

King Township buys former Nobleton Jr. school site for \$5.5 million

By Mark Pavilons

King Township has added an 8.4-acre property in Nobleton to its valuable inventory.

Councillors voted to purchase the former Nobleton Junior Public School site from the York Region District School Board for \$5.5 million.

Staff pointed out that the municipality needs to acquire additional parkland to meet its long-term service requirements and this parcel is ideal in many respects. The site has been used as soccer fields for many years and many have come to rely on these facilities.

It became clear that it would be beneficial to the Township to acquire the parcel to facilitate current and future parks needs, said Parks Director Chris Fasciano in his report. This will help ensure adequate passive and active recreational activities for the community for years to come.

Councillor David Boyd said this is a very exciting opportunity for the village of Nobleton.

He noted the significant contributions from former CAO Susan Plamondon and her efforts in negotiating this deal.

The property, for this cost, is a job well done. This is a one-time opportunity that all members of council saw value in and, I want to sincerely thank you all for your support.

I'm thrilled that we will be able to protect our legacy parkland space and will continue to further develop the Nobleton Lions Community Park by adding a new entrance to our park which will also contribute to Nobleton's core revitalization.

This is a tremendous opportunity. I am grateful that the Township will be guiding the process in the repurposing and development of this valuable parcel of property in the Nobleton core.

The school board demolished the building and so the Township now gets a clean property, free of any encumbrances and inclusive of the previously constructed soccer field for continued community use.

The funds will come from the capital budget through internal reserves. The Parkland Reserve Fund has adequate money to complete the transaction. Also, subject to future evaluation and determination, the Township intends to deem a portion of the site surplus and could sell it down the road to offset some of the costs. When that happens, the money will be earmarked for the parkland reserves and infrastructure reserves.

The York Region District School Board deemed the land as surplus in 2016. The Township has always expressed an interest in acquiring the land.

Boyd said there's a lot of history in that building, one that resonates with local residents. Saving some of the pieces will at least preserve a little bit of history. He said the bell tower, corner stone and some bricks were saved and hopes these will be part of a public monument of sorts.

The original Nobleton Public School (formerly S.S. No. 19), was built on the property in 1870, as a two-room, framed building. In 1937, the school board tore down the original school and built a one-room brick school, the portion that houses the bell tower. In 1956, a room was added to east side and more additions came in the 1960s. Alterations followed in 1983.