

Nobleton park redevelopment sparks core revamp

By Mark PavilonsEditor

Redeveloping the Nobleton Community Lions Park presents a unique opportunity to revamp the village core. Council gave its stamp of approval for 'reimagining' both the Lions Park and Nobleton Library. Staff pointed out this will be a collaborative efforts, in conjunction with development opportunities on adjacent properties. It will literally transform the services in the village. Staff have been evaluating options for improvements and redevelopment of facilities in Nobleton for years. And recent opportunities have arisen to help bring it all together. The preliminary concept includes land transfers with adjacent property owners to help relocate and expand the library. Staff would like to see the Nobleton outdoor pool and ball hockey court replaced by a wading pool and outdoor ice surface. Soccer fields will be relocated and hopes are a pickleball court can be created. Hope are arrangements can be made with adjacent landowners to enhance the area. Sections of Old King Road will be subject to a block plan exercise to be undertaken by Growth Management Services. This area presents a unique opportunity for the Township to establish a 'main street feel' with enhanced placemaking opportunities along Old King and in the village core. One of the elements that will be a focus of discussion will be the future of the Nobleton Community Hall, requiring a process where staff engages the Heritage Advisory Committee in the coming months. The Nobleton branch of the King Township Public Library services has been identified as requiring significant building improvements and an expansion to accommodate population growth in the village. King's Facility Services Master Plan (2019) recommends exploring opportunities to consolidate facilities onto joint campuses to reduce operational requirements, specifically staff resources. This project proposes the construction of a new library branch at the arena/park property and abandoning the existing building and location as surplus lands to be sold. The pool was last open in 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The pool did not open in 2022 due to a combination of aquatic staffing shortages, technical issues and equipment failures. Staff have worked over the past 18 months attempting to get the Nobleton pool ready for reopening. The physical condition of the pool and the continued national labour shortage of certified aquatics instructors have heavily impacted the Township's ability to reopen the pool. Due to significant structural deficiencies in conjunction with the expected opening of King's first indoor aquatic centre in 2024, the Nobleton Lions Outdoor Pool in King will be permanently closed starting in 2023. The closure presents an opportunity to re-develop the space for the future and enhance recreational services for the community of Nobleton. Plans being considered include a seasonal wading pool/water feature and the Township's first refrigerated outdoor ice surface. Staff are proposing to relocate the existing soccer field and to move it closer to existing sports fields, which enables shared lighting to expand current service capacity and facilitates possible land disposition. The pickleball courts will expand a service that is quickly becoming the most requested amenity for Community Services, while the parking enhancements will be included to assist with all of the new features. A bandshell is being proposed, since Nobleton hosts several significant events each year. From here, staff will: ? Undertake a community consultation process to ensure the vision presented aligns with the vision of the Nobleton community and its citizens. ? Negotiate with abutting landowners to establish terms for disposition and acquisition of lands to facilitate the re-development project from both a land and financial perspective. ? Undertake a block plan exercise for affected and surrounding lands. ? Make alterations as required and report back to Council with a financial and timing strategy for implementation. Sources of funding for the project will include DCs and money from the sale of lands. Staff will report back to council on the financial aspects for the construction and operation. Councillor David Boyd noted that many Nobleton residents have expressed the desire for a main street feel, often highlighting Old King Road as a suitable location to start the revitalization.