

Deck spindles of the gazebo in Dominion Gardens Park lie scattered after vandal(s) struck recently. The Town has surveillance video of the incident which they have shared with Halton Police.

Submitted photo

Park vandalism 'disheartening'

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The Friends of The Old Seed House Garden are very "disheartened" by the damage, said Baron. The group was formed in 2000 to raise funds, design and build the garden to recognize the Dominion Seed House company that operated from that location for many years. The group raised more than \$500,000 towards the garden, which officially opened in 2003, and today oversee and maintain it. They inspect the garden every day, even in winter.

"Our dream was to add more art installations (in the garden) but we're wondering if that's a dream that's impossible to fulfill," said Baron.

The goose sculpture is not the only thing in the park that's been vandalized.

Baron said as recently as Monday (Feb. 13) several spindles in the gazebo's railing had been kicked out, a garbage can had been overturned and two irrigation heads were damaged. The Town of Halton Hills has video surveillance, which will be shared with police.

Sue Balogh, also co-chair of Friends of the Old Seed House Garden, said in the past rails have been removed from the gazebo because they have been kicked in repeatedly, volunteers have had to re-stain the entire gazebo because it has had to be spot sanded so often to remove offensive graffiti. A picnic table in the gazebo had to be removed because of offensive carvings and the fact it was

repeatedly dragged to other areas of the park.

The Town of Halton Hills had to install motion detectors and video surveillance to deter vandalism, electrical outlets for lighting had to be placed higher with covers added to avoid being tampered with, and the glass panels in the tall light standards had to be replaced with plastic after being broken so often with stones.

Rocks that have been tossed into the small fishpond from the riverbed have to be removed regularly and at one point a large grass plant was torched to the ground in the formal garden.

"Our original vision of the gardens has been greatly altered because of the issue of constant vandalism," said Balogh.

She wants the public to know about all the vandalism in the garden.

"We are a small group of volunteers who maintain it and dearly want the community to feel a sense of pride in their ownership of this unique public space," said Balogh.

She said the garden's contents are the product of the generosity of members of the community who have donated or have helped the group fundraise to buy artwork, tools, plants, etc.

As well, she said, the Town has had to use tax dollars to contribute to the repairs.

"Personally I'd rather be spending my volunteer time gardening but more effort seems to go toward fixing this mutilated property," said Balogh



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