

Peninsula Community Council
March 5, 2012

TO: Chair and Members of Peninsula Community Council

SUBMITTED BY:



Brad Anguish, Director, Community & Recreation Services

DATE: February 14, 2012

SUBJECT: Strategy to Sustain Minor Baseball on the Peninsula

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

May 10, 2010 and September 13, 2010 Peninsula Community Council Meetings - staff was asked to prepare a report on a strategy to sustain minor baseball on the Peninsula. The report was to include changes for the following year (2011) that would create a home for minor leagues. The intent of the motion was to locate field space for youth on the Peninsula; in particular for the Bantam level of youth for the Conrose Minor Baseball Association.

BACKGROUND

With the increase of special events on the Halifax North Common, field time for minor baseball leagues on the Common has been impacted. Leagues booking the Common have continually been displaced in order to accommodate these larger events. These events can span anywhere from a few days to a week or more in duration. The installation of the temporary Skating Oval for the Canada Winter Games and the permanent installation of the Emera Skating Oval in that same location, has permanently removed Diamond #5 from the Common.

Facility Scheduling staff annually worked with displaced sport groups (both adult and minor) in an effort to accommodate play at alternate venues. As the need for Special Events on the Common increased, so did the need to re-locate groups to sport facilities off the Peninsula, wherever and whenever time and space allowed. Given the limited number of ball diamonds on the Peninsula and, in particular, diamonds that could adequately service the Bantam level of play for Minor Baseball, availability was at an even greater premium for minor league play.

In addition, a team of HRM staff comprised of members from Community & Recreation Services (Facility Scheduling), Transportation and Public Works (Municipal Operations) and Planning and Infrastructure (Real Property Planning) held meetings with Minor Ball League representatives to collectively determine an interim course of action.

DISCUSSION

One short term solution offered to the Conrose Minor Baseball League in 2010 was to take an under-utilized ball diamond (Rockingstone in Stryfield) and make it a dedicated Bantam Baseball Diamond for the sole use of the Conrose League. However, given the location, this offer was deemed unacceptable and rejected by the group.

A second option was to move all league home games for the Conrose League to the Westridge Ball Diamond on the Mainland Common (Clayton Park) on Sunday afternoons, with practice sessions scheduled during the week at Merv Sullivan (The Pit) in the North end.

The second option became the accepted solution for 2010 and 2011. It should be noted that both of these locations still remain outside of Peninsula Halifax.

The larger issue of sustainability of baseball on the Peninsula is being addressed in the Regional Centre Open Space Plan through Real Property Planning. Until such time as the results of the Plan are available (currently anticipated for July 2012), Facility Scheduling staff with the support of Municipal Operations will continue to work directly with the baseball league(s) being impacted via the Scheduling Process and the fair and equitable allocation of field space. Any and all accommodations made to date have been done with the input and approval of the ball league(s).

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications at this time.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Project and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Project and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Real Property Planning held two Open House sessions specific to the North Common Conceptual Plan (January 18, 2010, 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Bloomfield Centre; and January 20, 2010, 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Halifax Hall).

Real Property Planning provided an overview on the Central Common Plan to Peninsula Community Council (November 14, 2011, Item #9.3.1).

Facility Scheduling has processes in place that work toward the fair and equitable allocation of field time/space with the resources available. The process of allocating field time is done in a cooperative manner with involvement from the sport groups.

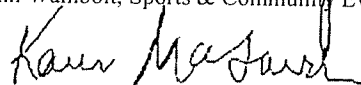
With the concerns that have been prevalent around field availability and the rescheduling of field time on the Common over the last few years, staff have met in house and have had several meetings with league representatives to discuss alternatives and options required to meet the needs of the client.

ATTACHMENTS

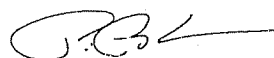
None

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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