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To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Stephen Brake, Director of Public Works
Date: March 8, 2021
Re: Bowmanville Boat Launch Restoration

At the Special Council meeting held on Thursday, February 11, 2021, Council passed Resolution #C-066-21. This resolution approved the Municipalities Operating and Capital Budgets for 2021. Included in the amendments from the Draft Budget Book was item cc) regarding the Bowmanville Boat Launch restoration. The approved amendment reads as follows:

“That the Bowmanville Boat Launch restoration in the amount of \$200,000 be placed into a reserve fund and the issue be further investigated before any work is done.”

Additional clarity on the budget amendment is required as the current direction provided on the matter can be interpreted in a number of ways. Various options exist for investigation and possible future construction that could include the following:

1. Remove the boat ramp and permanently decommission the launch to prevent its continued use;
2. Restore the existing boat launch to a reasonable standard;
3. Reconstruct the boat launch in another location along Lake Ontario;
4. Consider the need for a boat launch as part of a full waterfront development plan.

In 2019, staff of the Public Works Department endeavoured to have the remains of the old boat launch docks and staircases removed. As can be seen in the following photographs, the boat launch was in very poor condition and represented a serious risk of personal injury or property damage to users. The funding that was available to undertake this work, however, was insufficient to remove the existing ramp and replace any of the infrastructure necessary to properly restore the functionality of the existing boat launch. Although staff have permanently closed the boat launch to the public since 2019, it continues to be frequently used by recreational boaters and anglers.



Figure 1: Bowmanville Boat Launch Ramp and Dock



Figure 2: Bowmanville Boat Launch Dock



Figure 3: Bowmanville Boat Launch Dock



Figure 4: Bowmanville Boat Launch Ramp

The Bowmanville Boat Launch has for many decades been an important piece of infrastructure that provides easy access to Lake Ontario for the local boating community and visitors to Clarington. The users of the boat launch in kind provide considerable support to the local economy through the purchase of goods and services. In addition, the existing boat launch also represents an important opportunity for people to improve their mental health during these unusual times of Covid-19 by allowing them to engage with the local environment.

It should be noted that the investigation and implementation of either option 3 or 4 listed above will require significantly higher budgets and perhaps should be considered as a much longer-term vision for the Port Darlington area. The selection of option 1 or 2 will require considerable time for staff to acquire the necessary permits for in-water work, tendering of the project and construction of the proposed design. Any significant delay to the current timeline may continue to render the boat launch unavailable for users in 2021.

Given the past importance of the Bowmanville Boat Launch and the on-going public interest to have the facility properly restored, Public Works staff are respectfully recommending that direction be provided to proceed with the necessary repairs to the existing facility with funds to be drawn from the Parks/Maintenance Reserve Fund (Bowmanville Boat Launch) to a maximum of \$200,000.

Regards,



Stephen Brake
Director
Public Works