



LAFONTAINE BEACH PARK, BEACH WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS

MUNICIPAL CLASS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE #1 MEETING - Township of Tiny Council Chambers

130 Balm Beach Road West, Tiny ON

Saturday - August 25, 2012

From: 10:00 a.m. to 12:40 noon

MEETING MINUTES

The following is a summary of the first public meeting held August 25, 2012. The meeting was attended by two councilors and approximately 31 members of the public.

Presentations were made by the following:

Coldwater Consulting Ltd., - Dr. Mike Davies, Ph.D., P.Eng.,

Natural Resource Solutions Inc. - Erika Renecker

Aqua Solutions 5 Inc. - Judy Sullivan, P.Eng.

Town Staff in Attendance:

Henk Blom, CET Manager of Public Works

Dawn McConnell, A.Sc.T., rcji,

The following summarizes questions raised and the responses provided:

Q – Why was full removal of all the groynes not included as an option? Also why was full removal of the groyne(s) at the Park area not considered?

A – It was noted that full removal of all the groynes was considered in the initial analysis however works covering the entire beach area are outside of the scope of this project as the study area is limited to Lafontaine Beach Park.

With respect to removal of the full groyne(s) in the park area, the coastal analysis indicates capping or removal of existing fine sediments needs to be included in any proposed works. Partial removal of the groynes provides material for the capping option. The partial removal/capping was considered to be more beneficial than full removal because the full removal made capping difficult and therefore did not have as good performance under low water levels.

Q- There was concern voiced by the public that property values have dropped because of low water levels and water quality issues.

A- It was noted that Council is sympathetic to this and that is why the current study is underway. The Township was looking to explore options that could be realistically considered from a practical point of view (land ownership, size/scale of project) and also ones that would be acceptable to the approval agencies as a pilot project.

Q – How will waterfront owners along other areas of the beach be protected by this project?

A- This project is designed to improve conditions immediately in front of Lafontaine Park. The technical analysis being undertaken demonstrates that this project will not result in adverse affects to other properties along the beach (i.e. will not make existing conditions worse). The project will not, however, address beach- and water-quality issues for other properties. It is hoped that, in the future, this pilot

project will provide the basis for developing solutions that could be implemented by other property owners along this shoreline.

Q- There is an area where there is ponding which has formed between the bar and the shore as it has; a lot of sediment built up, bad mosquito area and there is concern about what can be done to help alleviate the problems in this area.

A- It was noted that the project and study is focused on the Lafontaine Beach Park and the recommendations are not designed to address all the other areas of the shoreline. The technical analysis is showing that the work in the proposed project area would not have any detrimental effects in the other areas. The adaptive management process for this project would include monitoring of the areas up and downdrift of the Park site.

Q- Who will monitor the site and for how long?

A- Typically the Ministry will require the Township to have a monitoring program in place, and do this on a regular basis (season, annual etc.) so that we will have a good idea of any impacts and be able to respond accordingly. In order for an adaptive management approach to work it must be able to react; so one would expect that it should be responsive on a yearly not a decadal time scale.

Q- There was concern that over the years trees/bulrushes have been removed, weeds grew and that the major pollution issue is from the geese and waterfowl. Is there a solution to this problem?

A – It was noted that part of this process is to address the rehabilitation of the whole park area but that this portion of the project is looking at the water's edge and how to improve it. Reducing the amount of 'muck' and weeds in the area will help, as will reducing the extent of the groynes, but waterfowl control/management is a whole other issue which is beyond the scope of this study.

Q- If this pilot project works will other residents be able to use the same idea of the removal or partial removal of groyne(s)?

A- The presence of these groynes on Georgian Bay is unlike anywhere else in Ontario. So the idea is that once this process is completed it will ease the way for future similar projects. The monitoring results of this project will have to indicate that it worked; that any detrimental effects were handled and mitigated so that the same basic principles can be applied elsewhere.

However any future site applications will still have to be dealt with on a site by site basis, through the same approval process. Detailed studies will still be required for a particular area, showing that there will not be any detrimental impacts. Hopefully the approval agencies will understand the processes better and see that the same basic principles have worked elsewhere so that this type of project can be considered in another location and this will assist to speed up the overall future approval process.

Q- Question was asked if the whole area could be included as part of this project?

A- The response was that the whole area could not be included as part of this specific project. A whole new project area could not be added on to this one and be considered under the same project. A new, large scale project would be required and the process started over because the whole study area would have changed.

Q- The question was asked that if water levels continue to fall then is all this work not being done for nothing?

A-The response was that water levels are falling at a rate of millimeters per year, but water levels also naturally fluctuate by as much as 1 metre per year. All of the natural seasonal and decadal fluctuations

(e.g. spring, fall, drought or wet seasons) are much bigger than the small downward trend of millimeters per year. Although the overall trend for water levels in Georgian Bay has been downward, periods of high water will continue to recur.

Q- Concern was expressed that the public has been waiting so long for something to be done and once there is agreement on the solution will the council have the budget to carry it out?

A- These concerns were duly noted.

One resident's comments indicated their support for the project as they felt that Tiny had to start somewhere with the Park area and a pilot project. There was concern that they did not want the process get stopped or delayed further because some of the public wanted the whole area to be looked at rather than just the Lafontaine Park. Concern was also expressed that the community needed to get the beach restored so that the public can use it as soon as possible. There was respect for the approval process which needed to be followed but concern that if there is not enough support for the present recommendations that this will cause further delays and cause the project to lose focus on moving forward.

The Township Staff provided a summary of the timelines; the approval agency process is long and can be slow but Tiny Township has no control over this. Tiny is following the Class EA process which involves getting input from the public. Tiny is happy to see the public attending this meeting and to voice their questions and concerns as it is extremely important to this process to know what the public thinks, and how to mitigate any issues to get the best solution possible for everyone.

As part of the Class EA process, receiving written public comments is important in order to be clear what concerns may exist and if there is support for the project. There is a 30 day comment period and all information is available on the Tiny Township website www.tiny.ca (i.e. original study, presentation slides etc.). The process is that the public comments will be taken and alternative(s) adapted if necessary. If there is a lot of disagreement with the concepts or if there are significant changes to an alternative, then Tiny may have to study it further which may extend the EA process and require further public meetings.

Following the public comment process, a project file will be completed and all of the information will be brought to Council for their consideration. Assuming that Council ratifies the chosen alternative, a notice would be put in the paper that the project file is ready for preview by the public. At that time any member of the public could object to the recommended alternative through a Part 2 order, whereby the Minister of the Environment that they are not satisfied with the results of the EA and the Council decision. The Ministry would then ask the Township to see if the concern can be addressed. If an agreement between the two parties cannot be reached then the Minister would make the final decision. The Minister could ask for more work to be done by the Township; again Tiny would not have any control on this time line.

Once this process is completed, the Township would need to allocate the necessary budgetary funds. Tiny Township would then proceed with the final design, approvals and construction phase of the project. This could be a 6 month to 1 year process and would also depend on the agency approval process which could take longer. If all went well, Tiny Township would include the project in the 2013 budget for construction, if not then 2014.

Minutes prepared by J. Sullivan of Aqua Solutions 5 Inc.