

Hespeler Village River Activation

Newsletter No. 3

October 2003

This is the third and final newsletter that will be produced for the River Activation Master Plan project. If you wish to be added to any future correspondence for the project, please email or phone Albert Frootman (contact information on the back page). Public input is an important part of the process and we want you to be aware of the latest developments.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the project is to establish a Hespeler Village River Activation Master Plan for the City of Cambridge, which strategically uses the Speed River in the interest of fostering and improving social, environmental, and economic well-being.

WHAT'S NEW?

Since the release of the second newsletter, another Open House was held on August 20th, 2003 to provide an opportunity for the public to review the Final Master Plan concept.

Reports were also produced which outline the three-phased master plan process. Copies of all three reports are available to review at the following locations: **City of Cambridge Planning Services Department, 3rd Floor, 73 Water Street North, and the Hespeler Library, 5 Tannery Street.**

At their meeting on July 23, 2003, the Hespeler Village River Activation Steering Committee adopted the following resolutions:

“THAT the Hespeler Village River Activation Steering Committee recommend that the Cambridge City Council adopt the Hespeler Village River Activation Master Plan comprised of Phase One, Phase Two and Phase Three- Final Reports, as revised,

AND THAT the Phase Three- Final Report be referred to the 2004 Budget Task Force for consideration in the 2004-2008 Capital Budget.”

On September 8, 2003, the proposal was considered by General Committee, which heard a number of delegations, and recommended the plan for approval by Council. On September 15, 2003, Council subsequently approved the Master Plan in principle. Allocation of new capital budget funding (necessary to fund all but the first two projects in 2004) will be considered by the Budget Task Force in early 2004.

FINAL MASTER PLAN

The Master Plan is composed of three phases- or strategies- for implementation. It is important to note that the phases do not follow a sequential timeline, rather, certain elements of each phase may overlap with each other.

Phase One – Guelph Avenue Bridge and Ellacott Lookout

The initial strategy is to focus efforts closer to the downtown core. Phase One projects are intended to focus on aesthetic enhancements to the Guelph Avenue Bridge, including pedestrian lighting, flower boxes, and spotlights for the American Standard Dam. The Bridge has been chosen as a starting point for implementation as many local residents utilize and recognize the Bridge as a primary link between neighbourhoods north and south of the Speed River. The Bridge acts as a visual reference point for the entire community, and is expected to be a strong catalyst for implementing other Phase One projects.

The second major element of Phase One is the enhancement of Ellacott Lookout. Changes proposed are a lookout deck, new lighting and improving the parking lot area.

Phase Two – Park Development

The second phase of implementing the Master Plan will involve expanding and developing the park on the north side of the river to the east of Guelph Avenue. Later, acquisition of more parkland to the west of Guelph Avenue is proposed. Creating this major parkland facility in the heart of the community would provide a central public open space. The park would also provide recreational use and space for residents and visitors to gather and meet. A pedestrian bridge and pathway over the dam, connecting the parkland with an urban plaza on the southeast side of Guelph Avenue, would complete the major Core Area projects.

Phase Three – Mill Pond Improvements

Phase Three focuses on the Mill Pond area of the Speed River. A strategy for dealing with sedimentation and water quality issues is a community priority in light of the interest and concern expressed since the first public meeting. This phase will be subject to approval of detailed environmental studies prior to any form of Mill Pond cleaning or development. Due to time required, the approval process needs to be started relatively early in the process of implementing the Master Plan to allow for full project implementation to occur in the ten-year timeframe suggested. Subject to the necessary approvals, work within and surrounding the Pond is expected to consist of selective dredging of the Pond to increase the velocity of the current, with the intention of using the dredged material to create small islands, develop wetland habitats, and introduce a pedestrian boardwalk system.

In addition to these recommended public projects, renewed private investment is encouraged by the Master Plan. Principles for the creation of a “new urban identity” in the area north of the river and west of Guelph Avenue are included in the Phase Three Report. The intention is to encourage the continued use and re-development of existing buildings over time, if industrial activities cease and as floodplain regulations allow.

** The Master Plan concept is available to review at the City of Cambridge Planning Services Department and/ or the Hespeler Library. Addresses are noted on the first page of the newsletter.*

NEXT STEPS

Now that the Master Plan has received Council approval, the following steps will be taken towards project implementation:

- Review by Budget Task Force;
- Formation of a new subcommittee of the Core Areas Revitalization Advisory Committee to oversee the implementation of the Master Plan; and,
- Detailed design and implementation of improvements to Ellacott Lookout and the Guelph Avenue Bridge in 2004.

Role of the Implementation Subcommittee

The Implementation Subcommittee is to be comprised of representatives of community groups, the Grand River Conservation Authority, and CARAC. The Subcommittee will be involved in reviewing and providing direction on the implementation of specific projects.

Who to contact for more information, or to provide comments:

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