Public Information Center could not be hosted by Public Works staff in 2020 to discuss the existing tennis courts in Stuart Park and to receive feedback regarding the proposed upgrades.

- 2.3 In lieu of hosting the Public Information Center, staff circulated a letter of project intent (Attachment 1) to all residents within the Emily Stowe Community (Attachment 2) on December 1, 2020. Stuart Park is considered the Neighbourhood Park within this residential area of just under 1,800 homes and would be the nearest tennis court location for residents within this community.
- 2.4 In an effort to gather the necessary public feedback regarding Stuart Park, and more specifically the on-site tennis courts, the residents of the community were provided with a link to a short on-line survey. The survey consisted of five direct questions regarding their use of Stuart Park, the amenities that require improvement and whether provisions for pickleball and court surface lighting should be made.
- 2.5 A meeting was also held by staff at the Stuart Park tennis courts on November 4, 2020, with a group of approximately 30 pickleball enthusiasts. This group is strongly advocating for the allocation of dedicated pickleball courts on the Stuart Park tennis courts, if the proposed resurfacing project is approved. This request is also consistent with the recommendations of the recently approved Clarington Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment (ORNA) Study.
- 2.6 Although the basketball court at Stuart Park was not part of the initial scope of this project review, the facility was reviewed by staff on November 4, 2020. Due to the presence of a number of large cracks in the existing asphalt playing surface the basketball court is deemed to be in greater need of rehabilitation than the tennis courts.

3. Analysis

- 3.1 A total of 64 individuals responded to the on-line survey prior it's closing at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, December 11, 2020. The summary of results is provided as follows:
- 72% of the respondents suggested that they visit Stuart Park at least once a week.
 - The amenities used the most at Stuart Park are greenspace, trails, tennis courts, basketball court, playground and baseball field in that order.
 - The tennis and basketball courts were identified by the community to have the greatest need of rehabilitation
 - 77% of respondents supported reconfiguring one tennis court into multiple pickleball courts.
 - 69% of respondents supported the provision of lighting on the tennis/pickleball and basketball courts.

3.2 The majority of respondents did not provide any additional comments, however, the following concerns from 13 individuals were submitted and should be considered:

- The money could be used for things that are needed more.
- The tennis courts are in good condition as is. Adding lighting to the area will only encourage unwanted activity and noise in a quiet community.
- The entire park could use upgrades. The basketball court this summer was the bane of everyone's existence. Adding lights will extend the noise into the nighttime.
- Lights should be on a timer.
- Why spend thousands of dollars on floodlights.
- Pickleball should be discouraged from being played in courts located near houses. There is already too much noise, profanity and loud music during the day that would continue after dark if lights are installed.
- There is enough daylight spring summer and fall for people to play sports.
- I only support this if the lights are turned off in a timely manner, say by 9:30 p.m.
- The light pollution would have a major impact on the wildlife that lives in the park and area. There is a great horned owl that lives in the park. Birds, and bats also make Stuart park their home.
- We have lived backing on to Stuart Park for over 30 years. We use the park and the tennis courts on a regular basis. Never once did we think we needed extra lighting.
- Any organized group play should only be allowed with City permits and within appropriate posted designated hours.
- Lighting would just encourage people to hang out, eventually leading to damage.
- Need the courts redone but don't want Pickleball. The ball is loud at 7 am on weekends.

4. Concurrence

This report has been reviewed by the Director of Financial Services/Treasurer who concurs with the recommendations.

5. Conclusion

Although the response rate by the Emily Stowe Community to the Stuart Park rehabilitation survey was very low, staff are of the opinion that the summarized findings closely represent the current needs of the park and its regular users.

It is, therefore, respectfully requested that Council provide direction to staff on the following potential upgrades:

- That the Guildwood Park tennis courts be resurfaced.
- That the Stuart Park tennis courts and basketball court be resurfaced.
- That one of the Stuart Park tennis courts be re-configured to provide for up to four pickleball courts.
- That lighting be provided on the Stuart Park basketball and tennis/pickleball courts

Staff Contact: Stephen Brake, Director of Public Works, 905-263-2291 extension 2903 or sbrake@clarington.net

Attachment 1 – Stuart Park Letter of Intent

Attachment 2 – Map of Emily Stowe Neighbourhood

Attachment 3 – Summary of Stuart Park Survey Results

Interested Parties:

List of Interested Parties available from Department.