

Residents request change in new subdivision

By Angela Gismondi

Residents living in the new Nobleridge subdivision in Nobleton came to the committee of the whole meeting with request for council this past Monday.

In July 2012, the Township's engineering and public works department received a petition from 12 of the 14 residents living on James Bowman Court, part of Nobleridge subdivision. The petition asked the Township to remove a landscaped island proposed for the middle of their cul-de-sac. In the report presented to council at the meeting, staff recommended that the residents' petition to eliminate the cul-de-sac island be denied and that the developer be directed to install the island as per the subdivision plan design. The original proposal included a lane width of 6.2 metres around the outer perimeter of the cul-de-sac to provide on street parking and one lane of traffic. The remaining centre portion of the cul-de-sac would have an enhanced landscape island completed with curb, one-metre-wide interlock pavers and a planting bed at the centre.

The proposed size of the cul-de-sac island was one of the concerns cited by residents. In particular, residents were concerned there wouldn't be enough space for parking on the street, would cause visibility issues for drivers and would be difficult for snow plows to get around. Another concern raised at the meeting is that the cul-de-sac island will require considerable maintenance, especially if it includes a landscaped area.

In order to address the concerns of the residents, staff and the developer's landscape consultants worked together and widened the lane to 8.5 metres to allow for better access. But in August residents submitted another petition asking for the complete removal of the island from the cul-de-sac.

At the committee meeting Monday, a James Bowman Court resident told council he signed the petition to have the cul-de-sac removed. He said the cul-de-sac is not needed, not wanted and will cause safety concerns for the people living on the street.

“There is no purpose for having that island,” said the deputant. “Nobody wants it. I just don't understand why we would go ahead with it. The island would likely not get maintained. It's going to create more work and make our street look ugly. I think it's going to create more of a problem.”

There was only one resident at the meeting who spoke in favour of keeping the island. He believes the island will act as a traffic calming measure, which is a concern for him as he has two small children.

“I think we should keep the island,” he said. “I think it would be safer.”

In addition to the developer being required to provide landscaping throughout the new Nobleridge subdivision, the cul-de-sac islands serve as an attractive feature and result in less storm water runoff resulting in less impact on downstream watercourses. It also reduces the temperature of stormwater run off and is a benefit to the downstream watercourse.

Staff expressed concern that the removal of the island on the court could also set a precedent for the new subdivisions in King. Nobleridge subdivision has six cul-de-sacs with similar landscaped islands proposed for each. The removal of the James Bowman Court island may lead to residents from the additional cul-de-sacs to request similar removal of the landscaped islands on their courts.

Councillor Linda Pabst said the island could be a safety concern.

“When you're driving it's hard enough to see around a bend without plants in the way,” said Pabst. “I don't see why it's necessary on a court with this few homes. I understand the concerns of the residents.”

Councillor Bill Cober wanted to make sure that if council decided to remove the island from the cul-de-sac, the money which was going to be used to install them be put somewhere else in the community. He asked for the issue to be deferred.

Councillor Debbie Schaefer agreed the issue should be deferred and more information is needed.

“This is not a one cul-de-sac decision,” said Schaefer. “It will affect others.”

Rob Flindall, director of engineering and public works for the Township of King, said the developer is anxious for a decision on the matter so the subdivision can be completed.

Councillor Peter Grandilli also wanted the matter deferred. He said the developer should concentrate on fixing up the mess at the parkette until the issues with the cul-de-sac are resolved.

A motion was carried to defer the matter and refer it back to staff for further information.